



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

Founder: Otto Schwarz Publisher: Pam Foster

Editors: Lin Drees, John Schwarz & Val Poss

2501 Amen Corner, Pflugerville, TX 78660

Phone: 512 989-0000 Fax: 512 989-3227 Email: CA30NG@AOL.COM

Web sites: www.usshouston.org & www.usshouston.net

Another shipmate has joined the crew standing watch in Sunda Strait

Guy Rose, Aug 8, 2008, Natural Causes

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BATAAN SURVIVORS OFFERED APOLOGY FOR DEATH MARCH

SAN ANTONIO -- At the Bataan Death March survivors reunion, Japans ambassador to the United States gave his country's first in-person apology for the 65-mile forced walk of U.S. troops and allies during World War II that left some 11,000 prisoners of war dead.

Ichiro Fujisaki spoke Saturday in San Antonio at the final scheduled reunion of the American Defenders of Bataan and Corregidor, its 64th annual convention, the San Antonio Express-News reported.

Fujisakis apology was welcomed by some of the 73 surviving Bataan Death March veterans of the Army and former Army Air Corps members in attendance. But others criticized it, saying it was long overdue, not aimed directly at Americans and didn't seem to come from the Japanese government as a whole.

In 1942, Japanese captors marched about 78,000 prisoners of war -- 12,000 Americans and 66,000 Filipinos -- for six days on the Bataan Peninsula on the Philippine island of Luzon to a prisoner-of-war camp. Many were denied food, water or medical care, and some were stabbed or beheaded. As many as 11,000 prisoners died, according to the U.S. Air Force.

As former prime ministers of Japan have repeatedly stated: "The Japanese people should bear in mind that we must look into the past and to learn from the lessons of history, Fujisaki said. We extend a heartfelt apology for our country having caused tremendous damage and suffering to many people, including prisoners of war, those who have undergone tragic experiences in the Bataan Peninsula, in Corregidor Island in the Philippines and other places."

"Ladies and gentlemen, taking this opportunity, I would like to express my deepest condolences to all those who have lost their lives in the war, and after the war, and their family members."

Fujisaki got a standing ovation from half or so of the 400 to 500 attendees, which included relatives of the ex-POWs.

"Well, we finally got the apology that we wanted", said retired Tech Sgt. Joe Alexander of San Antonio. "They ask how do I feel? ... Now we can rest at ease. We're satisfied".

But while some shook hands and posed for pictures with Fujisaki, who had flown from Washington for the last-minute speech, others gave him an earful. Former POW Hershel C. Boushey told the ambassador that he did not accept your apology, and that the atrocities and mistreatment many suffered was severe.

POW survivor Tony Montoya, who lives in Woodland, Calif., said his speech seemed insincere.

"This young man knows very little of the atrocities", Montoya said. "They probably rehearsed him on it."

Abie Abraham, 95, of Renfrew, Pa., who was a POW for more than three of his nine years with the Army, said it was time to move on.

"I was never one of those guys that worried about whether we got an apology or not", said Abraham, who is known as The Ghost of Bataan because he stayed 2½ years after being rescued so that the bodies of his fallen comrades could be given proper burial.

"The way I look at it is -- Japan is now our ally", Abraham said. "Why should we get an apology from them?"

Paul Ropp, a retired Air Force Reserve lieutenant colonel who is with the organizing group, noted there might be some cultural differences and nuances that made the apology seem lacking in clarity, sincerity and directness to Americans.

"This is about as candid an apology as anybody's going to get", Ropp said.

U.S. ASIATIC FLEET

Aug 28-30th, 2009

Contact Ray Kester 703-451-2520 or Charles Ankerberg 727-867-3891 for information

LOST BATTALION REUNION

August 13-15, 2009

Omni Dallas hotel at Park West, 1590 LBJ Freeway, Dallas (Hwy 635 @ Luna Rd)

Call 972-869-4300 direct & ask for LBA special rate \$89 per night.

The special rate is extended from Wed. Aug. 12 – Sunday Aug 16

Airport Travel Vouchers from DFW or Love Field to Omni are available

Contact Becke Freitas: 817 291-6817 or email rlr_freitas@yahoo.com

USS HOUSTON CA-30 SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION AND NEXT GENERATIONS REUNION

March 4-6, 2010

Doubletree- Allan Center

400 Dallas St, Houston, TX 77002

Call for room reservations Monday - Friday 9am - 5pm Central Time:

713 759-0202 or 800 222-8733

Please advise the hotel you are with the USS Houston group for the \$89 per night rate

ALERT – Make your reservation ASAP! You can always cancel if you must!

Have your credit card ready to provide billing information

FINANCIAL REPORT FOR JUNE –

Organization balance as of - \$4,715.56

Donors to kitty this quarter: Matt & Jane Matthews, Capt. Carter Conlin, George Duffy, Gwen Kerber, Margaret Conner, Audrey Ross, Donna Milton, Sue & John Kreutzer, Judy Bunch in memory of her father JERRY BUNCH, Silvia & HOWARD BROOKS, Fred Haring, Judy Bunch, Donna Minton, Trudy Schwarz. LEON GALSKE, Nancy Morrow, June Smith, Mary & SKIP SCHILPEROORT, Timothy Blixt, & Ann DuHaime.

- Note – if I omitted your name, feel free to remind me
- Note – Tax ID # 74-2814051 for your tax deductions
- Gentle reminder-- some folks won't be receiving a Bluebonnet next quarter.

US NAVY MEMORIAL – The Asiatic Fleet reunion this year will include dedicating the Asiatic Fleet Room at the Navy Memorial Naval Heritage Center. This conference room is available for a visit “when you request”...in other words not easily accessible to the public. “The U.S. Navy Memorial Commemorative Plaque Wall, inside the Naval Heritage Center, provides reunion groups and individuals an opportunity to create a permanent memorial by sponsoring a plaque for an individual, group, ship squadron, shipmate or specific battle, while (sic) also supporting the Navy Memorial. A U.S. Asiatic Fleet Plaque will be dedicated after our reunion memorial service.”

MAILBAG – When Jane Matthews was working on the updates of our Surviving Spouses, she was informed that Doris Louis, widow of LAWRENCE LOUIS died Jan. 19, 2008. We have no other details. “The Quan” magazine (American Defenders of Bataan & Corregidor) announced their March ’09 issue was their last. A Decedents group will be carrying the torch now. Their March issue announced considering organization meeting their criteria to distribute their funds. Our John Schwarz sent them a letter right away. Phillip Matthews of Australia sent a picture taken thru a porthole from the Orient liner *Orcades* in Columbo harbor in Feb. ’42 by a friend of Phillip’s father. We are delighted to add the photo to our archives! Pte. David “Digger” Barrett of the 2/9 Field Ambulance, 8th Division was given a belt buckle while in Changi prison from William “Bill” Tucker (*Houston* survivor). A few weeks after Bill give Digger the belt buckle as a keepsake, Bill was sent via Hell Ship to Burma where he died October 9, 1943 at 80 Kilo Camp, Burma of tropical ulcers. Digger kept the belt buckle over the past decades in hopes of finding Bill’s family to return it. However his efforts and mine failed to find a family member. At that time, Digger sent the buckle to me asking I give it to the National POW Museum in Andersonville, GA. The Doubletree Hotel in Houston wrote how honored they have been to host our reunions. “It swelled our hearts with pride to have heroes in our midst...catching a glimpse of my grandfather’s era, seeing tangible pieces of history laid out on tables was breathtaking, hearing stories from the people who lived it, there are no words”. Nancy Morrow sent a newsy note with a generous donation – Nancy makes jams from her harvest in her garden & very active with the Relay for Life since her experience with cancer. Johan VanLeer sent a copy of a letter to Pres. Obama from The Foundation of Japanese Honorary Debts in Holland urging him to have the Prime Minister of Japan, Mr. Taro Aso, acknowledge Japan’s war crimes & compensate its victims. Ann DuHaime sends a note that her address has changed to 9 299 Essex Rd, Warminster, PA 18974 (215 357-2818/cell 215 378-7072)

A FEW FACTS - Excerpt from USS Trinity newsletter/provided by Clarence Willis (USS Trinity) ‘In Capt. Walter Winslow’s book “The Ghost That Died At Sunda Strait”, on page 36, he wrote: “I took one more look at the three ships we were convoying and couldn’t help wondering about the officers and men aboard them. The *Pecos* and *Trinity* were loaded with fuel oil and the *Langley* carried thousands of gallons of high-octane aviation fuel. If we on board the *Houston* were worried about our chances, those poor devils had a good reason to be petrified”.

(Note: Of the above four ships, the USS Trinity AO-13 was the only ship that survived:

USS Langley CV-1 sunk February 27, 1942

USS Pecos AO-6 sunk March 1, 1942

USS Houston CA-30 (Flagship) sunk March 1, 1942

After our Flagship USS Houston was sunk, the US Navy Asiatic Fleet ceased to exist. In the first 85 days of WWII the US Asiatic Fleet lost 32 ships, 1826 men were killed and 518 were captured and became POW and many died in those POW camps. Capt. Winslow was also a POW for three and half years.’

WE NEED YOUR HELP – We are sending Bluebonnets to widows: Susan Arnold, Hazel Boren and Marge Detre but have had no reply when we have written to them. Does anyone have their status please? We learned that Mattie Atterberry, widow of CHARLES ATTERBERRY died last year – date & cause unknown.

NEW BOOKS - CRUEL CONFLICT – *The Triumph and Tragedy of HMAS Perth*, by Dr. Kathryn Spruling. Publisher: New Holland Publishers (Australia)

NAVAL ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES NEWS - The reunion will be October 14-17, 2009 at the Crowne Plaza Jacksonville Riverfront, Jacksonville, FL. See www.navalorder.com for up-to-date news. The NOUS is also starting their project of sending as many newsletters via email as possible. The Naval Order Foundation offers *Navy Heroes of Normandy*, a DVD documentary of the Monument story from concept to Dedication, by filmmaker Tim Gray @\$20 each. Send your request to CDR Robert Averill, USN (Ret), 3339 Lighthouse Point Ln., Jacksonville, FL 32250. We warmly welcome new Texas Companions SFC Harvey Hesley, Jr., USA, LT Steven Howell, USN, James Sharp, Jr., Cpl Mark LeMense, USMC.

CREWMEMBER SPOTLIGHT – WILLIAM STEWART sends a copy of a document signed by John Hancock on July 1, 1775 appointing Nathan Watkins Captain of Company the 26th Regiment Commanded by General Gates in the Army of the United Colonies. Nathan Watkins was the son of a coal miner in Wales. When he grew up, he didn't want to mine coal so he joined the British Army. They sent him to America. After a few years he didn't like the way the British Army was treating the Americans so he left the British Army and joined the US Colonial Army & fought (as an American) through the Revolutionary War. He accumulated a lot of back pay (money the US government didn't have) & was granted two tracts of land in lieu of pay. One tract thought to be in Virginia and the other in New York. He had two sons and gave each a tract of land. Northeast of Corning, NY, (tip of HI 414) is the city of Watkins Glen. It is believed Watkins Glen is on the tract of land given to Nathan's son Gilbert. WILLIAM's wife Mary is a direct descendent of Capt. Watkins.

"USS HOUSTON CA-30" by Muriel Butler (latest edition of "Barbed Wire & Bamboo" magazine)
The Galloping ghost of the Java Sea

History has recorded the tragic happenings in the Pacific during the month of February 1942. While the Australian 8th Division, together with British & Dutch forces were settling in & facing the toughest battle of their lives as POW's, the battle to contain the Japanese was continuing on the sea.

HMS Repulse & HMS Prince of Wales had both been sunk by the Japanese off Kauntan on 10 December 1941 with severe loss of life, the oceans were still to witness the Japanese deliver another severe blow to the Allied Naval Forces.

The USS Houston was launched by Newport News Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Company, Newport News, Virginia on 7 September 1926 and commissioned as CL-30 on 17 June 1930. Her designation was changed to CA-30 on 1 July 1931.

The Houston was flagship of the Asiatic Fleet in the West Pacific from early 1931 until November 1933, after which she crossed the Pacific to participate in exercises with the Scouting Force, to become flagship to the US Fleet between September and December 1938. She returned to the Philippines in November 1940 for her second deployment as Asiatic Fleet flagship. President FD Roosevelt made voyages aboard during 1934, 1925, 1928 and 1939. On the night of the Pearl Harbor attack, Houston got underway from Panay Island with fleet units bound for Darwin, Australia, where she arrived 28 December 1941 by way of Balikpapan and Surabaya. After patrol duty she joined the ABDA (American-British-Dutch-Australian) naval force at Surabaya. Air raids were frequent in the area, and the Houston's gunners downed four planes on 4 February 1942 before taking a hit, which disabling her No. 3 turret.

To be continued next issue

NOW HEAR THIS!

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

*** Please remember that donations are appreciated - 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. Mail Donations to: Mrs. Pam Foster, 370 Lilac Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648
2010 Scholarship Award= **\$2500.00!**

Scholarship Program Update:

*Current scholarship fund balance = **\$7,578.49**

*Scholarship Donations;

Obviously we continue to need funding to keep our internal, yearly scholarship properly funded for the long term. We ask all of our organization members to consider donating \$100.00 this year; if you can afford more than that it would be appreciated, if you cannot do that amount than \$75, \$50, or whatever you can do would be greatly appreciated. What is most important is that we all chip in and donate, that is how this will happen as there is truly strength in numbers. And please remember, the organization general fund needs your support as well for our organization to remain financially viable.

We will be conducting our annual scholarship auction at this year's reunion. Donation of items is requested. We thank very much, **all of you wonderful folks** who donated an item for auction last year. You made that fund raising element possible, along with the generous folks who purchase these items to enable money to go into our scholarship fund. Job well done by all, **THANK YOU.**

Anyone who has a 'lead' to an outside person, company, or other entity who may be a possible donor, we can provide you with a fund raising letter and brochure, or, accept the referral and a Committee representative will follow-up that lead. Please present leads to your Chairman, John K. Schwarz and that too, would be appreciated.

*The Scholarship Committee on behalf of our organization, has obtained a **PERMANENT** scholarship with the US Naval Academy Foundation which will be awarded **FOREVER**, bi-annually, in the name of, '**USS Houston CA-30 Memorial Scholarship**'. This scholarship affords a prospective candidate to the U.S. Naval Academy a complete year of preparatory cadet school training prior to entrance into the US Naval Academy. Given that year, the success rate during the subsequent four years at the Naval Academy is significantly increased giving greater potential for the production of an **Officer in the US Navy/Marines**. What a fitting, everlasting memorial to the sacrifices made by the brave men of the USS Houston CA-30! We thank all of the generous USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations members and others who so unselfishly donated funds in the drive to obtain this permanent scholarship.

We look forward to the announcement at the next reunion, of our first recipient of that award.

John Keith Schwarz- Scholarship Program Chairman, son of the late CA-30 shipmate-

Otto C. Schwarz

WHAT WE'VE BEEN UP TO – Tim Klenk, NG has been helping us pro bono & has recently retired. If he can work it out with his firm, Matt Kruetzer, 2nd generation NG (grandson of Paul Papish) will take Tim's place to help us stay honest. Our correspondence with the Asia Point Policy in DC keeps us updated on anything of interest or value. Our Birthday card project is going full strong as is our blog site. We're trying to get Bob Ivy's model ships donated to the new expansion at the Nimitz Museum. There's no news for any future travel for our dive team. Our 22 DVD collection of interviews is available for sale. All items for sale are listed in our catalogue on our web site. The membership/email vs snail mail list is finally up to snuff after working on it for a year. We have a triple check system set up with our finances so that in the event one is not able to take care of business, we have a check and double check back up. Please remember to go to Goodsearch.com for your research (Jo Klenk provides more details in the newsletter – a small way to increase our funds – every little bit helps). Our efforts to have more public recognition of the Asiatic Fleet are ongoing at the Navy Memorial. Their CEO resigned & we are re-establishing our relationship. Also, they have two models of the *Houston* & we're hoping to get the larger model donated by OTTO SCHWARZ many years ago moved to the Naval Academy. The design for the USS Houston plaque that will be sent to the Thailand Museum is beginning to take shape. We're trying to see if we can remain efficient but in hopes of saving money. We'll be changing from 4 to 3 newsletters a year. Your next newsletter will be the first part of December. *Starting 2010 the issue dates will be April, August and December.* We continue to receive queries from people trying to find information about the *Houston* or a relative. We're slowly working on a scholarship funding project that includes pictures of the CA-30, CL-81 & USS San Jacinto with a story about when the ship was sunk and the city of Houston raised enough money to replace the CA-30 with two ships (CL-81 & *San Jacinto*). There is a letter (original) signed by President George H. W. Bush with a letter of authenticity. I've not received any reports of speaking engagements at schools or clubs about the *Houston* lately. Our records are now being scanned. It is a VERY slow process, however, we're no longer dead in the water-progress is being made. Our web design and updates are constantly being updated. The reunion plans are a work in progress – more in "A Line from Lin". That about covers it for now.....

GOOD NEWS – The FDR pictures have been returned! Many thanks to the person that inadvertently picked them up & sent them back. Still, a few are missing so I have asked Jim Fisher (of PBS) to make copies. He is extremely busy but when he sends them to me, I'll put all of the pictures in order of each cruise and put them back in our albums. Whew – heavy sigh.

Also, the June 2009 issue of the Naval History magazine (www.usni.org) has an article about remembering the *Houston* on page 66 which includes a nice color group photo of our survivors attending the reunion. Sorry MARVIN (SIZEMORE), they misspelled your first name. The world now knows you as "Marvis"!

NAVY TERMINOLOGY: In the early days of sailing ships, the ship's records were written on shingles cut from logs. These shingles were hinged and opened like a book. The record was called the "log book." Later on, when paper was readily available and bound into books, the record maintained its name.

GOOD IDEA! NG, Andrea Young came up with the idea to sign up with her payroll office to have a donation sent *as a direct deposit* to the USS Houston kitty. This was very easy to accomplish. Please contact me if you would like to do the same!

ONCE UPON A TIME – One lone survivor by the name of OTTO SCHWARZ ran this organization from the basement of his home. He did it all! He put out the newsletter, answered correspondence (there was no internet), made speeches, handled finances, etc. He had a vision to perpetuate the memory of the *Houston* and planned carefully for the organization's future. He began to mentor a next generation member and that fell through. After much soul searching, he decided to entrust his valuable records to another next generation member with no experience but had that "keen interest". As he mentored her, he chose another NG that also had that interest. Those two women began to crank out a newsletter and handle the annual reunion & Memorial Service. Over a decade later, the work load grew like wildfire. Not one but TWO websites were created along with a blog site. Not one but TWO scholarship programs have evolved. The non-profit laws changed and the organization met the challenge. Officers were officially established along with a Board of Members. At this moment, there are 26 projects going on. We now have well over a dozen devoted and creative NG's actively participating in the everyday chores to run this organization smoothly. Eleven (plus) people work together as a team to create the reunion & Memorial Service. We also have two 2nd generation NG's that are intricate cogs in the wheel of this well oiled machine!! Many of those that can not participate graciously donate to the kitty to cover expenses. And we haven't even reached the part where "they lived happily ever after"! Wow!! Aren't you proud of being a part of the *Houston* family?

A BIT OF A CHANGE FOR NEXT YEAR'S REUNION - over the years, the hotel has looked the other way in regards to our providing our own warm snacks and liquor. At the last reunion, there was an incident late the last evening where liquor was taken from our hospitality room and consumed in the seating area of the bar. Now, they can no longer allow us to bring our own liquor (the law stipulates this) or they could lose their liquor license. Crock pots, etc. will be banned also therefore warm snacks will be scratched off our offerings. Everything will be snacks & finger food (no eating utensils to wash!!). This will lessen our work load having to wash --- the hotel will provide plates. We realize this is an adjustment from the old way, but other hotels demand ALL snacks and beverages be purchased thru them.

FROM DOWN UNDER – A letter from the Dept. of Veteran's Affairs (Office of Australian War Graves) reports the removal of the old stairs at Hell Fire Pass and erecting a walkway and concrete stairs. The Thai authorities have given permission to begin which is expected to take place in the dry season at the end of this year. There will be an interpretative panel and dedication plaque close to the Bastiaan plaque at the top of the pathway

MEETING NOTES – The Board had a long conference call on Saturday June 7th. Most of what we covered is in the newsletter. If you would prefer the actual meeting notes (6 pages), let me know and I'll provide them – the following is a summary.

Summary of the Meeting of the Board of Managers June 6, 2009

The Board of Managers of the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations held a meeting by teleconference on June 6, 2009. The main topics discussed are summarized below:

1. Reunion: Lin Drees, chairman of the Reunion Committee, reported that the next reunion will be held March 4 to 6, 2010 at the Doubletree Hotel in Houston. She is currently negotiating with the hotel and more details will be announced when they are available. Several people were added to the committee since so much work is involved.
2. Financial reports: updates on the Association and the Scholarship Fund.
3. Bluebonnet Newsletter: there will be three rather than four annual newsletters published in order to save money.
4. Membership registration: Andrea Young has been using the completed membership application forms to update both the online database and also the postal mail list.
5. Navy Memorial: John Schwarz and Vic Campbell are working with staff of the Navy Memorial to increase the visibility of the USS Houston on the plaza and in the Asiatic Fleet room.
6. Bush Letters: John Schwarz is working with Don Kehn and Jim Fisher to have the 100 letters signed by President George H. W. Bush framed and subsequently marketed in order to raise money for the scholarship fund.
7. Plaque for Thailand: Dana Charles is working on the design for a plaque which will commemorate the crew of the USS Houston and be placed in the museum in Kanchanaburi, Thailand. The Association welcomes collaboration with the Lost Battalion Association on a second plaque which could be linked to the first to honor the men of the 131st Artillery Battalion.
8. Scholarship: The scholarship application period extends from June 1 to November 1, so eligible family members are encouraged to apply. Fundraising for the scholarship fund is ongoing.
9. Projects: Val reported on a number of ongoing projects which are integral to the Association such as answering email queries, scanning of documents, birthday reminders, sales of Houston items, the three USS Houston websites, and others.

10. Legal Counsel: Tim Klenk has been providing pro-bono legal counsel to the Association but has recently retired from his law practice, so he will soon be “passing the baton” to Matt Kreutzer (a next, next generation member).

LINE FROM LIN

Announcing the 2010 Memorial Service information - perhaps Val has already announced this earlier in the newsletter: the Memorial Service will be Saturday, March 6, 2010, 2 p.m. Most of the reunion events will be Friday and Saturday, but please plan to arrive by Thursday so that you will be ready to put on your running shoes for Friday! Seriously, Thursday is a nice, easy, leisurely day, no crowds make it easier to browse the book collection - have time to walk around Houston downtown. Rooms will be available at \$89 - we were able to maintain the 2009 rate for 2010. I will let you know when the hotel is ready to start accepting reservations.

I am excited to announce that our Saturday night speaker will be our own Don Kehn who recently authored *A BLUE SEA OF BLOOD: DECIPHERING THE MYSTERIOUS FATE OF THE USS EDSALL*. Ron and I recently heard Don's presentation - and were very impressed.

Most hotels do not allow any outside food or drink to be brought into the hospitality suite. We have been lucky to have had that waived for us in the past. Due to liquor laws, we will be unable to bring in any liquor to be served in the hospitality suite, but the hotel will provide \$1 coupons to be used - one per purchased drink at the hotel bar - the drink may then be brought back into the hospitality suite. We have also been asked to only bring light snacks, no hot foods; we can not use hot plates or crock pots. We will again have chests of ice and soft drinks.

We are already deep into plans for 2010 - let us know if you would like to take charge of any part of the week-end events - or assist! The invitation has already been extended to The Houston Brass Band to again play for us next year. The Park around the Monument has already been reserved. We hope to visit the USS *HOUSTON* display in the library at UH. I am working on the contract with the hotel.

Peace and blessings - have a good summer - Lin and Ron Drees, 14219 Wickersham, Houston, TX 77077; 281.493.5171; lindrees.ca30@sbcglobal.net