



HADDO REUNION

10 ^{Through} 12
November 2000
in
Charleston, SC

FLORIDA BALLOTING ISSUES TAKE BACKSEAT TO HADDO REUNION

The Haddo Reunion 2000 was held in Mt. Pleasant, SC at the Holiday Inn and nobody thought about the Presidential Election. The event of the decade took place on 10, 11, and 12 November, but some celebrating began early. Attendees came from all over the country and brought a multitude of accents. Ages ranged from 14 to old, but all were young at heart. About the only time anybody's mouths were not turned up in a smile was when it was engaged in releasing pent up stories about times spent aboard the Haddo. Even that couldn't hold back the smiles all the time.



Holiday Inn, Mt. Pleasant

THE RECOUNT

Heads were counted Thursday evening at the Haddo Reunion and the attendee count was ahead of predictions. About a half a dozen were planned for, but almost two dozen turned out to show their support. The count was re-tabulated Friday and the numbers were indecisive. Saturday, another count was taken at the celebration banquet and it became the unofficial rumor that there were hundreds of Haddo Sailors missing. An unidentified source named Dick

Hillman said there will be another count in 2003. Until then, the 130 attendees will avoid legislative intervention by dividing all fun, emotion and memories equally among themselves. Sources say that they are willing to share pictures, however.

THURSDAY FAST CRUISE

A small contingent of Haddo sailors had volunteered to Fast Cruise Thursday before the official start of the reunion on Friday. They felt it was their responsibility to ensure the proper party

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atmosphere was set for those who traveled far and wide to attend the weekend festivities. Since Pride Runs Deep in this caucus, the small contingent almost became a quorum by evening's peak.

The atmosphere was indeed set. Supporters started showing up around 1400. By 2200 the hospitality suite was rocking. By 0330, when the last devotees (Mike Gary and Wayne Johnston) drifted out, the crowd had consumed 8 cases of beer, half dozen bags of chips, and 2 cans of soda.

FRIDAY OPENING CEREMONIES

Opening ceremonies were to begin at 1400, but the momentum had already begun by 1000. Party check-in was running rampant. The day quickly ran into the night as the bipartisan supporters (husbands and wives) continued to stream in. The Fast Cruise was successful in that the party atmosphere was definitely well ensconced in the psyche of all those who entered the Hospitality Suite. There is a strong chance that they were motivated ahead of time.

The sound level in the suite rose proportional to the square of the number of empty beer cans and more than once, five times in fact, committee volunteers were tasked with speed runs to the local wells.

The hum of sea stories was broken repeatedly by the laughter of recollection. Although the mood of the gathering was happy and emotionally charged, small patches of serious conversation passed from group to group like a politician working the crowd.

Talking over the din, drinking more than the norm, and standing for hours on end took a toll. But the real exhausting factor was the emotional energy drain. By 0200, only a couple diehards were still standing. With a little coaxing, they saw the wisdom in not demanding a recount.

SATURDAY MAIN EVENT

FREE TIME:

All attendees voted, by secret ballot, on the best utilization of the daylight hours. The result of the vote split the assemblage on four issues: Health, Education, Renewal, and Continuance.

Health: The group that was focused on health elected to play golf. Fortunately, none of the participants took the issue seriously and in fact, a few knew absolutely nothing about the subject. The dimples on the score cards were hard to read, so there was no count available at the banquet for announcing the winner. When the scores were recounted the next day, however, Dwayne Capps emerged victorious. Rumor has it that two other contestants had very close winning scores and are seeking yet a third recount.

Education: Another segment focused their attention on education and elected to tour the historical sites of Charleston. Education may have been their platform, but it was not the facts that they sought. No. It was the dirt, the scandals, the rumors, the stuff your mother didn't want you to know. The tour guide was Ken Starr (actually, it was a southern honey by the name of Jane Kiser).

Renewal: A third crowd focused on the need to renew and rebuild. They subscribe to the theory that this can only come from within. In keeping with this doctrine, they slept right through housekeeping calls, they ate a leisurely breakfast just about the time the Health guys (and gal) were teeing off, and they strolled around the hotel corridors while the education group was getting all the scoop on the area "South of Broad" (or as the locals say "SOB"). Of course there were some independents in this group who wanted to make a change; they just didn't know what. They spread their wings and indulged in some healthful and education activities of their own. Some of them got lost.

Continuance: This was probably the largest throng and their stand was "if it ain't broke, don't fix it". If the reminiscing, sea stories, and bonding were good enough for yesterday, then it ought to be good enough for today. So, they all found their way into the hospitality suite and carried on as if the partial night's sleep was just a blink of the eye.

BANQUET:

The banquet was truly a victory celebration. It's uncertain as to the victory (it may have just been winning the memory battle), but there was no



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doubt about it being a celebration. All around the banquet room flash cameras were going super nova and the sound barrier was being pushed by voices carrying both words and laughter (sometimes simultaneously from one source). And to periodically help focus the crowd, Fred Pester would let rip well timed alternating twin and triplet ooougha's from his authentic klaxon.

Several ex-Haddo sailors filibustered the evening. Ray Butters showed his inexperience at the mike as he stuttered his way through emceeing the event. Dwayne Capps got the banquet started with a blessing for the meal, the event, and all those who had come together in a meeting of old and new friendships. Tony DeNicola led the group in a moment of silence to honor our departed Haddo shipmates. Dick Nobel presented a plaque to Mike Gann in appreciation for starting and persisting with the Haddo newsletter, making the Haddo Reunion 2000 possible. Harold Clark received the plaque for Mike. Paul Callahan presented a plaque to Ray Butters in appreciation for his efforts in putting the Haddo Reunion 2000 together. RADM Robert Chewning jogged many a memory as he spoke about times aboard the Haddo. He also gave us a glimpse of where the Submarine Navy is today and where it might be going in the years to come. And, finally, Ray Butters presented the Admiral with a model of the Haddo in appreciation for his eloquent oratory as Guest Speaker.

Prior to being allowed to eat dinner the entire group was corralled into the lobby for a Kodak moment by a professional photographer. He also took small group pictures in the lobby after the banquet, providing evidence that a good time was had by all. And, yes, the dinner buffet got high marks in both quantity and quality. I guess they knew that a bunch of submariners wouldn't settle for less.

The celebration continued well into the night. Nobody seemed to want to let go of the evening. The NFL's slogan is "Feel The Power", but that could have easily been the slogan of the Haddo reunion. You could feel the power. You could feel it in the handshakes, the hugs, the laughs, stories. You could feel it in the air.


SUNDAY WRAP-UP

Business Meeting: A large contingency of Haddo sailors gathered in the bar Sunday morning to discuss the possibility of a return engagement (as on Election Day, no booze was served). Suggestions were made, opposing and supporting arguments were heard, and votes were taken. The Where, When, and Who was nearly unanimous (after the third count). The next reunion is currently scheduled to be in 2003 at New London, CT. Dick Hillman will chair the reunion committee and will be looking for volunteers in the coming year. Keep tuned to your Haddo Newsletter for ongoing updates.

Good-byes: As Shakespeare so poetically said it, "*Parting is such sweet sorrow*". Most of the attendees were able to face the good-byes with warmth in their hearts, smiles on their faces, sincerity in their eyes, and a clinging in their handshakes and hugs. Some opted to leave early, not trusting their emotional resolve. Some stayed over a day, hanging on to the aura. Of course there were those that said "No big deal". But then you know how hard some of those steely-eyed killers of the deep like to hold on to that 'can't get to me' persona. It comes from standing knee deep in water in a flooded compartment battling opposing sea pressure; or going through your third OBA canister fighting a compartment fire; or holding your breath during silent running while you hear screw noises through the hull; or feeling the boat shudder, pitch and yaw while overcoming the challenge of tons of water during an emergency blow from test depth. So, it's okay if they say, "No big deal".

WHO ARE THEY?

Figured out all the names to the faces in the pictures yet? Well, hang on to this supplement and I will list all the names in the next official newsletter. I wanted to keep this to three sheets and a 'soon to be gone' 33-cent stamp.

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Susie and I had an absolutely fabulous time at the reunion and wish all of you could have been there. To those of you who did make it, thanks. It was a befitting close to the real millennium.

Happy Holidays from the Butters' home to yours.



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