



**USS HOUSTON CA-30 BLUE BONNET**  
**“The Galloping Ghost of the Java Coast”**

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Co-Editor Lin Drees Founder: Otto Schwarz

**IN MEMORIAM**

**WILBUR SMITH**

**June 16, 2006**

**Complications from diabetes**

**MAX WILKER**

**July 3, 2006**

**Heart Disease**

**OTTO SCHWARZ**

**August 3, 2006**

**Cancer**

**REUNIONS**

**USS HOUSTON ASSOCIATION CA30-CL81**

**September 13 – 17, 2006**

**Sea Turtle Inn Jacksonville Beach, Florida**

**Contact Leitha Coates 904 285-8111 for further information**

**USS HOUSTON SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION**  
**AND NEXT GENERATION**

**March 2-3, 2007**

**Doubletree- Allen Center**

**400 Dallas St, Houston, TX 77002**

**713 759-0202**

**Contact: Val Poss 512 989-0000**

**Email: [CA30NG@aol.com](mailto:CA30NG@aol.com)**

**LOST BATTALION & USS HOUSTON REUNION**

**August 9 – 12, 2007**

**Omni Hotel – Dallas Park West**

**1590 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75235**

**972 869-4300**

**Contact: Gail & Mike Bialas 972 612-6768**

**Email: [mgbialas@worldnet.att.net](mailto:mgbialas@worldnet.att.net)**

This is the newsletter I've dreaded sending out the most. OTTO SCHWARZ literally faded away from us after so many months of putting up a good fight. Trudy kept us abreast with faxes & phone calls every few days always noting thanks to one and all for the cards and prayers. She's such a strong woman. In my last conversation with Otto, he was still mentoring me & discussing the organization. I promised him I'd carry on – I promised him the Next Generation would carry on through his example and teachings just as they are doing now.

**NOW HEAR THIS!**

All USS Houston (CA-30) Survivors Association and Next Generation family:  
Spread the Word! To all blood relations of the ship's crew, descendants, those associated through marriage, or any known persons with a keen interest in the USS Houston....

The Scholarship Program is announced! Applications are accepted beginning June 1 with the deadline for submission extending to November 1. Applications and specific information about applying may be obtained anytime by writing a request to:

John Keith Schwarz  
2500 Clarendon Blvd Apt 121  
Arlington, VA 22201

Those eligible to apply include students entering the final year of high school with anticipation of going to college, as well as all college under-graduates up through the final year of study. Previous applicants and winners can re-apply.

Applicants are required to present grades & evidence of other personal attributes, and are also required to write an essay.

*Please remember that donations are appreciated* – It would be an extraordinarily loving act to donate in honor of or in memory of a loved one. Make your checks out to USS Houston Scholarship Fund & send %Susan Krug, 3031 Loop Rd, Stevenson, WA 98648.

**FAIR WARNING** – This is going to be a long newsletter for a reason --- get comfy...

**DONATIONS** – (Tax ID # 17053122009007 **PLEASE** make checks out to the USS Houston Survivors Assn to get your tax deduction) Jack & Pat Mintzer, BASIL BUNYARD, WILLIAM STEWART, Audie Lynch, Col. Stephen & Sherry Ramsey, Joel & Debra Snyder, Trudy & OTTO SCHWARZ, Marion Beardsley in memory of MARVIN BEARDSLEY, Vivian Thompson, Walter Grice, Sylvia & HOWARD BROOKS, Henry & Jane Matthews, John & Susan Kreutzer, Rita Jedinak, Sherry Sylvester Ramsey, Theresa Papish, Sherry S. Ramsey in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ, Betty Schuster in memory of Theresa Papish, John Waller, John Schwarz – in loving memory of OTTO CARL SCHWARZ, Jack Williams in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ, John and Susan Kreutzer in memory of Theresa Papish, Theresa Papish in memory of OTTO SCWARZ (a note from daughter Susan saying "Mom would have wanted me to send this since Otto made it (to heaven) a few hours before she did), Mary Ann, Joseph, & John Keller in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ, Val & Max Poss in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ and in memory of Theresa Papish, Peter Capodice in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ, United States Postal Service Employees in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ, GENE WILKINSON in memory of OTTO SCHWARZ.

**JULY 28, 1934** – President Roosevelt leaves Hawaii aboard the USS Houston. Before leaving, he planted a tree at Iolani Palace.

**CAMP MABRY, TEXAS** – Vivian Thompson called to gently remind us to send in pictures of your Lost Battalion or USS Houston loved one to be displayed at the museum at Camp Mabry here in Texas. Send it to: Texas Military Forces Museum Attn: Col. Simpson, PO Box 5218, Austin, TX 78763-5218. Please remember to note the information about your loved on the back of the picture.

**DONATIONS TO THE SCHOLARSHIP FUND** - Those wishing to donate to the scholarship fund two things: ) Make all checks out to USS Houston Scholarship Fund - NOT TO SUSAN KRUG

**2) DO NOT SEND MONEY ORDERS OR CASH**

Susan spent most of a morning correcting the money order I received through a NG via the postal employees. Bless their hearts they wanted to give something but the feds won't let us put cash or money orders into this account because there is NO paper trail to figure out if ALL the cash/money order made it into the account!! Thank you.....

**MAILBAG** – BILL INGRAM was going through some “old stuff” and found a copy of a program of the presentation to the USS HOUSTON of a silver service dated October 27, 1930. He also sent pictures of the lovely wreath he provided for the organization at RAY GOODSON'S funeral. Thank you! Jerry Ranger and I have emailed & been on the phone about his trip to dive the USS HOUSTON August 10 -16. I warned him about the erupting volcano but he assured me it's on “the other side” of the island. I suppose I was born to worry..... Jerry gave us an update on his mom, Joyce. They have moved her in with them & have hospice checking in on her. I always send our love. I received a brief note from BILL STEWART saying he usually donates when he needs something but this time he doesn't need anything. BILL, thank you very much and although you didn't have much to say it's always good to hear from you! Audie Lynch sent a donation with a note that he hopes to attend the '07 reunion – Audie, we've missed you the last 2 years! A little bird told me Sylvia & HOWARD BROOKS went to Switzerland this summer to visit with Sylvia's family. We received a donation to cover the costs for the newsletter again from John & Susan Kreutzer. They have done this for quite a while now and we thank them VERY much! Susan not only keeps our web site current but has taken care of her mom Theresa while holding down a full time job. It was heartbreaking news to hear Theresa died the same day as OTTO. Rita Jedinak, sister of FREDERICK JOSEPH MILLS KIA, reports that sister Vera Churchwell died in January. She wishes she could attend the reunions but at 87, can't travel the distance. She reports she's working on getting a picture of her brother along with a bio to Shawn Flynn. Mary Schilperoort wrote a note telling of their month of July free of doctor's appointments and they left to attend a family reunion in Wasington. On the way to and from, they spent a couple of days with their son & daughter along with other relatives. They spent time at the Krug's (Larry and Susan) in their “lovely home in the woods”. However, home never looked so good when they got back. Sally Johnson sent a change of address (7212 Village 7, Camarillo, CA 90312-6924) and a keep up the good work message. JOHN HOOD'S sister Alberta sent a picture of him with Audrey & HARRY KELLEY during their visit. John holds his own fighting his BP and diabetes. He's on oxygen 24 hrs. a day. He's got a “new black Cadillac” AKA walker. Family along with a Home Health nurse help him out. He gets his hair “styled” whenever necessary. John, I hate to be the one to tell you this but you're getting ripped off!! Ha ha (For those of you that haven't had the pleasure of meeting him, John wears a natural Yul Brenner). Many thanks to the family of WILBUR SMITH for sending his many mementoes including his medals. We promise to take good care of them!

**CHANGE OF ADDRESSES** – Be it snail mail or email, please extend the courtesy with a change of address. If you no longer wish to receive a newsletter, please extend the courtesy to let us know (no feelings hurt). If we have not heard from you in 1 ½ years (6 issues) we will no longer put the red @ as a final warning. The name will automatically be dropped from either the snail mail or email list – not to hurt feelings but save myself some time & headache. We've got more complimentary newsletters going out than donors sending in. A widow or survivor will NOT be removed from the list.

**PULLEN REPORT** – C.P. Pullen, brother of ROBERT "SAM" PULLEN (died 100 kilo camp) reports he has been giving patriotic speeches, WWII & POW life for the last 4 years now. He was talking to the 6<sup>th</sup> grade class in an area school and mentioned a quote from the book THE BAMBOO EXPRESS written by Benjamin Dunn. One of the students told him that Benjamin was her great grandfather. He's now in contact with Benjamin who was in a bunk next to his brother when ROBERT died. What an extraordinary piece of luck!! C.P. plans to travel to Benjamin's home for a visit.

**ANOTHER BOOK IN THE WORKS** - Prof. Kelly Crager of Texas A&M contacted me about a book he's been writing titled LONE STAR UNDER THE RISING SUN. As luck would have it, Susan Ficklin daughter of Frank (131<sup>st</sup>) was visiting with us and we all met for dinner. A month later, he came by the house to look through some pictures to see what he could use in his book. Although the books centers around the 131<sup>st</sup> group, there is mention of the USS HOUSTON. Kelly was also the guest speaker at the Lost Battalion/USS HOUSTON reunion in August. I'll keep you posted when his book hits the racks!

**EXPRESSING CONCERN** – Information was conveyed to me that one of our NG's that has just recently found us on the internet has mentioned his interest in diving the HOUSTON with his family to go into the officer's quarters and retrieve mementoes. I immediately sent off a letter asking he reconsider the purpose of the dive as the wreckage is considered a war grave. I also reminded him that his wife's uncle went down with the ship (HAROLD ALBERS) & his father in law (the late AARON ALBERS) was a survivor. PLUS I explained that I gave the living survivors my solemn vow to discourage anyone from diving for mementoes. Hopefully, he has reconsidered because there has been no reply.

### **Book Review: "Soldier Slaves"**

What happened to all the lawsuits, legislation and legal eagles who were seeking justice a few years ago for former POW slave laborers of private Japanese companies during WWII...?

It's all explained in a new (2006) book by James W. Parkinson and Lee Benson called "Soldier Slaves," in which Parkinson, an attorney who led the legal team on behalf of ex-POWS, describes in alternating chapters and no-holds-bared detail, two campaigns fought by Americans 60-years apart.

The first campaign: American servicemen defending the Philippines in 1942 against the Japanese war machine; and the second: the same men, now elderly Ex-American POWS who fought again from 1999 to 2003 -- this time for justice -- against the combined might of Japanese Corporations and the US Government.

As former prisoners of war who had endured 3 1/2 years of brutal treatment, slave labor camps, disease, and starvation at the hands of the Japanese, these men hoped for at least

an apology from Japan to emerge from legal proceedings developed in 1999 by Parkinson and his team of legal heavyweights.

Instead, what they encountered was heavy resistance – and on the part of their own government, no less.

The Legislative, Judicial, and Executive Branches of the US Government each had an opportunity to "make things right" for prisoners of war of the Japanese -- to help them as, indeed, the federal government had recently helped survivors of slave labor camps in Europe.

Turns out, compared to the ending of WWII in Europe, the ending of WWII with Japan was far more different than any Ex-POW could have imagined.

To find out what actually happened in the so-called "JPOW Case," read this excellent book, and as a bonus, see how humbling it can be sometimes for some attorneys who take on such cases. -- Dana Charles, son of BOB CHARLES/USSHOUSTON survivor

"Soldier Slaves"

by James W. Parkinson and Lee Benson  
Naval Institute Press (2006)

**THE NEW LITTORAL COMBAT SHIP** – These faster and easier to maneuver ship is unlike our father's warships. It has a shallow draft & it's water jets let the ship zoom close to shore without getting stuck & can turn on a dime, allowing it to chase smaller boats in order to meet threats including modern day pirates & terrorists who turn speedboats into suicide weapons. The name itself is taken from the coastal "littoral" waters in which the ship will operate. Here's what will perk your ears up! I have been contacted by Lanny Kope, EdD of Arizona. He has submitted a request to the Secretary of the Navy(The Honorable Gordon R. England 1000 Navy Pentagon, Washington DC 20350-1000) that a ship be named after our RAdmiral Al Maher as a tribute to his courage and to the men of the USS Houston CA-30. **He asks that we participate by contacting our Congressman.** He writes that Rear Admiral Maher was one of the Navy's heroes during WWII. He was a graduate of the United States Naval Academy, class of '23, and was serving as the gunnery officer aboard the HOUSTON when she was sunk. During his career, he earned the Navy Cross, Silver Star, Legion of Merit, Navy and Marine Corps Medal, and the Bronze Star with V along with the Purple Heart, the Presidential Unit Citation to the HOUSTON, the American Theater Ribbon, the Asiatic-Pacific Area Campaign Medal, Philippine Defense Ribbon, the Yangtze River Medal, the World War II Victory Medal and the Order of the Orange Nassau (Rank of Commander) presented to him by the Netherlands. Mr. Kope also wrote that his heroism, professionalism, and devotion to duty and country are of such high caliber that they should be recognized and memorialized by the US Navy through the naming of a United States Naval Ship the *Arthur L. Maher*.

**SICK BAY** – JOHN HOOD keeps up the fight with his diabetes & heart condition. Joyce Ranger deals the best she can with her liver problem. I received an email from JOHN BARTZ's wife June several months ago saying his health wasn't all that well but no details. GENE WILKINSON has a terrible time walking because his legs give him a lot of problems. Capt. Carter Conlin (Naval Order of the United States Commander General) gave regrets that he is unable to travel to DC for OTTO SCHWARZ's funeral. He would be in the process of treatment requiring daily shots for 35 days.

The Hill

August 16, 2006

### **Push To Pay WWII POWs Renewed**

By Roxana Tiron

Just before leaving for the August recess, Sen. Orrin Hatch (R-Utah) and Rep. Duncan Hunter (R-Calif.) introduced separate bills to compensate World War II veterans captured by the Japanese and used as slave laborers in several factories.

The legislation, introduced with little fanfare, will likely stoke a decades-old and at times painful debate over how those veterans should be repaid for their sacrifice. In the past, attempts to compensate these veterans have failed in Congress.

While Hatch is calling on the Pentagon to provide financial compensation to the prisoners of war (POWs), Hunter, the chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, is calling on Japanese companies to also make voluntary gifts to the Pentagon to help repay the veterans.

The bills come at a time when Congress and the Pentagon are struggling to pay for the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and budget hawks are trying to tighten the purse strings.

In order for the Department of Defense to compensate the remaining veterans, it would have to find ways to offset the costs of doing so.

Both Hatch's and Hunter's bills are calling on the Pentagon to pay \$20,000 to each living veteran. About 3,000 people would qualify for reimbursement, at an estimated cost of \$60 million.

But each lawmaker is taking a different approach.

Most notably, Hunter's legislation, which is co-sponsored by 42 other lawmakers, lists about 52 Japanese companies, including Kawasaki Heavy Industries, Hitachi Shipbuilding, Mitsubishi Heavy Industries and Mitsubishi Mining, and is encouraging them to make contributions for the veterans.

"This will be accomplished by permitting Japanese companies, many of which are identified in the bill, to make contributions — in good faith and in recognition of their actions," said Joe Kasper, Hunter's spokesman.

The legislation authorizes the Secretary of Defense to accept the contributions and deposit them in the Department of Defense General Gift Fund, and to account for it separately from other amounts in that fund.

The secretary could accept the gifts from the time the legislation is enacted until December 31, 2007.

Under the legislation, the Pentagon would pay the qualifying internees, military and civilian government employees no more than \$20,000 each, and in addition, an equal share of the gifts it may receive from Japanese companies. Living spouses do not qualify for the reimbursement under Hunter's legislation.

The bill has been referred to the Armed Services Committee, the Government Reform Committee and the Veterans Affairs Committee's Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs subcommittee.

Hatch's legislation, co-sponsored by Sens. Jeff Bingaman (D-N.M) and Joe Biden (D-Del.), urges the Pentagon to pay \$20,000 to each living selected veteran or civilian internee, or the surviving spouse. It does not mention the Japanese companies that benefited from the slave labor.

The bill was referred to the Senate Armed Services Committee. The support of Sen. John Warner (R-Va.), the panel's chairman, would be a key element for the bill's passage, according to a knowledgeable source.

A committee spokesman said he had not yet seen the legislation and declined to comment. The Supreme Court has dismissed veterans's efforts to be compensated from Japanese companies, including Mitsubishi, Mitsui and Nippon Steel, and the U.S. government has opposed the efforts as well based on an interpretation of the 1951 peace treaty with Japan.

The U.S. Supreme Court declined to hear the veterans's appeal of a suit filed in 1999 in California by thousands of the Japanese POWs against Japanese corporations. In 2002 the case was dismissed at the appellate level, and not long after that in 2003, the Supreme Court upheld the decision.

The courts based their decision on an interpretation of a paragraph in the 1951 San Francisco peace treaty between the United States and Japan that states that Japan and its nationals cannot be sued for reparations for actions taken "in the course of the prosecution of the war."

At the end of World War II, the U.S. government paid the former POWs out of frozen Japanese assets, giving \$2.50 per day of imprisonment.

Donald Rutter, a former radioman in the Navy, spent 1,344 days in captivity and was paid \$3,360 based on the \$2.50 per day compensation that the U.S. agreed to pay. But he said that is a pittance for what he had to go through.

Other allied governments have paid their citizens who were POWs, and these U.S. veterans are asking for the same treatment from their government, Rutter said.

"Now we are asking [for an amount] cheaper than what they spend for toilet paper in the government," he said.

A new book entitled *Soldier Slaves: Abandoned by the White House, Courts and Congress* is fuelling the renewed lobbying and legislative effort to compensate those veterans for their ordeal. One of the authors is James Parkinson, a California trial lawyer, who worked on behalf of veterans; the other is Lee Benson, a Utah journalist.

The book is making the rounds in Congress and has reached President Bush's desk, said Parkinson, who received a personal note from the president.

From December 1941 until May 1942, United States military personnel fought against Japanese military forces on Wake Island, Guam, in the Philippines Islands, including the Bataan Peninsula and Corregidor, and in the Dutch East Indies. But during initial military action in the Philippines, U.S. forces were asked to surrender in the spring of 1942.

The Japanese army forced more than 10,000 Americans on an 85-mile march, which became known as the Bataan Death March. Soldiers were beaten, bayoneted and, in some cases, buried alive.

Approximately 780 men died on the march, and, among those remaining, soldiers died at the rate of one per hour for the next two months. Of the approximate 10,000 Americans who began the Bataan Death March, about 5,380 of them died in their first six months of captivity.

Those who survived spent months in prison camps. Many spent three-and-a-half years as slave laborers in Japanese factories.

And they were not the only ones. Americans fighting in the Philippines were also captured in Bagiuo, Corregidor, Manila, Cebu, and Mindanao. Others captured in Guam, Wake Island and Java were used as slave laborers.

**NAVAL ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES** – The 2006 National Congress will be in Washington DC 19-21 October at the Holiday Inn in Rosslyn, VA – I'm sure Carter has planned a very nice convention for everyone attending. It's good to know the New Orleans Commandery had resumed after Katrina. The most important news to update you with is about the Navy Normandy Monument. \$500,000 needs to be earned by April 2007. Did you know at Normandy, the contributions and sacrifices of all U.S. armed services and those of our Allies that took part in the D-Day Landings are commemorated – EXCEPT FOR OUR NAVY'S. The invasion's toll on the Navy included 1002 deaths, one troop transport, three destroyers, a destroyer escort and two minesweepers as well as numerous landing crafts. Please send your tax deductible donation to: "Naval Order Normandy Monument Project", Capt. Michele Lockwood, Treasurer General 2222 Alameda D Las Pulgas, San Mateo, CA 94403.

**FROM DOWN UNDER** – Allen Crispi was our USS HOUSTON Survivors Assn. & Next Generation representative at the HMAS PERTH commissioning. His plane landed at 7:30 am the day of the commissioning & he arrived at the ceremony in Fremantle "with 5 minutes to spare". Allen met PERTH survivors George Gray, Chilla Goodchap and David Manning. They all sent their condolences about Otto's passing. He also spent time with VAdm Russ Shadlers (Chief of the Australian Navy). He also met a gentleman by the name of Houston that is the equivalent of our Chief of Staff. Although a few of our NG's had expressed an interest in attending, Allen didn't see any "Yanks". Allen mentioned that David Manning was looking for his name in the Bluebonnet. Helllooooooooooooo David! Oh how Max & I wanted to attend ---- we especially wanted to meet the PERTH survivors. It seems our Aussie friends that came to our last HOUSTON reunion and Memorial Service last year missed each other at the commissioning but Brian & Ruth Morris gave Allen a call and they spent a few hours together the next day. What an honor Allen – we're all justifiably jealous!



**UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON** - Please join the University of Houston Libraries for a reading by James D. Hornfischer, author of *Ship of Ghosts: The Story of the USS Houston, FDR's Legendary Lost Cruiser, and the Epic Saga of Her Survivors*, to be published by Bantam this fall. A riveting account of the story behind the library's own Cruiser Houston Collection, *Ship of Ghosts* has been chosen as a Main Selection of the History Book Club and the Military Book Club, and as an Alternate Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club.

The reading will take place Thu., Nov. 9th at 6:30 p.m. in the Elizabeth Rockwell Pavillion of M.D. Anderson Library on the University of Houston campus. A book sale and signing will follow. Attendees are also invited to enjoy the *USS Houston* (CA-30) exhibit on display near the Pavillion.

To reach the library from I-45 South (coming from downtown), exit Spur 5 South (44B). Turn right at the first stoplight and take University Drive to Entrance 1. On your right is a Visitor parking lot (Lot 1B) which requires three crisp \$1.00 bills for payment. M.D. Anderson Library is past the student center towards the center of campus. The Rockwell Pavillion is located on the 2nd floor, accessible from the elevator or staircase just inside the front entrance. If you need special assistance, please contact Julie Grob by e-mail at [jgrob@uh.edu](mailto:jgrob@uh.edu) or by phone at 713-743-9744.

**SHIP OF GHOSTS** - Jim Hornfischer's book goes on sale October 31<sup>st</sup>. Not only will there be a booksigning event at the University of Houston as mentioned above, there will be two in Austin. One at the Texas Book Festival, October 28-29, Texas Capitol and BookPeople Bookstore on 6<sup>th</sup> & Lamar, Nov. 10, 7 PM. Also, *Naval History* magazine will carry an excerpt from the book in the November/December issue. This book has been chosen as Main Selection of both the History Book Club and Military Book Club, and an Alternate Selection of the Book-of-the-Month Club!

**THE DIVE TRIP AUG 9<sup>TH</sup> -16<sup>TH</sup> 2006 TO THE USS HOUSTON CA-30 IN JAKARTA.** Written by Jerry Ranger, son of the late John W. Ranger. Edited by Alan Schmidt

On Aug 4, 2006 I headed out for the Pensacola airport to begin another adventure to Java. I made good time flying to LAX. Then I had a 9 hour layover in LAX, where I updated my story on my laptop computer. I was lucky to meet several people from Australia at the airport that knew about the HMS Perth and the USS HOUSTON during the war. I gave them some of my new dive cards that I had special ordered just for the dive trip. Now I'm trying to waste time by walking around the airport until I get on the next flight to Sydney. The only real trouble that I have had so far is going through the check points. They had me unload all my carry-on bags due to all the batteries, dive light's, and the full face diving masks that was inside them. I made it all the way to Sydney, Australia before I had my first big delay which was a six hour layover. Then just as we got situated inside the aircraft for the trip to Jakarta, the fuel gauges was not working properly, so they tried to fix it before they had to get us another aircraft to fly over the water to Jakarta. Now we are just sitting here at the airport waiting for the aircraft to get ready for the trip. I tried to e-mail Brad to let him know that I will be late arriving, but the e-mail did not go through. At least the airline was nice enough to pay for dinner while we waited here at the airport. It is now 2:30 am in Florida and 5:32 pm here in Sydney. We finally got in the air heading to Jakarta after a very long delay. When I arrived in Jakarta, the airport was so empty due to the time (12:30 am). I then went and got my visa documents without any trouble this time. When I went to get my bags, an airport employee stopped me and informed me that one of my bags was still at Sydney airport. So I had to go to the claim's office to get the missing

bag shipped out to Daniel's business when it arrived. After getting my other bags, I headed to where they inspect your bags through customs. They X-rayed my bags and had me open all of them. One of the custom inspectors did speak English and knew what diving gear looked like, so it was allot easier to get through customs this time. Once I was let go, I headed to where Brad was standing. Brad and I headed for the car where everyone around tried to help me carry my bags to the car for some money. I had to keep telling them NO, and to not touch the bags. We finally made it to the car and started the long trip out to Brad's house. This is a two hour trip thru the county side. Being that it was so late; the traffic was not bad going through town. Once we arrived at Brad's house, I headed straight to my old room to sleep for the night. On this trip I did not have any trouble falling asleep and staying asleep all night long. The next day, I tried to get in contact with the baggage claim office at the airport to let them know that someone would be there at the office to receive my bag. No bag ever showed up, so we finally got in touch with them and they said that I would have to pick it up. So we told them that I would be there on Tuesday to pick it up in person.

Aug 7, 2006 On Monday we worked on our boat, (The Sea Otter), to see if she would make it out of the river today. Around 6:00 pm which was high tide, we moved the Sea Otter out of the river and to a resort cove where we anchored the boat. We did this so we could load up the Sea Otter with David's gear to make it easy to get out to the USS HOUSTON. We found several gas leaks in the engine that we had to change out several rubber hoses to stop them. Brad had an extra engine sitting by the side of the house, that he took the pieces off so we did not have to run all the way back to Jakarta to get them. After we got the engine in good shape we headed to the gas station which was approximately 5-10 miles away to get fuel for the Sea Otter the next day. It was then off to the Blue Moon Restaurant & Sports Bar for a good dinner. Since Brad is moving back to Korea after this dive trip, he does not have much food in his house. So we ate out at the Blue Moon almost every day while we were at his house. We called it an early night and each of us hit the racks off to sweet dreams of a much anticipated dive trip on the USS HOUSTON.

Aug 8, 2006 On Tuesday morning we filled the Sea Otter up with fuel. This was an under taking, to say the least. We had to swim out all of the gas cans from shore to the boat, while Brad filled the boat. I personally towed out eight (5 gal) fuel cans to him and then swam the eight empty cans back to shore to load them back in the car. This took a couple hours then we cleaned up and then we headed to Jakarta to have lunch with ADi, Michael and Glenn from National Geographic who are writing a story about the dive on the USS HOUSTON. They took pictures of us going over the blue prints of the ship. They said that they where diving on the USS HOUSTON on Wednesday while we did a tune up dive on the Dutch ship (The Everson). They also said that they would join us later in the week to dive again on the USS HOUSTON with our dive team. We said our goodbyes and they left for some other meeting. After lunch we rode out to the airport to recover my bag. I did not have any trouble getting the bag or clearing customs with it, so off to Daniel's business to drop off the air compressor with the scuba tanks. Daniel was not there so we dropped the items off at his office, and looked around for the dive boat that would be taking us out to the USS HOUSTON, but did not see it. Brad and I then drove to get some snacks for the trip and had dinner at the local Pizza Hut in town. Then we headed back to Brad's house making the long two hour trip.

Aug 9, 2006 On Wednesday morning we loaded up the Sea Otter with our dive gear and headed to the island of Sebeku where the Dutch ship ran a ground and slipped back into the ocean. It was hidden between two islands and just off the beach where it had broken up. Brad and I found big pieces of the ship in the deeper water. The pictures did not come out like I wanted them too. After the dive we headed back to Brad's house to shower and get ready to go to the airport. We left in plenty of time, but the traffic was so bad that we got there an hour late. We met up with David outside the airport and loaded all his gear into our car. Then the three of us went to dinner at the Outback Steakhouse in Jakarta, which was close to the mall so we could get more supplies for the dive before returning back to the house.

Aug 10, 2006 On Thursday morning we where up and packing the Sea Otter to make the trip to the USS HOUTSON. The trip out to the USS HOUSTON took us about an hour an half. We went along the coast line through Sunda Straits to the USS HOUSTON. We could see the dive boat, which is approximately forty feet long anchored over the USS HOUSTON. We pulled along side and started getting every thing transferred from the Sea Otter to the dive boat. Daniel was on board waiting for us to show up so he could go diving with us. David set up the Video Ray ROV and over the side it went. We started getting pictures just as it touched down on the USS Huston. There was a lion fish that David used the ROV to play with for a while, which he then named David too. Then he maneuvered the ROV over to the side of the ship where the currents where very strong and the Video Ray got hung up. Brad, Daniel and I got suited up in our dive gear and over the side we went for our 1<sup>st</sup> dive of the trip. When we got to the bottom next to where the anchor line was hooked up, I was sitting on the screw shaft waiting for Brad and Daniel to get down. There was nets and fishing line all over the area. I started to get hung up in some fishing line. We had to cut some of it away so we could move on from the anchor line. Brad went after the Video Ray ROV while Daniel and I went looking for fish to spear around the ship. We went by the two sets of gun tubes and the hanger bay before heading back to the surface. The problem was the air was low so we could not get back to the screw shaft area and anchor line. So we hooked on to a piece of the Houston and headed up by using my reel to make a free ascent to the surface. We did our safety stop at fifteen feet and then broke the surface. We saw we were off to the left of the dive boat and I had to swim back to the boat while Daniel had his boat crew come and pick him up in a rubber boat. I climbed back into the dive boat while Daniel's crew was helping break my reel line loose from the bottom. Then instead of the line breaking, a piece of the USS HOUSTON came up with the line. It was a pipe elbow from the USS HOUSTON which was approximately 2 1/2 feet long covered with sea life. We took pictures of it and sent it back to the bottom. Then Daniel had to go back to Jakarta to meet with some people to buy a boat which was coming in that night. Daniel stated that he would come back out at the end of the week to dive with us again. Now it was just Brad, Dave and I on the dive boat with the crew. The crew started cooking dinner while David set up the middle room on the boat for the Video Ray ROV work area. I got my things and set up my bunk area for the night. They had four bunks just behind the pilot seat with some kind of air conditioning that did not work very well. I was going to set up down below the four bunks in an area that had two bigger beds. But it got to hot to stay there so I slept up on the top bunk with a little window to keep me cool. After dinner David and I played with the Video Ray ROV dropping it down in the strong current. We had to put weights on the line to hold the video ray on the bottom. We tried twice before we got right up next to the ship and ran out of line to operate the Video Ray. So we brought it back up for the night and called it quits until the morning. During the night (around 2:00 am) we received a phone call from the

Navy Department saying that we can not go inside the USS HOUSTON or take anything off the ship. I tried to tell them that we would not disrupt or alter the site. We were there to photograph the ship before the sea currents took her away. I also tried to explain that the ship was in bad shape, and that it would not be there much longer. Since the two years that I have been gone from my first dive trip, the ship has more nets, more broken pieces off her and more holes in the ship. I was next to the screw guard before I knew it, which was the screw guard that I had my picture taken with, and now the middle section was broken off and lying on the hull. She stated that the Justice Department was upset and so was the Navy that we were going inside the ship. They went on to say that someone had e-mailed them a story from a newspaper. That she was trying to head it off and to inform us that we could not enter the site. She also stated that she would send me a copy of the rules of a US Navy War Ship sinking during the war with men aboard them. I told her that I was over the site and could not get them right now but if she would send them to my e-mail address, I would read them. Right after that call, I called Val and informed her of the problem of entering the ship. She stated that she would get back with me and to keep diving the ship. I informed David of the phone call and he called his boss to find out more information on how the U.S. Navy got involved with the dive. Then I tried to go back to sleep and David tried to walk it off, because he was mad and upset like I was.

Aug 11, 2006 On Friday morning we got up and had breakfast cooked by the crew. While we waited for the crew to cook, we talked about the phone calls, which changed alot of our plans. After breakfast Brad and I suited up to make the first dive of the day. The plan was for us to take the Video Ray down by hand and place it next to the ship so it could take pictures with out getting hung up in the fishing nets before getting to the ship. Brad was going to handle the Video Ray while I followed him down. Brad hit the water first while I got suited up with my dive gear. Brad went half way down the anchor line waiting on me. I entered the water, swam to what I though was the anchor line that Brad used to go down. There were two anchor lines and I went down the one that Brad was not on. When I got to the bottom, I sat there waiting for Brad to come back to the anchor line after he found a spot for the Video Ray. But Brad was still on the other anchor line waiting for me to come down. I then went out to the edge of the ship to see where he might be, at which time Brad had gone back up to the surface and David informed him that I had gone down using the other anchor line. While I was on the edge of the ship, Brad, not seeing me went and placed the ROV in a clear space from any nets so it could start to shoot the Houston. I had gone forward using the side of the ship for a reference point and then returned to the aft of the ship. I then when to my line that I had been using to get back to the anchor line. As I was just about to turn back to the anchor line, Brad appeared, so we headed back to the aft part of the ship to tried and find a hatch that David Fallot had used to get inside the ship. It was too dark, so we went up and over the hull of the ship heading in the area of the anchor line. We came up on the lowest shaft first then looked up to see the second. We got to the line and headed up to the surface, but not until I said goodbye to David the lion fish. Once onboard the dive boat, David and I tried to get some more pictures of the USS HOUSTON. We got some pictures of the ship before David parked the ROV connected to a net until Brad and I got back down there. David wanted to follow us around the ship, using the ROV as a camcorder on the last dive of the day. We had lunch, which the crew made for us and then Brad started filling the tanks so that we would have all the tanks ready for more dives. We have to shut down the dive boat so that the air Brad pumps into the tanks is clean air. The tanks take most of the day to fill. The currents moved the dive boat around the anchor line getting the ROV hung up in the net and it would not move when David started the ROV up to

check it out. Now it was a rescue mission to get the ROV and the anchor. Because the actual anchor line had cut it self free from the ship sending the anchor to the bottom. We where lucky because we had two lines attached to the ship, so we would not drift off the site. Brad and I went down and found the ROV with nets all in the shaft area of both motors. We try to cut the net free, but it was too much to do on the bottom, so I took the ROV back to the ship while Brad looked for the anchor on the bottom. Still having some air in my tanks I went back down to help Brad. We met on the ascent line where I went back to the bottom while Brad headed to the surface. Due to him being down deep, he needed to return to the surface. I had a look at the side of the ship, trying to see anything that I remembered from the first dive trip and then I headed back up to the dive boat. When I got back on the boat, the Video Ray was fixed and ready to go down again. At this time, we had dinner and then Brad went to read a book in his bunk, while David and I sent the ROV down to the USS HOUSTON on a night run. We would tie a weight on the line and sent it to the bottom so that the currents would not pick it up off the bottom and tried to get some more pictures. We played on the bottom trying to get back to the USS HOUSTON. We came so close several times and then we would bring the weight up and place it closer to the HOUSTON. We both got sleepy and called it a night. Sometime during the night I received a call from the defense attaché to Jakarta. He wanted to know what he could do to help us, and would talk to the people back in the states to inform them of what we wanted to do on the USS HOUSTON ( this was Brad's old boss). Then I received a phone call from the newspaper back in Michigan, and they wanted to know what was going on with the dive and why was it stopped. I informed him that we where being stopped from entering the ship by the US Navy and were not allowed to get inside pictures of the condition of it before the sea took her. It is so unfair that anyone can charter a dive boat and can come out here and dive the USS HOUSTON, plus enter the ship taking anything that they want. But when we are here to survey the ship and take pictures of the inside for the USS HOUSTON SURVIVORS and their family we are not allowed the same rights. The newspaper was going to print an update because there readers were behind the dive and wanted to know more about it. I tried to go back to sleep after both phone calls and some time later I was awakened by the crew getting ready for a new day.

Aug 12, 2006 On Saturday morning I informed the guys of the phone calls during the night and David said that he would send the newspaper a short email of our dives so far. We had breakfast and planned the next day's dives on the USS HOUSTON. Our first dive was to take a line down to the hanger bay area to make it easier to use the Video Ray. Brad and I took the rope down and pulled it over to the hanger bay area and tied it off. While we were trying off I did not see a very fine fishing net just to the right of the line. When the line was attached on the ship securely, Brad started back toward the aft anchor line to untie it so the boat could move to the middle of the ship. I was right behind him when the fishing line tightened around my knife and pulled it loose. I stopped and moved back until I could see what I was hung up on. I looked down on the hull of the ship but no knife was there to be seen or in the net. I then unbuckled my fin that was hung up and cleared the fishing net. I then decided to go up the line that we just tied on to the ship so I could make a free ascent to the surface. I went up the line and broke the surface not far from the dive boat and swam over to it. I was glad to be back on board the boat after getting hung up in a small net. I knew I would get free, as I just had to take my time and not panic and it would work out. I then waited for Brad to come up from the other line. We talked about what happened and what we would do the next time.

The second dive was to recover the Video Ray from the side of the ship, which I did by myself. The cord to the ROV was heading away from the anchor line, so I followed it out and then went down where it got tight. I swam up to the ship where the cord went under what I believed to be a gun tube. I followed it under the over hang and found it hung up in a very fine fishing line again. I cut it free and checked the screw to make sure that it was free. I then started to do a free ascent to the surface with the cord and Video Ray. When I came up to the surface the crew pulled me in using the cord from the Video Ray. This was a very short dive and I was glad for that. The current for this dive was almost at a stand still, which was good for me. I took pictures of the sea and of the Sea Otter just drifting behind the dive boat. I also filmed the oil coming out of the USS HOUSTON right next to the dive boat. It was coming up to the surface creating a marker for the USS HOUSTON below. I remember saying on the tape that is the life blood of the USS HOUSTON coming up to the surface.

The third dive was with Brad to get the Video Ray and take it to the ship, where we could use it as a camcorder. We tried to shoot the ship area that the ROV could not get too, because the current was making it run into nets and fishing line. We then let it go so it could be pulled back to the dive boat by David. Both of us returned to the surface using the anchor line now attached at the hanger bay area. Once onboard we changed tanks and got ready for another dive as soon as our surface time was good.

The fourth dive was to take David down to the hanger bay with the Video Ray, and let David see first hand what he was working in, then to the front of the ship to find hatches in case we would be allowed to go in and take pictures. The dive went well for a change. David really enjoyed himself diving into the hanger bay. We had to cut a hole in the net that is covering the hanger bay door area so we could get into the hanger bay. After entering the hanger bay we placed the ROV down in the right corner with some of its cord loose, so it would be able to fly around in there. We then went to the port side of the ship to find an open hatch, which there are several we could use. We checked our air and David's air was at the point where we had to leave, so we went back to the ascent line and returned to the surface. This was David's first dive on the USS HOUSTON and my fourth dive today. I was exhausted from the long day but we still had work to do.

After getting dried off we started the Video Ray up and took some pictures of the open hanger bay before the fishing line and a plastic bag got stuck in the ROV engines. So we had to shut down for the night and recover it in the morning. We did get some pictures of the hanger bay, most of them we have seen in other pictures, some of battle damages and some of the port holes that are now the top of the hanger bay that once was the port wall of the hanger bay. I'm so tired from all the diving and watching the Video Ray screen on the ship, that I'm going to call home and find out how my mother and wife are doing before turning in for the night. I hope that I do not get anymore phone calls except the one to say. "Go for it."

Aug 13, 2006 On Sunday morning I intended to go down to the ship with my green bag with American, POW, Navy and Marine Corp Flags and taking the second tile, along with MBT and the Video Ray log. The currents were just a little too strong but we thought we could get down to the ship to rescue the Video Ray. I hit the water and they lowered the green bag down to me. I could see that I was going to have trouble so I rewrapped the line from the green bag on my wrist. The current pulled it loose twice before I was worn out fighting the current. So I

returned to the ship and laid down on the deck for an hour to get ready for the next planned event. The next attempt we would send the green bag down to the bottom with weights attach to the anchor line. This way I would not have to carry the bag until we were finished and I would bring up the flags.

Around 10:00 PM we hit the water and descended down the anchor line to the hanger bay. This trip down was good and we headed for the hole in the nets to recover the Video Ray. I took the lead into the hanger bay with David following. I turned to light up the hole so he would not get hung up in the nets. So far so good, so we headed for the Video Ray because Brad had turn on the lights so we could find it faster. I worked on the cord while David got the ROV. Then I headed out to the net and through it, pulling the cord so David could be pulled out with the Rov. It only got hung up one time on the way out. Then as David was coming out through the net, his fin got hung up in the net. I used Brad's line cutter and reached over to grab the line and cut it like butter. But as I was cutting David free, my flashlight got hung in the net to the left and I quickly used the line cutter to free myself. Then we went up to the anchor line to get the flags so that I could place the flags out over the hanger bay door area. As I was doing that, David was using the Video Ray to take pictures of the tile and logo of the sponsors. Then we headed down to the hanger deck area to see what damage was there. There were several big holes in the deck which is now the wall. We placed the ROV at the end of the hole to see what we could in the dark. David said that he saw an eel at the entrance of the hole before I got there. Then we headed forward, we came to the curved part of in the ship as we headed toward the bow. Then we came to the stanchion that holds up the upper guns on the port side. There was a hatch just forward of that, which we looked into. The level of silt was high making it hard or impossible to enter through. David signaled that his air was at a point to return to the anchor line. When we reached the line we headed up to the surface. Once onboard we got out of our gear, we headed to the office to fix the Video Ray due to the lines that were in the screws. At this time I interviewed David on his work with the Sheriff 'Dept and Video Ray. After fixing the ROV and Brad filling some more tanks, our surface time was good to take the Rov down to the ship and leave it next to the ship, so that when we got power back on the boat we could fly it around the ship taking more pictures of it. The reason that we do not have power is we shut down the dive boat engine so that the fumes from the engine will not get into our air tanks while Brad is filling them. Sometimes it takes 8 hours or more to fill all the tanks we were using in a day or two.

During this time the captain went to shore with some of his men to get some cooking oil in the rubber boat. While he was gone, we were visited by the water police. They checked the ship papers and wanted to know what we where doing out here. I put my hands together like getting ready to be handcuffed and the remaining crew laughed. Really it was not a laughing matter because we do not know what is going on with this dive. We are here to photograph history for everyone to see, but now we are just taking pictures of the outside and getting the Video Ray hung up, whereas it should be inside the ship where it is less likely to get hung up. David is getting familiar with the currents and the Video Ray is ready to explore the inside but we are at a hold. We just can only explore the big holes in the ship, just like any of the divers that come out on a daily basis to dive it. Some have gone as far as the officer quarters open doors and taken pictures. I will leave it up to the HOUSTON FAMILY to get the U.S. NAVY on our side.

Now we are ready to take the VideoRay down to the USS HOUSTON and leave it there. So David went first with the ROV to the anchor line. I then followed to the anchor line and when I got there David gave me the ROV to take down. This time I let David go first down the line to the hanger bay, he emptied his BC of air and started down. I started to reach for my BC hose, when I grabbed it; I found that it had come loose from the back of my BC while I was exiting the boat to enter the water. I tried to stop David but he was already out of my sight. I yelled for the boat crew to pull the Rov back into the dive Boat while I tried to move the rope back and forth to stop him. Then I swam back to the ladder to get out and fix my dive gear, so I could go after David. I was informed when I got back on the boat that David had come back up and had gear problems too. So we fixed my BC problem by just screwing it back on the BC and we changed out regulators on David gear. Now we waited for Brad to top off David's tank so we could go back down.

On the second attempt taking down the Video Ray to leave on the ship, so later when we do have power we can fly it around the hanger bay area. We both hit the water and went down to the bottom where we met, checked our air and off we went. We dropped down on to the hanger deck area which now would be the wall. We went down to about 77 feet where there were several big holes in the deck. One had a piece of metal bent over like a platform but it was the deck peeling away or torn away from the deck. We looked into several other big holes that must lead into the crew's bunk area by the blueprints. Mr. Flynn said that he was in one that was under the quarter deck area. Which I believe was the radio crew bunk area or the port side. We placed the ROV on the metal and gave it enough cord to fly around the area. Now we headed back toward the bow of the ship going down the port side. We came to the gun tube stanchion and an open hatch on the port side. We looked into the hatch and it was filling with silt and the ROV may have been able to get through there. Then we went to the next hatch which was open and I believe by the blueprints would have gone into the officer area. I looked into it and I could have gotten my body down into it but I didn't. I did go to the next level which has been the deck over it and the deck was gone and I could see through back to the hatch. The deck on that level was missing and I could swim level and go out the hatch on the next level but I didn't. The wall that I was next to now went into the admiral's area and the water was getting darker and the current was starting to pick up. The next level was deeper and I did not want to get pulled away from the ship as the current got stronger so we headed back to the side of ship which was higher up and we could hold on to the port side of the ship while we swam back toward the anchor line. I took a picture of the hatch as we went by and a picture of David just before we got back to the anchor line. Then my memory card on the camera was full from all the pictures that I had taken top side and at the house. We checked the air and we still had some time before going up so we check the flags, which were hung up in the net. So I pulled down so that they could be seen and then we went over the top of the hanger bay which was the port wall at one time. There we saw a fishing trap that was tied to an opening which may have been battle damage. These holes have been seen in many pictures that we have from other divers and me from the last time I was here. Now we run into a big lion fish which David has named Jerry and a small one named Brad. These guys would not leave my side and I'm glad that I have on a wetsuit and gloves. These fish are very dangerous fish and can kill you by just touching them. The toxins in their spines will solidify your blood. Now it was time to go back to the ship. Up the line to the surface with a safety stop in between. Once we were onboard we sat around getting ready to fly the Video Ray once the current weakened. We had dinner cooked by the crew, which was mostly made up of rice and chicken and very



good. We waited until the sun went down before powering the ROV up. I e-mailed Val the updates and asked her how the permit was coming along. I also wrote in this log of all today's action and mishaps.

It is time to fly the ROV around the ship. Went to start the ROV and we pushed into a hole on the hanger deck area. Then we moved it around to see what it was. It was 15 feet by 30 feet where everything had fallen down. David let me operate the ROV for awhile and then I parked it by the opening. The currents now were too strong to do anything, so we were going to wait until midnight to try it again. I went to bed because I had dived several times that day and I was exhausted. David was going to wake me up but he didn't. David said that he was going to move it, when the currents pulled him out and he was unable to get back to the cord where it was looped around a stanchion and lock it down until morning.

Aug 14, 2006 Monday morning we were up at 6:00 AM getting ready to dive on the USS HOUSTON to recover the ROV and move it to the aft part of the ship where the ROV might not get stuck on the ship. This time Brad and I went into the water and down to the anchor line to the ship. The lion fish met us every time at the bottom of the anchor line. We checked our air and I went after the ROV, which was just below the line at about 77 feet. I slipped off the cord from around the stanchion and grabbed the ROV. I headed back to Brad and we headed toward the hanger bay door and then over the top. Brad came across a trap that had a grouper in it. He took a picture with the ROV and we headed back to the turret hole. We got to the #3 turret hole and started going down around 80 feet looking for the aft hatch. We must have gone by it because we came on the aft part of the ship and it was turning back to the right. We head back to the turret hole and placed the ROV at the opening of the hole. We gave the cord several big turns so that it could operator free and take pictures before having to pull it back to the surface later. Brad and I headed back following the center leg up to the end of the aft mast, then following on the port leg down and then going under the port leg to see more of the ship. But it was too dark and we headed back to the side of the ship following it back to the hanger bay. Along the way, we found more fish nets with big fish hanging in them. They must have just been there a couple days. We checked out the trap and the flags before going up to the surface. When we got back on the ship, David informed me that the current pulled the ROV out of the hole and he tried to get it up on deck and see the hull. David said that he got it hung up in some nets on the hull. So Brad and I went into the control room, (which is where the diver/crew eats, but we made it David's office) to see where the ROV may be on the ship. Soon as the camera came on, we knew he was hung up where we tied up the first day. You could see the screw shaft and the V were it connects to the ship. We decided to go after it when our surface time was good to return to the ROV. We all three sat around looking at the blueprints, thinking it would be nice to really get inside the ship, where the current could not keep pulling and pushing the ROV around. But we are waiting for the go ahead. I feel bad for the people that helped pay for this trip. I hope they will understand that I did everything to get them some pictures. The currents, the nets, and the government helped stop the Video Ray from completing it mission.

Now it was time to enter the water to recover the ROV and find it a place to fly from. Brad wanted to recover the grouper for dinner, so he took down a rope from the surface and a lift bag to remove the trap from the ship and send it up to the surface where the crew would recover it. So brad went down first and I followed him. We got the trap free from the ship and

sent it up with the lift bag to the surface. Then we headed back to the screw shaft where the ROV was hung up on. It did not take us much time to find it and it was really hung up in the nets. We cut on it for quite a while then it was free. I had David start it up so we could make sure it ran properly. Then Brad gave it to me to take down to the hole. At first I tried to find a hatch on the back part of the ship but did not find it. So I went back to the hole and set the ROV down while I got more cord pulled down from the top before placing it back farther so it would not be pulled out. During this time the cord got between my back and the tank. It was hard to reach and I was having trouble. Brad was about 10 feet above me and could not see the trouble I was having. Then it was time to change my regulator due to the tank being empty. That is all I needed right now. I reached and got my second regulator to put it in my mouth, and took a deep breath and got the cord free from my tank. Now I put what I believed was allot of cord in the hole, but I must have not due to it later only going a little bit farther in. I headed up to the side of the ship and we headed back to the anchor line checking out the ship. I could see allot of holes that where not there last time I dove on the ship in 2004. This ship is really going down hill fast and probably won't last much longer in the future. The last time I was here, I tried to enter the hanger bay area, where a wall had fallen in blocking most of the doorway so you had to go up to the top left edge to get in. Now the doorway is covered with nets and when you get past the nets the area is clear because it is all over the floor now. I believe this will be my last trip to the USS HOUSTON. I was hoping to get more pictures and video of the ship. But by the time I leave here in two days, I will have over 25 dives between the two trips. I will miss it but it is a hard place to dive. Right now the winds are blowing harder than we ever had this week. The boat is jumping up and down out of the water. The captain just put more water down below to make the boat level for the night. David has the ROV locked down on the edge of the ship just above turret #3 hole. We can see the current pushing over the coral and other fan type coral. David tried to move it about an hour ago. Which almost caused him to get hung up? But he was able to grab another piece of coral and set it back down. We will wait until we can move it again to go over the hull of the ship. For now I am going to call home and off to bed. We will try to make two or more dives tomorrow.

Tuesday Aug 15, 2006

We just got up and I called home to find how my mother was doing. Still holding on and having a better day. We are waiting for Brad to cook his famous omelet with cheese before diving or moving the ROV closer to the anchor line before we have to go get it. To dive to the back of the ship from the middle takes a lot of air and does not give you allot of time to see the ship or take pictures. With the visibility being so bad this trip, I have been lucky to get any good pictures of the ship. The sun is up past the clouds this morning with several fishing boats off is the distances. The cord to the ROV is running to the stern and under the Sea Otter. David turns on the monitor to the ROV and we are still in the same spot. The waves last night on the surface really rocked the boat. At one time I thought that the anchor line on the bottom was going to come off and we would drift away from the USS HOUSTON. But we made another night out here. Just before I went to bed we checked the ROV on the monitor and it looked like a hurricane going by. It kept turning the ROV on its side. We decide to bring the ROV up and not go down to it. The sonar was not working and we could possibly fix it on the surface. So David flew the ROV to the surface, while we pulled it into the ship. David checked it out and found that the sonar was toast and we did not have an extra one because they do not break down. The currents of the Sunda Straits have put man, equipment and the Video Ray to the test and won. I am glad that I brought extra regulators, because I had them go bad just before

entering the water. I lost two knives, one snorkel and a buddy earphone that OTS let us use. I had to replace a mouth piece due to me biting into it, trying to keep in my mouth.

Now it is time to do the morning dive on the USS HOUSTON. This dive will be with David and me taking the ROV down to the ship and finding a place to park it. The current is a little strong right now but we are going to try, since it is our last day of using the ROV. The plan was that we both got to the bottom and if it is too strong then we would come back up. I was the first one down to the bottom of the anchor line and let go of the rope. The current moved me two feet back before I could grab it again. I made up my mind that it was too strong to bring the ROV and tried to make it to the bow of the ship. So I headed up the rope and met David half way down. He did not have any trouble with turning around because he could feel the current where he was. We both got back on the boat and waited for an hour, after the current slowed down where we could enter the water again.

Now it was time to try again, both of us met at the anchor line and we went down to the bottom. I got there first and let go of the line. I was able to stay right there and wait on David. When David showed up I asked him if he was ok with this dive. He gave me the ok sign and we headed to the bow of the ship. We passed two open hatches on the port side just before turret #2 and when we got clear of the main mast area the current was too strong to get all the way out to the bow. So we dropped down trying to get to turret #2 holes. It was too dark and the current kept pushing me backward. So we turned around and went back to the hatch to park the ROV. We tied it off and headed back to the anchor line. On the way up the current was slow due to us being between the deck and the right wall and the port main deck wall as the deck. This blocked the current until we came out in the hanger bay area. David and I dropped down to where the holes in the hanger deck floor were. David had the flashlight at this time and entered the hole just a little bit inside. I held on to his fin so he would not go too far. I could see that he found another room where light was coming through lighting it up and had some big fish inside. David informed me that his air was time to return to the surface. So up to the anchor line I went where I had left the second tile for the crew and my father. Now up the line to the safety stop then aboard the dive boat. This was a good dive for David as he got to see more of the ship. I forgot that we did take pictures of each other going down on the ship before coming up. I felt better on this dive, but the current looked like it was going to get stronger. Now we waited for Daniel to return to the ship to dive with us today. Brad took the little rubber boat to shore to pick up more coke and Daniel. The rubber boat finally returned with some supplies and returned to shore to get Brad, Daniel and friend. David and I just worked on moving the Video Ray around to get some shots of the ship. David then moved it back so we could pick it up and try the bow again with Daniel with us. Finally Daniel arrives and he wanted to go diving right now. Daniel likes to spear the fish on the ship, while he is diving. So we got suited up and over the side we went. Daniel, David and I went down the anchor line. When I got down to the bottom, the current was so strong that I almost told David to go back up. But I asked him if he wanted to continue on to get the ROV and he said yes. I lead the way to the spot that the ROV was sitting. I could see it just about two feet in front of me when I came on it. The current was strong even right next to the two walls. I gave the ROV to David and I grabbed the cord and off we went to the bow hanging on for dear life. I could see that David was having trouble carrying the ROV and holding on to the side of the ship. Then I could see that David had enough of trying to make to the bow that he signaled to Brad on the surface to take the ROV up and let it go. I had the flashlight at this time and made sure he was right next to me as

we headed back to the line. This way the current was pushing us toward the anchor line. I could feel something grab my camera light line and it broke on the way back. When we got to the line, I told David to stay there while I recovered the flags over the hanger bay. I ran into Daniel looking into a hole in the top of the hanger bay. I recovered the American, POW and Navy flag, but could not find the Marine Corp flag. So I returned to the anchor line where David took my camera while I hooked the flags onto the anchor line for the trip to the surface. Now we are heading up to the safety stop. David, myself and the flag were flying in the wind off the line. I checked the computer and cut the safety stop short due to the current. We got to the ladder and it was going sideways making it hard to get up the ladder. When we got on deck, Brad informed us that the ROV was hung up and would have to be recovered tomorrow when I went down to cut the line loose from the ship so we could leave. Brad and Daniel loaded up in the Sea Otter and headed back to Brad's house leaving David and I out here for the night. Now David and I decided that we needed to get the ROV up because I did not know where it was located on the hull of the ship and did not want to take a long time looking for it and cut the rope too. So David and the Captain got in the rubber boat and headed out to where the cord was real tight. Then after a while the ROV came to the surface. Now we can take a break until tomorrow when I will go down and cut the rope so we can leave to meet Daniel and Brad at 9:00 AM. We all took pictures of each other in the tee shirts that I had made for the trip and laughed about the close calls we had so far. It has been a trying trip for me. I wanted to bring back more pictures of the ship like Denlay did in Jan 06. I was just glad that no one got hurt and everyone had somewhat of a good time. David informed me that if I come back in the future, he would come with me to photograph the ship. I believe this will be my last time on the USS HOUSTON. I will say my good by's tomorrow just before cutting the rope. Now, that my father has been reunited by Otto, and the other survivors of the USS HOUSTON. I feel like I could have done more if I could have been left alone and not worrying about our government throwing me and the dive team in jail. I feel that in the next couple years the sea will destroy more of the USS HOUSTON and no one will give a dam about it and this is a missed chance to photograph it for the USS HOUSTON SURVIVORS AND FAMILY. The law must be changed to help the ones that are trying to save history not steal from the ship. I know that many sailors, marines and officers went down on the ship. That is why we were here to show the condition of the ship to the one's that were on it. It is time for dinner aboard the dive boat and the captain has called. Tomorrow is another day.

Wednesday morning Aug 16, 2006 David and I got up early to make the last dive on the USS HOUSTON before heading back to port. David and I hit the water just after 7:00 am heading down to the bottom. The current was almost at a stand still. The plan was for me to recover the Marine Corp flag on the hanger bay and then for us to go around the ship coming back at the anchor line. When we were ready to go up, we were to cut the anchor line, leaving just enough of the line to hold it so we could get back up the line. After we were aboard the dive ship, the captain backed the dive boat up and the anchor line broke free from the USS HOUSTON. Now we took fresh water showers and got our gear packed up. After a short ride to shore, the rubber boat was filled up with our gear and taken to shore. The next trip in the rubber boat will take David and me with the captain to shore. I had given the captain a USS HOUSTON hat, which he would not take off now. After arriving at the shore, we unloaded the gear in to the two cars that were there for us to make the trip back to Brad's house. We took several pictures with the crew. Then I drove the other car following Daniel's driver to Brad's house. It took about one hour and half to make the trip. On the way we passed several school

groups marching on the side of the street. We took several pictures of the groups as we passed them. We got to Brad's house, where we found that Brad was just finishing packing his house furniture into the pod for the trip to Korea. Now we got the dive gear cleaned up and headed to the Blue Moon for lunch. Then we headed back to the house where we repacked our bags for the trip home. Lastly we headed back to the Blue Moon to meet up with Brad's friends and eat dinner. Brad said goodbye and we headed back to the house for the night. The next day David and I tried to change over the tapes to DVD. We were having trouble changing over, so we quit for the day. Now we headed back to Jakarta to check into a Hotel for the night. We had dinner with Brad's friend who runs the Hotel. After dinner it was time to take David to the airport for his trip home. Brad and I headed back to the Hotel after dropping David off at the airport. The next day Brad and I ran around to get his things ready to go to Korea and meet with some of his friends for lunch. After lunch, we headed back to the Hotel where I got ready for the trip home on the airplane. Brad dropped me off at the airport and he headed back to the hotel to meet his friends for a last night on the town. I made the trip back to Pensacola without any incidents. It was good to be back in the USA.

I would like to thank Scott Bentley and the Video Ray company for sending David Phillips over to Jakarta to help take pictures of the USS HOUSTON CA-30. OCEAN TECHNOLOGY SYSTEMS (OTS) for the communication systems and Bob Barth for the underwater video camera. I also would like to thank the USS HOUSTON FAMILY that donated money for the dive boat, because without your donations I would have not being able to accomplish this trip. Thanks to Daniel Tangguh Jakarta team diver, David Phillips Video Ray-HOV operator, Brad Gift Jakarta team leader, Robert & Sharron Long, John & Susan Kreutzer, GENE WILKINSON, Donna Flynn for the Fabulous Flynn Family, Max & Val Poss, Ron & Lin Drees, John & Pat Mintzer, Larry & Susan Krug, John Schwarz, Trudy and OTTO SCHWARZ, Sylvia & HOWARD BROOKS, Jo Klenk, Peter & Nancy Adams (in memory of JOSEPH DAVIS), Joyce Ranger (dive team T-shirts) & Bob Barth (underwater video camera system).

### **THANK YOU ALL**

**THE STORY BEHIND THE STORY -** Jerry received a phone call in the wee hours of the morning from a woman stating she was with the US government & if the divers or the little ROV enter the ship they will be arrested. The poor guy is ½ way around the world on a dinky boat over the site, caller ID doesn't give him any info & he can't remember her name. He calls me and we begin to backtrack. Seems she received an email about a news article telling of the dive. I get her number from the reporter and call, she's gone but the assistant insists a permit is necessary and the request takes 90 days. I offer to fill out the request and fax it to her – nope, gotta mail it in. I get the 11 page form off the internet, spend several hours filling it out & email it to her along with a 2 page cover sheet explaining these are not armatures (the men running the ROV filmed the interior of the ARIZONA), Jerry is the son of a survivor, we've been sending quarterly newsletters to the Dept. of the Navy for 6 decades advising of plans to dive and previous dives & they never contacted us about the new permit requirements. I beg this to be expedited because it's costing them \$1,000 a day & include a negative news article about them stopping the dive. She calls to say there was a miscommunication and I can fax it to her, heavy sigh – I ALREADY emailed it! Walking this through would take 90 minutes, not 90 days. In the mean time, I've called the US Embassy in Jakarta – due to the time difference, I chat with the guard that barely speaks English. I email them a desperate message. The clock is ticking & ask our NG's to contact their Congressman to get these folks to hustle it up. So many

immediately jumped on it contacting not only their Congressmen, the Secretary of the Navy, the President and First Lady! Alas, the clock ran out and Jerry had to come home & an opportunity to record the history of our beloved ship was lost. Jerry's first concern was about the money the people had donated. I assure him we understood & that was the least of his worries (while away his mom, Joyce was terribly ill). Now that he's home, I teased him we would have used the funds as bail money. Tee hee

**WHAT WE HAVE LEARNED** – Although the newsletters have been sent to the Naval Historical Dept, no one reads it & a new delivery address has been acquired (they have received copies of scanned Bluebonnets since the beginning for their archives via internet). The US Embassy in Jakarta is aware of tours to dive the HOUSTON, nothing can be done on their part because it's in international waters. The department that handles the historical archives is very difficult to find on the internet. They are listed under, are you ready for this? The Underwater Archeology Navy Historical Center. The UANHC is unaware of our organization, tours to dive (Jerry provided a picture of one posted in a bar), people contacting us about artifacts because there is no response from them (I assured her the articles have not been kept but we made sure they were sent to a historical museum-she wanted to argue an article wasn't ours to loan, I responded that we loan nothing – I signed the papers stating they were gifts), our discouraging people from diving our beloved ship (I sent a copy of my latest letter to someone that had inquired about diving for souvenirs), and the best of all – totally unaware of the USS HOUSTON Monument with the bell on top or the fact the Navy AND President Bush (the first) was involved. I'm sure we all have come up with the same conclusion that after 64 years our beloved ship is not protected as a gravesite by our government but ignored. Be assured, they know of us now..... as a matter of fact, Max and I will be in DC and I asked she meet us Sunday afternoon when we arrive (as in any NG that can or wants to attend). She replied (2 weeks later) saying she couldn't come on Sunday but invited us to visit them & have a little tour. I accepted advising I'd invited more members along. The details haven't been worked out yet.

#### **FINANCIAL REPORT –**

Debits		Credits	
Print Newsletter	93.17	Previous Balance	2557.47
Postage newsletter	112.56	Deposits	2110.10
Storage	252.06	Rsv '07 reunion	3000.00
Sales Items	216.20		
Postage	264.43		
Supplies	496.06		
Telephone	186.38		
Total	1620.86	Balance	3046.71

**ITEMS FOR SALE** - We have USS Houston T shirts sizes medium to 2X, great looking Next Generation coffee cups, Monument pins, Bell pins, bumper stickers and acrylic paper weights with the silhouette of the CA-30. ITEM: Shirt \$30, Cups \$15, Pins \$3, Bumper Stickers \$2, Paper weight \$20, CD (crew pictures) \$18, DVD \$18 "The Last Stand of USS Houston (CA-30) Death Becomes The Ghost", DVD \$18 Interviews of the survivors. NOTE: THESE PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING HANDLING - If purchasing both DVD's the cost will be \$30 total. Sorry for the increase however the packaging and pricing has soared. There just a few caps available - no more will be ordered until we can sell off inventory.

**IN CONCLUSION** - I struggle for the words to express the sadness we all share in the loss of Otto. The family asks we celebrate his life. God allowed Otto to be here at this time in history to fulfill His special purpose for this generation. How thankful we are that God allowed us to be here at the same time.

Until December - stay well

#### Line from Lin

The Lost Battalion reunion was recently held in Farmers Branch, Texas, which is near the Dallas-Ft.Worth Airport. Attending from the USS *HOUSTON* family were the following: Bob and Marti Charles and family, David and Donna Flynn, Robert and Eileen Hanley, Nadine Faulk and family, Gwen McFarland and daughter, Jimmie Pryor and family, and Lee Robinson and daughter. Also attending were family members of the following: **John Reas**, **Valdon Roberts**, **Bill Stevens**, and **James Raydell Wilson**. Since the 131st Field Artillery was originally stationed in Texas and many of them still live in Texas, there were too many of them for me to name all in attendance.

Why Two Groups - the Difference - I have had many people ask me about the Lost Battalion and the USS *HOUSTON* Survivors Association and why we have two associations. Here is what I believe to be the main difference. The Lost Battalion represents all the men who were POWs from both the 131st Field Artillery and the USS *HOUSTON*. The USS *HOUSTON* group covers not only the POWs who survived the sinking, but the men who went down with the ship. There were over 1,000 men on the *HOUSTON* when sunk - approximately 700 did not make it ashore - we cannot forget those men, nor their families.

On September 10 and 11 we will gather with others to celebrate Otto's life - and his legacy of the USS *HOUSTON* Survivor's Association and Next Generation. We are proud to have known and loved **Otto Schwarz**. His burial will be at Arlington National Cemetery.

PLANS FOR MARCH, 2007 - Plans are already in process, and in fact were started in February, 2006! The DoubleTree has again promised rooms at this past year's rate of \$79 dollars. At this time only Friday night dinner and Saturday lunch are planned for the reunion with the Memorial Service being held at 2 p.m. on Saturday. The reunion will be Friday and Saturday, but early birds are encouraged to start arriving on Wednesday and Thursday - and stay until Sunday - the hospitality suite will be open until late on Saturday night. The trip to UH to view the USS *HOUSTON* display will be on Friday so please arrive early enough to be able to attend the reception at UH. Registration forms and prices will be in the next Blue Bonnet.

To reserve your hotel rooms, please ask to speak with Shanna Jackson, 713.351.5757, or Raymond Medina, 713.351.5760. This will connect you directly with the Houston DoubleTree USS *HOUSTON* registry (and not the 800 number hotel registry which is not in Houston). Shanna and Raymond work weekdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., Central Standard Time. Be sure to mention that you are with the USS *HOUSTON* group - and be sure to mention anything special that you wish, e.g., handicapped room or close to an elevator. We also plan to have the hotel registration connected to our USS *HOUSTON* websites, and registrants will be able to make their room reservations over internet - please allow us until late September to get this set-up. Please make your room reservations early to make certain that you do have a room as the hotel almost ran out of rooms this past year.

Please mark March 2 and 3 on your 2007 calendar, and plan to come. Make plans to be an early bird and arrive on February 28 or March 1. This year (as every year) we had MANY new faces - please join us in 2007.

HMAS PERTH III - We wanted to attend the commissioning, but Ron's vacation days were limited, and we wanted to save days for Otto's Service. I received an email from my friend, Julie, with information and a couple of photos taken at the commissioning. Vic Campbell placed that information on the blog, [www.usshouston.blogspot.com](http://www.usshouston.blogspot.com)

We wish everyone a good fall season. Ron and Lin Drees - [lindrees.ca30@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lindrees.ca30@sbcglobal.net) - 14219 Wickersham, Houston, TX 77077, phone and fax, 281.493.5171.

**Dedicated to Otto Schwarz**

**A friend**

**A patriot**

**A mentor to us all**