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# THE IRONMAN—A DOUBLE ENDER'S NEWSLETTER

## Newsletter Naming

I've taken the liberty of naming our newsletter *The Ironman*. One thing comes through consistently in the hundreds of deck log entries - the Reeves crew were the Ironmen. While some of us who were onboard in the earlier years didn't use that particular expression, it certainly seems appropriate.

Looking back at the steam plant, the years of service in the Gulf, the post-Vietnam ReadImp, PEB and all those who tried to weld the ship to the pier in the years of 1973-1975, it took Ironmen to keep the Iron Lady moving.

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## Special points of interest:

- Reunion 2008, Washington, DC, survey form is enclosed. Please complete and return, whether or not you intend to attend. Planning is everything.
- If you aren't a current member, please complete the form on the back page and return so that you can continue to receive the newsletter.
- Please accept our Happy Holidays greeting!

## Washington D.C. 2008 Reunion Plans Firming Up

Now only ten months away, planning continues to progress. With the services of Master Chief McManuels and Military Reunions to Remember, organizing a full schedule and providing all Reeves shipmates with a satisfying and memorable gathering has become paramount.

Recapping from six months ago, a survey was sent to all former crew members, either by snail mail, email or both. In that survey, we asked for a measure of commitment to a 2008 reunion, related activities and some idea of travel plans.

Well, we received 30 completed survey forms with five members declining. With the 25 commitments, we are looking at a total of 48 participants.

There has been a lot of email since the survey was mailed. It appears that a lot more crew members are interested—now that we are talking about travel next Fall.

Just what is planned? Well, for starters,



The Lone Sailor at center of the Navy Memorial plaza.

we are scheduling the reunion from Wednesday to Sunday - four days rather than the usual three days. This will give ample time for guided tours on Thursday and Friday for DC, Annapolis and all of the many great sites within a short drive.

We are planning a reception on Wednesday night, a gathering on Friday night, a Saturday meeting and a Saturday night banquet.

Since there was so much interest at the Boulder reunion in 2006, and the association specified the East Coast, there—you have it!

We are enclosing another survey form with this issue of the newsletter. It's important that anyone who's interested in attending complete the form (*including* snail mail address) and return it soonest. Our ability to block hotel rooms is entirely based on your responses.

Please respond - so that we can plan for your reunion. If you've already responded, your number's already recorded.

## Finally, Admiral Reeves' Complete Biography

As I recall back when, there was a simple school-style yellow report cover that contained a very thin and sketchy biography of Admiral Joseph Mason Reeves in the wardroom. I suspect that there was a similar document in the Chief's Mess and the library on the mess decks. It was very sketchy and didn't tell us much about the man who created the modern doctrine of Naval Air Warfare. Well, there is a new book out, *All The Factors of Victory*, that is very enlightening, let me tell you.

Normally, I like to read a good who-done-it or spy novel. The real stuff can be boring. This time I was surprised.

The author, Thomas Wildenberg, has spent a great deal of time compiling the details on a man who wasn't particularly known for being a prolific writer. It seems that Admiral Reeves was a man of action and not a person who would write extensively to ensure his place in history.

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## Tailor-Mades & Liberty Cuffs

In REEVES' early history, pre-Zumwalt (or 1972 should you not remember), if I may, enlisted would were dress blues when going on liberty in the winter months. Of course, any sailor below the grade of Chief had a good set of Dress Liberty Blues (not to be confused with Inspection Blues). The Navy-issued blues were heavy, clunky, smelly and usually uncomfortable. Sailors and tailors all over the Pacific devised ways to personalize and make comfortable the dress uniform that had to be worn ashore in liberty status.

Meet the Liberty Cuffs. These embroidered additions to a dress blue jumper

really snazzed up a swab when sitting at in a bar because the jumper cuffs were unbuttoned and rolled back - two big no-no's to the SPs.



Sample liberty-cuff lining (you should see it in color!).

Some even went so far as to have the complete inside of the jumper lined with embroidery, and zippers added to the inseam for a snug fit. In many cases, the

material was much lighter than Navy issue, held a better crease, looked sharper, survived many a bingo ditch and was totally illegal. Getting past the OOD and off the quarterdeck was a real challenge, especially in the days when the only ride ashore was the liberty launch.

Oh, yes. Good tailor-mades were not complete without the bell-bottomed trousers that were piped and cut to a sailor's natural leg shape, and included the ubiquitous 13-button panel that really worked. 13 chances to say no, or do I go too far?

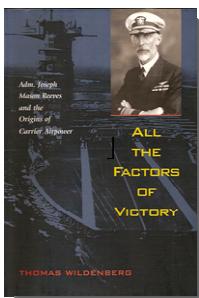
As I recall, a zipper took a lot longer. But, what do I know?

Darrell just couldn't seem to get to work on time. Every day, 5, 10 minutes late. But he was too good a worker, real sharp, so the Boss was in a quandary about what to do about it. Finally, one day he called him into the office for a talk. "Darrell, I have to tell you, I like your work ethics, but your being late often is bothersome."

"Yes, I know Boss, and I'm working on it."

"Well good. That's what I like to hear. It's odd though, your coming in late. I know you're retired from the Navy. What did they say if you came in late there?"

"They said, 'Good morning, Admiral.'"



The subject of this issue's book review, *All The Factors of Victory*

### Reeves' Biography (continued from page 1)

Firmly footed in the surface Navy dating back to the Spanish-American War, this Annapolis graduate came up through the ranks and earned his reputation as a "skimmer" - a term not known to the pre-WW II Navy.

Of course, in ADM Reeves' day, the connotation of Ironmen took on a whole new meaning. In his first ship, USS Cincinnati (C-7), and later USS San Francisco (C-5), his plant consisted of three 160 psi Scotch boilers driving two triple-expansion engines turning two screws for a max speed of 21 knots. That's a far cry from the 1200 psi plant on the Reeves. Remember, in those days, one closed the hatches into the fire-rooms to boost the forced draft blowers and coax an extra knot or two out of the plant. The fireroom crews suffered through heat exceeding 120 degrees F to get the extra performance. And, that exactly is what Asst Engineer Reeves did in the early days of the Spanish-American War in the ship's haste to get to Cuba and confront the Spanish fleet at Santiago de Cuba.

Joseph Reeves started out as an engineer (loud cheering from below-decks is permitted at this point). It wasn't until 1900 upon reporting to USS Kearsarge (BB-5) that he became a line officer and a weaponeer.



USS Cincinnati was Assistant Engineer Joseph M. Reeves' first ship

At this point, you might say, oh, well, and close the book. It gets a lot better.

J.M. Reeves had more commands in more interesting places than anyone I ever knew, even in the goat locker.

He was the commissioning CO of the USS Jupiter (AC-3) and then become commissioning CO of the USS Langley (CV-1). Yes, coaling auxiliary to aircraft carrier.

Just as he did in his A-ENG and WEPO days, J.M. Reeves threw everything into his new job.

In more space than this column will allow, suffice it to say that Joseph Reeves put his mark on Naval Aviation in so many ways. Read the book.

And, he put his mark on the conduct of WWII, when he was recalled to active duty in a limited capacity.

There is a problem with this book. Thomas Wildenberg has included so much content that it is impossible to write a synopsis.

As a book review, it's simple. The book is a really great read - and is totally fascinating to one who spend more than just a couple of years in the Navy.

We always serve on ships that have namesakes. More often,

(Continued on page 3)

## Making of a Newsletter

This is your newsletter. When you join the Association, it funds quarterly publication of this newsletter. We need your articles, stories, memories, jokes or whatever.

There are over 800 of you out there who are interested. You now sign onto the deck log at the website. Support your Association and join. Plan on attending at least one reunion. You'll never forget it!



**"I wish to have no connection with any ship that does not sail fast; for I intend to go in harm's way."** - John Paul Jones

This newsletter is published by:

The USS Reeves  
Association  
185 Luke Ln  
Bastrop, TX 78602-7498

Newsletter Editor - Michael Robertson  
Phone: 703-780-2269  
Fax: 703-740-9161  
E-mail:  
michaelrobertson@cox.net

All comments, suggestions, submissions and criticism are welcome.

My email is always open....

## Some Interesting Trivia

Ditty bag (or box) was originally called ditto bag because it contained at least two of everything: two needles, two spools of thread, two buttons, etc. With the passing of years, the 'ditto' was dropped in favor of ditty and remains so today. Before WWI, the Navy issued ditty boxes made of wood and styled after foot lockers. These carried the personal gear and some clothes of the sailor. Today the ditty bag is still issued to recruits and contains a sewing kit, toiletry articles and personal items such as writing paper and pens. (Yes, but does it still include clothes stops?)

In 1852 a white cover was added to the soft visorless blue hat. In 1866 a white sennet straw

hat was authorized as an additional item. During the 1880's the white "sailors hat" appeared as a low rolled brim high-domed item made of wedge shaped pieces of canvas to replace the straw hat. The canvas was eventually replaced by cotton as a cheaper more comfortable material. Many complaints on the quality and construction led to modifications ending in the currently used white hat. (But a properly "rolled" white hat was a work of art. The rolled hats worn by today's Navy Honor Guard are a bit exaggerated, in this man's opinion.)

Ed - Who remembers dragging white hats in the wake to make them whiter?

## Remembering a Buffalo Hunter

U.S. reconnaissance drones flew over North Vietnam during the 1960s and early 1970s to collect tactical intelligence and strategic intelligence. These unmanned aircraft were launched from airborne DC-130 Hercules cargo aircraft that remained over friendly territory; after their photo flight, the drones flew back to a location where they could be landed and have their film recovered; drones were reusable.

One such drone splashed into the Tonkin Gulf in 1972 before it could be recovered. REEVES picked it up. Improvising with the davits for the utility boat, the drone was lifted alongside and promptly rendered per-



manently inoperable by the sea swells, swaying, slamming and so forth. Ships aren't DC-130s.

The camera was recovered intact, however, given a fresh water shower and returned to the Air Force via the Big Mother Express...

A Buffalo Hunter drone hoisted on the port davit in recovery from the Tonkin Gulf. It was the worst day in the drone's life. Drone's aren't gigs or utility boats.

## Reeves Biography (continued from page 2)

we don't know who the namesakes are or what they did. Yes, it has something to do with Navy history. In the short term, it's understandable. In the long term...well, that's for you to decide.

That is no longer the case with ADM Joseph Mason Reeves.

If you've been following the website, I've started to break down Admiral Reeves' life into a timeline based on Mr. Wildenberg's work.

Keep an eye out for online updates. If you do the same thing that I did, checking the internet for every reference, you never get it straight, and you'll never sleep until you

figure out all the twists and turns in the "Old Navy."

Buy the book first and read it. It's a good read. Then check every possible reference on the 'net. It's fun, and it's educational.



USS Oregon, where Assistant Engineer Reeves first established his reputation as a can-do sailor.

## Very Rough Reunion Planning



Capital Building on a Winter day...looks better in September

Many of you have asked what a program would look like for the reunion. I know that for many, this will be a first time visit to the Nation's Capital. Well, there's a powerful lot to be seen and done.

This scheduled hasn't been firmed up at all. It is the result of discussions with Terry McManuels and his recommendations for organizing successful reunions.

Most groups plan for a Thursday—Sunday block of time. That usually means that shipmates arrive on Thursday, tour on Friday and Saturday morning, attend a reception on Friday night and a banquet on Saturday night. Sunday morning is mass exodus.

Since we are planning on a reunion in the northern Virginia/DC area, and there is so much to do, two full days for organized touring will barely be enough to scratch the surface. So, we have blocked out September 24 - 28, 2008, Wednesday - Sunday, to add that second day on the town.

Of course, we will have a reception on the Wednesday night. It will be a simple affair held early enough so

that shipmates and spouses can plan on dinner at one of the many great restaurants in the area.

Thursday and Friday will be organized tour days. Certainly a trip to Annapolis and the Naval Academy



John Paul Jones at the US Naval Academy

will be included. That might also be a good day to visit the new museums and USS Barry (DD 933) at the Washington Navy Yard.



USS Barry at the Washington Navy Yard

Friday would be a great day for visits to the memorials in the DC area such as Fort Myer and Arlington Cemetery, the Iwo Jima Memorial and Air Force Memorial, the Vietnam, Korean War and World War II Memorials and such places as the Lincoln, Washington and Jefferson Monuments.

For those with ground transportation, travel to Mt. Vernon Plantation, Woodlawn Plantation, Gunston Hall and the Marine Museum at Quantico are certainly feasible. Don't drive in DC, especially during the work week!

Of course, another gathering on Friday night is another good get-together, especially for those not arriving until Thursday or Friday. Depending upon planning and willingness to support such an event, the Friday social gathering (happy hour) could be sufficient to substitute for an evening meal.



The Smithsonian Castle

free for additional touring or local exploring. An Association meeting would be scheduled for later Saturday afternoon.

The Saturday evening banquet would be a coat and tie affair with a speaker (possibly Thomas Wildenberg, author of ADM Reeves biography).

To make it short and sweet:

- Wednesday, 9/24 - Arrival Reception 6pm
- Thursday, 9/25 - Organized daytime tours Evening free
- Friday, 9/26 - Organized daytime tours Social Hour 5pm Dinner/Evening free
- Saturday, 9/27 - Free time to early afternoon Association Meeting 4pm Banquet Dinner 7pm
- Sunday, 9/28 - Departure

There is more than anyone can do or see in Washington, DC, in just two days of touring. Those of us who live here haven't seen or been to all of it either. But a sampler is a good starter, even for those of us who can't find the starting line.

**Please remember that this isn't final or set in stone!**

## From The Website

Everything except the kitchen sink is posted on the website. It can't get any more packed than it is now. Or, maybe there's always room for another sea story, a couple of pictures, a reunion or two, some really great ship's trivia, or whatever.

There are a number of shipmates who aren't connected to the internet. But, there are a whole lot more that are connected. There's a wealth of ship's information (one man's views, actually) that need to be checked, rechecked, corrected, updated...you get the picture.

Dr. John White started the first website about five years ago. It had a lot of information. Working with Dr. White, the webpages have been copied onto the current website so that nothing can be lost. The original decklog started by Dr. White has been migrated to the new website. Nothing has been lost in the movement. If you haven't had the opportunity, visit the site.

The last few months have been very slow. But everything is up to date from

the latest emails and deck log entries.

The graphic below is the home page for the website. There's a lot more than the first page to read. Hopefully, there will be a lot more in the months and years to come.

Everyone who has ever served on Reeves and has posted that information

crew of 380 people. Over a period of 30 years, that means that there are as many as 11,000 people that walked her decks.

Of that population, maybe 10% are still interested in the ship. And, maybe one half of that group would be interested in getting together to swap lies, sea stories, and generally remember good times earlier in their lives.

I know - that's a lot of numbers. All I know is that there are a lot of ships that spent 30 to 40 years in service, and their associations seem to meet these statistics. There are also a lot of shipmates who spent 20 - 30 years in the Navy. They are involved with a number of their old ships and commands. But, a lot come back to the Iron Lady and her Ironmen.

Is this an advertisement?  
You bet! Check it out at:

<http://www.ussreeves.net>

It's your website, too!

## Web Page Graphic

at one of several websites is included on the crew's roster. Where email addresses have been given, an electronic mailing list is being built. The only way to build an association is to contact everyone who has ever sailed on the Reeves.

On average, the Reeves would have a

### Notes from the Web Deck Log:

Reeves was my last ship to serve aboard, 78-81, prior to completing 30 yrs service. Crossed the equator on her during my time aboard, finally a new shellback in an old body. She was home ported in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii and then Yokosuka, Japan while on-board. Retired in 1984 and remember the good and bad times while aboard, miss the good times with some fine shipmates. Perth Australia visit was great, 1981, and some of you may recall why I say this. Fair winds and following seas shipmates!!!

GMCM Roger Sorrells

I served as an MM1 onboard REEVES from 84-97. I started in M-Div #2 ER and then transferred to A-gang. I see a lot of familiar names in the log and it is great to remember a lot of my ole shipmates. REEVES was a pivotal tour for me where I matured a lot, learned a lot, had fun sailing 7th Fleet, and most important - I met my wife of 21 years now in the Philippines. I'm currently finishing up my 30 year career in the navy and will retire in the spring. Hope to hear from my fellow shipmates.

Clint Dougherty

It's nice to read all these names and places this ship's been and seen. A lot of good times and a lot of tough ones too. But it made us the men we are today. Thanks for the memories Reeves and all you great IRONMEN who served her. To Capt. Center....one last "Five Star Day!!!!"

Joaquin Angulo STG2