



## Springfield Shipmates:

In an effort to keep every one informed, I have started the first Newsletter about the upcoming event in Villefranche, but first a little background:

The Association “Les Américains et la 6<sup>ème</sup> Flotte à Villefranche sur Mer” was founded earlier this year by Valérie Blouin, grand daughter of Mere Germaine, whose restaurant has become famous through out the fleet and possibly the world. The goal of the organization is to educate the young and old about the history of the Sixth Fleet in Villefranche and to

commemorate the 50 years since the departure of the fleet on 20 January 2017.

The board of directors of the Navy League in Cannes are also members of this Association and we support this Association with great enthusiasm.

As number 62 to arrive at the Newport Pre-Commissioning School in Nov 1959, it gives me double pleasure to be part of the committee of the “*Americans of the Sixth fleet in VsM*” I have been tasked to find sailors from all Sixth fleet flag ships and to ask for **your input and memoirs** you have from your time in VsM. At this time I have 22 Springfield shipmates on the mailing list, but I would also like to hear from the other flagships, Salem, Des Moines, Newport News and Little Rock.

Back in April, when I first started my search for Shipmates, I received a mail from Bill Tiberend, Missile Tech, saying he was visiting Nice in June and wanted to show his wife Villefranche, So Bill and I met in Nice and a week later in Villefranche where Bill met the Mayor and Valerie and treated us to a fine lunch at “La Mere Germaine” Merci Bill. (sorry no pictures yet)

Thanks also to James Guignard for his interesting and amusing memoirs from VsM. Jim was supply officer ashore. Dennis Sherwood who has offered his help Gene Hucke, Bob Sullivan who has some amazing stories as the Diver aboard Springfield and Bob O’Neil ,who was in A div with me. Great to hear from all of you ! We shall keep in touch!



Valérie Blouin, VADM Foggo,  
Mayor Trojani, “Dutch”

Prof. Christophe Trojani Mayor of Villefranche sur Mer and Valérie Blouin, President of “Les Américains et la 6<sup>ème</sup> Flotte à Villefranche sur mer” met with Vice Admiral James G. Foggo, Commander of U.S. Sixth Fleet at a luncheon in Mougins, hosted by the directors of the Navy League of the United States, French Riviera-Monaco Council in May to discuss the planning of 6th fleet commemoration events in 2017.

Admiral Foggo, being a Francophile is very interested in our project for 2017. Our Association with the cooperation of Mayor Trojani is also promoting the erection of a monument commemorating the Sixth Fleet in VsM. We are working with Captain Edwin Grohe, Sixth Fleet Liaison Officer in Toulon to find a ship’s anchor of one of the ships stationed in VsM. as the main structure for the monument. We know that the “Springfield” anchor was possibly converted into razorblades. However the search is still on for a suitable anchor.

On page 2 you will find a detailed account from President Valérie Blouin.  
Make sure you click on the link for some great photos.

**EXHIBITION « THE US SIXTH FLEET IN VILLEFRANCHE-SUR-MER »**  
**by Valérie Blouin , President of Les Americains et la 6ème Flotte à VsM**

The association « Americans and US Sixth Fleet in Villefranche-sur-Mer » opened its first exhibition from July 4th to 14th, 2015 at the Citadel in Villefranche-sur-Mer.

**More than 150 persons attended the opening ceremony on Friday, July 3rd!** Many of our association's members participated. The US Navy League was represented by the President, Cornelis Van Vliet, as well as board members, Bernard Calamaro and Keith Knight. Due to previous commitments, the US Sixth Fleet Commander, Admiral James G. Foggo, was unable to attend. Admiral Foggo was represented by Captain Edwin Grohe, Sixth Fleet Liaison Officer in Toulon, France. The US Embassy in Paris was represented by two Naval Attachés, CDR John Q. Quartey and Chief Randy C. Griffeth. Annette Anderson, President of the USA-Monaco Association, also attended the official ceremony.

The evening ended with a dinner at *La Mere Germaine* where the Professor Christophe Trojani, Mayor of Villefranche-sur-Mer, and several other guests were invited by the owner, Thierry Blouin, grandson of 'Mom' Germaine. The US Sixth Fleet Exhibition presented an interesting collection of photos, documents, movies and memorabilia going back to the time when Villefranche-sur-Mer was Headquarters for the US Sixth Fleet from 1953 to January 1967. Many pictures on the below link.

<https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.1687487594805475.1073741832.100006327525445&type=1&l=7f7db73521>

During the 10-day period of the exhibition (July 4-14, 2015), we had many visitors, including new members of our association who were interested in learning more about the US Sixth Fleet's presence in Villefranche-sur-Mer. Visitors of a certain age came to share their memories while younger visitors and tourists stopped by to learn more about the history of this unique relationship between the port town of Villefranche-sur-Mer and the United States Navy. We even had a number of US Navy veterans visit the exhibition who had served on the 'Flag Ship', USS Springfield, and actually lived in or around Villefranche-sur-Mer during their tour of duty.

**AMERICAN INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEK-END**

This was our first attempt of organizing an American Independence Day weekend. During three days, almost all the restaurants in Villefranche-sur-Mer enthusiastically participated in creating and offering in their menu a special Independence Day 'Burger'. And for each burger purchased, 1Euro was donated to a well-known French charity called « *Restos du Cœur* ».

Our Fourth of July attracted many people. The Municipality of Villefranche-sur-Mer organized a 'Vintage Market' with a wide-range of clothing and memorabilia from the 50's and 60's. There was a display of American cars from the 50's and 60's. Harley Davidson motorcycles paraded through the town. The Miss Pin-Up Contest finally had a winner from a number of 'colorful' candidates. Country & Western music and a dance demonstration was followed by a Rock'n Roll concert with Didier Diamante and his KustomBand. The evening ended with an impressive fireworks display from the ramparts of the 16th century Citadel.

**THE FUTURE**

We are already in the process of planning for 2016. But our main focus and principal objective is 2017 because it will be exactly 50-years on January 20, 2017 that the USS Springfield left the Bay of Villefranche. Professor Christophe Trojani, Mayor of Villefranche-sur-Mer, has announced that 2017 will be an 'American Year' in Villefranche-sur-Mer! We have many projects and will keep you informed on the progress of each project and as soon as project or event is confirmed. We can already promise you the creation of a website before the end of this year. For further information, you can contact us by e-mail : [us6fleet.vsm@gmail.com](mailto:us6fleet.vsm@gmail.com). Or follow our activity on Facebook [us6fleet.vsm](#) and Twitter [@us6thfleet\\_vsm](#).

Thank you for your continued support.

Valerie Blouin

President

Association “Les Americains et la 6ème Flotte à Villefranche-sur-Mer”

8, Impasse Mere Germaine

F-06230 Villefranche-sur-Mer

France