

USS Plymouth Rock (LSD29)

Newsletter January – April 2018, 49th 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:

Bill Provencal, Association Secretary/Newsletter Editor at:

billinp@metrocast.net

or regular mail at:

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

Walter Hyatt, MM3, on board 8/62-5/66, Walpole, MA
Peter Nicoll, EM3, on board 77-79 PO Box 814, Manteca, CA 95336
Edmund Joyce, Pfc, USMC, on board 4/58-10/58. Apt. 1, 121 Waterman Street, Manchester, NH 03103-6478



Known Deceased Shipmates

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

Martin (Marty) Stetter, ET3, on board 11/54-10/56, Plank Owner, Hamburg, NY deceased 1/18/2018	John Chapple, RM3, on board 10/57-9/60, Bristol, TN, deceased 4/2/2018



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.



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



Mainstay Hotel & Conference Center

2018 Ships Reunion

We will have reservations at the Mainstay Hotel on October 8, 9, 10 2018. The hotel is located at 151 Admiral Kalifus Rd., Newport, RI 1-855-213-0582 or 1-401-849-9880

Situated in beautiful Newport Rhode Island The Mainstay Hotel & Conference Center has everything one might want in accommodations. The Mainstay Hotel & Conference Center is right across the street from the very popular Newport Grand Casino, and also boasts three meeting rooms and one banquet room to hold your functions. In dining we have a full service restaurant, The North End Steakhouse, serving breakfast, lunch and dinner. The Reunion Registration form for the reunion is enclosed in this newsletter, information as to how to register and an itinerary is contained.

Group rate is \$70.00/ night plus state and local taxes



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:

Shorty Cyr, BM3, e-mail: shortybm3@yahoo.com, 203-753-6220

Bill Haynie, e-mail: whhaynie@charter.net, 864-934-2900

Things to see in the Newport Area

The 2018 Ships Reunion is scheduled for Newport, RI for October 8-10, 2018. 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.

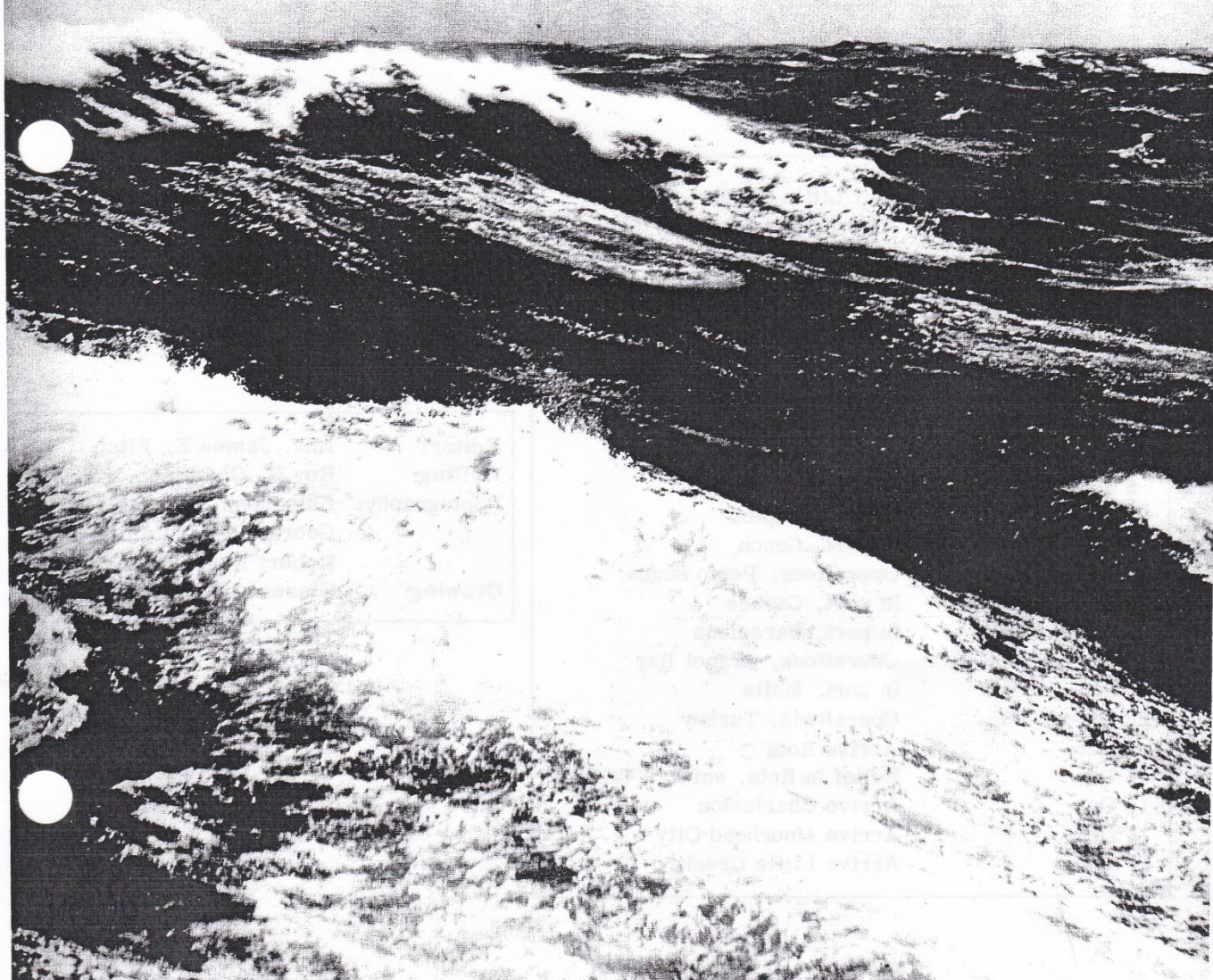


Naval Station, Newport. The Naval Station Newport is a United States Navy base located in the city of Newport and the town of Middletown, Rhode Island. Naval Station Newport is home to the Naval War College and the Naval Justice School.

Fort Adams State Park.

These are just some of the possibilities.

WHAT FORCE POINTS MENTOWARDS THE SEA? SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL
MAN HAS LOOKED AWAY FROM HIS ONE SIXTH OF THE EARTH TOWARD
THE FIVE SIXTHS THAT IS NOT HIS BY BIRTH, BUT HIS BY CONQUEST.
SOME ARE LEMMINGS WHO GO TO SEA BECAUSE THERE IS NO OTHER
WAY TO LOSE THEIR IDENTITY. THEY DO NOT GO WITH A PURPOSE,
THEY JUST GO. BUT TO THOSE THAT LOVE THE SEA, IT IS MANY
THINGS. IT IS THE EASE OF CUTTING ACROSS THE SPARKLING GLASS.
IT IS THE HALF A SUN CASTING PASTEL COLORS OVER THE GREEN,
VIOLET, AND BLUE SURFACE OF THE DEEP. IT IS THE SMELL OF THE
AIR, THE CITIES AND COUNTRIES OF MYTH AND TRADITION, THE NAVI-
GATION OF A SHIP, THE SEAMANSHIP IN A STORM. IT IS THE PEOPLE
YOU LIVE WITH, THE STARS YOU SEE, THE WIND YOU HEAR, THE CUR-
RENT YOU FIGHT, THE FOAM YOU TOUCH, THE DAMPNES YOU FEEL,
THE LIFE YOU LEAD. IT IS MYSTERY AND EXCITEMENT. IT IS AND AL-
WAYS WILL BE. IT IS MAN.





USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29), 1954-1995

USS *Plymouth Rock*, a 11,270-ton *Thomaston* class dock landing ship, was built at Pascagoula, Mississippi. Commissioned in November 1954, she was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet. Over the next three decades, *Plymouth Rock* deployed regularly to the Caribbean area, made several cruises with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean, and occasionally visited northern Europe and South America. She also participated in Arctic Distant Early Warning (DEW) Line support operations in 1955 and 1957, a Project "Mercury" space flight support mission in 1961, the Cuban Missile Crisis blockade in 1962, the Palomares nuclear weapons recovery effort in 1966, weapons development efforts, disaster relief undertakings, and a large number of Amphibious exercises. USS *Plymouth Rock* was decommissioned in September 1983. Following a decade in the Reserve Fleet, she was sold for scrapping in September 1995.

Images of the Plymouth Rock acquired from Facebook





First Landing Band - QM2 Cliff Clausen (Bass), BMSN Lee McDowell (Drums), EMFN Greg Newman (Guitar), EN2 Johnny O'Boyle (Guitar).





**Shellback Ceremony (East Coast) 47 deg 18.5 min West Longitude —
at Equator.**



At the Strait of Magellan., 1981



Naval Station, Bermuda 1979



I LIKE BEING A SAILOR

I like standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face and clean ocean winds whipping in from the four quarters of the globe – the ship beneath me feeling like a living thing as her engines drive her through the sea.

I like the sounds of the Navy – the piercing trill of the boatswains pipe, the syncopated clangor of the ship's bell on the quarterdeck, the harsh squawk of the 1MC and the strong language and laughter of sailors at work.

I like the vessels of the Navy – nervous darting destroyers, plodding Fleet auxiliaries, sleek submarines and steady solid carriers. I like the proud sonorous names of Navy capital ships: Midway, Lexington, Saratoga, Coral Sea – memorials of great battles won. I like the lean angular names of Navy 'tin-cans': Barney, Dahlgren, Mullinix, McCloy – mementos of heroes who went before us.

I like the tempo of a Navy band blaring through the topside speakers as we pull away from the oiler after refueling at sea.

I like liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port. I even like all hands working parties as my ship fills herself with the multitude of supplies both mundane and exotic which she needs to cut her ties with the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe where there is water to float her.

I like sailors, men from all parts of the land -- farms of the Midwest, small towns of New England, the cities, the mountains and the prairies, from all walks of life. I trust and depend

on them as they trust and depend on me for professional competence, for comradeship, for courage. In a word, they are “shipmates.”

I like the surge of adventure in my heart when the word is passed “Now station the special sea and anchor detail – all hands to quarters for leaving port”, and I like the infectious thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands of welcome from family and friends waiting pier side. The work is hard and dangerous, the going rough at times, the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the ‘all for one and one for all’ philosophy of the sea is every present.

I like the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship’s work, as flying fish flit across the wave tops and sunset gives way to night. I like the feel of the Navy in darkness – the masthead lights, the red and green navigation lights and stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters – they cut through the dusk and join with the mirror of stars overhead. And I like drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad noises, large and small, that tell me that my ship is alive and well, and that my shipmates on watch will keep me safe.

I like quiet mid-watches with the aroma of strong coffee – the lifeblood of the Navy – permeating everywhere. And I like hectic watches when the exacting minuet of haze-gray shapes racing at flank speed keeps all hands on a razor edge of alertness.

I like the sudden electricity of “General quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations”, followed by the hurried clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the ship transforms herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful work place to a weapon of war – ready for anything. And I like the sight of space age equipment manned by youngsters clad in dungarees and sound-powered phones that their grandfathers *would still recognize.*

In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods – the impossible shimmering mirror calm and the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow.

And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, a refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom and chief’s quarters and mess decks.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their Navy days, when the seas belonged to them and new port of call was ever over the horizon. Remembering this, they will stand taller and say,

“I was a Sailor. I was part of the Navy and the Navy will always be a part of me.”



OLD GEEZERS! (Geezer - Slang for Old Guy)

Old Geezers are easy to spot.:

At sporting events, during the playing of the National Anthem, Old Geezers hold their caps over their hearts and sing without embarrassment. They know the words and believe in them.

Old Geezers know about World War I, remember the Depression, World War II, recall Pearl Harbor, Guadalcanal, Normandy and Hitler. They remember the Atomic Age, the Korean War, the Cold War, the Jet Age and the Moon Landing, not to mention Vietnam.

If you bump into an Old Geezer on the sidewalk, he will apologize. If you pass an Old Geezer on the street, he will nod or tip his cap to a lady.

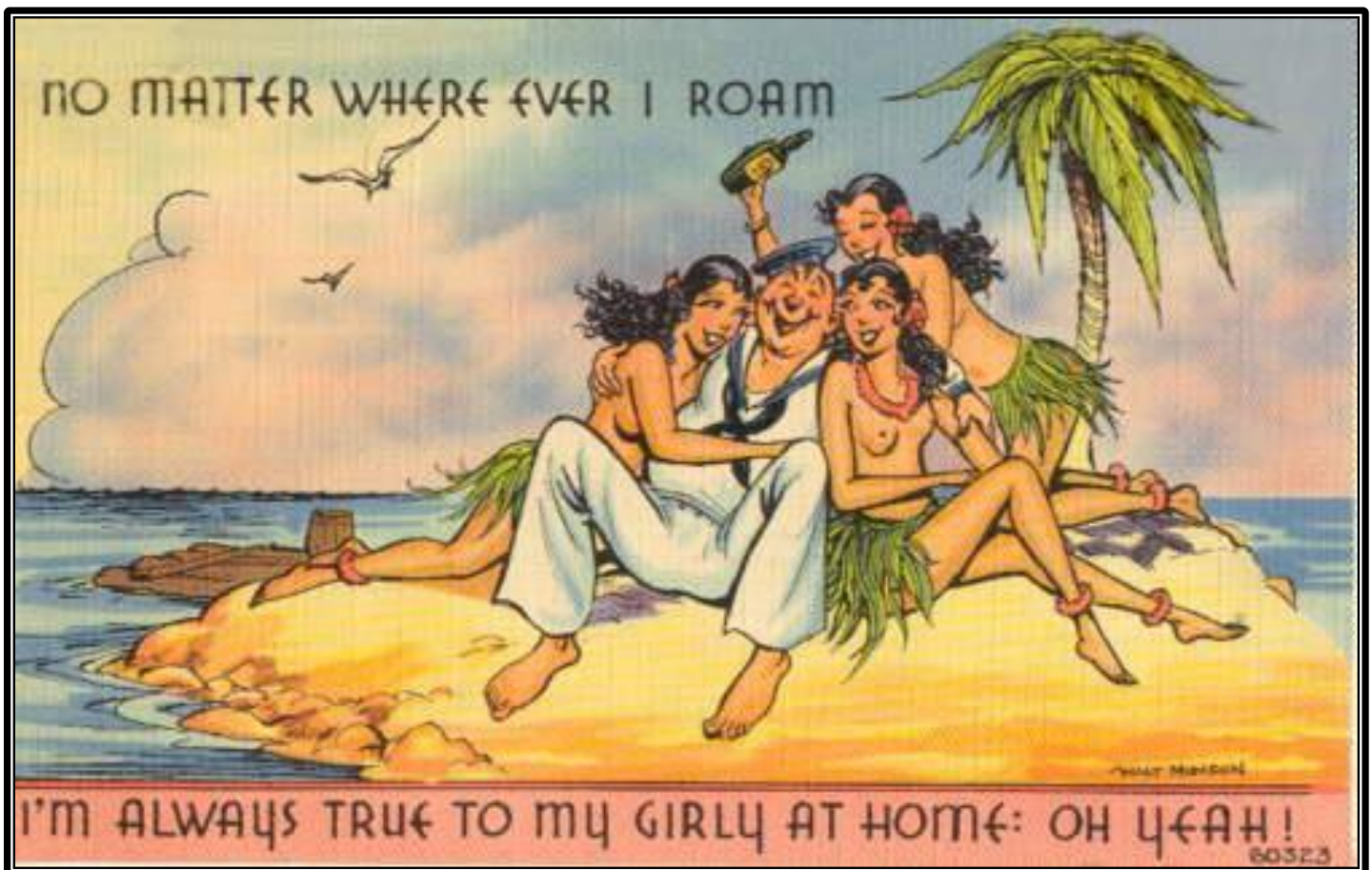
Old Geezers trust strangers and are courtly to women. Old Geezers hold the door for the next person and always, when walking, make certain the lady is on the inside for protection.

Old Geezers get embarrassed if someone curses in front of women and children and they don't like violence and filth on TV or in movies.

Old Geezers have moral courage. They seldom brag unless it's about their grandchildren.

It's Old Geezers who know our great country is protected, not by politicians or police, but by the young men and women in the military serving their country.

This country needs Old Geezers with their decent values. We need them now more than ever. Thank God for Old Geezers!

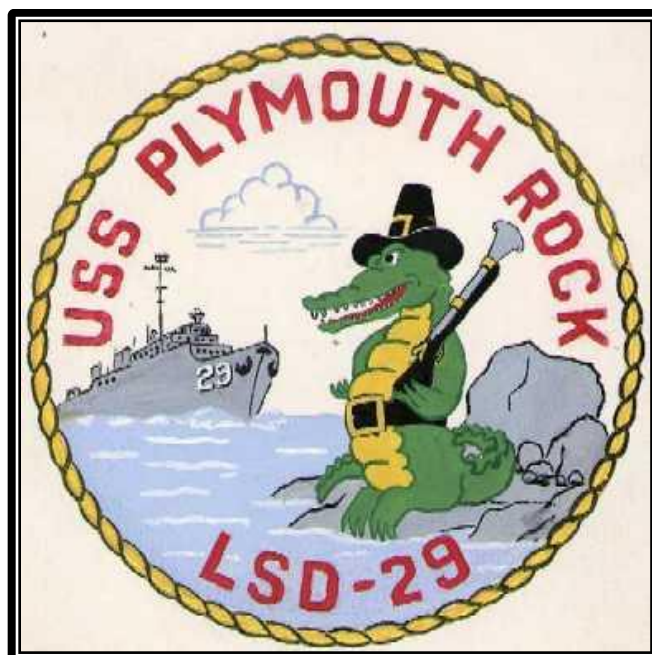






The U.S. Navy amphibious dock landing ship USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29) underway in 1974.

Date September 10, 1974



The insignia of the USS *Plymouth Rock* (LSD-29). This emblem was received from the ship in 1958. It features an alligator (symbol of the Amphibious Force) in Pilgrim dress standing on the ship's namesake, Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts. A depiction of USS *Plymouth Rock* is in the left background. *U.S. Naval Historical Center. NOTE: This insignia was designed and created by Charles "Cos", "Pappy" Costello, RD2 while on board the USS Plymouth Rock.* He was AKA as "Pappy" because of his age. He entered the Navy near the end of WWII was discharged but called back for Korea. He said he told the Navy "I'm here till I retire". Info provided by Tom Wagner, YN3

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, from the collections of the Naval Historical Center.*

USS Plymouth Rock Association

Reunion Registration Form for Monday October 8 – Wednesday, October 10, 2018
Mainstay Hotel, 151 Admiral Kalifus Road, Newport, RI 02840

We have not scheduled any tour event for you to participate in this reunion, as we are assuming that you would prefer to take part in many of the activities available in the Newport area as noted in the April Newsletter.. A Hospitality Room will be available to us while we are at the hotel for shipmates to gather and visit. (We will have refreshments available) Ships store items and ship memorabilia will be on display. Please bring any items you wish to share.

NAME _____, PHONE _____

GUEST/GUESTS _____

Dates you will be attending: _____

Will you be attending the Dinner Banquet or Buffet on Wednesday, if yes, how many? _____

Note: You are not required to attend all three days of the reunion, if 1 day or 2 days fits that is OK. Please submit this form with your registration for 1, 2 3 days to David Dortch , 4009 Hickory Cove, Paragould, Arkansas 72450. **DEADLINE: Reservation form must be received prior to June 30, 2018.** Hotel registrations need to be made by you by contacting the Mainstay Hotel at 401-848-9880 or 855-499-0001. Group rate is \$70.00/ night plus state and local taxes. Hotel website is at: www.mainstayhotel-newport.hotelsone.com

DO NOT submit this form if you are not planning on attending the reunion. However, if you are not 100% sure you will be able to attend, but hope to attend, please submit the form to help us plan the event

Itinerary:

Monday October 8: Check in time at hotel is 3:00 pm Check in for the reunion will be anytime after in the Hospitality Room. Shorty Cyr, David Dortch and Bill Provencal will be handling check in.

The Association will be hosting a Welcome Reception at 6:00 pm, which the Association will be paying for. This will be Hors d'oeuvres with wine, beer and soft drinks. The reception will be held in the Hospitality Room.

Tuesday, October 9: Time for you to enjoy the Newport area or visit with shipmates in the Hospitality Room or visit the Outdoor Pool or Fitness Room.

Wednesday, October 10:

Business Meeting in the Hospitality Room (time not yet set)

Reunion Banquet-We will be holding a dinner banquet menu or a banquet buffet. Dinner banquet menu will be \$26.95-35.95/person, Buffet menu is \$23.95-28.95. This is in addition to

a 20% gratuity and a 8% tax. More information as to the time, etc will be provided at the Check in. We will collect fees for this at the Check in on Monday October 8, 2018.

Thursday, October 11:

Check out time is 11:00 at the hotel front desk.

Based on the attendance at the last reunion, and at this reunion, this may be the last USS Plymouth Rock reunion. This will be decided at the Business Meeting on Wednesday.

For additional information on the reunion, contact:

Bill Haynie, EN3 e-mail: whhaynie@charter.net, 864-934-2900

Shorty Cyr, BM3, e-mail: shortybm3@yahoo.com, 203-753-6220