



NEWSLETTER

Of the USS REID Reunion Group

Vol. 11 No. 3

Web site : <www.ussreid369.org>

August, 2007

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Reunion 2007

Karen and Reid Senter have things pretty well organized for the reunion in New Orleans in November. Reid says that Karen is doing most of the planning. That's in between flights to Paris, Hong Kong, Honolulu or wherever she goes on her full time job as flight attendant.

We will be staying at the Wyndham Riverfront Hotel (entrance pictured below) at a special rate for military reunions (about \$69 + tax). The hotel is located in the city center, not far from the French Quarter.

Arrival date is Thursday, November 1, 2007. Fly in to the Louis Armstrong Airport (or drive.) The airport is 15 miles from the city. There is a shuttle for \$13 or you can take a taxi for \$28. I presume sharing would cut the cost of the taxi.

For reservations, call the hotel 504-524-8200, mention USS REID Reunion. The address is 701 Convention Center Blvd., New Orleans, LA 70130.

Karen has scheduled a tour of the WW11 museum for Friday, November 2 and she will try to arrange for them to do a lunch for us. On Saturday we will go to the Mardi Gras Museum. Reid may be able to arrange a tour of the ship yard also, for those interested. Instead of our usual banquet, Karen plans to have dinner at her house on Saturday Night. Karen says there is so much more to do, but that will be left to individual taste. Sunday is a great day to do brunch at one of the fine restaurants. We understand that those staying extra days should be able to get the same special hotel rate, but you should check.



News of Shipmates & Their Ladies

BETTY ALFORD (Bill)

BEAUMONT, TX

I enjoy the Reid newsletter very much! Your mention of postal rates in the most recent issue served to remind me that it has been quite some time since I contributed toward same, which is enclosed. [Thank you for the check, Betty.]

INVITATION

As always, I will be back in Beaumont in early October. Anyone driving to New Orleans that month will be on Interstate 10 which goes right through Beaumont. My 3 bedroom home is available to any shipmate for overnight(s) and I will send directions to my house to whoever contacts me at the Wisconsin address [P.O. Box 136, Florence, WI 54121] between now and the end of September. I'm sure that by the time the August newsletter comes out, people will know their plans for the reunion. "Shipmate" of course includes relatives, with or without the shipmate.

WALTER FOX

Ft. Pierce, FL

I was speaking to Katie Fox recently and she told me that she and Walter will miss the reunion in New Orleans. They have booked a cruise for that same period. The cruise will start in the far east in Singapore and go on to Australia, Bali, Fiji, Hawaii and end in San Diego.

ED VANCE

Las Vegas, NV

Ed called to say that he is scheduled for heart surgery in August, but he definitely plans to come to the New Orleans reunion. I think that will be his first one!

Referring to the picture of lost shipmate Russell Pitts, whose picture appeared in the last issue, Vance said he remembers Pitts very well. I urged him to contact the family.

Ed also remembers the sinking of the submarine in the Aleutians in 1942. He said he was the only one who got hurt during the action. He was at his

GQ station in the magazine for gun #4 when our depth charges went off. It knocked off all power to the hoist and he had to hand crank the shells up the hoist. The wrench he was using broke loose and hit him in the face. He did a little time in sick bay.

I asked for a picture, but I don't have any as yet.

ALLIE DANIELS (John)

Paramount, CA

I am still finishing my tax season., and trying to cope with the loss of John. The flowers that were sent were gorgeous.

I received the newsletter yesterday and enjoyed the article on John and especially enjoyed the pictures.

JAMES JACOWAY

Albuquerque, NM

Last year I published a picture of some of those shipmates rescued by an LCI on December 11, 1944. Jim C. Jacoway sent me a letter identifying his father, Jim A. Jacoway, in that photo.



Jim Jacoway December 1944. This is the only picture we have of a young Jacoway.

BETSEY HALSEY (ralph) Mystic, CT

Here are some shipmates I have identified, cropped out of those 1942 pictures that Betsey sent in.

In going through many boxes of papers that Ralph had accumulated over the years, I came across these two photographs. I was a freshman in college when it was taken, and although I knew him then - he roomed with my brother at Yale - we had no romantic attachment.

He came to visit my family after the sinking of the REID. I was home for Christmas vacation and the rest, as they say, is history.

We were married in June of 1945 and Ralph was stationed for a short while in Norfolk before going to Bath, Maine to join the SARSFIELD before its commissioning.

Ralph was very loyal to his comrades on the REID. It was his privilege to have many friends among those on the ship they served so well. I trust you see some familiar faces in these pictures.

I always enjoy reading the newsletter and congratulate you and others who make it interesting and informative. Best wishes to you all.

[Betsey sent in two, good quality, pictures of the ship's dance held in the St. Francis Hotel in San Francisco November 16 & 17, 1942. The dance/party was held on successive nights so that the duty section also would have a party night. The pictures were good quality and I was able to crop out a number of shipmates for our website.

There are many more shipmates in the pictures whose names I cannot remember. If someone out there has any ship's party picture with names identified, please send it in to me.



Elmer Childress, WT2/c



Warren Law, SK1/c



Lt R.D. McGinnis



Maurice Paul BM2/c



Lt(jg) Bill Albers



Lt (jg) Ralph Halsey



John Gallup S1/c

Dallas Foley SM3/c

Do you remember these guys?

Here are some more cropped pictures from that 1942 San Francisco party night in November.



John Walsh CRM



Marcel Saint RM3/c



Earl Barry TM2/c



Swede Nelson FC2/c

Bud KAUTZ

McHenry, IL

Next October is gonna be a pretty busy time for me and I sure hope I can cope with it.

The Lowndes is having its reunion the first part of the month in St. Louis and one of our granddaughters is getting married in the middle of the month. Then the Reid mini reunion.

Despite 3 hip replacements, one knee replaced, both rotator cuffs worked on and back surgery and a few other things that aren't to be mentioned, I'm still planning on surviving. Not ready to throw the towel in yet.

Raymond (R.J.) Mathis

Sumter, SC

RJ called a few months ago and I mentioned it in the last newsletter. He promised to send a picture and sure enough, here it is.



Joe Driscoll WT1/c



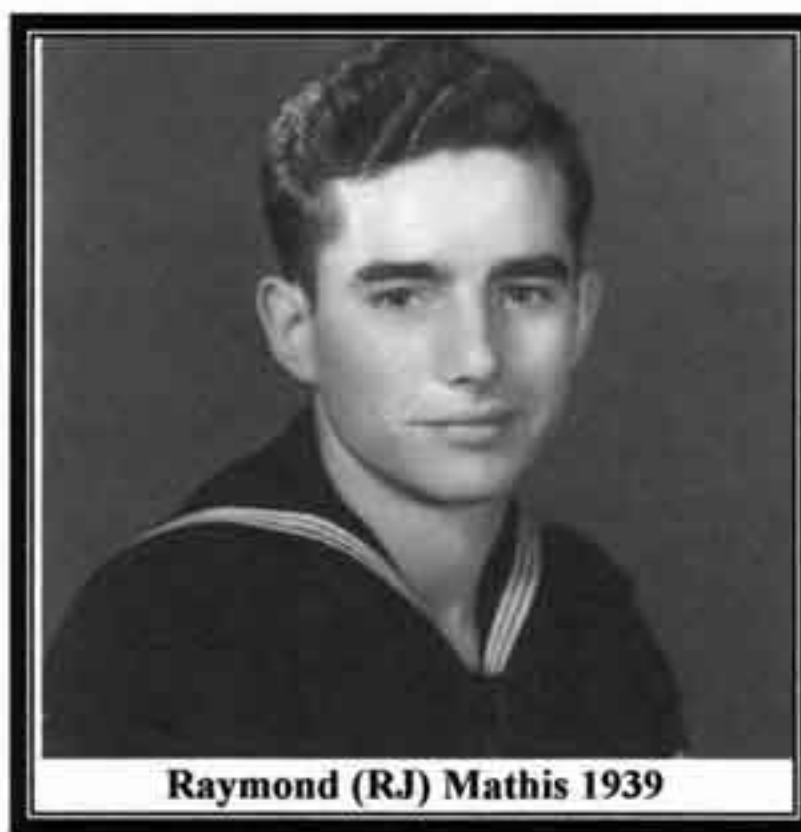
Jocko McFall BM1/c



Lt.(jg) Jack Kennedy



Bill Mattox TM1/c



Raymond (RJ) Mathis 1939

Remembering

ELMER FAULKNER

Lebanon, OR

I am writing to inform you of the passing of my father, Elmer Raymond Faulkner, on April 20, 2007. Dad was 89 at the time of his death from kidney cancer and age related illness. He served aboard the USS Reid 369 and was onboard on the day of the sinking. His rank was ship's cook 3rd class, but his battle station placed him on deck that day. His eulogy included the details of that day, Dec. 11, 1944, and all who attended were greatly moved. His service to our country shaped his entire life and he passed his stories and experiences down to us, although we cannot begin to imagine the bravery and horror of that day.

He really enjoyed receiving the newsletters of the reunion group and if you would be so kind as to enter my name on your mailing list, I would like to continue getting his copy.

Thank you for keeping up this newsletter. And if you could include a note about Dad's passing, I would appreciate it.

Marsha J. Holly
eldest child of Elmer R. Faulkner

Faulkner's sinking story, as provided to Bill Alford many years ago:

I was so proud to have served aboard the REID. I once gave my opportunity to transfer [to another ship] to Bones Gourley so I could remain aboard my proud ship. I was a ship's cook, but my GQ station was a gunner on the 20mm right in front of the bridge. I reported the planes I saw to Captain McCornock by word of mouth.

[During that final attack] All I could see just before

we were ordered to abandon ship was a 5 inch gun clear against the stops firing as fast as it could. The smoke from the forward part of the ship was from our 5 inch guns, and from a plane crashing into the right side below, possibly near the waterline. I couldn't see what I was supposed to be firing at, so I threw up a barrage. We gave it our best to the bitter end.

With all the debris in the water, it looked like

someone put dynamite under about a hundred bushel boxes and touched it off. I was the last one to leave our gun station. I had to go over the side by way of the railing; no time for ladders. I didn't even have time to tie my life jacket. When I was a short distance from the ship, I turned and saw our ship going down aft first, all blown to shreds.

I helped one of my shipmates to blow up his Mae West. I wish I knew who he was, because he thanked me so much for helping him. Several people had trouble unscrewing the little valve on the Mae West.

I was picked up by an LCI or LSM. I crawled into a life ring and they dragged me aboard, like a water soaked cat. But thank God I was saved. It hurts to know that so many of my shipmates were trapped below decks with no chance whatsoever because the ship went down so fast.

Later on, back at Leyte, Rufus Porter told me, "Elmer, did you know that a Jap plane wing missed your head by about a foot?"

Many times I recall from memory that last day aboard the REID. No one can feel the pride and the sorrow of that day that a man who was there will always have.

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*He signed his account "Elmer Faulkner (Belly Robber)" That was his nickname aboard, a name probably shared with ship cooks on other ships as well.*



**My only picture of Elmer Faulkner - 1942**

# Remembering

**GORDON SEASTROM**

Batavia, IL

Gordon Seastrom died of cancer at his home on July 17, 2007. He was just a few weeks shy of 83 years of age. He grew up in the Navy, on the USS REID and in battle, as did many of his shipmates with whom he maintained a life long friendship. It was my good fortune to have known him in the final decade or so of his life.

His obituary was featured in the Chicago Tribune with a three column picture of him in front of the nation's flag. The newspaper summarized his life very well and excerpts follow:

Gordon Donald Seastrom was 17 when, after enlisting in the Navy [September 1941] and being assigned to the USS Reid, DD-369 [November 1941], he survived the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Family members said the World War II veteran later

participated in 29 major combat actions in the Pacific aboard the same destroyer, which soon after his departure was sunk by a kamikaze attack that resulted in hundreds of casualties.

"He was fortunate during the war but kept his guardian angel very busy," said Sally, his wife of 57 years.

Years later, the retired math teacher visited grade schools throughout the western suburbs and spoke to pupils about his war experiences.

"They'd always ask him about Pearl Harbor," his wife said. "He'd tell them how the air was filled with smoke and about all the fire on the water. He had a hard time talking about it at first, but then he opened up."

Mr. Seastrom, taught at Washington Junior High School in Naperville for more than three decades.

Born and raised in St. Charles, Mr. Seastrom was the son of Swedish immigrants. After his mother's death when he was 11, he went to live with the family of his lifelong friend, Marv Abramson.

"We were like brothers -- just turned 17 and still in



**Gordon & Sally 2006**

high school when we joined the Navy," Abramson said. "We got through boot camp together, but then Gordie was sent to Pearl Harbor. It was weeks before I found out he'd survived the bombing."

After his military discharge in 1945, Mr. Seastrom received a high school diploma and later a bachelor's degree in education from Northern Illinois University in DeKalb. He taught for one year at a grade school in Shabbona, Ill., before joining the staff at Washington Junior High, where he taught math for 33 years. He retired at age 62.

Mr. Seastrom received his private pilot's license in 1976 and enjoyed flying as a member of the Napier Aero Club. He also loved to travel -- visiting all 50 states -- and went on more than 20 cruises with his wife, family members said.

Mr. Seastrom was a member of the Illinois Education Association, the National Education Association and the Aurora Area Retired Teachers Association. He also was a member of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Association and traveled to Hawaii several times for reunions.

"He did everything he wanted during his retirement," Sally said. "He knew he was a lucky man and had lived a good life."

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### **New Address**

Walter Johnson's new address is 142 Simmons Street, Wenatchee, WA 98801-3817

Clarence Olsen's passed away last year and his obituary appeared in the last issue, but without a picture.

His son, Terry Olsen, sent in a copy machine picture of his father. I reproduce it here as clear as I can get it

**Clarence Olsen 1944**

### **Notice**

Our Treasurer Walter Fox recommends that checks to the USS REID Reunion Group be sent directly to him so that they can be deposited more promptly. The address is Walter Fox, 2023 St. Lucie Blvd, Lot 271, Ft. Pierce, FL 34946

# VISIT TO WAUTOMA, WI.

by Bud Kautz

Last June 15, three of us, my son Bill, grandson Will and I, made a trip up to Wautoma, WI to visit Reid Reunion President Gil Girdauskas and his wife Terry.

It was fortunate that Bill had a GPS in the car to guide us directly to Gil's home. We turned on to Vintage Lane, a long tree lined country lane. Upon arriving we received a very warm welcome by the Girdauskas', even though we interrupted their lunch.

Gil took us on a tour of the facilities pointing out and giving a bit of history of several old time cars which included a Brewster, Buick, Ford, and many other makes, and best of all a 1916 Cadillac. **Now that is a car!**

Gil asked if we would like to go for a ride in it, the answer was a unanimous and enthusiastic, "YEAH!" by all three of us. Can you possibly imagine the feelings we had tooling down the highway in a 91 year old car doing 50 plus MPH? On a humorous side, Gil had installed a whistle and when passing a golf course would activate the whistle while the golfer on the tee was on his downswing. Humorous to all but the poor guy trying to make par. Sadistic?

This car was way ahead of its time, it had cruise control and a steering wheel that folded out of the way, Gil described it as a fat man's wheel making it easier to get into the driver's seat. This proves the old adage, "There's nothing new under the sun." It also had V8 engine way back there in the early 1900's.

Vintage Vehicles also have an extensive library containing many catalogs, books and original items relating to restoring old cars.

As promised to young Will, Gil pulled up to an old country store run by Mennonites, where they sold "penny" candy. Unfortunately, they

didn't have one of my favorites, Mary Janes, but they did have Bulls eyes.

All in all this made quite an impression on a 7 year old boy, to the extent that he told his Dad, "That's what I want to do, what Mr. Gil does."

After our ride we returned to the home base where Terry, the gracious hostess that she is, served up cold watermelon and lemonade. At this time Gil and I lapsed into memory lane, rehashing some of our experiences while serving on the Reid.

A visit to the internet site address, "Vintage Vehicles Inc" will surely be of interest to many of the Reid shipmates that have internet availability. The company is now run by Gil's two sons, Bruce and Paul.

Besides restoring antique cars they also receive damaged grilles, moldings, hub caps, etc. from all over the USA and foreign countries.

Through tedious and time consuming handwork, they are made to look as if they just left the factory in their original form.

This trip was a really great Father's Day gift from my son, Bill. *[You met son Bill in Ft Myers last year, if you made that reunion. - Ed.]*





Here are some shipmates who were cropped out of Betsey Halsey's pictures whom I can't identify. Notice that those with short hair were the pollywogs who just got initiated a month before on the way to Pago Pago. **PLZ HELP with names!!!**



**Unknown #1**



**Unknown #2**



**Unknown #3**



**Unknown #4**



**Unknown #5**



**Unknown #6**



**Unknown #7**



**Unknown #8**



**Unknown #9**



**Unknown #10**



**Unknown #11**



**Unknown #12**



**Unknown #13**



**Unknown #14**

**More Unknown shipmates. If you can identify them, we will enter their pictures on the USS REID web page for posterity.**



**Unknown #15**



**Unknown #16**



**Unknown #17**



**Unknown #18**



**Unknown #19**



**Unknown #20**



**Unknown #21**



**Unknown #22**



**Unknown #23**



**Unknown #24**



**Unknown #25**



**Unknown #26**



**Unknown #27**



**Unknown #28**



**Unknown #29**

More unknown shipmates from the November dance in 1942, right after returning from Samoa. HELP!!!  
There are 10 or so more "Unknowns" from that 1942 picture that will appear next issue.



**Unknown #30**



**Unknown #31**



**Unknown #32**



**Unknown #33**



**Unknown #34**



**Unknown #35**



**Unknown #36**



**Unknown #37**



**Unknown #38**



**Unknown #39**



**Unknown #40**



**Unknown #41**



**Unknown #42**



**Unknown #43**



**Unknown #44**



**Unknown #45**

# Reunion -2007

## RUFUS PORTER

McLean, VA

I talked to Rufe Porter by phone recently. He is doing as well as can be expected. He is still able to drive, although getting in and out of the car is a challenge. He stays active in volunteer activities with his academy class. He sees Angelique occasionally for a dinner on the town.

Rufe says it is difficult to travel, but he hasn't ruled out going to the New Orleans reunion.

## FRENCHIE MANCKIA

El Cajon, CA

I talked with Jerry Manckia, his son. Frenchie keeps going but slower, as we all do. He was out with friends when I called, so even though his energy level may be low, it doesn't keep him in a rocking chair.

## LEN GARDNER (AKA TACK)

Palmyra, VA

We went on another Windjammer cruise last February and did the British Virgins this time. We coaxed another aged couple to go with us for moral support and would like to do another Windjammer to some other part of the Caribbean this coming winter. (If the creek don't rise.)

We did our annual family gathering in North Carolina for a beach week this summer. There were 24 of us in one large house, ranging in age from 2 to 85. It's crowded, but it's great fun, and you have to like kids.

Doris, who plays 18 holes several times a week, chases me out to the golf course once a week or so. Surprise! Surprise! After years of decline, I think my skills have finally leveled out.

USS REID REUNION GROUP  
c/o Len Gardner  
3 Cove Circle  
Palmyra, VA 22963

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS

FIRST CLASS

Where: Wyndham Riverfront Hotel  
701 Convention Center Blvd  
New Orleans, LA 70130  
Tel: 504-524-8200

When: November 1 to November 4  
(Or stay over for more fun)

Mark your calendar and make reservations

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Betsey Halsey (Ralph) Mystic, CT

It was a while coming, but we now have a picture of Betsey and Ralph Halsey in their salad days. Betsey says it's the only picture she could find from that period, and that was in an old newspaper.



The Halseys in the summer of 1945