

Shipmate September 2021
Duke Longworth
28 June 2021

Summer is nearing the end! If July and August were anything like June this year will be a real scorcher! I really like the fall! You likely remember some of my fond memories of fall in the Yard: the leaves turning color, cool days, the warpaint on Tecumseh, and the football games! This year we have our 50th reunion, so this is a very special year! I hope to see you there!

Our **50th reunion** is just a few weeks away when you receive this column! Registration closed August 15th, so I hope you are all set to be there! This reunion promises to be top notch! See you soon!

Here's a timely note from **Jocko Jastrab**: "Duke, Trust all is well and that you're looking forward to the 50th reunion as much as I am. It's shaping up to be a great time. The reunion committee has done a fantastic job putting the program together and deserves a resounding BZ for their efforts. Can't wait to see everyone again!



Connor & Mayumi Hancock with Mario Summa and Jocko Jastrab

“Wanted to let you know about a recent event here in SW Florida that involved our class and ‘Another Link in the Chain.’ Here’s the text of what transpired written by **Al Burda '68**, President, Florida Suncoast Alumni Chapter:

“At a recent joint Florida Suncoast Chapter of the USNA Alumni Assn. and Sarasota Manatee Council of the Navy League luncheon, classmates **Jocko Jastrab** and **Mario Summa** presented a beautiful USNA Alumni Association Captain’s Chair donated by **Jan Milligan** as ‘Another Link in the Chain’ award to **ENS Cameron Hancock USN '21**. They made the award as representatives of the USNA Class of 1971 from the Florida Suncoast Chapter to Cameron as the most outstanding local USNA Class of 2021 graduate. Cameron Hancock’s parents, Connor and Mayumi accepted the chair on his behalf as he was in training in San Diego.”

“Unfortunately, Jan could not attend to present the chair, so Mario and I pinch hit for him. It was a wonderful day and opportunity to meet several USNA alumni who attended. That’s it for now. Take care and see you this fall. Jocko.” Thank you! Jan had not mentioned this to his company-mates! Glad you passed along this info! I’ll see you and Jan at our reunion!



Jocko Jastrab at the Florida Suncoast Chapter

Next is an update from the San Diego Chapter '71er **John Ball**: "Hi Duke! Sixteen of us San Diegans gathered at Lana and **Tom Hammons'** beautiful Southwestern Yacht Club on June 9th for a delicious buffet dinner and drinks on a splendid evening on the Bay. Since many wives attended as well, most of us were on good behavior as we regaled them and each other with new and old stories, some of them true. We toasted the class with champagne, toasted the Navy wives with champagne, and - well you get the picture. For most of us it was a nice opportunity to wear our class rings again in solid company. The evening was a great start to summer weather here in San Diego and we look forward to the 50th Reunion in Annapolis. Classmates in the photo below with (company # in parens): **Jim Ward (7)**, **Ed Hebert (10)**; **Scott Burd (8)**; **Russ Stahlak (12)**; **Steve Pelstring (8)**; **John Ball (26)**; **Brad Closson (3)**; **Joe Anthony (3)**; **Jim Bryant (20)**; **Fred Mallgrave (22)**; **Steve Comer (31)**; **Tom Hammons (34)**; **Rick Smith (34)**; **Chuck Bongard (12)**; **Dave Bolduc (12)**; and **Pat Doyle (23)**. John." Excellent work by our San Diego classmates! You guys are tops!



San Diego '71ers celebrating 50 years!

The San Diego input continues with this note from **Tom Hammons**: "Duke, you received an update from **John Ball** on the San Diego celebration of our graduation. So, I thought I would give you a quick note on Club 34 celebration. We set up Zoom call for 1130 EDT on Wednesday to toast our successful 50-year journey from graduation. We had 13 Company-Mates participate: **Jerry Acton, Tom Bowman, Mike O'Connor, Dick Cheliras, Jim Gosma, Tom Hammons, Randy Harper, Bill Hatcher, Chuck Janes, Charlie Keating, Mitch Marich, Dan McConnell, Kevin O'Connor, and Mike O'Connor**. A few tails were told and we had a chance to catch up on the latest medical reports. All in all, a great way to kick off a Wednesday morning in San Diego, champagne before 0900. Tom." That sounds like an excellent way to start the day,

especially when you are celebrating our 50th year since graduation! Well done, Shipmate!

Have you heard the good news! The following classmates were selected as *Naval Academy Class of 1971 Sports Legends*. The Navy Sports Legends section will be an integral addition to the newly constructed *Ron Terwilliger Center '63 Center for Student-Athletes* in Ricketts Hall. Congratulations to these selectees with this well-deserved recognition for sports excellence achievement as midshipmen 1967-1971!

Class of 1971 Sports Legends:

Tom Abernathy (tomusna71@att.net) – Soccer

Jim Bloom (jlbloom2@cox.net) – Track and Field

Jack Conrad (jlconrad71@comcast.net) – Basketball

Bob Custer (custer@earthlink.net) – Squash and Tennis

Lew Mason (kathyt_98837@yahoo.com) – Wrestling

Mike McNallen (mcnallen15@aol.com) – Football

Mike Morrell (mmorrellsm@gmail.com) – Lightweight Football / Track and Field

Steve Newberger - Boxing

Dave Pearl (dapper.search@comcast.net) – Swimming

Karl Schwelm (karlschwelm@gmail.com) – Lacrosse

Since my last column I received the sad news of the passing of our classmate and friend, **John** (Jack) **Balcom**. Jack passed away in New Hampshire on Tuesday, Jun 22nd. He graduated from 1st Co and selected USMC as a career choice. While at the academy, Jack was always the life of the party coming up with ideas to act out. Maybe that is why he was in the Thespians and choir. He became an expert in logistics and after the Marines, worked for *Ford* as an engineer and then BAE Systems and SAIC Corporation. Later in life he entered local politics and became a State Representative in the New Hampshire 21st District (2000-2004 and 2014-2016) working in the legislature directing the Office of Education. He is survived by his wife Marie, daughter Lindsay, son Jon, and six grandchildren.

I note the date of submission for this column is 28 June 2021! 54 years and going since taking the oath of office as a midshipman. Certainly, I hope there are many more years to go! See you in September!

Too soon, it is time to close. Please keep our classmates and their families in your prayers for good health, especially continuing protection from the COVID-19 virus, healing when needed, and safety in travels. The pandemic highlighted that **today** is the gift of “the present” and life is precious and too short! Love passionately, give and share your blessings generously with others – as we are richly blessed so may we richly bless others. Our leadership at home, in our social circles, and in daily routines is vital to maintaining our nation’s constitutional republic. Now is the time to shape the future of our great nation as we strive for a more perfect union. There is plenty of work remaining as we increase our wisdom! Time, tide and column due dates wait for no man!

Duces Virum, Duke