

# LEYTE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LEYTE CV-32  
ASSOCIATION

FROM THE PRESIDENTS DESK

May 2013

As we approach our 27<sup>th</sup> reunion this October I would like to take this opportunity to thank the many people who for years have given their time and effort to make the LEYTE Association the success it has been. Some of our shipmates have served as officers and committee members since the beginning of the Association and others for many years. I want to THANK them all. This year will complete my term as President for the second time. I will be passing the gavel and office over to the capable hands of Frank Hanna at the reunion and we will be holding elections for the next two years. He will have all my support, his selected committee chairmen and hopefully yours. If needed, I will be available to help with future reunions.

This year's reunion will be held in Orlando, Florida at the Embassy Suites (airport). The Embassy Suites features two room suites, along with a full complementary breakfast, an afternoon manager's reception and free airport shuttle service for those who will be flying. We will have an extended menu for our Thursday and Saturday dinners. As usual we will have our hospitality room featuring beer, soft drinks and wine and a place to show off some of our memorabilia. I would be remiss if I didn't thank the people who helped me with the Florida arrangements – Angelo Masi, his wife Katherine, along with Stan Roberts and his wife Billie that did a lot of the leg work.

At each reunion we have a memorial service to honor those who have passed in the previous years. If anyone has knowledge of shipmates, other than those listed in the Taps, that have passed recently please let our Chaplain Frank Koeller and/or the Leyte News Editor know so that we can add them to our memorial list so that we can read their names at the memorial service. This year also marks the 60<sup>th</sup> year of the tragic explosion and fire on October 16<sup>th</sup> 1953 in Boston that took the lives of 32 of our shipmates and five civilian workers. They will also be remembered during our memorial service. I would like to mention that this information and much more is accessible on our web site [www.ussleytecv32.com](http://www.ussleytecv32.com) thanks to our ever present Webmaster Steven Perry. Visit the site and you will

be surprised to see how well it is maintained and up to date.

Before I close I would like to add a little trivia to my report: We are all familiar with the Doolittle raid in 1942 from the deck of the Hornet. In the early 50s Commander Henry Miller was our Executive Office. As a Navy pilot in 1942 he was assigned to the Doolittle group to instruct them in short runway takeoffs. He stayed with them till they took off from the Hornet. You may see him in the old newsreels taken on the Hornet walking the flight deck with Doolittle.

I wish good health to All. God Bless and God bless America. See you in Orlando!!! Jack Mitchell, President

## OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN ON 2012 AND 2013 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

- President: John E. Mitchell 480-239-9555
- Pres-Elect: Frank Hanna 772-475-6977
- Vice-Pres: Charles H. Hill 209-754-1022
- Secretary: William D. Carr 586-264-2048
- Treasurer: Angelo R. Masi 239-348-0085
- Fin. Secty: William McQueary 303-475-2003
- Asst. Secty: Vacant
- Chaplain: Frank Koeller, Jr. 610-282-1777
- CMAA: Le Grande Van Wagenen 732-727-5993
- Founding President: C. Farnsworth 518-346-5240
- First Past Pres: Charles H. Hill 209-754-1022
- Air Group: W. Carl Jeckel 860-536-6006
- Audit: Frank Koeller, Jr. 610-282-1777
- Historian: Vacant
- Hospitality: As Assigned
- Newsletter: Kenneth McLaurin 757-497-7188
- Nominating: John E. Mitchell 480-946-3993
- Publicity: Le Grande Van Wagenen 732-727-5993
- Registration: John Woods 847-695-6988
- Ship's Store: Charles H. Hill 209-754-1022
- Webmaster: Steven Perry 404-324-0852

## ASSOCIATION FUND RAISER

During this years reunion we will hold the raffle for the good of the Association offering generous gifts by our membership. These would be brought by members attending the reunion, other members sending in gifts, donations from a local company, or anything else of mystery. They could be bought new, on sale, or made by the many craftsmen and ladies. You should place your name on each item so to be recognized for the donation. The funds will be use to defray the Associations expenses since we have such a small income due to the overwhelming Life Time members leaving only the income from those paying annual dues.

## THE CHAPLAINS CORNER

By Frank Koeller, Jr

In the last days perilous times will come. II Timothy 3. Men will be lovers of themselves, boasters, proud, unthankful and unholy. Without natural affection, trucebreakers, false accusers, fierce and despisers of those who do well. Traitors, high minded, lovers of pleasure – more than lovers of God; having a form of Godliness, but denying the power thereof; ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth. Men with corrupt minds.

Doesn't it all sound familiar? Study the scriptures to make you wise unto salvation through faith.

## RELIGION WAS HIS REFUGE

Selections from Cdr Bagwell's presentation

These are from an article on a speech made by then Cdr Bagwell to 300 pilots of Fleet Air and NAS Jacksonville. 'The reasons why some men broke as prisoners of war and others stood up under the worst the Communists handed out will be debated for years. However, Cdr Bagwell who spent 33 months in Red prison camps probably furnished one answer.'

"Barefooted . . . we were forced to march 150 miles in eight days with temperatures as low as 40° below zero." Bagwell, CO of VA-35 operating off the LEYTE, was on his 28<sup>th</sup> mission when he was forced to crash land his AD-4 Skyraider behind enemy lines after encountering a cable stretched between two mountains by Red forces to down U.S. and Allied aircraft.

"I began to pray immediately after the crash. Gas tanks might explode any moment. Some 20 minutes passed before I finally freed myself from the cockpit. God was never more real." About 40 North

Korean soldiers surrounded him and he began his 33 months of captivity. The prisoners were housed in mud-rock constructed rooms.

After issuing the prisoners a pair of poor quality tennis shoes and light clothing, the "round-the-clock" political indoctrination began. During the first 18 months, the Reds used every means in their power to convert the prisoners to Communism. Many men tried to escape, but Bagwell believes no POW from his group ever reached American lines.

In 1951 about 60 percent of all officers died due to malnutrition, lack of medical facilities or the extreme cold weather. Many died because of their poor physical condition. "A lot of men gave up. Only my faith in God kept me moving from day to day." I lost my Bible in the crash, but through the grace of God I was given a water-soaked testament by a small Korean waif. Its contents were my most valued possession. God was my refuge all the way. Only through faith in Him am I here today." Sort of the old phrase 'on a wing and a prayer.' We remember on this the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the end of the Korean War those LEYTE pilots that did not make it home. BATSON, BROWN & WAGNER!

## COMMUNICATIONS

I have to say communications instead of Mail Call since we receive messages in so many different ways today.

First I want to indicate that the handout we received at reunion 12 was prepared and donated by former Lithographer Bill Ford. Bill has also sent many communications on the 60<sup>th</sup> remembrance of the 1953 explosion and fire in Boston which we will recognize at the reunion this year.

Richard (Goldberg) Grant would like to contact any Marines from the original Detachment, April "46 at [rgrantco@aol.com](mailto:rgrantco@aol.com).

Received from Elizabeth Cardimona, daughter of Erwin 'Erv' Karow, and who accompanied him to several reunions: ad passed away in September 2012 so please keep in touch with the reunion as we wish as a family to join in 2013 to honor him and be with all of you. He enjoyed being part of the reunions and looked forward to going every year and when he couldn't it crushed his spirits but thought of you always. Please remember him and us as we do you in 2013.

From Lucia Morfesis: Today I received the beautiful LEYTE NEWS. It is much appreciated. The crew, the members of the LEYTE, the good works you do and the good times and the fellowship

you have, occupy a very big place in my heart. My beloved husband Peter died November 27, 2011 He was hospitalized, ICU's, ER's, Nursing homes, etc. two solid months. Arthritis is a terrible debilitating illness. His Navy friends followed him 3, 4 & 5 times a week for two months. You can imagine how grateful I am to them (true shipmates). More like family. I wish the LEYTE all life's blessings.

From John Flynn: A letter to advise us that Dominic F. Scutti that we remember from reunions past, has moved to a nursing home and to provide his address and phone.

From Charlie Cava: Met Carl Jeckel this past summer at his camp site in Forked Lake, NY where I spend the summer months. Found out Bill Ford lives in my community but haven't met him yet. Planning on attending Orland reunion.

From Bill Moore to Bill McQueary: My father, Harold R. Moore, was an ETM in LEYTE prior to commissioning in early 1946. He helped install the RADAR equipment. He was discharged in April the same month of commissioning. He found his fathers dress blues and sent a photo of the Honorable Discharge patch AKA Ruptured Duck that was worn by WWII veterans and wanted to know what it was..

From Arthur Harrelson's brother to the website inquiring about his brother that was lost in the Boston Explosion and fire. He was sent a photo and information on the V-3 division from the 1953 cruise book. He has been in contact with Clair Fletcher a shipmate of his brother.

From Commander I.B. 'Pete' Clayton III, USN (Ret.), widely recognized at the highest levels of the navy for his expertise in conventionally powered carriers and as a writer, notification that he has completed the article "**The Life of USS Leyte (CV-32)**" for the Foundation Spring 2013 issue. The article is filled with LEYTE and Air Group photos in addition to the text and is so well done that it is a must read for those that can get hold of a copy.

From Ken Hilleman via Bill McQueary the obituary of David D Lund who was recognized for his 'dead stick' landing on LEYTE after his disabled plane barrel rolled at takeoff. His quick thinking saved the plane and crew.

### **CAPTAIN THOMAS HUDNER HONORED**

Submitted by Jim Nelligan

Bath, ME – A newspaper article quoted Capt. Thomas Hudner that pure instinct led him to intentionally crash-land his plane in Korea in 1950

in an attempt to save his squadron mate, Ensign Jesse Brown, the first African American naval aviator. Hudner the only surviving Medal of Honor recipient from the Korean War, never thought that his actions would be recognized with the nation's highest military laurel. Nor did he ever imagine that friends, family and colleagues would gather at the Maine Maritime Museum to acknowledge his lifetime of achievements, which now include serving as the namesake for the future USS Thomas Hudner, an Arleigh Burke class DDG 116 destroyer being built by Bath Iron Works and scheduled for delivery in 2017.

### **RECOGNITION**

The following partial quote, made by the outgoing Commanding Officer of USS Boise (SSN-764) the most decorated submarine in the fleet, recognizes the men who now go down to the sea in ships and those that support them. It is as true for those from the past that have made the Navy what it is today  
"The officers fight the ship, the chief's run the ship and the crew makes the ship run. Day in day out, whether standing watch topside on a cold, gusty night, picking out adversary contacts from a complicated display, or having a confident hand at the controls of our reactor plant, the crew always makes the ship run. The sons of our American families, heroes all, were the heartbeat of the ship. Six hours on 12 hours off – day after day, mission after mission, deployment after deployment. It was all supported by our strong, loving families at home, giving us encouragement and allowing us to carry on with our assignments: Boise, however is just a small piece to the Navy. We are very dependent on the leadership, guidance and support of our operational commanders at home and deployed and the shore support that keeps our machine moving. I am honored and humbled to have been your Commanding Officer."

### **TEAR DROP MEMORIAL**

Standing more than 100 feet tall, "To the Struggle Against World Terrorism" honors victims of 9/11 and the 1993 World Trade Center bombings and serves as a symbol of solidarity in the fight against world terrorism. The memorial was a gift from the Russian people and Vladimir Putin, President. Dedicated on September 11, 2006, it stands in direct view of the Statue of Liberty and the former World Trade center on the peninsula at Bayonne Harbor,

New Jersey. In the memorial hangs a 40-foot stainless steel teardrop, representing sadness and grief over the loss of life, but also hope for a future free from terror. Etched in granite on the 11-sided base are the names of nearly 3,000 killed/

#### **TAPS**

Peter D Driscoll 12/12  
Ernest Farmer 12/12  
Douglas W Hunter 1988  
David F Hutchenson, Jr  
Erwin C Karow 9/12  
Darrell Kirkpatrick  
Charles I Lukralle 5/12  
David D Lund 11/12  
Alfred J Manfra 5/12  
Ben F Park  
Dallas Parrish 10/12  
Nick Recce Sr  
Leo M Sabota 9/12  
Arthur Schultz 12/12  
James R Scruggs 12/12  
Donald Strohm  
Robert Taffanelli 10/12  
Arthur Tagliente 1/13

#### **SHIPMATES LOST ON OCTOBER 16 1953**

<b>OFFICERS</b>	Elmer Holt
James Bedford	Walter Macomber
Leonard DeRose	Thomas Meyers
Charles Fischer	Clinton Randall
William Gagas	Taddeus Runowicz
<b>ENLISTED MEN</b>	Leo Kadlec
Charles Ball	Gregory Keenan
Thomas Bielecki	Riley Lintz
Joseph Capper	Kenneth Mayhew
Roland Conrad	Sidney Mills
George Crespy	Fulton Mountain
Gerald Faulkner	Neil Nelson
Jackie Hackett	Joe Patterson
Arthur Harrelson, Jr	George Quinn
Warren Hartley	Earl Slater
James Hildreth	James Winslow
Nathan Jackson	William Wooley
<b>CIVILIANS</b>	Carl Hult
Edward Buzyk	Charles Murphy, Sr
Selby Herald	John Rosa

\* \* \* \* \* USS LEYTE (CV-32) ASSOCIATION RENEWAL/APPLICATION \* \* \* \* \*

I Mbr#\_\_\_ apply to renew (\_\_\_) **or** for membership (\_\_\_) in the USS LEYTE (CV-32) Association and forward in consideration a gift of \$ 15.00. **or** Life membership (\_\_\_) 59 years or less = \$150; 60-69= \$100; 70 up = \$50.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (\_\_\_\_\_) Wife's Name: \_\_\_\_\_ \*\* 2013 DUES\*\*

**Info Change**(\_\_\_) first/mi/last \_\_\_\_\_ nickname \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_ City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_ + \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: Home (\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ e-mail Address \_\_\_\_\_

Crewmember: From \_\_\_ - \_\_\_ to \_\_\_ - \_\_\_ Division(s): \_\_\_\_\_ Rank/Rate: \_\_\_\_\_

mo yr mo yr

**Mil. Retired?** No \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ **If yes, Rank/Rate** \_\_\_\_\_ **USN/US** \_\_\_ [Mbr# \_\_\_\_\_ **Paid \$** \_\_\_\_\_ ]

Return Form to: **William I. McQueary, 14519 WCR 16, Ft. Lupton, CO 80621**

**Please make checks payable to USS LEYTE CV-32 ASSOCIATION**

\*\*\* A Non-Profit Organization of former crew members \*\*\*