

The After Battery Rat

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Conversation w/ Rat

From Mike Bickel to Dex Armstrong:

You are the most hilarious submariner I know. I have mentioned this to you before, but was wondering if you had ever considered printing up those ABR tales into a booklet. There are a lot of smoke-boaters out there that are really great guys and they don't have e-mail or Web access. Your writings are used in more and more newsletters from USSVI bases across the nation.

I've seen Hemming's stuff more recently too (i.e., "The Nest") in circulation. Everyone loves you guys. You should get this stuff published... get a Library of Congress Number, ISBN, etc. put that little cartoon on the outside (Rat w/ Coke) and sell em at the Reno convention next year. Name a cause... a statue to Thelma where Bell's used to be... wouldn't matter... the money would roll in.

Dex Armstrong's Reply:

Mike, You're too kind. I write those stupid stories to validate my credentials as a qualified member of ships' company of a boat I fell in love with many years ago and to celebrate the bluejacket family that took this idiot in and tolerated his stupidity.....and to thank the officers and senior petty officers who taught me a mans obligations and the value of dependability. As I tell people, I'm no writer...I could line up high school English teachers and college professors from here to East St. Louis who would be more than happy to testify that I should leave the English language in peace and communicate with my fellow man by drawing pictures in the dirt with a pointed stick. Dr. Nolan, my English Comp professor at the University of South Carolina crowned me the King of the Run-on Sentence...and asked me once, "Mr. Armstrong what do you have against punctuation? Have you ever met a period you actually liked?" No, Mike....I sit late at night and handwrite out the stories....the recollections return my memories of the best time in my life....I was twenty feet tall, bulletproof, broke, living at the absolute bottom

Dex Coming to Reunion!!

From Mike Bickel:

I recently heard from Dex that he is planning to attend our upcoming reunion! This is great news. He got talked into this by Glenn Herold (Sea Leopard). I wanted to relay a conversation I had with DEX over the past month and thought you might enjoy it. It is the subject of this month's "After Battery Rat".



rung of submariner society, ragging and being ragged by the finest group of men I would ever be privileged to know.....providing a somewhat irreverent butt for regular kicking by Dutch Vanderheiden, the COB...serving a fine wardroom and swinging from limb to limb. I grew from boy to man breathing Main Induction air, hotsacking, stealing white hats from the Orion radio shack.....dining on Beer Nuts, Slim-Jims and Rolling Rock draft at Bells Finishing School for Idiots and just pissing against the wind with Adrian Stuke, the man I would UPS one of my kidneys to if he needed a transplant. No, I'm a kid who loved to sit in the After Battery messdeck and BS with the heavy hitters...the LIFERS...the guys who wore ten pounds of combined hash marks, ribbons and rate and said, "Back in the old navy...." all the time.....The guys God put on earth specifically to point out to the rest of naval mankind what a worthless, idiot jerk you were.

Mike.....Thanks for your kind words.....besides I don't know the first thing about publishing a book.....and somebody is likely to turn up and sue my ass. By the

way.....Great event idea for your reunion: The Re-Visiting of EAST MAIN STREET.....Purchase an old school bus....paint it black and put Naval Shore Patrol on both sides....Then for twenty bucks you can arrive in skivvies, a white hat, neckerchief, socks and a dog tag chain....ride down to East Main, sing Johnny Cash songs....take a pee in the middle of EAST MAIN like the old days....and get back in the Shore Patrol wagon and get delivered to the DesSub Piers gate * (CE Piers* or Convoy Escort Piers for you really old bastards). The proceeds going to the Florence Crittenden Home for Unwed Mothers. Just an idea.

On the serious side for a second...Thank you and Glenn for all the kindness shown a jerk whose only legacy was that the COB once told him that he was one damn good state five sea, sail door one and two-way trashdumper.

DEX

Heave Out and Trice Up

"Reville... Reville... Heave out and trice up... Smoking lamp is lighted in all authorized smoking areas. Rise and shine, morning glories... Up and at' em. Drop your cocks and grab your socks... Move it ladies. Chow is being served... C'mon you ugly bastards, MOVE IT! I'm not issuing personal invitations. Let's hear feet hitting' the deck. Okay darlings, I want to see some activity... Hot coffee... Another day in Arliegh Burke's Canoe Club... C'mon you mattress-back sweethearts... MOVE IT!!"

"Chief, you whack me one more time with that gahdam clipboard, I'm gonna feed it to you."

"Knock off the bullshit and crawl out from under that blanket... NOW sweetie, not next week."

"Chief, did you have a mother, or did you just crawl out from under a rock?"

"Stuke, you can do better than that... Hit the deck... I haven't got all day."

"Don't bother me Chief, I'm in the middle of a dream... Nothin' between me and the cold, cold ground but a skinny blonde."

"You wish... Move it Bucko and let the boys in Ohio take care of your skinny blonde. Isn't she the one with buck teeth and a glass eye?"

"Screw you Chief... You and the horse you rode in on."

"Boy, that's original... Knock off the bullshit and roll your worthless good-for-nothing butt outta the rack."

"I wanna go home... I don't like the navy... No one told me it was full of mean, loudmouth lifers... I wanna go home... My mommy needs me."

"I heard your mommy broke your plate and burned your picture."

"Nice talk Chief."

"Roll out! I'm tired of screwin' with you hard cases... Start separating yourself from those flash pads... Do it ladies... Everybody outta the pool... Chow time."

"Anyone seen my left boot?"

"Armstrong, when are you going to learn to keep track of your gear?"

"Chief, there's a thief in here... The sonuvabitch stole my left boot... The one with zinc chromate all over it."

"There's a lotta thieves in here... Especially the ones controlling a side locker full of canned peaches."

"Got it wrong Chief... That's a fringe benefit of being in the stores loading party. Deck Force, Chief... Deck Force Cumshaw."

"Bullshit, you one-way bastards... In The Old Navy somebody would have punched your lights out."

"The Old Navy? When was that Chief? Was everyone in it as ugly as you?"

"Just what the Boat Service needs... More smart mouth comedians. Beautiful day topside, girls... Great day for chipping hammers and paint scrapers."

"Chief, when is the relaxing, sit on your ass day scheduled? You know one of those sit in the after battery, drink coffee and bullshit about the good ol' days in The Old Navy... You know, ones like you and the other Chiefs have every day?"

"When you shipover five or six times, horsefly."

"Shipover?... You on dope?"

Mornings alongside... Lovely moments in time... Sweet, gentle, convivial mornings with personalized wake up calls... Where The Navys' finest greeted the blossoming day.

"Armstrong..."

"Yeah Chief?"

"You need to visit the laundry truck...I can smell you from here."

Emily Post never passed a pressure hull.