

# U.S.S. MARS (AFS-1)

NEWSLETTER NO. 2

SPRING 1998



Compiled and Published  
by

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**MARS SHIPMATES** I thank you for your support and encouragement you have given me in my effort to make our newsletter informative. I have spoken to many of you on the phone and corresponded with others. You have made this task very rewarding and your financial support insures that everyone receives our newsletter. The cost of this letter is about a \$1.50 per mailing. If you want to help with this expense, a few stamps are always needed and welcomed. To insure less damage, all future newsletters will be mailed in envelopes. I will continue with a newsletter every five/six months. Keep the mail coming, your comments and information are needed.

## REUNION NEWS

We now have a firm date for the reunion in 1999. Mark your calendar and make your vacation plans to be in Cincinnati on

October 15-17. Dutch Mueller is working on new hotel arrangements and other details. He has informed me that many of the large river boats (Tall Stacks) from all over the U.S. will be docked in Cincinnati that week and has insured me that we will have plenty to do. If you find a name on the "SHIPS CREW" list, who you would like to see again, give him a call. That may be all

it takes to want to attend this reunion. Over 40 have indicated that they plan to attend. As of now, no other reunion is planned before Cincinnati.

**MARS HISTORY** I have received many bits of information on our ship these past few months, thanks to some very thoughtful shipmates. I now have the ships commissioning booklet, the 1968, 1969, and 1979 cruise books. I have also received the decommissioning book. I will assemble all this information and publish it in our future newsletters. This letter includes the high lights of the ships 30 year history. Send any information and pictures you have. I will put every thing in some type of order and have it at the Cincinnati reunion. I NEED YOUR HELP AND YOUR ASSISTANCE IS MOST WELCOME.

USS/USNS MARS is no longer an active ship. She was towed to Pearl Harbor this past January and retired in the mothball fleet. I have just recently received this information with an article about her days with the Military Sealift Command. This will be included in the next newsletter.

**REUNION NOTICES** have been or soon will be published. I am now in contact with the reunion chairman for the Sylvania (AFS-2) and we are making a joint effort to have our information published. An invitation has been extended to the Mars for their reunion in St. Louis in August. If interested, give me a call.



1999						
OCTOBER						
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17	18	19	20	21	22	23
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THE CREW AT THE 97 REUNION.

Ship shape and ready to get underway.  
Early morning muster at Silver Dollar City, 10 June.

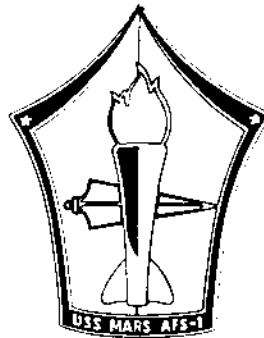


Dan Anibas, Dale Ashcraft, Kurt Elliott, Bob Fryderlund, R.G. Frfdenlund, John Fussell, George Johnson, Everett Jones, Bill Lada, Harold La Fayette, Ernie Mueller, James Newport, Frank Rawl, Perry Shelton, Bill Stansberry, Gene Stewart and John Willis.

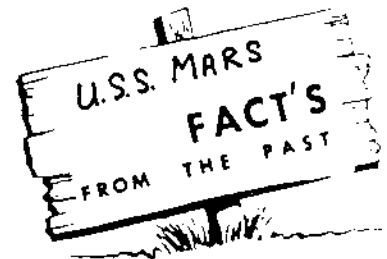
*U.S.S. Mars History*



1963



1993



THE MARS INSIGNIA

Although the ship was named for a small community which bears the name of the planet MARS, the ships insignia was inspired by the Roman god, MARS, whose symbols were a flaming torch and a spear. As adapted to the USS MARS insignia, the spear represents battle readiness while the torch--a universal symbol of peace represents service towards peace. The fins are an indication of the jet age--a jet age sign supporting an age old symbol of peace.



## MILESTONES

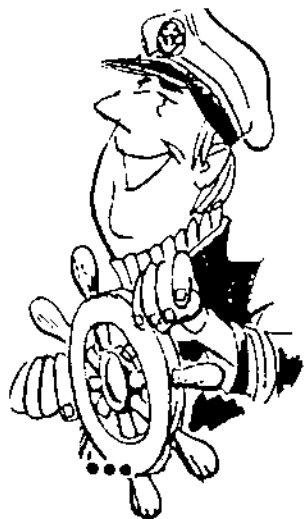
### MARS' HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS DURING ACTIVE NAVAL SERVICE

- 15JUN63 - Built by National Steel and Shipbuilding Company and launched in San Diego, CA.
- 21DEC63 - Commissioned as the first AFS at Long Beach Naval Shipyard, Long Beach, CA.
- 01SEP64 - Completed first cargo onload and departed for new homeport of Yokosuka, Japan.
- 23SEP64 - Forward deployed in Yokosuka, Japan in support of U.S. forces to in South Vietnam, conducting numerous unreps and vertreps on 15MAY70 Yankee Station and on Market Line.
- 22APR70 - Received Meritorious Unit Commendation for outstanding service during SEP68 through AUG69, for service in support of Vietnam war.
- 15MAY70 - Changed homeport to Naval Station, Alameda, CA.
- 19NOV70 - En route Yokosuka, Japan for WestPac deployment.
- 17AUG71 to 25JAN72 - Overhaul Williamette Iron and Steel in Richmond, CA.
- 16MAR73 - Deployed, en route Sasebo, Japan for homeport change.
- MAR & APR 75 - Supported evacuation and cargo transfer from Cambodia and Saigon, South Vietnam.
- 18AUG76 - Changed homeport to Naval Supply Center, Oakland, CA.
- MAR to JUL 77 - In the yards for major equipment overhaul.
- 04APR to 30OCT 78 - WestPac deployment.
- 02APR to 26MAY 83 - Participated in Fleetex 83-1, served as the lone AFS asset for a three carrier battle group, the largest assemblage of ships and aircraft since WWII.
- 01JAN to 30JUN83 - Awarded first Battle "E" for outstanding performance during competitive cycle. (This should get remarks).
- 19NOV to 19MAY84 - Western-Pacific/Indian Ocean deployment, supported Midway Battle Group in the North Arabian Sea.
- AUG to DEC84 - At Todd Shipyards, San Francisco, CA for installation of emergency diesel, automatic boiler controls and new computer system.
- 24JUL to 21DEC85 - WestPac 85 deployment, operated in the North Arabian Sea and the Persian Gulf. On the trip home, Mars rescued 36 Vietnamese political refugees.
- MAR to MAY86 - PMA at Todd Shipyards, San Francisco, CA.

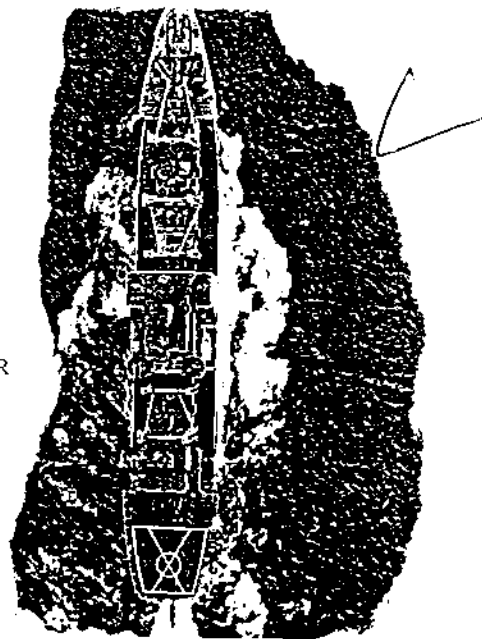
## MILESTONES

### MARS' HISTORICAL HIGHLIGHTS DURING ACTIVE NAVAL SERVICE

- 21AUG86 - Awarded Naval Supply System's Command Best Sales and Service Award for medium sized ships.
- 03JAN to 30JUN87 - Deployment to Indian Ocean/Persian Gulf area of operations, supporting Battle Group Bravo.
- JAN to MAY88 - In yards at Continental Maritime Shipyard, San Francisco, CA. Major overhaul of engineering equipment.
- 01JUL86 to 31DEC87 - Awarded second Battle "E" for outstanding performance during the competitive cycle.
- APR88 - Received second Meritorious Unit Award for outstanding readiness and unsurpassed performance in support of unanticipated battle group operations in the North Arabian Sea.
- JUL88 - First Pac Fleet CLF ship to pass FTG standards for material readiness, after they were drastically increased after USS Stark incident.
- 12SEP88 to APR89 - Deployed in support of Persian Gulf operations.
- DEC89 to MAR90 - PMA Southwest Marine Shipyards, San Francisco, CA.
- MAR to AUG90 - Local operations, participated in the Hyack Festival, the Portland Rose Festival, and law enforcement operations Mexico.
- 08NOV90 to 17MAY91 - Deployed to the Middle East. Supported operation Desert Shield/Storm in theater for nearly four months, from 23DEC90 until 18APR91.
- APR to NOV91 - As a result of Mars' outstanding performance in operation Desert Shield/Storm, she was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation Medal, the Southwest Asia Campaign Medal (two bronze stars), the Kuwaiti Liberation Medal, the CincPacFlt 1991 Logistics Excellence Award and nominated by CLG-1 for the National Defense Transportation Award.
- FEB to MAY91 - Conducted final series of required inspections. Supply management assessment - "outstanding" every category. Shipboard explosive safety instruction - zero discrepancies 3M inspection. "Excellent" overall! OPPE - adjective grade of "Good".
- SEP to DEC91 - PMA Naval Air Station, Alameda, CA. Installed Halon Flooding System, AFFF Bilge Sprinkling System and overhauled boilers.
- 31JUL to 30OCT92 - Deployed to Western Pacific in support of U.S. Navy Subic Bay Cubi Point withdrawal.
- 01 February 1993 - Mars decommissioned Naval Station, Treasure Island, San Francisco, CA for turn over to Military Sealift Command.



DEC 63 - DEC 65	CAPT R. C. MEDLEY
DEC 65 - DEC 66	CAPT G. C. WATKINS
DEC 66 - JUL 68	CAPT H. RILEY
JUL 68 - DEC 69	CAPT P. A. ANDERSON
DEC 69 - JAN 71	CAPT T. D. NUTT
JAN 71 - AUG 72	CAPT A. E. KNUTSON
AUG 72 - AUG 74	CAPT R. C. ADAMS
AUG 74 - NOV 75	CAPT D. R. McCRIMMON
NOV 75 - OCT 77	CAPT H. W. BADEMAN
OCT 77 - JUN 79	CAPT S. RALPH, JR.
JUN 79 - AUG 79	CAPT J. F. BAUMGARDNER
AUG 79 - JUN 81	CAPT C. K. HUTCHINSON
JUN 81 - APR 83	CAPT E. A. BREWTON
APR 83 - JAN 85	CAPT J. A. MORIARTY
JAN 85 - JUN 86	CAPT I. M. HIPPER
JUN 86 - FEB 88	CAPT J. J. COONAN, JR
FEB 88 - AUG 89	CAPT M. B. NORDEEN
AUG 89 - FEB 91	CAPT W. W. PICKAVANCE
FEB 91 - FEB 93	CAPT M. A. OSTERTAG II



# mail call

COMMENTS . . . .  
. . . . from the crew



The heart of this newsletter is the information that our past shipmates have been willing to share with us. I have enjoyed reading all your letters and have left everything as received. I hope everyone enjoys this MAIL CALL section of our newsletter. Keep sending your letters.

I plan to attend the September '99 reunion in Cincinnati - all going well. Enclosed is a small check to help continue the publishing of your newsletter. Keep up the good work

George Watkins

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I have been working for General Motors Parts Division and am now eligible for retirement. I enjoy working in the woods cutting fire wood. I also enjoy fishing (David Bloomer SF 2 and I try to get together fishing every May). I have a daughter Sherry (22) who lives in S.C. I enjoyed my time on the Mars. My memories are working long hours while at sea and playing hard while in port. I believe the reason I enjoyed the Mars is because of the guys I served with. The friendship bond is still there today!!! I am very proud to have served with them on the Mars, but also I am just as proud to be remembered as one of the "Stanley Steamers".

Kurt M. Elliott

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July 69, reported to Klondike AR 22. 70 - 72 Shore duty Inact Ships in San Diego. 72-73 USS Orleck DD 886. 74 - 77 USS Midway, only way I could get back to Japan, type 3 sea duty Fleet Tra Gru Yokosuka, Inst. Boiler Water School. 80 - 84 shore duty in San Diego. Retired 6/84, would not go back to sea to have a shot at E-9, no thanks. Worked for Marriott Hotel Corp. last 9 years. No more engineering. Would you believe a door man 3 days a week. Have a motor home worth twice as much as the house. Been cat fishing 34 weekends in a row.

Gary Joslin

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I was on the commissioning team of the USS Mars and took it from National Steel to Yokosuka, Japan. I was an Ensign in the Supply Corp, under Capt. Chuck Gardner, who lives in Washington, D.C. I dropped my grade point average four one hundredths on a point to graduate fourth from Supply Corp School in Athens, GA, fourth instead of first or second, just to be assigned to the Mars. It was a tour well worth pulling. I married an Athens girl, Caroline and we had a daughter by the time we arrived in Japan. It was an experience all three of us have cherished. I left and went to the East Coast Navy and its formality, left active duty, stayed in the reserves and retired a Commander with 23 years. I have gone on to a successful career as an attorney. Caroline and I were recently discussing Vietnam and for us it was just a job. It had not become the hot bed of politics until after I was out of the Navy. I have Meniere's Disease (Vertigo) due to being on the Mars. I am on 100% SS disability due to it. I had to sell my law office. I am having difficulty getting military disability as the doctor on the ship did not keep good records. Do you know anyone else who is having these problems or suggestions as to who to contact to break through the red tape. I would be interested in any information on the Mars, newsletter, and reunion.

Earnie R. Breeding

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Departed the USS MARS: 0900 19 Nov 1970 Nas Alameda with orders to report to CO Naval Station, San Diego, California. To be assigned to the Supply Department, Waterfront Operations Division. While I served my two years ashore I and two other transient First Class Storekeeper's validated 16 service craft in preparation for their first "Coordinated Ships Allowance Lists". A job that was fulfilling but, looking back on it I don't think that I would want to make a career of it. My next set of orders I had a chance to go back to sea or be assigned to the "Commissary Store, Adak, Alaska. Never having been in Alaska I decided to take orders for the Island of Adak, to report not later than 30 Nov 1973. My wife Yukie and I was living in Chula Vista, California at the time. Yukie says if you take those orders your going alone. Well, I went to Adak unaccompanied for 12 months but, after that first summer, I wrote and told Yukie how nice the summer had turned out. Of course I neglected to tell her that this was the nicest summer in many, many years. I put in for housing and was able to bring Yukie to Adak where she got the fishing bug. An am I glad as I always have me a fishing partner. I was placed in charge of the commissaries "Material Division" after the Senior Chief Ships Serviceman departed. A lot more new challenges. I didn't think that I would be ready for these challenges, so soon after the assignment in San Diego, but I was wrong. I think that the bad weather helped. And besides I had an outstanding First Class Ships Serviceman that was very good to work with. Wouldn't you know it, I extended for a couple of years, once I had my wife on the island. I was luckier still on my next assignment, as I got a chance to talk to my detailer in person while stationed on Adak. He had an assignment open for an E-7 at the Military Air Traffic Co-ordinating Unit, McChord Air Force Base. My number one choice, that I had been trying to get for a few years. As, it is right in my own backyard. I had gone on active duty in October 1954, when I lived right across the highway from McChord AFB. Well, as you well know there is no assurance that you will be assigned to your number one choice. But, oh! Lucky me, I did get the assignment. I reported to "MATCU" for my final assignment in the Navy. The only thing negative about this assignment was it involved shift work.

But, being senior I had first pick. None of the military really wanted to work the swing shift as there seem to be a little more work involved. But, I didn't mind, as I later went to work part-time for a contractor right there at the terminal. I'd get off of my military job and go to work for the contractor running "Quicktrans". Then one day after I retired from the military, I received a call from a Navy Chief I was stationed with on Adak. He was working for "Honeywell Marine System Division". Honeywell was in the market to hire someone with my back ground for a specific job. Only do to last a couple of months. I went for the interview and got the job. Still kept my job at the freight terminal and commuted from Bremerton to McChord daily for about two months. The job at the freight terminal was starting to turn sour when Honeywell called back and ask if I would be interested in working full time. My answer was yes, of course. So, fourteen year later I decided to retire and start enjoying life to the fullest.

# To Honor The Fallen

By Frank Hart  
SK1, U. S. Navy (ret)  
The KCN Staff

It was a beautiful day. The temperature was in the high 70's. The blue sky above us was almost cloud-free.

The view from the hill on which we stood showed us the capitol city of Frankfort. The Capitol Building dominated the skyline. One thought that wove a common thread through our minds was that a more perfect spot could not have been chosen for this tribute to the fallen warriors who are honored here.

There were seven of us, all connected by this memorial. We were veterans, or wives and mothers of veterans or those presently in the service, gathered at the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Frankfort, to express our gratitude to those who had made the ultimate sacrifice for their country and their loved ones.

Our group included a veteran of World War II: Tom Ragan, and his wife Barbara; a veteran of the Korean Conflict: John Keys; two of us who were of the Vietnam Era: Mike Fitzgerald and this writer, a mother who had lost a son in Vietnam: Phyllis James; and the mother of a young man presently serving in the Navy: Mayola Jett.

Five of the group had been to the Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial previously. Most of them had attended the dedication ceremonies last November 12th. This was my first visit to the Memorial. I had only read descriptions of the Memorial in the papers and was looking forward to seeing it first hand.

What I saw was not an ornate monument to the dead, but a simply designed memorial, paying tribute to those who had paid the highest price for the freedom we enjoy in

this country. There was no general on a rearing horse, brandishing a saber, daring the enemy to meet its fate. No angels with trumpets signaling glory. Just a clean, honest memorial.

Earlier in the day we had visited the memorial to our country's war dead at the Frankfort Cemetery, and the contrast between the two was striking. Where the first memorial we visited reflected the ornateness of times past, the Vietnam Veterans Memorial was almost plain. Plain, but very striking.

The Kentucky Vietnam Veterans Memorial is set on a large slab of concrete on a hill overlooking the Capitol City of the Commonwealth. As described earlier, the view is spectacular. The centerpiece of the Memorial is a large polished sundial. Carved into the concrete are timelines and the names of those who died in Vietnam listed by month on the timeline of each year. As the shadow of the sundial moves, the tip points to the current date. Carved into the concrete is a quote from Ecclesiastes 3:1:

"To everything there is a season and a time..."

Also carved into the concrete are the names of MIAs from the Commonwealth.

Those that had attended the Memorial's dedication commented on how peaceful it was to be at the Memorial without having the crowds as before. And the view from the site was commented on by all of us. I felt that those being honored here were probably enjoying the view also, and would do so always.

After we left the Memorial we went to lunch. Each of us commented on our feelings while at the Memorial. As I listen to the tape while preparing this article, I feel again

the emotion that I felt as the words were first said. Some of us were on the verge of tears, and for some, tears did flow.

We all enjoyed our visit to the Memorial. We felt that it was a fitting tribute to those it honored. It was felt that it was a shame that those whose names were inscribed at the Memorial would not be able to enjoy the day as we did. There were feelings of sorrow among us, but also feelings of pride, pride in knowing that these men had given of themselves for us, and that we as a nation are grateful for their sacrifice.

Those two words, pride and sorrow, pretty well sum up the feelings of the group.

The trip to Frankfort was not all solemn. Tom and John engaged in what we called in the Navy "sea stories," and more than once the phrase "I was there once" was heard. Memories are good things to have. And the memories of our days in uniform are special and we cherish them.

Both Tom and John are active in veterans organizations; Tom is a past commander of VFW Post #7453 in Covington, and John is a past commander of American Legion Post #203 in Latonia, and is presently serving as 6th District Commander of the Legion.

For some of us that made the trip to Frankfort it was a heart wrenching experience.

But for us all, it is a memory that will remain, as will the pride that we felt.

On behalf of the *Kentuckian Community News*, this writer wishes to thank members of the Hurry-Berry-Smith VFW Post 7453 and American Legion Post 203, for helping make this story possible.

And, sadly, but with great pride, we offer our gratitude to those who are honored in Frankfort.

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Worked for Miller Brewing Co. for 18 years. After plant shut down, started my own Lawn Maintenance and Landscaping business. Have a wife (Sharon) and will celebrate our 30th Anniversary in December. Three children, Peter, 28, Patrick, 26 and Pamela, 13.

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John W. La Page

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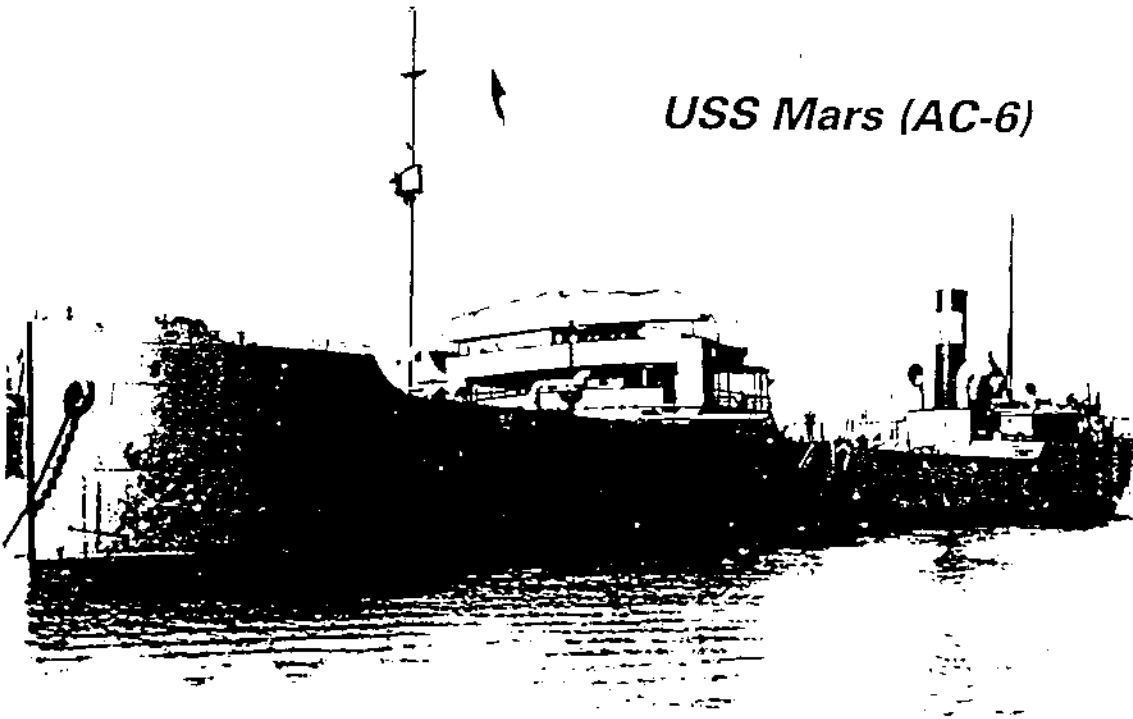
I was a commissary 3rd class while stationed on the Mars. I went into Submarine Service and retired as a Chief in 1981. After retirement, I went to school under the GI Bill and received a BA in Business Admin. I am currently employed by the Dept. of Veterans Affairs, as a Military Service Coordinator in Albuquerque, N.M.

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Isaac R. Lopez

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## USS Mars (AC-6)



### GREETINGS FROM AN OLD SALT:

Your nice informative letter deserved a quick reply. I reported aboard my Mars AC-6, at Hampton Roads, Va. on 16 August 1919. I was an Ensign D (deck officer) and had the 1st. Division. Besides this, I had the additional duties as Communication Officer. I had the 12 to 4 watch day and night while at sea.

We took one trip to the Adriatic Sea, carrying supplies to a small American Task Force, stationed at Spalato, Austria. It took us 18 days to get to Gibraltar, on the way over. The old Mars cruised at about 8 knots in good weather. If there was any kind of sea, we had to slow down on account of our heavy load of coal. We used so much coal on the way over, we had to buy coal at Gibraltar. If I remember correctly we paid \$22 a ton for coal that could be bought in the States at \$4 a ton.

On the way back to the United States, we made a stop at Pola, Austria, to pick up several downed German Aircraft that the U.S. Air Force wanted. We made another stop at Gibraltar, on the way back. Also stopped at the Madeira Islands for 24 hours. Long enough for a short leave to get a taste of their good wine. While passing the Bermuda Islands, we ran into a severe storm. Our problem was the opposite of that going over. We were so light that the Mars seemed to be riding on top of the waves. The propeller was out of the water half of the time. The Engineer had to trottle down the engines until the propeller hit the water again.

My release from active duty was received while I was in Spalato, effective when we reached the States. So on the 15th of December 1919, I was detached from the Mars and relieved from all active duty.

This gives you a few of the highlights of my service on the old Mars. I am 89 years old and enjoying my retirement at the Holmstad, in Batavia, Illinois, with my lovely wife, who is 85. We will be celebrating our 62nd Wedding Anniversary this year.

Otto H. Harer

Mr. Harer and I corresponded with each other in 1983, when he responded to our ad for the first reunion. I sent him a picture and the history of the new Mars. The last correspondence I had with Mr. Harer was in 1985.

Everett R. Jones

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I want to thank you for sending me the information about the Mars reunion and also the newsletter that you have written. I have kept a fairly good eye on the Naval Publications that I receive but had not seen anything about the Mars for several years. I remember when you hosted the first reunion and I am sorry that I could not attend at that time, but I am now retired and will do my utmost to make the one in Cincinnati, Ohio.

I was just thinking back about the Mars, and remembering that the first time I saw her was when she was on the skids alongside the Sylvania at the shipyard there in San Diego. What a long time ago...

Also, I recollect when Chief Johnson made E-8. Being a communicator, I received the information via dispatch in radio Central...I went looking for him, but he was over at the Chief's Club..So I called over there, and asked for them to pass the word for Senior Chief Johnson to come to the phone. Don't know whether or not he will remember that.

Gene Kitts

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I was aboard the Mars from Jan'68 to Jan'70. I was the ship's postal clerk, (PC3), X-Div. I am now living in Lincoln Park, Michigan and working as a maintenance supervisor for the Wayne County DPW. I really enjoyed my two years aboard the Mars, especially the good times in Japan, Taiwan, Hong Kong and Subic Bay in the Philippines. We had a great crew while I was there and I'm looking forward to the reunion in Cincinnati in Sept. '99. Keep me informed of any happenings before then .

Larry Martin

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Sorry this took so long to respond. My boy Justin had some intensive leukemia treatments, my wife had 6 weeks of experimental treatments in New Jersey for cancer. My employer of 9 years filed bankruptcy and we moved. Other than that, all is well.

Dale Ashcraft

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I went from the Mars to the Castor down in Sasebo. In December of 1966, I was transferred to the Naval Hospital, Oakland where I served until I retired from the navy in August 1969.

After I retired, I worked 5 years at the Eden Regional Occupational Training Program in San Lorenzo, CA, at the same time going to college (Cal State Hayward) getting a degree in Sociology and Nursing. After I got my nursing license, I worked for 10 years for Alameda County, mostly in Santa Rita jail, but also spent a couple of years in the Newark Health Center. I retired from Alameda County, April 1, 1990. I also worked as a nurse in industry for several companies and retired at New United Motors, July 1, 1995.

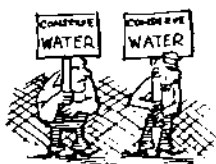
The wife and I keep busy with our family, having legal custody of our 10 year old grandson and making several trips a year to see our son granddaughter in Seattle area.

I attended the first Mars reunion in San Diego in 1983 and enjoyed it very much. It is always good to renew old acquaintances and to reminisce about "the good old days." I appreciate the work of Chief Jones in getting these newsletters out. Enclosed is a check to help with postage.

Richard S. Godfrey

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Sorry I took so long to respond to your letter. Yes I am interested in your newsletter.

I was in San Diego and attended the launching of the Mars. I was in the Pre Com Crew, there fore a plank owner. I rode the ship up to Long Beach where we were commissioned. There were only 2 Warrant Officers aboard - CWO-4 Western and myself. Western was sent to Japan to prepare housing for the families when the home port was assigned there. He retired shortly after., so I was the only Warrant aboard until I was transferred in 66. Some good stories about that, I came back in 66 and was in Pre Com Crew of the USS Samuel Gompers as Elect. Repair Officer. Made first overseas trip. Received orders to Bremerton Shipyard - completed my 30 years as a Ship Supt and retired as CWO-4 in November 1969. After retiring, took a trip in a motor home around the U.S. Worked for a brief time - retired for good and spent 10 or 12 years roaming about in various motor homes - 5th wheelers - trailers. In 1990, had a severe stroke, put a halt to that. I did get in lots of backpacking prior to stroke. Grand Caynon, Zion Park, Pacific Crest Trail, Mexico into Washington, 2200 miles, did not complete the entire trail, but had a wonderful trip. Enclosing a couple dollars for the newsletter. Keep up the good work.

William R. Clements

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The Newport family arrived in Yokosuka, Japan on 26 June 1969. No housing was available except in Yokohama, which was very sub-standard. We turned it down and found us a house to rent in the Ashina area. We thought we could live there until base housing became available, as we had a 3 year tour aboard the Mars. We had to bum some necessities from the base until our house hold goods arrived. We just got settled in to our house and we headed south. I believe we made two swings south and came in on Xmas eve, 1969. After the holidays, I tried to get a windshield ordered for my car that was broken while parked on the base. As RMC Warncke stated, we headed south for a swing and received orders for the homeport change. We sent power of attorney to our wives and gave them some orders. Then we received questions and answers from them. So most all of the paper work was completed by the time we arrived in Yoko. We had to off-load any chow and items that could be used in Yoko and also replenish ships in port. Then the job began loading our household goods. We kept our cars until the last minute. Then they were loaded on board Mars. I believe we had 192 different house hold shipments, 98 cars, 9 cats, 16 dogs, a mita bird and a parakeet on board when we left. It seems our going home pennant was 486 feet long. We lost part of it when we left Pearl and had to repair it before arriving in Alameda. We wore a little disappointed that we only spent 11 mo of our 3 yr tour in Japan.

We made one more trip to WesPac in '71 and were gone 7 months. It was a hard working trip and the Mars did her job as usual. As Cargo Chief, I received a lot of co-operation from all departments on board, it was part of the mission.

I departed Mars on 21 Apr 1972. Was transferred to PacFlt soap team as ROIC at Mare Island N.S.Y. Shortly after reporting on board, I received word that I was selected for E-9. However all advancements were frozen. One year later I was advanced and completed my tour there and transferred to the Fleet Reserve in June 1975.

We returned to Chickasha, OK and worked in a automotive parts house for 19 years. I have been retired for 3 years. I have worked with the Okla. Veterans Recognition Committe, VFA, Grady Veterans Memorial committe (which was dedicated 11:11 A.M. on 11 Nov. 1995). Also active in church work and made two trips for habitat housing.

I enjoy fishing and bowling, shooting the bull every chance I get. Tell a few sea stories when I can find someone to listen.

James M. Newport

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Dear Everett and Fellow Shipmates

Thank you for the copy of the Newsletter. It brings back a lot of memories. The article from John Peck, I remember a Peck in R Div., brought back more memories. I remember Otto and Ratcliff, both were also in R Div. I believe.

Now for some information on my time of duty on the Mars and what has happened since then.

I reported to Pre Comm school at San Diego in Sept. of '63 for duty on the Mars. She was still under final construction at National Steel and Shipbuilding, they were putting the finishing touches on her. I left the Mars in Dec. of '64 right after we arrived in Yokosuka.

I was an MM2 attached to A Div. I worked the kinks out of those pesky hold conveyors. I always wondered who designed those things? I remember working with MM2 Green, FN Jump, MMSC Johnson. I wish I could find the commissioning pamphlet, it had a lot of the names I can't seem to remember. (We have just moved into a new home and a lot of stuff is still packed.) I do remember that fine shake down cruise to Acapulco. I do believe that was one of the most outstanding weeks of my Naval career.

After leaving the Mars I attended AC&R school in San Diego, served aboard the USS Frank E Evans (DD-754), USS Tutuila (AGR-4), USS Camden (AOE-2) and spent a year on shore duty at Monterey, Ca. at the USN Post Grad School.

I left the Navy in 1969, and have lived almost exclusively in the Pacific Northwest since that time. I have just recently gotten re-married (they say the third time is a charm) to a wonderful lady named Lila. I have three wonderful children, Chuck Jr. 28, Jennifer, 20 and Mike 17. Mike is living with Lila and I. We have just moved into a three bedroom home in Hazel Dell, WA, just north of Vancouver, WA.

I am a member of the A L Post #176, 40 et 8 Voltaire 99, VFW Post 7824, VVA Chapter 512 and also an associate member of the Pearl Harbor Survivors Assoc. of Vancouver, WA. At this time I am co-chair of the Clark County Veterans Memorial Committee, we will dedicate a new Veterans Memorial, Memorial Day 1999. I am the #1 Gofer for "Veterans Remembrance Week", this year we are bringing the "Traveling Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall" to Vancouver, WA, May 21 - 26, 1998, watch for us on TNT and CNN that week-end. I have also just finished a one year stint as chairman of the Vancouver Celebrate Freedom Parade Committee.

I am enclosing copies of a few items I found. Hope they will be of some use to you in future newsletters. If I find anything else of interest I will forward it to you.

b1cj53@aol.com

Chuck Jones

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I had more fun in the 14 months I was on the Mars. I remember Dutch Mueller from M division. I was the mess cook for the 1st class mess for 2 or 3 months. We had 26 1st class at the time. I remember because I received \$1 from each one every pay day. They helped me change from SA to FA and get into the M division.

I am now a computer operator with the Teamsters Union and will retire in 2000. Now divorced, but put my daughter through college with a BA in communications. Looking forward to our next reunion.

John D. Milliken

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It is hard to imagine that 31 years ago, Dec 7, 1966 I left the Mars in Subic and headed home. I have a lot of memories of life on the Mars, some bad, most good. I was in precommissioning school in San Diego and sailed with her from San Diego to Long Beach in Dec 63, prior to commissioning. I came aboard as MASA or now I believe it is DPSA and left MA2. S-1 was my division and I was a computer nerd. I have pictures of some of the programs that I wired up - such a contrast to today. However; that Univoc 1004 had only 1K of memory, so by today's standards, that is very primitive. One of my memories happened one morning at about 0500. We were returning to Yoko and were somewhere in Tokyo Bay and we were standing in the chow line as we had an early breakfast due to arriving early in Yoko. Suddenly the words came over the speakers "all hands man your collision stations, stand by for collision starboard side". Now we had many drills, but never a collision drill. The entire crew ran to the starboard side after "Blam" a Japanese fisherman had struck us midships. We could look over and down at the panicked crew members on the fishing boat and suddenly it occurred to someone on the bridge that the crew of the Mars was not at collision stations and called for the "Man overboard" drill. Needless to say, we all responded to that as trained.

Another one was on a bright and sunny calm day we were at noon chow and ran over something metal in the middle of nowhere, but that is another story to be told at a later date.

I own a Sales Agency specializing in parts for Heavy Duty Trucks (18 wheelers) and am based in Oklahoma City area with a branch office in Houston Metro.

Walter Sirman

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Thanks for the newsletter and congratulations. It is very well done. Bravo Zulu!

This is just a note to let you know about the PACE program. The enclosed article was printed in Senior magazine and then in Navy Times. There are about 120 teachers out at sea aboard US Navy ships.

My tour aboard USS Mars was in 1990. It was my second tour so I was still excited about going to sea again. It was really a blast. We sailed from Alameda, across the pond (not stopping at Pearl Harbor) and right into Subic Bay. From there we sailed down past Singapore and anchored in a little bay at Phuket Island, Thailand. I flew home from there, but Mars went on to the Persian Gulf for Desert Storm.

It was a great cruise, largely because Captain W W "Bear" Pickavance was CO. He is a flyer who has great leadership ability. He is now a Rear Admiral in charge of Carrier Group One, based in San Diego. In the newsletter, you mentioned the possibility of a mini-reunion on the West Coast. If that gels, please let me know as I'm sure Bear will be there if he can make it.

Well, that's enough for now. I have to get back to shovelling the snow off my front porch. More later.

# Retire First Then Join the Navy and See the World

Donald A. Landauer

After some 25 years happily teaching business and management at Los Angeles City College, my wife and I retired and settled in a lovely home in South Lake Tahoe, a northern California community at an elevation of about 6500. The farthest idea from my mind was any association with the U.S. Navy. I had enjoyed my experience as a sailor in 1945-46 but never expected an opportunity to relive those distant days.

In 1990, I received a telephone call, asking me if I would be interested in teaching aboard Navy ships. I started to decline, thinking of the long drive each week to Alameda (where I assumed the ship to be). "Oh, no," corrected the voice on the line, "We'll fly you to wherever the ship is. You'll go on board equivalent to a lieutenant commander. You'll have a stateroom, eat with the other officers, and teach for six weeks. Then, we'll fly you home from wherever you are."

I approached my wife somewhat like an excited little puppy-dog wagging his tail, wanting something. My wife is a reader, and I'm a pesterer. So, she (after 45 happy years of marriage) said that she wouldn't mind getting rid of me for a few weeks, especially for an activity which I would so obviously enjoy.

The school that operates the program is Central Texas College. I called their San Diego office, and after the submission of the appropriate paperwork, became qualified. My first ship was USS Merrill, a destroyer. I flew to San Diego, boarded the ship, reported to the ESO (Educational Services Officer) and was shown to my stateroom. I oriented myself, met the people with whom I would be working, and prepared for my first class, which would begin in two or three days.

The day after I arrived, we left San Diego. I watched, fascinated at all the preparations for a ship to go to sea. Having no responsibility that day, I went up to the signal bridge where I would be out of everyone's way and could see all the activities below. Several people on the dock were waving farewell, the workaday tugs set us out to the bay, the seagulls and pelicans, irritated at being disturbed, flew to another ship, and after 45 years, I was again at sea!

I was drinking in the sights of San Diego Harbor when suddenly the ship's loudspeaker, 1MC, blared: SECURITY ALERT. SECURITY ALERT. Quickly, a group of armed young men appeared, wearing flak jackets and helmets. One of them looked at me and firmly stated, "Stand fast, sir." It was NOT a suggestion! I was jolted out of my nostalgic reverie and was reminded that this was no love-boat cruise. I was, indeed, aboard a United States Navy warship. They carried out the drill with dedication and efficiency. That was something I observed for many drills on many ships in the next four years. I was prouder than ever of the men and women in our fleet.

I taught in a room that was designed to be used as an office, but was currently unoccupied. I had been told to expect about 20 men. I was startled to see the roster of some 65 people who were interested in taking my courses. I divided them into four sections (two for business and two for management) and went into my teaching schedule. Despite dozens of interruptions, watch changes, and emergencies, the students persisted and all 65 finished the courses. I was so proud that I could hardly wait until my next assignment.

Since that first cruise, I have traveled and taught in the Persian Gulf, all along the coast of Eastern Asia (with stops in Yokosuka, Hong Kong, Singapore, Penang, Colombo, and other exotic ports) and across the Indian Ocean to Somalia. I accept two or three tours each year. Each one is somewhat the same, and yet each one has its own unique adventures and experiences.

Entering the Persian Gulf in 1991, we were surrounded by the smoky, oily air from all those hideous oil-field fires. I asked the officer who had the con if we might be entering Los Angeles harbor by mistake. He smiled and nodded in understanding.

Life at sea is fabulous! Where else could one watch an Unrep (underway replenishment)? Imagine two ships thundering along within a few yards of each other, refueling or transferring supplies. The bow waves collide between the ships and shoot spray high into the air. Provisions are moved from one ship to the other, and then, all the lines, hoses and connections are secured and the ships go their separate ways. It's an always fascinating evolution.

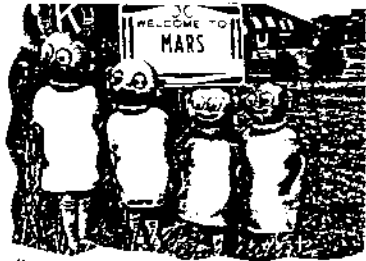
On many trips, especially when we're delivering Marines to some task, an amazing transformation takes place. My students are mostly in their late teens or early twenties. In classes, they have the appearance of twenty-year-old kids and act accordingly. Suddenly, when they are assigned a task ashore (as in Mogadishu), they don their battle uniforms, take up their helmets and weapons, and become serious, professional warriors. The change never ceases to amaze me.

Any dedicated teacher enjoys his or her students. I always have. But here, working with these fine young people, I have an enormous sense of value and gratitude. They diligently come to class after long hours on watch, or during working parties, or engaging in training exercises, and yet they are attentive, responsive, thoughtful, and eager to learn.

Watching AirOps is another "between classes" activity. The helos hover and land and take off at all hours: sometimes training, sometimes bringing mail, and sometimes evacuating sick or injured men. The skill of these pilots is amazing.

This article is too short to describe completely other adventures such as the errant snake charmer in India, the wretched poverty of Somalia, the 400 year-old boat builders in Dubai, the WWII caves of Yokosuka, or the Pizza Hut in Bahrain.

To summarize my experiences, I have written a novel concerning the theft and subsequent recovery of a U.S. Navy helicopter from a ship in Singapore. The responses from senior officers and reviewers have been gratifying. If you would like to learn more about this teaching program or simply like an exciting adventure story, contact me at the address below. I would enjoy hearing from you. As with any old salt, I like to share sea stories with anyone interested. Soon, however, I'll be at sea again, working with more fine young people of the U.S. Navy and enjoying my "retirement."



FIRST SEA VOYAGE OF THE USS MERRILL



The Mars went in commission with 408 men on board. There were 304 men and women on board at the time of the decommissioning. It is estimated over fifteen thousand crew members served on board in this 30 year period.

# Deepest Sympathy

## MEMBERS PASSED AWAY



LT Charles E. Hall  
 PN2 Dudley Jenan  
 MMCM Ellsworth D. Johnson (Big John)  
 EN3 William C. Ling  
 CWO Charles R. McVay  
 RMC Maynard Nelson  
 FT2 Terry W. Reed  
 LT Sherman C. Salisbury  
 LT Arnold L. Singer  
 GMGC G. F. Slattery  
 IC1 Norm Wojczynski  
 BM1 Roy J. Wright, JR.

## Many Thanks

To the following persons who are helping with the newsletter expenses.

\$20.00	J.C. Kaltenborn
\$75.00	George E. Johnson
\$20.00	Edward J. Fourre
\$250.00	George C. Watkins
\$20.00	John W. Laird
\$25.00	Ronald L. Henning
\$20.00	Dale R. Ashcraft
\$30.00	Kurt M. Elliott
\$20.00	William R. Clements
\$10.00	Gary E. Joslin
\$20.00	Frank Rawl
\$25.00	James M. Newport
\$15.00	Frank R. Hart
\$20.00	Gene E. Kitts
\$25.00	Peter F. Warncke
\$25.00	Larry Martin
\$25.00	Wordon S. Gonyea
\$50.00	Walter Sirman
\$15.00	Robert M. Sizemore
\$25.00	Anonymous
\$20.00	Don Landauer
\$25.00	John D. Milliken

## STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT

Printing and postage has been purchased and paid for the next 50 past crew members to make contact with me.

Once again, these funds will be used only for the costs of our newsletter.

Fall 1997 balance	-----	\$19.21
Donations	-----	<u>\$780.00</u>
Total	-----	\$799.21
Postage	-----	\$196.53
Printing/envelopes/labels	--	<u>\$251.52</u>
Spring 1998 balance	-----	\$351.16

\*\*\*\* REUNION INFORMATION \*\*\*\*

<http://www.htnews.com/archive/21997/living/reunion.html>

**THIS PAGE HAS BEEN EXCLUDED  
FOR SECURITY REASONS.**

This list of names are former crew members who are on the mailing list. Would be great if we could match up these names with dates you were on the Mars. Please help with the dates, rank/rate and division/department. I will only list your city and state. I do not publish an address, unless requested.

Allen, Jim  
Andrews, Joe  
Ang, Melanio MM1  
Antonio, Persevero S.  
Ashley, Randy  
Aulich, Rick

Bloomer, Dave  
Bockelman, Kenneth SK2  
Boetticher, Jim  
Bullock, Kenneth

Cerelli, Mike  
Clark, Hugh  
Dengler, Philip C.  
Dino, Frisco D. SKCS  
Domingo, Dominador

Farmer, Stanley L. HMC  
Fletcher, Henry BMC  
Foster, Stan ETCM

Gardner, Charles A. CDR  
Gaulis, Tony  
Geigle, Fred J. YN2  
Gillies, Ken  
Gore, Larry BTCM  
Gorospe, Honorio C. EMC  
Goudy, Lee  
Gunderson, Allan SM2

Hackett, Levin PC1  
Hackler, Tom B. QM1

Iebus, Carl E.  
Ives, Dan  
Jones, Don

Kehl, Derek S. SKSN  
Klockman, Karl

Leskie, Ludwig L. SN  
Liddle, Paul BM3

Mabie, Lew  
Mahoney, Otto GMGC  
Matejcek, Joseph PC1  
Mayor, Camilo E. SK2  
Mc Garr, Phillip L. SK1  
Morris, Bill  
Odell, Steven R. HM3  
Oppie, Cecil  
Owens, Bill RM1

Paris, John C. SM2  
Parker, James F. LT  
Partin, John W.

Ryan, Steven R. RMC

Sappanos, Louis M. CDR  
Scarbrough, James M.  
Smith, Jerry W.  
Snay, Thomas R. ET3  
Sommers, James J. OSSN  
Stith, Fred E. BM2

Tast, Richard  
Thompson, John  
Turner, John SMC

Vick, Kurt R. SM3  
Vockenhuber, Helmut M.

Wilcox, Ray  
Winston, Paul R. ET3

Yinger, Ken E. BM3  
Yusko, George F. QM3



## Moving? Let us know.....

When you have a change of address, make sure to keep me up-dated on your new mailing address.

The below letters were returned as un-deliverable from the first list of names I received. If you live in the area of one of these shipmates, please check your phone book.

Dean Bartels - Willow Springs, IL  
Peter C. Geare - San Diego, CA  
Perry L. Hockless, Beaumont, TX  
Rick L. Houser, Spring Valley, CA  
Robert A. Kallman - Aurora, CO  
Bryan G. Lutz - Ocean Springs, MS  
Stephen L. Miland - Sacramento, CA  
Wallace J. Ponder - Miami, FL  
David M. Purtzenski, Waldorf, MD  
Michael F. Riedle - Houston, TX  
Merrien G. Seastone - Portland, OR  
Tadeo T. Tottoc - Reedley, CA