



OCTOBER 1-4, 2022 SHIP REUNION *ALL RATES, ALL YEARS

SAN DIEGO, CA - I met LTJG George Mellen (8/68-6/71), who was the first crew member to arrive, at the hotel bar on Thursday night for drinks. What a great start to the reunion.

More shipmates came in on Saturday; some flying in and some driving in. That night we had 43 people for the 'Welcome Reception' at the Quarterdeck Restaurant & Bar at the Bay Club Hotel & Marina. On Sunday, a group of 28 toured the USS Anchorage (LPD 23).

On Sunday night, a San Diego Symphony patron donated a table of four to a performance at the bayside Rady Shell. Two tickets were given to LTJG Joseph Noha (70-75), who contributed \$1500 to the reunion, and the other two tickets went to QM Alan Bescan (5/73-12/76), who won them from my 'pay early incentive' drawing. They had a great time.

Monday morning a group of 23 went on a two-hour harbor cruise. After returning to the hotel, everyone had free time until the main event. Check-in started at 1700 with the Naval Base San Diego Color Guard and our Pledge of Allegiance officially starting the event at 1800. Besides the good food and giveaways, decommissioning CO CAPT Mark E Cedrun shared with us what it was like those last few months. He held back tears as he described shutting down the ship for the last time. After he spoke, several crew members got up and shared what it meant to be part of the LSD36 family.

The following morning, 22 met at the Old Town Mexican Café for a well needed breakfast. Afterwards, there was more free time until the Padre game that night. We arrived early and took in some batting practice before watching the Padres beat the Giants 6-2.

It was tough saying goodbye to everybody. I am already looking forward to the next reunion.

NOTE: On behalf of the entire crew, a very special "Thank You!" to LTJG Joseph Noha (69-73), who donated \$1500 toward our reunion. This helped with deposits, cash giveaways, special guest sponsorship, and more. Three other shipmates; MA Dave Rios (1/85-8/87), OS James Acerra (8/95-8/99), and FC Jason Velasquez (11/93-7/98), donated a combined \$654.



NON-PROFIT NEWS

My current project is to pursue non-profit status for our organization. This could be our Mission Statement:

"To keep our ship's memory alive for future generations, providing emergency assistance to our crew, and supporting the mission of the U.S. Navy."

I have researched what is required to become a 501(c)(3) organization. I met with a non-profit attorney and their fee will be \$1599.00 or \$2599.00 (plus some fees) depending on the amount of work they do. There are a few different types of 501(c)'s that apply to Veteran organizations; an attorney would help select the best for us. I am looking for an individual or business to cover this expense as a 'Major Sponsor' or to provide a founder's loan.

Several people have shown an interest in board positions, but we also need individuals to participate on committees. Contact Michael if you're interested.

NOTE: I mentioned this at the reunion and the LPD 23 commissioning CO, CAPT Joel G. Stewart, who attended, contacted me afterwards and suggested including LPD 23. Instead of USS Anchorage (LSD 36) Association, we could be USS Anchorage Association and represent both ships. Not sure how this would work when fundraising for our reunions, but I will be sitting down with someone to discuss the possibilities. Your thoughts?

SHIP'S HISTORY - October, November, December

1969

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER: Navy tugs YT 759 and YT 180 assisted with mooring at Pier 2, Berth 1 Mare Island on October 31. The ship offloaded all stored ammunition and moved to a starboard side mooring to a pier at Point Molate Naval Fuel Depot to offload fuel. The ship completed offloading 320,368 gallons of fuel on November 1. On that day, the ship moved to a mooring starboard side Pier 21, Berth 21 South at Mare Island. On November 4, Navy tugs "number unknown" and YTM 190 assisted with moving to Dry Dock 3. USS Anchorage crossed the dry dock sill at 0907, water was pumped out, and the ship rested on keel blocks at 1056.

1975

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER: Before heading home, USS Anchorage and six other ships of PHIBRON 5, took part in Operation Polymode (Mid-Ocean Dynamics Experiment), which ran from October 28 to November 9. Operation Polymode was a survey to collect ocean surface layer salinity and upper thermal structure data in a broad swath between Japan and Hawaii. The seven ships rendezvoused and proceeded to the study area, where they lined up abreast, 25 nautical miles apart, taking measurements every two hours.

1977

OCTOBER: Among the amphibious exercises in which the ship participated was Operation Fortress Lightning from October 10 to 23, held in waters near Santa Cruz, Mindanao Island, Philippines. Nearly 100 Navy and Marine Corps commands were involved in the planning of this exercise and the operational order consisted of almost 1000 pages; 30 U.S. Navy ships with thousands of Marines and 135 aircraft participated.

1988

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER: USS Anchorage was undergoing an extensive overhaul at Southwest Marine Shipyard, San Pedro, California through November. This overhaul refitted USS Anchorage to accommodate LCAC's and two Phalanx Close-In Weapons Systems were added. On December 15, CDR Gregory C. Butler relieved CDR Michael C. Wein as Commanding Officer.

1990

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER: Deployment of the 5th MEB (Marine Expeditionary Brigade) to the Arabian Gulf was talked about as early as August, but they had a shipping problem. Only nine ships were available, and the Marine expeditionary brigade needed 15. On November 9, USS Anchorage was made available but was unable to undergo a pre-deployment work-up. Finally, on December 1, USS Anchorage, carrying the 5th MEB along with two LCAC's (Landing Craft, Air Cushion) onboard, joined the largest amphibious group to depart from the West Coast since the Vietnam deployment in 1965.

2000

NOVEMBER: The ship took part in Operation Iron Magic, United Arab Emirates, November 15-25, was in Bahrain November 26-29, took part in a Marine Expeditionary Unit Exercise (MEUEX) off Kuwait December 1-10, and conducted MIO (Maritime Interdiction Operations) December 19-25, in support of United Nations Resolutions, the first amphibious ship to do so in nearly two years.

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