



NEWSLETTER

Of the USS REID Reunion Group

Vol. 2 No.3

August, 1998

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Hey! Amigo!

We'll see some of you in San Diego, in September. Both the old REID and the new REID have contributed to giving a "well done" party and grand send off to the FFG30 as it retires from the U.S. Navy. The rumor is pretty strong that the ship soon thereafter will join the Turkish Navy and be given a new name.

Festivities begin on Thursday, September 24 with tours of the ship beginning at 1:00 PM and a banquet in downtown San Diego in the evening. On Friday there will be the decommissioning ceremony in the morning, followed by a reception at the pier. There will be a

social gathering in the evening arranged by the Senters. If you haven't made your plans known to Karen Senter, do it now! See instructions on the back page.

To cap off a party, there should be a surprise! The ship will be all decked out with flags and bunting for the occasion to celebrate the ending of a career. Wouldn't it be fine to celebrate a beginning as well? There's not enough time to schedule a birth, but how about a wedding? Now who's available and willing? It was Capt. Senter's idea and he didn't have to search far. Frenchie and Marie will be wed aboard the REID Wednesday, September 23, about 5:00 PM.



New Guinea in 1943 or 1944

Picture taken on the front of the fire director, sent in by Willie Wilson who remembers most. L to R: "Yard Bird" FC3/c (name?), W.C. Crews FC2/c, William "Bo Bo" King FC1/c, Willie Wilson FC1/c, Wayne Polk FC2/c, James Milam CFC, Greg Lewis FC3/c. The 3 in front: Lewis (?) FC3/c, Paul Achenbaugh FC2/c, name unknown.

Remembering

Louise Pullen

Carmel, CA

The newsletter addressed to Mrs. Pullen was returned marked "Deceased." I have no other information.

LtCmdr Pullen was the Commanding Officer of the REID when I came aboard in June, 1941. I see in his biography that he was the same age as my mother, born in 1898. He probably saw most of us in the crew as youngsters. He was moved up rapidly to Captain over the course of the year that he was aboard. He left the REID in the Aleutians in August, 1942. He retired as Rear Admiral in 1949 and spent his retirement years in private school education.

Mike Komar

Shalimar, FL

Mike's niece, Noreen Kulusick of Heritage, PA, called to report that Mike had passed away on March 25, 1998. He was 79.

The following information is based on our telephone conversation and material she sent in later.

Mike joined the Navy in 1936 and came aboard the REID as an Apprentice Seaman when the ship was commissioned. According to some records sent along by his niece, Mike had a great, four year, peacetime tour through the Mediterranean, both coasts of the U.S., the Caribbean and

Hawaii with lots of ports of call along the way. He was discharged in 1940 when his enlistment was up. Noreen believes he was a torpedoman. *[The torpedo gang was pretty tight. I expect some of you will remember Mike.]*

After a short tour as a civilian looking for work, he joined the Army Air Corps and served 20 years plus 5 years in the Reserves. He retired as a Master Sergeant. According to the list of ribbons and medals that his niece sent



Mike at 17



Mike at 77

along, Mike served in the North African campaign, the Middle East, and with a bomber group operating over Germany from bases in England. He later served in occupied Germany, in Korea where he received a Presidential Unit Citation.

After his service career, Mike worked in Louisiana in various capacities and retired once again to Florida. His wife, Florence, died three years ago. They had no children. The funeral director arranged a military funeral for Mike and he was buried in Barrancas National Cemetery, Pensacola, which Mrs. Kulusick describes as a beautiful place.

Mrs. Kulusick added, "He was a loyal and devoted service man and enjoyed the reunions he attended. He kept us entertained with his "service" stories, and we treasured the gifts he brought us. We were glad he had so many "civilian" years to spend with us.

We miss his telephone calls -- "Greetings from the sunny South!"

Fletcher Hale Huntington Beach, CA

Noel Solomon of Huntington Beach, CA called to report that her father, Captain Fletcher Hale had passed away on February 22, 1998. He was 82. She said that he had been in a nursing home and was doing fairly well, with some prospect of moving out when he

suffered a fractured skull in an accident under what his daughter considers suspicious circumstances. His only child, Noel, said that her father had requested that there be no funeral or fuss. His ashes were scattered at sea as he requested. His wife died about ten years earlier.

We don't have much about Capt. Hale in our own files except his bio-sketch that Bill Alford collected. Fletcher Hale was born in May, 1915 in Laconia, NH. He entered the Naval Academy in 1933. These were the days of slow promotions and he was still an Ensign when he signed on the USS REID in 1939. Like Rufus Porter after him, he served in most every shipboard post and left the REID as Executive Officer in the summer of 1943 as Lt. Cmdr.

My recollection of Fletcher Hale is of a young officer, with a pleasant and tolerant attitude toward the crew. I ran into him years later, just to say hello, in the old Navy Dept building on Constitution Avenue (now torn down.) It was in the late 1950's or early 1960's.

Mrs. Solomon sent along this bio-sketch that evidently was intended as an obituary.

" Born and raised in Laconia, New Hampshire, he accompanied his father to Washington, DC, when his dad was elected to Congress. He attended Western High School and Severn Preparatory School en route to the Naval Academy.

Captain Hale entered the Naval Academy and graduated with the class of 1937. A graceful and talented athlete, he confined his formal athletics to playing baseball earning an N.

His first ship was OKLAHOMA (BB37). In her he started a continuous sea going career that



Hale & unknown cameraman on REID
Were we ever so skinny?

trip to Yalta. Her ship's company witnessed the moments of horror when another escort accidentally fired a torpedo toward the ship carrying President Roosevelt.

Postwar shore duty found him at the Naval Academy serving in the Executive Department. The fourth year of that assignment was as an exchange officer at West Point.

In the Korean War he commanded ARNOLD J. ISBELL (DD 869). In her he earned a third Bronze Star to add to the Silver Star and two Bronze Stars he earned in WW II.

A tour at Fleet Training Group, San Diego, a student year at the Naval War College, an OPNAV assignment, and three years in London on CINCNELM's staff preceded returning to sea in command of RENVILLE (APA 227) in 1958. This led to command of the PACFLT Amphibious Training Unit and Command of Amphibious Squadron Three. In 1961 he served a Chief of Staff to COMNAVBASE, Los Angeles, leaving in 1964 to serve his last active duty assignment as Commander Naval Training Center, San Diego. Retirement came in the summer of 1967. He worked in real estate for several years before full retirement.

He is survived by his daughter, Noel, wife of COL Edward Solomon, USAF, retired, of Huntington Beach, California, and their children Lesley Pope and John Hale Solomon. His second wife, Meg, predeceased him in 1988."



Ensign Hale

Shipmate News

Gil Girdauskas

Wautoma, WI

A BIG thanks for the GREAT job you are doing on the NEWSLETTER.

The last time I got together with our Reid group was at the commissioning of the Carney...it was a grand affair...took my wife (Terry) one of our daughters (Kathy) and a dear friend along and we had a great time. Had a chance to chat with Rufus and with others who attended.

I did attend the Annapolis Reunion, and that was a fine time too. My first reunion was at Milwaukee (near my home town of Sheboygan).

I want to give you our corrected addresses and E-Mail addresses: June-Oct : N1940 20th Drive , Wautoma, WI 54982 PH: 920-787-2656 E-Mail: Girdauskas@juno.com

Nov-May : P.O. 832 / 504 Jungle Road, Edisto Island, SC 29438 PH: 803-869-0042 E-Mail: Girdauskas1@juno.com (note the addition of the '1' for our Edisto Island E-Mail).

Gil's Special Message to Shipmates

I can understand why it's a tough job to write a Bio and why many of our shipmates are reluctant to do so. [Mine] was the first I've ever done about myself and it was not easy.....tell the guys it's kind of therapeutic after you get started and not to worry about missing dates, ship names etc. Blame it on PARTSHEIMERS! At our age, we have a right to that claim!

[OK gang, now its your turn. If Gil can do it, so can you. Without you, there can be no Newsletter. -Ed.]

Bill Terry

White Oak, TX

While attending family reunion in the Texas hill country I talked to Elmer's wife Lois and found that Elmer had moved from the VA hospital in Kerrville to a nursing home in Bandera, Texas, which is about 25 miles from Kerrville. Elmer wanted me to tell everyone hello, and he is still thinking reunion 99 in San Antonio.

He has been working on his Bio for the newsletter. It was in about the same shape as mine. Maybe we'll get them finished one of these days.

Ha! Anyway, Lois said they are hoping Elmer's stay in Bandera is temporary, and they go back to Kerrville soon. It is better not to call him at Bandera but to call Lois and let her relay any messages to him at this time.

Marlena and I are doing just fine at this time and staying busy with reunions and trying to stay out of the heat as much as possible.

Joseph Driscoll

Yuma, AR

I am one of the plank owners - old but still moving. My wife and I both had hospital time from November to January in San Diego. Seems like most of us need to get patched up on a regular basis to keep going. We are in pretty good shape now.

Will head to northern Idaho for the summer. It gets a little warm here in Yuma, so we don't usually get started south till October.

George Gillespie

Portland, OR

I am sorry Tack, I will not be able to make the trip to San Diego because I have been declared disabled and housebound due to my health by the VA. I am on oxygen 24 hours a day, taking a variety of pills for my heart condition.

I wanted to become a writer, so the VA has contacted Gery Barra who took the challenge of tutoring me in my endeavor. The VA has furnished a state of the art computer, connected to the world-wide web. I have converted the garage to a writer's studio, struggling with all the ramifications of how to write and what to write and how to sell, which keeps my mind off my infirmities.

Anthony Lugar

Key West, FL

The last issue of the Newsletter sent to Tony Lugar was returned with no forwarding address. There is no answer at the telephone number we have on our roster. Does anyone have any information on him?

Gary Holmstrom

USS Mobile Bay

Michael Turner

USS Reid

The Newsletters addressed to the USS Mobile Bay for Capt. Holmstrom and to the USS REID (FFG30) for LtCmdr Turner were returned without comment. I presume they have been reassigned.

Hear It Now: Pearl Harbor Day Radio

by John McDonough

[I saw this interesting account of news reporting on December 7, 1941 in the Wall Street Journal a few months ago. As the author says, "It wasn't always the way we remember it."]

On April 29, 1942, NBC gave 130 transcription discs to the National Archives. They contained 34 continuous hours of radio broadcasts beginning at 2 PM EST Sunday, December 7, 1941.

But the Archives promptly marked them "inactive," stored them in the TransLux Building and forgot about them for half a century. Future generations never heard them. Until now.

It wasn't always the way we remember it.

John Daly has interrupted the New York Philharmonic so many times on those "Hear It Now" records, for instance, that even people who should know better now believe it. Only one problem. It never happened. CBS had a news program every Sunday at 2:30. When the tickers moved the first of Pearl Harbor about 2:25, it came just in time for Mr. Daly to rip and read on "World News Today."

The jolt of events forced a lot of quick tap dancing. Moments after Mr. Daly read bulletin one at 2:31, he switched to London, where a stunned Robert Trout, today of ABC, sat in a BBC cubicle holding a story on North Africa. After ad-libbing with flawless poise on possible London reaction to the Japanese attack, Mr. Trout proceeded to the news from Tobruk, which seemed almost embarrassingly beside the point. The Philharmonic went on as scheduled at 3 PM.

The most startling thing these recordings reveal is how little Pearl Harbor jostled regular programs. Especially sponsored programs.

Anyone who recalls how network news bulldozed everything in sight when President Kennedy was shot or when the first smart bombs hit Baghdad will find it inconceivable that on the most fateful American day of the 20th century, "Manhattan Merry Go Round," Edgar Bergen and nearly every other sponsored entertainment went on the air as if nothing had happened.

NBC's early reports seemed to tiptoe into the story, as if it might disturb the programming furniture. The first bulletin cut into a play, a dramatization of "The Inspector General," at 2:33 PM (9:33 AM in Oahu). It lasted only 21 seconds, the 3 PM second bulletin, 55 seconds. H. V. Kaltenborn adds that Manila now has been bombed. For the next half hour Americans bite their nails as "The Wake Up America Forum" debates the federal budget.

3:29 PM - third bulletin, 90 seconds: Cannon fire "going on now in Honolulu." The budget discussion drones on.

3:36 PM - fourth bulletin, 10 seconds: "A naval engagement is in progress off Honolulu..." At 3:44 a debater mentions Pearl Harbor and the audience bursts into applause.

3:49 PM - fifth bulletin, 90 seconds: The War Department orders 1.5 million soldiers into uniform "by tomorrow"; all Japanese in Norfolk, VA, are under arrest.

3:55 PM - sixth bulletin, 35 seconds: Churchill and the American Ambassador "are conferring tonight" in London.

4:06 PM - seventh bulletin: Six minutes into "National Vespers," NBC gets the first live feed from Honolulu. "It's no joke," says a shaken Webley Edwards over a

feeble phone line from the roof of the Honolulu Advertiser. "It's the real war."

Then an astonishing thing happens. The telephone company interrupts Mr. Edwards on the air. "We're trying to get through on an emergency call," an operator says. Mr. Edwards protests, then vanishes.

In that amazing actuality, listeners suddenly sense the full danger at hand. A journalist's privileged sanctuary had been invaded by a crisis now spinning so wildly out of control it recognized no protocols.

For the next hour the story gathers mass and momentum. Bulletins cluster into broadcasts. There are missed cues, cross talk, dead air and confusions - the verisimilitude of panic in progress. But the reports remain remarkably objective and never turn rancorous or "yellow."

At 4:11, H. R. Baukhage gets the scoop on Cordell Hull's meeting with Japanese envoys. At 4:35, Upton Close speculates that part of the Japanese navy has "gone fanatic" and joined with Germany to stage the attack. Mark that one the first Pearl Harbor conspiracy theory.

At 5:16 PM, a flash from Tokyo makes it official: "Imperial headquarters announced a state of war."

Sponsors could not control events, but they could control their time slots and programs. And most stood by them to the last commercial. Shows were abundantly interrupted, though Kraft's "Great Gildersleve" was riddled with five flashes in 18 minutes. But bulletins were quick and lean. And they avoided endless repetition. Beginning about 8:30 PM summaries were read at the start of programs. Of course, the sponsor was always thanked "for relinquishing a portion of his time."

All these shows were live. Yet the protocol of radio demanded that the illusions of the studio sanctum be walled off from the upheavals raging outside. On December 7 it seemed desperately inappropriate. ... It would be 2 and ½ years before a breaking news story would finally burst that dam and snuff out all commercial programming. That would be on D-Day.

Unexpected Bonus

Sometimes there is a surprise benefit pops up that makes being editor worthwhile, as with a recent issue of the Newsletter. A widow called me right after she received her copy in the mail. She was excited to find a picture of her husband in the early war years. She had none of him taken during the war and asked for copies to give to her children, which of course I sent along.

Small incidents like that add an extra element of satisfaction. But more importantly, they emphasize the special contribution that each of you old timers out there make to the rest of us by your stories and pictures that you send in for publication.

Thought for the day -----

Lord, make me the kind of person my dog thinks I am

Gilbert Stanley Girdauskas

An Autobiography

[Gil forgot to cover his early years. What is briefly provided here is based on follow-up telephone conversations. - Ed.]

Gil's parents immigrated from Lithuania around 1900. His father, George Girdauskas, about 16 or 18, found work in the steel mills in Homestead, PA, just across the Monongahela River from Pittsburgh. The steel industry was booming; strong young men from Europe seeking a better life made it go, and Andrew Carnegie was the boss. Ten and twelve hour work days, six days a week, were the norm in the latter part of the 1800's and early 1900's. Unions were organized in many major industries, including the coal mines and the railroads on which steel depended. Strikes were called to obtain better working conditions and shorter hours. They were bitter, violent, bloody and frequently deadly. A few years before his father arrived, in 1892, a strike at the steel mills in Homestead became one of the most violent in U.S. history.

Part of the family folklore includes the story of Gil's parents' trip to the altar. George Girdauskas left a friend in Lithuania when he emigrated, with a promise that he would send for her. When George saved enough money, he bought her a ticket with a condition. If she would marry him, he would not ask for his money back. Not so fast, George! Mary held out for two years before deciding a suitable courtship had transpired.

George did well at the mill, rising to supervisor and living comparatively well in the company town. The family grew, but Mary became disenchanted with the persistent soot for which the Pittsburgh area was noted until fairly recently. Bitter strikes in the coal mines and railroads forced closings at the mill. On one of those occasions, the family decided to join other family in Sheboygan, Wisconsin where there was work at the Kohler plant. Here they lived in a Lithuanian community and here Gil joined the family on June 22, 1926.

Gil grew up with lots of older brothers and sisters around. He played hockey on the rivers at night, lit by tar barrels. He played center on the high school basketball team and still vividly recalls the 21-20 championship game that his team won in the days when Gil's 10 points in one game was a high personal score.

His dad died in 1938. Gil was 12. He and everyone else in the family, including his mother took jobs to keep the family together. His three brothers were already in the service, by the time Gil was old enough to enlist.

Continuing in Gil's own words-----

I joined the REID at Pearl in 1944, as a F1/C after boots at Great Lakes (I was just 17). We went on to Wake with I believe the Salt Lake City (Cruiser) and a carrier (maybe the Montpelier). We had a major engine

problem and we were dead in the water.... some of the other gang can give the details as to why (maybe water in the fuel?). At any rate it was most disappointing for the Captain and Crew and many a butt was chewed out for the problem. My biggest problem during this first engagement (?) was getting my sea legs. My Wisconsin buddy could eat the cold pork sandwiches and wave them in front of my face and never was phased by even rough water. Eventually, I got my legs. On our way to Alethea I got a very bad case of pneumonia and Rufus Porter had me transferred to the hospital quarters of the tender Dixie (?). I was one sick pup, they gave me penicillin every four hours and took x-rays every day. Needless to say I survived. After



Gil in 1944

recuperation on board, I went to see the exec to find out when I could rejoin the REID (all my gear and personal belongings were on her and it was assumed I would return to her after I was well enough). He told me to sit down....then he related the terrible fate of the REID. He asked me point blank if I wanted to serve on another Destroyer or go back to Pearl or the States for new construction. I said I wanted to serve on another can.

Only in the Navy would the following procedure have been carried out: he pulled out a desk copy of all ships that were coming into Alethea and the Destroyers that may be tying along side Dixie. He made the following comment: you've come off of one of the best Destroyers in the fleet, let's find you another vessel that you will be proud to serve on". With that he called off the names of ships (as I looked over his shoulder) and he'd make comments like: "this is a bad luck ship...always in trouble", "this one has a dreary Captain" etc. I couldn't believe the situation....a Commander telling a First Class what ship I should join!

I believe to this day that he knew the REID well....I only wish I could remember his name. Anyway, we chose the Bronson (DD668), a Fletcher class and in about two weeks I joined her with a completely new seabag of

gear including ditty bag. She was a bit larger than the REID at 2150 tons. We went through hell and back with her but she proved to be a good ship with a good crew. We did the two Invasion, then the Jan. '45 air strikes on Tokyo. We were one of the closest ships to Tokyo when we launched over 900 planes from 20 carriers. (The weather was foggy and that prevented the Japanese from finding us I guess.) Then with the same group (58.3) we went on to the China Sea to hit Hongkong, French Indo-China, and Soit. We recorded record sinking of Japanese shipping in the China Sea as they moved equipment from Japan to China in anticipation of a near-future American invasion of Japan. We and other "small boys" almost capsized in the China Sea in the Typhoon of 1945, when the Spence, Monahan and Hull went down and most of the ships

including carriers had some damage; we did some very fierce rolls and only God knows how we righted each time. After that we joined up for picket duty during the Kamikazi runs during the Okinawa invasion...that's where I got banged up and literally ended my short naval career. [Gil had volunteered to go ashore with a landing party and man 50 caliber machine guns. They were blown out of the water and never got ashore. He was in the water for 18 hours before being rescued. Fortunately there were no sharks in the area. Gil was awarded the Army Navy Medal for saving one of the others on the landing craft. — Ed.]

After a stay at Hawaii Hospital, then a great cruise back to States on the USS Hope, hospital train to Great Lakes, recuperation and finally discharged from Great Lakes Hospital. After that I recuperated in my home town of Sheboygan, WI with my 3 brothers who also survived the war (one as a Ranger in Europe, one as an Engineer in the Pacific and one in the Air Corps....Mom always said she was the luckiest Mom in the world). Then I finished my schooling, I got into advertising (owned my own Agency for a while but always restored antique cars like your Model A on the side)

The love of my life, Terry and I were married in 1950, we now have 5 grown (and wonderful) children and 7 grandies (last count). My sons run our nationally recognized antique and classic car restoration business, Vintage Vehicles, Inc., in Wautoma Wisconsin. Terry and I live 6 months in Wautoma, Wisconsin and 6 months at Edisto Island, South Carolina; (guess which 6 months?) We're retired, although we help the boys during the summer months (fun working and driving those old Packards, Pierce Arrows, Locomobiles, Cords etc.) We have a collection of cars too and if any Reider



Gil & his award winning 1928 Pierce Arrow

is in our area during the summer months they can come visit and take a cruise in one of our old machines.

Appreciation

[The USS REID Reunion Group, following consultation with the executive committee, contributed \$1,000 to the cost of ceremonial affairs now being scheduled in connection with the decommissioning. Just before deploying, Capt. Senter sent the following letter of appreciation to our treasurer, Bill Pennington, who had included a personal contribution as well.]

I just today received checks from you and the DD369 Association and wanted to express my deep appreciation for your kindness and generosity. We certainly did not expect this much appreciated gift from you and your group—it has been an honor and privilege just to be able to associate with you.

Your generosity will allow us some leeway to plan for our decommissioning on 25 Sept and put deposits down without depleting our Welfare and Rec funds. We are tentatively planning to have a decommissioning dinner on Thursday, 24 Sep. I will get a letter out (soon!) To formally invite all of your members and give them a tentative schedule.

We will deploy on 23 April for three months. We will take with us a sense of heritage emanating from you DD-369 Sailors who have gone before us. We will endeavor to make you proud.

Thank you again for your kindness and generosity.

Most sincerely and very respectfully,

/s/ REID Senter, Commander, U.S. Navy

Decommissioning Agenda

Sept. 23

5:00 PM Frenchie & Marie Wedding
Reception follows.
All 369'ers invited - coat & tie

Sept. 24

1:00 PM Ship tours start
6:00 PM Coctails U.S. Grant Hotel
7:00 PM Banquet U.S. Grant Hotel
Cost \$37.00 pp - coat & tie

Sept. 25

10:00 AM Decommissioning Ceremony
Reception follows on pier
6:00 PM Lawn reception at Senters'
home - all 369'ers invited
Casual attire

Special Instructions:

- ** If you are planning to attend the wedding, be sure to contact Marie no later Sept. 7. 619-461-8155
- ** If you are attending the banquet and/or need lodging at the Navy Lodge, be sure that Karen Senter know your plans no later than Sept. 1. Call 619-435-2532

Small World Department

I have a neighbor out here in the country who is a retired Navy Captain by the name of James Payne. He was in the Academy class of 1938. We were swapping sea stories recently and he was surprised to hear that I had served on the REID. It turns out that he was enroute in late 1944 to take over the command of the USS REID, when he learned that the ship had gone down.

Well, I was flabbergasted at the coincidence. Jim and I have been neighbors for 20 years and I hadn't known of this remarkable connection.

LtCmdr James Payne had been Executive Officer on the Evans (DD552) and was transferred in Ulithi with orders to Pearl for reassignment. He was pretty sure from exchanges of letters that he was expected to take command of the Reid. While enroute to Pearl on a damaged carrier, he got word that the Reid had been sunk. When he reported to the type commander in Pearl, it was confirmed that he had been scheduled to take over the REID and that the REID's captain, McCormock, was to take command of the HAILEY (DD556).

However, McCormock was still in the hospital when Payne arrived in Pearl Harbor and unable to take over his new command. So it was arranged that Payne would take command of the HAILEY. Thus, in a manner of speaking, Payne did relieve McCormock, despite the fact that the Reid had been sunk.

Address Changes

Delete:

<u>Capt. Gary Holmstrom</u>	Address unknown
<u>LtCmdr Michael Turner</u>	Address unknown
<u>Anthony Lugar</u>	Address unknown
<u>Mrs. Louise Pullen</u>	Deceased
<u>Capt. Fletcher Hale</u>	Deceased
<u>Michael Komar</u>	Deceased

Changes & Additions:

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