

**OLD Reunion Hall Table for:  
LORSTA French Frigate Shoals**

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**On 12/24/07 Paul Ledlow** said:

Mele Kalikimaka from Iowa

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**On 12/15/07 Durrie Monsma** said:

Just learned of this site via email from ET Mike Chenault and see a lot of familiar names from my stint as CO 71 to 72 (VK, Nagle, Ledlow, Welch). Just retired as publisher of Greenwich and Stamford, CT papers where I once wrote tongue in cheek about FFS when Survivor series was hot. Prompted Ed Bragg, a Greenwich resident who was CO in 50s to contact me. We've since become good friends. CAPT Durham (Durrie) Monsma, USCGR (ret) P.S. One of my treasured possessions is the FFS scrapbook, which was about to be destroyed when found in a locker on a Great Lakes buoy tender. A warrant officer who was flipping through it recognized my photo and tracked me down in Colo. Retirement project would be to scan and post. DJM

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**On 12/06/07 Paul Ledlow** said:

Watched a Cousteau special about Hawaian Islands Tern Island sure has grown over and more birds now than when I was there

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**On 10/21/07 Paul Ledlow** said:

Yes there are alot of us still out here even after35 years

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**On 10/17/07 Matthew Bezayiff** said:

Glad to see there are still some FFS sailor's still around.

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**On 09/24/07 Dave Busch** said:

Was on FFS Tern Is. 1956-57 Recently found an old email address for CO Ed Bragg and have attempted contact. Some years ago corresponded with CO Bob Getman (Capt-Retired) who was planning an FFS history, but lost contact.

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**On 03/04/07 Jerry Murdock** said:

I did a short tour there as CWO in '76. Wish I could have stayed. FFS was a beautiful place with a ton of fun things to do. CO was Dale Hower and ETC Chuck Conner. I acted as CO for a time when Dale & a couple of the crew had to be medevac'ed after a particularly cutthroat game of volleyball. Enjoyed glass ball expeditions, watching the goony birds and fairy terns (and all the other wildlife), visits from George Balazs to study the sea turtles, and the lovely nurses who came to take our blood for the red cross. I'll never forget sitting in front of the Playboy club with a cold Primo watching the manta rays gli9de back & forth just offshore. Jerry Murdock

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**On 01/13/07 kevin mitchell** said:

decomishing crew,ocean kayak fishing in calif.wish i had one on the island.82lbs jack,mahi mahi,lobster,16 sharks,it was the best fishing/snorkeling i ll ever do.Commander Conehead.

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**On 11/01/06 John Byron** said:

Did anyone watch the pbs special on 11/1 on the monk seals of the northern Hawaiian Islands. Filmed on French Frigate Shoals including Tern Island. It has been a long time - stationed there 66-67.

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**On 10/31/06 Harold Willis** said:

Hello French Frigate. I was on the Mallow out of Hono from '78 to '80. On the last boat out when FFS closed as a station.. or so we thought. What incredible water! I saw FFS on the cover of National Geographic a few years back. It still looks 'make believe.' Best to you all

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**On 09/12/06 Jay Bold** said:

I was on FFS 10-60 to 11-61. I have some pictures from there if anyone is interested.

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**On 08/24/06 Robert Popwell** said:

I was on the island from 08-69 until 05-70 and was there during the flood. I was right out of boot camp but made SN on the island and then left to to Governor's Island for ET school.

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**On 08/24/06 LCDR Mark Hudson** said:

If anyone out there has, or know of someone who has old tech manuals and schematics for the AN/FPN-30 Timer, AN/FPN-T325 Transmitter, and the AN/FPN-1700 Amplifier, please let me know. It seems as this piece of history has been lost forever if we don't find a copy of it and get it into the right hands for preservation.

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**On 08/02/06 Chuck Conner** said:

Fond memories of snorkling, beechcoming, birdwatching, fishing, and watching the sunset at the playboy club. ETC in 76-77. A big hello to all the crews.

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**On 06/19/06 Norm Wheeler** said:

RADM Raymond H. Wood (Ret), the 2nd skipper at Tern Island , 53-54, passed away on June 18, 2006 in Hampton, NH. Great man, great skipper.

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**On 06/16/06 John Byron** said:

Just thought I would pass this along - Saw yesterday where French Frigate Shoals is now part of a National Monument in an effort to save the eco system of the chain. There is a map of the area at [msnbc.com](http://msnbc.com). Was on FFS 9/66 to 9/67 - Hi Jerry - you probably don't remember me - was an SN at the time.

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**On 12/24/05 Paul Ledlow** said:

I can remember arriving on FFA N23 on a Thursday Dec23 1970 fresh out of bootcamp Paul Ledlow EO1(SCW) USNR RET.

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**On 12/09/05 Peter PINDAK** said:

I want for picture cards of FFS (Tern). Maybe someone could help me, thanks! :-)

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**On 12/05/05 Paul Ledlow** said:

arrived 23Dec70 not a great Christmas

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**On 07/20/05 Jon von Kessel, CWO4 Ret** said:

Thought I would just add a few more words since my last posting. My wife & I just returned from three weeks touring Europe and visited 10 countries. A fabulous trip - but no beaches worth much, even the famous Nice, France beach.

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**On 07/10/05 Doc Walker** said:

Served as HM1 Aug 64 to Sept 65. I truly was the 'unidentified sailor returning from 'JOE,s) who stated to the reporter from the Honolulu Advertiser that the cat was 3ft tall and breathing fire. The man that caught the cat was a SA named

Grove. I retired from the CG in Sept 1980 as CWO3 (MED)

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**On 04/06/05 lossee** said:

Here is the web address (under construction) for some of the pictures I have. And I'm always adding new ones.  
<http://www.geocities.com/cgchief304/frenchfrigateshoals.html>

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**On 03/15/05 lossee** said:

some pictures 1969/1970 at french frigate shoals cgchief304

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**On 02/18/05 George Archer** said:

I arrived in June '65. Brent Mills whom I relieved said a cat had arrived on a barge of construction material about a year earlier, but was wild. I never saw the cat for three months until one of the guys caught him in a 'rabbit trap' I kept him in my quarters to keep him safe from Ferd, Runt & Dolly our german shepherds. The cat lived with me for about three months until he died probably from kidney stones in early '66.

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**On 02/17/05 Jay Cotton** said:

Jon, That link is broken, is there a new one ?

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**On 07/22/04 Joe Branam** said:

Does anyone remember driving real fast down the runway and then turning off the headlights? It did get dark out there.

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**On 07/22/04 Joe Branam** said:

My time at French Frigate Shoals was an experience of a life time and one I will take with me to my grave with fond memories.

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**On 05/22/04 kevin mitchell** said:

commander conehead still on watch! waiting for the return of the mothership.last crew!

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**On 05/10/04 CWO4 Jon 'vK' von Kessel** said:

New e-mail address posted. To those of you who have never visted French Frigate Shoals, or those who would like to reflect upon their days and lonely nights on Tern Island or East Island before the move to Tern Island, check out the following web page that is dedicated to the Coast Guard's presence at FFS. Go to '<http://www.mindspring.com/~cwelch/>' you will be pleasantly surprised with all of the photographs and related storied pertaining to the 'Best Kept Secret' in the CG.

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**On 11/14/03 Russell Bowman** said:

SA with the last crew ... wow what a start ...

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**On 08/30/03 Lossee Wheeler** said:

( Lossee@hotmail)was stationed 11/69 to 11/70 and was pleased to be with the best crew of the CG .Had a lot of fun . Would like see the Island again Served with two very good officers .am retired and living in W.Va

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**On 05/20/03 Charlie Polly** said:

Is there anyone around that was on the old French Frigate around 49-50? Would sure like to find some pictures or correspond with anyone still around.

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**On 12/18/02 John Kambic** said:

i was on ffs june 1977 to june 1978. i remember everet tyson, al 'the cook' belk from the main island, and all the rest. still have my scrap book and pictures.

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**On 09/29/02 Glen Masker** said:

Stationed there in 72-73. Great place for a 18 year old! just kidding . . . got some great pictures left. Any one remember the Christmas party and Me being dressed as 'betty Lou'? Some of you clowns told me I was looking better and better as the night (and booze) wore on. Love to hear from any of you guys. I have a bunch of super 8 movies from the place. Glen

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**On 07/09/02 don venneri mck ret** said:

i was oh ffs in 70 71 i was a en1 the station was being rebuld at tat time im retmck live in portland or

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**On 10/31/01 Don Opedal** said:

Never a crew member but how many can say FFS started their CG career? As a kid in Hawaii I talked to Al Haines and Pete Hughes on ham radio (KH6GRG). Pete visited after evacuating from the flood and I met Al as he departed going through the airport. I enlisted in the CG in 1970, retired as a LCDR in 1993. Actually visited FFS in 1974 while on leave in Hawaii. Recognize several names below.

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**On 10/09/01 Everett Tyson** said:

Tyson here.

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**On 01/11/01 Verne Bennett** said:

Was on FFS 61-62. Still remember the faces and many of the names after all these years. Was a busy time for all of us because it was the year of the Johnson Is. Hydrogen bomb blast and we were part of the plan, even though we were about 500 miles away. We had about 15 PMR civilians on the island that year. The bomb went off at 2300 and the sky looked as though it was mid-day. Lost all Loran signals for about 30 minutes. We had been shutting down the Loran A four hours a day in preparation for the blast. Something about interference as I remember. I was ET1 at the time. Went on to RCA and OCS. Retired as CDR in 1991. I could write a book on all the happenings the year I was there.

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**On 12/30/00 John Byron** said:

Stationed at FFS 9/66 to 9/67. First duty station out of boot camp. Great memories - still show off my scrapbook whenever I can. I still have a macrame fishing float skillfully done by Ed O'Neil (great cook). Served under LT Bates and LT Rader & Jerry Lentz was our radioman. Thanks for the memories.

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**On 12/09/00 Everett (Ty) Tyson** said:

Stationed 1977/78. Great times and remmember a couple of Jacksonville, Fl guys. We changed the Playboy club to the Turtle Club and played some really good softball. Anybody recall Allen the cook from Reserves on the big island?

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**On 08/31/00 Ron** said:

Anyone remember Dennis Thompson?

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**On 06/28/00 Jeff Smith** said:

Stationed at FFS May74-May75. Lots of good times for such a far away place

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**On 05/27/00 Bob Fuller** said:

Was stationed on FFS Mar '68 - Dec '68.

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**On 04/04/00 Jon McManis** said:

Stationed on Frigate in 1970. I dropped the loran tower and was one of the last Coast Guardsman to leave the island. CO was Arn Haggars (A great CO and person)

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**On 02/10/00 Dave Martin** said:

Was just checking in to see anything new and remembered a bit of trivia. Had occasion to speak with John GLENN and in the conversation he said he had been sta at FFS during WW2

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**On 02/05/00 Dave Martin** said:

On the shoals for Xmas of 55. Out of 21 yrs in the CG had my only Capn Mast with 14 days restriction. New Years eve was memorable with sick bay alky and Mike Sapia sinking the fire ax next to the corpsmans head. Some place for and 18 yr old with raging hormones.

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**On 01/05/00 Roger Russell, BMCM (Ret)** said:

Was BMC on Frigate from Jan 75 to Jan 76. Was my reward for making BMC. Thank you very much. Would be nice to chat with anyone there then. Retired BMCM Jan 93.

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**On 11/03/99 Howard Schadt** said:

I was the RM on FFS from July 1969 to July 1970. If anyone would like copies of pictures I took during the 'Great Flood' send me an E-mail.

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**On 09/21/99 Kelly Hirsh** said:

Just dropped by to say Hello and Thanks !!! to all those that served with me and made my Command of FFS a special part of my life. It might not have been as great as ET1 Al Haines remembers it , but it was a great tour thanks to you guys.

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**On 08/24/99 Scott** said:

I am looking for someone who was in the USCG, at Fr. Frigate Shoals during April 1979. His name was Thomas J. Knight. I need to contact him, as he was (is) a fellow amateur radio operator and I need a card from him for the radio contact we made 20 years ago. If anyone knows him, or know how I can find out where he is today, please email me at [soakland@home.com](mailto:soakland@home.com). Thanks!

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**On 08/04/99 Ed Park** said:

Al Haines asked if I would post the story of the Frigate Wild Cat here in the reunion hall but, I think it is too long. I would be happy to e-mail it to anyone that would like a copy.

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**On 08/04/99 Al Haines** said:

Just wishing everyone a happy Coast Guard day. I may drop my steak in the sand and chase Ferdinand to get it back in memory of the Coast Guard Day cookouts at the Playboy Club of the Pacific.

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**On 05/07/99 Ed Park** said:

I was on French Frigate the night the Cat was captured, will e-mail the details, as I remember them.

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**On 05/05/99 Barbara Farrell** said:

Aloha no! I'm a crazy cat lady in Honolulu looking for scuttlebutt from anyone who remembers 'The Midnight Marauder of French Frigate Shoals' - a large cat that snuck onto Tern Island sometime in 1964, and evaded capture for about a year.

According to the news articles I've found, the cat was seen by Ray Jacobson, Bill 'Blossom' Thornton, and Dave Grove, and was finally caught and tamed by Lt. (jg) George Archer, Jr. I hear the cat really liked the mess hall spaghetti! Anyone know anything? Please contact me if you do - and thanks!

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**On 01/13/99 JON von KESSEL, CWO4, Ret** said:

To those of you who have never visited French Frigate Shoals, or those who would like to reflect upon their days and lonely nights on Tern Island or East Island before the move to Tern Island, check out the following web page that is dedicated to the Coast Guard's presence at FFS. Go to '<http://www.mindspring.com/~cwelch/>' you will be pleasantly surprised with all of the photographs and related stories pertaining to the 'Best Kept Secret' in the CG.

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**On 12/17/98 JON** said:

Aloha to all who had the pleasure of serving on French Frigate Shoals. I am the one who served the longest continuous tour on French Frigate. 17-1/2 months (1970-1971) without getting off Tern Island except to go fishing or make a trip over to East Island in our 16-ft Boston Whaler to take field intensity measurements of our radio beacon. There are a few of the crew members who I have been able to contact from this page. Anyone who wishes to chat about the place? If so contact me at [JonvK@att.net](mailto:JonvK@att.net).

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**On 11/25/98 Alan Haines** said:

Just a note to let you know I'm still alive and well. There isn't a week that goes by that I don't think about the island paradise that was the worst duty in the guard. Check out the guestbook at [radiojerry.com/frigate](http://radiojerry.com/frigate) and see the posts from many of the former denizens of the shoals. Would like to get in touch with any of the former residents particularly those from the 69-70 time frame. It's coming up on 30 years now; how many of you old geezers are still out of the home.

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**On 11/06/98 R Petri** said:

I was Stationed on FFS in 1946 after doing six mos on the CGC Spruce WAK246 (Like the Nettle and Trillium) I was a cook there. I remember you could walk around the island backwards in 17 1/2 minutes. After leaving Frigate I asked them to send me some where there was trees. They said OK and I landed on Ulithy. Guess what, after I got back to the states my first assignment was a light ship. It makes me laugh. After spending 10 years in the CG those two Loran stations were the only shore duty I ever had, and now a day they get a pin if they get five years on a ship. any way Frigate was a pretty good place and a lot of memories

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**On 10/31/98 Ed Park** said:

New E-mail address: [ejpark@flash.net](mailto:ejpark@flash.net)

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**On 10/10/98 Bob Hood** said:

Just noticed I made a mistake on my dates at that beautiful vacation spot of the Pacific French Frigate Shoals. I was there from May 68 to June 69 since I was at Base St Louis, MO from July 69 to Jan 70. I had so much fun that all the days seem to run together.

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**On 10/09/98 Jim Lane** said:

Stationed at FFS '65-'66, ET, remember the peace of the starry night sky where you could see the Milky Way and consider how small the Earth and FFS was in relation to the universe. Best reading time I ever had, no phones ringing. Duty at FFS made one become very self-reliant with a can-do mind set.

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**On 10/02/98 Jerry Lentz** said:

Just added a September 1997 aerial photo of East Island to the French Frigate Shoals Today web page. Enjoy!

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**On 09/25/98 Jim Haralson SN** said:

Stationed FFS from 66'-67' and have many many fond memories of the place. Best duty station around. Had forgot about Dolly and Ferdinand until I read some of your comments. Big business was collecting fishing floats and macrameing nets around them to trade to the C-130 crews on Thursdays for whatever. Where has the time gone. Still have visions of La Perousse Pinnacles and memories of jumping off that thing. Oh to sit on the Lanai again under the big one and watching the gooney birds do their thing. Jeep races down the strip until someone didn't stop in time and went off the end of the seawall. JATO packs and rubber water baldders and changing light bulbs at the top of the tower. Jim

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**On 08/24/98 Ed Park** said:

I was an ET2 and stationed on Tern Island from Oct 64 to Nov 65. I served aboard the CGC Kukui in 1968 and 1969 and made several visitsto FFS.

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**On 07/25/98 Norm Wheeler** said:

I was the cook at French Frigate from June 1953 to Dec 53. From there went to Catanduanes. Enjoyed the fishing and skin diving. We had a dog there that thought he was a pig. Dug up everything with his nose. Had two skippers while there. The Hawk, Lt Hawkins from the Bibb and Lt Wood, later Adm Wood. Always looked forward to PBY deliveries of fresh food and movies.

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**On 05/01/98 Jack E.Rader, Jr.** said:

I was on FFS from 4/67-4/68, and as it probably was for anyone stationed there one of the best and most memorable years of my life. After your tour you could say, what are you going to do, send me to French Frigate Shoals, with impunity. I have good memories of almost all of the crew advancing at least one grade while they were there, SPAR Parr visiting the island as Mrs. Claus, being able to get a killer sun tan, before we found it really was a killer, and swimming out to the reef behind the mess deck area with Price, and Javor, and then seeing the sharks swimming between the reef and the island. The KUKUI with Capt. Midnight Mosher came out in October and refueled us and built a new concrete water catch basin and water storage facility. Does anyone remember the time we had finding homes for Dolly(Dummy)'s pups. Good ol' Ferd had to prove that having only one nut didn't mean he wasn't able.

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**On 04/19/98 Jerry Lentz** said:

Visit the Turtle Trax web site at [www.turtles.org](http://www.turtles.org) and go to the page commemorating the 25th anniversary of turtle tagging at FFS. Then click on the picture of East Island and view the first in a series of FFS-themed cartoons.

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**On 04/13/98 S. weiden** said:

I served on FFS Mar 70-Mar71 as SN. CO was H.F. Hirsch III. Plenty of fond memories. Hey Allan.

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**On 12/21/97 RW Kerr** said:

Hello -- Not a FFS vet but was the GM on the Buttonwood in 74-75 Still remember the CO who called me ashore to put his .45 back together-- he had taken it apart and couldn't get it back in one piece. Was so happy he let me burn off about 50 rounds. Who got the picture of the Playmate of the Month from the Playboy Club?

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**On 12/12/97 Wendall Bishop** said:

1977-78 LORSTA FFS Resident; Any of the old crew still around?

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**On 10/30/97 Jerry Lentz** said:

The new 'French Frigate Shoals Today' page is up and running. See it at <http://www.radiojerry.com/ffstoday.htm>.

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**On 09/13/97 Jerry Lentz** said:

Coming soon - French Frigate Shoals 1997!!! Allen Tucholski just returned from a 10-day stay on Tern Island and has lots to pass on, including lots of photos.

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**On 08/21/97 Rodger Knoop** said:

I am looking for some information on a unit patch from the early to mid or late 60s. I am active duty stationed at Loran Station Caribou Me. I was contacted by a man that lives in Rocport Me that said during the Veitnam war he sent Christmas trees to some overseas units and French Frigate Shoals was one of them. He was sent a unit patch and would like to know the meaning of the numbers and letters on it. It is a runway with 21.6 at one end and 21.7 at the other and also has FSS and C-S1 and NR-04 on it any info would be helpful e-mail me and I can give you his name if you want thank you

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**On 06/28/97 QUASEBARTH, WERNER H. ET2 1951-1954** said:

EAST ISLAND 1952. START UP CREW TERN ISLAND 1953 READ APPROX 300 BOOKS IN YEAR, NOT ALL CLASSICS.FROM ET2 IN 54 TODATE HAVE BEEN IN THE STEEL FABRICATION INDUSTRY.

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**On 06/18/97 Bob Hood** said:

I arrived on the Frigate May of 67 for my all expense paid vacation on a Pacific island. I was an ET3 that departed as an ET2 in May of 68. I have several pictures of my tour. Mostly birds, seals, sharks and oh yes some of the crew. David Soyka, Bret Petterson, David Garrity, Winston Coy, ETC Flood, ETCS Loud, BMC Johnson to name a few. The conditins were not the best but Stan made some great meals.

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**On 06/02/97 Matthew Bezayiff, ETC Ret** said:

Was station at Frigate 74-75 as a ET3. still have shots of the island. Had the QSL card made up for the station and lost the original years ago. If anyone has a copy, I sure would like to get one.

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**On 04/16/97 Frank Nagle** said:

What ever happened to Runt and Dummy? Hope they found a good home after the station closed. I was there 71-72 left just when the new buildings were be built. I was an SNEW at the time...

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**On 03/03/97 Alan Haines** said:

Was ET1 on FFS from 1969-1970. Best duty I had in the Coast Guard. Would like to go back and see the place now.

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**On 02/04/97 John Marks** said:

based on "Frigate" 1956-7 to the best of my recollection. 15 men, three dogs, two cats and ten million birds. I still have a copy of the photo of our crew that the "Honolulu Star Bulletin" reporter took and published. Don't remember much of the crew as individuals (names). I do remember a few events that lightened or burdened the days there. Ah, youth.

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**On 01/28/97 Mark Roddy** said:

Was stationed on French Frigate from around Jan of '75 to Jan of '76. This was my first tour after boot camp, And after 20 years I still have some strong memories of "The Rock". For any of you Tern Island residents out there you may not know but back in '76 National Geographic did aan article on French Frigate I don't think that it ran until about a year later but it had some wonderful pictures. I still have a photo album from my time there if anyone is interested.

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**On 01/05/97 Bill Mathes** said:

I was on Frigate from 11/60 thru 11/61. Find it hard to remember names. Prior to Frigate was on the Basswood and made one six month curise all over the western Pacific. I really enjoyed this adventure, we ended up in Japan. After Frigate I went to the repair base on the industrial canal in New Orleans where my term ran out in August 63. I would like to hear from anyone that can remember me.

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**On 12/31/96 Richard Hackney** said:

I was there for a few months in late 1958. Prior to being transfered to the Shoals I had requested a tech school. In December of '58 I received orders for Groton, so my delightful stay was kind of short.

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**On 12/17/96 Richard Hackney** said:

Stationed 1958. Caretaker of the National Forest and Chief Librarian.

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**On 12/01/96 Jerry Lentz** said:

Was an RM2 on FFS from Aug 66 to Aug 67. Found the island to be a very relaxing experience. Nice weather - good way for a newlywed to accumulate a nest egg for setting up housekeeping. Looking for pictures taken after the island was swept by the famous hurricane.

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