



## Newsletter of the USS BAINBRIDGE Association

Summer 2016



### Message from your President

Hello again friends and shipmates. Once again we have completed a successful reunion. It sure was great to see everyone in Springfield. The reunion was fun, interesting and for me even educational. I learned many things about Abraham Lincoln's life and family that I wasn't aware of before. Many thanks to John Browning for doing an excellent job on coordinating the accommodations and venues we all enjoyed.

I know everyone is wondering where and when our next reunion is going to take place. We have been considering the Lancaster, Pennsylvania area. There is a lot of history there including the Gettysburg Battlefield, Amish country and much more. Over the past few weeks Bob Hemingway has been putting in a lot of work on investigating the hotels, possible venues, transportation to and from Lancaster and other transportation available in the area. He has negotiated with the Heritage Lancaster which has agreed to accommodate our needs for the reunion starting Sunday, June 4 through Wednesday June 7, 2017. All the arrangements and schedules are still in the early stages. We will send out a notification to everyone as we move forward and events and schedules are more finalized.

During our last business meeting in Springfield it was suggested by Carol Fulk that we reintroduce the "Wives' Corner" section of the newsletter. This was part of our newsletter 6 or 7 years ago when Carmela Courtemarche was editor. In fact Carmela called it "Wives' Tales". I believe it only lasted for a few editions of the newsletter. I'm guessing due to lack of input. So I am asking all of you ladies to send in stories from a "wives' perspective". As Carmela said it in earlier editions of the newsletter, they can be "stories of family, long waits, love, heartache, humor and hope".

Just write them up and email them to Bob Beaty at [rlb8601@cox.net](mailto:rlb8601@cox.net) and we will publish them in future newsletters. A word to you guys too. All input is welcome and requested to fill each edition of our newsletter. I know there must be some more sea stories out there.

Charles Gilbert has finished sending out invitations to everyone on our active members list to become "friends" on the Bainbridge Reunion Facebook page. Pictures from the Springfield reunion have been posted as well as pictures from reunions in past years. Many members have not responded to the invitations yet, but Charles has gotten positive feedback from those who have. Check your email, get your Facebook account and join us for the fun and memories.

Bob Vassuer has been working on the Bainbridge website and has done several additions and refinements. If you haven't been on the website for a while I invite you to log on to [ussbainbridgeassociation.com](http://ussbainbridgeassociation.com) and check it out.

During the business meeting it was voted that the association officers, I, Chuck Gilbert, Dick Holloway and Jim Beaty remain in office for another year. The appointed officials, Bob Beaty, Mauro Greco and Bob Vasseur will also continue in their positions. Jerry Fulk has volunteered to assume the chaplains duties upon the loss of our shipmate Dan Robertson this past year. Thank you to each of you for helping insure our association remains active and keeps moving forward.

Well, Dianna's birthday is in the last week of July on the 25<sup>th</sup> and she wants to go to Laughlin, Nevada and play a little to celebrate. It looks like we'll be going from one HOT location to another. I guess we'll just have to stay in the air conditioning, have a few drinks, have some nice dinners and play a little to contribute to the Nevada economy. We want to wish everyone a safe and enjoyable summer.

Joe Bisig

**PICTURES OF ITEMS SEEN AND SITES VISITED AT U.S.S. BAINBRIDGE ASSOC. REUNION HELD ON AUG. 5TH. THRU AUG. 9TH. IN SPRINGFIELD, ILLINOIS**



USS Bainbridge Association 2016 Reunion Springfield, IL Pictures



Lincoln Statue



Lincoln Tomb



Original Springfield Capital



New Springfield Capital



Capital Internal Pic #1



Capital Internal Pic #2



Capital Internal Pics #3 & 6



Capital Internal Pics #4 & 7



Capital Internal Pics #5 & 8



## The Reminiscences of Vice Admiral Raymond Peet U.S. Navy (Retired)



VADM PEET

### This is the third part of the Interview No. 1 with VADM Raymond E. Peet described in the Reminiscences.

The doctrine that I had learned in school was to surprise a sub and if possible ram him, but I couldn't get Count Austin to make up his mind to do that. He wanted to preserve the ship for the later fight. We would have lost our sonar, of course, but we would have gotten the submarine. At any rate, we broke off after that incident and rejoined the others. Sure enough, early in the morning hours on schedule we discovered this formation of Japanese ships. Well, Burke and Austin had agreed on tactics beforehand, and we knew exactly what to do. We proceeded to attack, launched our torpedoes, and opened fire with 5-inch guns. We were successful. We had lots of hits. However, the Converse was hit by a dud torpedo, amidships. It struck against the ship with a thud. I was on the wing of the bridge, and the concussion knocked me down, as it did others on the bridge. We temporarily lost all power; then we recovered and went on as if nothing had happened. At the time we were not quite sure what it was, whether we had hit something or vice versa. It was later that we determined it must have been a dud torpedo. Finding out came about as follows. We had been at sea for a long time, so they sent us to Sydney, Australia, for rest and recreation. There we were dry-docked and were able to look at the bottom of the ship. You could see the imprint of a torpedo in the hull. It made a distinct dent in the hull of the ship and failed to explode. We all felt very, very lucky. At any rate, we were engaged with the enemy force until the wee morning hours. We were chasing the survivors, but one or two did manage to get away. It was a very successful engagement and as a matter of fact well documented. Later on, we were ordered to join up with the cruisers--the Denver, the Montpelier, and the Cleveland.

That group was headed up by Admiral "Tip" Merrill. \* We were trained to team with them also. It was with them that we participated in the battle of Empress Augusta Bay--a melee at night with a large Japanese force. \* We experienced several hot engagements that night and also did more shore bombarding, the details of which are getting to be rather vague in my mind. There have been numerous stories written about these events.

Q: Was that when you were involved in the Empress Augusta Bay engagement?

Admiral Peet: Yes. We were involved in many engagements in the South Pacific in that two-year period. It was just an active time. I'll always remember an event that took place following the Empress Augusta Bay engagement. We had been quite

*\*Rear Admiral A. Stanton Merrill, USN, Commander Task Force 39, embarked in the light cruiser Montpelier.*

*\*For a detailed account of this battle, see Morison, Breaking the Bismarcks Barrier, pp. 305-322.*

successful, and all the units in the area had followed our exploits with great interest. When our destroyers came into harbor--there were lots of ships down there--they manned the rails and rendered us honors. It brings tears to my eyes even now.

Q: Which harbor

Admiral Peet: It was across from Guadalcanal--Tulagi. They lit up the whole harbor and gave a party for us. It was quite unusual. It was quite impressive, to be recognized in that way by your peers, and the thought of it brings a lump to my throat even now. As I said, we were then given ten days in Sydney for R and R.\* That was a tremendous experience for us to be let loose in Sydney after nearly two years of no liberty other than on uninhabited islands. You can imagine all the problems we had with our sailors. Sydney was quite a sight. Following these celebrations, we came back and joined the fleet.

About that time Admiral Mitscher and the carrier task forces were coming into their own. \*\* They were beginning to operate in the Gilbert and Marshall Islands. Admiral Burke was ordered as chief of staff for Mitscher. Admiral Bob Cavenagh was our division commander. \*\*\* He had relieved Austin, and Austin had come back for another job. Cavenagh became squadron commander, and I got to know him. He was very mild-mannered, not a very decisive man, but very pleasant. With him we participated in some of the carrier task force operations, worked with the Australian ship--the Canberra--and with the English Ship--the Victoria. We experienced lots of carrier operations, which was entirely different from what we'd been doing in the South Pacific. We did this for a few months, and then I received orders back to the States to be a gunnery officer--of a new construction destroyer.

Q: Before we leave the South Pacific--I heard a comment that Admiral Burke used his destroyer like a hot rod. I thought this was a wonderful comment.

Admiral Peet: He did. Some of the ships in the squadron, and I think the Stanly was one, had different types of boilers, and when they were going at high speed they couldn't stop immediately. They had to cool down, and to do that they had to run around outside the harbor for an hour or so. Wherever we went, we went at high speed. Des Ron 23 was truly a hot-rod outfit, but that was important to the officers and the crew. They knew they were a bunch of hotshots, and they weren't afraid to go in harm's way. They knew they had a good team, that they could protect each other, that they could shoot accurately and that they had good damage control teams--that all was a part of Admiral Burke's plan.

*\*R and R--rest and recreation.*

*\*\*Rear Admiral Marc A. Mitscher, USN, had just taken over as commander of the fast carrier task force. He and Burke became quite a famous and successful team.*

*\*\*\*Commander Robert W. Cavenagh, USN, moved up from being commanding officer of the Stanly to take command of Destroyer Division 46.*

Q: None of those ships was lost?

Admiral Peet: No, didn't lose any. We had several close calls in that Empress Augusta Bay engagement when we were making our torpedo attack on the Japanese cruisers. One of the ships--I think it was the Foote--wasn't able to keep up with us, and she got hit in the fantail with a torpedo. She was crippled and dead in the water for a long time, but she did not sink, and we recovered her. The Spence had a problem. I think a shell exploded near her engine room, and they lost power. I was ODD of Converse steaming behind the Spence at high speed on a pitch-black night. I came up right alongside her. That was where I got another credit for my excellent night vision. I quickly detected Spence had lost power, so I sheared out of line immediately. You see, when you are going at 30 knots and 300 yards astern and the ship ahead suddenly loses all power, you are going to ride up on her. I ordered full rudder. The captain was apprehensive, but he never questioned my order. We scooted right alongside of Spence and proceeded on, leaving her behind.

Q: Then you got up into the Gilberts, Carolines, Kwajalein, Eniwetok, and the Marianas--all operational territory for the Pacific carrier task forces.

Admiral Peet: Remember, later in the war we had two fleets which operated alternatively in the Western Pacific. The Converse participated in these operations for a few months and then returned to San Francisco for overhaul. After our overhaul, we sailed for Pearl Harbor. There I received orders to leave the ship, return to the States, and put a new ship in commission as gunnery officer. But just prior to our return to the States, our exec was detached, and the next senior officer fleeted up to take his place. He was a reserve officer who was not at all interested in the job.

Q: Are you still talking about the Converse?

Admiral Peet: Yes, the captain at that time was J.B. Colwell, who had been Admiral Halsey's gunnery officer. \* He had relieved Hamberger. Well, Colwell shipped this guy off to the hospital for an appendicitis operation, and he made me the acting executive officer. Here I was less than two years out of the Academy, and he made me exec of the ship. That was quite a thing, even in those days. Captain Colwell and I got along fine. A few weeks later, we put in to San Francisco for an overhaul. Captain Colwell left the ship on emergency leave (his wife was ill), and I was in charge of the overhaul. There I was a fresh-caught lieutenant--you made it pretty fast in those days.

Q: You mean JG or full lieutenant?

Admiral Peet: Full lieutenant, and was acting exec officer.

Q: Where was the shipyard?

*\*Commander John Barr Colwell, USN, who eventually became a vice admiral. His oral history is in the Naval Institute collection.*

Admiral Peet: San Francisco, and when Converse went to sea again, I sailed with it. I had an unusual experience with this change of orders I received in Pearl. Obviously, I wasn't too thrilled about being a gunnery officer again after having been an exec. The skipper of the Spence needed an executive officer; for some reason he had to fire his old one. He knew I had been acting exec on the Converse, and we had gotten along quite well together in the shipyard when Spence was being overhauled at the same time as Converse. He was helping his ship, and I was representing the commanding officer of the Converse.

I was attending all the conferences with the shipyard commander, and the captain of Spence and we got to know and respect each other quite a bit. He wanted me to be his executive officer rather than going back and being a gunnery officer of the new ship. I liked that; I wanted to be his executive officer, but the orders never did come through. The squadron commander approved of it. He had requested the orders from BuPers, but we received no answer. In short, I had to catch a flight back to the States on the Pan Am Clipper. I got on the plane, and the day after I left those orders came through saying, "Okay, you can be the executive officer to the Spence." What happened next was that the ships sailed, and you may remember the Spence was lost within two weeks of that period in a typhoon. \* The ship turned turtle, and nearly all hands were lost. I could have been on that ship, and I often wonder why I was spared. It's one of the reasons I tend to be a fatalist. Here I was doing everything I could to get on the Spence, but to no avail.

Q: I wonder what would have happened had you been on the ship--did you perceive you might have saved it?

Admiral Peet: As I understood the situation, the ship didn't ballast properly in the fueling operation. Having been a damage control officer at one time on Converse, I was keenly aware of the need to ballast and that sort of thing. I often wondered if I couldn't have saved that ship. Of course, you never know, but I shall always have an uneasy feeling about it. Why was I left off? I tried everything I could possibly do to make that come about. I was single, and I was just raring to go.

Q: It makes you think also that perhaps things don't come that way and you shouldn't try too hard, because from your point maybe they shouldn't happen. When did you find out the Spence was lost?

Admiral Peet: When I got back to Washington, I went to the bureau immediately and said, "I want to go to the Spence. The skipper of the Spence wants me to be his executive officer." And they said, "You don't want to go to the Spence; she is lost."

*\*The USS Spence (DD-512) was lost 17 December 1944. Only 24 members of her crew survived the sinking.*

Q: How did you feel?

Admiral Peet: I just didn't know what to think. Instead of sending me to new construction, BuPers had a problem with the USS *Aulick* and sent me there. The *Aulick* had a captain who had his crew scared to death. He'd play bridge in the wardroom and put a gun on the table to intimidate someone who didn't play the right card. He was just out of his cotton-pickin' mind.

Q: Like Queeg?\*

Admiral Peet: Yes, he really was; it was an unusual situation I found on that ship.

Q: Was he a Naval Academy man?

Admiral Peet: Yes, he was. He was relieved for cause later on. \*\* There was an investigation--it was just a nasty situation. The morale of the crew was destroyed. They had been hit by a kamikaze plane off Okinawa and had been badly damaged. I found the ship in the Vallejo shipyard. \*\*\* Upon completion of overhaul, the ship was going to be sent back to the Pacific to operate with the carrier task forces and in the Okinawa sea. My job, of course, was to train the gun crews, restore their confidence as I was the gun-fire control officer.

Q: I am lost now in the sequence; you went to the Bureau and they said no, and then when you were back there didn't you go to some kind of a gunnery school for two months while you were there?

Admiral Peet: Yes, a refresher deal in Washington, D.C., as I recall. Then at the end of that time I was ordered to go to the *Aulick*. She was in the repair yard at San Francisco. I went there to help finish the repair job. That's where I met Dian.

Q: The ship had been hit by the kamikaze, but not while you were on it--that's why she was in for repairs?

Admiral Peet: Yes, that's why she was in for repairs. As I have said, I was very fortunate to have excellent night vision. I also had good depth perception and could spot 5-inch gun bursts accurately. As we went through our gunnery training, I could see the morale of the crew came up as we shot down one towed target right after the other. As we sailed to the West Pacific they had renewed confidence that they could shoot and defend themselves.

*\*Lieutenant Commander Queeg was the commanding officer of the USS Caine in Herman Wouk's World War II novel. IM Caine Mutiny. Queeg became mentally unbalanced in a typhoon modeled on the one which sank the actual USS Spence.*

*\*\*On 24 March 1945, Lieutenant Commander William R. Hunnicutt, USN, relieved Commander John D. Andrew, USN, as commanding officer of the Aulick.*

*\*\*\*Mare Island Navy Yard, Vallejo, California.*

Q: And you could then take evasive action?

Admiral Peet: Yes, we could protect ourselves. We had a number of experiences after we arrived in picket station in Okinawa. There used to be three destroyers on a picket station around Okinawa.

Q: Did you go directly from San Francisco alone?

Admiral Peet: I believe we went alone, making a routine stop at Pearl and training along the way. The *Aulick* was needed to re-join the other ships. She had been temporarily withdrawn because of the damage.

Q: To be alone, that was rather scary, wasn't it?

Admiral Peet: Well, I had lots of confidence in those days. I was young and didn't know better and had had a lot of battle experience already. I knew what we were going back to.

Q: I am sure your motivation inspired your crew.

Admiral Peet: They needed that very badly. I have never seen such a group of demoralized men--the captain was relieved--we went through Pearl Harbor and we had a new skipper. This skipper later became an admiral after I did. In those days, I wanted to go to PG school at the end of the war. Remember it was in my master life plan to go to MIT. And the funniest thing, the new skipper of the *Aulick* said that would be the worst thing in the world for my career. But I didn't listen. I applied for postgraduate school, and he endorsed it for me. Later on, after I had been on that ship for a year, I received two sets of orders--one to go to postgraduate school, and the other orders to flight training. I had also applied for flight training. As a consequence, I had to make rather a key decision in my career. I decided in favor of PG school. I figured they couldn't take the education from me; it was like an insurance policy. The flight training was sort of a mechanical type of thing--anybody could learn to fly.

Q: The war was still on?

Admiral Peet: The war was wrapping up. It was in June of '45 that I went to postgraduate school; the war wasn't quite over. It ended shortly after I got back to the States--while I was in postgraduate school at Annapolis.

Q: You were on the *Aulick* for five months?

Admiral Peet: Is that what it turned out to be? I thought it was a little more. The experience on the *Aulick* at Okinawa was on antiaircraft picket duty. One day a kamikaze came in on our ship's formation. We were shooting at it, and it landed alongside one of our ships in our formation. The Japanese Zero exploded underneath the ship and wiped out the bottom of that ship under

the engine room. That ship sank in less than 20 minutes, and there wasn't a single man lost; we were able to pick up all those men. A few of them had broken legs and bruises. That was a hair-raising experience, because here we were in engagements where the enemy had given up. Up until then, we had been involved in battles where the best man would win. He was trying to outsmart you, and you were trying to outsmart him, but in this case he was giving himself up. That was a demoralizing experience. The pilot of the kamikaze was giving up his life and trying to take you with him. It was a different war to me, and I was very impressed by the futility of it all.

Q: Did you have the feeling the Japanese were coming to the point of giving up?

Admiral Peet: We had the feeling that they were so desperate that they were just going to commit suicide and take you with them. That made a very significant impression on me. I was impressed by certain things that happened during the war, and some things will always stick in my memory. I often use my experience in talks, particularly to religious groups. When we were steaming en route to the South Pacific, we were called to general quarters from time to time. One time, as we were steaming along, we came across a raft bearing four or five Japanese. As we went alongside the raft to help them, the senior Japanese stood up with a machine gun in his hands. We all cleared the decks. He just waved it around and began jabbering at all the others on the raft and at us. They wouldn't let us take them aboard our ship. He turned around, put the machine gun at the head of each man, shot them, and put it in his own mouth and shot himself. You can imagine the impression that left on a young officer--they were so fanatical and wouldn't be rescued. I saw fanaticism many times in the South Pacific--when we sank ships, the people just wouldn't be rescued. We had a hard time getting survivors aboard ship. They would swim away from the ship. The Japanese were fanatical people and hard to understand.

Q: I have heard references to that but never such a direct experience such as yours.

Admiral Peet: Yes, it left a deep impression on my mind. There is another experience that I had that left an impression. I also tell this to religious groups. While on the Converse, we had occasion to put a boat on the water that contained a young man, who is now a lawyer in Virginia Beach, named Levin. Ensign Levin was the boat officer. \* I was the gunnery officer in charge of putting the boats in the water, and that's how I was so close to this story. Also in the boat were an engineer and a boatswain's mate. They

*\*Ensign Bernard Levin, USNR.*

were put to sea to explore something a lookout had sighted. While they were in the water, the ship was called to general quarters. We had to go away and leave them in the middle of the Pacific all alone. We, of course, intended to come back, but they had no way of knowing that.

When we did come back later and picked them up, I talked to this young Bernie Levin and he told me this story:

"We were out there all alone and saw this ship sail over the horizon. We didn't know what had happened. The boatswain's mate was a foul-mouthed guy who just kept cussing and swearing. The other fellow in the boat knelt and prayed. You know, I thought about this for a while and I kind of had sympathy for the fellow who was praying; he was a little more constructive and it might do some good. So I joined him in prayer."

You can just visualize the scene out there, these three fellows in the boat complaining about their lot and this young ensign, Bernie Levin, trying to decide which way to go.

Q: The crew and the ship performed well after you got there?

Admiral Peet: They performed extremely well. We were a good shooting outfit; the morale came up, and they got a little spirit and things went well. We were talking about the new captain in the Aulick. I was very, very fortunate in fitness reports. He endorsed my application for postgraduate school without prejudice. It was the type of thing that said he felt the ship couldn't spare me without qualified relief. The oddest thing is that after the war--a year or two later--he went back to PG school. I think he thought about it and decided PG education was career enhancing.

Q: Tell me a little bit about where that was and your course of study and various facets of that?

Admiral Peet: On my way back to Annapolis I stopped off in Oregon and picked up a bride. We were married in Union, Oregon.

Q: Probably no one ever heard of Union, Oregon, except your wife and me.

Admiral Peet: Well, we were married in the church there and all the people--the best man, the bride's maids and nearly everybody in attendance were all named Hutchinson. It almost looked like a shotgun wedding. It was at the Baptist Church. We had an itinerant minister, as they didn't have a regular minister.

Q: That was a full-regalia wedding?

Admiral Peet: Yes. We boarded the train in La Grande, Oregon, that night and came across the country and visited my parents so they could get to know my bride. Then we went to the Naval Academy. There Dian and I first lived in an attic apartment, then later on we moved to one of these homoja huts that they had at the Naval Academy as temporary housing during the war. These

were Butler-like houses erected by the Seabees. At the Naval Academy we called the compound of living quarters Homoja Village. It was located near Perry Circle. We had a good life. I studied awfully hard.

Q: That was the PG school in ordnance?

Admiral Peet: In those days, in '45, I went back for the ordnance engineering PG course. There were about 48 of us who were in competition with each other. The postgraduate school was then at the Naval Academy. Now it is in Monterey, California. At that time students took preparatory courses before going on to other colleges. Some of the group went to Purdue, some went to MIT, some to Cornell, depending on your specialty. There was competition among us from about June to December to decide who would specialize in what--I would say ten or more of this group became admirals later on. I was fortunate in that, here again, my aptitude for math stood me in good stead. I stood pretty high in the group, although I didn't have a high class standing in the Naval Academy. Most of these fellows stood higher than I did in the Naval Academy, and I did very well scholastically in this competition. As a result, I was one of the five who went to MIT for the fire control course.

Q: Did you have any choice?

Admiral Peet: That was my first choice and you got your first choice depending on your scholastic standing from June to December. Of the five there was John Chase \* who later became an admiral; Tom Collins, Forrest Houston (who ended up with TB and stayed on as instructor at MIT); and the fifth man was Bill Vose whose father was a Navy captain. Collins also left the Navy fairly soon after MIT--he had a lot of children to support, and he just had to be at home a lot. His wife was sickly and weak and he left the Navy. Bill Vose never caught on--an old-shoe type of fellow who was more interested in doing things with his hands. He was a good junior officer but never became a successful senior officer. John Chase was very capable. He was selected for admiral a year or so after I was.

The group of us worked well together. We worked in particular with Dr. Draper who developed a single-degree-of-freedom gyro.\*\* It was very precise and was used for the basis of the inertial navigation system in Polaris submarines. We did our master's degree thesis on the inertial navigation system. My particular interest was the single degree of freedom gyro for space stabilization. Bob Seamans, who later became Secretary of the Air Force, was an assistant professor to Dr. Draper.\*\*\* Those were exciting

*\*John D. Chase, who finished 14th of 456 graduates in the Naval Academy class of 1940; Lionel A. Collins, Jr., who stood 46th of 399 in the class of 1941; Forrest E. Houston, who was 21st of 563 in the class of 1942; and William F. Vose, who was 66th of 563 in the class of 1942.*

*\*\*Dr. Stark Draper, who also invented the spin-stabilized lead-computing sight for light anti-aircraft guns in World War II and for whom the Draper Laboratory at MIT is named.*

*\*\*\*Robert C. Seamans, Jr., who was Secretary of the Air Force from 1969 to 1973.*

times to be involved in that sort of thing. I'll never forget those days, because we just worked our tails off to keep our heads above water. The Navy students were taking five courses. We were taking a full load in graduate school, while the others were taking only a partial load. We had the number one man of the USNA Class of '41 there also. He had a nervous breakdown--it was just tough competition in graduate school at the end of the war. I remember going to one exam that had to do with computer theory--Professor Caldwell was our instructor.\* This was in the early days of computers. The exam involved much math, and I felt confident. When I saw the exam, I knew that I could do it--it was a good full hour's work, but I could do it. Well, I hadn't been working 10 to 15 minutes when a Chinese boy got up and turned his paper in. The professor graded it and he said, "Aha, you missed a couple of points; you only got a 98." Here I was still working my head off to finish in an hour; this was very demoralizing to me. But that's the type of people we were competing with. It was right at the end of the war, and people were taking these MIT courses to go back and teach them in other colleges.

Q: How had the Chinese man gotten there--he was a U.S. citizen, of course?

Admiral Peet: In 1946 there were people at MIT from all over the world. To get into the graduate school was a real tough proposition. The MIT professors weren't too happy to have the military there. They gave us the impression they had to take us, but they felt, what will these fellows ever contribute to MIT? They'll go back into the Navy, and we'll never hear of them again, whereas the other students will bring credit to MIT." I learned many good lessons though during this period. For instance, I did a paper for Professor Caldwell on the computers. It was a lot of work; a lot of trial and error work was behind the effort. I didn't show all that work on my paper; I just gave him my final answer. He gave me a barely passing grade, and I said to him, "What's wrong with this paper?"

He replied, "There's nothing wrong with it; it just looks like it came too easy to you, that you didn't spend much time on it, so I just gave you a passing grade."

I said, "I worked my head off on this; I had lots of trials and so on."

He said, "Well, let this be a lesson to you. You're going to leave here and be a consultant. Don't let people think your recommendations come so easy. Show them all the work that goes with it." It was a lesson for me. I've thought about it a lot since then.

The MIT education was very valuable to me. It was really the reason I got command of the Bainbridge.

Q: Did you have feelings of what was going on in the world and the experiments that were going on in other nations by other scientists at that time or was that--were you too busy with your...

Admiral Peet: A certain amount; but I was really too busy just surviving. It was very, very difficult for a Navy student to survive with that full workload, and I always resented being put in that position. I felt that I really had to work so hard just to

*\*Dr. Samuel H. Caldwell.*

survive that I didn't get as much out of it as I would have liked.

Q: What would you think should be different?

Admiral Peet: Later on, I went to the National War College. It was a more relaxed atmosphere with students of the caliber that you should send to those schools--the type that will make sure that they get something out of it. They shouldn't have to be pushed or deadlines; nor should the workload be so great that students can't sit back and reflect on the overall picture, the whole scheme of things.

Q: There was no attempt to develop your own creative ideas?

Admiral Peet: I have no love for MIT; I think of it as a factory; I think of it as meeting homework deadlines nearly every day in the week. I took a few hours off on Sunday--never went out for any entertainment or anything. How my poor wife survived the ordeal I don't know, but she was a good sport.

Q: Where did you live?

Admiral Peet: It was very difficult for us to find a place, but we came across a new duplex apartment house for rent in Arlington, Massachusetts. In those days, many items were in short supply. We had a hard time getting such things as cooking utensils. We rented the lower floor, and another family was to live on the upper floor. There was only one furnace available for the two apartments, so we had to share the fuel bill. Well, here we were, living on lieutenant's pay--I was a junior man in the class and the others were lieutenant commanders and commanders. The family upstairs happened to be going to the Harvard Business School. He was from the Merck Chemical Company family. They opened their windows and all the heat was going outdoors. Here I was struggling along trying to pay half the fuel bill. When we finally called it to their attention, they understood and cooperated. That was an experience that I won't forget either.

Q: Was your wife working or just helping you survive?

Admiral Peet: Helping me survive. I was brought up with the feeling that your wife didn't work for pay outside the home. I don't know whether that was good or bad, but she never did. It was five years until we could have children, she took classes at MIT on her own; she kept very busy--did a lot of volunteer work.

Q: Had she gone to advanced education?

Admiral Peet: Yes, she was a college graduate before she became a United Airlines stewardess. She went to Oregon State University in Corvallis, as did her two brothers. After she graduated, she wanted to do something exciting and became a United Airlines stewardess. In those days only college graduates became stewardesses, and just before that they had to be registered nurses. She had an interesting time; she was flying mostly from San Francisco to Cheyenne. This was the time of the San Francisco Peace Conferences. She happened to be on one flight, a side-flight to Los Angeles, that Aimee Semple McPherson \* was on. Aimee

*\*Aimee Semple McPherson was an evangelist who had a sensation-filled career on the West Coast in the years prior to her death in 1944.*

took a liking for Dian, and she had Dian show her letters from her boyfriend. After looking at them and talking to Dian she said, "You marry that fellow."

Q: This was you?

Admiral Peet: Yes.

Q: I thought she was a very fascinating woman.

Admiral Peet: She was a fascinating woman, and Dian can tell that story in a very fascinating way.

Q: When I knew that she was a stewardess, I had thought surely you had met her on a flight somewhere.

Admiral Peet: No, it was her roommate who knew an officer on the Aulick, and they decided that the two of us should get together. They arranged a blind date.

Q: So she helped you survive in Cambridge, winters and summers.

Admiral Peet: She was a tremendous Navy wife; she was always very helpful.

Q: Any opportunity to take advantage of the cultural things that Boston offered?

Admiral Peet: My wife is very musically inclined; she plays the violin. But there is a sad side to that. When we went to Boston from Annapolis, we had parked the car on the Boston Commons, and the violin and all her nice clothing were stolen. She never had a violin after that that she really liked. There is another side; before we were married she asked me if I liked the violin--I didn't know she played.

Q: You gave the wrong answer?

Admiral Peet: I did; I said I didn't care for the violin, so she was always reluctant to play in my presence. She would sometimes play in churches, but only if I agreed not to be there. I would have to sneak in the back and listen. I feel badly about it, because she is a beautiful violinist. She used to whistle and play the violin on a radio program in Oregon.

Q: Does she now have a violin?

Admiral Peet: She has a violin, but she doesn't play it very much. You ought to hear her whistle sometime--it's quite beautiful. She has true pitch; if you play a note she can tell you exactly what it is; she has a very keen musical ear.

Q: But, of course, MIT did a great deal for you in spite of the problems and difficulties.

Admiral Peet: Yes, it really set up my career from then on. At first, I was very disappointed, because when I left MIT I was ordered to be an operations officer on the destroyer squadron staff operating out of New Orleans.

To me that was a demotion. I had been executive officer of a destroyer during the war. To go back as an operations officer in a DD after all this education was very demoralizing.

Q: Before we go on to that, remember the end of the war and you were still at MIT, weren't you?

Admiral Peet: No, you see, I went back to postgraduate school at the Naval Academy in 1945; the war ended in '45, and so when I was at MIT the war was over.

Q: That's right; you were there from '45 to '48.

Admiral Peet: Yes, I was at the Naval Academy in '45 and '46 and from '46 to '48 I was in Cambridge at MIT. I had taken enough courses for a doctorate at MIT but didn't have time to do the doctoral thesis. I did get a master's degree in electrical engineering.

Q: I thought that was Key West, but you say it was New Orleans.

Admiral Peet: Yes, New Orleans and while I was there--for a year-- interesting things happened. The squadron was in trouble. They needed some experienced people; they were having all sorts of problems--boilers burning out, bearings being wiped, and it just had a bad reputation. They had been accused of rum running in the Caribbean on the reserve cruises.

Q: You mean the Navy ships were accused of rum running?

Admiral Peet: Yes, it was a mess. BuPers sent a whole group of new skippers to many of the ships. They sent me as an experienced destroyer man to be the squadron operations officer. There were eight ships in that squadron. We used to cruise every other

two weeks in the Caribbean. We would take reserve officers from the Midwest on a two-week cruise, then bring the ship back to New Orleans. We visited Panama, the islands in the Caribbean, Guantanamo, and maybe go to Tampa or places like that. I learned just how valuable the reserves are. I learned an awful lot about reserve programs. With just a handful of regulars, augmented with these reserves, we could keep those ships in good shape, running and a productive unit of the fleet.

One of the captains they sent down there was B.J. Semmes, who later became Chief of the Bureau of Personnel and President of the Naval War College. \* He did a fine job. I had a close association with him when he was skipper; we worked together to help straighten things out down there. I have been very fortunate throughout my naval career to have served with people who were very capable and who did get fine jobs in the Navy later on. It had to have an effect, because everywhere I went I was associated with those people. They either requested me for jobs or gave me access to top-level people.

It was interesting to bring these ships up the Mississippi River. People don't realize that New Orleans is about 90 miles up this river.

The river pilots are all part of a family--a very close-knit group. When they didn't see a pilot flag flying on a government ship, all their friends on the river complained we were speeding and that the wash from the wake was causing damage. If you took a pilot you didn't have that problem. It was an interesting and picturesque ride.

*\*Commander Benedict J. Semmes, Jr., USN.*

**Editor's Note: Another part of ADM Peet's Reminiscences will be in the next newsletter.**



**Info. From Bob Beaty, (Publisher, Editor & Historian)**

If you need to check on the status of your membership dues for the association, e-mail Dick Holloway (Treasurer) or Jim Beaty (Secretary). Contact information for Dick and Jim is on page 11 of this newsletter.

As more information is developed related to our next reunion, updates will be provided to all association members.

If you have stories, pictures or any other information that you would like to be placed in the newsletter to be enjoyed by the other members, let me know so I can put it in the future newsletters.

It would also be great if all members would start thinking about places they believe would be good for future reunions and think about hosting the events.

I also had a short visit with ADM Peet, Mrs. Peet and their son Gary. The visit was great and ADM Peet wants to thank everyone in their Bainbridge extended family for their thoughts and prayers.

**REMEMBER**  
**LANCASTER, PA**  
**JUNE 4 THRU 7 2017**  
**USS BAINBRIDGE**  
**DLG N 25**  
**ASSOCIATION**  
**REUNION**

# You Don't Want to Miss Another Issue

If you did **not** fill out this form in the *Winter 2014 Newsletter* or your email address changes at any time or the address label on your newsletter is **not** correct PLEASE submit those kind of changes by mail to: **Jim Beaty 609 Goldstone Lane Fort Worth, TX 76131** or by email to: **Plank.owner1@gmail.com**

Members receiving the Newsletter by regular mail can check the address label that indicates the last year paid. Dues are payable January 1st. of each yr. (1995 indicates a complimentary copy) If your dues are not current, submit a check for \$15.00 to :

**The Bainbridge Assoc. C/O Dick Holloway, Treas, 9307 Teakwood Lane, Garden Ridge, Texas 78266**

*Thank you for your cooperation!*

**Editors Note: Now that most newsletters are sent as an attachment to a group addressed email, those members will receive a separate email reminding them that their dues need to be renewed. HOWEVER, IF YOU KNOW YOUR DUES ARE NOT CURRENT, YOU CAN CONTACT JIM BEATY, or DICK HOLLOWAY AND THEY CAN PROVIDE YOU THE YEAR IN THE SYSTEM THAT YOUR LAST PAYMENT COVERED.**

**(THE CONTACT EMAIL ADDRESSES ARE LISTED BELOW).**

Last Name \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ Middle Initial \_\_\_\_\_ Nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Dates aboard the BAINBRIDGE \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Rating while Aboard the ship \_\_\_\_\_ Division \_\_\_\_\_

E-Mail Address \_\_\_\_\_ Tel. Number ( ) \_\_\_\_\_

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## USS BAINBRIDGE REUNIONS to Date...

1995 Norfolk VA	2005* Ft. Lauderdale FL
1996 St. Louis MO	2006 San Antonio TX
1997 Charleston SC	2007 San Diego CA
1998 San Diego CA	2009 Savannah GA
1999 Branson MO	2010 Puget Sound WA
2000 Tallahassee FL	2012 Omaha NE
2001 Tucson AZ	2013 Chattanooga TN
2002 Rapid City SD	2015 Albuquerque NM
2003 Washington DC	2016 Springfield, IL
2004 Las Vegas NV	

*Join us at the next reunion in Lancaster, PA  
We would love to see you !!*

*\*Cancelled due to two hurricanes*

2016 USS Bainbridge Reunion Banquet Pictures



**NOTICE**

The 2017 USS Bainbridge Association Reunion Is Planned for June 4th thru June 7th. In Lancaster, PA. More Information Will Be provided In Future Notices and Newsletters. Please Plan To Attend.