

AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS REUNION

HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
SEPTEMBER, 2017







Amphibious Ships Reunion

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania

September, 2017

USS Bexar - USS Cambria - USS Pickaway - USS Rankin - USS Yancey

The **USS Rankin** and **USS Yancey** held their fourth combined reunion from Thursday through Sunday, September 28 – October 1, 2017, at the **Red Lion Hotel Harrisburg Hershey**, in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania. This was the 22nd annual reunion for the Yancey and the 14th for the Rankin.

The two ships were joined this year by shipmates and guests from the **USS Bexar**, **USS Cambria**, and **USS Pickaway**. This was the 23rd annual reunion for the Bexar, the 24th for the Cambria, and the 19th for the Pickaway.

The hospitality room opened on Thursday afternoon, when attendees began registering and receiving name tags and event tickets. Ray Casey of Military Reunion Planners greeted everyone and reviewed the itinerary and other useful information.

It was thought that, though each of the five ships had been named after a U.S. county, some of the attendees may not have been aware of that fact, or even have known anything at all about "their" county. Also, the officials and residents of these



counties may have been unaware that, over seventy years ago, a warship had been named after their county. Our reunion planners took action to remedy those situations...

The registration packets for Rankin shipmates contained copies of an official proclamation from the **Board of Supervisors for Rankin County, Mississippi**, declaring September 28 through

October 1, 2017, to be **USS Rankin Days in Rankin County**. Shipmates from the other ships got copies of similar documents from the counties after which their vessels had been named. Each registration packet also contained informative literature about the appropriate county.

After registering, everyone gathered in the hospitality room to renew old acquaintances and meet new people. At 5:00 PM, local historian **Sheldon Munn** spoke to us about the history of Pennsylvania and the Harrisburg area. This was followed by the traditional reception dinner in the hospitality room.

Friday began with a buffet breakfast before the buses loaded up for a trip to the **Amish Country** around **Lancaster County**. After seeing mile after mile of beautiful farmland, our first stop was at **Kitchen Kettle Village**, the home of dozens of shops where you can purchase anything from quilts, plants and baked goods to specialty coffee. We continued our bus tour of the countryside with a stop at the **Lapp family's Amish farm**, where we walked around the grounds and saw the sights. Then we were invited inside the house for a snack and an introduction to an Amish family and the Amish way of life. We later returned to the same home for a communal meal of chicken pot

pie, roast beef and apple pie for dessert. As the sun was setting, we left Lancaster County for our return to the hotel and the hospitality room.

On Saturday, our destination was **Gettysburg**. Two buses departed the hotel at 9:30 AM with Sheldon Munn as our guide. Sheldon's vast knowledge of Gettysburg and the three-day battle in July of 1863 made for an outstanding day.

Our first stop in Gettysburg was at the National Military Park's **Museum and Visitor Center**. We watched a short movie *The Birth of a New Nation*, narrated by Morgan Freeman, followed by a visit to the **Gettysburg Cyclorama**. This is a 360° painting depicting Pickett's Charge, the final infantry assault of the battle. The Cyclorama is 377' long and 42' high, and is mounted on the wall of a round auditorium. What a sight!

After viewing other exhibits in the Center, we boarded the buses and, after a quick tour of the town of Gettysburg, we stopped at **General Pickett's Buffet** for lunch. Then we boarded the buses for a tour of the battlefield. After viewing many battle areas and monuments from the bus, we disembarked at the "high water mark of the Confederacy" on Cemetery Ridge, from which we could see the entire battlefield. This is where the



Union Army fought the final charge from the Confederates. Sheldon described the final day to us with great enthusiasm, ending one of the best guided tours that many of us have been on. After a long day, we were all happy to head back to the hotel and the hospitality room.

On Sunday morning, each ship had its own meeting to discuss business and next year's reunion. **Dallas, Texas** was chosen by consensus as our 2018 destination, with dates and events to be determined later.

Sunday's touring was closer to the hotel. We first traveled to **Hershey, Pennsylvania**, the home of the Hershey Chocolate Company. After a bus tour of the city of Hershey we arrived for a tour of the Hershey factory. This consisted of a Disney-like ride through the chocolate making and packaging process. We had time for a quick lunch and shopping in the gift shop before heading back to Harrisburg for a city tour. Our last stop was the **National Civil War Museum** in Harrisburg, which has two floors of exhibits portraying the entire story of the Civil War. Many artifacts are also on display, from guns and uniforms to shaving and sewing kits. At the end of the museum tour, everyone was ready to get back to the hotel and get ready for the Annual Banquet. As always, we

didn't have quite enough time to go to our rooms and prepare for the evening's events. It was reminiscent of our Navy days, when we got off watch just a few minutes before a Captain's inspection.

The annual **Banquet and Memorial Service** was preceded by individual and group pictures in the hospitality room. The event began with a series of toasts by CDR Ed Gaskell. Dinner was served and enjoyed by one and all. After dinner we conducted our Memorial Service with John Karlis acting as Chaplain and Ed Gaskell as Bell Ringer. The names of the deceased were read by Skip Sander for the Rankin and George Clifton for the Bexar, Cambria, Pickaway and Yancey. The Memorial Service was followed by guest speaker Rick Campbell, author of four thrilling novels with submarine themes. Rick is a retired U.S. Navy Commander with 34 years in submarine service and a vast knowledge of undersea warfare. After his talk, Rick signed complimentary copies of his book *The Trident Deception*.

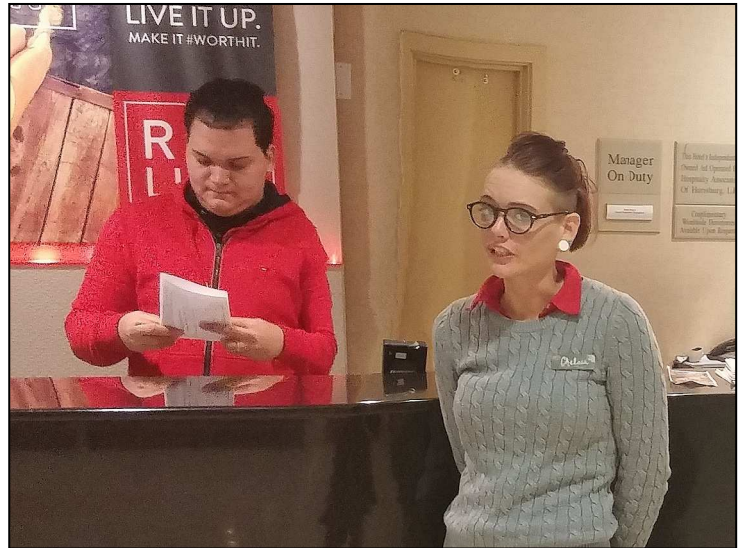
The shipmates and guests retired to their rooms or the hospitality room, winding up the 2017 Harrisburg reunion. Beginning early Monday morning, everyone said their goodbyes, checked out of the hotel, and headed for home.



Our Hotel



The Red Lion welcomes us...



...and checks us in...



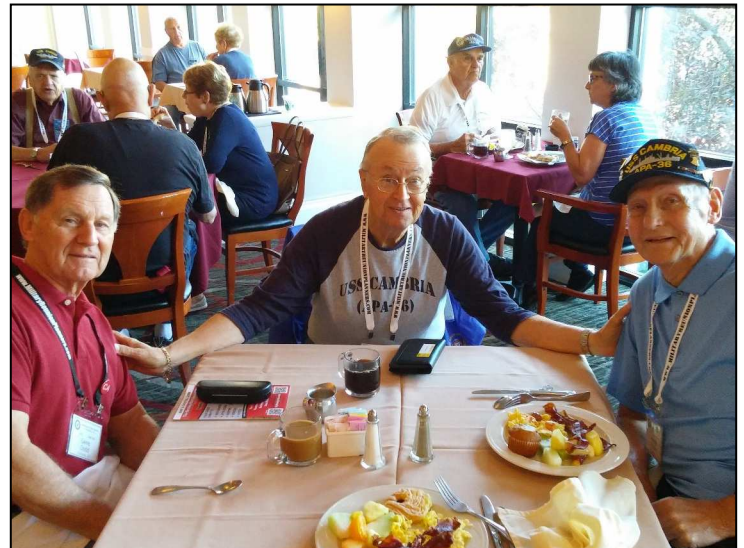
...to our comfortable room.



The view from Room 323



The Seasons Restaurant...



...hosts breakfast with our old friends.

Our Hospitality Room



Eight from the Rankin



Ladies' night out



Happy people!



Kitchy-koo!



Hospitality reigns!



A squared-away Machinists Mate

Our Hospitality Room



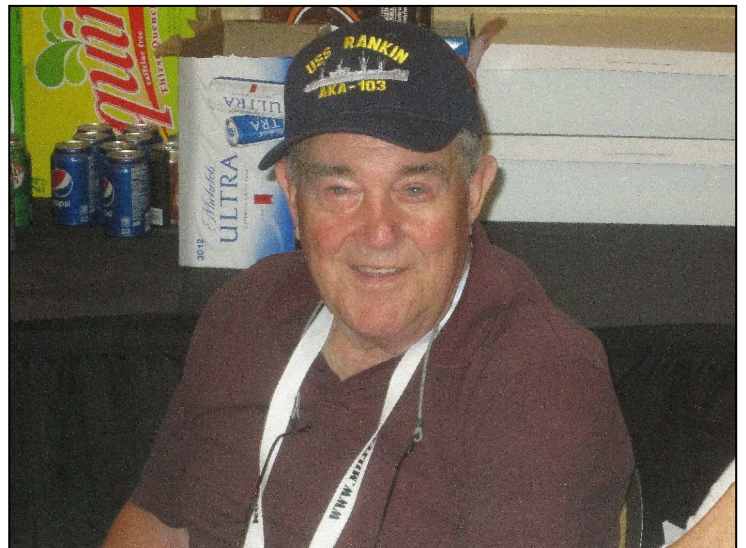
A charming Cambria couple.



These girls seem to like sailors!



Another happy reveler!



I'm loving my first reunion!



Ladies of the Cambria

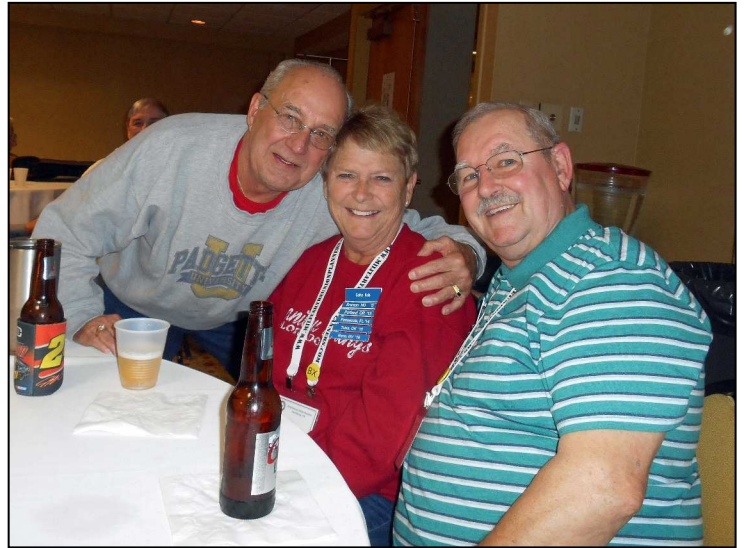


Hmmm!

Our Hospitality Room



Chief of the Bexar and Pickaway



We like our beer!



More happiness!



Here's lookin' at you!



Lots of good conversation...



...and lots of good snacks!

Amish Country



Miles and miles of beautiful farms...



...owned by Amish in buggies.



Kitchen Kettle Village...



...is full of charming shops.



Moving on to the Lapp farm...



...and seeing a cute young Amishman.

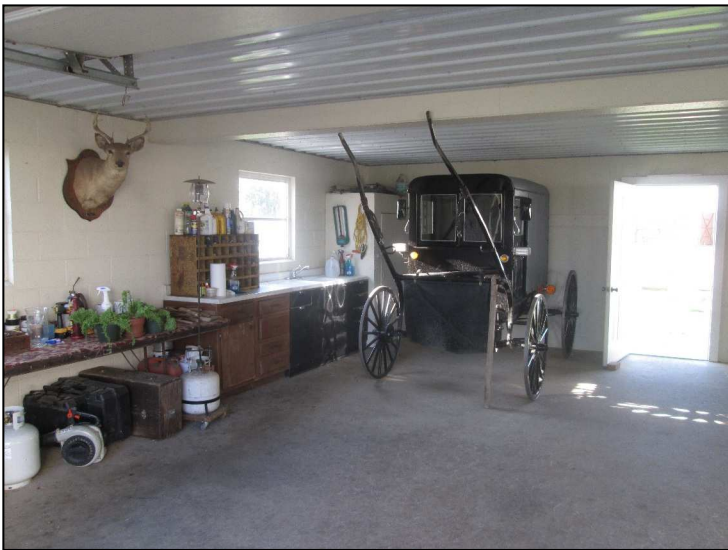
Amish Country



Inside the Lapp barn...



...are stalls for the horses.



There's a garage for carriages...



...and an adjoining driveway.



A carriage dashboard...



...and a carriage driver's seat.

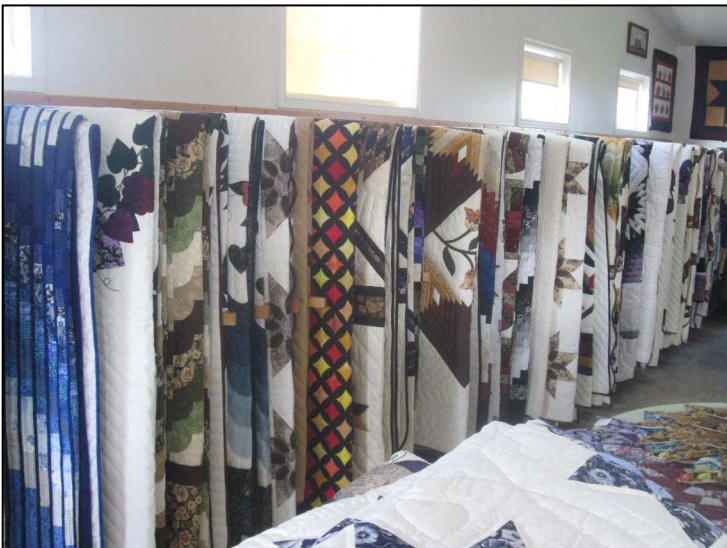
Amish Country



We visit an authentic Amish store...



...and sun ourselves on deck.



The Amish make incredible quilts...



...and other hand-sewn items.



They preserve pickles and jellies...



...and they have their typical amusements.

Amish Country



Frank knows a LOT about Amish life:



The women keep nice gardens.



They raise a lot of horses.



Their laundry is dried in the sun.



Their barns are very important.



Electricity from nature is OK.

Amish Country



The Lapp family cemetery



Horse-drawn rig with generator & metal tires



More horsepower



When are rubber tires OK?



Grain drill: \$19,100 new or \$270/month



These are scooters, NOT bicycles

Amish Country



Some Amish ponies



An Amish flower garden



An Amish gardener



Amish transportation



Dinner at the Lapp farm...



...was crowded and delicious

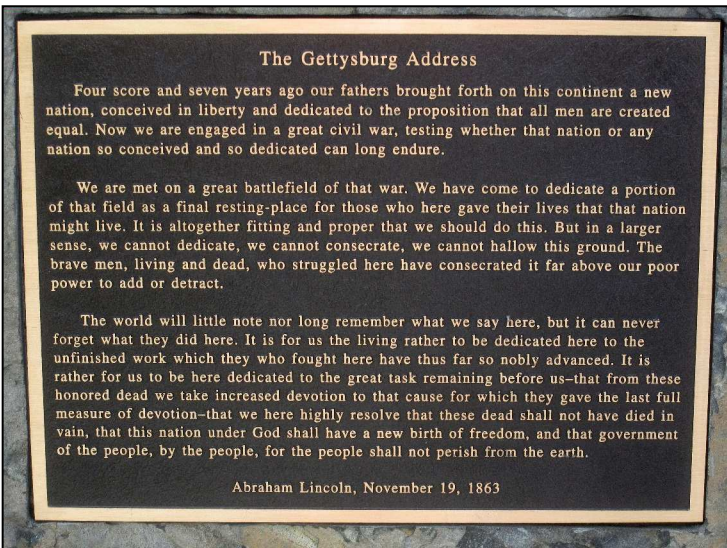
Gettysburg Visitor Center



We saw a narrated film...



...and a huge circular painting



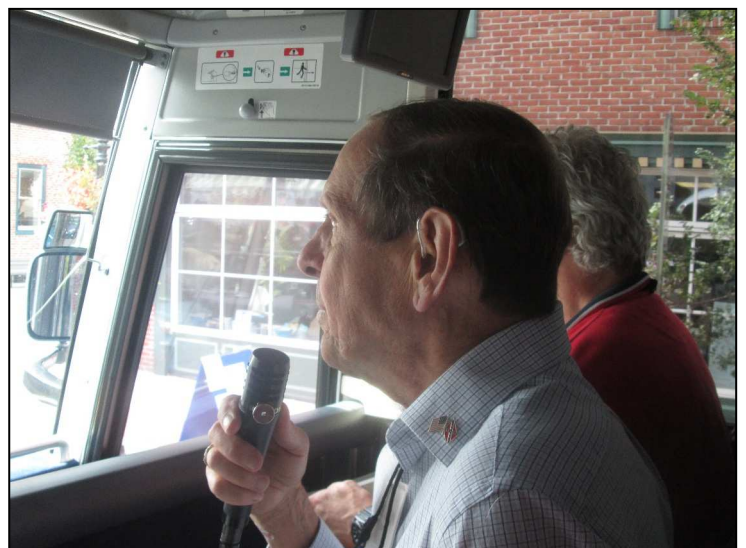
The Gettysburg Address...



...delivered by Mr. Lincoln



And so to lunch...



...as our history lesson continues.

Gettysburg Battlefield Tour



Lunch in Gettysburg...



...then onward to the battlefield.



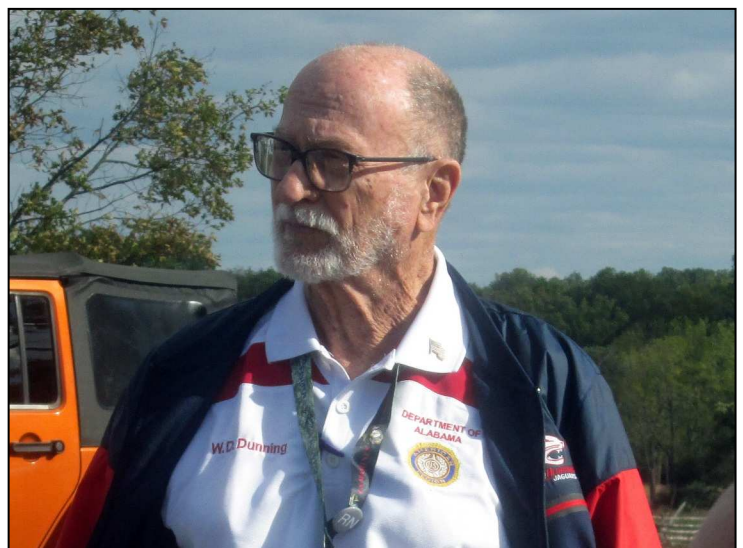
Sheldon Munn is an enthusiastic guide..



...who captivates his audience.



The Navy is interested in history...



...and so are the Marines.

The Battlefield and its Weapons



There is so much to contemplate...



...the deadly artillery...



...the expansive battlefield...



...so large and so wide.



The cannons...



...and the ammunition wagons.

Honoring the Men Who Fought There



Remembering the battle with 1,328...



...monuments, markers & memorials...



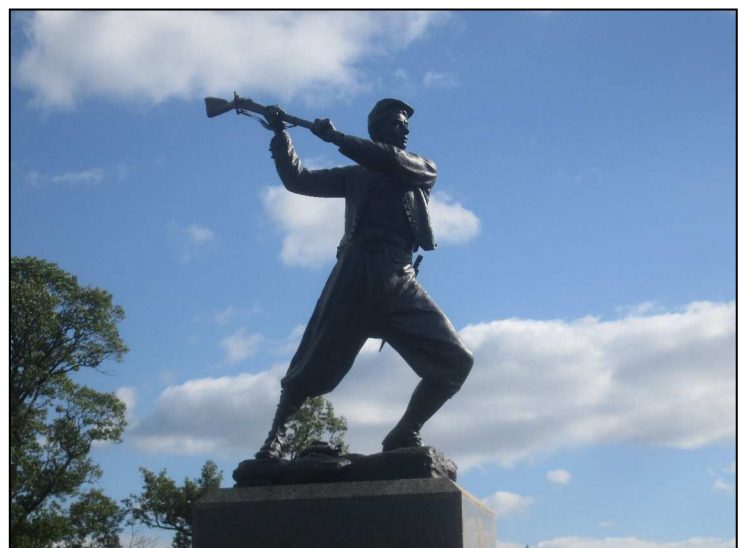
...all of them specifically dedicated...



...to fighting units...

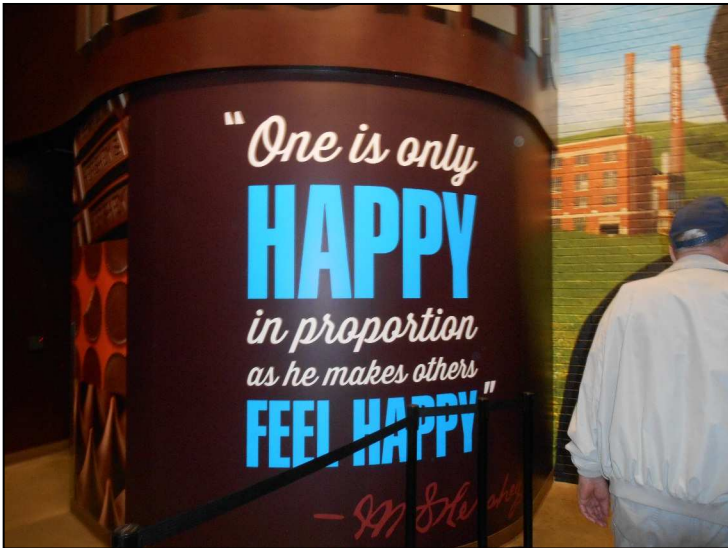


...and their soldiers,...



...some of them very realistic.

Tour of Hershey and Harrisburg



Milton Hershey's motto



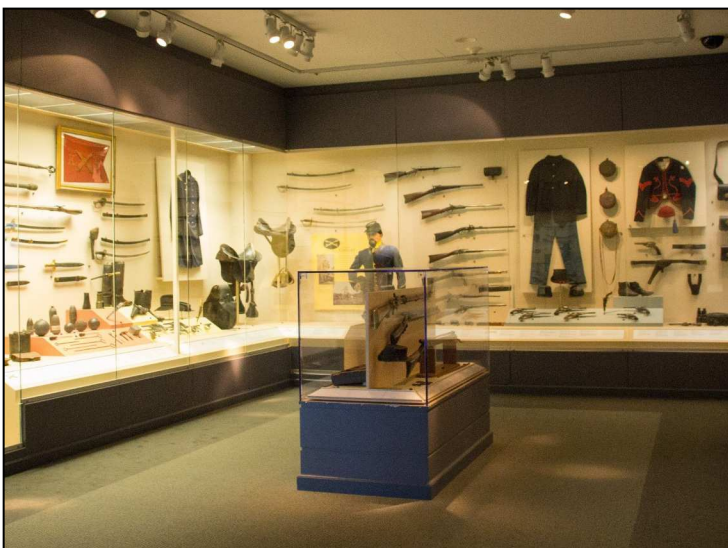
His modern factory



Making Hershey's Syrup



More from the 1860s



Many battlefield artifacts



Comforting a comforting soldier

Our Annual Banquet



Toastmaster Ed Gaskell



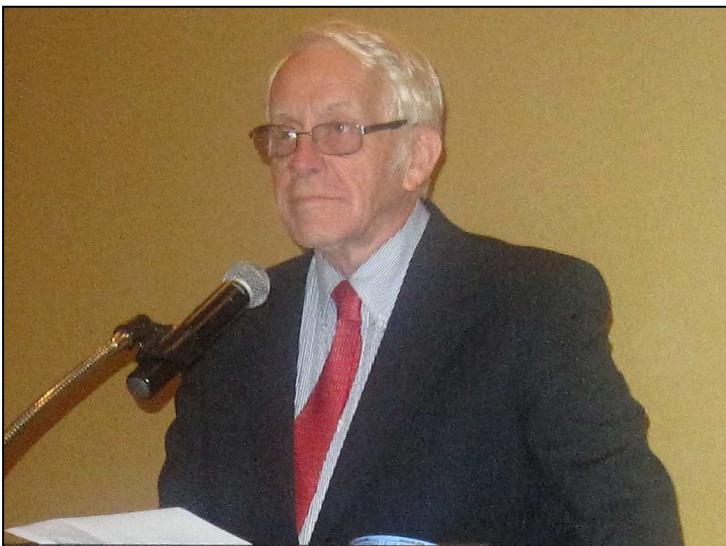
NJROTC Color Guard



Diners waiting to be served...



...a delicious banquet meal



Skip Sander addresses the diners



Rick Campbell signs some books

USS Bexar Shipmates and Guests



John Beeler
USS Bexar
SK2, 1967-1969



Kelly & Cathy Kolb
USS Bexar
SFM2, 1964-1968



Don Laubhan & Carol Blackburn
USS Bexar
RDSN, 1960-1963



Chuck Legler
USS Bexar
SN, 1960-1964



Bill & Nancy Macmillan
USS Bexar
MM2, 1960-1962



Gary Padgette & Meredith Zallar
USS Bexar
BMSN, 1961-1964

USS Bexar Shipmates and Guests



Ron & Betty Anne Schilling

USS Bexar
MM2, 1958-1963



Richard & Eunice Stiger

USS Bexar
SK3, 1954-1956



USS Bexar Commissioning Ceremony
October 9, 1945



USS Bexar at Mare Island Naval Shipyard, 17 May 1946



U.S. Navy 7th Fleet Amphibious Ready Group, March 1965
USS Bexar, USS Princeton, USS Thomaston, USS O'Bannon



Proclamation

In honor of the 2017 Reunion of the Officers and Men of the U.S. Navy Warship

USS Bexar

We Hereby Proclaim That September 28 through October 1, 2017 are considered to be
USS Bexar Days in Bexar County, Texas

Bexar County Commissioners Court

County Judge Nelson W. Wolff
Commissioner Sergio "Chico" Rodriguez
Commissioner Paul Elizondo
Commissioner Kevin A. Wolff
Commissioner Tommy Calvert

USS Cambria Shipmates and Guests



Bob Canty & Mary Shear

USS Cambria
EM2, 1966-1970



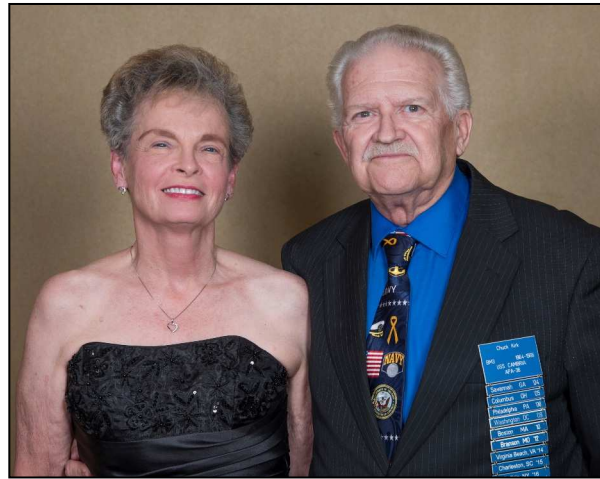
Gene & DeAnn Dodd

USS Cambria
YN3, 1958-1961



Hank & Donna Henry

USS Cambria
EM3, 1963-1966



Chuck & Karen Kirk

USS Cambria
BM3, 1963-1966



Roland Parker

USS Cambria
MM3, 1966-1968



John Partin

USS Cambria
YN3, 1960-1963

USS Cambria Shipmates and Guests



Lee & Sally Patterson

USS Cambria
IC2, 1966-1969



Dan & Joyce Rabinowitz

USS Cambria
LTJG(SC), 1967-1969



Richard & Deborah Sokolik

USS Cambria
BMSN, 1966-1968



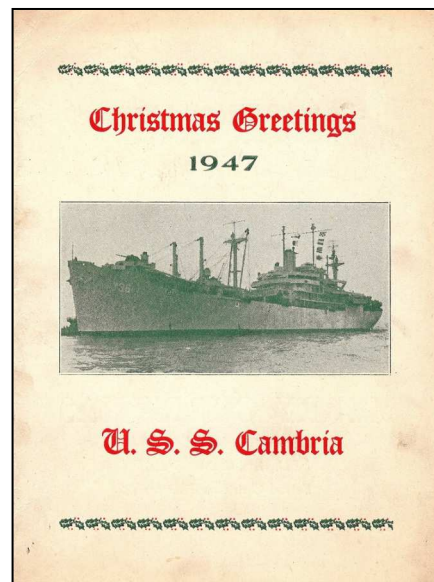
Ramon & Phyllis Stafford

USS Cambria
BT1, 1954-1958



Harold & Michael Willison

USS Cambria
YN3, 1950-1952



PROCLAMATION

"USS CAMBRIA DAYS"
September 28th – October 1st, 2017

In honor of the special reunion of the officers and men of the mighty warship, the USS Cambria (APA-36), which was named after our County, we, the Board of Commissioners of Cambria County, Pennsylvania, hereby declare September 28th through October 1st, 2017, to be USS Cambria Days in Cambria County, and we thank those individuals who served upon this ship for their service and patriotism.



BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS

[Signature]
Thomas C. Chernisky

[Signature]
B.J. Smith

[Signature]
Mark J. Wissinger

ATTEST:
[Signature]
Michael Gelles, IV, Chief Clerk



UNITED STATES SENATE

This Certificate of Special Recognition is presented to

***The Crew & Officers of the USS Cambria
(APA-36)***

In recognition and appreciation of your service during World War II

October 1, 2017

DATE

[Signature]

PATRICK J. TOOMEY
UNITED STATES SENATOR



USS Cambria underway with a Coast Guard crew, circa 1943

USS Pickaway Shipmates and Guests



Edwin Beer
USS Pickaway
FT2, 1956-1960



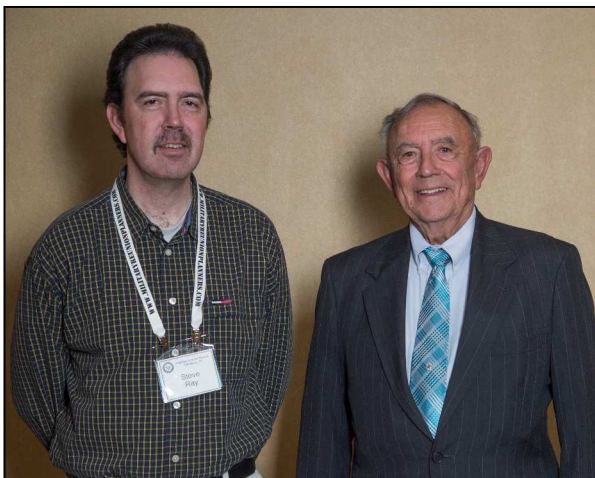
Jimmy Cee & Louise Miller
USS Pickaway
EN2, 1960-1964



Chuck & Chris Chidsey
USS Pickaway
SHS3, 1967-1969



Harold Dee & Melba Elders
USS Pickaway
EN2, 1951-1955



Steve & Ben Ray
USS Pickaway
RM3, 1959-1961



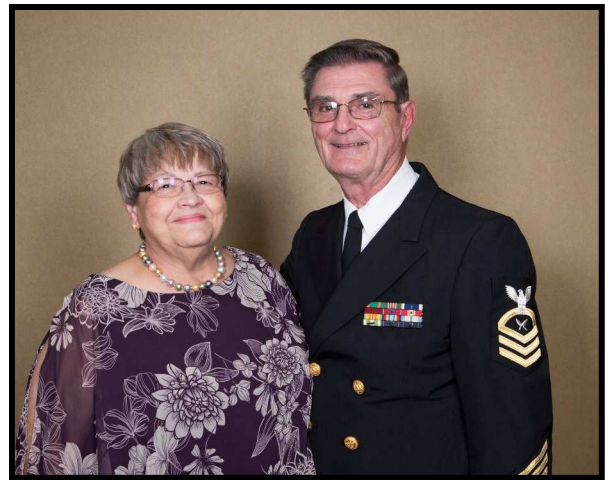
Bettye Reed, Joe Reed, Fay Lee
USS Pickaway
GMSN, 1955-1959

USS Pickaway Shipmates and Guests



Dean, Wendy & Sandy Severe

USS Pickaway
GM3, 1957-1959



Buzz & Judy Stewart

USS Pickaway
IC3, 1964-1965



Douglas Voeltz

USS Pickaway
FN, 1965-1967



Bobby & Nancy Wisely

USS Pickaway
TE2, 1951-1953





USS Pickaway in Pusan, Korea, before proceeding to the Battle of Inchon



Marines boarding USS Pickaway for lunch near Pusan, Korea, 1950



~ Resolution ~

WHEREAS, it is the pleasure of the Pickaway County Board of Commissioners to recognize people and occasions of outstanding significance and crewmembers from five World War II-era Navy ships, all named after U.S. counties, are holding a joint reunion in Harrisburg, PA, which includes crewmembers from the USS PICKAWAY. The USS PICKAWAY (APA-222) was a Haskell-class attack transport that saw service with the US Navy in World War II, the Korean War, and the Vietnam War. The name "Pickaway" stems from a division of the Shawnee Indian Nation, the Piqua, which means, "men risen from ashes," and this tribe made their home on the Pickaway Plains, Ohio, a wide rolling plain of hills three miles south of Circleville, Ohio; and,

WHEREAS, the USS PICKAWAY was laid down on September 1, 1944, and was launched on November 5, 1944, arrived at Pearl Harbor on February 16, 1945, and subsequently departed for Iwo Jima to evacuate victorious U.S. Marine forces on the island and returned to Pearl Harbor on April 5th. In early 1948, USS PICKAWAY participated in "Operation Sandstone," the second atomic test in the Pacific; and,

WHEREAS, in 1950, a month after the North Korean forces marched against South Korea, the USS PICKAWAY began shuttling US Army troops from Japan to Pusan to stem the tide of battle. During the Korean War, she saw her first real amphibious invasion at Inchon, when the United Nations forces flanked the North Koreans. During the Korean War, USS PICKAWAY was deployed to the Korean area four times, and landed troops on most of the major Korean beachheads; and,

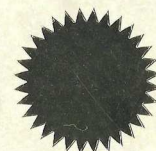
WHEREAS, during the Vietnam War, USS PICKAWAY participated in "Operation Westwind," and soon after arriving in Yokosuka, she was ordered to proceed to Buckner Bay, Okinawa, to embark a Marine Battalion for transport to Vietnam to help build up American forces after the Gulf of Tonkin Incident. In 1965, she participated in the US Pacific Fleet Exercise "Silver Lance," and again bolstered the Allied military effort in Vietnam. Together with other elements of Amphibious Squadron 3, USS PICKAWAY landed the 2nd Battalion of the 9th Marine Regiment over the beaches of Da Nang, South Vietnam. During 1966, she participated in Operations "Jackstay," "Osage," "Deck House I," "Nathan Hale," "Deck House II," "Hastings," and SEATO training exercise "Sea Dog." She also replenished USS ORISKANY at sea in the Tonkin Gulf; and,

WHEREAS, USS PICKAWAY received one battle star for World War II service, six battle stars for Korean War service, and four campaign stars for Vietnam War service; then,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that in honor of the special reunion of the officers and men of the Mighty Warship USS PICKAWAY (APA-222), which was named after our Fair County, we, the duly elected Commissioners of Pickaway County, Ohio, hereby designate

September 28, 2017 thru October 1, 2017

To be
USS PICKAWAY DAYS
 in
 Pickaway County, Ohio



Brian S. Stewart
 Brian S. Stewart

Jay H. Wippel
 Jay H. Wippel

Harold Henson
 Harold Henson

USS Rankin Shipmates and Guests



Paul & Faye Allen
USS Rankin
ENS(SC), 1946-1947



Ralph & Christina Ayasse
USS Rankin
SMSN, 1959-1962



Dave & Andrea Beeler
USS Rankin
ETN3, 1963-1966



Bob DeVault
USS Rankin
SM2, 1959-1962



Hugh & Margaret Doherty
USS Rankin
SN, 1959-1961



Frank & Rose Marie Draper
USS Rankin
SN, 1961-1964

USS Rankin Shipmates and Guests



Willie D. Dunning III
USS Rankin
PFC, USMC, 1962



Ray & Jackie Falker
USS Rankin
MMFN, 1964-1967



Harry Fuerstenberger
USS Rankin
ICFN, 1965-1965



Ed Gaskell
USS Rankin
LT, 1954-1956

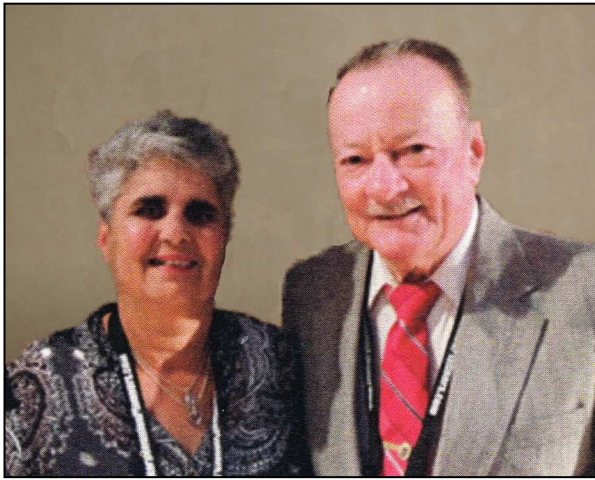


Pete & Lola Gersbacher
USS Rankin
LTJG, 1959-1960



John Gorham & Lillian Wakefield
USS Rankin
SN, 1959-1962

USS Rankin Shipmates and Guests



Elton & Margaret Gould

USS Rankin
CSSN, 1956-1960



Jim & Joanne Grant

USS Rankin
RD2, 1961-1963



Dick & Martha Lacy

USS Rankin
ENS, 1958-1959



Jim "Harvey" McCubbin

USS Rankin
RD2, 1962-1965



Allen & Donna Newell

USS Rankin
RM3, 1959-1960



Sherrill & Shirley Pittman

USS Rankin
RM3, 1955-1958

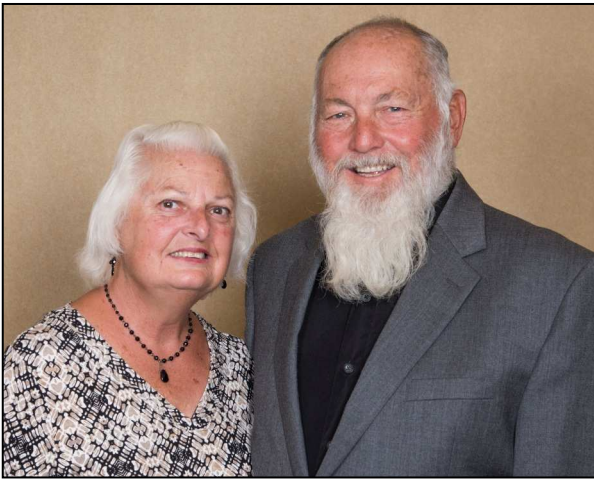
USS Rankin Shipmates and Guests



Skip Sander
USS Rankin
LTJG, 1961-1963



Carl & Flo Siciliano
USS Rankin
CS3, 1962-1964



Charley & Mary Smith
USS Rankin
PN3, 1964-1965



Jan Smits & Carol Fuos
USS Rankin
EN2, 1956-1959



Ray & Alice Spicer
USS Rankin
BT3, 1960-1963



Tex Spicer
USS Rankin
BT3, 1960-1962

USS Rankin Shipmates and Guests



Walter & Arleen Stringer

USS Rankin
MM3, 1965-1969



Mark & Linda Thomas

USS Rankin
IC3, 1967-1970



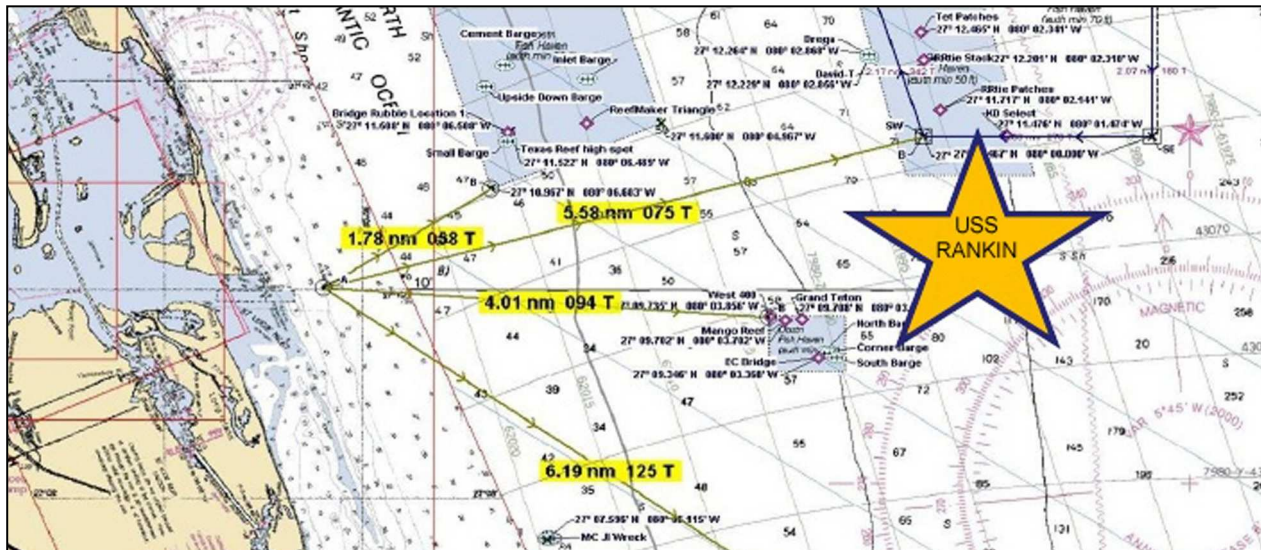
Harry & Norma Zimmer

USS Rankin
LTJG, 1958-1959



Craig & Debbie Holliday

USS Rankin
Guests of Sherrill Pittman



Rankin's Final Resting Place – 4 Miles off St. Lucie Inlet, Florida



USS Rankin Shipmates – Seated: Frank Draper, Tex Spicer, Ray Spicer, Harry Zimmer, Ed Gaskell, Paul Allen, Sherrill Pittman, Charley Smith, Carl Siciliano, Buddy Stringer. Standing: Dick Lacy, Bob DeVault, Hugh Doherty, Ray Falker, Jim Grant, Willie Dunning, Dave Beeler, Harvey McCubbin, Harry Fuerstenberger, Pete Gersbacher, Skip Sander, Ralph Ayasse, John Gorham, Mark Thomas, Allen Newell. Missing from picture: Elton Gould, Jan Smits.

USS Yancey Shipmates and Guests



Norman & Connie Boyd

USS Yancey
EMC, 1961-1963



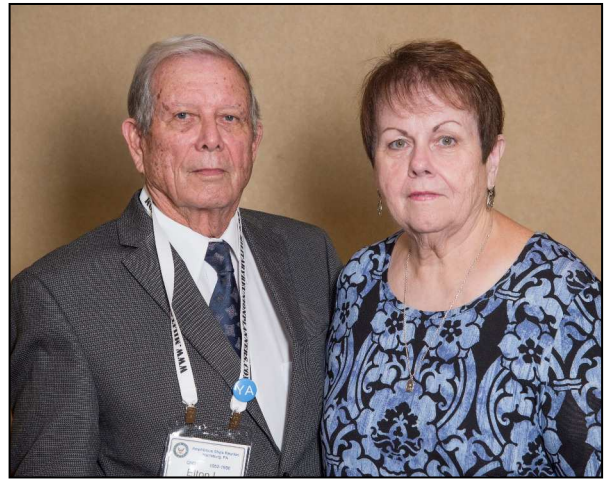
George Clifton

USS Yancey
QM2, 1963-1967



Paul Dunn

USS Yancey
LTJG, 1966-1969



Elton & Ada Fauber

USS Yancey
QM2, 1952-1956



Walter & Toby Gillespie

USS Yancey
FN, 1961-1963



John Karlis

USS Yancey
EM3, 1966-1968

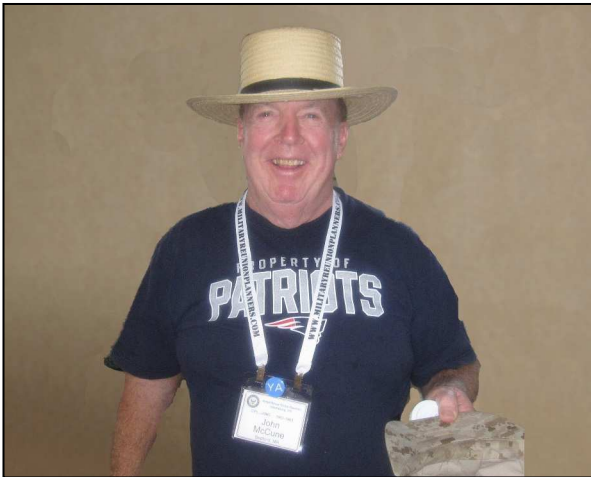
USS Yancey Shipmates and Guests



Ruth Krok & Son
USS Yancey



Duane & Betty Malme
USS Yancey
MM3, 1954-1957



John McCune
USS Yancey
CPL, USMC, 1962-1963



Jere Retallack
USS Yancey
SN, 1963-1965



Paul Smith
USS Yancey
EM3, 1966-1968



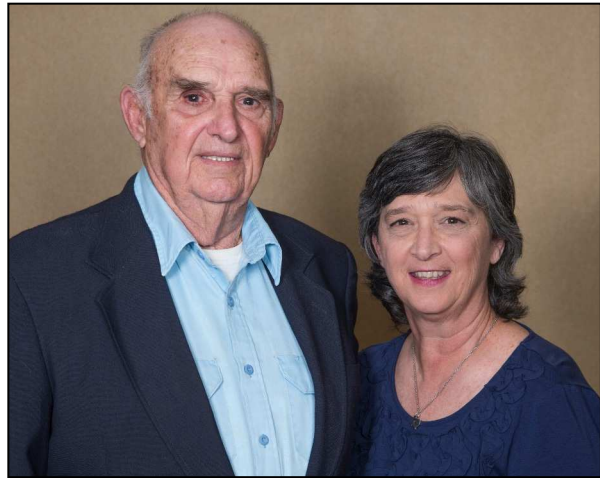
Daryle & Anita Thornburg
USS Yancey
EN3, 1963-1966

USS Yancey Shipmates and Guests



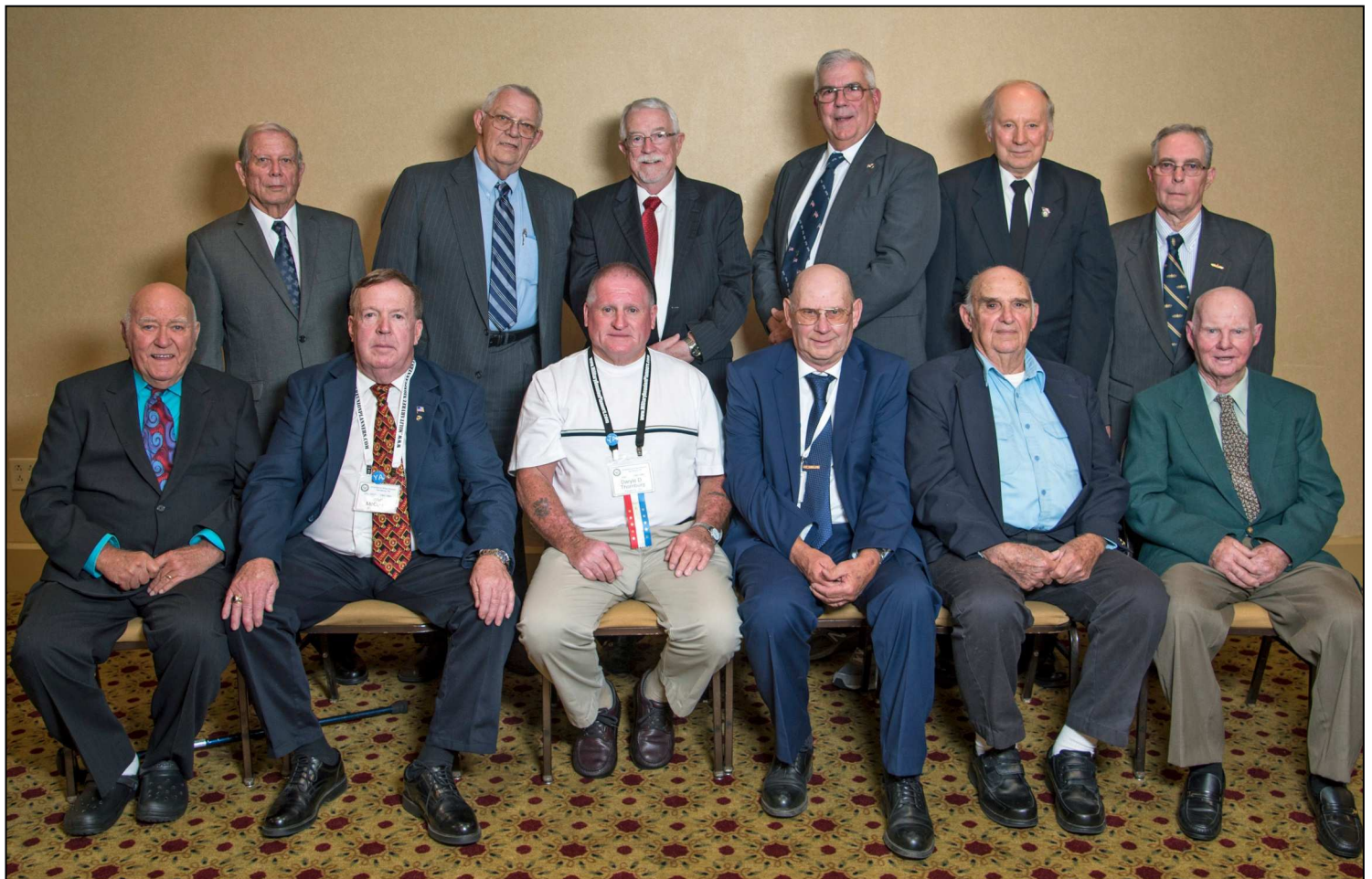
Melvin & Martha Wentzel

USS Yancey
QM2, 1961-1963



J. W. Young & Virginia Greer-Young

USS Yancey
SH2, 1951-1954



USS Yancey Shipmates – Seated: Duane Malme, John McCune, Daryle Thornburg, Melvin Wentzel, James Young, Norman Boyd. Standing: Elton Fauber, Walter Gillespie, George Clifton, Paul Smith, John Karlis, Paul Dunn. Missing from picture: Jere Retallack

Board of Commissioners

Johnny Riddle, Chair
Jill Austin, Vice-chair
Mark Ledford
John Stallings
Jeff Whitson



Nathan R. Bennett
County Manager

Donny J. Laws
County Attorney

J. Jason Robinson
Clerk to the Board

PROCLAMATION

To Honor the crew members of the

USS YANCEY AKA-93

WHEREAS, the USS Yancey was commissioned in honor of Yancey County, North Carolina in October of 1944; and,

WHEREAS, the USS Yancey served as an attack cargo ship during World War II, including the battles of Okinawa and Iwo Jima, and the Korean War and later used during the Cuban blockade during the Cuban Missile Crisis; and

WHEREAS, the USS Yancey was honored with five (5) battle stars during World War II and the Korean War; and

WHEREAS, many brave sailors have served admirably and honorably aboard the USS Yancey; and

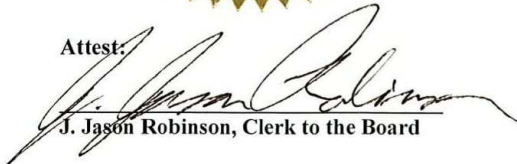
WHEREAS, the reunion of the USS Yancey will be held on September 28, 2017 through October 2, 2017.

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT PROCLAIMED by the Yancey County Board of Commissioners, that September 28, 2017 through October 2, 2017 be recognized as USS Yancey days in Yancey County, North Carolina in honor of the crew members both living and deceased of the USS Yancey.

THIS 11th DAY OF September, 2017.




Attest:


J. Jason Robinson, Clerk to the Board


Johnny Riddle, Chair

Johnny Riddle, Chair


Jill Austin, Vice-Chair

Jill Austin, Vice-Chair


Mark Ledford, Commissioner

Mark Ledford, Commissioner


John Stallings, Commissioner

John Stallings, Commissioner


Jeff Whitson, Commissioner

Jeff Whitson, Commissioner

Attendee Directory

Amphibious Ships Reunion

Harrisburg, Pennsylvania – September 28 to October 1, 2017

USS Bexar

Beeler, John SK2, 1967-1969
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Kolb, Kelly SFM2, 1964-1968
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Legler, Chuck SN, 1960-1964
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Macmillan, William MM2, 1960-1962
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USS Cambria

Canty, Bob EM2, 1966-1970
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Dodd, Gene YN3, 1958-1961
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Donna Henry
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Kirk, Chuck BM3, 1963-1966
Karen Kirk
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Parker, Roland MM3, 1966-1968
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USS Pickaway

Beer, Edwin FT2, 1956-1960
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Cee, Jimmy EN2, 1960-1964
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Reed, Joe W GMSN, 1955-1959
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2502 S Spruce
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Judy Stewart
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Wisely, Bobby TE2, 1951-1953
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Overland Park, KS 66212
913-649-7401
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USS Rankin

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Beeler, Dave ETN3, 1963-1966
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Dunning III, Willie D. PFC, USMC,
1962
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251-661-4226

Falker, Ray MMFN, 1964-1967
Jackie Falker
8420 Elko Drive
Ellicott City, MD 21043
410-207-6773
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Fuerstenberger, Harry ICFN,
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Gersbacher, Pete LTJG, 1959-1960
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USS Yancey

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Thornburg, Daryle EN3, 1963-1966
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The previous list shows each man's *rank* or *rating* and *rate* while he was assigned to his ship.

Officers have *ranks*, as shown in **bold** below. SC indicates the officer was in the Supply Corps.

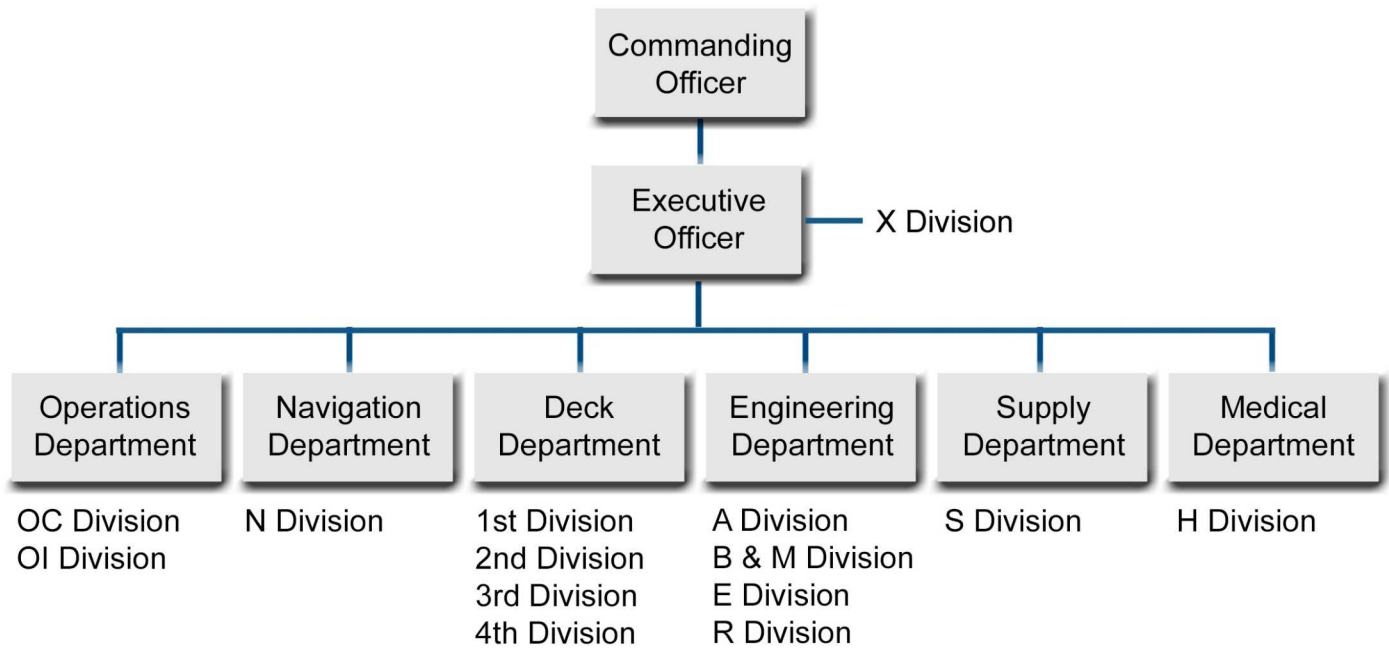
Enlisted men have *ratings* and *rates*. *Ratings* are occupational specialties, signified by the two-letter abbreviations shown below. Separately, each man's *rate* corresponds to his pay grade.

A number or the letter C following a man's rating abbreviation indicates his rate: he was a third, second, first class, or chief petty officer.

Men without those designations, FN and SN in the list, are known as non-rated men. If one of them is on track for a specific rating, he is known as a *striker*, and his rating abbreviation is added in front of his non-rated designator. A seaman striking for radarman, for example, would be an RDSN.

| | |
|-------------|---------------------------------|
| BM | Boatswain's Mate |
| BT | Boilerman |
| CPL | Corporal |
| CS | Commissaryman |
| EM | Electrician Mate |
| EN | Engineman |
| ENS | Ensign |
| ET | Electronics Technician |
| FN | Fireman |
| FT | Fire Controlman |
| GM | Gunner's Mate |
| IC | Interior Communications |
| LT | Lieutenant |
| LTJG | Lieutenant, Junior Grade |
| MM | Machinist's Mate |
| PFC | Private First Class |
| PN | Personnelman |
| QM | Quartermaster |
| RD | Radarmam |
| RM | Radioman |
| SF | Shipfitter |
| SH | Ship's Serviceman |
| SK | Storekeeper |
| SM | Signalman |
| SN | Seaman |
| TE | Teleman |
| YN | Yeoman |

Amphibious Ship Organization



A ship's organization remains fairly constant over time. Things are somewhat different in wartime when crews are significantly enlarged, but the general outline typically remains the same.

This page describes the USS Rankin's organization in the mid-1960s, but it is believed to apply generally to all AKAs and APAs from the postwar period through the early 1970s.

The Commanding Officer, also called the CO, Captain, Skipper, or Old Man, has total charge of the ship and everything that happens aboard.

The Executive Officer, also called the XO, Exec, or Commander, is second in command, and is responsible for implementing the CO's orders through the others on the ship. He also controls the ship's day-to-day administration. He is assisted by a Personnel Officer, yeomen and personnelmen.

The Operations Department is responsible for all communications and information flow inside and outside the ship. The Operations Officer is assisted by the Communications Officer, the Combat Information Center Officer, and the Electronics Material Officer, who together supervise the RMs, SMs, RDs, and ETs.

The Navigation Department is responsible for the safe navigation of the ship. It

is headed by the Navigator, who is assisted by enlisted Quartermasters.

The Deck Department is responsible for the weather decks, the ship's boats, and for operating all the ship's cargo handling equipment. It is headed by the First Lieutenant, whose assistants include the ship's Boatswain, the Boat Group Commander, the Gunnery Officer, and several Division Officers and Boat Officers. The enlisted members of the department include Seamen, Boatswain's Mates, Gunners Mates, and Fire Controlmen. The first two are fondly referred to as "deck apes."

The Engineering Department operates and maintains the ship's power plant, the engines on the ship's boats, and various mechanical equipment throughout the ship. The department head is the Engineering Officer, also called the Chief Engineer or Chief Snipe. He is assisted by a Main Propulsion Assistant, a Damage Control Assistant, an Electrical Officer, and a Repair Officer. The members of the engineering department, both officer and enlisted, are fondly referred to as "snipes." Enlisted snipes include BTs, EMs, Firemen, ICs, MMs, and SFs, plus others not represented at this reunion.

The Supply Department manages the

ship's payroll and expenses and provides many supplies and services: food, laundry, barber shop, supplies, repair parts, the ship's store, and more. Its enlisted crewmembers include Comissarymen, Ship's Servicemen, Storekeepers, and several more ratings not represented at this year's reunion. Due to their responsibilities for feeding the crew and the perceived shape of their oak leaf insignia, Supply Officers are fondly referred to as "pork chops."

The Medical Department consists of a doctor called the Medical Officer, and a group of Hospital Corpsman. They are known for providing remedies for hangovers and seasickness.

A day aboard ship begins with reveille at 0600. The workday runs from 0800 to 1600. During the workday, every crewmember has a job that they work at, usually related to their rate and rating.

In addition, most officers and crewmembers "stand watches," where they are involved with sailing the ship and keeping her safe. These watches run around the clock, and are four hours in length. They start with the midwatch, from midnight to 0400. The 1600-2000 watch is usually divided into two two-hour "dog watches," to accommodate the evening meal.

USS Bexar



USS Bexar (APA-237/LPA-237) was a *Haskell*-class attack transport built on the Victory ship design by Oregon Shipbuilding of Portland, Oregon. She was named after Bexar County, Texas.

Bexar received three battle stars for Korean War service and five campaign stars for Vietnam War service.

She was launched on July 25, 1945 and commissioned on October 9, too late to see action in WWII. She joined *Operation Magic Carpet* and returned troops from the Pacific until early 1946.

In June *Bexar* proceeded to Bikini Atoll to participate in *Operation Crossroads*, a test of the effectiveness of atomic bombs on warships. Over 200 warships participated in the operation, 75 of them as targets. *Bexar* served as an equipment supply center.

Based in Norfolk from 1947 onward, *Bexar* operated along the Eastern seaboard and in the Caribbean, making a Mediterranean cruise in 1948.

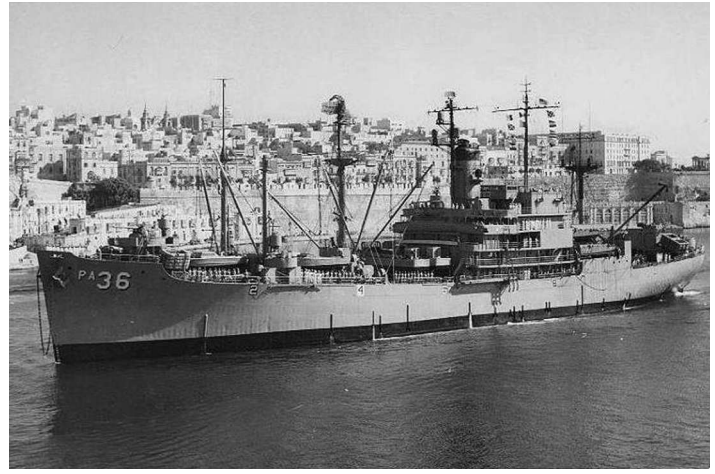
In September 1949 she took part in a large amphibious exercise in Hawaii. In July 1950 *Bexar* departed Norfolk for the Mediterranean. In August she was ordered to embark Marines and proceed via the Suez Canal to Japan. Upon arrival, she proceeded to Korea where she participated in the Inchon and Wonsan landings and the evacuation of Chinnampo and Inchon. Departing the Far East in January 1951 she proceeded to San Diego.

Between August 1951 and December 1953 *Bexar* made two more Far Eastern tours in support of Korean operations. During the latter she served as flagship for *Operation Big Switch*, the movement of prisoners from Koje Do to Inchon, Korea.

In 1954-1955 *Bexar* made another tour of the Far East during which she helped in the Tachen Islands evacuation.

Bexar also saw extensive service in the Vietnam War. In 1965, she helped land the first US ground troops at Chu Lai. *Bexar* was decommissioned in 1970. In 1982 she was scrapped in either South Korea or Taiwan.

USS Cambria



USS Cambria (APA-36/LPA-36) was a *Bayfield*-class attack transport built by the Western Pipe and Steel Company of San Francisco. She was named after Cambria County, Pa.

Cambria received six battle stars for World War II service, and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal for participating in the Cuban Missile Crisis.

She was launched on November 10, 1942 as SS *Sea Swallow*, converted to an attack transport, and commissioned on November 10, 1943, with a U.S. Coast Guard crew.

In December 1943, *Cambria* sailed from Norfolk to Pearl Harbor. In January she sailed for the invasion of the Marshall Islands, serving as flagship for the Majuro Attack Group.

In June, she was a flagship in the Marianas invasion. In the assault on Saipan, she took on 715 casualties of the fighting on the island. Later she handled 613 casualties from the invasion of Tinian.

In September she landed troops at Dulag, Leyte, in the first assault wave, then received 70 wounded men.

In January 1945, *Cambria* landed troops at Lingayen Gulf, then trained for the invasion of Okinawa, where she put her troops ashore in April 1945. Subsequently she was a participant in the enormous *Operation Magic Carpet* which brought back demobilizing troops to the United States.

After the war, she operated from Norfolk on local exercises and training in the Caribbean. She was placed out of commission in reserve in June, 1949.

Cambria was recommissioned in 1950 with the outbreak of war in Korea. She later operated in the Caribbean and off Labrador, with three tours of duty in the Med. In 1956 she landed United Nations troops at Gaza during the Suez crisis.

In 1958, she supported American landings in Lebanon. In 1959 she visited Great Lakes ports in connection with the opening of the Saint Lawrence Seaway. She was involved in the Cuban Missile Crisis in late 1962. In 1969 she collided with USS *Shadwell* (LSD-15) during an exercise off Malta.

Cambria was decommissioned in 1970 and scrapped the following year.

USS Pickaway



USS Pickaway (APA/LPA-222) was a *Haskell*-class attack transport built by Permanente Metals Corporation, Yard No. Two, in Richmond, California. She was named after Pickaway County, Ohio.

Pickaway's keel was laid on September 1, 1944. She was launched 66 days later and commissioned on December 12, 1944. She saw service with the US Navy in World War II, the Korean War and the Vietnam War. *Pickaway* received one battle star for World War II service and six battle stars for Korean War service.

In February 1945, she evacuated Marines who were finishing off the Japanese forces on Iwo Jima. During the rest of the war, she transported personnel between San Francisco and various ports in the Pacific.

Pickaway visited Japan and China in 1947 and participated in *Operation Sandstone*, the second atomic test in the Pacific, early in 1948.

During the Korean War, *Pickaway* was deployed to the Korean area four times. She landed troops at Inchon and most of the major Korean beachheads.

During 1957 and 1958, she made regular deployments to WestPac. In 1958, she took part in *Exercise Blue Star*, the largest amphibious exercise conducted since WWII.

In 1964, she took a Marine battalion from Okinawa to Vietnam to help build up American forces after the Gulf of Tonkin Incident.

In March 1965, she participated in the US Pacific Fleet Exercise *Silver Lance*. In July 1965, together with other elements of Amphibious Squadron 3, *Pickaway* landed the 2nd Battalion of the 9th Marine Regiment over the beaches of Da Nang, South Vietnam.

During 1966, she participated in *Operations Jackstay*, *Osage*, *Deckhouse I*, *Nathan Hale*, *Deck House II*, and *Hastings*.

USS *Pickaway* was decommissioned on January 30, 1970, and struck from the Naval Register in 1976. She was sold for scrap in 1980.

USS Rankin



USS Rankin (AKA-103/LKA-103) was a *Tolland*-class attack cargo ship built by the North Carolina Shipbuilding Company of Wilmington, North Carolina. She was named after Rankin County, Mississippi.

Rankin's keel was laid on October 31, 1944. She was launched 52 days later and commissioned in Charleston, South Carolina on February 25, 1945. She joined the Pacific Fleet in April, participating for 17 days in the Battle of Okinawa. During her time there, she faced more than 100 *kamikaze* air raids. On June 28, she sailed for San Francisco. She was in Seattle when hostilities ended, and sailed for the Philippines.

Rankin took part in *Operation Magic Carpet*, repatriating U.S. soldiers who had been stationed in the Far East. She visited China and Japan during 1946 and early 1947. The ship was decommissioned in San Francisco in May 1947, and placed "in mothballs" at Suisun Bay, California.

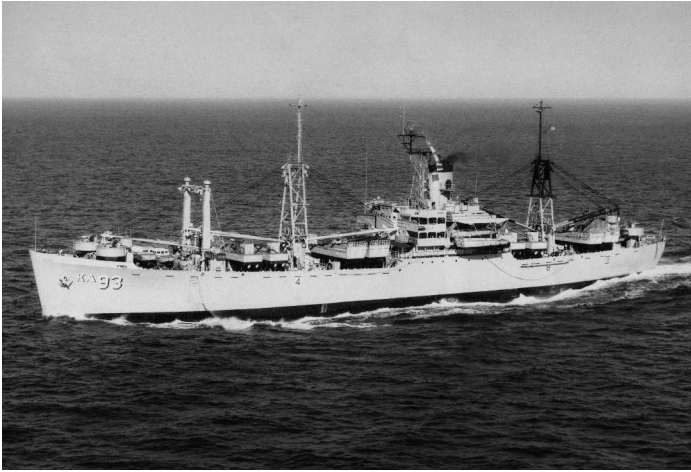
Rankin was recommissioned in March, 1952 at the Todd Shipyard in Alameda, California. She transited the Panama Canal to join the Amphibious Force, Atlantic Fleet, and began a second career supporting amphibious training operations in the Atlantic, Mediterranean, and Caribbean.

In July 1958, she helped land 5,000 U.S. troops in Lebanon, helping to avoid a civil war. In November 1962, she was one of hundreds of ships responding to the Cuban Missile Crisis. In February 1963, she visited the Dominican Republic for the inauguration of President Juan Bosch, and in April, she patrolled for 31 days off the coast of Haiti until tensions eased in that country.

From 1956-1960, *Rankin* won an unprecedented five straight Battle Efficiency Awards, enabling her crew to wear a Gold E on their uniforms. In 1958, she simultaneously held every award available to an AKA.

USS *Rankin* was decommissioned in 1971, and in 1988 was sunk as a fishing and diving reef off the coast of Stuart, Florida. She rests on her starboard side in 130 feet of water.

USS Yancey



USS Yancey (AKA-93/LKA-93) was an *Andromeda*-class attack cargo ship built by the Moore Dry Dock Company of Oakland, California. She was named after Yancey County, North Carolina.

Yancey's keel was laid on May 22, 1944. She was launched on July 8, and commissioned on October 11, 1944. She operated in the Pacific during the war and participated in the amphibious landings at Iwo Jima in February, 1945 and Okinawa in April. After Japan's surrender in August, *Yancey* was in Tokyo Bay for the signing of the Japanese Instrument of Surrender on September 2, 1945.

She made voyages delivering troops for the occupation of Japan before returning to the United States in January 1946. After spending most of the next year on the East Coast, *Yancey* was ordered back into the Pacific in November, and took part in *Operation Highjump*, a Navy expedition to Antarctica, in January 1947; Yancey Glacier was named in the ship's honor.

After spending most of the next decade in duties in the Western Pacific, *Yancey* was decommissioned in March 1958 and placed in reserve at Olympia, Washington. She was reactivated in the aftermath of the Berlin Crisis of 1961 and recommissioned in November.

During the October 1962 Cuban Missile Crisis she sailed in support of the U.S. blockade of Cuba, and during the April 1965 U.S. intervention in the Dominican Republic she carried almost a quarter of all of the evacuees from Santo Domingo. In January 1970, *Yancey* was blown by a storm into the Chesapeake Bay Bridge-Tunnel, closing it for several weeks.

USS *Yancey* was decommissioned for the final time in January 1971. After being stripped of salvageable materials, she was sunk in 1990 as an artificial reef off Morehead City, North Carolina, a place she had visited often in the past. She rests on her starboard side at a depth of 160 feet.

AKA / APA History

AKAs and APAs were designed during WWII specifically to carry troops, equipment and supplies in support of amphibious assaults, and to provide boats and naval gunfire support during those assaults.

They were originally designated as Attack Cargo Ships (AKA) and Attack Transports (APA). In 1969, they were renamed as Amphibious Cargo Ships and Amphibious Transports and redesignated LKA and LPA.

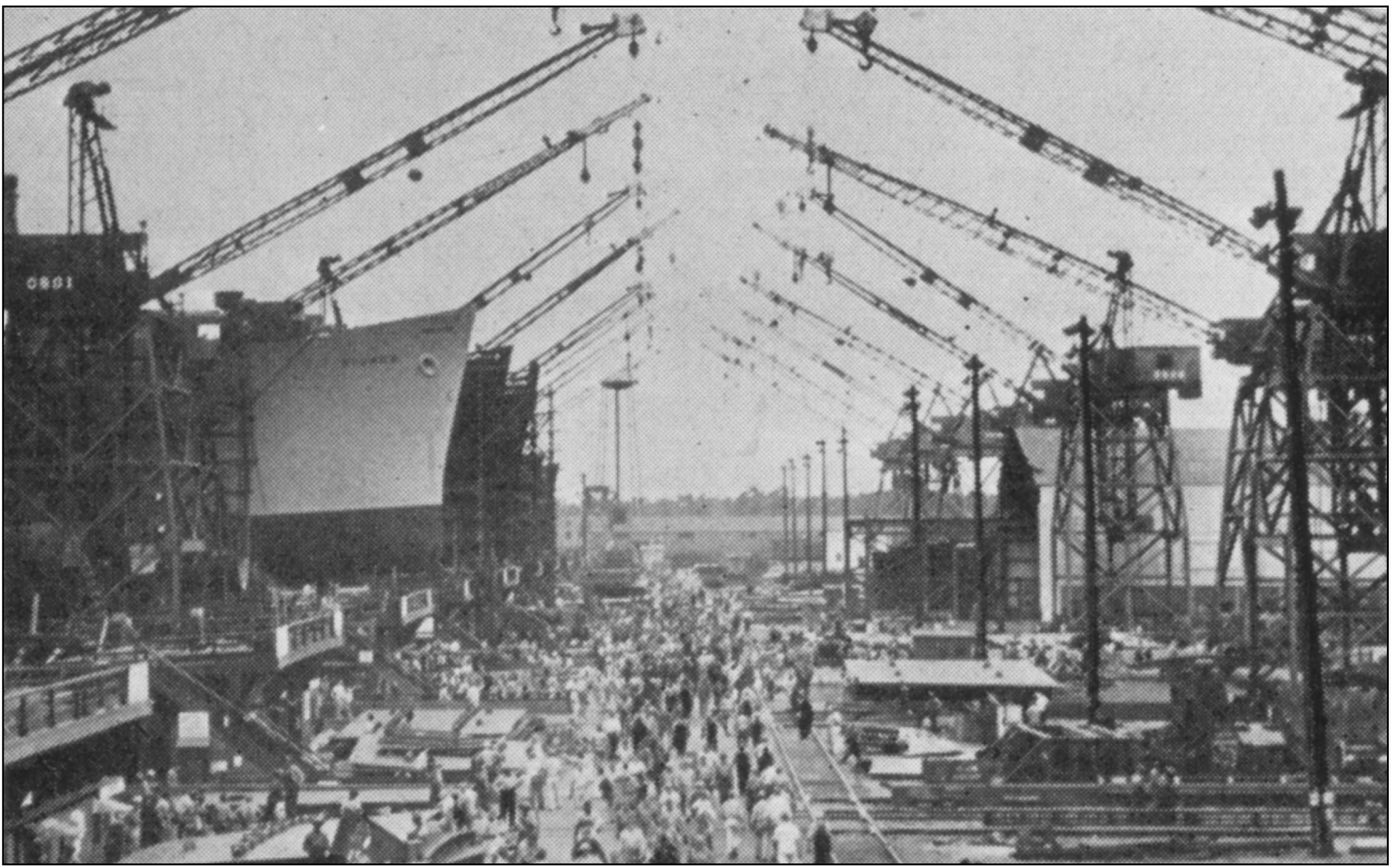
Compared to other cargo ship types, they could carry landing craft, were faster, had more armament, and had larger hatches and booms. APAs had facilities to house and feed large numbers of troops. AKA holds were optimized for combat loading, a method of cargo storage where the items first needed ashore were at the top of the hold, and those needed later were lower down. Because these ships went into forward combat areas, they had Combat Information Centers and significant amounts of equipment for radio communication, neither of which were present in other similar ships.

AKAs and APAs played a vital role in the Pacific War, where many were attacked by kamikazes and other aircraft, and several were torpedoed, but none were sunk or otherwise destroyed. Nine AKAs, including USS *Yancey*, and 21 APAs were present at the Japanese surrender ceremony in Tokyo Bay on September 2, 1945.

After the war, many AKAs and APAs were "mothballed" and put into the National Defense Reserve Fleet. Others were converted for other uses, such as oceanographic surveying, undersea cable laying, and repairing other ships. Some of the reserve ships were recommissioned for the Korean War, and some stayed in service during and after the Vietnam War.

By the end of the 1950s, it was clear that boats would soon be superseded by helicopters and air cushion landing craft (LCACs) for landing on enemy shores. Throughout the 1960s, new varieties of amphibious ships began to replace APAs and AKAs. Both the United States Navy and the British Royal Navy developed amphibious transport docks (LPDs), with well decks and flight decks, which gradually took on their role and today have assumed it completely.

The last AKAs, featuring a completely new design, were commissioned between 1968 and 1970. There were no corresponding new APAs. In 1969, when the remaining AKAs and APAs were redesignated LKA and LPA (retaining their previous numbers), only a few were still in commission. The last APA/LPA was decommissioned by the early 1970s, and the last amphibious cargo ship, USS *El Paso* (LKA-117), was decommissioned in 1994.



Building Amphibious Ships, 1945



Prayer Service at the USS Rankin Commissioning Ceremony, 1945



USS Bexar Reunion History

- 2017 - Harrisburg, PA
- 2016 - Reno, NV
- 2015 - Tulsa, OK
- 2014 - Pensacola, FL
- 2013 - Portland, OR
- 2012 - Branson, MO
- 2011 - Boston, MA
- 2010 - Long Beach, CA
- 2009 - Nashville, TN
- 2008 - Newport News, VA
- 2007 - Tucson, AZ
- 2006 - Chicago, IL
- 2005 - Washington, DC
- 2004 - Seattle, WA
- 2003 - San Antonio, TX
- 2002 - Charleston, SC
- 2001 - Reno, NV
- 2000 - St. Louis, MO
- 1999 - Norfolk, VA
- 1998 - San Diego, CA
- 1997 - Colorado Springs, CO
- 1996 - San Antonio, TX
- 1995 - Jacksonville, FL



USS Cambria Reunion History

- 2017 - Harrisburg, PA
- 2016 - Buffalo, NY
- 2015 - Charleston, SC
- 2014 - Virginia Beach, VA
- 2013 - Chattanooga, TN
- 2012 - Branson, MO
- 2011 - Pensacola, FL
- 2010 - Boston, MA
- 2009 - Washington, DC
- 2008 - Philadelphia, PA
- 2007 - Milwaukee, WI
- 2006 - Albuquerque, NM
- 2005 - Columbus, OH
- 2004 - Savannah, GA
- 2003 - Baltimore, MD
- 2002 - Charleston, SC
- 2001 - New Orleans, LA
- 2000 - San Diego, CA
- 1999 - Lancaster, PA
- 1998 - Norfolk, VA
- 1997 - San Antonio, TX
- 1996 - St. Augustine, FL
- 1995 - St. Louis, MO
- 1993 - Ft. Mitchell, KY

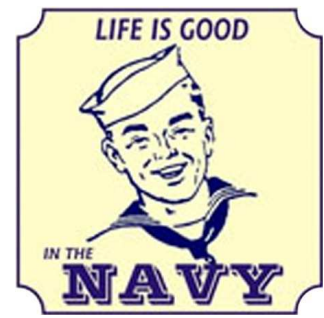
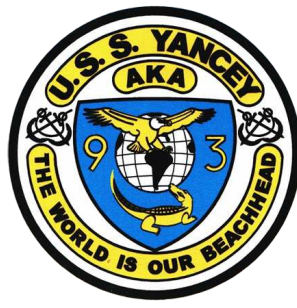


USS Pickaway Reunion History

- 2017 - Harrisburg, PA
- 2016 - Reno, NV
- 2015 - Tulsa, OK
- 2014 - Pensacola, FL
- 2013 - Portland, OR
- 2012 - Branson, MO
- 2011 - Boston, MA
- 2010 - Tucson, AZ
- 2009 - Jacksonville, FL
- 2008 - Lexington, KY
- 2007 - Nashville, TN
- 2006 - Chicago, IL
- 2005 - San Diego, CA
- 2004 - Grand Rapids, MI
- 2003 - Seattle, WA
- 2002 - Indianapolis, IN
- 2001 - Denver, CO
- 2000 - San Antonio, TX
- 1999 - Omaha, NE

The Pickaway and the Bexar reunions merged in 2011, continuing this way until their reunion company discontinued operations in late 2016. That event led to the two reunion groups merging with the Rankin and Yancey reunions in 2017.





USS Rankin Reunion History

- 2017 - Harrisburg, PA
- 2016 - Jacksonville, FL
- 2015 - Nashville, TN
- 2014 - Newport, RI
- 2013 - San Antonio, TX
- 2012 - New Orleans, LA
- 2011 - Charleston, SC
- 2010 - Branson, MO
- 2009 - Norfolk, VA
- 2008 - Stuart, FL
- 2007 - New London, CT
- 2006 - Washington, DC
- 2005 - San Diego, CA
- 2004 - Norfolk, VA

There were some informal reunions in the 1990s, all held in Virginia Beach. The USS Rankin Association was started in 2003 when Skip Sander and four other officers from the early 1960s decided to find as many shipmates as they could. They found them by the hundreds, and due to popular demand they held a reunion in 2004. It drew 297 people, a total never approached again.

USS Yancey Reunion History

- 2017 - Harrisburg, PA
- 2016 - Jacksonville, FL
- 2015 - Nashville, TN
- 2014 - Newport, RI
- 2013 - Washington, DC
- 2012 - San Diego, CA
- 2011 - New Orleans, LA
- 2010 - Boston, MA
- 2009 - Mobile, AL
- 2008 - Seattle, WA
- 2007 - Washington, DC
- 2006 - Chicago, IL
- 2005 - Norfolk, VA
- 2004 - San Francisco, CA
- 2003 - Corpus Christi, TX
- 2002 - Charleston, SC
- 2001 - San Diego, CA
- 2000 - Baton Rouge, LA
- 1999 - Washington, DC
- 1998 - Pensacola, FL
- 1997 - San Francisco, CA
- 1996 - No reunion
- 1995 - Norfolk, VA

The Yancey reunion group merged with the Rankin group in 2014.

Top Amphibious Reunion Cities

- 1 - Branson, MO
- 2 - Norfolk Area, VA
- 3 - Charleston, SC
- 4 - San Diego, CA
- 5 - San Antonio, TX
- 6 - Washington Metro, DC
- 7 - Nashville, TN
- 8 - New Orleans, LA
- 9 - Newport, RI
- 10 - Seattle, WA
- 11 - Savannah, GA
- 12 - Chicago, IL
- 13 - Las Vegas, NV
- 14 - New London, CT
- 15 - Annapolis, MD
- 16 - St. Louis, MO
- 17 - Reno, NV
- 18 - Myrtle Beach, SC
- 19 - Cruise Reunion
- 20 - Colorado Springs, CO
- 21 - Boston, MA
- 22 - Baltimore, MD
- 23 - Buffalo, NY
- 24 - Portland, OR
- 25 - Philadelphia, PA



The above list was compiled from a study done by the USS Rankin in 2015.

They asked 69 large amphibious ships to tell where they held their reunions from 2001-2015. Twenty-seven ships responded, providing data for 330 reunions, held in 91 different cities.

The top four cities accounted for 25% of all these reunions; the top 12 accounted for 50%, and the top 25 accounted for 64%. Branson hosted 28 reunions, Norfolk held 24, Charleston held 19, San Antonio and Washington DC hosted 16 each. The other cities in the Top 25 held from nine to four reunions each. Five reunions were held on cruise ships.

BEFORE THE BOARD OF SUPERVISORS
FOR RANKIN COUNTY, MISSISSIPPI

**A Resolution Honoring the Servicemen of the United States Navy
who Served Aboard the Tolland Class Attack Cargo Ship USS Rankin
and Declaring September 28, 2017 through October 1, 2017
to be USS Rankin Days in Rankin County, Mississippi,**

WHEREAS, it is with great pride that the Rankin County Board of Supervisors recognize and honor the servicemen of the United States Navy who so ably and capably served our great country aboard the Tolland Class Attack Cargo Ship, USS Rankin, a warship named for Rankin County, Mississippi; and

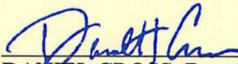
WHEREAS, the USS Rankin was commissioned during the final year of World War II, serving briefly during the conflict and for two years during the postwar transition to peacetime. She was re-commissioned during the Korean War and served her country with honor and distinction until her final de-commissioning in 1971; and

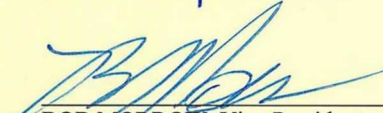
WHEREAS, for her service during World War II, the USS Rankin was awarded the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with one star, the World War II Victory Medal, the Navy Occupation Service Medal with an Asian Clasp, the National Defense Service Medal, and the China Service Medal. During the eight years after her 1952 re-commissioning, the USS Rankin was awarded the Battle Efficiency Award six times, including an unprecedented five straight from 1956–1960. By special order of Commander in Chief, Atlantic Fleet, USS Rankin sailors were authorized to wear the Gold “E,” signifying five straight Battle Efficiency Awards, and the ship wore the Gold “E” on her stack; and

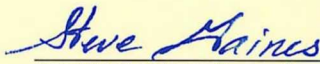
WHEREAS, the USS Rankin was a very special ship during her time in commission, being characterized by high morale and outstanding performance. Many of her captains and officers proceeded to high rank and distinction within the U.S. Navy, including a Medal of Honor recipient, a Navy Cross recipient, and a member of the Blue Angels flight team; and,

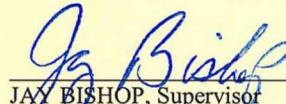
WHEREAS, it is with great pride on behalf of all citizens of Rankin County, Mississippi, that we, the Rankin County Board of Supervisors, recognize and commend the Servicemen of the United States Navy who sacrificed willingly for the good of their country, serving with honor and distinction, and representing the great people of the United States aboard the USS Rankin, a warship proudly named for the grateful people of Rankin County, Mississippi. The citizens of Rankin County, Mississippi, owe a debt of gratitude to the servicemen aboard the USS Rankin for securing the freedoms we enjoy. May we never take for granted the great price paid for our freedoms and liberties. May we endeavor to serve our fellow man with a similar spirit of personal sacrifice and devotion to duty as that displayed by the Servicemen aboard the USS Rankin. We hereby declare September 28 through October 1, 2017, to be USS Rankin Days in Rankin County, Mississippi, and we wish for the Servicemen of the USS Rankin gathering in Harrisburg, Pennsylvania, a meaningful time of fellowship and reflection as they celebrate their history with this great warship.

SO RESOLVED AND ADOPTED this the 5th day of September, 2017.

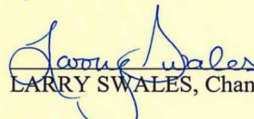

DANIEL CROSS, Board President


BOB MORROW, Vice-President


STEVE GAINES, Supervisor


JAY BISHOP, Supervisor


JARED MORRISON, Supervisor


LARRY SWALES, Chancery Clerk

The Amphibious Sailor

You've heard of the fliers, Marines, and the troops,
The Navy and frogmen, and all sorts of groups.
But give it some thought, and then tell if you can,
Have you ever heard of th'Amphibious Man?

This seldom seen gob is a wandering sort,
Since unlike his brothers he's got no home port.
He goes where he's needed, he does what he can,
This orphan-type sailor, th'Amphibious Man.

He might be a seaman from off of a ship,
Or just out of boot camp, a skinny young whip.
He's picked out at random—how else to decide?
A few might have chose it, but most were Shanghaied.

He runs with the boats, wherever they go,
And nobody told you, so you'd never know.
Yes, no one has told you of him or his job,
He's not known or heard of, th'Amphibious Gob.

No matter his duty or how much he knew,
He got special training before he was crew.
They showed how to run 'em, and told what they're
worth,
And taught how to land 'em, then back through the surf.

You've heard of the Navy, of ships fore and aft,
But probably never of this: "landing craft."
They're building 'em plenty, we need a lot more
To land on the islands, and win this damned war.

Both Mike Boats and Peters, and others as well,
Of wood and of metal, and sturdy as hell,
With ramps in the front, and with engines in back,
And armed with machine guns, for when they're
attacked.

They're loaded from transports, in darkness of night,
He sails 'em in circles without any lights.
Then out through the gunfire to land on the shore
Through surf that can kill them, then go back for more.

Surviving the first wave's the start of his job,
Since those on the beach, they depend on this gob.
He brings reinforcements and all that they use,
His job's in the battle, but not in the news.

When battles are over, the radio tells
Of soldiers and heroes, their beaches and hells.
You'll thrill at the stories of them and their jobs,
But never a word of Amphibious Gobs.

And after the conflict, in good civvy life,
How can he explain to his kiddies and wife:
He fought in the Navy, but not on a ship—
An orphan-like sailor, now ain't that a pip?

They've heard of the fliers, the troops and the draft,
Marines and the Navy, but not landing craft.
And no one has told them of him or his job...
He's a hell of a mystery, th'Amphibious Gob.

Anonymous - Adapted by Louis F. Sander

This poem had its origin in World War II, when amphibious boat crews were assigned to boat groups rather than to ships. These crews are the "Amphibious men" referred to in the poem. Sailors would be plucked from other duty, given amphibious training in Fort Pierce, Florida, then rushed off to man the landing craft wherever they were.

They wore a red and gold patch on their sleeves, to show they had earned this special qualification. Their work was difficult, dangerous, and dirty, but it was essential to waging and winning the war.

Some terms in the poem may be unknown to post-WWII Navy folk: To Shanghai is to forcibly conscript a man to serve a term working on a ship, usually after having been rendered senseless by alcohol or drugs. A gob is a sailor. A Peter is an LCVP, or Papa boat, named after the WWII phonetic for the letter P. A transport is a ship that carries landing craft — in other words, an AKA or APA.

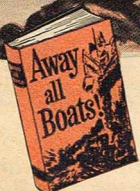


SCREAMED FROM THE RAW THROATS OF FIGHTING MEN

TORN FROM THE HEARTS OF THEIR LOVE-LONESOME WOMEN

AWAY ALL BOATS...AWAY! THE BATTLE CRY OF THE SOUTH PACIFIC . . .

COLOR BY **TECHNICOLOR** IN **VISTAVISION**
WIDE SCREEN PICTURE HIGH FIDELITY



Away All Boats!

STARRING

JEFF CHANDLER · GEORGE NADER · JULIE ADAMS · LEX BARKER

CO-STARRING **KEITH ANDES · RICHARD BOONE · JOCK MAHONEY · WILLIAM REYNOLDS · CHARLES Mc GRAW**

JOHN McINTIRE with **FRANK FAYLEN** • Directed by **JOSEPH PEVNEY** • Screenplay by **TED SHERDEMAN** • Produced by **HOWARD CHRISTIE**

A UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL PICTURE • COMING SOON TO YOUR FAVORITE THEATRE

That was then...

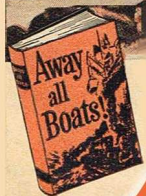


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MOBILION PICTURE HIGH-FIDELITY



Away Old Goats!

STARRING **SKIP SANDER • GEORGE CLIFTON • JIMMY CEE • HANK HENRY**

CO-STARRING **PAUL ALLEN • ED GASKELL • NORMAN BOYD • J.W. SMITS • DICK LACY • HARRY ZIMMER**
JOHN McINTIRE with **FRANK FAYLEN** • Directed by **JOSEPH PEVNEY** • Screenplay by **TED SHERDEMAN** • Produced by **HOWARD CHRISTIE**

A UNIVERSAL-INTERNATIONAL PICTURE • COMING SOON TO YOUR FAVORITE THEATRE

...and this is now!

The 2017 Amphibious Ships Reunion was planned and organized by Military Reunion Planners of Grapevine, Texas, under the leadership and guidance of:



George Clifton
USS Yancey

Skip Sander
USS Rankin

Ray Casey
MRP

Attendees from the USS Bexar and USS Pickaway were invited by Jimmy Cee of the Pickaway. A. B. "Hank" Henry invited the attendees from the USS Cambria. Those from the USS Rankin and USS Yancey were invited by their respective reunion groups.

The Proclamations declaring our reunion dates as special days in their counties were provided by the elected officials of Cambria County, Pennsylvania; Pickaway County, Ohio; Rankin County, Mississippi; and Yancey County, North Carolina. The Bexar County proclamation is a *pro forma* imitation, produced because Bexar county was slow in responding to our request.

This Memory Book was conceived and created by Skip Sander and printed by blurb.com. Shipmate photos were taken by Steve Miller of Steve Miller Photography. Other photos were provided by Ed Beer, George Clifton, Debbie Holliday, Chuck Legler, Jere Retalack, Brenda Ryneski, Skip Sander, and Buddy Stringer.







PARTICIPATING SHIPS

USS BEXAR

USS CAMBRIA

USS PICKAWAY

USS RANKIN

USS YANCEY