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## **CLASS OF 1948 SHIPMATE COLUMN**

**JUNE 2005**

Please note the change of address on the masthead, as the Moores are now back north in Rhode Island for the summer where we will reside until about the first of November. Use the RI address and phone, and the same email address. This month we have lost some Classmates, sadly, and I will try to cover events and still remain within the allotted word count.

We are very sad that Ben Reams died 26 March at home in Annapolis of heart failure after a short heroic struggle to stay with us. Ben had kept for years the 1948 Class records of who is where, and was usually way ahead of the Alumni Association. He did the mailings and tracking for Homecomings and Reunions, and will be hard to replace. He did a stint at the U. of Chattanooga, joined 48 in the 10<sup>th</sup> Company plebe year, and finished in the 7<sup>th</sup> Company. He became a bedrock Christian late second class year while deathly ill in the hospital, and missing the ring dance. He took to sailing immediately, working up to yawl command as a first classman. After some surface duty in SEMINOLE and SPANGLER he emerged from submarine school, December 1950 and served in MEDREGAL, PICUDA, and ICEFISH, and as XO in CUTLASS. At PG school, Monterey, he took an MS in Mechanical Engineering. He became an Engineering Duty Officer and served at the Portsmouth, ME, Shipyard. After serving in NEREUS as Repair Officer and a tour at BuShips in Washington, he retired in July 1966. He worked for Westinghouse in Annapolis for over 20 years in the Underseas Division. The Reams lived in Bowie, near Annapolis, for a few years, and then moved into Nancy's family home in Wardour,

on Weems Creek, in Annapolis. Ben and Nancy were married in 1948. Nancy is a Crab (raised in Annapolis) and a navy junior and Ben leaves her in the old home, a son, CDR Hugh Reams USN(ret) of Bowie; and a granddaughter who is about to make Lt USN, two daughters Dr Nancy R. Deibert of Edgewater MD, and Suzanne Bridges of Elizaville NY, 9 grandchildren, and a great grandchild. Ben was well known as smart, thoughtful, organized, methodical, well-read, Biblically wise and knowledgeable, highly reliable, and generally a man of few, but worthy, words. He was a skilled woodcrafter, gardener, philatelist, and photographer. He led a Bible study group for 38 years. He is missed around Annapolis and certainly among his Classmates and many friends. Ben's remains were inurned at the Naval Academy Columbarium after a celebratory service in the Academy Chapel. There was a large group of Classmates and Annapolis friends, most of who later gathered at the Wardour home for warm reminiscences.

Sally Chapline sends a dandy photo taken at dinner in Scottsdale, AZ, in February, where she and Ed were joined by Jean and Gene Kelly. Kellys and Chaplines were visiting families in the area.

Bob Chadima sent in a new email address and added: "I spent most of my sea time in destroyers and amphib. That was in a Navy that no longer exists. 1947 to 1956 were frustrating years for a surface navy sailor. I truly appreciate your messages, which help keep me informed. After nearly fifty years ashore, I still find salt water in my blood."

Another great submariner, Robert M. Weidman (23<sup>rd</sup> Company), known as Whitey, passed on in Sarasota, FL of complications from Parkinson's disease on 15 March 2005. Whitey came out of Ann Arbor, MI and graduated in '47. After a tour in the destroyer FLOYD D. PARKS, he did submarine school and served in RUNNER and BURRFISH. Then, from the Personnel Plans Division of CNO, he was snared as Whitehouse social aide to the

Eisenhowers. He picked up a Stanford MA in personnel administration, and returned to the boats as XO of SARDA and SIRAGO, then CO of CARP and COBBLER. He had a tour with BuPers and did the Armed Forces Industrial College in Washington. He served as ComSubDiv 52, and as CO of the sub tender PROTEUS in Guam, had another shot with BuPers, and finished with command of the Naval Stations in Guam and Subic Bay, Phillipines. He and his wife, Vareita, retired to Sarasota. Whitey was one of those big guys who probably bumped his head a lot in the boats. His easy way and smile won't be forgotten. His remains were inurned in the Florida National Cemetery.

After a long illness with cancer, our Class Gettysburg, PA, resident, Dick Sprince, died 11 April 2005 (14<sup>th</sup> Company). He came from the state of Maine and entered the Academy from Bates College. Upon graduation in 48, he joined the battleship, MISSOURI, along with a number of Classmates. He was in the gunnery department and as an aerial shore gunfire spotter at Inchon in Korea, in an unarmed helicopter, he was awarded an Air Medal. He transferred from the battleships to the minesweeper, WHEATEAR, and then escaped to submarine school, later serving in CARBONERO and JALLAO. Dick resigned in '58 and went with General Electric. He moved to NASA in 1966, working at Kennedy Space Center in Apollo, receiving the Apollo 11 Medallion for his contributions. He served in NASA Washington from 1969-80, picking up a MS in Engineering/Business Management from George Washington U, and working in various areas including the Three-Mile Island committee, the TEKTITE manned underwater habitat program, and setting up the Mt St Helens emergency satellite network for FEMA. He taught high school, college, and graduate studies in math, science, and business. He was an Eagle Scout, and served the national association, and was active in a number of submarine organizations. Dick and Jean were always present at Washington area Class gatherings, Homecomings, and

Reunions, and will be missed greatly. He leaves Jean and three sons, two daughters, and several grand and great grandchildren. Dick made many friends through the years, and was better than most of us at keeping track of them. He had a ready laugh and a wry humor. A memorial service is scheduled for 2 May at the Academy Chapel, to be followed by inurnment at the Columbarium at the Cemetery, and a reception at the Officer's Club.

Benjamin S. Dowd, PHD, Lady Lake, FL, died of bacterial pneumonia on 16 March 2005 (7<sup>th</sup> Company). Ben resigned from the Navy early on and entered a career as an educator and education administrator. He earned a master's in education from Portland U, OR, and a PHD from U of Texas. He served on the staff of the Governor of Texas, and as a professor at Peabody Vanderbilt College for many years. He was Dean at the U of Northern Alabama. Finally moving to the Orlando area, he supported the PHD program of the U of Phoenix. He and Joyce settled in Lady Lake, (the Villages) FL, to a career of leisure. He only semi-retired, continuing to teach grad students for the U. of Arizona. Ben enjoyed golf and reading, but his passion was teaching. Those who knew him called him "Gentle Ben". His students referred to him as their own "Jonathon Livingston". He will be missed by all.

William Drayton Wilson, (23<sup>rd</sup> Company) died 3 February 2005 in Columbia, SC. I have little information on his navy career, although he retired as a LCDR. He received a Doctorate of Engineering from the U. of South Carolina, and taught engineering at Midlands College for 20 years. He is survived by his wife, Jane Carolyn Rogers Wilson, two sons, a daughter, and a grandson. He enjoyed farming and traveling after his retirement.

Bill Jones writes from Rochester NY, musing about our Shipmate column and his reconnection to Classmates through bits and pieces therefrom, including a note about the passing of his wife, Sonia, in 2004. He writes by hand, a curious method to which we seem to

have become unused. He enclosed a letter he had sent to Dick Robertson, from which I excerpt freely. "My roommate, Bill Kanzler has been a great help to me through letters, as he went through the same loss as I several years ago. I continue to live in my house (1965) in Greece, several miles south of Lake Ontario. I am very busy with finances, bridge 3 times per week, 1.5 mile walks, meals, housekeeping, etc. I am taping my oral autobiography, very time-consuming. I regularly see or talk with Don Dick, who worked for Kodak, as I did. We were also shipmates in PHILLIPINE SEA (CV-47). I also talk to Joyce and Bruce Benson in Sarasota. We used to see them twice a year enroute to Long Boat Key. My daughter, Bonnie, lives nearby with her husband and son, and another daughter, Sally, lives with her husband in Plano, Texas."

I learned about an hour ago that Lee (Levon) Berberian (20<sup>th</sup> Company) died this morning, 17 April 2005. This from a telephone call to Dudley Holstein from Lee's wife, Priscilla. Further information will be in the next column.

Gloria Dalles Netherland, the wife of Roger, who was shot down in Vietnam and carried as missing in action for many years until his remains were found and returned by the North Vietnamese, died 22 March 2005. There will be a memorial service for her at the old Fort Myer Chapel adjacent to Arlington Cemetery on May 10, followed by inurnment in the Cemetery Columbarium. I will publish more about this in the next column.

I hope that you have had a chance to enter the Class Website at [www.usna.com](http://www.usna.com), still in gestation, to see what is now there, and what the possibilities are and will be. Comments and suggestions are welcome to me and/or John Tsiknas at [johntsiknas@sbcglobal.net](mailto:johntsiknas@sbcglobal.net). Also, I just heard from Jorge Montalvo in Ecuador that he is now on line and welcomes visits at [Jorge\\_montalvo@andinanet.net](mailto:Jorge_montalvo@andinanet.net).

