

Now Hear This!

Association Address:

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**Address for Tax Deductible
Contributions:**

USS Houston Survivors'
Association
c/o Pam Moura, Treasurer
2065 Sutter View Lane,
Lincoln, CA 95648
(Please specify which fund:
General or Scholarship)

Association Email Contact:

Contact@USSHouston.org

Association Founded 1947

By Otto and Trudy Schwarz

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**USS Houston (CA-30)
Day of Remembrance 2021—Revised**



USS Houston (CA-30) Monument, Houston, Texas

**DAY OF REMEMBRANCE 2021
VS. THE PANDEMIC**

Due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, our Association's Board of Managers has determined it will not be feasible to proceed as usual in 2021 with our annual "Day of Remembrance." We have taken into consideration the necessity of making travel arrangements, the age groups of our usual participants and guests, and the extra expense it would take to comply with the City of Houston's strict health protocols for any gathering of 50 or more. *(Continued on next page.)*

The Doubletree Hotel at the Galleria has been very gracious and understanding regarding the cancellation of our usual contract with them. They wish us well and look forward to hosting us in 2022.

We are still in talks with City personnel to determine what type of small service, if any, might be allowed at Sam Houston Park in March, 2021. At this time, we have no firm answers from the Houston Special Events Office and there is no promise of an answer before the end of January, 2021. We will keep you informed if and when plans are developed.

Meanwhile, I know I speak for the entire Board when I say, "We wish you and your entire family the best of everything for these 2020 holidays and the New Year!"

Please stay well... Let's get this virus kicked out of our lives for good!

Sue Kreutzer, President
USS Houston (CA-30) Survivors' Association
and Next Generations®

WORN GRAVE MARKER REPLACED



(Left): Old Gravestone.
(Right): New Gravestone.



In September 2019, Donna Flynn informed me that she was able to get Arlington National Cemetery (ANC) to swap out the headstone of her late husband, USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivor David Flynn, due to some sort of error she wanted righted. Donna encouraged me to try to replace the badly weathered gravestone of USS *Houston* (CA-30) crewman William C. Batchelor, Jr. with a well-deserved, updated gravestone. I came home and followed through with her suggestion by going through proper protocols with the ANC. I am happy to report that as of Veterans' Day, November 11, 2020, the new gravestone has been installed. I came upon William Batchelor's new gravestone (12-3917) as I placed roses in

the driving rain on Veterans' Day at the ship's marker (see photo below), and at each of the gravestones of the USS *Houston* survivors buried in section 12 (Gans, Schwarz, Flynn, Stefanek, and Batchelor). Many thanks to the Arlington National Cemetery for placing a new headstone at Mr. Batchelor's gravesite! And thank you to Molly Duran for informing Mr. Batchelor's NOK (Gary Miles) of the new grave marker. —John K. Schwarz



A HOLIDAY SONG'S SPECIAL MEANING

It's in a commercial, playing regularly this Holiday season—"I'll Be Home for Christmas...if Only in My Dreams." Each time the song plays, it stirs up thoughts of the survivors of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29) in captivity after the loss of both ships through three Christmases ('42, '43, '44). The song also reminds me of all WWII allied POWs, including the men of the Lost Battalion, who suffered the same longing for Christmas as well as all their families who did not know whether their loved one was alive, or not.

Were Allied POWs working on the Burma-Thailand Railway even aware of the date? Were they able to share anything special on Christmas Day? I wish that question had been asked while one could; then the answer would be known.

The song also makes me think of all the survivors of the *Houston*, *Perth*, and Lost Battalion, who were transported back home by Christmas 1945 and were able to share Christmas with their respective families. One can only wonder what could have been going through their minds that first Christmas back after those years in captivity—now able to be with family/friends, yet not with their POW brothers. I wish I had asked about that, too.

Thoughts also turn to all those young, brave, faithful crewmen of both USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29) who, as of the early morning of 1 March 1942, would never experience another Christmas—and to all Allied WWII servicemen who lost their lives in service to their countries to assure all of us our Christmases.

This Christmas, this Hanukkah, is for all of them. God Bless them. RIP heroes. —John K. Schwarz



From the desk of the Executive Director

John K. Schwarz

This month's Blue Bonnet newsletter edition comes in our final month of the current tax year (2020). A reminder: Most contributions to the Association will qualify as tax deductible (check with your accountant/tax preparer if in doubt).

Although our current financial state is healthy in both the general 'kitty' and scholarship accounts, it remains important to continue fund-raising. Consider, as an example, one of our main interests: to establish permanent remembrances of the ship and her crew. Often, this takes us into the museum realm where things such as museum quality encasements for artifacts can become quite costly. Regarding our Scholarship Fund: if we were to have a prolonged period where there is low interest in terms of candidates and applications, we might decide to create another permanent scholarship similar to what we have at the U.S. Naval Academy; that, too, would be costly.

The two key points here are that: One, cost drives the responsibility to continue to raise funds and manage Association finances in the most responsible manner, and Two, both Funds are all about "permanency." Our mission—to perpetuate the memory of USS *Houston* and her crew—is best served by establishing permanent memorials, be they museum installations or scholarships.

For those who have donated we thank you very, very much.

Donating Options:

- On-line through the "News" page on our website (www.usshouston.org). See upper left-hand corner. Credit card and PayPal options are available.
- By check made out to the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association & Next Generations. Designate which account (scholarship and/or general); if to be split among both, designate which amount to each, and mail to our Association Treasurer: Pam Moura, 2065 Sutter View Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648
- Through payroll deduction by some employers. In some cases, employers also offer a "matching funds" option for their employees.
- Selected banks offer a "Bill Pay" option where single or recurring donations can be made.
- One additional thing: utilize "AmazonSmile" for your Amazon shopping. This offers the same product and pricing as regular Amazon, yet through "AmazonSmile" we get a modest donation from Amazon for every dollar spent. Please see the instructions in the Blue Bonnet (page 13) or contact our treasurer Pam Moura at: pam@usshouston.org.

Thank you all for your consideration and ongoing support for our Association, and have healthy, safe and Happy Holidays!

John K. Schwarz

Postwar Studies of Former U.S. POWS of the Japanese

By R. Dana Charles

With the September 2, 1945 signing of the Japanese surrender aboard USS *Missouri*, the catastrophic Pacific War was over. But for many former American POWS of the Japanese, including the 291 liberated and repatriated Navy and Marine Corps crewmen of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and 445 liberated and repatriated U.S. soldiers of the 131st Field Artillery/2nd Battalion, who had survived 3.5 years of brutal POW captivity together, certain battles lingered on. Physical ailments, including the aftereffects of tropical diseases, as well as certain emotional issues, including depression, anxiety, and symptoms of what today is known as Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder, would continue to plague many former American POWS, including USS *Houston* and Lost Battalion survivors, for years after the war ended.

Houston survivors and 131st FA/2nd BN soldiers were among 34,648 American servicemen that were prisoners of war of the Japanese during WWII. Of that total number, 12,935 (roughly 37%) died as POWS; a total of 21,713 were returned to the USA when the Pacific War ended in 1945.

Due to the harsh conditions of POW captivity, the life expectancy of many repatriated American POWS of the Japanese was shortened, according to a 1980 study of former American POWS.¹ In fact, this study found that of the 21,713 American POWS repatriated in 1945, some 5,476—roughly 25%—died between 1946 and June 30, 1979. As of June 1979, approximately 16,237 former POWS of the Japanese were still alive.²

Unfortunately, a professional study of the 736 repatriated USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors and Lost Battalion soldiers—as a POW group—was never conducted during the lifetimes of these men. So, much information about the physical and mental difficulties that USS *Houston* (CA-30) and Lost Battalion soldiers experienced after the war is unavailable today. However, a few controlled government-sponsored postwar studies were conducted between 1954 and 1976 which described the postwar physical and mental status of former American veterans, including WWII POWS. It is important to note that each of these studies determined that after World War II ended, former Pacific Theater American POWS suffered from serious physical and mental difficulties to a greater degree than any other group of WWII veterans.

Postwar studies (1954 – 1976) on former American WWII prisoners of war included the following:

Cohen and Cooper (1954). The U.S. Veterans Administration published a follow-up study of U.S. veterans made by the National Research Council in 1954. Conducted by **Bernard Cohen** and **Maurice Cooper**, the study investigated four groups of WWII veterans, each comprised of 2,000 men: One group consisted of former POWS from the Pacific Theater (PT); another group consisted of former combat troops from the PT; a third group was comprised of former POWS from the European Theater (ET); and the fourth group consisted of former combat troops from the ET. This study concluded that there was seven times as much illness among former Pacific Theater POWS, and twice as much illness among the European Theater POWS as in either of the combat groups. “The Pacific Theater POW group had been imprisoned for an average of about three times as long as the European POW group, and had suffered much greater hardships, including prolonged undernutrition.

© R. Dana Charles

Not only was their mortality rate almost three times the expected rate for their chronological age, but also the incidence of almost every category of illness—physical and psychological—was several times higher among Pacific Theater POWS than any other groups.” (Cooper and Cohen)³

The study also found that “the main causes of the significantly higher percent of deaths among Pacific Theater POWS during the study period (1946 – 1952) were tuberculosis and trauma (i.e.: accidents, suicide and homicide). The authors hypothesized that the trauma might be due to underlying psychiatric problems due to the POW experience. Cooper and Cohen also found that former PT POWS had a significantly higher number of deaths for the first two years after liberation (1946 – 1947) and a slightly diminished, though still excessive, death rate for the remaining four years of their study (1948 – 1952).”⁴

Nefzger (1965). A follow-up study by **M. Dean Nefzger** confirmed Cooper and Cohen’s finding that tuberculosis and trauma were the principal causes of death among Pacific Theater POWS for the 1953 – 1965 follow-up period. Nefzger also found a significantly greater number of deaths due to cirrhosis. He suggested that a significantly higher percent of deaths due to cirrhosis might be due to malnutrition during captivity, or a “different standard or manner of living since repatriation. (e.g.: alcohol abuse)”... Like Cooper and Cohen, Nefzger implied that excess death due to trauma might be due to underlying psychiatric problems (e.g.: anxiety neurosis)... Nefzger also found that after 1953, the mortality rate of former Pacific Theater POWS was indistinguishable from that of other WWII Pacific veterans in his study.”⁵

Keehn (1976). A follow-up study by **Robert Keehn** traced mortality among former Pacific Theater POWS through 1976. Keehn confirmed Nefzger’s report of significantly higher mortality due to trauma, tuberculosis, and cirrhosis in former PT POWS than in his PT veteran control group. “Like Cooper and Cohen, Keehn suggested that a significantly higher number of former PT POW deaths due to trauma could have an origin in underlying psychiatric problems arising out of the stress of internment... Like Nefzger, Keehn suggested that former PT POWS’ mortality due to cirrhosis could be due to post-liberation alcohol abuse as well as to malnutrition suffered during captivity.”⁶

Beebe (1975). Gilbert W. Beebe, PhD conducted a study in 1975 called “Follow-up Studies of WWII and Korean War Prisoners of War” which appeared in the American Journal of Epidemiology, Vol. 101, Page 421. Beebe wrote: “Morbidity, some types of maladjustment, and disability all seem elevated in POWS relative to their controls, especially for prisoners of war of the Japanese. If the screening period following repatriation is set aside (1945 for WWII POWS, 1953 for Korean War POWS), the most remarkable and long-lasting differentials are seen in the psychiatric area, especially in hospital admissions for psychoneurosis and for psychosis (schizophrenia). Scored responses to the Cornell Medical Index also suggest a fairly wide-spread affective disturbance among the prisoners of war of the Japanese, especially. Although not high, the hospital admission rate for psychoneurosis among [Europe-held] prisoners of war shows they did not go unscathed. Data obtained by questionnaire on maladjustments support the conclusion that many prisoners of war of the Japanese and Korean War POWS have permanent psychologic impairment...”⁷

In addition to the studies by Cohan and Cooper, Nefzger, Keehn and Beebe, some former POW

medical doctors wrote postwar articles regarding aftereffects of captivity suffered by American servicemen captured in the Philippines in 1942—former POWS who experienced some of the same wartime mistreatment as did USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors and Lost Battalion men. Below is a portion of one of these postwar articles:

Three Decades Later: Residuals of Japanese Prisoners of War

by COL Eugene C. Jacobs, MC, USA (retired)

Forum on Medicine, Vol. 1, No. 6, September 1978

[NOTE: COL Jacobs was a U.S. POW of the Japanese at Camp 1, Cabanatuan, Philippine Islands.]

“...After the liberation of the Allied POWS in 1944 and 1945, an adequate diet supplemented by the required vitamins and minerals rapidly improved most of the acute symptoms of the [nourishment] deficiency disease, but most of the individuals who had been prisoners of the Japanese of 6 months or longer were left with one or more of the following permanent residual effects: amblyopia; angina pectoris; arrhythmia; congestive heart disease; deafness; dysentery; hernia; hyperesthesia; impaired memory; insomnia; irritability; chronic malaria; muscle cramps; tuberculosis; neuralgias; nightmares; nyctalopia (sic); paresthesia; polyneuritis; tinnitus.

After returning home, many of the former POWS vowed they would never “go without” again. They overate, over-smoked, overdrank, and overmedicated, and—just as detrimental to their health—under-exercised. They indulged in their craving for the things they had missed in prison camp. They preferred diets rich in fats, cholesterol, and salt, and they drank lots of coffee. Unfortunately, many ex-prisoners who have chain-smoked since the end of the war have complicated their residuals with the following tobacco-related diseases: Amblyopia; bronchitis; bronchiectasis; myocardial infarction; hypertension; peptic ulcer; strokes; thromboangitis (sic) obliterans; cancer of the lips, tongue, bronchus, stomach, etc.; emphysema... Some have become chronic alcoholics, further damaging their brains, hearts, livers, stomachs, and nervous systems, and a few have become addicted to drugs...”⁸

These and other postwar studies and various articles written by former POW doctors revealed that many former American WWII prisoners of war needed help for physical and mental difficulties. A postwar statement written by Dutch Doctor Henri Hekking to help USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors and men of the Lost Battalion will be discussed in the next Blue Bonnet.

Footnotes:

- (1) POW, Study of Former Prisoners of War, Veterans Administration, 1980.
- (2) Ibid., Charles Stenger, p. 10.
- (3) “Stresses of Incarceration, Aftereffects of Extreme Stress,” American Ex-Prisoners of War, Inc., 1991, p. 10.
- (4) POW, Study of Former Prisoners of War, Veterans Administration, 1980, p. 85.
- (5) Ibid., p. 86.
- (6) Ibid., p. 87.
- (7) “Morbidity, Disability and Maladjustments,” by Gilbert W. Beebe, PhD, Packet #2, American Ex-POW, Inc., p. 14.
- (8) “The Japanese Story,” American Ex-POW National Research Committee, Packet #10, p. 69-70.



RONALD SEARLE

P.O.W. CARTOONIST & ILLUSTRATOR

By Joseph L. and Marlene McCain

Ronald Searle was born at Cambridge, England in 1920. Even at a young age, he showed great promise as an artist. However, he realized in 1939 that his country would soon be at war so he left art school to enlist in the

Royal Engineers.

In 1941, as part of the British 18th Division, he was sent to Singapore, Malaya, and rushed into frontline combat. He described his unit as being “unfit, unacclimatized, unenthusiastic and untrained in jungle warfare”. They were also still wearing their British winter uniforms. Friends said that he lost most of his interest in military things during that short-lived tropical campaign, and thereafter devoted his time to perfecting his artistic skills. He drew endlessly and critiqued his own work from his first day to the last as a Japanese captive. He fully intended to become a well-known artist when he returned to England.

First held at Changi Prison Camp, Ronald Searle spent much of his time sketching and drawing. Eventually he and some fellow prisoners were able to create a P.O.W. camp magazine that was published once a month for five months. Only a few copies could be produced of each edition but they were shared among the thousands of prisoners and very much appreciated.

After about fourteen months at Changi Camp, Searle was sent north to labor on the infamous Death Railway. He continued to improve his artistic skills while in Thailand, but proved to be far less talented when building railways for the Japanese. The guards became aware of this and beat him on the head for his failings. With the creativity of a natural cartoonist, he began wearing a hat which he stuffed withalang grass. The beatings continued but were not so bad with a well-cushioned head cover. Then the Japanese realized that he was an artist and gave him duck eggs to eat, as well as pencils and paper. In return, he was ordered to draw dirty pictures for them. He enjoyed the duck eggs and used the pencils and paper to draw everything except the desired dirty pictures. The guards were most displeased and no doubt beat him over the head some more.

Ronald Searle became very ill at Kanburi as a result of dysentery, malaria and tropical ulcers. He was in a coma much of the time at the camp hospital and not expected to survive. Whenever he would drift into consciousness, he would crawl upright on his bed and continue sketching – with his right hand, as his drawing hand (the left hand) was badly ulcerated. The camp doctors thought that he would have to have the left hand amputated in order to survive, but he somehow persevered and avoided the loss of his hand.

After the horrors of the railway ended, Searle was returned to Changi Camp where he continued to draw. He considered his sketches to be a record of what he was experiencing - a sort of self-appointed task which would not have found favor with the Japanese. Had they found his work, it is very likely that he would have been executed, so he hid his drawings beneath the beds of cholera victims. The Japanese were terrified of this disease and never came near the cholera hut.

He also became very involved with the Changi Gaol Playhouse as a designer and producer of sets for their productions. A pianist, Bill Williams, and a former *USS Houston* band member, Mus1C Albert (Hap) Kelley, provided many of the musical scores. *(Continued on next page)*

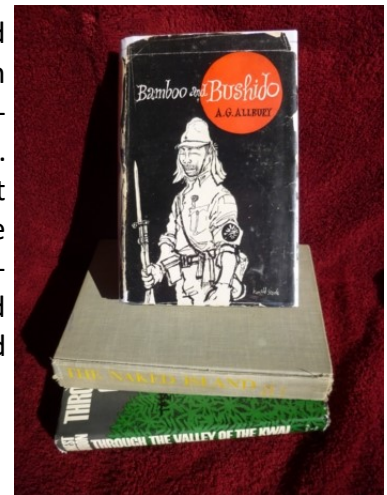
With a string of successful shows already to their credit, it was decided to stage an extravaganza of song. This was to be no small production, and anticipation of the event ran high among the prisoners!

Opening night was a lavish affair and attended by no less than the entire Japanese administration, including General Saito. All went well until the final number. A magnificent creation, the bow of a steamer ship, sailed onto the stage with smoking stacks and whistles blowing. The ship had required every bit of Ronald Searle's artistic ability and the stage carpenter's resourcefulness. The finale was a new song written by Bill Williams called "On Our Return." The entire show company flooded onto the stage as passengers about to embark and even the audience joined in the singing of the chorus.

General Saito said nothing, but left with his group of followers in ominous silence. The next day he said plenty, however. The Playhouse was declared permanently closed, and he could barely be talked out of having the entire playhouse company executed! The war, he angrily pointed out, would last one hundred years and Nippon was Number One!

The war did not last a hundred years, of course, and came to an end in August 1945. Ronald Searle was able to return to England with some three hundred drawings. Many of these first appeared as illustrations for the book, The Naked Island, by his Australian P.O.W. friend, Russell Braddon. Later, they were used in other books about the war and the death railway. Ronald Searle did achieve the fame he sought and received the Reuben Award for Outstanding Cartoonist of the Year in 1960. He authored and illustrated several books and was often a cover artist for the New Yorker Magazine. Searle passed away in France in 2011 at the age of 91.

(Right): Some books illustrated by Ronald Searle



Notes:

1. The books illustrated with this article are in the author's personal possession. All contain Searle drawings. No doubt there are others.
2. The best collection of Ronald Searle's war drawings can be found in the book, To the Kwai and Back.
3. The full archive of his P.O.W. artwork is kept at London's Imperial War Museum.
4. Other books written and illustrated by Ronald Searle include Searle's Cats, The Illustrated Winespeak, and St. Trinians – the Entire Appalling Business.

Sources:

1. The Naked Island by Russell Braddon. Published 1953, Doubleday & Co., Garden City, NY.
2. Internet Wikipedia Open Library: Ronald Searle information re: life, artwork & writings.
3. Illustration Chronicles/The War Drawings of Ronald Searle. Compiled and written by Philip Kennedy <https://www.illustrationchronicles.com>

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

- 8/4/2020: Received a request for information from **Cassie Wojan** and replied as follows: “Dear Cassie, Thank you for your email regarding your great grandfather and his brother—USS *Houston* (CA-30) crewmen **Warrant Officer Louis E. Biechlin, USN** and his younger brother **Yeoman 2nd Class Neil Conrad Biechlin, USN**. I am the son of a USS *Houston* Marine survivor and vice president of our USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors’ Association and Next Generations® and it is my honor to reply to your inquiry... I am sorry to report that most of the ship’s records went down with the ship when it was sunk in battle on 1 March 1942. However, I found some copies of some officers’ records at the U.S. National Archives (NARA-II) in College Park, MD during a research trip I made there several years ago. Attached is a scan of one of the records which indicates that L. E. Biechlin was assigned as a carpenter aboard ship. We have no records in our archives which indicate where he was held as a prisoner of war during WWII. Our crew roster indicates that he passed away in 1983 of Cancer in Los Angeles, CA... I am sorry to report that I have found no records or photos pertaining to his younger brother, Neil C. Biechlin, Yeoman 2nd Class, who was lost when the ship was sunk on 1 March 1942. I am very sorry for your loss... If you have any information on Neil C. Biechlin or your grandfather, L. E. Biechlin, we would appreciate it greatly if you would share it with us so that we might have it posted on our online crew roster... I am pleased to report that as a relative of crewmen of the *Houston*, you are more than welcome to join our association which is dedicated to perpetuating the memory of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and her crew. If you are interested in becoming a member of our Association, we invite you to go to the bottom of the News section page of our website (www.usshouston.org), fill out a membership form and email or mail it as indicated on the form. There is no cost to join. However, voluntary donations are always welcome and appreciated! Also, each year since 1995 our Association has held a USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Service at the site of the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Monument in Houston, Texas where we remember and honor the crew of the ship. Our 2020 service was held on 7 March 2020 (I’m attaching a copy of our April 2020 issue of our newsletter which features coverage of the event). We invite you to attend any of our future Memorial Services which are usually held on a weekend near the date of the ship’s loss (1 March). Due to the Pandemic, plans for the 2021 annual Memorial Service are uncertain at this point. Check back on our website (www.usshouston.org) where we will post our plans in the weeks to come. Again, thank you for your interest in your great grandfather and his brother, and the USS *Houston* (CA-30).
• 8/4/2020 – Received the following email reply from **Cassie Wojan**: “I would be honored to join. I will also keep you updated as I continue to research. Thanks for the information; knowing more about my family is priceless. Best, Cassie Wojan.”
• 9/9/2020— I wrote a note of thanks to Richard Ross after he sent our archives two photos of USS *Houston* (CA-30) crewman **Charles P. Dinan, F2/c, USN** who was killed in action aboard USS *Houston* (CA-30) during the 1 March 1942 Battle of Sunda Strait, as well as a postcard written by Mr. Dinan before his death.
• 10/7/2020: Received the following email: “USS *Houston* Association: I am the great nephew of **[USMC Corporal] Kelton George** who was KIA after being transferred to the *Pecos*. I have all his letters home and he was a prolific writer and will be digitizing them soon for inclusion with your site. He was very descriptive of place but for obvious reasons would not state specific locations. I am trying to trace his writing to a visual time-line with location. Is there record available of date and location of the *Houston*? Thank you for any support you may provide. **Kelton Davis.**”
• 11/17/2020: According to our records, **Marine Corporal George** was wounded during the Japanese Air attack at the Battle of the Flores Sea when a Japanese bomb struck the afterdeck of the *Houston* near Turret Three, killing some 46 crewmen. Corporal George was transferred to a hospital at Tjilatjap, Java, and was later transferred to USS *Pecos*, on which he was killed in action on 1 March 1942 when the *Pecos* was sunk by the Japanese. I am very sorry for your loss. To retrace Corporal George’s whereabouts prior to his death, as you wish to do, I would recommend: (1) Reading these books: ***the Last Battle Station*** by Duane Shultz; ***Ship of Ghosts*** by James Hornfischer; ***The Ghost That Died at Sunda Strait*** by Walter Winslow; (2) Looking through our Association’s copy of the Ship’s Logs. We could make them available to you during our next available annual “Day of Remembrance.”

USS HOUSTON CA-30 MERCHANDISE UPDATE

Now Hear This!

We have...

- Received a new shipment of USS *Houston* (CA-30) hats so orders can be placed and filled; \$15.00 ea. plus shipping.
- Two new men's Polo shirts available due to our most recent special order, both in men's medium, one dark grey and the other red. Both are embroidered with the USS *Houston* (CA-30) logo; \$23.00 ea. plus shipping.
- Plenty of USS *Houston* (CA-30) challenge coins available; \$9.50 ea. plus shipping.
- USS *Houston* (CA-30) ship pins—Gold or Silver trimmed; 2 for \$5.00 plus shipping.

Contact: johnk.schwarz@yahoo.com for all merchandise questions and information.

Wear your USS *Houston* (CA-30) apparel proudly and
help keep the memory of the ship alive!



USS *Houston* (CA-30) hat
(Navy Blue)



USS *Houston* (CA-30) Polo Shirt
(Dark grey)



USS *Houston* (CA-30) Polo Shirt
(Red)

Scholarship Programs Update

USS Houston (CA-30) Annual Scholarship

With our own administered program, the USS Houston CA-30 “internal scholarship,” the Scholarship Committee is currently in the assessment process to determine if we will have a 2021 awardee to announce. If Yes, yet another deserving student will have financial assistance with their educational costs. The next scholarship “cycle” will not commence until June 1, 2021 for a potential 2022 award. That being the case, for those who are “coaches” for prospective candidates, it is never too soon to encourage and advise on the kind of research which can increase the chances for success through the application process. “Coaches” and candidates both are encouraged to review all the requirements that are listed in the application packet which is available on our website, usshouston.org, 'scholarship' tab.

This is important to review each scholarship cycle as changes to the application process, if implemented, would be included (for example a change was made this year to both the submission address and the process itself). The packet posted on the web replaces any previous version. Due to the new changes it is even more important than ever to not wait to make submissions by the very last date of the application cycle (November 1).

We thank all of the generous folks who contribute to this program enabling it to assist our young students with higher educational costs!

U.S. Naval Academy Foundation—USS Houston (CA-30) Scholarship

To Date:

8 awardees resulting in:
6 graduated Naval Officers,
1 graduated Marine Officer,
1 in-progress toward graduation.

“Java” Update



As many of you know, last fall we sponsored a puppy, Java, through Semper K9 Assistance Dogs. Java was named in honor of all the USS *Houston* crew and the members of the Lost Battalion, and her photo graced the pages of this spring’s [Blue Bonnet](#) newsletter. However, we’ve been informed by Chris Baity, head of the organization, that while Java has excelled in learning required skills, she is too easily distracted (by other dogs or people) to perform in the consistent manner that a disabled service member would require of an assistance dog. Therefore, she is having a “career change,” and will be placed with a service member or service member’s family—people who do not require the same level of assistance. As you can imagine, we were quite disappointed to learn that Java has “washed out” and won’t achieve what we anticipated, but as Chris pointed out, not everyone can become a Navy Seal.

Chris has informed us that we can name another dog in honor of our USS *Houston* and Lost Battalion heroes, so we’ve asked Semper K-9 to name a future “recruit” Burma, to honor the sacrifices of all our relatives. We will be sure to keep you informed about him/her. — Nancy Hamilton



REPORT FROM JAKARTA

CAPTAIN STACEY A. PRESCOTT, USN

Greetings from Jakarta! I hope this e-mail finds everyone at the USS *Houston* CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations safe and healthy.

We continue to make steady progress on our cooperation with the Government of Indonesia on the protection of USS *Houston* (CA-30). Though the COVID-19 pandemic has prevented us from meeting with officials in Banten Province, we have been able to coordinate with the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (MFA) on the Implementing Arrangement (IA) required for the enactment of a Maritime Conservation Zone (MCZ). MFA created a first draft of the IA, and that IA is currently under review with Navy and State Department legal teams.

As I know CDR Greg Adams informed the Association last year, there are some areas where assistance was requested, and we are still pursuing options for the partnering and/or funding of these areas of assistance:

- Construction of a Battle of Sunda Strait Information Center to help raise awareness among the local population about the *Houston*, *Perth*, and World War II;
- Development of a "USS *Houston* Scholarship" specific for Banten students; and exploring a sister-city partnership between the cities of Houston and Banten.

I am happy to report that we are in contact with Sister Cities International, and are working with MFA to set up the requisite meetings in Banten Province to proceed with that partnership. In our discussions with MFA, they have expressed openness to the idea of an information center that takes the form of a monument with informational displays or even a virtual platform, which could provide even more information about WWII in Indonesia. We therefore have been reaching out to potential partners in the U.S. to facilitate that possible solution.

In October, we welcomed our new Ambassador, Mr. Sung Kim, to Indonesia. He is a big proponent of protecting the *Houston* and will be bringing up the *Houston* in many of his introductory meetings. We also hope to arrange a visit for him to Banten Province, so that he can meet the local stakeholders and help progress our efforts for the MCZ. Though I am happy to report the local caretakers who keep an eye on the HMAS *Perth* MCZ have assured me they also keep watch over the *Houston* even though the MCZ has not yet been declared. We were very happy to have many of those personnel join us for the Battle of Sunda Strait Commemoration earlier this year.

Most recently, the U.S. Secretary of Defense invited Indonesian Minister of Defense Prabowo Subianto for meetings in Washington, DC. While there, we were able to make some progress on a way ahead for Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency (DPAA) efforts in Indonesia, which focus on aircraft and troop losses ashore or in shallow water. As part of DPAA's tour of their hallway in the Pentagon, their Principle Deputy Director raised the protection of *Houston* as another of the Department of Defense's ongoing efforts, and Minister Subianto expressed his desire to facilitate that in any way he could.

The Indonesian Ambassador to the U.S., Ambassador Lutfi, also pulled me aside during the tour and asked that I keep him informed of our efforts, as he would like to help facilitate as well. While the Ministry of Defense is not involved directly in our efforts, I was very pleased to hear the depth of their support, and will of course keep them apprised and accept any assistance they offer.

So in summary, in partnership with our Indonesian counterparts we are exploring a number of options to support and amplify the value of a *Houston* Maritime Conservation Zone. And the expressions of support we have gotten not only from our new Ambassador, but from senior leaders on the Indonesian side, give me reason to hope that we can make real progress in the coming months.

Happy Holidays and best wishes for the New Year to all in the *Houston* family.

Lest we forget.

Very Respectfully,

Stacey

PS. You can read Ambassador Kim's biography at

<https://id.usembassy.gov/our-relationship/our-ambassador/>

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You Shop, Amazon Gives

By Pam Crispi Moura, Treasurer

Many of us already shop online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Did you know that Amazon has a program to 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.

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THE ORAL HISTORY PROGRAM AT THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR

By John K. Schwarz

Upon reading an article entitled "Survivors' Oral Histories," ([The Blue Bonnet](#), August 2020), which discussed the Oral History program at the University of North Texas State (UNTS), Silvia Brooks, widow of USS *Houston* CA-30 survivor Howard Brooks, wrote me to ask why Howard was not on the list of oral histories archived at UNTS. Silvia was sure that Howard had recorded his oral history there.



Howard and Silvia Brooks

Well, thank you, Sylvia! Her inquiry led to the discovery that indeed oral histories of many survivors of USS *Houston* (CA-30) are archived at other places—in this case, at the National Museum of the Pacific War (formerly known as the Nimitz Museum). Below is the result of our contact with Mr. Chris McDougal, who is the director of the department that includes the oral history archives. He provided both a list of survivors whose oral histories are in their collection, as well as a recommendation for access. Museums and other institutions sometimes share documented histories of this nature. For instance, it is believed that the WWII Museum in New Orleans may also have some oral histories of USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors, as well.

These oral histories are very important as they, in a sense, keep the survivors able "to talk to us." Those of you who may have read through any of these documents know how candid and revealing they are. They enable us to gain tremendous insight into not only the path taken by each interviewed survivor, but also into their hearts and souls—they reveal what they were feeling and thinking. These oral histories provide truly remarkable and intriguing information and all are resources for generations to come—including applicants to our Association's annual scholarship program.

Here are the names of USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors who were interviewed for the National Museum of the Pacific War Oral History Program:

| | | | |
|------------------------|------------------------|---------------------|------------------------|
| Brooks, Howard (x 2) | Charles, H. Robert | Clark, Dallas | Crispi, Eugene |
| Ficklin, Frank (131st) | Flynn, David | Forsman, M.I. | Gallagher, Frank "Ned" |
| Garrett, James "Joe" | Goodson, Ray | Hekking, Dr. Henri | Ingram, Bill |
| Kelly, Harry | Kooper, L.W."Dutch" | Papish, Paul "Pap" | Ranger, John |
| Reas, John | Schilperoort, Clarence | Schwarz, Otto (x 2) | Wilker, Max |
| Wilkinson, Eugene | Woody, Stanley | | |

Chris McDougal, Director of Archives and Library, National Museum of the Pacific War, writes: "Copies of any of the interviews, which are not online, can be obtained by contacting me directly by emailing me at: cmcdougal@nimitzfoundation.org, or by calling me at: 830-997-8600 (ext. 264). All interviews online can be downloaded in either audio or transcript form from the website as many times as wanted."

IN MEMORIAM

Patricia Mignon Glover



March 7, 1928—July 31, 2020

Cabot, Arkansas

Widow of USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor Ross Glover, Navy

Meet your...

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...here to serve you!*



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* The Board of Managers is available to members for questions, concerns, input, or to clarify any matter regarding the Association via email (to contact@usshouston.org), phone, or regular mail.

Membership

Our Association continues to grow as more folks reach us—through such avenues as our websites—and want to know more about the *Houston*, or just simply seek to contribute to the perpetuation of the memory of this gallant warship. To those interested in taking it further and joining our Association: go to www.usshouston.org, click on the “news tab,” scroll to the bottom and review the Association’s bylaws, then click on the link to membership form (<http://www.usshouston.org/memberform.pdf>). After filling out the form, send it in as directed on the form. Our Association is funded through voluntary donations rather than mandatory annual dues. To make a donation, please refer to page one of this newsletter, or review the instructions on the “news tab” of our website.

Association Communication Channels

- Association information, including current and archived newsletter editions, is available at the Association's official website: www.usshouston.org.
- All email correspondence for the Association is directed through: contact@usshouston.org
- The Association’s regular mailing address and phone number is listed on the first page of each issue of the *Blue Bonnet* newsletter.
- Our Association's only social media presence is on Facebook at: **USS Houston CA-30**.



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

Thank you...!

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

Donations

July 16 – November 15, 2020

In Memory of Howard Brooks
Silvia Brooks

Other Donations

Melissa Ellsworth
Bernice Harapat
John Schwarz

AmazonSmile Donations Received:

January – November 2020: \$169.29

Financial Report

by Pam Moura, Treasurer

January 1 – November 15, 2020

General Fund

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Beginning Balance: | \$25,136.08 |
| Receipts: | +6,840.39 |
| Expenses: | <u>-5,631.90</u> |
| Ending Balance: | \$26,344.57 |



Scholarship Fund

| | |
|--------------------|------------------|
| Beginning Balance: | \$22,790.39 |
| Receipts: | +2,499.44 |
| Expenses: | <u>-3,000.00</u> |
| Ending Balance: | \$22,289.83 |



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