

Now Hear This!

Association Address:

c/o John K. Schwarz, Executive Director
2500 Clarendon Blvd., Apt. 121
Arlington, VA 22201

Association Phone Number:

703-867-0142

Address for Tax Deductible Contributions:

U.S.S. Houston Survivors' Association
c/o Pam Foster, Treasurer
370 Lilac Lane,
Lincoln, CA 95648
(Please specify which fund – General or Scholarship)

Association Email Contact:

Contact@USSHouston.org

Association Founded 1946:

by Otto and Trudy Schwarz

USS Houston, HMAS Perth Memorial Installed at U.S. Embassy in Jakarta



March 1, 2015: Eagle Scout Candidate Richard Stacpoole (Right) unveils the new U.S.S. Houston (CA-30)/H.M.A.S. Perth (D-29) Memorial, which he designed, at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Java, Indonesia. (Photo by Dana Charles)

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By Dana Charles

A newly created U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. Perth memorial was commissioned at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, Java, Indonesia on Sunday, March 1, 2015—73 years to the day after both cruisers were lost in battle some 60 nautical miles away in Bantam Bay. 15-year-old Richard Stacpoole designed the memorial as his Eagle Scout Project. Richard, the son of the U.S. Naval Attaché at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, CAPT Mark Stacpoole, USN, unveiled the completed memorial at a special ceremony at the U.S. Embassy in

Jakarta where U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Robert O. Blake warmly received it.



Richard Stacpoole, 15, Memorial designer

The Memorial features a custom-made wooden case whose legs resemble U.S.S. *Houston's* 8-inch guns. Inside the case are two portholes from U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) and two framed photos—one of *Houston's* skipper CAPT Albert Rooks, USN and the other of *Perth's* skipper CAPT Hector "Hec" Waller, RAN. The crew list of H.M.A.S. *Perth* is inscribed on the right side of the case, and the crew list of U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) is inscribed on the left side. Hanging on the wall behind the case is a framed print of a painting by artist Tom Freeman of U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) fighting at the Battle of Sunda Strait. The H.M.A.S. *Perth* Association and the U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors Association and Next Generations participated in donating to the new Memorial, which is the only memorial to U.S.S. *Houston* and H.M.A.S. *Perth* currently in Jakarta, Java, Indonesia.

On the night of February 28, 1942, U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) were attempting to enter Sunda Strait when they encountered an entire Japanese invasion fleet comprised of two heavy cruisers and one light cruiser; 9 destroyers; and some 60 transport ships. Low on ammunition and fuel, the *Perth* and the *Houston* nevertheless opened fire and evaded serious damage until sometime after midnight on 1 March 1942 when H.M.A.S. *Perth* with a crew of



The new U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) & H.M.A.S. Perth (D-29) Memorial in Jakarta, Java, Indonesia

681 aboard was hit by heavy gunfire and four torpedoes and was sunk. The *Houston's* 1,050-man crew of sailors and Marines fought on alone for approximately 40 more minutes. Running out of ammunition, *Houston* was pounded at close range by heavy shells, and struck by at least three torpedoes until she finally went down, bathed in enemy searchlights. During this ferocious battle, known today as "the Battle of Sunda Strait," approximately 1,000 Australian and American crewmen, including the captains of both ships, perished. The 368 American and 350 Australian crewmen who survived the battle became prisoners of war of Imperial Japanese forces. By the time the Pacific War ended in August, 1945, only 290 naval officers, sailors, and Marines of U.S.S. *Houston*, and 218 sailors of H.M.A.S. *Perth* were still alive.



From the desk of the Executive Director

John K. Schwarz

The first message I would like to impart is one, big **THANK YOU!** That goes to everyone/anyone who made a contribution to our fabulous memorial service held on March 7, 2015 at the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 monument. We simply could not do this without the help of all those listed on the program and those behind the scenes. The Board of Managers offers all of you our praise and gratitude.

For many years we have wondered what it would be like when we do not have the honor of the presence of any of our living survivors at the service. Obviously, for those who were in attendance, you know that that time arrived on March 7th. I am proud to say that our resolve and spirit remains steadfast and was on display on March 7th as we honored *all* of U.S.S. *Houston's* crewmen—the 700 Sailors and Marines who perished on the night of U.S.S. *Houston's* loss; those crewmen who survived the sinking but who perished as POWS; those crewmen who have passed away since WWII; and those crewmen who are still living. We are grateful to everyone in attendance who offered the spirit of respect through remembrance.

For those of you who were in attendance at our Friday night dinner, you received a brilliant presentation delivered by RADM Samuel Cox, USN (Ret.), Director of Naval History and Heritage Command, Navy Yard, Washington, DC. He clearly described the current condition of the ship based on recent Navy dive assessments, as well as measures already taken and ongoing to protect her integrity. I will gladly summarize the message by simply saying that now more than ever, our ship needs to be left alone for its own very continued existence.

So what's ahead? Well, any number of things as we seem to have no 'down time' anymore here at U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 central. For example:

- The Board will be re-examining the criteria and parameters regarding membership in our Association. This issue has been touched upon in several recent articles and discussed going back quite a few years. The ultimate goal is quite simple. That is, to include any number of members, whatever the number, who are sincere in offering contribution to our mission of 'perpetuating the memory of the ship and her men'.
- Our traditional reunion week-end model has to be re-examined as it continues to operate 'in the red'.
- Please remember that the Board of Managers is always available and open at: (contact@usshouston.org). If you have compliments, questions, concerns, you do not need to wait for an annual membership meeting to voice them.

We wish you good health and happiness this year! Enjoy the rest of the Bluebonnet!

John

Son of Otto and Trudy Schwarz

Reunion 2015 Report

By Sue Kreutzer

Association President & Reunion Chairperson

What a wonderful Reunion/Memorial Service 2015! One exception to be noted...there were no survivors in attendance. So, in fact, I should correct my first sentence! What a wonderful U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 family visit/Memorial Service 2015! Mr. Ingram and Mr. Brooks, I do hope your health is leveling out on the good side. We missed you!



(L to R): Eunell Weissinger, Trudy Schwarz, and Donna Flynn.

There were 4 surviving spouses in attendance: Donna Flynn, Teresa Reilly, Trudy Schwarz and Eunell Weissinger. More than 45 attended various activities over the week-end culminating in the best yet Memorial Service on Saturday in Sam Houston Park with 175 in attendance. (Thank you to the Sea Cadet head-counter volunteers! That wasn't an easy job, guys!)

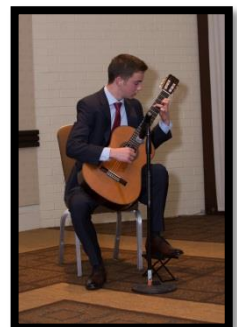


Sea Cadets' Color Guard, March 7, 2015.

The absence of survivors (we all knew the day would come) shows us we need to re-examine the possibility of splitting Reunion from Memorial Service, carrying out both components, perhaps in different locations, to make travel easier for our survivors and surviving spouses so they can spend time together while maintaining our mission to perpetuate the memory of CA-30 through the Memorial Service. Those of you who have witnessed the camaraderie these men and their wives share know how special the bond is. Of course, we must do what we can to allow them the time to reunite without causing travel hardships. In addition, the Reunion continues to run in the red.

The Member Meeting on Friday morning was well-attended. The Nominating Committee presented two current Managers for re-election till 2018. Members approved Dana Charles and Pam Foster. Please take a look at the "Becoming a Manager" Guidelines included in this **Blue Bonnet** (p. 20). The Board is always looking for interested members who want to deepen their involvement. Remember that WWII poster: "Uncle Sam Needs YOU"? Your Association needs YOU!

Friday evening's dinner presentation was nothing short of spectacular! It started with our Marine friend, Steve Waldner, entering and assembling two stands flying the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 Survivors' Association Banner on one next to the H.M.A.S. *Perth* Association's banner on the second! Steve had constructed these stands for us! We thank you from the bottom of our hearts, Steve. Our internal scholarship recipient, Stephen Reilly, not only shared his winning essay with us, but he also serenaded us with his guitar as well! Oh, my goodness, Stephen, what a treat! (See photo at right).





**RADM Samuel Cox, USN (Ret.), NHHC Dir.
Speaking at the 6 March 2015 Banquet**

RADM Samuel Cox, USN (Ret.), the newly appointed Director of Naval Heritage and History Command, shared his wealth of naval knowledge with the group. Since RADM Cox accepted his position late last year, no one on the Board had ever spoken with him nor had any idea how extensive his knowledge of the CA-30 was. My goodness! He is quite familiar with the story! Applause from families in attendance expressed support for his firm respect of the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30, recognizing it as a sacred war grave, where it lies in Indonesian waters. While some refer to current operations in Sunda Strait as “salvaging,” Mr. Cox called it “scavenging.” He shared with us that efforts are underway to persuade the Indonesian government to create a non-dive circumference around the wrecks of the *Houston* and *Perth*, designating them internationally as war graves to be left undisturbed. Thank you, sir, for your work to protect what remains of our ship!

The Memorial Service 2015 clearly was the best one yet! Houston’s Mayor Annise Parker joined us and read a proclamation honoring the ship and its men. The speakers outdid themselves. The Patriot Riders, the Invincible Eagle Band, the Sea Cadets, the Marine Rifle Salute Team and our wonderful refreshment volunteers, the Gideons, did an amazing job. Thank you one and all! Job well done!



**Ex. Dir. John Schwarz receives a
Proclamation from City of Houston
Mayor Annise Parker. CAPT Carter
Conlin, USN (Ret.) looks on.
(Photos: Tim Joseph)**

2015 Memorial Service and Banquet Photos

Photos of the USS Houston (CA-30) Memorial Service and March 6 Banquet by Tim Joseph can be viewed at:

<http://timjoseph.smugmug.com/Events/USS-Houston-2015-Ceremony/n-xg89fp/>

<http://timjoseph.smugmug.com/Events/USS-Houston-2015-Banquet-Hyatt/n-zkRGgQ/i-kJTpsDV>

Also, NG Shawn Flynn’s photos of the 2015 USS Houston (CA-30) Reunion can be seen at:

<http://www.ushouston.net>

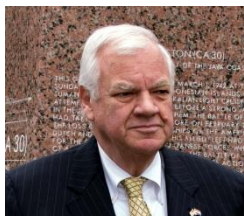
Many thanks to all the outstanding 2015 Memorial Service participants, including:



CDR Andrew Schroder, RAN
Assistant Naval Attaché
Speaker



Gil Raynor
C.O., Texas Commandery,
Naval Order of the U.S.
Speaker



Geert Visser,
Consul, The Kingdom of the
Netherlands
Speaker



Mayor Annise Parker
City of Houston
Speaker



COL Stan Horton, USMC
U.S. Marine Corps
Speaker



Matt Rejmaniak
Singer



CAPT Carter Conlin, USN (Ret.)
Navy Hymn



Carl Salazar
Dir., Office of Veterans
Affairs
Speaker



You Shop, Amazon Gives

By Pam Crispi Foster, Treasurer

Many of us already shop online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Did you know that Amazon has a program where they will donate a portion of your purchase price to the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations? There is no additional cost to you or to the association and the proceeds help to perpetuate the memory of our ship and the sacrifices made by her crew. Visit our website: www.usshouston.org and click on the AmazonSmile link or go to the website shown below. This is a win-win situation for all of us.

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support the **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations** by starting your shopping at <http://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2814051>.

Meet our 2015 Scholarship Recipients

U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) Annual Scholarship Recipient



Stephen Reilly

The twelfth internal scholarship winner, Stephen is the third recipient to come from the USS Houston CA-30 survivor John D. & Theresa Reilly family tree. He is a high school senior at Loyola High School in Los Angeles, CA and is currently considering various college options. His scholarship application was outstanding. He read aloud his award winning essay at the 2015 Survivors' Association reunion and received a standing ovation. Here are some other notable things about Stephen:

- 4.0 grade point average
- Sports Editor of the Loyalist Student Newspaper
- Loyola High School Baseball Team
- Assistant baseball Coach- South Pasadena, CA Little League
- Usher, Holy Family Catholic Church
- Union Station Soup Kitchen Pasadena, volunteer
- South Pasadena Library volunteer
- Intermediate second language skills- Spanish

U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Recipient



Megan Cessna

A Summa Cum Laude graduate from Ross S. Sterling High School in Baytown, Texas, Megan is attending Greystone Preparatory School at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas as a Foundation scholarship recipient. Some of her achievements include:

- Starting First Baseman and Team Captain of the Varsity Softball team.
- Drum Major of the Sterling Silver Spectacular Marching Band.
- National Honor Society.
- Girl Scout for ten years.
- Has actively played tournament softball.

U.S.S. Houston (CL-81) Association's Annual Reunion

August 18 – 23, 2015

Radisson Hotel – Green Bay, WI

Contact: Barbara Hillebrand 608-424-6095;

Bhillebrand@charter.net

Shipmates, families and friends are welcome!

...NOW HEAR THIS...!

INTERNAL ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

Applications for next year's scholarship program competition are being accepted beginning June 1 with the deadline for submission extending to November 1, 2015.

To apply for the scholarship applicants can go to www.uss-houston.org and click on the scholarship tab, scroll down to bottom of the page and click to download the application packet.

Application packets can also be obtained by writing to John Keith Schwarz, 2500 Clarendon Blvd. Apt. 121, Arlington, VA 22201.

Each year the amount our Association can award to the Internal Scholarship recipient depends on your generosity. The scholarship award available for 2016 will be \$3,000. Donations are always accepted and appreciated, and are necessary to perpetuate this program.

You can also remember the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 Scholarship Fund in your will, estate planning, or beneficiary designations. All donations are tax deductible.

Donations should be made out to: U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 Survivors' Association. Please note on your check: "Scholarship Donation."

Mail Donations to: Pam Crispi Foster, 370 Lilac Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648

To-date and after approximately 15 years of program implementation, we have awarded **12** scholarships totaling **\$25,250.00**. This is an extremely successful program outcome by any measure.

We thank everyone who has donated and participated in this worthwhile endeavor.



Past Internal Annual Scholarship Winners

- 2004 – Gene Bankhead, grandson of Gene Crispi
- 2005 – Katy Fort, granddaughter of Cecil Chambliss
- 2006 – Gerald Agin, grandson of Gerald Agin
- 2007 – Jenny Garrett, granddaughter of Joe Garrett
- 2008 – Raymond Davis, great nephew of George Davis, Jr.
- 2009 – Alex James, great nephew of John Stefanek
- 2010 – Kevin Swick, grandson of John Reilly
- 2012 – Cody Karcher, great grandson of Richard H. Gingras
- 2013 – Laura Reilly, granddaughter of John Reilly
and Maggie Tuttle, great niece of Howard Brooks
- 2014 – Stephanie Daigre, granddaughter-in-law of Gene Crispi
- 2015 – Stephen Reilly, grandson of John Reilly

Past U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Winners

- 2010 – Stephen Scales
- 2011 – Lene Gilchrist,
- 2013 – Robert Z. Sutherland
- 2014 – Evan S. Hovenden
- 2015 – Megan Cessna



U.S. NAVAL ACADEMY FOUNDATION SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM

Due to the generosity of our Association members and others, and since its purchase in 2008, this permanent scholarship—the U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Scholarship—has been awarded five times. This scholarship award enables a year of preparatory military school education, which helps these candidates enter the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), and helps produce proud Naval Officers. We are pleased to report that our first and second scholarship recipients have now graduated from the USNA and are currently serving as officers in the U.S. Navy. What a lasting tribute to the legacy of the men of U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30)!

Notes on news received via email at contact@usshouston.org and via regular mail...

- 11/26/15: Received an email from **Richard Williamson** as follows: "In 1945, my father **Lt. Lyman Williamson** of the OSS parachuted into Thailand. His main task was training the free Thai army. From the little that he revealed to family members after the war, he was involved in a number of other activities. One of these involves three survivors of the U.S.S. *Houston*. My father said that they had some intelligence that there were Americans in one of the Japanese prison camps. The US Navy was anxious to see if they couldn't get these men out because the feeling was that the men were likely from an American ship that was sunk early in the war near "the straits of Mallacca". My father never mentioned the Java Sea or the *Houston*. From what he said, I surmise that the men were from the *Houston*. The Navy wanted badly to learn what had happened to the *Houston*...My father mentioned something like a prisoner exchange. He went with other OSS men leading their captive through the jungle where they met the Japanese. The OSS men left with three sailors, all of whom were blind. I recall asking why they were blind and my father said he did not know. Reading the history of the camps, they were likely the victims of malnutrition...I spoke with **James Hornfischer**, author of "Ship of Ghosts" about his interviews with OSS officers. Some of the history of the OSS bringing *Houston* survivors out of the camps at the end of the war is described in his book. However, the detail involving my father must have occurred before the end of the war. He parachuted in only once and came out via a British submarine in a covert nighttime extraction, a maneuver that would not have been necessary after Japan surrendered... Some of the *Houston* survivors and the next generation may well be able to fill in the details of what happened in Thailand in 1945 that led to three men getting free. I would welcome any information. Regards, Richard Williamson.
- 12/26/14: After doing some research, I replied to **Richard Williamson** as follows: "Thank you for contacting us regarding your father's story. Many thanks to your father for his service to our country.... Except for the two USS *Houston* (Navy) survivors, **James W. Huffman** and **Lanson H. Harris**, whom Jim Hornfischer described in his book *Ship of Ghosts*, I'm sorry to report that I know of no other *Houston* survivors who escaped or were "exchanged" prior to the Japanese surrender in mid-August, 1945... Mr. Hornfischer describes the July 1945 escape of Mr. Huffman and Mr. Harris beginning on page 379 (of the hardback edition). The OSS camp where the two survivors found help was apparently known as "Pattern," and the American who assisted them was 33-year-old **MAJ Eben B. Bartlett, Jr.** from Manchester, NH, according to Mr. Hornfischer. It's possible that the men your father rescued were Americans from some American ship other than USS *Houston* (CA-30), which was sunk near Sunda Strait off the coast of Java on 1 March 1942; not near 'the Straits of Mallacca.' Thank you for sharing your story with us."
- 12/8/14: Received from **Johan Vanleer** the following email: "I would like to inform you the passing (November 17h.) at the age of 93, of my dear friend **JACK PENHOLLOW**, USN Signalman 1st Class and transferred from the U.S.S. *Marblehead* to the Hr.Ms. *De Ruyter* just before the Java sea Battle. While in a lifeboat he was rescued by an American sub (U.S.S. S-37) and served her the rest of the war years. In 1997 he attended a reunion in Rotterdam and appeared on Dutch TV with his story. He lived in Palm Desert, Calif. With best wishes and regards, JOHAN VANLEER."
- 12/8/14: Received a forwarded email from Shawn Flynn written by **Ryan McKittrick** as follows: Good Evening Shawn, I found your name on the U.S.S. *Houston* website. I am looking for a lost crew member's photograph. I have looked and have not found a cruise book for the *Houston*. **Raymond Nickelson** was a childhood friend of my grandfather's. Recently my father passed away. While looking through an old scrapbook I found a letter my grandmother had written. It said that Raymond Nickelson was my grandfather's best friend from Milan, Indiana. He died on the USS *Houston* and my dad was

named Raymond in his honor. I was just curious if you would have information or possibly a photo of him. I have done some research and found that Raymond had a brother who was also in the Navy. He lived but passed away here in Texas. From what little I could gather he did not have any children so I am unable to see about contacting them for a photo. Thanks for your time, Ryan McKittrick, Hutto, Texas.”

- 12/9/14: I replied to **Ryan McKittrick's** email as follows: “Dear Ryan, Thank you for contacting us regarding your grandfather’s friend, U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) crewman **Raymond Nickelson, MM2/c, USN** who was killed in action aboard the ship during the Battle of Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942. I am very sorry for the loss of your father....Unfortunately, the ship’s records, as well as personal photographs taken of each other by the crewmen themselves, etc. were all destroyed when the ship was lost in Battle on 1 March 1942...Of the *Houston's* 1,050 crewmen, only 291 survived the loss of the ship and the 3.5 years of Japanese captivity which followed. Most had very few personal belongings when they were finally liberated...So, we have very few photographs of U.S.S. *Houston* crewmen. Sorry. In our next Association newsletter, I will be happy to ask our survivors if they may remember Mr. Nickelson. I do not want to raise your expectations very high, however. One of the sources of information that survives today are copies of the ship’s logs which our Association makes available for viewing each year at reunions. Our next reunion will be held in Houston, TX on 6 – 7 March 2015. If you are interested in checking out the ship’s logs to see if Mr. Nickelson’s name appears there, you are certainly welcome to attend our reunion. If you would like more information, please let me know...Thank you again for contacting us...”
- 12/27/14: Received the following email: To Whom It May Concern: **James Ballew**, my grandfather, was a survivor aboard the U.S.S. *Houston*. He passed away in 2002. There isn’t a day that goes by that I don’t think about him, what he went through, and the rest of the crew aboard the U.S.S. *Houston*. I, along with the rest of my family, are interested in becoming members of the U.S.S. *Houston* Survivors Association. We would love to contribute and become a part of the Association’s family. Thank you for your time and consideration. Respectfully, **Josh Powers**.
- 12/29/14: Received a photo in an email from **NG David DeMarco** of the USS *Houston* plaque located at the Naval Academy. David wrote: “I was at the Military Bowl in Annapolis on December 27 and took this photo. Did not know if it had been sent to you before. My stepfather **Charles Lohrig** was a crewman and survivor of the ship. Thanks for keeping their sacrifice at the forefront of history. David DeMarco” In a follow-up email, David wrote: “Most certainly the plaque is located on the Memorial Garden inside the Naval Academy stadium. The wall is rather impressive. There is also Captain Rooks' Medal of Honor and citation in the Naval Academy museum. I saw that many years ago when my son was competing for an appointment there. He ended up at West Point.”
- 1/3/15: Received an email from **NG Jim Bunyard**: “Hi Dana, Thank you and U.S.S. *Houston* Association for the many years of memories honoring the crew members. My Dad always looked forward to the March celebration in Houston, Texas. In accordance with his wishes he was buried in his U.S. Navy uniform...”
- 1/5/15: Received from **Steve Youll** the following: “Dear Dana, Happy New Year! As per our [National HMAS *Perth* Association] website (<http://www.hmasperth.asn.au> ,) we have a revamped Executive of: **President: Lyle Phillips; Secretary: Darrell Hegarty; Treasurer: John Rosmalen**. I would appreciate it if you could add/include Lyle and John to your mail out distribution(s) - and keep me and Darrell on them. I will remain on the Committee and help with "projects"...





U.S.S. Sampson (DDG-102)



Warships honoring U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. Perth (D-29) on Sunday, 1 March 2015 in Sunda Strait

U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. Perth Remembered in Sunda Strait

Five warships of three nations, led by the American destroyer U.S.S. *Sampson* (DDG-102), gathered on Sunday, 1 March 2015 in Sunda Strait over the sites of the remains of U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. *Perth* to honor both cruisers, which were sunk exactly seventy-three years ago in a nighttime naval battle known today as the “Battle of Sunda Strait.” Aboard U.S.S. *Sampson*, CDR Steven Foley, USN, the destroyer’s skipper, presided over a special remembrance ceremony. U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Robert O. Blake; the Australian Ambassador to Indonesia Paul Grigson, and RADM Charlie Williams, USN spoke before the assembled crew of U.S.S. *Sampson*, then released a wreath into Sunda Strait over the site where U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) was lost on 1 March 1942. A U.S. Navy rifle detail fired a twenty-one gun salute and Taps was played. A U.S. Navy Master Chief presented an American flag to R. Dana Charles, who was representing the families of U.S.S. *Houston*’s crew.

Attending the ceremony, representing the Indonesian Navy, were: Commodore Chocky Hutabarat, Commander, Sea Action Group of the Western Fleet; and Commodore Abdul Rashid Kacong, Commander, Sea Security Task Force Western Fleet. Also attending were: CAPT Nick Hart, the Naval Attaché of Australia; MAJ Koichi Takagi, the U.S. Marine Attaché from the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta; BGEN John Gould, the Australian Army Attaché from the

Australian Embassy in Jakarta; MAJ Michael Linskey, a British Army officer; CAPT R. Mark Stacpoole, USN, U.S. Navy Attaché from the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta, who organized the entire day's activities, and his son Richard Stacpoole; and R. Dana Charles, vice president of the U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors' Association and Next Generations.



(L to R): MAJ Koichi Takagi, USMC; Richard Stacpoole; MAJ Michael Linskey; BGEN John Gould; CAPT Nick Hart, RAN; CAPT. R. Mark Stacpoole, USN; R. Dana Charles. (Photo: ENS Brynn Gray)

In Sunda Strait, U.S.S. *Sampson* was joined by the Australian warship H.M.A.S. *Larrakia* and 3 warships from the Indonesian Navy: T.N.I. *John Lee*; K.N.I. *Kobra*; and T.N.I. *Beladau*. It was perhaps the largest international group of warships to assemble in the Sunda Strait since WWII. After the wreath as laid over the site of



On 1 March 2015 Dana Charles and CAPT R. Mark Stacpoole hold the wreath that was later released into Sunda Strait over the site of U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30).

U.S.S. *Houston*, the warships moved approximately two nautical miles to the site of H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29). All hands aboard U.S.S. *Sampson* then stood at attention as, over on the nearby Australian warship H.M.A.S. *Larrakia*, a wreath-laying ceremony was held honoring the *Perth*. After this ceremony was concluded, all of the guests aboard U.S.S. *Sampson* were then transferred to the *Larrakia*, which steamed to Jakarta.

Later that day at the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta U.S. Ambassador Robert O. Blake hosted a commissioning ceremony of a new U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) and H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) Memorial. (See Pages 1 - 2)



Dana Charles (right) was honored to cut the cake at the USS *Houston*/HMAS *Perth* Memorial dedication. U.S. Ambassador to Indonesia Robert O. Blake (left) accepts the first piece of cake.

After the dedication ceremony, Ambassador Blake hosted a dinner at his residence in Jakarta—a beautiful and spacious 1920's house. At the dinner, US Naval Attaché CAPT Mark Stacpoole, USN introduced Dana Charles to several Indonesian officials including the head of the Indonesian (Bantam Bay) water patrol and the head of an Indonesian museum in Jakarta. – Dana Charles.

USS HOUSTON ITEMS FOR SALE

DVD "Last Stand" (8 oz.) \$20.00
 Bumper Sticker (1-3 is 1 oz.) \$2.00
 Challenge Coin (3 oz.) \$10.00
 Bell or Monument Lapel Pin (specify type)
 (1 - 6 pins is 1 oz.) \$3.00
 Ship Lapel Pin (specify silver or gold highlights)
 (1 - 3 pins are 1 oz.) \$4.00



Polo Shirts - Short Sleeve, Navy Blue
 with Gold Embroidery of the USS Houston:
 Men's - sizes M-2XL \$25.00
 Women's - sizes S-XL \$25.00
 (Shipping Weight-10 oz.)



T-Shirts (size Medium) (9 oz.) \$10.00
 T-Shirts (size Small, large, and X-Large) (9 oz.) \$20.00
 T-Shirts (size 2XL or 3 XL) (9 oz.) \$25.00

Note Cards of the USS Houston Ship (pack of 10) (5 oz.) \$10.00

Ship of Ghosts book (about the USS Houston),
 Autographed by author James Hornfischer (2.2 lb.) \$30.00

Shipping Costs:

1 oz. – 6 oz. = \$4.00
 7 oz. – 12 oz. = \$7.50
 13 oz. – 5 lb. = \$10.50

Make checks payable to:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association

Mail checks to:

Sue Kreutzer
 43156 Meadowbrook Cir.
 Parker, CO 80138

Questions? Email: Sue@USSHouston.org

Blue Ball Cap ("USS Houston CA-30", 10 oz.) \$15.00
 Brown Ball Cap ("USS Houston CA-30", 10 oz.) \$5.00
 Brown & Black Ball Cap
 ("U.S.S. Houston CA-30 2nd Generation", 10 oz.) \$5.00



Blue Ball Cap



Brown & Black Ball Cap



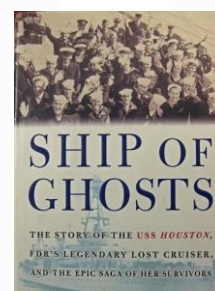
Women's Polo Shirt



Men's Polo Shirt



T-Shirt



Ship of Ghosts
 Autographed by author
 James Hornfischer

Include the following information
 (please print clearly):

Name
 Address
 City, State and Zip Code
 Phone Number
 Items Ordered, Size and Quantity

Meet your ...

Board of Managers

...here to serve you!

Executive Director: John Schwarz
Son of USN survivor Otto Schwarz
Association strategy/outreach, Special Projects,
Scholarship Committee, Membership liaison
Email: John@usshouston.org



President: Sue Kreutzer
Daughter of USN survivor Paul Papish
Webmaster, archives, membership,
Scholarship Committee
Email: Sue@usshouston.org



Vice-President: Dana Charles
Son of USMC Survivor Bob Charles
Crew and POW camp records,
Blue Bonnet Editor, researcher, correspondent
Email: Dana@usshouston.org



Treasurer: Pam Foster
Daughter of USN survivor Eugene Crispi
Financial and IRS records,
Scholarship Committee
Email: Pam@usshouston.org



Association Website:
www.usshouston.org

Facebook Group Site:
USS Houston CA-30

Membership

Our U.S.S. *Houston* "family" continues to grow weekly as more and more folks want to know about the gallant crew of U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30. If you have relatives and friends who have not yet joined our Association, please encourage them to join us! Members do not have yearly dues. However we do operate based on the generosity of our membership. Annual donations are gratefully accepted. For more information and a membership form, click on: <http://www.usshouston.org/memberform.pdf>, fill out the form and send it in!

Welcome Aboard!

*We would like to
extend a hearty
welcome to everyone
who has recently
joined our U.S.S.
Houston (CA-30)
Survivors' Association
and Next Generations!*



Ellis Clark-great nephew of Ellis Hostick
James Clark-great nephew of Ellis Hostick
Stephen Clark-great, great nephew of Ellis Hostick
Susan Clark-niece of Ellis Hostick
Stephanie Daigre-granddaughter-in-law of Eugene Crispi
Brent Harrell-son of John Harrell
Ruth Hoyme-daughter of Aaron Luverne Johnson
Sharron Long-daughter of Albert McGarvey
Jo Marie Reilly-daughter-in-law of John Reilly
Michael Reilly-son of John Reilly
Stephen Reilly-grandson of John Reilly
Joshua Ballew Rogers-grandson of James Ballew
Linda Swick-daughter of John Reilly

Survivors' Postwar Battle with Strongyloides

When the Pacific War ended in 1945, 500 U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) and 131st Field Artillery/2nd Battalion survivors of the Burma-Thailand Railway returned home to the United States—some of them carrying inside of them a potentially dangerous worm-like parasite called Strongyloides. Because Strongyloides were not common in the U.S., American doctors at that time did not know to look for them in former POWS of the Japanese. As a result, undiagnosed Strongyloides were to infect many of these American “death railway” survivors—for years to come.

Although a treatment for the parasite was available in 1967, no one in America thought about locating potential victims of the disease among U.S. veterans until the late 1970's when Dr. L. L. Pelletier, Jr., MD, Chief of Medical Services at the Tacoma WA V.A. Medical Center read in a medical journal that former POW survivors of the Burma-Thailand Railway were being treated in Britain and Australia for Strongyloides. At first, Dr. Pelletier began testing for the parasite among former American POWS of the Japanese who were held in the Philippines and in Japan, but these tests came back negative.

It was around 1979 that U.S.S. *Houston* survivor Otto Schwarz learned from some Australian POW buddies that former Australian and British POW survivors of the Burma-Thailand Railway were being successfully treated for the parasite. Some friends at the American Ex-POW Association referred Otto to Dr. Pelletier. Later that year Dr. Pelletier requested and received permission from the V.A. to conduct a study of U.S.S. *Houston* and 131st survivors of the death railway; Otto Schwarz supplied names and addresses of *Houston* survivors and Crayton “Quaty” Gordon provided names and addresses of 131st members.

In January 1981, Dr. Pelletier mailed questionnaires to the U.S.S. *Houston* and 131st survivors, explaining in his cover letter that “the purpose is... to examine individuals with creeping eruption or a past diagnosis of Strongyloides to establish whether there is a need for widespread screening.” At that time, the preferred American test for the presence of Strongyloides involved a laboratory examination of stool samples. Those U.S.S. *Houston* and 131st survivors who wrote back and agreed to participate in the testing were provided with stool-collection kits.

What are: Strongyloides Stercoralis (aka: Strongyloides)?

Too small to be seen without a microscope, this tiny parasitic worm lives in the soil, usually in Tropical regions in which there is poor sanitation. Strongyloides burrows into the skin of its victims and makes its way into the blood stream. The mature worms resided in the small intestines. Unlike other types of parasitic worms which die out over time, Strongyloides can thrive in victims indefinitely. If a victim's natural defense system is compromised by chemotherapy or is weakened by disease, the parasite can be life-threatening.

Some people infected with Strongyloides have no symptoms. Other people have symptoms which can include an itchy, “creeping skin eruption” that appears just under the skin—sometimes on the abdomen. My father, Robert Charles, a U.S.S. *Houston* (Marine) survivor of the railway had an itchy, rash-like line, which would appear and travel a tiny distance from one place on his belly to another over a period of several days then vanish. It would appear, move around, and disappear—month after month, year after year. My father's own doctors were mystified. My father wouldn't complain about his rash; he just lived with it—for decades. Thanks to Dr. Pelletier, my father was successfully treated with Thiabendazole around 1983—some 38 years after his symptoms first appeared. -- Dana Charles

In 1981, the treatment for *Strongyloides* consisted of taking a pill containing Thiabendazole twice a day for two days, with the treatment repeated one week later. In a letter to his patients, Dr. Pelletier explained that side effects may include: dizziness, loss of appetite, nausea, and vomiting. "Rarely diarrhea, fever, stomach ache, flushing, chills, itching, swelling, sleepiness, headache, rash, ringing in the ears may occur. Very rarely low blood pressure, high blood sugar, yellow vision, and liver trouble may result from the medication," he said. "While this list of possible side effects seems long, in practice the medicine is well tolerated by most people."



Strongyloides Stercoralis Larvae. (Photo: Wikimedia)

After the initial treatment, the V.A. contacted the infected U.S.S. *Houston* and 131st survivors in 2 and 8 month intervals for additional stool sample exams to make sure that the medicine had eliminated the parasite.

Meanwhile, Otto Schwarz would use the pages of this newsletter to keep *Houston* families informed of the progress of Dr. Pelletier's testing. In February 1983, Otto reported: "To bring you up to date: Dr. Pelletier has completed Phase I of his research, that being to test all of us who had reported having symptoms. Of the 232 tested, 52 proved to be infested and required treatment..."

Later that year, Dr. Pelletier launched Phase 2 of his research—to test all remaining U.S.S. *Houston* and 131st survivors whether they had obvious symptoms or not. In August, 1984 Dr. Pelletier and a team of technicians attended the Lost Battalion Association reunion in San Antonio, Texas. Otto reported in the Blue Bonnet that:

"Once again Dr. Pelletier showed his deep interest in our struggle with *Strongyloides* by attending the San Antonio Reunion to do more testing. Dr. Pelletier was assisted by his lovely wife, and a team of technicians from Audie Murphy VAMC. The good doctor is continuing his efforts to uncover new cases of the worm and track the condition of those formerly diagnosed and treated. This year Dr. Pelletier went even further and made arrangements with the National Institute of Health to send a representative to our reunion with a new skin test which they believe will diagnose the condition quicker and more efficiently. Dr. Franklin Neva, Laboratory of Parasitic Diseases, National Institute of Health, Bethesda, Maryland set up a base at the downtown San Antonio VA Clinic and we were transported there via V.A. van.

"The new test involves injecting five different drops of anti-gens (*strongyloides* matter) in each arm. It was most interesting to see an instant reaction in the cases of some of our men who we knew suffered from *Strongyloides*."

In the August 1984 Blue Bonnet, Otto wrote: "Dr. Pelletier was awarded a plaque of appreciation from the Lost Battalion Association in recognition of his dedication in trying to relieve us from the 'Burma Hitch-hikers.'" The final count of *Houston* and 131st Survivors infected with *Strongyloides* appears to have been: 52.

■ Dana Charles





Members and friends of the H.M.A.S. *Perth* Association (Victoria) gathered at the H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) Tree at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Australia on 1 March 2015. Joining the group were two American officers: Major Peter Caggiano II, U.S. Army and LT (jg) Ricardo Elizalde, USN.



LT (jg) Ricardo Elizalde, USN spoke during the 1 March 2015 H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) and U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) remembrance ceremony at the Shrine of Remembrance, Melbourne, Australia.



February 22, 2015: CDR Bill Ritchie, RAN (Ret.) of the H.M.A.S. *Perth* Association of Australia speaking at the H.M.A.S. *Perth*/U.S.S. *Houston* Regatta ceremony near Perth, Australia.

Article on H.M.A.S. *Perth* Survivor Gavin Campbell

To read the article, go to: <http://www.canberratimes.com.au/act-news/perth-survivors-tale-of-courage-stoicism-and-endurance-20150227-13pzse.html>

In Memoriam

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

RADM Robert B. Fulton II, USN (Ret.)

2/18/15

Collierville, TN

U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor



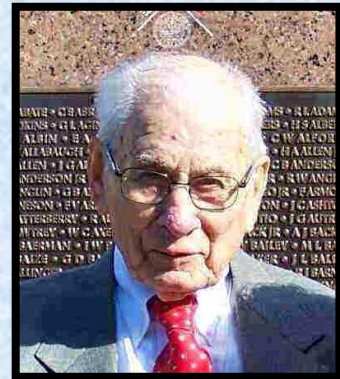
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In Memoriam

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Basil Corbin Bunyard

12/20/14

U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**COL Frank E. (Ned) Gallagher, Jr.,
USMC (Ret.)**

2/9/15

Palo Alto, CA

U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

In addition to remembering those of our U.S.S. *Houston* Family who have passed on from this life, we also remember those from H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) and the 131st/ 2nd BN who forged such close bonds with our U.S.S. *Houston* (CA-30) crewmen while enduring the same treatment as POWS.

They too will never be forgotten.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Frederick Gordon Skeels, OAM

1/9/15

Perth, WA, Australia

H.M.A.S. *Perth* (D-29) Survivor

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

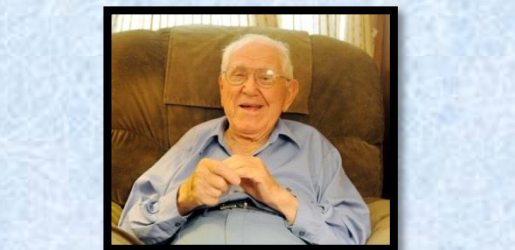
In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Luther Prunty

1/9/15

Member: 131st FA/2nd BN



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Mary Beth Brown

2/23/15

Widow of 131st FA/2nd BN Member

Alf Brown

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

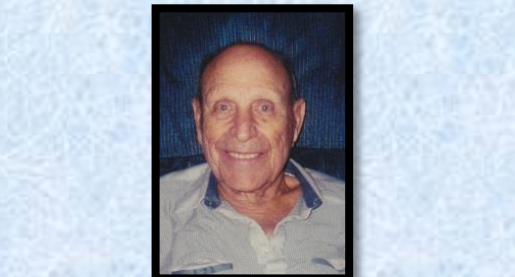
In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Howard Higginbotham

1/2/15

Member: 131st FA/2nd BN



★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Frankie Gordon

2/22/15

Widow of 131st FA/2nd BN Member

Crayton "Quaty" Gordon, Sr.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Becoming a Member of the Board of Managers of the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30 Survivors Association & Next Generations (02/2012)

The mission of the Association is to perpetuate the memory of the U.S.S. *Houston* CA-30. This mission has no particular end date, the hope being that this mission will be continued and carried forward through the generations to come. Accordingly, there is an ongoing need to have members functioning as Board members. As with any organization of volunteers, the Association can only function when members are willing to increase their level of participation and devote more time and effort.

The Association's day-to-day conduct of business is performed by its Board of Managers. Each Board member (3 to 7) is a volunteer assuming responsibilities in the many elements of work necessary to be done. Currently defined responsibilities include:

- Website maintenance
- Reunion coordination
- Special projects/initiatives management
- Member roster maintenance
- Association correspondence
- Maintenance, storage and utilization of Association archives for research
- Blue Bonnet production
- Blue Bonnet distribution
- Communication with other organizations
- Management of two scholarship programs
- Retail marketing and storage of Association merchandise
- Other duties as needed or assigned

As the members of the Board reside in various parts of the country, the principal means of communication is via monthly teleconferences, at least 90 minutes in length. The Board expects its members to function within team parameters; consensus decision-making; collaboration on assignments; support of each other's work—these are just a few characteristics.

If you would like to accept the challenge of becoming a Board member in the Association, let any of the Board members know of your interest and availability. Please share your interests, special skills or expertise, including identifying the particular responsibility you would consider assuming. Assisting a current Board member prior to assuming full responsibility is required.

Requirements for eligibility to stand for election to the Board of Managers:

- Membership in the Association
- Proven track record after application is made in completion of one of the duties outlined above.

The mission of the Association has been passed down to the Next Generations by our Survivors and it is up to us to continue fulfilling their original dreams and aspirations.

The Blue Bonnet is pleased to present...



A new Illustration of U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) "The Galloping Ghost of the Java Coast" by artist Jean ("Nimitz") Secardin.

To view other illustrations by this talented artist, go to: <http://www.world-war.co.uk/profiles.php3>

Thank you

...on behalf of the Association to those who have made donations, as follows:

Donations:

Memorial Donations:

In memory of Basil Bunyard:

Wanda & Selbert Chernoff

Shelly Heavlin

Other Donations:

Pete & Nancy Adams

Howard & Silvia Brooks

Carter Conlin

Joanne Dembrowski

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Chuck, Linda, & Kevin Swick

Patricia Warfield



Published by:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations (April, August, December)

Editor: Dana Charles

Proofreaders: Pam Foster, John Schwarz, Sue Kreutzer

Distribution: Sue Kreutzer, Pam Foster

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contact@usshouston.org or Bluebonnet@usshouston.org.

All articles submitted are subject to editing.

Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of this Association, its members, or its Board of Managers.

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Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

Fiscal Year 2014

January 1 – December 31, 2014

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$13,522.43
Receipts	+2,273.41
Expenses	-3,000.00

Ending Balance **\$13,245.84**

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$13,272.90
Receipts	+8,034.59
Expenses	-5,601.22

Ending Balance **\$15,706.27**



Fiscal Year 2015

January 1 – March 16, 2015

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$13,245.84
Receipts	+4,150.21
Expenses	-0.00

Ending Balance **\$17,396.05**

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$15,706.27
Receipts	+5,188.45
Expenses	-5,423.63

Ending Balance **\$15,471.09**

