



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

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IN MEMORIAM

JOE GARRETT

DECEMBER 18, 2007

NATURAL CAUSES

MARION CONNER

JANURARY 28, 2008

NATURAL CAUSES

We now have 28 survivors left

**USS HOUSTON CA-30 SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION
AND NEXT GENERATIONS REUNION**

Feb/March 2009 – to be determined

Doubletree- Allan Center

400 Dallas St, Houston, TX 77002

Advise you are with the USS Houston group for the \$89 per night rate

Have your credit card ready to provide billing information

Contact: Val Poss 512 989-0000

Email: CA30NG@aol.com

AUGUST REUNION IN DALLAS

I've not received their newsletter to include their reunion information. It will be in Dallas at the Omni Hotel – Dallas Park West, 1590 LBJ Freeway, Dallas, TX 75235 as it has been the past several years. Please email editors Mike & Gail Bailais for information: mgbailas@verizon.net

DONATIONS – Bill Lynch, BASIL BUNYARD, Audie Lynch, Henry & Jane Matthews, Rosemary Adlong, Carol Ann Hess in memory of WILLIAM WRIGHT (BILL) STEVENS, JR., BILL STEWART, Ella Jane Harris in memory of LANSON HARRIS, Jean Rentz Lansing, Erma Snyder in memory of JOE SNYDER, Nancy Greenwald, Vickie Keehr, Betty Miles, Alberta Hull & family in memory of JOHN HOOD, John Schwarz, Betty Fowler in memory of CHARLES “JACK” FOWLER, Nancy Herndon, Fred Haring, Trudy Schwarz, Rufus Choate, Matthew Rejmaniak in memory of EDWIN DOMBROWSKI (KIA), Dr. Joseph Connolly, Joel & Debra Snyder in memory of JOE SNYDER, Marie & JACK FELIZ, Walter Grice, Ella Harris, Jo Klenk in memory of JOE GARRETT, Sharon Long, Allen Crispi, Nancy Adams, Ron & Lin Drees, Capt. Carter Conlin (Naval Order of the United States), Mike & Becke Freitas, Susan & John Kreutzer, Jimmie Pryor, Mary & “SKIP” SCHILPEROORT, Audrey & HARRY KELLEY, Teresa Reilly in memory of JOHN REILLY, Silvia & HOWARD BROOKS, Leland Stewart.

DONATIONS FOR '08 DIVE – John & Susan Kreutzer, Marian Royce & Susan Pogue in memory of LAWRENCE KONDZELA, CK McFarland, Lee Robinson, Raymond Nies, Buzz Creek T/A Grade-A Media, Nancy Adams, Ron & Lin Drees, Ruth Watts, Martha Loggins, Audrey & Harry KELLEY, Harry Kelley Jr., Eugene Frey, John Waller, Trudy Schwarz, John Schwarz, Sharron Long.

MAILBAG – I am very sad to have to report that Erma Snyder (widow of EARL SNYDER) died suddenly Feb. 6th, 2008. They suspect an aneurism. Alberta Hull, sister of JOHN HOOD, wrote to thank everyone for being so kind to John for many years. He had spent Thanksgiving Day with her. The next day, his brother in law was preparing lunch for him & “Jack” said he’d go to the bathroom first. A few minutes later Gene heard a small thump & went to check on him & he was gone. Bill Lynch advised that his wife Anne died April 16th due to pulmonary fibrosis.....we send our sincere regrets. The Dec. 3rd edition of “The Palm Beach Post” had a picture on the front page with 4 WWII veterans – of course, the most handsome of them all was our very own DAVID FLYNN. The Humanitarian Society honors their WWII vets twice a year with a dinner dance with the veterans as the honored guests. DAVID also participated on Dec.17th in the POW/MIA Christmas wreath laying service at the VA Cemetery in Boynton Beach, FL with Lt. Col. Gray (Tuskegee Airman WWII) Gavan Daws wrote to Trudy Schwarz to report the Charlie Rose show with Otto & Gavan is up on YouTube:<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U>) Congratulations to Harry Kelley, Jr. on the birth of his grandson, Jacob Ross Greene 2/28/08. That makes 4 grand kiddos for Harry Jr. --- I wonder how many great grands that is for Audrey & HARRY KELLEY? Dorothy Rogers, NG had to cancel her reservations for the reunion due to the sudden death of her mother in law – we all send our love and support. I admit it – I hit the wall. After about 1 ½ years of both Trudy Schwarz & I writing & calling repeatedly to Rear Admiral Richard Buchanan, President & CEO, Navy Memorial Foundation 701 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 123, Washington, DC 20004-2608 inquiring about why he & the other planners of the Memorial failed to include the Battle of the Flores Sea, Battle of the Java Sea & Battle of the Sunda Strait we never reached HIM. His underlings would respond with evident lack of knowledge. She & I pressed on but to no avail. At one time, the letterhead showed Mr. Buchanan as the man in charge along with Tom Hanks. As of late his solicitation letters for donations haven’t included Tom’s name. The last form letter soliciting money just went all over me & I replied unkindly in yet another letter addressed to him. He’s now aware that I am totally unimpressed with his decision making & demand my name be removed from his mailing list because “I find your begging for financial assistance is offensive to the memory of my late father ---- just one of the hundreds of men you and your committee chose to ignore.”

FROM DOWN UNDER - Paul Steves of the Department of Veterans' Affairs, Office of Australian War Graves sent a letter to inform us of the change caused by safety considerations at the Hellfire Pass Memorial Museum. After inspection, serious safety issues with the foundation of the staircase & surrounding rock face. A proposal for a new walkway running from the back for the museum building to the cutting has been submitted to the Thai authorities. Comments or questions are referred to Charlotte Sarossy at Charlotte.Sarossy@dva.gov.au. I have received some information from our friends down under explaining the Wall of Remembrance at the museum in Kanchaburi, Thailand. There is a wall along a stairway in the museum that is acknowledging the Allied countries that worked on the Death Railway. Both the USS Houston CA-30 crew and Lost Battalion group have been invited to have a plaque placed. Eugene Brooks, son of survivor HOWARD BROOKS is working on the design for us. HMAS Perth survivor David Manning wrote that he and wife Audrey were on a cruise prior to Christmas & the ship conducted a short remembrance ceremony in Sunda Strait. Altho the cruise wasn't all that cooperative OR enthusiastic providing different times and places to gather for the small service, Art managed to get word out to passengers & a solemn service was held by a few interested guests. One "lifted" a carnation from the pursers desk, another recited the "Ode" in a brief & moving service including a 2 minute pause of silence to remember those that gave their lives for our freedoms. Arthur Bancroft reports 60 Minutes crew flew to Perth & spent 3 days interviewing & filming different locations. This should be aired by the time you receive the newsletter. Their new mailing address is 115 / 71 Ruislip St, Wembley, WA 6014 (physical address James McCauley Apartments 115, 18 Barrett St). His email is abancroft@tpg.com.au. Marie Feliz, wife of JACK FELIZ, called to report his Aussie friend in the POW camps in Japan, George Adams died in late February due to complications of a stroke. I was told that George's father was a member of the crew in the story & movie "Mutiny on the Bounty".

BOOKS FOR SALE - *4000 BOWLS OF RICE A Prisoner of War Comes Home* BY Linda Goetz Holmes is now available via Brick Tower Press @1230 Park Ave, NY,NY 10128. Sales: 1 800-68BRICK, Phone: 212 427-7139, Fax: 212 860-8852, email: bricktower@aol.com (www.BrickTowerPress.com). Gavan Daws reports his book *Prisoners of the Japanese* is in it's 9th printing. *The Adventures of Eddie Fung: Chinatown Kid, Texas Cowboy, Prisoner of War*, has finally been published by the University of Washington Press. If you would like an autographed copy from the author himself and have proceeds from the book sale go to the Lost Battalion Association, please fill out the order form below and send to us. Or you can order the book at a substantial discount from www.amazon.com. Copies of *The Adventures of Eddie Fung* are \$22.50 each. For surface shipping within the U.S., please add \$3.00 for the first book, plus \$1.00 for each additional book. Please note the number of copies you want, who the books should be autographed to, your name, address, & phone number. Make check out to Ed Fung and send with your information to: 503 Hagar Court, Santa Cruz, CA 95064.

DVD'S OF INTERVIEWS AVAILABLE – Jane Matthews & husband Matt (NG's) have taken the old videos of interviews and transferred them to DVD's. They have been donated to several museums to use for research about the *USS Houston CA-30*, HMAS Perth & ABDA Fleet. They are available for sale to the organization also. Please contact me for a pricelist & order form.

CREW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Melfred "Gus" Forsman was born March 22, 1921 in Alpena, South Dakota to Gustave and Nellie Forsman. On April 18, 1939 "Gus" left his home in Iowa Falls, Iowa and enlisted in the Navy at Des Moines, Iowa. After training as a Seaman at Great Lakes, Illinois and Bremerton, Washington in ship repair; he was assigned to duty aboard the Cruiser, *USS Houston*.

On March 1, 1942 when the ship went down in the Java Sea he became a Japanese prisoner of war. On March 14, 1942 the Navy Department notified his parents that he was "missing following action in the performance of his duty and in the service of his country". It would be 15 months before they received word from "Gus" that he was a POW.

Melfred was moved from Serang to Batavia on Java, and from there to the slave labor camps building the "death railway" through Burma and Thailand. In January 1945 he was at a place called Kanchanburi, north of Bangkok. He was working as a goat herder when he was approached by a Portuguese doctor in the French Indochina underground who was asking for information about the camp. After being given permission by Captain W.D. Parker and Major W.M. Rogers he carried news of the camp to the doctor and began smuggling in newspapers, which contained war news, as well as medications into the camp in a hollowed out bamboo pole. His smuggling activities were discovered by the Japanese Kempei Tai (secret police) and he was arrested along with Major Rogers and Captain Parker. He was sent to Bangkok to appear before a Japanese military trial and was sentenced to 6 years solitary confinement. He was taken to Outrum Road Jail and for the next 6 months was held in solitary confinement in a 10 x 4 foot cell. Sometime after August 20, 1945 he, along with other prisoners, was released. They then made their way to Changi jail where they were liberated by American troops and then airlifted to Calcutta, India.

After returning to the United States, Melfred was discharged from the Navy in 1946 and married Dilene Jean Schuler on September 30, 1947. In 1948 he applied to Spartan School of Aviation to become an A&P mechanic, but when Dilene became ill they returned to Iowa where he drove a cab. In 1949 he joined the Army. In 1954, while stationed in Paris, France, his twin daughters Dawn and Diane were born. In 1956 he was stationed at Ft Rucker, Alabama working in Army Aviation, testing the CH 37 helicopter. The family then headed to Mannheim Germany until 1962 when they returned to Ft Rucker. In 1964 Melfred retired from the Army.

In 1969, he was recalled to active duty and sent to Vietnam as part of the 242nd Air Assault Support Helicopter Company of the Black Barons 269th Combat Aviation Battalion. Gus was crew chief flying in a CH-47. They were known as the Muleskinners. He completed his tour of duty and returned to the states in 1970. He was a National Guard advisor in Norman, Oklahoma until his retirement in 1972.

In November 1997 his lovely wife, Dilene died from lung cancer, 2 months after celebrating their 50th wedding anniversary with family and friends. On May 16, 1998 – 56 years after Melfred's POW experience – at a special ceremony at the Veterans Center in Midland, Texas he was awarded a Purple Heart. Receiving the award, Melfred said, *"I gratefully accept this award on the behalf of my over 700 shipmates still standing watch in the Sundra Strait"*. He was also honored by a proclamation from the Mayor who declared the 16th, "Melfred Forsman Day in Midland".

On December 1, 2005 Melfred "Gus" Forsman passed away at the Kerrville VA Hospital in Texas. He was 83 years old.

HAWAII – VETERAN'S DAY '08 – I'm taking names! Not only is the USS Missouri organization researching group rates for accommodations and flights, so is NG, Allen Crispi! Please be aware that the group rate flights will limit you to departing and returning on the same dates with the others.....that's why you'd get a "group" rates – because you're flying as a group. Max & I will be using our air miles arriving June 7th & returning June 15th. Our son in law has access to the Hale Koa Hotel for the military families – you may want to check that out. Reservations need to be made early with the Hale Koa as I understand. I will keep those of you that have notified me of all updates as soon as I get them! If you don't see your name listed, don't hear from me by the middle of June or want to be added, please give me a call (512 989-0000 or email me-ca30ng@aol.com) So far we have (by last name only): Brooks (2), Chiapetta (1), Courtney (1)Crispi, (1), Drees (2), Feliz (2), Foster (2), Gouge (6), Guerrero (1), Ingram (2), Keehr (2), Kelley (3), Krug (2 - or maybe 7?), Letze (1), Long (1), Matthews (2), Poss (2), Robinson (2), Schilperoort (2), Schwarz (2), Snyder (2).

NEXT GENERATION MEETING – If you want the full official version, please contact me & I'll send a copy. To keep it short I reported: Shawn Flynn continues to work on the album (www.usshouston.net), Eugene Brooks, NG is designing the plaque for the museum in Thailand, The Nimitz Museum accepted our donations, the documentary *The Cruiser Houston: of Pride & Purpose* kindly donated copies for all survivors & a few to be sold (proceeds went to the Scholarship fund), & contact with the USS Houston SSN-713 has been reestablished. The sub will be in port in Honolulu, HI for the Veteran's Day Ceremony, Eugene Brooks is working on a project of a "challenge coin" (one side the SSN-713 & other CA-30) plus Val is working on Sailor of the Quarter & Sailor of the Year acknowledgements with the ship's XO. New business: Sharron Long purchased a new copier for us to use during the reunions, she is also working with the Doubletree for the '09 reunion. Veteran's Day '08 will be aboard the USS Missouri & will report to those interested of the discount room and air fairs, the scholarship fund is in good order & just a few tweaks needed, we are addressing some updating of the charter & adding of some bylaws due to federal & state mandates, the association voted to give authority to the Scholarship Committee to handle accounts as needed, Val reported that John Schwarz's name had been added as a signatory to assn's bank account in the event of her demise – the membership vote: approved unanimously, a vote was approved unanimously to elect John Schwarz as Pres. & Jo Klenk as Secretary since officers should be present. (Vice Pres Susan Kruetzer & Treasurer Shawn Flynn were present), discussion over "ownership" of the Association – it was explained it belongs to all of the members & all are encouraged to participate in the perpetuation of the memory of the ship & her crew. Lastly, Jerry Ranger gave a brief update of the dive explaining difficulties with getting the sonar equipment sent and delivered on time along with storms being forecast the 1st of March when the dive team was to be there. He was encouraged to make safety his highest priority.

ITEMS FOR SALE – You can find our items for displayed on the internet at www.usshouston.org under NEWS. It not only shows what we have in our inventory but the cost of mailing along with a order sheet OR you can contact me for information.

<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">CLASS OF SERVICE</p> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">This is a full-rate telegram or cablegram unless the deferred character is indicated by a suitable symbol shown or preceding the address.</p>	<h1 style="margin: 0;">WESTERN UNION</h1> <p style="font-size: small; margin: 0;">812 AM 16th 76 4 Extra Government</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">W. W. WHELAN, PRESIDENT HENRY D. CARLTON, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD J. E. KELLEY, VICE PRESIDENT</p>	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">SYMBOLS</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">L-L-Only Letter</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">DT-Deferred Telegram</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">LC-Deferred Cable</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">N-C-Cable Night Letter</p> <p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">No Symbol</p>
<p style="font-size: x-small; margin: 0;">The time shown in the date line on telegrams and day letters is STANDARD TIME at point of origin. Time of receipt is STANDARD TIME at point of destination.</p>		
<p style="margin: 0;">Washington D.C. Mar 14th Via Conway Ark March 15th 1942</p> <p style="margin: 5px 0 0 0;">Elvin Warner Lynch Route 1 Box 54 Scotland, Ark.</p> <p style="margin: 10px 0 0 0;">The Navy Department deeply regrets to inform you that your son Charles Leslie Lynch, Gunners Mate Second Class, U.S. Navy is missing following action in the performance of his duty and in the service of his country. The Department appreciates your great anxiety and will furnish you further information promptly when received. To prevent possible aid to our enemies please do not divulge the name of ship or station.</p> <p style="text-align: center; margin: 10px 0 0 0;">Rear Admiral Randall Jacobs Chief of Staff.</p> <p style="text-align: center; font-size: x-small; margin-top: 20px;">THE COMPANY WILL APPROPRIATE REDEMPTION FROM ITS PATRONS CONCERNING ITS SERVICE</p>		

IRS & STATE OF TEXAS – I've worked this past year with the IRS & State of Texas getting us updated. Bottom line (& this was sooo laughable) – since we haven't ever received \$25,000 or more annually we haven't been required to file a report BUT, since we didn't file a full report, they lost track of us.....sort of. After hours on the phone, reading hundreds of pages of government doubletalk, I proved we weren't a terrorist cell (it's become VERY complicated since Sept. 11) & were "reactivated" as of our original '97 date. HOWEVER, I found out something that was of concern to a few members – we won't be fined if we don't issue a scholarship. However, with 11 applicants this year, I doubt we'll have to concern ourselves. Another piece of information that was in question since I give a summarized quarterly financial report (just like Otto had done for decades) – that's all right with the IRS since I only have to report to them ONCE a year. If anyone wants a detailed copy, they are most welcome to ask....but, per the IRS, there is a fee for the organization to send it out. And please, if you have a question about IRS &/or state non-profit organization requirements, please contact THEM, not me....I'm not the expert & still learning!!! Thanks to NG, Tim Klenk, he's helping us out pro-bono. Yes! We've grown to the point we have our own attorney & if you ask me any questions, I'll forward your query to *him* & HE can refer you to the IRS or state requirements. It's NOT fun reading material!

GENERAL OBSERVATION – Otto told me over & over & over again that so few knew so little about the first 3 months of WWII. THAT was an understatement! I have researched for every historical museum (of decent reputation) & began writing, calling, faxing any and every name I could find with each establishment for the last 2 years (they could care less). I have pitched the history of the Asiatic & ABDA Fleets (they could care less & surprisingly have no incentive to check out that part of Naval History). Thanks to NG's Jane & Henry Matthews, all of our interviews on video have been converted to DVD & they were sent to those museums. ONE has called to thank us – but complained that they used "gold" DVD's & would have to convert our "silver" DVD's to their "gold" ones. I've not given up the fight because I realize that most of the people I deal with are probably younger than my own children & are clueless. My other observation is within the Houston family – very few actively participate. Those that do participate throw themselves into their project with a passion. Please remember – it is the purpose of this organization (let me repeat again – O R G A N I Z A T I O N) is to perpetuate the memory of this great ship and crew. In the past, I have asked for your suggestions. We have grown tremendously thanks to technology (websites, emails, blogs, etc). The more we grow, the more work there is to do and more people we need to help. In lieu of asking for suggestions, I propose that from now on, you report in to me what project you've decided you are going to handle from start to finish. We can discuss the pro's & con's but please know, I won't be able to take your suggestion & make it work. This will be your baby. I've got more than I can handle & put in 8-12 hour week days plus 4 hour weekends just to keep up. I've received over 7,000 emails in the last 12 months. I asked for & have been offered some assistance to lessen the load and I am MOST appreciative (as is Max). Yes, it became overwhelming --- but in a good way. This is our "Houston family" & no one will know this ship & crew's story unless we all pitch in using whatever talents we have (or don't have). We are **not** about to Strike the Flag (Striking the ensign was and is the universally recognized indication of surrender) - we've gained momentum & going to hold fast!!!

BLUEBONNET MARCH '41 – 'HOUSTON BASEBALL TEAM HITS THREE GAME WINNING STREAK' "The HOUSTON baseball team played three games last week emerging victor each time. The first game was played on Feb. 20 with NICHOLS FIELD. The game was featured by a four run scoring spree by our team in the first inning, which included timely doubles by Stefanek and Mullins. Wisecup was the master of the NICHOLS FIELD batters, keeping nine hits well scattered while retiring eight men by the strike out route. The game ended with the Houston winning 6-5. The CANOPUS was our opponent on Sat. , Feb. 21st, in our first errorless game. The hard hitting of the Houston team plus the excellent pitching of Vereley was responsible for the 8-5 victory. Vereley pitched a masterful game – striking out 12 men and, though touched for ten hits, was never in trouble but for the 8th inning when he weakened slightly allowing a walk and three hits. This, coupled with an interference by Truskowski, allowed four runs to cross the plate. Dingler led the Houston batters with 4 hits in as many times at bat. On Sunday, Feb. 22, the Houston was victor over the 16th NAVAL DISTRICT by a score of 9-5. The Houston was off to a fast start in the first inning when Battenger walked; and singles by Bain, Stefaek, Koski, with sacrifice by Dingler, tallied 4 runs. The highlight of the game was the mighty wallob, by Trainer, for the farthest hit ball seen in Vaviet in ages, for a home run. In the 9th, Mullins made a spectacular diving one-hand stop of a fast ground ball right over second base. In the previous week, the Houston crossed bats with the strong, hard hitting team of the LANGLEY at Harrison Field. Although we lost this one by the score of 4-3, it was a spectacular and hard fought game throughout the entire tilt, the deciding run crossing the plate in the later part of the last inning. Going into the last, the Houston was leading by the score of 3-2, but a couple of well placed hits by the Langley put the game "on ice" for them.

FINANCIAL REPORT

DEBITS

Print newsletter	88.00
Postage newsletter	105.84
Supplies	1488.04
Reunion expenses	7332.31
Phone	72.00
Postage	332.99
Printing	120.60 (special mail out to survivors)
Storage	209.75 (note increase from 63.75 to 73.00/mo)
Sub total	9749.53

CREDITS

Previous Balance	7665.00
Deposits	8719.28
(reunion meals, sales, donations, interest)	
Sub Total	16384.28
BALANCE	\$6634.85

Line from Lin

This year the morning started out cold, but by the afternoon, the weather was as beautiful as the Memorial Service. Each year we add more meaningful parts to our Service. This year we found a Boatswain's Mate - and we added a special part to the Service. At the beginning of the Service, BM2 Terrence Phillips blew his whistle to "pipe on" to the Memorial Service each of the six survivors. The City of Houston participated this year; Mayor Bill White sent Buddy Grantham, Office of Veterans' Affairs, to lay a wreath during the Wreath Laying Ceremony. For the first time the Dive Team also laid a wreath, and two Marine Corps divisions each laid a wreath. Many new traditions were started this year.

After the Memorial Service, many said "how touched they were by the Service," "how meaningful the Service was," "how moving and beautiful," "emotional and thought-provoking," "that each year the Service is better than the year before" and most said that they would be back next year. This year found many people staying to talk around the Monument and enjoy each other's company before scattering to go their own ways.

Each year at our Memorial Service, I would love to be able to call out all the names of OUR MEN who served on the USS *HOUSTON* – and are named on the Monument, BUT it would take too long. So we call out all the names of ones who are in attendance or have family and friends in the audience. This year the following Survivors attended with family and friends: Howard and Silvia Brooks, David Flynn, Bill Ingram, Harry and Audrey Kelley, Clarence and Mary Schilperoort, and Marvin and Helen Sizemore. Bob Charles was represented by his son. Representing their deceased husbands, the following wives and family were in attendance: Gwen McFarland, wife of Tom McFarland, Jimmie Pryor, wife of Charley Pryor, Teresa Reilly, wife of John Reilly, Lee Robinson, wife of Marvin Robinson, Trudy Schwarz, wife of Otto Schwarz, the founder of the USS *HOUSTON* Survivors Association, and Eunell Weissinger, wife of Bill Weissinger. This year the following 15 deceased men had family to represent them: Roger Barnett, Joseph Bienart, Leonard Bradley, Gene Crispi, Edwin Dombrowski, Gus Forsman, Joe Garrett, Walter Grice, Alfred McGarvey, Paul Papish, John Ranger, John Reas, Valdon Roberts, John Stefanek, and James Raydell Wilson. Dub Reed was a POW w/ the *HOUSTON* men and a member of the 131st Field Artillery; he was also represented by family members. Scott Phillips, one of the 1,000 Avengers, was ill and unable to attend, but was represented by a family friend.

Also in attendance were Bob Curtis and Jerry Waxman, both Marines in World War II and Tom Sledge, Air Force, who dropped bombs over Japanese ships, once missing the Japanese ship transporting "our men" to start their slave labor, building the Death Railway, but hitting the ship with mainly Japanese soldiers. Three members of the VFW Post 8790 served in WW II: Bob Cook, Marine, Travis Reilly, Navy, and Joe Rodriguez, Army.

Attending this year was Bob Ivy, a model maker, who has made models of many ships - always using the blueprints, no kits. Currently he has two models of the USS *HOUSTON* CA 30 - in two different sizes.

With the beautiful weather we were able to enjoy the music of the Houston Brass Band, including the Echo Taps. They play 30 minutes before the Service begins, plus during the Service, they play the National Anthem, and Navy Hymn which is recited by Carter Conlin, Texas Commandery. The Honor Guard from VFW Post 8790 supplied the rifle salute. The Sea Cadets attended, helped with ushering, escorted our Survivors into the Service, and provided the color guard. The Mayor's Office of Special Events, The Heritage Society, and the Houston Park Service had the Monument paving repaired, the park ready for our use, and provided the sound equipment, along with the sound technician - we are very pleased to have their assistance with the preparations beforehand and the expertise of the City's sound man. The Heritage Society flew our flags (ABDA flags and POW flag) at the Monument, allowed use of the Museum's restrooms, and provided last minute assistance with the killing of red ants that popped up due to the recent rains. The NOUS, Texas Commandery, keeps the flags in safekeeping for us during the year.

Every year, two families appear with homemade cookies, coffee, and bottled water. Larry Poole, along with Roy and Dorlene Gideon, are wonderful friends of the USS *HOUSTON*.

Many thanks to all who assisted this past year - setting up chairs, folding up chairs, ushering, assisting with various aspects of the Service. The following assisted with setting up the chairs, handing out flags and programs: Ron Drees, Matt Matthews, Ron Miller, Dawn Lodge, Mary Olah, and Rita Carroll. Also thanks to any whose names I have forgotten to mention - all assistance was appreciated.

Friday afternoon, we attended a reception held at the UH Library and also viewed the displays in memory of the USS *HOUSTON*. Jim Fisher from the local PBS station brought their recently produced video of the *HOUSTON*, and this was shown at UH during the reception. Come to Houston to view the Monument and to UH Library to see the display area for our USS *HOUSTON* photos, letters, memorabilia, and paintings. Precinct 3 was able to again provide bus service to the Library - we appreciate this service each year.

Jerry Waxman suggested that I contact the VFW Post 8790 to see if they could provide the Rifle Salute. During my conversation with the men at the WFW Post, I mentioned the need for a Boatswains Mate to perform the whistling on his Boatswain's pipe, and a few hours later I received a call from a Navy recruiting station, offering BM2 Phillips' services. Isn't it amazing as to how everything falls together. Please don't hesitate to call with suggestions!

We have not yet set a definite date for next year's reunion and Memorial Service. The 2009 date will be announced in future BLUEBONNETS and also via emails - be sure that we have your current email address!

Many thanks to all who attended our reunion and the Memorial Service - and for those of you who were not able to attend, you were missed!

Lin and Ron Drees, 14219 Wickersham, Houston, TX 77077, 281.493.5171 (phone and fax) -- or lindrees.ca30@sbcglobal.net

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE TO THE 'HOUSTON FAMILY':

Our wonderful 2008 reunion was also a terrific week-end for your scholarship program.

First- the organization's largest scholarship to-date (\$3,000.00!) was awarded to RAYMOND DAVIS. This marked our fifth scholarship award and makes for a grand total of \$8,250.00 that has been granted in scholarships since the inception of the program. To this end- we thank all of you for your generosity and also state that as for our scholarship program- we have come a long way! From both a process and funds standpoint, the program has never been healthier. But, we still have much more to do, but later in this piece for that.

Back to our 2007-2008 winner Raymond Davis; his great uncle was Lieutenant George E. Davis, Jr. USN and served on the USS Houston CA-30 from May of 1938 until February 4, 1942. On that day and according to a report, George was in command of a gun turret when it was struck by

Japanese bombers in the Flores Sea battle. George was killed on that fateful day. He was a 1935 graduate of the U.S. Naval Academy. The U.S.S. George E. Davis (DE-357) destroyer escort was named for Lieutenant George E. Davis. Raymond Davis, our scholarship winner, is a Communications major at the University of the Arts in Philadelphia, PA. He aspires to be a film-maker (a sequel on the way?). We extend our gratitude and well wishes for the future to Raymond and all of the other 11 applicants in this year's scholarship competition.

The Scholarship Committee had a lengthy, spirited and productive annual meeting on Friday, 02/22 in Houston. The major takeaways of interest to our group are;

*Our next year's award has been established at \$2,500.00. This decision was arrived at through Committee consensus. It represents a balance between offering a significant amount while also being mindful of our ultimate financial goals.

*Our capital funds which are in excess of \$30,000.00, are well taken care of. We are very careful of where it is deposited and who has access to it. Everyone can confidently know that 100% of all donated amounts go into the fund for scholarship awards only.

*We have a very healthy award determination process that this year, took 11 applicants down to our winner.

*****NOW HEAR THIS;**

Your Scholarship Committee has re-affirmed its commitment to continue both external and internal fund raising to accumulate a benchmark one level of \$50,000.00. This is of the utmost importance; it would ensure that someone can receive an annual scholarship in the name of, because of and in memory of the men of the USS Houston CA-30 literally, forever. It makes the scholarship one additional element that forever can contribute to the perpetuation of the memory of men, and ship. The \$50,000.00 level insures that capital funds can be 'frozen' and will never go below that amount as the scholarship award can be offered off interest earned. From that point on- additional capital obtained beyond the \$50,000.00 means a larger scholarship award (more capital- more interest earned).

To achieve this goal, your Committee will continue targeted external fund raising.

***To achieve this goal, we are asking all of our 'Houston Family' to consider making a \$100.00 donation during this year, but preferably within the next three months (by June 1). By so doing, we would make our goal ourselves.**

****Please consider acting on this internal plea. One hundred dollars, a great way to defer a piece of the forthcoming U.S. recovery plan check.**

***Remember- all donations are completely tax deductible.**

*You may also supply leads of any prospective donors to anyone on the Committee who will follow through to make a formal plea to that person/business/organization/etc.

SPECIAL THANKS;

I offer this section with mixed feelings because I fear I will omit someone(s). But, I'm going forward anyway, so please forgive me in advance if I forgot anyone;

*Thank you to Val, Lin, Sharron Long and sister Pat, Maxer, Ron, and all those who once again put out a fabulous total week-end and memorial service.

*Thanks for Jane Mathews successful fund raising, Jo Klenk's willingness to accept new challenges and Pam Foster's unselfish work as our Treasurer.

*Thanks to the entire Scholarship Committee for their support in particular, to fund raising activities.

*Thanks to survivor Howard Brooks grand-daughter Shelby Ann who delivered a motivational reading of Raymond Davis's winning scholarship essay. Shelby Ann gives us hope for the next, next generations as do all our scholarship applicants.

*Thanks to everyone's support of the scholarship fund raising auction that raised over \$2,000.00 this year!! Special thanks to Allen Crispi. What a talented Next Generation fellow. What a guy Gene Crispi was to give this organization such dedicated Next Generationers as both Pam Foster, and Allen Crispi who is the undeclared world's finest auctioneer (and a fabulous Blues-man, you ought to see he perform).

*Special thanks to Tim Klenk who has been unselfishly providing us extremely valuable legal counsel on organizational matters.

*Thanks to the 'Mighty Flynn's'; bro's personified who enhance and motivate us all in so many ways.

*Thanks to Dana Charles; this dude is an accomplished musician and one heck of a great guy whether it is advice, karaoke, or by just being who he is.

*Thanks to Don Kehn, Jr., what can be said; the USS Houston's mans man who can tell you what temperature it was in turret number one on 03/01/1942.

*Thanks to Jim Fisher of PBS & his crew for their donation of items that brought in \$840 towards the scholarship kitty.

*Thanks to Ron Drees for being so thorough when the scholarship guidelines were initially established & making the decision making process easier.

Sorry again, I know I forgot someone(s), so thanks to all of you who make me so proud to be a part of the **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations.**

John Keith Schwarz- son of the late Otto C. Schwarz, Scholarship Committee Chairman

NOW HEAR THIS!

All *USS Houston* (CA-30) Survivors Association and Next Generations 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*....

Scholarship Program - 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 visiting our website or writing a request to:

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

Applications are now available via the USS HOUSTON website
(www.usshouston.org)

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 or evidence of progress in school and may present outside work experience, extra-curricular activities, etc. Applications must also present an essay.

The '08 -'09 scholarship will be in the amount of \$ 2,500.00

*** 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. You can remember the USS Houston Scholarship Fund in your will, estate planning, or beneficiary designations. All donations are tax deductible.*

Donations should be made out to: USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations.

Mail Donations to: Pam Foster, 370 Lilac Ln., Lincoln, CA 95648

Katy Veterans

6256 George Bush Drive
Katy, Texas 77493-9183
Phone: 281-574-9183



Memorial Museum

Katy, Texas 77493 • 281-391-VETS
E-mail: VW9182@6to.net

APPLICATION FOR COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE

In Memory of

(1) _____
Full Name

USMC - POW
USM - POW
Branch of Service

(2) _____
Date of Birth

_____ Date of Death

(3) From: _____

First line will be the veteran's full name and branch of service. (INCLUDE ONLY for each branch of the service to be used: USA -- USN -- USMC -- USAF -- USMA, etc.)

Second line will be the date of birth and date of death. (YEAR DATE ONLY. If requested, we can insert extra information between these dates, such as: WWII -- KOREA -- VIETNAM -- special branches of the Service: SWADES -- RANGERS -- GREEN BERT -- special awards: BRONZE STAR -- MEDAL OF HONOR, etc.)

Third line will be who has requested the plaque: FAMILY -- FRIEND -- WIFE -- SON, etc.
From: His Comrades At Post 60000

This line has a maximum length of 30 letters. Example: From His Loving Wife & Family

The Katy VFW provides this service free of charge. However, we appreciate donations in any amount. These are tax deductible.

PERSON MAKING APPLICATION _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____

TELEPHONE NUMBER _____

An educational activity of Floyd E. Breedlove VFW Post 9182