



IN MEMORIAM

Matt Marinos	December 28, 2009	Natural Causes
Lloyd Willey	January 24, 2010	Natural Causes

U.S. Navy Cruiser Sailors Assn
16 – 21 May, 2010
Rapid City, S. Dakota
Contact Robert Patrick 360-387-9257

34th Annual USS Houston CA 30 - CL 81
Sept. 14th thru 19, 2010
Hilton Garden Inn 441 International Center Drive (Richmond area).
Sandston, VA 23150 1-877-782-9444

Contact: Donna Rogers, 3949 Little John Drive, York, PA 17408
717-792-9113 dlr7110@yahoo.com

HBO PROJECT - HBO is gathering 30 second messages to thank the WWII veterans & will have them as a national tribute. The Navy Memorial offers a kiosk for people to participate. If you have a web camera on your PC, you can leave a message going through HBO's web-site. When John Schwarz was at the Navy Memorial on USS *Houston* business, he left the following message, "I would like to thank each and every one of the "Greatest Generation" who sacrificed and serviced our great country in WWII and in particular, to the men of the Asiatic Fleet and it's flagship, the USS *Houston* CA-30.

THIS N THAT - Replica's of the Asiatic Fleet Plaque can be ordered thru Paul Haley (United States Navy Memorial) (202 380-0760 ext 760) for \$150....Terry Mattan, General Manager of the Thailand-Burma Railway Center reports that on Jan 14th, Rod Beattie, Managing Director was bestowed the honor of "Knight in the Order of the Orange-Nassau" by the Queen of the Netherlands for appreciation and recognition for the special way in which they have carried out their activities. DAVID FLYNN was featured in the "Sun Sentinel" paper Nov. 21st! He was honored by his children & grandchildren along with other friends and family with a surprise 90th birthday party.

MAILBAG – Just as the newsletter went to the printer, I received a note from JACK FELIZ thanking “all of those lovely and caring people” for his Get Well Card signed at the Lost Battalion reunion. “At age 98 I didn’t think that there were many events that could touch my heart, but seeing all those wonderful signatures just melted my heart strings and gave me a very mellow and truly appreciated feeling toward all of you very kind and considerate friends.” Jack reports he is about fully recovered & no longer uses his walker getting “around quite well”. Melissa Ellsworth, daughter of MATT MARINOS, called to tell us that Matt had died in his sleep on the 28th of December. She asks to be added to the Next Generations roster & sent in her Membership Registration Form and hefty donation. Anne DuHaime sent a donation with a note saying that due to her poor vision, she now has a machine to help her read. She has moved in with her son Raymond at 299 Essex Rd, Warminster, PA. 18974 (home 215 357-2818/cell 215 378-7072). Dorothy & LLOYD WILLEY’s Christmas message included announcing their granddaughter’s garden wedding at their home on their own wedding anniversary date. Granddaughter Adria even used Dorothy & Lloyd’s cake topper for the cake. LLOYD died peacefully with family gathered around him a few months later. Nancy Morrow always includes a newsy note when she sends her donation – she continues to make her preserves, jams & marmalades (growing her own fruits) and volunteers at the cancer support group since she’s a survivor herself. Joe Kollymer sent a generous donation with a note reporting his son graduated from San Angelo State with a degree in Physics & Math in December then entered grad school at Texas Tech in January. Audrey & HARRY KELLEY sent several generous donations for the kitty and reunion expenses – I repeat several & generous. We sincerely appreciate their consistent support. PO3c Ryan Cleary, great-nephew of VINCENT POLIDORO has graduated from Nuclear Power Training Command (he is MM Nuke) & off to prototype training.

SICK BAY – As stated, JACK FELIZ is just about recovered & we’re about to pull him off the “sick bay list”, Anne DuHaime (surviving spouse of ART DUHAIME) struggles with her vision problems. Mary & SKIP SCHILPEROORT are in California & hoping to be able to return to their home in Arizona. Mary still has use of her left side & is undergoing more physical therapy. They’ve installed a pole in her room to help with her rehab. OTTO SCHWARZ’ s sister Helen Estes had made reservations for the reunion but had to cancel due to arthritis problems. Jimmie Pryor (surviving spouse of CHARLEY PRYOR) had a fall & broke 3 ribs. When taking Xrays, they found a tumor on her kidney. Audrey called to tell me that HARRY’s (KELLEY) doctor would not let him travel to attend the reunion as HARRY fights lung cancer....this is the first they missed & it wasn’t the same without them. Audrey herself has just overcome colon cancer. Vickie Kehr reports that husband Wally had knee surgery and is slowly mending. Our Jerry Ranger had knee surgery with no improvement so he had surgery again in January. Both Donna and DAVID FLYNN had knee replacements. Trudy Schwarz had a bit of a battle with this mean bronchial bug going around. Silvia Brooks has also had knee problems but some shots in the area helped.

DONATIONS – Bridget McMaster, John Schwarz, Marie & JACK FELIZ, Tim & Jo Klenk, BASIL BUNYARD, Silvia & HOWARD BROOKS, Trudy Schwarz, Eileen & ROBERT HANLEY, Sally Johnson, Fred Haring, Jane & Matt Matthews, Audrey & HARRY KELLEY, Vickie Keehr, Anne DuHaime, STANLEY WOODY, Ron & Lin Drees in memory of BOB CHARLES, Melissa Ellsworth in memory of MATT MARINOS, Joseph Connolly, Mariann Tracy, Dana Charles, Marilyn Vandever, John & Jan Bradley, Nancy Adams, Nancy Morrow, Nancy & Darrell Greenwald, Mary & SKIP SCHILPEROORT, Sharron & Bob Long, Col. Tom Sledge, Andrea Young, Michele Pope, Joe Kollmyer, Capt. Carter Conlin, Ben Stefanek, Walter Grice, Dorothy & Fred Hekking, Ted Maddox, Capt. Cal Dean Hill USN-Ret., BASIL BUNYARD, Bernard & Cynthia Quinlan, Gordon & Roma Duffy, Capt. Kerry Magee, Eugene and Mary Frey, Matthew Rejmaniak, Bill Lynch, Eunell Weissinger , Sgt. Ivan Hammond, Marilyn & Larry Fizer, Teresa Reilly in memory of John D. Reilly, Judy Bunch, Vicky Bergman in memory of LEON GALSKE, Laura & Tim Fournier in memory of LEON GALSKE, Bristol Retired Police Officers Assn in memory of LEON GALSKE, Karl & Mary Schirm in memory of LEON GALSKE, Leland Stewart, Ron & Lin Drees, Larry & Susan Krug, Mark & Maryann Seleman in memory of LEON GALSKE, John and Sandra Stocki in memory of LEON GALSKE. **We sincerely appreciate the generosity of our *Houston* family & friends!**

FINANCIAL REPORT

Previous balance: \$7,834.51 + Deposits \$16,816.38 - Debits 18,264.93 = \$6,385.96

Note – if I omitted your name, feel free to remind me

- Note – Tax ID # 74-2814051 for your tax deductions
- Gentle reminder-- some folks won't be receiving complimentary newsletters in the future.

A FEW CHANGES – We had a tele-conference Board meeting in December to tweak some of the work load & here are a few changes:

~Please do not ask us to add someone to the mail list --- ask them to contact us by call, email or snail mail. We will send them a “welcome” letter along with the Membership Registration Form & copy of our Bylaws. This is not to be arbitrary but to have documentation in the event the feds or state requests to confirm our membership. If the MRF (Membership Registration Form) is not returned, we can not add them as members entitled to a newsletter nor will we follow up & send a 2nd set of information. The “welcome letter” will explain they can access our tri-annual newsletters via our website if they choose not to sign and return the form.

~For those of you that have not returned the MRF (Membership Registration Form), you will continue to receive the newsletter but not have voting privileges. ~There will no longer be complimentary newsletters to non participating NG's or friends. All members, with exception to survivors, surviving widows and those organizations we are in constant contact with & visa versa (ie: University of Houston, Tin Can Sailors Assn., Asiatic Fleet Assn., etc.), will receive newsletters for no more than 12 months without participating with either their time, talent or “tithing”. Participation of time and talent is more than sending 2-3 birthday cards annually. We are not only a non profit organization but more importantly Houston family that works as a team. These 3 T's are essentialor we will fail in our objective to perpetuate the memory of this ship and crew. In the past, we have sent gentle reminders after 12 months have gone by without hearing from you, THEN sent another query at the time of the next newsletter. This is too time consuming & will no longer be our responsibility to remind you. However, this does not mean you won't be able to access the latest newsletter via our website (see header for web address).

~For those receiving the Bluebonnet via email – We will no longer email the newsletter as an attachment or cut & paste the newsletter for those that can not download. You will receive a message advising the newsletter is now accessible on our website. We will provide the specific website information for easy access. It is recommended you visit your local library to access the newsletter if you have difficulties with your computer.

Thank you for understanding – The Board of Members

NOTE – To help with any questions....

~ Note: “tithing”/donation - There is no set amount required either annually or monthly but we ask for an occasional and affordable donation to help us along. The Board felt a donation fitting comfortably with a member's circumstances would ease the stress of a required amount (dues/membership fee).

~We are trying to phase out as much snail mail as possible to cut expenses. If you have an email address, please extend us the courtesy of sharing it with us.

~ Note: “expenses” - Although all time spent by our volunteers are on an unpaid basis, we have the expense of our website, storage of archives, fax, phone, DSL, stamps, shipping, paper, envelopes for snail mail correspondence, paper clips, staples, etc.

~ If you change your email address, please contact us. We will no longer write (snail mail) and ask for your new email address.

~If you change your mailing address, please contact us. We will no longer try to track down your new address.

NAVAL ORDER OF THE UNITED STATES – We will always owe a debt of gratitude to this group for erecting our magnificent monument. *Mission Support* is the NOUS campaign to sustain funds for the Oral History project from remaining WWII veterans, NROTC Midshipmen & Coast Guard Cadets, enhancements to the Navy Monument at Normandy, etc. Like us, the foundation is not-for-profit & your gift is 100% tax deductible. (Tax # 01-0840239). Mail donations to Capt. Al Serafini, 416 Sycamore St. San Carlos, CA 94070-2018 (make check payable to "Naval Order Foundation").

FROM DOWN UNDER – The Australian Government, Department of Veterans' Affairs continues to keep me posted with step by step pictures and explanations of the progress of the new stairs at Hell Fire Pass. Retaining the structural and visual integrity is a key design consideration.

The Memorial Service for the HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* was held at St. John's Church, Fremantle Western Australia on Sunday 28 February. During the service I addressed the congregation, and specifically the four West Australian survivors present, Arthur Bancroft, Fred Skeels, Robbie Roberts, and Norm Fuller, to extend greeting and best wishes from the survivors of USS *Houston*. I then read their names as you sent to me, and concluded with the portion of Psalm 107 that begins "those that go down to the sea in ships..." I also laid a wreath on behalf of USS *Houston*.

I fill the role of Senior Officer in the North American Veteran's Unit here in Perth, and our unit President Michael Munjak coordinates all the veteran events in which we participate. He took the photos which I have attached, provided the wreaths, and laid one of them on behalf of NAVU. It was our privilege to recognize the courage, dedication, and sacrifice of the shipmates of HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston*.

Very Respectfully

Capt. Mike Donnelly USN (ret)

A memorial to Capt. Hec Waller was dedicated on Sunday March 14 at Benalla, VIC. Members of the Waller family were present as well as a number of Perth Association members, together with a Perth Banner. The memorial consisted of central granite stone (approx. 4 tons in weight) on the top of which will be a bronze "whirlpool"; which depicts the last sign of a sinking ship with a seaman's cap and an officer's cap floating on the "water". Around the perimeter of the bronze "whirlpool", the well known words "*They have no grave but the cruel sea etc: etc:*" will be inscribed. Each side of the centre stone will have a granite pillar - that on the right in memory of & to honor CAPT Waller, & that on the left in memory of all those servicemen and women lost at sea on operational service. Mr. Louis Lauman was commissioned to sculpture the "whirlpool", he being well known as the sculptor of the now famous "Weary Dunlop" statue in the Benalla Gardens. Sir Edward 'Weary' Dunlop was also one of Benalla's favorite sons. Our Aussie pen pal, Pattie Wright helped us arrange to have USS *Houston* representation with wreath laid by *Perth* survivor Gavin Campbell & Capt. John Sheehan, Naval Attaché, Embassy of the United States. Six HMAS *Perth* survivors, all over the age of 85 attended. The Australian national anthem was played and the MC gave his best to sing the Star Spangled Banner to honor the Americans/USS *Houston* & crew.

Also, a documentary is being made on PERTH I by noted film Producer Brendan Ward for screening early 2012 around the 70th anniversary of the sinking. Brendan is also seeking currently serving ADF persons (preferably Navy) who are descendents of a PERTH I crewmember when she was sunk in Sunda Strait.

I'm sad to report that the USS *Houston* tree is succumbing to the heat stress from the draught conditions at the Shrine of Remembrance. Denis Baguley, Chief Exec says they plan to replace the tree within the next 5 years depending "on whether it deteriorates sooner than later". There was mention of salvaging the wood from the tree to use & I have referred this to the Board to investigate.

THAILAND-BURMA RAILWAY CENTER – We are proud to announce the connecting USS *Houston* and Lost Battalion plaques arrived at the museum. The *Houston* plaque is also alongside the *Perth* plaque. They will join other plaques honoring the Allied POW's that worked as slave labor on the Death Railway. Many thanks to Dana Charles for donating the plaque along with his art expertise designing the plaque. Lori Buzzo (daughter of LB survivor DAN BUZZO) donated her talents by designing the LB plaque, Terry Manttan (whose father was on the *Perth*) and Rod Beattie for their hard work!!

NATIONAL MUESUM OF THE PACIFIC WAR – Curator Kari Kohloff wrote to advise our materials donated in '07 have been placed on display: Two reproduction paintings of USS *Houston* & HMAS *Perth*, a log of surviving personnel, & personal account by Cmdr. William Epstine. Two paperweights were donated (the acrylic with silhouette of the Houston & one containing the oil from the Houston) are being rotated. These items will remain on view through May '10 & "quite likely for some time beyond".

DIVE TEAM LOCKER BY JERRY RANGER

For those that missed a great reunion in Houston TX. The dive team is trying to get up another dive trip to the USS HOUSTON and HMAS PERTH in Java. We are looking at the months of June and July of 2011, so that we will miss the rain and spring tides in the area. The boat that we are looking at will hold/sleep 14 people onboard. So we will be offering space onboard for non-divers to experiences being over the USS HOUSTON and watching the divers and Video Ray (ROV) in action. You might ever get to operator the ROV around the ship. .

The dive team in the pass has had the USS HOUSTON Family and VideoRay Company sponsoring the dives trip by donating money to the dive team. As of right now we have VideoRay Company donating the ROV and two ROV Operators (David Phillips and Tom Crossman) to go on the 2011 dive trips. Now we are asking the USS HOUSTON Family and friends if they can to help us by donating money to the USS HOUSTON CA-30 DIVE TEAM to make this dive trip happen.

This may be the last dive trip to the USS HOUSTON for the dive team to take video and pictures for the Houston's survivors. I would like to turn it over the dive team to the Next, Next Generation to care on.

For those that would like to donate money to the Dive Team - Please send your check to :

USS HOUSTON CA-30 SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION & NEXT GENERATIONS
2501 Amen Corner, Pflugerville TX. 78660 (DIVE TEAM in the left hand corner)

The dive team would like to thank all that has already donated and hope that other will help the dive team get over to Java by donating to the USS HOUSTON DIVE TEAM.

For those (scuba diver and non-divers) that might want to joined in the dive trip to the USS HOUSTON and HMAS PERTH. Please contact: DIVE TEAM LEADER, Jerry Ranger at:

Ranger9@bellsouth.net 850 623 3399 850 293 1140

2011 DIVE TEAM AS OF NOW IS:

Jerry Ranger (diver)
David Phillips and Tom Crossman (VideoRay operators/divers)
Brad Gift and Eunju Kim (divers)
Scott Ingram (non diver)
Commodore Vince Di Pietro (diver)
Mike Whetstone (non diver/video taker of the trip)

The dive trip will last about 2 weeks with 10 days over the USS HOUSTON.

WE THANK ALL OF YOU FOR HELPING WITH AND DONATING TO THE USS HOUSTON DIVE TEAM.

NOW HEAR THIS!

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM- Applications are accepted beginning June 1 with the deadline for submission extending to November 1. Applications and specific information about applying may be obtained anytime by visiting our website or writing to: John Keith Schwarz, 2500 Clarendon Blvd., Apt 121, Arlington, VA 22201

**** Please remember that donations are appreciated - You can remember the USS Houston Scholarship Fund in your will, estate planning, or beneficiary designations. All donations are tax deductible.** Donations should be made out to: USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association. Mail Donations to: Mrs. Pam Foster, 370 Lilac Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648
2011 Scholarship Award= **\$2500.00-\$3,000.00!** (depending on scholarship fund balance)

SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE:

Just to speak on what we can do when we work together; approximately a decade ago Ned Galagher announced that the Survivor's Association would engage in the establishment of a scholarship program, a vision of many of the survivors.

Well, on Friday night March 5, 2010 our organization realized the awarding of **TWO** scholarships; our annual internal award winner and the first awarding of our permanent, US Naval Academy Foundation scholar award.

The 2010 USS *Houston* CA-30 Scholarship winner is **Kevin Swick**, grandson of the late **John D. Reilly**, crewmember of the USS Houston CA-30. Kevin hails from La Canada, CA and is a high school senior about to graduate and attend a college not yet decided upon. Kevin of course did a fabulous job with his application including a heart wrenching essay that was read to our group at the scholarship dinner on 03/06/10. Members of Kevin's family including his mom **Linda**, GrandMom **Theresa Reilly**, and uncle **John Jr.** were all proudly in attendance at the reunion. Best of luck to Kevin with your future and thank you Kevin for your understanding/admiration of your grandfather and all of the men of the CA-30.

The 2010 United States Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship, 'The USS *Houston* CA-30 Memorial Scholarship', is awarded to Midshipman **Stephen J. Scales**. Stephen is a Magna Cum Laude graduate of Texas High School of Texarkana, TX. He was a member of the National Honor Society, Calculus Club, Chess Club, Risk Club, Senior Student Council, Tiger Vision, UIL Science Team, Varsity Soccer and Swim Team. He was awarded the Most Scholastic Academic All State for soccer. He was nominated for the National Honor Society of High School Scholars and to attend the National Youth Leadership Forum on Defense, Intelligence and Diplomacy. He was selected as Who's Who Among American High School Students. Stephen was a member of the Fellowship Bible Church in Texarkana, TX where he taught and served with Project Serve and Young Life. Stephen attended Greystone Preparatory School at Schreiner University in Kerrville, TX last year under Foundation sponsorship. He made the President's list and was Vice-President of Greystone Prep School.

He is currently in year one at the US Naval Academy, Annapolis, MD majoring in Naval Architecture with a leaning towards submarine warfare.

*Current scholarship fund balance = **\$11,935.19** (includes 2010 reunion auction and donations, does not include \$2500.00- 2010 scholarship award debit)

*Scholarship Donations;

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

remember, the organization general fund needs your support as well for our organization to remain financially viable.

We conducted our annual scholarship auction at this year's reunion. We thank very much, **all of you wonderful folks** who donated an item(s) for this year's auction. You made that fund raising element possible, along with the generous folks who purchase these items to enable money to go into our scholarship fund. Job well done by all, **THANK YOU**. Combining money raised at this year's auction, silent auction and other donations received, we raised \$2,275.00!! Thank you everyone concerned, thank you, this is how we can perpetuate this award from year-to-year. Anyone who has a 'lead' to an outside person, company, or other entity who may be a possible donor, we can provide you with a fund raising letter and brochure, or, accept the referral and a Committee representative will follow-up that lead. Please present leads to your Chairman, John K. Schwarz and that too, would be appreciated.

John Keith Schwarz- Scholarship Program Chairman, son of the late CA-30 shipmate-
Otto C. Schwarz/Trudy Schwarz

CRUISER HOUSTON COLLECTION NEWS FRM THE LIBRARY -

For this issue I have a number of exciting updates to share with members of the USS *Houston* Survivors Association and Next Generations. First, the University of Houston Libraries have received three new donations related to the USS *Houston* (CA-30).

The family of Captain Albert H. Rooks, the heroic Commanding Officer of the *Houston* who was killed during the Battle of Suna Strait, has donated a small group of papers, photographs, and memorabilia related to Rooks. Highlights include several photographs of Rooks that we did not previously have in the collection, letters sent to Mrs. Edith Rooks (Rooks' widow) following the ship's sinking, and material related to the naming of several facilities in Rooks' honor. Many of these items were preserved by Rooks' son, Harold "Hal" Rooks, Sr., along with his own research documents, journals, and books.

In addition, we received a donation of correspondence written on board ship by George Hosmer Cumming, Jr. all the way into 1942. It was donated by his niece Virginia Cumming. Finally, we received a second gift of materials that belonged to ensign and survivor Preston R. Clark, Jr., donated by his son Rick. This donation includes the "g-string" worn by Clark during captivity as a POW.

In other news, uniforms of Houston survivors David Flynn (Radioman First Class) and the late Henry Nickel (Chief Boatswain's Mate) will soon go on display as part of the Library's permanent USS *Houston* exhibit. Both uniforms have been sent to a textile conservator in order to have archival mannequins made for them, and custom exhibit cases have been ordered to display them, along with the ship's bell that was formerly in the Brown Room. The new cases will be placed near the ship's model on the second floor of the Library

And finally, coming this summer... digitized, fully searchable scans of the ship's newsletter (also called the *Blue Bonnet*) from 1933-1941. They will be available online as part of the University of Houston Digital Library at <http://digital.lib.uh.edu/>. I will send an announcement to the organization when they are ready.

-Julie Grob

LINE FROM LIN (The 2011 date will be March 3rd, 4th, and 5th - mark your 2011 calendar!)

We had a beautiful day for our 2010 Memorial Service. After the Memorial Service, many said "how touched they were by the Service," "how moving and beautiful," "emotional and thought-provoking," and most said that they would be back next year, even the first-timers plan to be back. Each year more people stay afterward to talk, look for loved ones' names on the Monument, take photos, and enjoy each others company before scattering to go their own ways.

Each year at our Memorial Service, I would love to be able to call out all the names of OUR MEN who served on the USS *HOUSTON* – and are named on the Monument, BUT it would take too long. So we call out all the names of ones who are in attendance or have family and friends in the audience.

This year the following Survivors attended with family and friends: Basil Bunyard, David Flynn, Clarence Schilperoort, and Marvin and Helen Sizemore. Bill Ingram was represented by his son. This year we had 2 131st Field Artillery Survivors attend: Dan Buzzo and Eldridge Rayburn, along with their sons.

Representing their deceased husbands, the following wives and family were in attendance: Teresa Reilly, wife of John Reilly, Lee Robinson, wife of Marvin Robinson, and Trudy Schwarz, wife of Otto Schwarz, the founder of the USS *HOUSTON* Survivors Association.

This year the following deceased men had family to represent them at the Memorial Service: Roger Barnett, Joseph Bienart, Leonard Bradley, Bob Charles, William DeWald, Edwin Dombrowski, Severyn Dymanowski, James Gary, Joe Garrett, Walter Grice, Albert Krekan, Alfred McGarvey, Paul Papish, Thomas Pecena, Charley Pryor, John Ranger, John Reas, Valdon Roberts, Tony Russell, John Stefanek, and James Raydell Wilson. And also the family of Clyde York who served on the USS *EDSALL* were with us this year.

This year we were honored to have Doc Hekking's son and wife with us. Fred Hekking has great stories to share of his days as a prisoner when he was a young adult.

The granddaughter of CMDR W. H. Martin, Executive Officer of the HMAS *PERTH* was with us this year - Sandy DiPietro gave a wonderful talk at lunch - she said that a Survivor of the *PERTH* told her that had he realized that sixty years later, he would be meeting and speaking with the granddaughter of CMDR Martin, since he was standing beside her grandfather, he would have tried to remember exactly what he said those last minutes before the sinking!

Attending this year was Bob Ivy, a model maker, who has made models of many ships - always using the blueprints, no kits. Currently he has two models of the USS *HOUSTON* CA 30 - in two different sizes, plus a CL 81. He also drew up his own blueprints from photos of the original USS *HOUSTON* which was a German ship captured during World War I - and renamed USS *HOUSTON*. With the blueprints he then made a model. Bob has his own mini-museum of ship models in his apartment!

Also attending this year was the Frey family: Gene, Marcia, and Sean - they brought along their large model of the USS *HOUSTON* - their model is a remote control - and will someday be skimming along the waters.

With the beautiful weather we were able to enjoy the music of the Houston Brass Band, including the Echo Taps. They play 30 minutes before the Service begins, plus during the Service, they play the National Anthem, and Navy Hymn which is recited by Carter Conlin, Texas Commandery. The Honor Guard from VFW Post 8790 supplied the rifle salute. The Sea Cadets attended, helped with ushering, and provided the color guard. The Mayor's Office of Special

Events, The Heritage Society, and the Houston Park Service had the Monument paving repaired (unfortunately this has to be repaired each year). Special Events is a tremendous assistance and provides the sound equipment, along with the sound technician - we are very pleased to have Todd Holloman's assistance with the preparations beforehand and his expertise as the City's sound man. Peggy Horn with The Heritage Society flew our flags (the ABDA flags and POW flag) at the Monument, and allowed use of the Museum's restrooms. The NOUS, Texas Commandery, keeps the flags in safekeeping for us during the year. The POW flag was donated by Harry and Audrey Kelley several years ago.

Every year, two families appear with homemade cookies, coffee, hot cocoa, and bottled water. Larry and Linda Poole, along with Roy and Dorlene Gideon, are wonderful friends of the USS *HOUSTON*. Roy and Dorlene's granddaughter came this year since she is interested in World War II.

Many thanks to all who assisted this past year - setting up chairs, cleaning off the chairs, assisting with various aspects of the Service. The following assisted: Ron Drees, Ron Miller, Matt Matthews, Annie Golden, Betty and Ted Maddox, Scott Ingram, David Pryor, and Andrea Young. Kathy Larson brought roses which were presented to each Survivor's wife and each Surviving Spouse. Matt Rejmaniak brought bottled water for the Band. The following assisted during the meal time with the saying of grace or leading the pledge: Val Poss, Mariann Tracy, Nancy Greenwald, Andrea Young, Corbin Odom, and John Bradley. Val Poss and Dana Charles made sure to invite our dignitaries who participated during the Service; Nancy Greenwald wrote thank you notes. Also many thanks to any whose names I have forgotten to mention - all assistance was appreciated.

Patty Letze and Sharron Long, along with Val and Max Poss, oversaw the hospitality suite - they had many helpers! Assisting them the first day, Wednesday, with the set-up of the hospitality suite were: Jerry Ranger, Dana Charles, Bruce DeWalt, and Gene, Marcia, and Sean Frey.

Friday afternoon, we attended a reception held at the UH Library and also viewed the displays in memory of the USS *HOUSTON*. Come to Houston to view the Monument and to UH Library to see the display area for our USS *HOUSTON* photos, letters, memorabilia, and paintings. Precinct 3 was able to again provide bus service to the Library - we appreciate this service each year and the courtesy of the drivers. Jane Matthews worked with UH to set up the reception - and Don Kehn was the bus monitor for the bus trip over to UH.

The 2011 date will be March 3rd, 4th, and 5th - mark your 2011 calendar!

Many thanks to all who attended our reunion and the Memorial Service - and for those of you who were not able to attend, you were missed! Please come next year.

Lin and Ron Drees, 14219 Wickersham, Houston, TX 77077, 281.493.5171 (phone and fax) -- or lindrees.ca30@sbcglobal.net

ITEMS FOR SALE - We have USS Houston T shirts sizes medium to 2X, great looking Next Generation coffee cups, Monument pins, Bell pins, bumper stickers DVD's of interviews of the survivors, DVD of "The Last Stand of USS *Houston* (CA-30) Death Becomes The Ghost" & CD of crew pictures, Challenge coin. Please go to <http://usshouston.org/news.htm> (bottom left) for the prices & order form or contact Val Poss for a price list.

CHALLENGE COINS

If you read the list of items for sale, you'll notice something new! We now have USS *Houston* CA-30 Challenge coins. Andrea Young took on the project, got different designs and negotiated pricing. They are fantastic! We are selling them at \$12 each (includes shipping).

CREW MEMBER HIGHLIGHT -

JOHN B. NELSON

Jim Hornfischer mentions Ensign John B. Nelson in four places in his book, ***Ship of Ghosts***. In 1951, when I reported aboard the USS Robert L. Wilson, the Executive Officer was John Blount Nelson, USNA class of 1940. The same person.

We all knew that John had been a Japanese prisoner of war but not until reading *Ship of Ghosts* did I appreciate the ordeal he went thru as a slave labor prisoner. The experience affected his personae.

John was promoted to Commander while aboard the Wilson. Records show that he made Captain before retiring from the in June Of 1965. He died February 4, 1981 at the age of 63 and is buried in the Houston National Cemetery, Harris County, Texas.

The Robert L. Wilson, DD/DDE 847 Association is paying tribute to him by updating his record as it appears in the US Navy Memorial Foundation's Navy Log. Any information you can share with us such as next of kin or his obituary would be greatly appreciated.

Phil Dilloway
USSRLWA Historian

GOD BLESS AMERICA