

USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter May - August 2017, 47th Edition


Welcome to the USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter

The USS Plymouth Rock Newsletter is a publication issued every four months by the USS Plymouth Rock Ships Association. If you would like to contribute an article, a piece of Navy or Plymouth Rock history, photo, memory or anything that might be of interest to you or other shipmates, you can send it as an e-mail to:

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Recent Address/E-Mail/Phone/Numbers/Address Changes to the Ships Muster

LTjg Brandon Macomber, on board 4/68-5/70, Evergreen, CO New E-Mail Address: sandy.macomber5@gmail.com

CDR Jerry Guretin, on board 75-77. New Address: 1602 Governors Drive, Apt. 2018, Pensacola. FL 32514

LTjg Michael Schneider on board 10/61-3/63. New Address: 858 Scenic Hills Way, Annapolis, MD 21401-6904. New E-Mail Address: mjs88@verizon.net

Bill Sims, DC3, W. Milton, OH. New E-Mail address: wsims918@yahoo.com



Known Deceased Shipmates

For a complete listing of deceased shipmates, visit our Memorial Page in the ships website

Raymond Floriano, BT3	Bobby Cummings, BTC
Captain Elmer H. Kiell, deceased 6/30/2016	



Thank You's

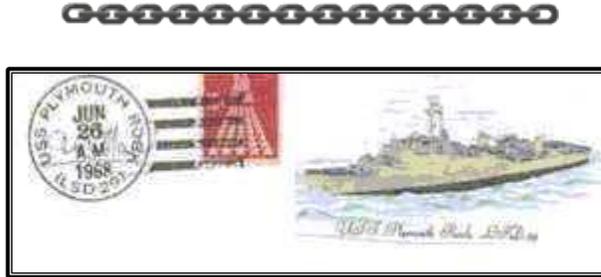
We would like to thank the following shipmates/friends/organizations for providing pictures, information and articles to the website, the Ships Association and newsletter.

USS Whetstone, LSD27		



Ships Store Items

To view all of the items in the Ship Store go to the ships website at ussplymouthrock.com, select Ships Store Link



Received an e[mail from Robert Black, ET2, Fayette, AL, on board a 1980-83. “Who would I contact to get a copy of that picture in the Newsletter of the PRock in Valparaiso in 81? I was just looking for one last night after I heard about the offshore earthquake a couple of days ago. When we were there a pretty good tremor, probably close offshore one evening near dark and a couple of good waves came in. From the O3 level it seemed like it was six feet but probably not but it made a good scene with the three ships nested.

Probably the same day that picture was taken they had Visit Ships for the public and my duty was on the pier in dress whites. It seemed like that was the biggest turnout of people on the whole cruise and when they announced it was closing the crowd swelled on the pier and a lady was pushed off into the water between the pier and the ship. I took off my shoes and hat and almost jumped when she popped up and was swimming like a fish and they threw a life ring so I just walked along tracking her to a Jacobs ladder they lowered and someone in dungarees got in and helped her up. I turned around and there was a TV camera filming. If I had known he was there I might have gone in anyway but that was the nastiest looking water. Thanks for the help, Robert Black” His e-mail is

simstick@gmail.com

Received a note from LTjg Mike Schneider, Annapolis, MD, on board 10/61-3/63. “I appreciate what you and the others do to keep us old PLYMOUTH ROCK sailors connected. Best regards, Mike Schneider” His e-mail address is mjs88@verizon.net

Received an e-mail from David Adams, ,pfc, USMC: “I was on the P.R. for 9 months of 1960 on Med. cruise...was a member of U.S.M.C. Recon..was on starboard side compartment with U.D.T. in compartment next to us..as a young Marine it was an experience I will never forget.....Navy..Marines...U.D.T...we all got along good..for a month we went to Malta to train with Royal Marines and were high lined back aboard the 29....me and another Marine went over first...next came all the comm gear and the high line broke,.... omg what an experience” His e-mail is gofer62@yahoo.com

Received a note from Eve Arnold, daughter of LCDR Ed. Arnold: “ Daughter of LCDR Ed Arnold, searched for this on a whim since I realized I'd never seen a photo of the ships that my father was on during his years of active duty. Thank you for maintaining this website so I could learn a little bit more. “ Her e-mail address is aja7588@rit.edu



2018 Reunion

The 2018 Ships Reunion is scheduled for Newport, RI for September 26-30 . Tentative possibilities for things to do include:



Cliff Walk: The Cliff Walk along the eastern shore of Newport, RI is world famous as a public access walk that combines the natural beauty of the Newport shoreline with the architectural history of Newport's gilded age. Wildflowers, birds, geology ... all add to this delightful walk.



Naval War College Museum, in Newport. National Historic Landmark and home to the Naval War College Museum. Named Founders Hall in honor of the founding fathers of the College

Newport Mansions along Millionaires Mile and Ocean Drive. The seaside city of Newport, Rhode Island, has long been home to some of the most affluent families in America. Spend a day exploring the gilded homes and extravagant lifestyles of these rich and famous.





Battleship Cove, Fall River, MA USS

Massachusetts, BB59. USS Joseph Kennedy, DD850, PT Boats, Kinddensee A Soviet-built missile corvette. All within a short drive from Newport.

USS Constitution in Boston. USS

***Constitution* is a wooden-hulled, three master heavy frigate of the United States Navy, named by President George Washington after the Constitution of the United States of America. She is the oldest commissioned naval vessel afloat.**



Naval Station, Newport. The Naval Station Newport is a United States Navy base located in the city of Newport and the town of Middletown, Rhode Island. Naval Station Newport is home to the Naval War College and the Naval Justice School.

Fort Adams State Park.

These are just some of the possibilities.

As additional information becomes available, it will be posted here as well as in the first page of the Ships Website. For additional information, contact:

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LSD-29 DEPLOYMENTS - MAJOR EVENTS

Month	Year	to	Month	Year	Deployment / Event
MAY	1953	-			Keel Date: 4 MAY 1953 at Ingalls Shipbuilding Pascagoula MS
MAY	1954	-			Launch Date: 7 MAY 1954
NOV	1954	-			Commissioned: 29 NOV 1954
MAR	1956	-	OCT	1956	Mediterranean
MAR	1956	-	OCT	1956	North Atlantic-Med-Indian Ocean
APR	1956	-	OCT	1956	amphibious exercises med.
JUL	1957	-	SEP	1957	Blue Nose - Artic Circle
JAN	1958	-	MAR	1958	Mediterranean-Lebanon
JAN	1958	-	JAN	1958	Beirut landing operations 1958
FEB	1960	-			Shellback Initiation - 11 FEB 1960 - Atlantic Ocean
JUN	1960	-	DEC	1960	Mediterranean
OCT	1962	-	OCT	1962	Cuban Missile Blockade
MAY	1963	-	OCT	1963	Mediterranean
OCT	1965	-	DEC	1965	Guantanamo Bay
JAN	1966	-	MAR	1966	North Atlantic-Med-Indian Ocean
JAN	1966	-	MAR	1966	H-Bomb recovery operations off Palomares Spain
MAY	1969	-	SEP	1970	Caribbean
NOV	1969	-	APR	1970	Caribbean
JUL	1970	-	AUG	1970	North Atlantic
FEB	1972	-	AUG	1972	Mediterranean
OCT	1972	-	MAR	1973	Caribbean
JUL	1978	-	FEB	1979	North Atlantic-Med-Indian Ocean
AUG	1978	-	JAN	1979	North Atlantic-Med-Indian Ocean
JUL	1979	-	AUG	1979	Caribbean
JAN	1981	-	DEC	1983	UNITAS
JUN	1981	-	DEC	1981	UNITAS
JUL	1981	-			Shellback Initiation - 16 JUL 1981 - Atlantic Ocean
SEP	1982	-	NOV	1982	North Atlantic
SEP	1983	-			Decommissioned: 30 SEP 1983

Named after the site of the landing of the first permanent settlers in New England in 1620, the 11,270-ton USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29) was a *Thomaston* class dock landing ship that was built by the Ingalls Shipbuilding Corporation at Pascagoula, Mississippi, and was commissioned on 29 November 1954. The ship was approximately 510 feet long and 84 feet wide, had a top speed of 21 knots, and was armed with eight twin 3-inch guns and six twin 20-mm guns. *Plymouth Rock* had a crew of 304 officers and men, could carry up to eight helicopters and 21 LCM(6) landing craft, accommodate 300 troops, and transport more than 2,000 tons of cargo.

After being commissioned, *Plymouth Rock* sailed from her home port at Norfolk, Virginia, and went on her shakedown cruise off America's east coast and the Caribbean. In the summer of 1955, the ship transported men and equipment to the Arctic Distant Early Warning bases in the far north. In March of 1956, *Plymouth Rock* deployed to the Mediterranean for amphibious exercises and returned to the United States in October. During 1957, she made numerous trips to the Caribbean and then went back to the Arctic, resupplying American bases there.

From May to October 1958, *Plymouth Rock* was assigned to the US Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean and participated in the landing of US Marines in Lebanon in July. In early 1959, *Plymouth Rock* pioneered the tactical concept of "vertical envelopment," which was (and still is) the use of helicopters to assault a specific target. The ship then returned to the Caribbean and in February 1960 participated in operation "Amigo," during which she carried support helicopters and other equipment for President Dwight Eisenhower's visit to South America. From March to December of 1960, *Plymouth Rock* was deployed once again to the Mediterranean.

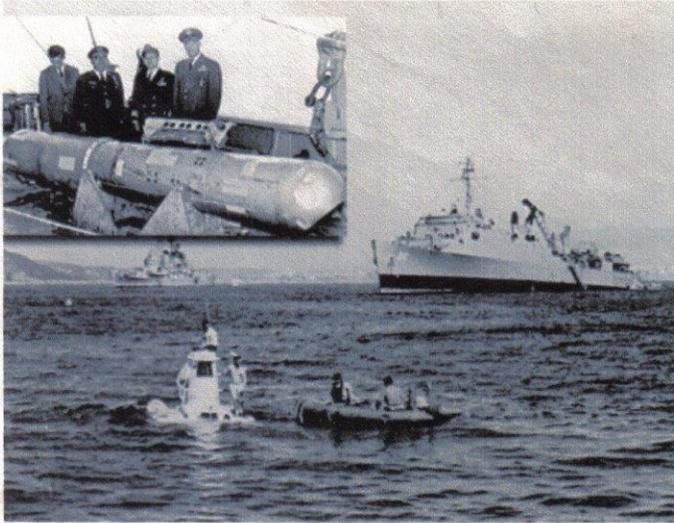
Throughout 1961, *Plymouth Rock* made several deployments to the Caribbean and one to the Mediterranean. In 1962, the ship returned to the Caribbean and was part of the US Navy's blockade of Cuba during the Cuban Missile Crisis. On 7 May 1963, *Plymouth Rock* went to the Mediterranean and came back to the United States in October.

In 1964, *Plymouth Rock* completed two cruises to the Caribbean and participated in operation "Steel Pike I" off the coast of Spain, which at that time was the largest amphibious exercise since World War II. In early 1965, *Plymouth Rock* ended another cruise in the Caribbean and from 28 January 1966 to 7 March was involved in the frantic search for a missing hydrogen bomb off the coast of Palomares, Spain. The bomb fell out of a B-52 bomber after a mid-air collision with a KC-135 tanker aircraft over the Mediterranean. Both planes crashed, but after a search of the area lasting more than two months, the United States eventually recovered the missing bomb from the Mediterranean.

In late 1966, *Plymouth Rock* was again in the Caribbean, this time providing supplies and relief for the victims of hurricane "Inez" in Haiti. After three more deployments to the Caribbean in 1967, *Plymouth Rock* was sent to northern Europe. She spent the next several years alternating between deployments in the Caribbean and northern Europe. USS *Plymouth Rock* was decommissioned in September 1983 and, after spending more than a decade in the Reserve Fleet, was sold for scrapping in September 1995.



**SUPPORT SHIP FOR H-BOMB RECOVERY
FOR DSV ALVIN & CURV-1 OFF
PALOMARES SPAIN JAN -- MAR 1966**



MRS.
Calman Levich
9811 Conn. Ave.
Kensington, Md.
20795

USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29) cache, 19 February 1966. Support ship for H-Bomb Recovery for Alvin and Curv-1 off Palomares, Spain, January - March 1966.



NAVY BOOT CAMP

A Navy man I'm gonna be Sailing on the deep blue sea. Went to see the Navy man, "Sign me up Sir, if you can. Chief said I've got what it takes. Next stop will be "Great Mistakes" Caught the bus, I'm headed out, Hoo-yah they will hear me shout! Today I just arrived at "boot" Proud to be a new recruit. Sat me in the barber's chair. Now you see I have no hair. Took my jeans and my old shoes, Fit me for some "BDU's". Tell my mom that I'm okay.. It's time for me to find my way. "Great.Mistakes" I'm gonna stay, Until my Graduation Day! A Navy man I'm gonna be Sailing on the deep blue sea.



NORFOLK, Va. (NNS) -- More than 7,000 Sailors from the George H.W. Bush Carrier Strike Group (GHWBCSG) are scheduled to arrive to their homeport Aug. 21, 2017. Led by Commander, Carrier Strike Group 2 Rear Adm. Kenneth Whitesell, the GHWBCSG is comprised of flagship USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77) with embarked squadrons of Carrier Air Wing (CVW) 8, CSG-2 staff, Destroyer Squadron (DESRON) 22 staff and ships. The aircraft carrier USS George H.W. Bush (CVN 77), commanded by Capt. Will Pennington, and the guided missile destroyer USS Truxtun (DDG 103) are returning to Naval Station (NS) Norfolk after a seven-month deployment. USS Philippine Sea (CG 58) returns to NS Mayport, Florida, Aug. 19, and USS Hue City (CG 66) returns Aug. 21.



Photo # NH 97359 USS Plymouth Rock (LSD-29)



USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29) photographed circa the later 1950s or early 1960s, with a HUS helicopter parked on her after deck. *Official US Navy Photograph*



THE OLD OUTFIT

Come gather round me lads and I'll tell you a thing or two about the way we ran the Navy in nineteen forty two when wooden ships and iron men were barely out of sight. We wore the ole bell bottoms with a flat hat on our head and we always hit the sack at night...we never "went to bed." Our uniforms were worn ashore and we were mighty proud. Never thought of wearing civvies, in fact, they were not allowed. Now, when a ship puts out to sea, I'll tell you son, it hurts, when suddenly you notice that half the crew's wearing skirts! And it's hard for me to imagine a female boatswains mate, stopping on the Quarter Deck to make sure her stockings are straight. What happened to the KiYi brush and old salt-water bath? Holy stoning decks at night cause you stirred old Bosn's wrath! We always had our gedunk stand and lots of pogy bait. And it always took a hitch or two, just to make a rate. In your seabag all your skivvies were neatly rolled and stopped. And the blankets on your sack had better have a three-in fold. Your little ditty bag...it's hard to believe just how much it held, and you wouldn't go ashore with pants that hadn't been spiked and belled. We had scullery maids

and succotash and good old S.O.S. And when you felt like topping off, you headed for the mess. Oh we had our belly robbers, but there weren't too many gripes. For the deck apes were never hungry and there were no starving snipes. Now, you never hear of Davey Jones, Shellbacks or Polliwogs and you never splice the main brace to receive your daily grog. Now you never have to do a watch or stand the main event. You even tie your lines today; back in my time they were bent.

We were all two-fisted drinkers and no one thought you sinned if you staggered back aboard your ship, three sheets to the wind. And with just a couple hours of sleep you regained your usual luster and bright eyed and bushy tailed, you still made morning muster. Rocks and shoals have long since gone and now it's U.C.M.J. Back then the old man handled everything if you should go astray. Now they steer the ships with dials and I wouldn't be surprised if some day they sailed the damned things from the beach, computerized.

So when my earthly hitch is over and the good Lord picks the best, I'll walk right up to Him and say, "Sir, I have but one request. Let me sail the seas of Heaven in a coat of Navy blue, like I did so long ago on earth, way back in forty-two.

Thanks to the USS Whetstone LSD27



USS Plymouth Rock (LSD-29)

Underway on 8 April 1963, shortly before she deployed to the Mediterranean for a tour with the Sixth Fleet.

She has an experimental retractable sonar fitted to her bow.

Official U.S. Navy Photograph.