

# Sirago Newsletter



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## SPECIAL REUNION ISSUE

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Duty Section 6164

### "I STAND RELIEVED"

Mike Bickel - RMBICKEL@STUPP.COM  
Shipmates,

As those of you who attended the 2005 Reunion already know, Joe Roche was unanimously elected to take over as Commanding Officer / President of the USS Sirago (SS485) Veterans' Association. In this issue, therefore, I am taking the opportunity to introduce you to the new "wardroom" of association officers who will, with your input and support, take this group on new and strategic deployments which I can assure you, will make what we've done so far seem like child's play. First of all, however, I'd like to review a little history of our organization for those of you who are unaware of it.

In 1992 a Sirago crewmember – Ray Rausch –

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Linda & Mike Bickel – Relieved to be "Relieved"

officially started the Sirago reunions. They started off with about 10 crew members and their wives. There were reunions held in 1994, 1995, 1998, and 1999. While Ray was officially in charge in 1992, a crew member named Bill Gerber took a VERY lead role in all newsletters and organizational activities through 1999. He built the databases and coordinated with the United States Submarine Veterans (USSVI) to find new members. Bill's passion for the group was admirable. Others pitched in and helped to keep it going – members like "Wally Walraven" whose never ending energy was an inspiration.

Bill Gerber has passed on and the 2001 reunion was named for him. During our 2003 reunion, through the hard work of David Glaser, we incorporated ourselves as a 501(c)(19) Veterans' Fraternal Association to help insure that the group will stand to the last man. Wally Walraven has also passed on to his Eternal Patrol and this 2005 reunion was named for him – his widow Cecile was thanked by the entire crew who attended for Wally's hard work for the good of our association.

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Your new officers are: Joe Roche (CO), David Glaser (XO), Garry Goetschius (DO – disbursing officer), Rich McCamant (AO – admin officer) and myself as SO – supply officer. Additionally Pat Conroy is training with David Glaser in all XO (Reunion Coordination) activities. You all know Rich McCamant – the one who has distinguished himself as having accounted for about 800 more people since he took over the “search and rescue” role. Now he is an official officer of the association filling the officer void left when Wally died unexpectedly last year. In this issue you will see a special “LOST CREW” insert that he has written. I am certainly hoping that you will support his efforts so that we may account for ALL of Sirago’s crew.

This article is sort of my own “Swan Song” so I get to have the soap box for a few parting comments. I would like to ask you all to do something for me. VOLUNTEER! You and I know that a boat can’t deploy with just a “wardroom” of dedicated officers. If you were at this last reunion you saw Chief Chuck Veir and Bob Flora doing “port and starboard” duty sections on “ship’s store” – and they did a FANTASTIC job. You saw others helping with registration and other duties. “Big Robbie” Doug Roberts coordinated all inventory receipts and delivery. He also insured that a bell stand was constructed for the REAL Sirago Bell so it could be used during our tolling ceremonies. Joe Roche and son gathered information (video sessions) related to Joe’s LEGACY project and David Glaser’s daughters pitched in on every conceivable task imaginable. Folks donated items for raffles which helped to insure we didn’t lose money this reunion. Yes – there are volunteers now... but based upon what I’ve heard about upcoming events, even more work will be necessary and I am asking you to strongly consider supporting the efforts of the group. Maybe some day you will “volunteer” to lead this group into the future.

Please hold the Memorial Day Weekend open for 2007 and plan on traveling to Mobile Alabama for a very special time. You won’t be sorry.

**Mike** ♦♦♦

## REUNION INFORMATION

Sirago Crew WHO CAME by Duty Section: (107):

DS4548 (3): Les Addotto, Jim McCullough, Jim Wood

DS4952 (7): “CUSH” Cushing, Duane Gow, Harry Lang, Bob Kaufman, “John” Ledbetter, Dan Reilly, “Buck” Steere

DS5356 (9): George Albert, Morton Appelbaum, Bob Barringer, Don Hall, “Stoney” Hilton, Bob Liland, Robert Mazurek, Buddy Shumake, John Tumilty

DS5760 (17): Wayne Booton, Bill Bush, Rodney Clevenger, Roger Dean, Don Gotta, David Hauer, George Hinda, Richard Konow, Mel Laubach, Glenn Neal, Francis Rickel, Clyde Russell, Gene Russell, Bill Shamphan, Dennis Strake, Bud Tolbert, Jim Wilhelm

DS6164 (20): Bill Abbruzzese, Ted Anthony, Bruce Boughton, Charlie Bryant, Dale Craig, Joe Hoffmann, Jim Hughes, Larry Jinks, Mike Leeds, Reggie McCarver, Larry McClintock, George Miller, Joe Roche, Gene Shore, "Butch" Sites, Al Standish, Doug Tucker, Lewis Vaughner, Ralph Wiggins, Marv Yokum

DS6568 (23): Bill Bailey, Richard Barnette, Gary Beasley, Clyde Beatty, Bill Clegg, Virgil Clemmer, Tim Cole, Pat Conroy, Dennis Duren, Dennis Eber, Dave Glaser, Garry Goetschius, Ray Harrison, Dan Kozlowski, “TY” Lynch, JD Mayo, Rich McCamant, Doug (Big Robbie) Roberts, Rob Schutte, Dean Sedgwick, Chuck Veir, Steve Whitaker, Marshall Woods

DS6972 (28): Mark Adler, Fred Baker, Robert Bell, Frank Berlinger, Mike Bickel, Russell Burrows, Chuck Cain, Frank Campbell, “Doc” Carter, Matt Cola, “Rusty” Curtis, Armando Dela Rosa, Bob Flora, Tom Foglesong, Ken "Stewburner" Frazier, Bob Garvey, Frank George, Bill Huskey, Paul Knickman, Les Lammers, Bill Oakes, Tom O'Brien, Michael Peterson, Scott Primmer, George Self, Fred Thompson, Jim Ware, Paul York

NOTE: About 30 people above were FIRST TIME ATTENDERS of reunions.

**DECISIONS:** At the general meeting it was decided to allow for Absentee Ballots for any issues (at the Association Officers’ Discretion) providing that BYLAW changes have clear advanced details sent to the entire crew for review prior to any such vote.

MEMORIES OF REUNION 2005



## WHAT'S YOUR EXCUSE??!!

This last reunion was actually DOWN in count compared to the previous two reunions. We had 107 crew members show up as opposed to 125 in 2001 and 132 in 2003. As this has been a concern of ours, the following may be helpful for you.

### EXCUSE 1: I'M GETTING TOO OLD.

Lester Addotto is 92 years old and traveled from Grass Valley, California.

### EXCUSE 2: IT'S TOO FAR.

See answer to Excuse #1. Also... how about Ron Flint who in 2003 came from Jakarta, Indonesia? Or how about our 2005 winner for traveling - Denny Eber who came in from Guam, once again edging out Tom Foglesong who comes every year from Hawaii? Our next reunion will be in Mobile, Alabama... maybe that's closer to you.

### EXCUSE 3: I'VE GOT HEALTH ISSUES

If you've got a doctor's excuse, then we certainly

don't want you risking your health on coming to any reunions. However, is this the doctor speaking or just complaining? We routinely have one crew member who can only come on Saturday evening as that's how long the dialysis is good for. We pick hotels that insure that you won't have to do stairs or steps. Air conditioned buses, help with getting around.. all these are taken care of.

### EXCUSE 4: MY WIFE DOESN'T WANT TO LISTEN TO A BUNCH OF OLD GUYS TELL SEA STORIES.

Does she like dinner cruises and 5-star cuisine? Does she like an opportunity to shop within walking distance of a top notch luxury hotel?

### EXCUSE 5: OK - THE REAL REASON IS THE MONEY

We have a scholarship fund for those in need. If you need to avail yourself, let us know.

Rich McCamant  
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**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**