

Shipmate September 2022
Duke Longworth
27 June 2022

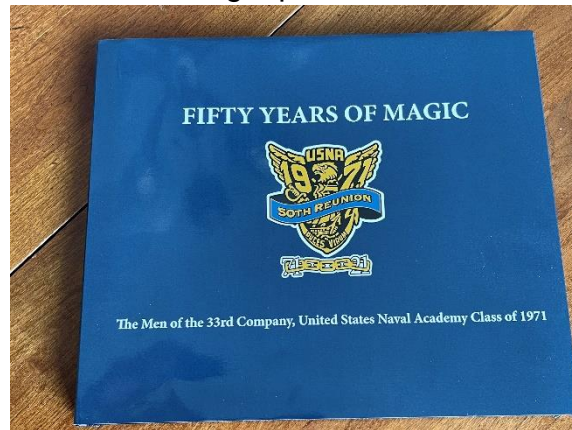
September is here! The brigade has returned from summer cruises and leave. The Yard bristling is with midshipmen attending classes and participating in the wide range of activities. You probably know or have read that fall is a favorite season of mine! I look forward to the cooler days and nights and football! Here's to the Midshipmen having a winning season! I would enjoy a visit to halls of Mother B to see if the plebes still square corners and shout, "BEAT ARMY, SIR!" I think I will have to settle for watching a fall p-rade. I do hope to see many of our classmates at a home-game tailgate or the Army-Navy game this fall!

I received an excellent note from **Mac Oxford's** wife, Chris: (Editor's note: Chris' note was intended for the June *Shipmate* column; however, I mistakenly overlooked her note. So, it is later than planned, but it provides an excellent reminder of the fun we had last fall!). Chris' note: "True to the Company motto, '71/33 Magic,' 33rd was represented at the 50th Reunion with 23 of 25 living mates, 21 spouses, and two widows. Navy's win over UFC was a welcome surprise and the tailgate food was excellent; the Class dinner on Sunday night was thoroughly enjoyable; and the Monday breakfast was a wonderful way to end the weekend; but, the highlight for the 33rd was Friday evening's Company dinner at Carrol's Creek Café. Below is a photo of the 33rd Company attendees:



(L-R) Front row, kneeling – **Jon Chichucki** (white shirt), **Pete Baker**, **Bill Shutt**;
Second row – (Argyle sweater) **Dave Hackett**, **Steve Brown**, **Steve Martin**, **John Closs** (Holding 33rd banner); Standing – **Jim Bloom**, **Mel DeMars**, **Buz Dereniuk**, **Mac Oxford**, **Paul Madurski**, **Jack Boniface**, **Gary Bakken**, **Mike Ward**, **Mike Miernicki**, **Dick Cooper**, **Rolland Weibley**; Faces obscured on right side – **Dan Curry**, **Larry Wray**, **Bob Hendershot**.

The evening featured a large display of memorabilia including a penknife issued on I Day, Navy and Army b-robies (those things have held up well!), Reef Points, pictures, and much more. There must have been some overweight suitcases toted by classmates! “Highlights of the evening were a visit by (the fictitious) **LCDR Matt (The Hat) Von Calvert, '45**, who bestowed awards on mates for their back-in-the-day transgressions, and the surprise presentation of the nearly 150-page, hard-cover coffee table book, *Fifty Years of Magic – The Men of the 33rd Company, United States Naval Academy Class of 1971*,



33rd Company Reunion book

a compilation of stories from each of the Company-mates reporting on their lives since graduation. A shortened version of *Fifty Years of Magic* had been sent out as a PDF-file during the summer prior to the reunion. The extended, hard-copy version of the book was made possible through a generous donation from the family of deceased mate, **Vincent P. Conroy** (1949-2017). During the reunion, 33rd Company made plans for their next reunion at the Navy-Air Force game in October 2022.” What an excellent showing by 33rd Company! Sounds like lots of fun!



LCDR Matt Von Calvert in full regalia

“When we approached the family of Vinny Conroy to write a piece for the book for him, they were so excited by the project that they gave a very generous donation that took the project from a printed-at-Staples-and-stapled-together-pamphlet to a real coffee table book of nearly 150 pages with color pictures and lots of extras. We are forever grateful for that donation! I've attached our 'press release' and pictures for inclusion in the class column of *Shipmate*. Thanks, Chris Oxford.” I'm sure I would enjoy reading the 33rd Company book about my battalion-mates!

Chris Oxford sent this additional background note: “After reading all the reunion news in the January February Shipmate, I decided that 33rd Company should send along its own news.

“A little background on our book, *Fifty Years of Magic – The Men of the 33rd Company, United States Naval Academy Class of 1971*. The project came about because, after my 50th high school reunion, I wanted to know more about my classmates' lives. When Mac's 50th USNA reunion came along, I decided that the guys might be interested in what their company-mates had been doing since graduation. Bob Hendershot's wife, Jo, and I compiled and edited all the information. Cullen McLean, Jo's nephew, put it all together for publication.

Next is a note from **Joe Sheppard**: “Hey Duke, Linda and I just got back from New Orleans, where we watched the Navy Women, including our granddaughter, **Maggie Schuler '25**, compete in the College Sailing National Championships. It was a great time, except for the one day that was wiped out by thunderstorms. After competing, the women all travelled overnight back to Annapolis to participate in the Commissioning Ceremony. Go Navy! Joe.” Sounds like an exciting time with your granddaughter!

Below: Linda and Joe Sheppard with granddaughter, Maggie Schuler '25





Tom Gross sent this update regarding tailgates at Annapolis football games: “Once again, our Class tailgate will be up and operating every home game. You will find us at our traditional spot on the Blue Side parking lot perimeter, directly out from the press box. We're easy to find, so plan to rendezvous with your group at the tailgate. “As usual, the tailgates will start two hours before kickoff and remain open through halftime.

Go Navy Women sailing team!

All classmates and guests are welcome. All home games except September 3 (Delaware) and October 22 (Houston) are scheduled for 3:30 PM. The Sept 3 game with Delaware and October 22 game with Houston are scheduled for a 12-noon kickoff at Navy-Marine Corps Memorial Stadium. Sadly, or gladly, depending on your point of view, our Link-in-the-Chain class, 2021, has graduated and dispersed to the fleet and Corps, so we won't get to meet any these impressive young people.

“Our menu is largely potluck. Classmates bring dishes, drinks, desserts, or snacks to share, grill space is also available for those who want to bring their own tailgate grill specialties. However, Chef **Bob Capra** will be serving up brats and burgers as well. Coming from out of the area? Don't sweat it. If you don't have a chance to pick up something, come anyway. We haven't run out of food yet! See you there! Beat Army! Tom Gross.” I'm looking forward to the '71 tailgate! See you there!

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, safety in travels, and strength to meet every challenge. **Today** is the gift of “the present” - 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!

Duke Longworth