I am very pleased with the response this year although we continue to have problems with people waiting until the last minute to get their reservations in at the hotel. I simply have no solution to this problem. All I can say is that since we always negotiate a contract where there is no penalty for cancellations, there is absolutely no reason to wait until the last minute to make your reservations. In any case the turnout for this reunion looks more like what we usually have, with several new members planning to attend their first Patrol Gunboat Association reunion.

Most of the final details for the 2006 reunion are either completed or are close to being finished. Eagle Crest has the final order for our ball caps and expects to deliver them to me within the next few weeks. Ed Reynolds from K&E Crafts has finished the final graphics for our coffee mugs and is working on them now. Delivery is expected in about 2 weeks. I have signed the entertainment contracts and made the appropriate deposits, so that is taken care of. The final cut off date has passed so if you plan to attend you should have already made your reservations.

As of today it looks like we have 57 crew members planning to attend. Including guests, I have registration forms for a banquet attendance of 97 so far. There are 38 people who have registered both with the hotel and with me. There are 15 who have registered with me but have not yet booked their rooms at the hotel and there are 3 who have booked their hotel rooms but have not registered with me. We have 68 confirmed for the Thursday tour and 67 confirmed for Friday. Saturday there are 36 people planning to go.

As a reminder the dates for the reunion are August 2 - 6, 2006 and our group rate is $64.00 for a single, double, triple or quad room. Included in the room rate is a full hot breakfast buffet. This group rate is good for rooms during the reunion as well as reservations 2 days before and 2 days after for those who wish to come early or stay late. While the actual cut off date for all hotel reservations, tours and other events was July 2nd, the sales manager has assured me that they will honor the rate as long as possible. This will depend on the number of rooms available so be sure to get you reservations as soon as possible.

Reservations: All hotel and tour reservations after the July 2nd Cut-Off date are being accepted on a space available, first come, first served basis. I make it a point when I negotiate a contract to be sure to have a liberal cancellation policy for folks who need to change their plans at the last minute. To my knowledge, nobody has ever lost money due to having to cancel, so there is simply no excuse not to register early. I assure you, it makes my life easier and it makes it much easier to plan the reunion.

Remember, there is a free hot breakfast buffet every morning for registered guests. Let me take remind you that our hotel is a bit older than those we have stayed at in the past. I should also point out that on 1 July, 2006 the hotel became the Ramada Hotel, Charleston. The sales manager has assured me that they will still provide the same quality service and attention to detail. I will say that their staff is the most enthusiastic team of individuals that I have ever worked with since I started doing these reunions. I believe we have negotiated the most economical package that we have ever had. I hope that the lower price and energetic hotel staff make up for the age of the property.

As usual, the Hospitality Room will open at noon on Wednesday with snacks, soft drinks and beer provided at no charge. Refreshments will be available in the Hospitality Room from noon Wednesday until the end of the reunion on Sunday. Spend the day getting reacquainted with your shipmates and friends. Wednesday evening, dinner is "on your own". Enjoy dinner at the hotel restaurant or head out on the town and eat at one of the many local restaurants.

Once again, we have tired to arrange affordable tours for your entertainment and relaxation. On Thursday we will board our motorcoaches at 9:00 AM and head to Patriots Point. A tour of the USS Yorktown will include lunch in the CPO Mess. Next we will take a boat tour of Fort Sumter. We are scheduled to return to the hotel by 4:00 PM where you can relax in the Hospitality Room until dinner. Dinner on Thursday evening is "on your own".

Friday we depart the hotel at 9:00 AM, starting out with a guided tour of Historic Charleston. Next our coach will drop us off at the Old City Market for "lunch on your own" and a bit of free time to browse and shop. At 1:30 PM we will head back to the hotel, arriving around 2:00 PM.

We usually have a group buffet dinner on Friday, but this year I thought we would try something different. Instead of our usual buffet, this year we will have an old fashioned "Low Country Pig Picking". Currently there is no entertainment planned following dinner on Friday, so you can spend the rest of the evening enjoying snacks, a cold beer or two and other refreshments and of course "Sea Stories" in the Hospitality Room.

The 2006 Business Meeting will be held on Saturday morning as usual. We will need to get an early start because I have also

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scheduled a tour on Saturday afternoon. Members and wives are encouraged to attend. Schedule and location will be posted in the Hospitality Room. I will do my best to make this meeting short, but I feel it is important to take the time to keep you informed on how our Association is doing. We will also discuss the results of the surveys that we sent out this year regarding the frequency of our reunions. I will also provide information on the next Reunion as well as the location. I will be glad to take questions and suggestions from the members.

Following the business meeting you can grab a quick bite to eat, then prepare to board the busses and head out on the H.L. Hunley Tour. After 136 years on the bottom, the Hunley was successfully raised on August 8, 2000. The tour includes transportation to the Warren Lash Laboratory and an expert guide well versed in the Hunley's history. We expect to return to the hotel around 3:30.

Of course the highlight of all of our reunions is the Saturday Night Banquet Dinner. We will be drawing the winning 50-50 tickets as well as tickets for the raffle prize winners. I have also arranged for an outstanding entertainer to join us this year. After dinner you can sit back, relax and get ready to "Rock and Roll".

All good things come to an end. Sunday we bid each other farewell until the next reunion.

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NEVER TRUST AN OLD LADY

An old lady gets pulled over by a police officer. "Is there a problem, Officer?" she asks. The officer replies "You were speeding, May I see your license?" The old lady says "I don't have one, lost it four years ago, when I got arrested for drunk driving."

Next the officer says "I see, may I see your vehicle registration?" I don't have one" says the old lady, "This car is stolen. I stole it, and killed the owner, hacked up his body, and put the pieces in a plastic bag, in the trunk. You can check it out, if you'd like."

The police officer slowly backs away from the old woman, goes to his car, and calls for back up. Within 5 minutes, police cars circle the old woman's car, guns drawn.

A senior officer asks her to step out of her car. "Is there a problem, Officer?" she asks. He says "One of my Officers told me you have stolen this car, and murdered the owner?" "Murdered the owner?" She asks. He says, "Yes, could you please open your trunk for me?" She does, revealing nothing but a nice, clean trunk.

"Is this your car, Ma'am?" asks the officer. She replies "Yes, it is my car, and here are my registration papers." He says "One of my officers told me you don't even have a driver's license. May I see it, please." The old woman digs around in her purse and shows him her valid driver's license.

The officer looks quite puzzled. He tells her "One of my officers told me you didn't have a driver's license, stole a car and murdered the owner, hacked up his body, and stuffed it in a plastic bag, and stuck it in the trunk!"

The old lady says "I bet the lying S.O.B. told you I was speeding too!"

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NEW MEMBERS IN FILE

Following is a list of new members that have been located since the last newsletter was published.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
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<tr>
<td>Goss, Joseph F.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Wright, James K.</td>
<td>Asheville</td>
<td>06/27/2006</td>
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DIRECTIONS TO THE CLARION CHARLESTON AIRPORT HOTEL

From: just about anywhere: Follow I-95 North or South, depending on where you are coming from, take I-95 Exit 86A merging onto I-26. Follow I-26 South toward Charleston. Take Exit 209 toward Ashley Phosphate Road. Make a left turn onto Northside Drive. Next you will turn left onto Ashley Phosphate Road. In a about a quarter mile, turn left onto Northwood Boulevard. The hotel is located at 7401 Northwoods Boulevard. Parking is free at the Clarion Hotel.

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HOSPITALITY ROOM

For those of you who are attending your first Patrol Gunboat Reunion, I want to mention the Hospitality Room. Once you are settled in to your room, the Hospitality Room is the next place you should go. When you get there you will receive your registration package, a schedule of tours and other events and meal and tour tickets for those events you signed up for when you registered. You will also receive your free 2006 Patrol Gunboat Association Reunion souvenir and coffee mug. As always, we will be selling tickets for the Saturday night raffle table and 50-50 drawing. Remember, with the purchase of $20.00 in raffle table tickets, you receive a "Free" Ballcap. The hospitality room will open at noon on Wednesday and remain open until noon Sunday. There will be free snacks, soft drinks and beer available throughout the reunion.
It is with a truly sad heart that I report the loss of our shipmate, friend and Historian Dave Donaldson. I received the following message from Janet:

Dave Donaldson, Patrol Gunboat Association Historian, died Friday April 14th, after struggling for three weeks with blood clots in his lungs. He was in intensive care for a solid week after his kidneys failed. His blood went way out of control. They tried all kinds of blood thinner’s. Twice when an IV would fall out, his blood would pour out; yet he was still producing new blood clots. His blood kept clogging up the dialysis machine. Eventually all his organs started shutting down one by one.

When he went in the hospital, he thought he had it made. When they found the blood clots in his lung, they also found a nodule in his lung. He kept saying that he was lucky that he had the clots or he would not have found the nodule till it was too late. We all assumed that they would handle the blood problem and then go in to check the nodule. Dave was sure that it must have been cancer because he was a heavy smoker for many years. He quit about ten years ago. Eventually, the doctors agreed with him. They decided that only cancer would cause that much trouble with his blood. We will never know for sure. He was a great trooper till the very end. He helped us accept the final outcome.

The rctfd in our email address stood for “radio control three finger dirty Dave”. He did however tell his Mom that the “If” was because he cut off half of four fingers and the “dd” stood for Dave Donaldson. She had no idea that he was known as “Dirty Dave”.

Janet Donaldson

Shipmates,

I have talked with Janet several times in the last few months as well as exchanging a few email messages. Dave was the type to prepare for everything. He left instructions with Janet that should anything happen to him, she should contact Bill Powell (PG-86) and he would know what to do with the Association historical files and artifacts. The members of the Patrol Gunboat Association have been truly blessed to have had his support and assistance for the last eight reunions. We could have never found a better friend and shipmate. When I talked to Janet we discussed the Association memorabilia that we have collected over the years and I decided that I would have most of it sent to me until we find another member to take over. That will allow me to do an inventory of what we have. I am certain Dave would say something like “Quit screwing around and get to it.”. If you are interested in assuming the position of Association Historian, please let me know. Let me warn you, you will have big shoes to fill.

I do believe that there must be something that follows our time on this earth. I am confident that somewhere Dave walked aboard, and reported for duty. Somebody probably smiled and quietly said “Hmmm, another Staffie”. Dave most likely simply said “I’m Dave Donaldson, the new Historian, get out of my way and I will have things organized and ready for display in time for the next reunion”.

Dave was a great friend of mine, he was a true shipmate.

I miss him already.

From Shipmate Paul Bennett (PG-88): Dave Donaldson was a Staff guy with the PG’s who volunteered for the PG Historian job and turned our history into a thing of beauty. He had books on all 17 Gunboats and archived every aspect of the program. He preserved a lot of memories for thousands of PG sailors and did it without fanfare or great recognition. He died suddenly this month and will be greatly missed. Paul in Dallas, looking forward to Charleston next year. Keep up the good work.

From Shipmate Stan Orizna (CCR-3): I served with Dave Donaldson at Commander Landing Ship Squadron ONE in San Diego in 1969. Our command later changed to Commander Coastal Squadron THREE as LST’s were decommissioned and patrol gunboats were brought into the squadron under Commodore Charles Dodd. I will always keep him in my mind as a young, JG with a bright smile and eager disposition.

From Shipmate Paul McGanyan (PG-88): This is really sad news. I really enjoyed talking with Dave at the reunions, and the wealth of historical knowledge that he had of the Gunboats was overwhelming and cannot be replaced. It will be very different not having him at the reunion in Charleston.
FROM THE MAILBAG

On this page, I want to print some of the comments that I have received from shipmates who either call or write to me. Due to space restrictions, I cannot include all of these comments. I will include those for which I have space in the current publishing period.

SHIP'S PATCHES

Two more patches have been added to our inventory. I just ordered patches for USS Antelope (PG-86) and USS Ready (PG-87). That brings our ships patch inventory up to seven. I realize that it is taking a long time to complete the set, but the substantial cost and 50 patch minimum makes this an expensive project. I also have to report that the price has gone up a bit too. Patches now will cost $12.00 each. Members wanting one of these patches should send me their order along with a check for $12.63 for the patch and postage. I will also be taking some of each patch to the Charleston Reunion. We are making very little profit on these patches, but what we do make is being used to help pay for the next ones. It is simply a matter of time until we complete the set. Help us do so by buying one or two patches.

2006 50/50 Drawing

Checking the database, it looks like we have had more than $1400.00 in 50/50 tickets returned so far. The response has been great, particularly considering that at this time last year we had less than $1,000.00 toward the 2005 drawing. We will continue to sell tickets until the business meeting. If you wish to purchase additional tickets, just drop a check in the mail to me for $10.00 for each set of 12 tickets. I will complete the stubs for you. Each year we use the proceeds from the 50-50 ticket sales to help with reunion expenses such as the cost of printing meal tickets, name tags and name tag holders, entertainment for the Saturday Night Banquet and many other expenses.

The purchase of 50/50 tickets is a great way to support the Association. Not only does it provide support, it gives you an opportunity to cash in on big bucks at the same time. Keep in mind that proceeds from sales of 50-50 tickets are what helps pay for refreshments, the soft drinks, beer, chips and pretzels that we all munch on in the Hospitality Room. Even if you can't attend the reunion, your participation in the 50-50 drawing helps cover these expenses. Additionally, you stand a chance of cashing in if your ticket is one of the three winning tickets drawn. Remember, you need not be present to win. We will make our drawings for the 50/50 winners on Saturday evening during the Banquet Dinner. Last year the lucky winners shared $732.00 in prize money. We will no doubt exceed last years sales, so don't miss out. Send your check today.

The Supreme Commander

Following are names of Patrol Gunboat Shipmates who have met the Supreme Commander since the last edition of "Gunboat Riders". As this information is made available, I will include it in the following newsletter.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Shipmate:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Squiller</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dave Donaldson</td>
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