



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

Editor: Val Roberts-Poss 107 Hallie Ct. Georgetown, TX 89628

Phone 512 763-1217 Fax 512 868-3385

Email: [CA30NG@AOL.COM](mailto:CA30NG@AOL.COM) web: [www.usshouston.org](http://www.usshouston.org)

Co-editors: Otto Schwarz and Lin Drees

**FROM THE SURVIVORS**

We sadly report that one more of our crew has joined his shipmates Still Standing Watch in Sunda Strait:

**Sprinkle, Kenneth** - December 25, 2001

His death was reported to Kyle Thompson, with no further information but that attempts are being made to have his ashes scattered in Sunda.

**HUMBLE THANKS:** Trudy and I were overwhelmed by the number of calls and cards we received this past Christmas. Over the many years of Association with the Houston family we have been blessed with lasting friendships all over the world. We are humbly grateful, and we love each and every one of you.

**LOSS OF A GOOD FRIEND:** Ernest Gordon, author of "Through The Valley Of The Kwai", passed away on January 16, 2002. The former officer in the Argyll and Sutherland Highlanders became an ordained Presbyterian Minister after the war and became the Dean of the Chapel at Princeton University. Well known among Far East POW's because of his book, "Through The Valley Of The Kwai", he was 85. His book is about to be re-released along with a movie "To End All Wars".

**ABOUT BOOKS:** A number of months ago, JACK FELIZ generously sent me a copy of his book "The Saga of Sailor Jack". In the good old days, when I had my sight, I would have read it immediately and made a report in my column. Trudy has been experiencing an extremely busy period and was suffering from constant tearing of the eyes. I then tried to find someone to read it onto audio tape, but could not.

Finally Trudy's condition improved somewhat and she red the book to me, a little at a time. "The Saga of Sailor Jack" is a fascinating trip in time. Don't be fooled by the title, this is not a sea story. Very little of the book is devoted to the USS Houston and the war.

**JACK** describes his meager beginnings on a ranch in California, to his career in the Navy becoming a super machinist, finally advancing in rank which included Chief Engineer on two carriers. Following the war, and advancement to Captain, he ended up as a Naval Envoy to Columbia South America.

**JACKS's** description of his early days in the Asiatic Fleet and up the Yangtze River make my short time out there sound like training to be an alter boy. His "magic carpet" liberties always included a Russian Countess or the most beautiful blonde in town. I wish that "**JOE**" **GANS** and "**ITCH**" **SCHRAMM** were here to verify this.

The rest of the book (almost 500 pages of text and photos) is devoted to a life of traveling he and Marie have enjoyed to the four corners of the globe. His shipmates and former p.o.w.'s will find the next to the last chapter, describing his return to a former prison camp at Ohasi Japan, most interesting.

You can order your copy by phone to Universe Customer service 1 877 823-9235, or via most major book stores giving the ISBN #0-595.

**THIS 'N THAT:** Received word recently that **JOHN WISECUP** and wife, Iku, have finally returned to the U.S. **JOHN's** cousin, Jim McDaniel from New Orleans, informed me that he had their ashes sent from Japan to the new Dallas/Fort Worth National Cemetery this past December.... H.M.A.S. Perth Survivor David Manning and wife Audrey called from Ballarat Australia to wish all a Happy New Year. They are going on a cruise ending up in Honolulu. They are leaving Sydney on, of all dates February 18, a date I thought he would avoid putting to sea.... Sixty years later and the questions still keep coming, I recently heard from a lady from Poghkeepsie NY who asked about ENS. **HERB LEVITT**. The only info in our records was that he was killed in an auto accident after the war. I then remembered that **LEVITT** had remained in Java, as did **GENE CRISPI** and **DAVID FLYNN**, I called them and they told me that **LEVITT** was a fine officer, well respected for sticking up for the men against the Japs. I gave the lady the phone numbers and she was able to talk to two survivors who knew the person she was asking about. So unlike all the other groups, we still provide a valuable service.

Over the past year Val and I have been corresponding with retired Admiral Stephen R. Loeffler regarding an exhibit in Changi, Singapore called "A tribute to Americans – P.O.W.'s Remembered". The Admiral, while on duty in Singapore, learned about we Americans being in Changi during WWII and together with the American Society in Singapore, formulated plans for an exhibit in the Changi Museum to pay tribute to us. He also contacted Frank Ficklin, 131<sup>st</sup>., and between all of us we came up with a number of items for the exhibit. So thanks to Admiral Loeffler and the American Society in Singapore we now have another place to visit.... The Cruiser Sailors Association will hold it's annual convention at Annapolis MD on A pril 28 to May 3, 2002. Deadline for registration is March 28, contact Ed August 21 Colonial Way, Rehoboth MA. Word from my Aussie mate and "alleged escapee" from Saigon, Alan Donaldson, that his wife Hazel and daughter Jan are making a 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary trip to Singapore, then to Bangkok and River Kwai.... On Christmas Day we had a surprise call from Perth Survivor Charles "Chilla" Goodchap. Chilla and wife Ngairé have moved into a retirement village because of her ill health. We have many pleasant memories of our visits with the Goodchaps. He had a pub on a bay where some of the original Governor landed. We had a great time visting Australias "Gold Coast".... Perth Survivor, Ernie Toovey, reports tough times with his beloved Jean confined to a nursing home.... My very close mate, Perth Survivor Arthur "Blood" Bancroft, successfully sank the 2<sup>nd</sup> HMAS Perth by pushing the plunger which made the ship into a reef and recreational diving area off the coast of Western Australia. Arthur celebrated his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday with a bang.

**FROM THE SICK BAY:** **ART DU HAIME** has been admitted to the VA Nursing Facility at Coatsville PA. Ann reports that it is a fairly new facility and the staff is outstanding and that **ART** is comfortable and content... **LANSON HARRIS** is still battling Parkinsons but he and his wife June took the time to write us some complimentary words along with their Christmas greeting.... **GENE CRISPI** seems to be recovering from a rough year and plans on being in Houston in March....**DUTCH KOOPER**, a new man with all his new parts, will be in Houston in March... **RAY GOODSON** on the mend after a rough year does not expect to see us in Houston.... **JOHN REAS** suffering from several serious problems not sure about Houston... According to the CL-81 newsletter, **JOHN STANZCAK** is confined to an Indianapolis nursing home.... **EARL "JOE" SNYDER** using oxygen a lot still says he and Irma will try to make Houston....**BOB CHARLES** underwent several surgeries in recent months....**LLOYD WILLEY** and Dorothy send a beautiful poem to help me shake some of my medical problems. Their frequent correspondence and concern is so appreciated. Latest word is they cannot make it to Houston. **LLOYD'S** knees are giving him a great deal of grief, they hope to make Dallas next August....**HARRY KELLEY** and Audrey recently drove to visit **ROSS GLOVER'S** wife Pat. They spent the afternoon with her and report that she is having a hard time living alone. **HARRY** is moaning that he is now 81 and the might want to take away his job driving a school bus....we have just learned that **MILES BARRETT** has been confined to a nursing home for the past year and a half. At the last minute **ROBERT HANLEY** had to cancel their plans for the reunion due to illness but no details given.

**60<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY REUNION:** Our 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Reunion topped all previous reunions. It blows my mind how Val, Max, Lin & Ron, year after year, run a reunion which is bigger and better than the one before. Any other organization would have a committee of at least ten doing half the job. We owe those four wonderful people a rousing WELL DONE. The reunion was jam filled with fantastic events, among which were:

Of the approximately 310 in attendance at the reunion, 20 were survivors. They were: **DAVID FLYNN, NED GALLAGHER, GUS FORSMAN, GENE WILKINSON, GENE CRISPI, DUTCH KOOPER, PAUL PAPISH, GENE PARHAM, SKIP SCHILPEROORT, JOHN REAS, BIL INGRAM, HOWARD BROOKS, BOB CHARLES, JOHN HOOD, HARRY KELLEY, JOE GARRETT, AL KOPP, STANLEY WOODY, DALLAS CLARK** and **OTTO SCHWARZ**. It was great to have such a high percentage of the survivors there. Many came despite great personal discomfort, i.e. **GUS** confined to a wheel chair with oxygen at his side, **JOHN REAS** who has been battling bad health for some years, was accompanied by a Personal Therapist, and **DUTCH**, recuperating from recent hip surgery, just barely able to walk the long distances to the meeting rooms. I'm sorry if I missed any others, but being blind I missed a lot. It was great to see **JOE GARRETT** who was attending his very first reunion, and **DALLAS CLARK** who is 92 years young.

Gene Grey and son Sean had on display their 6 ½ foot model of our ship, which they have been working on for 8 years. They had a plexi-glass cover made, rented a van at a cost of \$800, and drove for 3 days just to show it to us. It is truly magnificent, and drew large crowds at all times. The Frey's are dedicated to preserving the memory of the Houston. We appreciate and salute you, Gene 7 Sean.

At about 8:30 p.m. on Saturday, we were hooked via speaker phone with David Faltot and his team of divers, from a boat right over the Houston. They had been diving Houston for three days, and for about ½ hour they answered questions. They had surveyed the ship from stem to stern. They cleared up many misconceptions that we have had these many years. For instance, the tow forward turrets are still on the ship, the gun barrels are pointed down in the mud. The hatches of the turrets are open but the turrets are

filled with silt, and they could not see into them. The ship is lying on her starboard side. They surveyed the damage on the port side. Most of the shell damage is from the bridge forward with a lot of hits in the hull under turrets 1 and 2. They have taken a 10 foot flag to the ship and will send to us later. The ship is lying facing due east. It was an exciting conversation with some knowledgeable divers.

Our annual visit to the U of H and the Houston Collection was even better than previous years. Pat Bozman and Julie Grob went all out this year to make us feel welcome. They had a special exhibit on the first floor of the library and as we entered the Houston Collection on the fifth floor, they had the flag made in Siagon hanging prominently behind the lectern. A real surprise came when each survivor was presented a beautiful clock. The clock had a picture of the Siagon flag and a brass plate commemoration the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

Our annual memorial ceremony at the monument, although wet and freezing, was bigger and better than ever. Val and Lin pulled out all the stops, complete with the Houston City Brass Band, a bag piper, echo taps and a Marine rifle squad (21 gun salute). The Assistant Naval Attaché presented from Australia presented some of us with newly minted gold coins from the Royal Australian Mint commemorating the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the sinking of Houston and Perth. The coins are a great honor and very beautiful. I won't take any more space as Val will be describing them and telling us how we can order the \$3 and \$5 sets.

Another surprise highlight came when the son-in-law of Val and Max, Sean Gouge put on a special program as a gift to the survivors from the Valdon Roberts clan. Sean is a Tech Sgt. In the Air Force Reserve and is a Tactical Aircraft Maintenance Specialist (Crew Chief) for F-16 Falcons. His unit was recently activated and sent to Kuwait. He asked Val and Max to send him 71 small American flags. After lunch on Saturday, the Poss's got up and recited the poem "I Am The Flag", accompanied in the background by song "Proud to Be An American", after which Sean called for the flag bearers. In from another room came Sean's three sons, Josh, Chad and Max carrying a folded American flag. They marched to precise military bearing, stopped and passed the flag from one to the other, saluting. These boys, ages 6 to 9, then passed the flag to their dad, who brought it over to me. We exchanged salutes and he presented each survivor with a flag and a certificate. It turned out that his F-16 unit was bombing targets in Afghanistan, and the flags were carried in the planes as they went on their missions. A beautiful certificate was printed up in Kuwait indicating the name of the pilot, the air field he took off from, and his target. Sean had a flag and certificate for each of the 71 survivors. How can we ever thank Sean for his service to his country, and for making us a part of that service? WELL DONE Sean.

You already know that each year the skipper of the USS Houston SSN-713 comes to our reunion and brings along the Sailor of the Year. This year it was discovered that there was a sailor on the SSN-713 who had two great uncles who went down on CA-30. The young sailor's name is Greg Waldee, and the two great uncles on the CA-30 were **JACK and DON FUSSEL**. A brother, Brian Waldee is serving on the USS John L. Hall which by co-incidence, docked in Houston, and he joined his brother at our reunion. What an emotional sight to see those brothers making a rubbing of their great uncles' names on the monument. The CA-30 continues to create amazing events.

Everywhere you went for those superb three days you saw the hands of Val and Lin. How blessed we are to have those very special ladies in our Houston family.

**POW BACK PAY UPDATE:** At long last the checks for the back pay have started to be mailed. On about March 8, I started getting reports from some who had received checks. In checking with Memphis, I was informed that they will be coming through in batches. The checks are in 1942 dollars, but if Congress changes the method of payment, additional checks will be mailed. Check your computation which comes with the check to make sure there are no errors. If you find an error DO NOT CASH THE CHECK, but contact Commander DeNicola at Memphis immediately. If you have any questions, please feel free to call me at 908 964-7986. Those that are eligible are the living survivors and deceased survivor's widows.

### A Lot of Lines from Lin

Well, true to Houston weather, it surprised us again!!!! For those who were not with us for the reunion weekend, the weather turned cold and very windy the morning of and during the service. BUT there was a front page photo in Sunday's Metropolitan section which showed 3 of our people under a blanket – then there was another photo inside with a very nice article about our service. Also Saturday's paper had a small article. Anyone wishing copies should please let me know, and I will mail a copy to you. The temperature dropped below freezing a couple of nights. (Incidentally it is now in the 70s and low 80s.)

First I need to thank everyone who helped us out during this reunion – I will not mention names because I will forget someone – from the persons who arrived by plane with boxes of homemade cookies to the person who supplied 8 cases of cold drinks for the hospitality suite to the people who brought sweet and sour sausage, dips, chips, cookies, bottled water – the hospitality suite was beautiful with all of your contributions. The exhibit room was great with all the books, photo albums – and the color copier to make copies. The Freys' model looked great, as did Steve Loeffler's Changi exhibit boards. The bus monitor helped out by getting everyone onto and off the buses. AND THEN there was the chair brigade – once again we unfolded, wiped dry, and set up chairs – then after the service re-folded chairs – without the chair brigade we would have all stood. Matt Rejmaniak, our friend who also is an NOK, led the singing at the Memorial Service, and the bagpiper, Leonard Sanders, is a NOK; he had a relative on one of the ships of the Asiatic Fleet and came from California to attend the Asiatic Fleet reunion.

In Otto's column you will find the names of the Survivors who were in attendance. The following Surviving Spouses (many accompanied by family members) were at the Memorial Service: Mrs. Ranger, Mrs. Pryor, Mrs. Burroughs, Mrs. Robinson, Mrs. Weissinger, and Mrs. Reilly. Also attending were 3 men and wives from the 131<sup>st</sup>: Frank and Leeta Ficklin, Quaty and Frankie Gordon, and Kyle and Vivian Thompson. Attending the dinners was John Kidd, my friend whose official address was the HOUSTON as he was on Adm. Hart's staff.

Each year we have more NOK – or Next Generation – who attend (many due to Vic Campbell's web site – thank you very much, Vic). This year the following Navy and Marines had family to remember them at the Service: Wilson, Roberts, Nickel, Wenholz, Weiler, Pecena, Stivers, Lynch, Cumming, McMaster, Koelling, Davis, Dillon, McGarvey, Dombrowski, Bradley, Callahan, Gary, Walts, Moga, the Fussel brothers, Russell, Bloch, and Eiden. Basil Bunyard was unable to attend, but was represented by a nephew.

The USS HOUSTON (SSN 713) always sends someone to represent the submarine for the reunion weekend. This year due to a death in his family CDR Mack was not able to attend, but he sent Lt. Coffey, Petty Officer Lantz (Sailor of the Year), and Petty Officer Waldee. The USS JOHN L. HALL was also berthed in the Houston area and sent Petty Officer Waldee who is a brother to the previously listed Waldee. It was a very special time since their 2 great uncles (Fussel) went down with the HOUSTON.

Another special person at our Memorial Service was Johnny Johnson who was one of the one thousand volunteers

who signed up in May of 1942 to replace our HOUSTON's crew when the city of Houston thought that the whole crew was lost.

Val and I were very blessed to have RADM Steve Loeffler (retired) step in and be our MC for the Memorial Service. The Houston Brass Band was great – arrived early – started playing an hour before the Service – and played for a short time as people were departing. If anyone has a photo with the band, please send to me – as they have an album and would like additional photos to place in their album.

Bill Ingram videotaped the Service and will make copies for ones wishing a copy. Please address your request to Bill Ingram, 5260 Julington Forest Dr., Jacksonville, FL 32258, and enclose a check for \$10 to cover his cost and postage. You will not be disappointed. Bill's tape covers from Steve's talk on Changi Chapel, talk in the exhibit room, the Friday night dinner, including Otto's speech that he had given at the Asiatic Fleet Memorial Service, and presentations, the music before the Memorial Service and most of the Service. For those of you who do not know, our reunion was Bill's honeymoon; he and Evelyn had married earlier in the week. Congrats to Evelyn and Bill.

Many of us attended the Asiatic Fleet Memorial Service on Friday at the Battleship TEXAS. While we were there, a storm passed over. Umbrellas were the order of the day. Many of the Asiatic Fleet reunion attendees attended our Memorial Service on Saturday. A daughter of ADM Hart was with the Asiatic Fleet group who attended our Service.

Many thanks to the Nimitz people for the interviews – they completed 20 interviews. We appreciate you giving an interview – the interview will be available for research in the future. And we also thank you for participating in the documentary. Fourteen interviews were completed for inclusion in the 2 documentaries: USS HOUSTON and the 131<sup>st</sup>.

Change of Command – There will be a change of command ceremony for the submarine on May 20<sup>th</sup> (a Monday) in Bremerton, WA; we have been invited. BUT I need to have your name and address if you are interested in receiving an invitation. Please let me know as soon as possible.

Also if you have a picture of your family – or a clear picture of the Survivors all together – please send me a copy – many thanks – and we look forward to seeing you next year – March 1<sup>st</sup>. I had approximately 200 register for the week end – and there were over 300 at the Memorial Service.

The next weekend found several of us in Austin, TX, for the dedication of the Lost Battalion Room in the Military Museum at Camp Mabry. Kyle and his men made us all proud with a very beautiful room, which includes a model of the USS HOUSTON, the porthole, photographs of many Survivors of USS HOUSTON and 131<sup>st</sup>, plus information and a video of the POW experience. Vivian and her group presented a beautiful reception.

Here is my address: Lin Drees, 14219 Wickersham, Houston, TX 77077 – and my e-mail address is Lindrees.usshouston@juno.com

## FROM THE NEXT GENERATION

**REUNION 2002** – Well folks, it seems that Otto and Lin covered just about every facet of the reunion so I won't bore you with more. Lin and I worked 30 hour days and 9 day weeks to get the reunion organized. We wouldn't have had programs for the Memorial Service if it hadn't been for John and Sue (Papish) Kruetzer. They not only designed the programs, but donated them! Our only complaint is that neither of us gets to enjoy visiting with the survivors and their friends & families as much as we would like. My days were running from 6am to 1am the next morning during the reunion & I'm sure Lin was dashing about putting in the same hours. As Otto stated, there were events going on during the entire reunion including impromptu sing alongs around the grand piano led by Dana Charles both Friday and Saturday evenings. Speaking of Dana, he came to our home for 3 days after the reunion to peruse our archives for a book he is writing. I'm afraid I wasn't much of a hostess.... He was a kind and understanding guest. The non-Texans got a taste of one of our winter cold fronts called a "Blue Norther". I had to profusely apologize to our MC as I was so cold during my intro of him that I was stuttering & cut it short. Our Allied nations of the ABDA were richly represented by the Counsel General Ian Murray of England, Harry Roosevelt (grandson of H.L. Roosevelt – Asst. Secty. to the Navy when the CA-30 was christened), Commander Howard Furness, Asst. Naval Attaché from the Embassy of Australia in Washington DC, Counsel General Ed Reitsma of the Netherlands with keynote speaker Robert Mitchler, Retired Illinois State Senator. Otto presented me a beautifully framed Asiatic Fleet Proclamation from Pres. Bush for the office here – only one of 6 like it... and mine's the best looking! The Poss's and Drees's are sooo glad it's over but already are making plans for the reunion next year. Don't expect such hoopla, fellas 'cuz this was the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. You'll have to hang around another 60 years for a repeat of this year!

**WEBSITES** –<http://www.kwanah.com/txmilmus/lostbattalion/history3.htm> is a new site that tells of the USS Houston and the Lost Battalion. Also look up the University of Houston's web site at: <http://info.lib.uh.edu/speccoll/cruiserh.htm>. They have done a fantastic job!

**DONATIONS** – The organization exists solely on your donations as we do not charge for membership, newsletters, research, etc. Expenses have run high and donations were running low. Your generosity is deeply appreciated & a special thanks this quarter to: Laurie Stevens, Ben Reynolds, **BASIL BUNYARD, EARL AND ERMA SNYDER, JAMES BALLEW**, Lim Brigman, Earl Lusk, Thomas Baker, Irene Kiefer, James Golden, Jennifer Talbert, Jean Lansing, **BILL STEWART, GENE WILKINSON, QUATY GORDON, JACK AND MARIE FELIZ, HARRY & AUDREY KELLEY, STANLEY WOODY, PAUL AND THERESA PAPISH, DALLAS CLARK, SKIP SCHILPEROORT, FRED & LIZ SEIKER, JOHN HOOD, HOWARD AND SYLVIA BROOKS**, Mattie Atterbury, Carter Conlin, Harry Kelley Jr., Jimmie & JB Pryor, Joe Kollmyer, John Bradley, Mary Martwick, Bill Kendell, Adrien Fritz, and Tracy Hobbs.

**JAPANESE DOCUMENTARY OF WAR ATROCITIES** – "Japanese Devils" is a Japanese documentary released in which 14 former Imperial army soldiers recall their brutal role in their war against China. They discuss their acts in gruesome detail. For more information go to [http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h.nm/20011210/re/japan\\_atrocities\\_dc\\_1.html](http://dailynews.yahoo.com/h.nm/20011210/re/japan_atrocities_dc_1.html)

**DOUBLE YOUR DOLLARS!!** – Did you know that many employers will match gift programs? When you donate to the scholarship fund, be sure to include your matching fund form and we will apply with your company.

**IN SEARCH OF:** *Survivors, this is directed to you. Please help - - -*

**SEVERYN DYMANOWSKI** (Musician 2<sup>nd</sup> Class) of Gary, Indiana – contact F.I. Kiefer (cousin) 3567 Champeau Rd., Green Bay, WI 54311

**JAMES ELMORE HOGAN** – Contact Viva Wiley (sister) 603 Meadow Green Ct. SE, Albuquerque, NM 87123. phone 505 291-8007, email: [viken@rt66.com](mailto:viken@rt66.com)

**IRA W. BAILEY** – contact Wendell Slippel (nephew) 7 Favour Ct., Stafford, VA 22554. email: [tcsipplelinva@msn.com](mailto:tcsipplelinva@msn.com)

**PAUL GILLELAND** – contact Greta Truesdell (grand daughter) 958 Hampton Trail, Lilburn, GA 20047. Email: [gtruesdell@atl.mediaone.net](mailto:gtruesdell@atl.mediaone.net)

**JAMES CLAYTON DICKIE** – contact Gary Forrest (nephew) 320 Rainbow Ln., Appleton, WI 54911. Email: [vgforrest@msn.com](mailto:vgforrest@msn.com)

**JAMES WATT** of Iowa – contact Jim Warwick (nephew) Box 219, Coultier, Iowa 50431. Email: [war219@frontiernet.net](mailto:war219@frontiernet.net)

**CLARENCE BROCKMAN** – contact Dale Brockman (nephew) – 717 Cresta Mira, El Paso, TX 79912.

**HAROLD WALTS** – contact Elaine Walts (sister) 5540 Walnut Av. #2-B, Downersgrove, IL 60512. Email: [frenchgardner@msn.com](mailto:frenchgardner@msn.com)

**CLINTON SHETTLESWORTH** – contact Ed Shettlesworth (son) 718 Market St., Rockland, MA 02370. Email: [Evsdal@aol.com](mailto:Evsdal@aol.com)

**JAMES T. KNOWLTON** of Des Moines, IA – contact David Kiltz (great nephew), Elkhorn Valley Muesum, 515 Queen City Blvd, Norfolk, NE 68701. email: [evmdirector@cablone.net](mailto:evmdirector@cablone.net).

**COINS** – The Royal Australian Mint has issued a commemorative coin acknowledging the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Battle of Sunda Strait. Actually, you have a choice of two – one, an aluminum bronze proof finish coin depicts the forward sections of the Perth and the Houston and retails for \$35 (Australian). It is housed in a jewelry style case with an outer box and includes an Authenticity Certificate signed by the Controller of the Mint. The second coin is an uncirculated finish bi-metallic coin featuring on one side, an image of Queen Elizabeth II and its reverse side, an image of the bell of the Houston, and retails for \$5. (Australian). They are issued in sleeves with the story of the battle noted on the sleeve. The coins can be ordered from the Royal Australian Mint by phone 61 2 6202 6999 (9am – 4pm EST) Fax 61 2 6202 6953 or via email at [www.ramint.gov.au](http://www.ramint.gov.au).

**CHANGE OF ADDRESS – JOSEPH WOLF** 7009 Kermit Ln., Stockton, CA 95207, **JOSEPH GARRETT** 2038 Stop 30 Rd., Hendersonville, TN 37075-8814. **USS HOUSTON SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION & NEXT GENERATION** 107 Hallie Court, Georgetown, TX 78628, phone: 512 763-1217, fax: 512 868-2285.

**NAVAL ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES, TEXAS COMMANDERY** – Again, the NOUS (as we affectionately call them), was on hand behind the scenes to add those special touches to the Memorial Service. Thank you sounds redundant, but it is sincere. Capt. Ragsdale reports that some repairs and improvements at the site are in the making. Of course, there are expenses involved. Any donations or queries can be sent to him at: Capt. Carl V. Ragsdale, 118 Hillsborough Dr West, Montgomery, TX 77356.

**PORTHOLE CASING** – NG, Jerry Ranger has been in contact with some divers in Jakarta that found a small porthole casing at the Houston CA-30 site. Jerry had hoped to receive it during the reunion, however it was not delivered until late Sunday morning at the hotel. It is beautifully mounted on wood with a brass plaque attached stating that it was recovered February 17, 2002 & presented to the organization on the occasion of the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary. I will be investigating museum locations for a permanent site, however won't depart with it until after next year's reunion. We want to share this with the survivors and their families first.

**NEWS FROM ENGLAND** – Our friend Fred Seiker is very involved with the National Memorial Arboretum at Alrewas, UK. After 6 years of negotiating with the Thai government, 4 sections of the original tract of the infamous Death Railway were delivered to them in January. It has cost the National Memorial Arboretum \$3,800 pounds (approximately \$5,700 American) they are now on a funding drive. Any and all donations would be greatly appreciated from friends near and far. Max and I have sent a donation in honor of Fred, memory of my dad (**VALDON S. ROBERTS**), and the USS Houston CA-30 to The Thai-Burma Railway Project, N.M.A. Alrewas, %Fred Seiker, 22 Raven Dr., Worcester, ENG. Max & I have been invited to represent the American POW's and we are trying our best to be there at the official dedication in August.

**HELP** – Max & I were just a little busy during the reunion and realized we hadn't taken any pictures! I have been asked for copies of pictures and videos. I know that Vic Campbell and Tom Wilkinson are working together on editing a video. I would appreciate any copies you would like to share. If I have not responded to a request you've made of me, please send me a gentle reminder. I KNOW someone asked for a copy of President Bush's greetings to the survivors, however my memory fails me. If you change your email OR snail mail address, **please** let me know. I've received requests for caps – I have reordered & am ready to take yours orders.

**CREW MEMBER SPOTLIGHT** – A memorial service was held Sunday, January 26, 1946 for Chester August Sass after officially being declared dead. He had been listed a missing in action since March 1, 1942. He enlisted in the Navy August 10, 1939 at the age of 19 and received boot training at Great Lakes, IL. He boarded the Houston in October, 1939, and served on her until she was sunk. He was a graduate of St. Clair High School class of 1938 and was president of his class. He was survived by his parents, four sisters and a brother.

**POW LAWSUIT** – Our politicians have see-sawed with decisions. Congress approved a provision that would have prevented federal agencies from opposing civil lawsuits by former POW's against Japanese individuals or corporations. Then, the White House succeeded in having the provision struck in a conference committee for fear it might interfere with gathering international support for the war on terrorism. There is an alternative though – the Justice for United States Prisoners of War Act of 2001 which allows vets to invoke Article 26 of the 1951 peace treaty between Japan and the Allied nations. If passed, it will permit former POW's to pursue reparations against Japanese individuals and companies in American courts without interference from the American government. Obviously, this is going to take a long, long time.

**FOR SALE** – Bumper stickers \$1.00, Caps \$15, Monument and Bell pins \$2, "Death Become the Ghost" videos \$15, Avenge the Houston posters \$10, schematic of the Houston \$5 for small, \$10 for large.

**CAMP MABREY MUSEUM OPENING** – The Lost Battalion Gallery at the Texas Military Forces Museum, Camp Mabry, Austin, Texas was held at 11 am on March 9<sup>th</sup> with a moving ceremony and distinguished speakers including Texas Governor Rick Perry. Unfortunately, I didn't get the names of all the survivors and next of kin, however, we filled 4 rows. After the ribbon cutting ceremony we were allowed to tour the gallery and it is wonderfully done. Kudo's to Kyle Thompson for all his hard work, it clearly showed in the presentation of the POW's history along with honoring them. Special recognition to Vivian for her part in the food at the reception... I've GOT to have that toffee recipe! My apologies for not giving a report on the reception given the evening before. We had a family emergency and couldn't attend.

**MAILBAG** – Joe Kollmyer sent me an article out of the Star-Telegram(Fort Worth, Texas) dated November 12 featuring **GARTH SLATE** (131<sup>ST</sup> survivor) on the front page for Veteran's Day. Clay Ramsey sent me an article out of the Dallas Morning News dated November 11<sup>th</sup> with a picture of **BOB CHARLES** featuring the Veteran's Day Parade. **MATT (The Greek) MARINOS** was surprised that his son, Mike, found us on the interned & we responded. (Of course, I respond!) Jimmie and JB Pryor write that they are in fine health & have been traveling – they even took a cruise to Alaska.. the dust never settles on their luggage! **JIM BALLEW** sent a note before he set out to get the price of hogs & frogs – he met a radioman at the Asiatic Fleet reunion that was keyed into the USS *Houston* & got to listen to the LAST message from the old girl. He met another that had known our beloved Ancient Mariner, **JOE GANS** in China. Jean Burroughs spent October on a cruise through the Panama Canal, Thanksgiving in New York & 7 New Years at the Rose Bowl. The late **CECIL CHAMBLISS** would be proud of his grandchildren – Matt is with the 13<sup>th</sup> Marine Expeditionary Unit in Afganistan while Mary Fort is in the 9<sup>th</sup> grade & member of the Navy ROTC. Rita writes that she and **JOSEPH WOLF** have been married two years now. The Lusk family sent a copy of the certificate they received on Veteran's Day presenting **JOE LUSK** his WWII combat action ribbon posthumously. **JACK & MARIE FELIZ** wrote that they didn't travel this past year but worked diligently on Jack's new book, THE SAGA OF SAILOR JACK. **JOE GARRETT** wrote that they have moved twice this year... it's been tough keeping up with them! **PAUL AND MARY JANE BEATTY** have traveled to Pennsylvania, Alaska & the Bahamas. **BOB CHARLES** writes that he and **OTTO SCHWARZ** have abandoned their plans for a book about experiences in Siagon since so much time has elapsed and memories of events have faded. **BILL STEWART** wrote that he wore his uniform & marched in the Veteran's Day parade in his home town. He reports that he felt 50 years younger & felt "plum good looking" so he wore it all the day taking his Mary out to a patriotic band concert & dinner. I always enjoy letters from Mattie Atterbury sharing her fishing stories..... she should write a book. Mary Martwick sent a donation along with a note saying that she misses Phil, her handyman. She is now on oxygen for her emphysema but has a bright outlook & sweet sense of humor at 80. **LLOYD WILLEY** had his letter to the editor published in his home town of San Marcos, CA entitled "Taliban won't want to leave Guantanamo" – very well written, I might add. Elsie Schilperoort Wassenaar submitted an excellent essay about Christmas events and the return of her "lost" brother. I'll be happy to send a copy to anyone that contacts me.

**TOUR** – As you know, our tour to Jakarta, Singapore and Thailand was cancelled due to September 11<sup>th</sup>. Mason Logie is organizing another tour for 2003. He was at the March reunion with literature. If any readers are interested, please contact me and I will be sure to get you the information.

**ATTENTION MARCH REUNION ATTENDEES** – Lin and I are realizing that we are missing some wonderful stories and important information for our archives. I'm asking..... nooo, I'm begging you to please jot down stories told to you and send them in. Don't worry about writing skills or grammar. We must have these stories to carry on!

## FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR USS HOUSTON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Balance forward Oct 2001		\$9521.18
Donations, interest, matching funds		577.67
Total	\$10,088.85	
Debits (Funding Research Book)		100.00
Ending Balance as of 25 Feb 2002	<b>\$9,998.85</b>	

### FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Previous Balance	6150.13
Donations/sales/reunion payments	9446.88

Debits	
Print newsletter	369.55
Postage newsletter	141.35
Phone	338.53
Postage	259.32
Computer repairs	237.00
Computer	999.00
Supplies	1311.60
Caps	181.20
Refunds	391.00
Reunion expenses	8741.95
Total	12121.07

Current Balance **3475.94**

**IN CONCLUSION – P L E A S E N O T E** our change of address on the front page!! We moved into our new home on February 4<sup>th</sup> & the buyers signed on our other home while we were at the March reunion. It's been hectic unloading boxes in a frenzy as we had to get them back within 2 weeks to get our deposit back. Call me picky, but I grew very weary of looking at butcher paper taped to the windows for a month. Once I get this newsletter out, I can put up pictures, organize what I unloaded in the cabinets, start sewing curtains and unpack the "mystery box" I found in the back of the closet today. Max graciously gave up the exercise room shown in the floor plan and let me expand it a couple of feet for my office approximately (12x12). We also improvised on the closet shown and it is now a heat and air conditioned storage room (5x12). The old computer just could not hold the information and updates so I had to break down and get a new one. I fought it but it was costing more and more to repair. I invested in desk for the computer and I'm set. I spend at least 4 hours a day working on inquiries and projects for the organization receiving a minimum of 30 emails a day. I love this work!! Until the next edition --  
- God Bless.

## THE SOUL REMAINS

Every year on March First they gather  
In dwindling numbers not in sorrow, rather  
In pride as four nations represented: ribbons and dress  
Look back to honor their bravest and best  
Who banded together and stood to fight  
For their flags and each other against the might  
Of a seasoned and modern foe  
Until the ships and men were sent below  
The waves in numbers so great  
Few remained to tell of the awful fate  
Of great Dutch cruisers, de Reuter  
And Java and the Brit's Exeter and the cruiser  
From Australia, the Perth and so many  
Other proud ships with crews whose families  
Would miss them terribly and wonder  
What happened and why and of the other  
The Great American cruiser HOUSTON  
Who died battling alongside her ally  
Perth, thrusting a final sting into any  
Target her guns would reach and when  
She settled into the sea, there and then  
Her battle flag still flew and fluttered  
To the waves still in battle dress undeterred  
By the total loss of the hull and guns  
And the crew being unshipped and undone  
For there was still a soul  
That would play its roll  
And yes, the HOUSTON is remembered  
And yes, her allies remember  
And here they are every March First  
In the city of Houston with mist  
In some eyes and pride in all.

Vic Campbell – February 2002  
Almost 60 years after the loss of  
The heavy cruiser USS *Houston*  
And the combined Allied Fleet  
In the Battles of the Java Sea