

Now Hear This!

Association Address:

c/o John Schwarz, Exec. Dir.
2500 Clarendon Blvd., Apt. 121
Arlington, VA 22201

Association Phone Number:

703-867-0142

Address for Tax Deductible

Contributions:

USS Houston Survivors Assoc.

c/o Pam Foster, Treasurer
370 Lilac Lane,
Lincoln, CA 95648

(please specify which fund –
General or Scholarship)

Association Email Contact:

Contact@USSHouston.org

Association Founded 1946:

by Otto and Trudy Schwarz

Senator John McCain Honors USS Houston Survivor David Flynn



Senator John McCain with Survivor David Flynn
(for more on this story see page 2)

In This Issue...

- McCain Honors Flynn / 1, 2
- Reunion 2013 / 1, 18, 19
- Beeson/Rentz Personal Account / 2
- Desk of Executive Director / 3
- Original Decking / 4
- Veteran's Day Message / 4
- Houston Maritime Museum / 5
- Houston CL-81 Reunion / 5
- Presidential Cruise Program / 5
- New Book / 5
- Sam Houston Park / 6
- In Memoriam / 7
- Seen Alive / 8
- Scholarship Update / 9
- Scholarship Winners / 9
- Note to Survivors / 9
- Crew Spotlight-Stewart / 10, 11
- Rolling Thunder-Ingram / 11

In This Issue...cont.

- Howard Brooks / 12
- Sale Items / 13
- Perth News / 14
- Who Are Those Guys? / 15, 16
- National POW Museum / 16
- Liberated POW Photo / 17
- Reunion Registration Form / 18
- Reunion Schedule / 19
- Board of Managers / 20
- Welcome Aboard / 20
- Membership / 20
- Association Websites / 20
- Mail Bag / 21
- Financial Report / 21
- Thanks to Donors / 21
- Masthead / 21

ATTENTION!

Register Now
for the

**USS Houston CA-30 - 2013 Reunion
March 14-16, 2013**

**Hyatt Regency Downtown Hotel
Houston, TX**

*See page 18 for the
registration form and page 19 for the tentative
schedule of events. You won't want to miss it!*

**2013 Scholarship winners
to be announced at the reunion!**

McCain Honors David Flynn – continued from page 1

Senator John McCain, a former POW, visited the Naval Air Station Fort Lauderdale Museum on Thursday, October 25, 2012. Senator McCain spoke about Veterans issues, mingled with the “by-invitation only” crowd of about 150 people, and then signed the 25x7 aviation mural “*On Final Approach*” by Bob Jenny. **USS Houston CA-30 survivor, David Flynn**, and several other WWII veterans were invited to attend the event. McCain gave special honor and recognition to these men for their service to our country.

Personal Account

Follow-up to Chaplain Rentz/Walter Beeson Story

Blue Bonnet, August 2012, pages 7 and 16

In the context of Walter Beeson’s rescue as described in the August 2012 Blue Bonnet which was taken from **Ship of Ghosts** by James Hornfischer, I wanted to share the following story:

As a child during WWII, I remember the loss of the USS Houston because it was a blow to all Texans. Recruiting stations were set up on Main Street and hundreds of young Texans volunteered to replace the lost crew members. My grandmother, Carrie Beeson Stubblefield and my father Emmett Stubblefield, USN, told me that we had a cousin that went down on the Houston. That was all I knew but I never forgot.

Many years later, I read about the USS Houston reunion that was scheduled for March of that year. The article also recounted stories of relatives who were lost. When I decided to call I didn’t even know his name. I guessed it was Beeson because of my grandmother. Imagine my surprise when I was told that Walter Beeson not only survived but was coming to the reunion. It was my happy privilege to spend two days with Walter. We exchanged family folklore and had a wonderful time. He attended church with me the Sunday morning after the reunion service and that was the last time I saw him. Unfortunately, it was only a few short months later that I

received a call from Walter Beeson’s daughter informing me that he had passed away.

Walter’s parents considered him dead until he appeared on their front porch several months after being liberated. According to his account, the Houston was in a battle prior to the Java Sea. He said that after fighting all day when he was relieved he fell down on a pile of laundry to sleep. His assigned bunk received a direct hit killing the person in it and thus accounting for reports of his death.

There is a humorous sidebar that you might have to be southern to appreciate. One of his uncles was a Baptist preacher who decided it was not right that Walter didn’t have a funeral, so he bought a casket and headstone and conducted a funeral in absentia. Walter with his great sense of humor, said he went to visit his grave each time he went to Mississippi.

Thank you so much for picking up the standard so proudly carried by the men of the USS Houston.

Billie Johnson

proud cousin of Walter Beeson and
daughter of Emmett Stubblefield, USN, WWII

From the desk of the Executive Director
John Schwarz



It is life's amazement to me how, with only four months since the last Blue Bonnet correspondence, so many things have happened.

First, this is hoping everyone is well, particularly, those of our group who may have been affected by Hurricane Sandy. I have personal insight into some of our cherished folks: Survivor David Flynn (& Donna) sat things out on the eastern coast of South Florida and were fine and even had a chance to be honored at an event during it all by Senator John McCain. Survivor Howard Brooks, who lives very close to where Sandy hit land, had no structural damage albeit without power for five long days. He and Sylvia are fine and that is the most important blessing. Trudy Schwarz is a little further north and inland in NJ and did not lose power but suffered a damaging, downed tree. She too is well and for that we are all very thankful. For everyone else, again, this is hoping you are safe and sound and getting ready for the reunion.

It was heart-wrenching to experience the loss of two of our beloved Next Generations this period. I knew Phil Gans, son of the late CA-30 survivor Joe (the "ancient mariner") and Isabelle Gans since I was a toddler. This was because Joe and Otto were close and lived near one another and Joe was literally, my Godfather. Phil was an early, active member of our Scholarship Committee and left us way too early in life at age 63. We had seen Phil as recently as November 2011 at the ship model unveiling in Washington DC where he participated and gave full support to that effort.

John Kreutzer, husband of Association President Sue Kreutzer and father to both our legal counsel Matt, and also pilot son Joe, also passed away. John was a true friend and contributor to this Association as son-in-law to survivor Paul Papish, as well as being a serviceman himself (as was Phil Gans, I may add). John was an active member of our Scholarship Committee efforts for many, many years, contributing in many ways. He helped the group with obtaining the permanent USNA scholarship. John, feeling far from well, physically helped move much of our organizational materials to Houston, TX back in November 2010 and that alone made him a hero in my mind. He was a fine man indeed. Both John and Phil will be missed and remembered. The passing of these two fine men reminds me of how precious our lives are, and how important it is to consider making contribution to, and to display kindness in, what we do to honor those great CA-30 men and wives who gave us life.

Your Board of Managers is working hard on the 2013 reunion. I want to thank each and every one of them for the work they do **every day** to run this Association. This upcoming reunion will be a terrific weekend so please get your plans made promptly. Although the City of Houston may offer us some challenges regarding access to our Memorial site, this is assuring you that a service will take place with no loss of spirit or intent. We are nearing the end of our financial fiscal year (same as calendar year) and an assessment is ongoing which will result in knowing our actual operating expenses for the year, and whether we are covering those expenses through the voluntary donations, and what the health is of our scholarship fund for tomorrow and years to come.

John

Original Decking of USS Houston

A piece of the original decking of the USS *Houston* has been obtained by the Association which anticipates that it will be added to the ship model case in Washington, DC, in the near future. Trudy Schwarz who is making the donation recalls the events which led to this great "find". Well before the sinking of the ship, it was in a port for "retro-fitting". At that time, this decking piece was given to a man who, years later, contacted Otto Schwarz, and offered it to him. Now it will be enjoyed by many who come to see the beautiful USS *Houston* CA-30 ship model at the National Museum of the Navy.



Original decking from USS Houston CA-30



Ship Model at National Museum of the US Navy In Washington DC



Veteran's Day Message

As written by Dana Charles on behalf of the USS *Houston* CA-30 Survivor's Association and Next Generations

11 November 2012
Veterans' Day

*Dear USS Houston CA-30 Survivors,
Families, and Friends,*

*On this special day--Veterans' Day--we
honor and thank all of our nation's
veterans.*

*We especially wish to thank all crewmen
of USS Houston CA-30 for their service to
this country.*

*To those members of our own USS
Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and
Next Generations who are veterans:
thank you for your service to this
country.*

Thank you to all our veterans...!

*Sincerely,
The Board of Managers
Sue Kreutzer
R. Dana Charles
John Schwarz
Jo Klenk
Pam Foster
Jane Matthews*

“Little Bits” – FOR YOUR INFORMATION

New Book

As mentioned in the August Blue Bonnet, the new book entitled **Ray Parkin's Odyssey**, about HMAS *Perth* survivor Ray Parkin, written by Australian author Pattie Wright, may be obtained online at http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_title.asp?ISBN=9781405039970&Author=Wright,%20Pattie. The audio book version may be obtained online at <https://itunes.apple.com/au/book/ray-parkin/id511177478?mt=11>.

USS *Houston* CL-81 Reunion

The 37th Annual Reunion of the USS *Houston* CL 81 Association will be held August 20 - 24, 2013 at The Holiday Inn & Suites in Chicago, IL (Rosemont Area). A visit to Great Lakes and an Architectural Boat Tour of Chicago is included.

All family members are invited to attend. We welcome all "second and third generation kids".

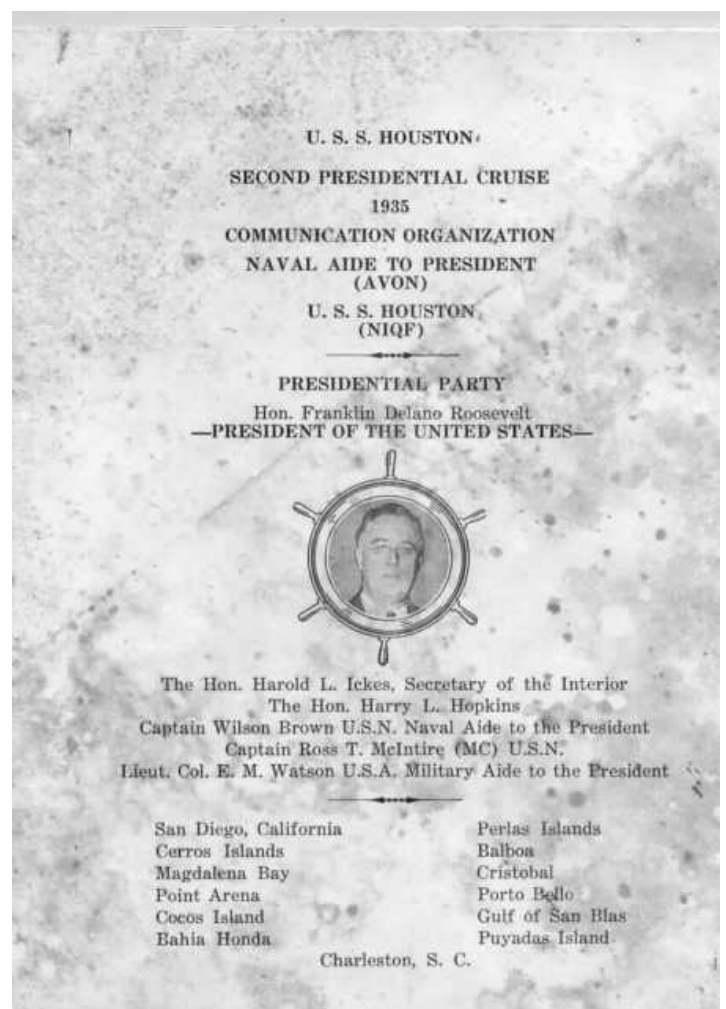
Contact:

Donna Rogers
3949 Little John Drive
York, PA 17408
717-792-9113

HOUSTON MARITIME MUSEUM

Work on the establishment of a USS *Houston* CA-30 exhibit at the Houston Maritime Museum is continuing, and any contributions of items related to the USS *Houston* CA-30 and her crew would be greatly appreciated. If you have any contributions to make, contact Heather Schiappa directly at the museum.

Heather Schiappa
Director of Operations
[Houston Maritime Museum](#)
2204 Dorrington, Houston, TX 77030
Phone (713)-666-1910
Fax: (713)-838-8557



1935 Program cover for President FDR's second presidential cruise aboard USS *Houston* CA-30

Work is Progressing at Sam Houston Park

by Marlene Morris McCain

Following final design approval in 2008 and several years of fund-raising before the project could start, October 22, 2012 saw the official commencement of the renovation at Sam *Houston* Park that includes replacement of the flag platform around the USS *HOUSTON* monument, located in the center section of the park. This replacement was necessary because the platform had cracked. The construction includes re-installing the flagpoles and building new walkways to connect the monument with the Nichols-Rice-Cherry House and other buildings in this part of the park.

On this first day of Navy Week 2012, a special Proclamation Ceremony was held. Special attendees at the ceremony were Asst. Secretary of the Navy Juan Garcia, *Houston* City Councilman Larry Green, and Capt. Carter B. Conlin, USN (Ret.). A photo of the ceremony is shown along with photos taken during the progress of the project. Construction began the same day with about 30 members of Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 28, Detachment 15 (the Seabees) starting immediately after the ceremony. Lt. E.R. Weatherall, USN, was the officer in charge. The Seabees worked throughout Navy Week and even returned over the weekend to finish up. According to Alice Collette of the Heritage Society at Sam *Houston* Park, "The end result is very, very nice!"



Proclamation Ceremony with Asst. Sect. of the Navy Juan Garcia (L) and Houston City Councilman Larry Green holding the proclamation.



Beginning project: monument with old platform removed, base swathed for safety and layout for new platform and flagpole base.

This particular project is part of a larger master plan, and the remainder of the work will begin after Jan. 1, 2013. It is expected that the work at Sam *Houston* Park will be completed by July 2013. The new platform where the flags are installed will have pink granite added back to complement the monument. This portion will be completed by a contractor for the master plan project. It is hoped that the ongoing work will not prevent having the Memorial Service for the 2013 Reunion at Sam *Houston* Park as usual, although that is a possibility.

(right) Construction of connecting walkways.



Completion of Navy Week project: monument with new flag platform and sidewalks.



(left) Seabees Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 28, Detachment 15 who did the work. Thanks, guys!

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Parker, CO



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Scotch Plains, NJ



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Tampa, FL



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Seattle, WA

Remembering....

Page 7

Seen Alive In Water

by R. Dana Charles
son of the late H. R. Charles, USMC.

Several years ago during a research trip to the National Archives in College Park, MD I found and scanned some documents regarding the USS *Houston* CA-30, including the one below: "Seen Alive in Water." This document shows the names of crewmen who were last seen in the water after the ship went down and the names of the crewmen who saw them last. (Editor's note: The list may not be complete.)

<u>SEEN ALIVE IN WATER</u>			
<u>NAME</u>	<u>SEEN BY</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>SEEN BY</u>
REIDER, MM2c	ROSS, F2c	McKENZIE, Slc	STEVENS, FC3c
REED, Slc	BARBATTI, Slc	MARSH, BM2c	McFADDEN
ROLF, SF3c	DAY, Slc	MARTIN, Slc	MINTON
RAMSEY, Capt.	Ens. SMITH	MARKRIS, Flc	TUCKER, Mus2c
ROCQUE, G.T.	Ens. SMITH	McDONALD, Slc	JOHNSON, Slc
REISSINGER, Slc	TRIFEL, Slc	MYERS, 1st Mus.	Lt.(jg) ROGERS
RAYMOND	PORTER, J.J. 1 Mus.	MAINEY, Ensign	GRANT, Cox
ROACH, BM2c	STANCZAK	NETHKEN, Ensign	Lt.(jg) ROGERS
ROGERS, Slc	Ens. LEVITT	NORTHCUTT, Slc	GRANT, Cox
STAHL, EM2c	SCHILPEROORT, C.H.EM2c	NELSON, RM3c	HARRELL, J.A. Y3c
STALLBERGER, GM1c	SCHILPEROORT, C.N.EM2c	OWENS, SM2c	REYNOLDS, Slc
Lt.Cmdr. SMITH	SMITH, H.P. EM1c	OXFORD, WT2c	STRICKLAND, Flc
STEWART, QM1c.	SMITH, H.P. EM1c	O'HARA, RM2c	PISTOLE, AMM3c
STORY, CMM	EDDY, CM2c	PATTY, Lt.	BARBATTI, Slc
SMITH, G. F.	ARMOUR, Slc	PITTMAN, RM2c	NEIDERHAUS, Slc
SHORT, F2c	ARMOUR, Slc	PINKERMAN, CWT	EDDY, CM2c
SPRRGH, B. GM2c	BARBATTI, Slc	PRINCE, Slc	GEORGE, P.M. S2c
STURGILL, O.J.Slc		PERKINS, BM2c	BUSH, J. AOM2c
SILER, Slc		PRATICO, EM3c	STANCZAK
SHUNUSKI		POLK, WT2c	STANCZAK
SKUDLAS, J.		PATTERSON, P3c	HARRIS, AMM1c
SKIDMOORE, Lt.	Cmdr. EPSTIEN	HOGA, Gunner	FOWLER, F2c
SLASHER, Slc	KONDZELA	HOSTICK, GM1c	PISTOLE, AMM3c
STAFFOR, Slc	HUEBLER, Bugle	HAROLD, CM3c	Ens. LEVITT
SIZEMORE, S2c	THOMAS, C.L. Slc	HODGE, Lt.	GRANT, Cox
SLOCUM, Pfc	HUTCHINSON	HAWKINS, J.B.	PARHAM, Slc
SCHRODER, MM1c	STANCZAK, MM2c	HOWARD, Slc	YARBRO, GM1c
THOMPSON, PayClk	ARMOUR, Slc	HALL, Slc	Ens. NELSON
USTAZEWSKI, PhM2c	BARBATTI	HINMAN, Cox	MUSTO, Slc
UKENA, J. Slc	NIEDERHAUS, Slc	HAYES, G.W. Slc	SMITH, J.A. Slc
WELLBOURNE, BM1c	McFADDEN	IWANICKI, S.J.	PORTER, 1st Mus.
WESTERFIELD, EM1c	WEEKS, MM1c	JOHNK, AMM3c	LAWSON, AMM3c
WHITNEY, CM2c	PRICE, Slc	JELLISON, Slc	Lt.(jg) ROGERS
WOLF, F. GM2c	BARBATTI	JOHNSON, John Slc	INGRAM, Slc
WOODRUFF, Lt.	BARBATTI	KOHLER, Musc	PORTER, 1st Mus.
WALCHUK, GM2c	TIEFEL, J.	KARBOWSKI, Slc	STEVANS, FC3c
WILLITON, J. Slc	PARHAM	KLYMAZEWSKI, SC2c	HUCKNER, SC3c
WEAVER, GM1c	YARBRO	LYNCH, GM2c	SOULE, GM3c
WATT, S2c	EBAUGH, S2c	LEE, Aerogle	BUCKNER, SC3c
WOOTEN, Slc	HARRELL, J.A. Y3c	LEWIS, J.A. Y2c	GRAHAM, Y3c
WISE, S2c	BINGHAM, J.L.	LATTIN, RM1c	Ens. LEVITT
WHITE, Slc	SMITH, J.D.	LUTES, E.T. Slc	BARBETTI, Slc
WEISSINGER, Slc	AXELSON	LAFFERTY, PayClk	PARHAM, Slc
WHITE, MM2c	STANCZAK	LEWDANSKI, J.WT2c	EDDY, CM2c
WYLIE, "Bill"Slc	AGIN, G.L.	LEE, K.	WOODY, Slc
YANNUCCIM, Mus2c	STANCZAK	MALLORY, Ensign	ARMOUR, Slc
McCARTY, CWT	ALDERMAN, CRM	MILLER, CGM	ARMOUR, Slc
McCUMBER, CY	ALDERMAN, CRM	MARTINEZ	STEPHANEK, Cox

NOW HEAR THIS!

Scholarship Update and Funding

We have three candidates this year for the USS *Houston* CA-30 internal scholarship. They are currently being reviewed for a winner.

In 2010, the Scholarship Committee decided that it needed to have a minimum of \$13,000 in its account in order to award a scholarship of \$3,000 – a reserve of \$10,000 plus the \$3,000 award. If the reserve falls below the \$10,000 level, the scholarship amount will automatically be reduced. Therefore, the Association must raise at least \$3,000 each year to replace the awarded money. Please keep this in mind when viewing the Scholarship Fund Balance reported in the Blue Bonnet.

In addition, the Association and Scholarship Committee would like to build the fund total to a level which would make it possible to generate the annual award from income earned on the principal and thereby establish a perpetual scholarship such as has been done for the Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship. This is a wonderful way to “perpetuate the memory of the USS Houston and her crew” as our mission states.

With these thoughts in mind, I encourage you to consider a donation before the end of 2012 to the Scholarship Fund. It is fully tax deductible since the Association is a 501(c)(3) non-profit organization. Every penny will go to the Scholarship recipient. Many employers or companies will match some or all of your donation, so please inquire of your employer about that possibility. It is usually a very simple procedure.

Donations to the Scholarship Fund are always greatly appreciated! See the box on the right for additional information.

Jane Matthews
Scholarship Chair

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Past “In House” Scholarship Winners

2004 - Gene Bankhead-grandson of Gene Crispi
2005 - Katy Fort-granddaughter of Cecil Chambliss
2006 – Gerald Agin-grandson of Gerald Agin
2007 - Jenny Garrett-granddaughter of Joe Garrett
2008 - Raymond Davis-great nephew of George Davis, Jr.
2009 - Alex James-great nephew of John Stefanek
2010 - Kevin Swick-grandson of John Reilly
2012 – Cody Karcher, great grandson of Richard H. Gingras

Past US Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Winners

2010 - Stephen Scales– Midshipman 2/C Scales is majoring in Ocean Engineering, is in the 22nd Company and is scheduled to graduate in May, 2013.
2011 - Lenu Gilchrist, III – Midshipman 3/C Gilchrist is majoring in General Science, is in the 12th Company and is scheduled to graduate in May, 2014.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

How to Donate to the Scholarship Fund

1. Make your check payable to:
USS *Houston* CA-30 Survivors Association
2. Write “**Scholarship Fund**” on the memo line.
3. Mail it to:

Mrs. Pam Foster, Treasurer
370 Lilac Lane
Lincoln, CA 95648

Note to Survivors

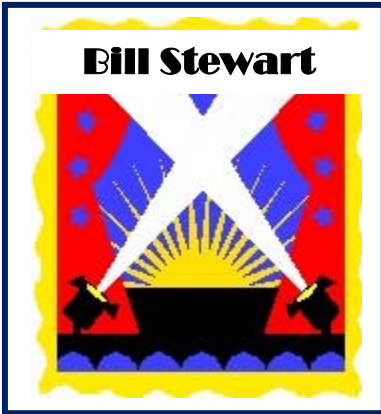
Audrey Houston-Skolund would like to know if any survivors remember her grandfather who was KIA at Sunda Strait. His name was:

Dwight Aird Houston
GM2/c, USN

If you have any information about Dwight, please respond to contact@usshouston.org. Thanks!

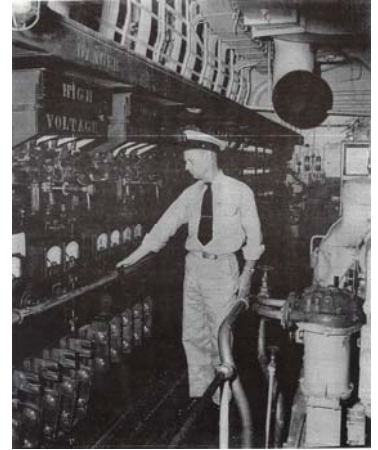
Crew Spotlight

by Marlene Morris McCain



William J. Stewart began his sea duty in the US Navy aboard the USS *Detroit* at Pearl Harbor in June 1941. A few months later he reported for duty on the USS *Houston* on January 15, 1942, at Darwin, Australia. After the Battle of the Flores Sea and the aborted convoy to Timor, the *Houston* arrived at Surabaya on February 22 for several nights of patrol duty. On February 27, the *Houston* joined a fleet of Dutch, British and Australian ships and the Battle of Java Sea followed. With many of the

Allied ships sunk, *Houston* and HMAS *Perth* were ordered to retire to Batavia. At dusk on February 28, *Houston* and *Perth* departed Batavia headed for Australia via Sunda Strait. About 11:30 pm they ran into a Japanese invasion fleet and commenced firing. *Perth* was torpedoed and sank, but *Houston* continued the fight until midnight when turret 2 was hit and set afire. S1c Bill Stewart was in the shell deck crew of that turret. He was badly burned, but managed to get clear. When "abandon ship" was ordered, he went on deck and obtained a life jacket. He left the ship and swam aft to get clear of the shellfire.



"Young" Bill Stewart at work

Bill could see land since there was swimming toward it. Swimming was current was favorable to him and the to 4 hours he touched bottom and was very thirsty so he began searching unsuccessful and exhausted, he sat

When Bill woke at daylight, he They started out walking, hoping to Australia. Only ¼ mile down the road, taken prisoner. They were marched to prisoners in Serang Theater. While doctor from the *Perth* who treated his about three weeks later he was pretty



Bill and Mary Stewart
at Asiatic Fleet Memorial Day
on March 1, 2004

almost a half moon, and he started difficult because of his burns, but the swells moving ashore helped a lot. After 3 crawled the rest of the way to shore. Bill for drinkable water. After 20 minutes, down to sleep as the moon went down.

discovered another crewmember close by. reach Batavia and find a ship bound for they ran into Japanese soldiers and were Serang and held with about 1,000 other there, Bill was fortunate to meet a burns with cod liver oil ointment, and well healed.

After spending 3 weeks in Serang Theater, Bill was moved to Serang Prison for three weeks and then to Batavia Bicycle Camp for about six months. In October, he and many others were loaded on a ship bound for Singapore. After ten days at Changi POW Camp, Bill was put aboard a ship for Japan. Conditions on the ship were horrible and 102 men died during the trip. Finally they reached the port of Nagasaki.

From Nagasaki, Bill was sent by passenger train inland to O Hasi, a three-day journey. Surprisingly, the prisoners were given railroad box lunches that were pretty good! Their destination was an iron mine, but Bill and his fellow prisoners were assigned to odd jobs in connection with an iron ore-concentrating mill throughout the winter and spring. When summer came, they were moved to a permanent camp where they

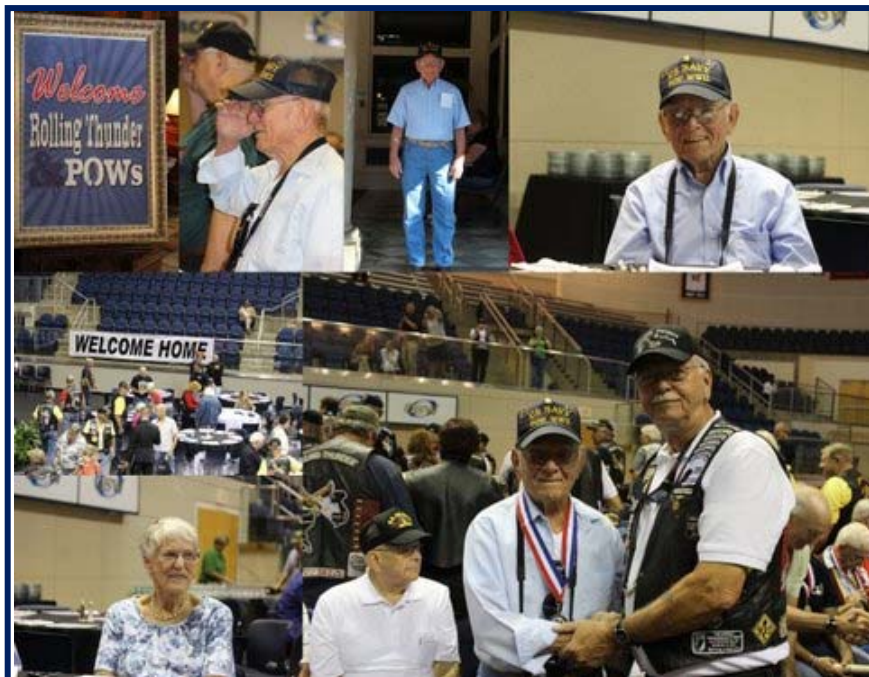
continued on page 11

*Bill Stewart
(more recently)*

remained until the war was over. Some of the men were forced to dig iron out of the mountain, but about fifty were assigned to carpentry, machine, welding, and electrical shops. Bill worked in the electrical shop, and he learned enough from the electricians and radiomen there to pass all of his future Navy exams for advancement.

One of the men in camp had a radio. They knew when the atomic bombs were dropped and that the war had ended. Two days later Bill was sent to a hospital in Marioka. After three days there, he was put on a train for Sendai where he boarded an LSM (**L**anding **S**hip **M**edium) for lunch and transfer to a hospital ship, the USS Rescue. The lunch was fried chicken, and it sure tasted good! An hour later the Rescue was headed home. They were three weeks en route, and then Bill was in Oakland Naval Hospital, CA, USA! He remained in the Navy, passed all of his exams with high marks, and retired is a Master Chief Electrician.

Bill is now 92 years young and lives in Independence, Kansas. We salute you, Bill, for your courage and fortitude amidst overwhelming hardships. Thank you for your service to our country.



*Collage of USS Houston survivor Bill Ingram at Rolling Thunder's annual "Ride Home 2012" in Americus, GA. In the bottom right photo, Ingram shakes hands with Robert Mitchell, Rolling Thunder Florida 4 President.
(Photos by: Michael Rothfeld)*

Rollin' Rollin' Rollin'

Rolling Thunder is a non-profit organization with an estimated 900,000 members which has as its mission to “publicize the POW-MIA issue to educate the public ... and are committed to helping American veterans from all wars.” Most members ride motorcycles but that is not a requirement.

Bill Ingram was an honored guest at Rolling Thunder's "Ride Home 2012" which was held in Americus, GA, near the famous Andersonville National Historic Site on which the National POW Museum is located.

Howard in the Headlines

Survivor **Howard Brooks** and his wife Silvia recently visited his sister in Greeneville, TN, which is where Howard grew up. During his visit, the local newspaper, the Greeneville Sun, did a fabulous article on him. Howard is truly a "hometown hero"! Limitations of this newsletter make it impossible to reprint the full article, but part of the first page is reprinted below.

www.greenevillesun.com

Friday, October 26, 2012 THE GREENEVILLE SUN A-9

POW Years Long Past, But Memories Of Home Still Bring Comfort

There's a birthday coming up next week, on Oct. 30, and if the birthday boy didn't live in New Jersey, I'd bake him a cake and throw a little party for him on the Poor Farm Road.



BOB HURLEY
COLUMNIST

Well, I might not bake the cake myself because I'd want it decorated with a U.S. Navy flavor from the 1940s. On second thought, I'm pretty sure I could never handle the decorating part.

Howard E. Brooks turns 93 next Tuesday, and since I wanted to be first, I've already called to wish him a happy birthday and many more.

Howard has been gone from Sunnyside and Greeneville for so long now that only a handful of folks remember how he survived the sinking of his ship in early 1942, which was followed by 42 months of hard labor as a prisoner of war of the Japanese Imperial Army.

He was one of only two survivors of the crew of the lost ship who made it



Howard Brooks and his wife, Silvia, of Mount Laurel, N.J., visit the oak tree at the old Sunnyside School that Howard climbed and played in as a child during the 1920s. "There was a time when there were more kids than acorns on this old tree," Howard said. The original white-framed school building he attended stood to the left of this scene. The building in the background replaced it in the 1960s.

soon after American forces dropped atomic bombs on two Japanese cities in early August of 1945.

A couple of months later, he was back home at Sunnyside.

Almost every minute of every day for 42 months, Howard thought of Sunnyside and home.

"Thoughts of home kept me going, kept me alive," he said.

"Some of the guys couldn't eat the rice and the other awful things we were given to eat, but I ate them and never stopped thinking that this terrible food would give me strength to keep me going and to get me back home."

"I never gave up, not for a minute. I refused to give up. There was too much waiting for me on the other side of the world to give up."

And when he got back home to Sunnyside, it was "a glorious moment," he said.

Actually, it was more like a "glorious week" as friends and family members from a wide area converged on the Brooks home in a fashion the family had never seen before and never saw again.

"Looking back, I know it happened," said Betty Britton, of Tusculum, Howard's sole surviving



(see photo on left) Howard and Silvia Brooks visited a VA Cemetery on Veterans' Day and while there two people walked up to them and asked about the USS *Houston* since Howard was wearing his *Houston* hat. Both of them said they had read the book Ship of Ghosts. The lady in red is the Lieutenant Governor of NJ and the man is a Brigadier General from the local base.

USS HOUSTON ITEMS FOR SALE

Acrylic Paper Weight (10 oz.) \$20.00

Bumper Sticker (1-3 is 1 oz.) \$2.00

Challenge Coin (3 oz.) \$10.00

Bell or Monument Lapel Pin (specify type) (1-6 pins is 1 oz.) \$3.00

New! Brown & Black Ball Cap ("USS Houston CA-30 2nd Generation", 10 oz) \$5.00

New! Ship Lapel Pin (specify silver or gold highlights)

(1 - 3 pins are 1 oz) \$4.00



Ball Cap (Blue) (10 oz.) \$15.00

Ball Cap (Brown) (10 oz.) \$5.00

DVD "Last Stand" (8 oz.) \$20.00



Brown & Black Ball Cap

New! Polo Shirts - Short Sleeve, Navy Blue
with Gold Embroidery of the USS Houston:

Men's - sizes M-2XL-\$25.00

Women's - sizes S-XL-\$25.00

(Shipping Weight-10oz.)



Women's Polo Shirt



Men's Polo Shirt

T-Shirts (size Small to X-Large) (9 oz.) \$20.00

T-Shirts (size 2XL or 3 XL) (9 oz.) \$25.00



T-Shirt

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

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

Shipping Costs:

1 oz. - 6 oz.= \$4.00

7 oz. - 12 oz.= \$7.50

13 oz. - 5 lb.= \$10.50

Note: USPS Ground Service Only

Make checks payable to:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association

Mail checks to:

Jane Matthews

836 Kendal Drive

Broadview Heights

Ohio 44147

Include the following information
(please print clearly):

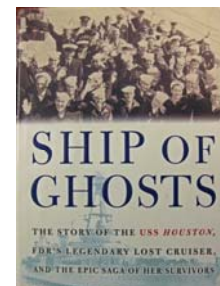
Name

Address

City, State and Zip Code

Phone Number

Items Ordered, Size and Quantity



Ship of Ghosts
autographed by author
James Hornfischer

Questions? Email: Jane@USSHouston.org

HMAS Perth

Notes from “down under”

Colin Bancroft, son of HMAS *Perth* survivor Arthur Bancroft, writes that when the Captain of the current HMAS *Perth* changes, the first call of duty is to introduce the new Captain to the HMAS *Perth* 1 survivors. This event took place in Western Australia on November 26, 2012. (see photo below)



HMAS Perth's David Manning spoke aboard the HMAS Warranmunga on February 11, 2012.



(back row) CAPT Mal Wise (outgoing HMAS Perth Captain), LCDR Chris Leece (XO HMAS Perth), CAPT Lee Goddard (Incoming HMAS Perth Captain), and (front row) HMAS Perth 1 survivors Fred Skeels (90), Norm Fuller (92), and Arthur Bancroft (91).



Trudy Schwarz sent a “picture from the past”! This was taken in 1982 at the HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* CA-30 Memorial Yacht Regatta in Fremantel, Perth, Australia. Pictured are *Perth* survivors Arthur Bancroft and “Buzzer” Bee standing at the “*Houston/Perth* Memorial Wall” at the Nedlands Yacht Club. *Houston's* picture is clearly seen near the middle of the photo.

WHO ARE THOSE GUYS?

By Joe and Marlene Morris McCain

The story of life aboard the USS *Houston* would be incomplete without remembering the ship's band because they were such an important part of each day's events. Rightly considered to be the best in the fleet, the Houston band played for noontime concerts and in the evenings before shipboard movies were shown. They often provided an orchestra for special occasions at the Manila Polo Club and the Army/Navy Club. When the war started, these events were discontinued, of course, and the band members were assigned to battle stations as ammunition handlers and also as part of the searchlight crews.

The often-published picture from the Cruiser Houston Collection in the University of Houston Library shows a portion of the Houston's band practicing on the ship's quarterdeck but does



#2 - Recently surfaced photo of band

not include the names of the men. A second picture, apparently taken the same day, has recently surfaced and it is now possible to name at least some of the bandsmen in the two photographs. Also, we can positively date the two photos as having been taken between late March 1941 and mid-September 1941. How this was done is an interesting side note and is based on three crewmembers (Zeramby, Kelley & Morris) that appear in these photos.

Band members Albert "Hap" Kelley and Edgar Morris reported for duty aboard the Houston together on March 29, 1941 while the ship was in the Philippines. The bandmaster who is shown in both images, S.M. "Ski" Zeramby was transferred back to the United States on



#1 - Photo from Cruiser Houston

September 19, 1941. The new bandmaster, George Galyean, came aboard along with five new band members around the first of October 1941.

So, who are those guys in the pictures? In the photo from the Cruiser Houston Collection, "Hap" Kelley is on the left with his trombone and was identified by a member of his family. The tall man beside him is believed to be Savaryn (known as "Steve" to his friends) Dymanowski and next, in the center of the picture, is Walter Schneck with Bandmaster Zeramby in the foreground. In the second photo, Eddie Morris is at the left edge and the man seated next to him with his back to the camera is possibly Vernon Koelling. "Ski" Zeramby is facing the camera and we have a much better image of this well-liked bandleader.

When the Houston was lost, only seven of the eighteen band members aboard managed to reach shore. Of these, just five were able to somehow survive the harsh conditions of Japanese captivity to come home:

continued on page 16

George Galyean, "Hap" Kelley, Eddie Morris, John Porter and Walter Schneck. "Hap" Kelley, remembered by many for his brilliant work with the concert parties while at Changi Prison in Singapore, chose to stay in the Navy and eventually retired as a Chief Musician having served as Band Leader for the DESLANT (Destroyer, Atlantic) Band. Eddie Morris was the

last living member of the Houston's band (he passed away in January 1993) and the second picture shown here was among his possessions.

If anyone reading this can identify other band members from these photos or offer corrections to what is stated above, the authors would certainly welcome any correspondence.

National POW Museum

Did you know that there is a National POW Museum? It is located near Americus, GA, on the grounds of the Andersonville National Historic Site where the Civil War POW Camp Sumter was located. The placard located near the entrance to the museum reads: "This building is a memorial to all Americans held as prisoners of war. Through exhibits and video presentations, the museum is a reminder that America's freedoms can come at great cost. The museum's architecture is not based on a specific place but is meant to evoke prison guard towers and stockades in general. Development of this landmark resulted from a partnership of many different individuals and groups, including the American Ex-Prisoners of War and the Friends of Andersonville." If you have never visited the museum, it is well worth a trip!



(above)
National
POW
Museum



(left)
Wreath on
gatepost



(right)
Gateposts
and flags

A Picture is Worth a Thousand Words

Do you recognize anyone in this picture? Their names are listed in the box below.



Liberated American POWs

File Number: 701008

Released September 19, 1945

SIXTEEN LIBERATED POWs ARRIVE IN WASHINGTON

Fifteen survivors of the ill-fated cruiser USS HOUSTON which had been missing since the day after the battle of Java Sea February 27, 1942, and one sailor captured when Corregidor fell, are shown upon their arrival in Washington September 18, 1945, via the Army's Air Transport Command on a flight which began in Karachi, India, soon after their liberation. Left to right (kneeling): George Chapman, Gunner's Mate third class, of Marseilles, Ill.; Bernard Kocher, Seaman First Class, of 814 Baker St., Toledo, O.; Russell Fitzgerald, Fireman Second Class, of Andrews, Tex.; Melvin H. Mahlandt, Pipe Controlman First Class, of Carlyle, Ill.; William Ingram, Seaman Second Class of 1215 E. Congress Ave., Springfield, Ill., and Harold Vinje, Fireman Second Class of Bettendorf, Ia. Standing, left to right: Walter Schneck, Musician Second Class, of 905 Riverside Drive, Waterloo, Iowa; Alex Wolos, Seaman First Class, 2538 Cortez St., Chicago, Ill.; Griff Douglas (leaning), Pharmacist's Mate Third Class of 1303 N.J. St., Portland, Oregon; Chu Lin Tsao, Mess Attendant First Class of Wei Hei Wei, China; Chester Aufderhart (leaning), Seaman First Class of Van Dyne, Wis.; Arnold W. Momberg, Chief Yeoman, of 303 Richings St., Charles City, Iowa; Elmer F. McFadden, Gunner's Mate Second Class, of 701 So. Ave. B., Washington, Iowa; Richard Schulz, Signalman Third Class, 345 No. Crosby Ave., Fremont, Nebraska; John Stanczak, Machinist's Mate Second Class of 815 Boston St., Bicknell, Indiana; and Ernest Goderre, Watertender First Class of 43 Lucas St., New Bedford, Mass. The Corregidor survivor is Yeoman Momberg.

Names of liberated American POWs

REGISTRATION FORM

71th Anniversary USS *Houston* Memorial Service/Reunion

March 14-16, 2013

Hyatt Regency *Houston* Downtown

Hotel room reservations MUST be made by YOU either by calling 888-421-1442 or 402-592-6464 or online at <https://resweb.passkey.com/go/USSHOUCA30>

Reservation Line: 888-421-1442 or 402-592-6464

DEADLINE – MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 7, 2013

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY AND LIST THE NAME OF EACH PERSON INCLUDED IN THIS REGISTRATION (Use the back of this form if necessary)

Name(s): _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Name of crew member you are honoring and relationship (or state you are a friend). Please include branch of service: _____

Anticipated date and time of arrival: . _____

Friday Dinner – 6:30 PM (please select your choice of entrée)

Chicken Marsala # _____ x \$33.00 = \$ _____

Vegetable Lasagna # _____ x \$33.00 = \$ _____

Saturday Brunch – 10:30 AM # _____ x \$22.00 = \$ _____

Registration # _____ x \$40 per person = \$ _____

Late Registration # _____ x \$15 per person = \$ _____

(Received after February 7, 2013)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Reception at the University of Houston (Friday) # _____

Bus seat need to U of H # _____

Handicapped Access # _____

Please include a check for the total cost made payable to: USS *Houston*-Next Generations (your check is your receipt). Payment is non-refundable.

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

**USS HOUSTON (CA-30) SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION
AND THE NEXT GENERATIONS**

Tentative 2013 Reunion Schedule of Events

March 14-16, 2013

THURSDAY (March 14) - REUNION BEGINS

Registration & Hospitality room	6 PM	Arboretum 2-3 (2 nd floor)
Scholarship Committee Meeting	4 PM	Arboretum 1 (2 nd floor)

FRIDAY (March 15)

Hospitality & registration	8 AM – 11:30 PM	Arboretum 2-3 (2 nd floor)
** Hospitality Room is closed during meals		
Annual Member Meeting	10 AM	Arboretum 1 (2 nd floor)
Board of Managers Meeting	11 AM	Arboretum 1 (2 nd floor)

Thursday Dinner and Friday Lunch on your own – List of eateries is available at concierge desk. **Please** double check when the restaurants will be open!

University of Houston Reception 12:30 PM – 3:45 PM
12:30PM-12:45PM - Gather in hotel lobby to check-in prior to boarding bus.
1:00 PM – SHARP - Bus departs for U. of Houston.
1:30 PM – 3:00 PM – U of Houston Staff
3:15 PM – SHARP - Bus departs for the return to the Hyatt Hotel.

Dinner	6:30 PM	Arboretum 4-5 (2 nd floor)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Speaker: Executive Director's Year-end Report and Announcement of Scholarship Winner• Special presentation: appearance related to a recent PBS documentary entitled 'Everyday is a Holiday'		

SATURDAY (March 16)

Hospitality**	8 AM – 11:30 AM	Arboretum 2-3 (2 nd floor)
** Hospitality Room closed during meals & Memorial Service		

Brunch	10:30 AM – 12:00 PM	Arboretum 4-5 (2 nd floor)
Speaker: Houston Maritime Museum		

Memorial Service setup	Time: TBD	Location: TBD
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71st Anniversary Memorial Service 2012	Time: TBD	Location: TBD
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Dinner on your own.

Meet your ...

Board of Managers

...here to serve you!

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



President: Sue Kreutzer
Daughter of USN survivor Paul Papish
Webmaster, archives, membership,
Scholarship Committee
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Secretary: Jo Klenk
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Blue Bonnet editor, blog master,
birthday card project, Scholarship Committee
Email: Jo@usshouston.org



Manager: Jane Matthews
Daughter of USN Survivor John Stefanek
Chair of the Scholarship Committee,
Chair of the Future Vision Committee,
Sales Items
Email: Jane@usshouston.org



Welcome Aboard!



*We extend a hearty
welcome to those who
have recently joined the
Association.*

Carol Kathleen Coughtry
sister of William Wright Stevens, Jr.
Carol Ann Hess
niece of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Jon Henley
grt nephew of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Jennifer Muller
grt niece of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Garrett Muller
grt grt nephew of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Trenton Muller
grt grt nephew of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Rob Henley
grt nephew of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Kate Henley
grt grt niece of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Lauren Henley
grt grt niece of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Jon Henley, Jr.
grt grt nephew of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Ava Henley
grt grt niece of William W. Stevens, Jr.
Debbie Rebernick
daughter of Joseph Schertz

Membership

Our USS Houston "family" continues to grow weekly as more and more folks are wanting to know about the gallant crew of USS Houston CA-30. Members do not have yearly dues. However we do operate based on the generosity of our membership. Annual donations are gratefully accepted. We invite you to join with us. Click on <http://www.usshouston.org/memberform.pdf> , fill it out and send it in.

Association Websites:

USSHouston.org
Our primary website
USSHouston.blogspot.com

Also... check out our
Facebook group page at
USS Houston CA30

The Mailbag

with the latest news from our *Houston* family and friends:

For your consideration and to provoke conversation, **Fred Seiker** writes in regard to whether or not we should forgive the Japanese military for its "unimaginable terror regime": "It is not my right to forgive in the name of the many who perished. They were my friends then, they are my friends still. They have a voice no more."

★★



*Happy Holidays
to you all!*

Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

July 20 – November 17, 2012

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 12,604.59
Receipts	501.27
Expenses	<u>0.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$13,105.86

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 8,078.01
Receipts	1,550.17
Expenses	<u>-456.06</u>
Ending Balance	\$ 9,172.12

Giving Gifts

As the end of the year draws nigh and holiday celebrations abound, many people think of giving special gifts. Would you consider a gift to the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations in your year-end planning? You may donate to either the Scholarship Fund or General Fund. See "Now Hear This" on page 1 for more information. Or, go to the website at

<http://www.usshouston.org/news.html>

then scroll down and click on the DONATE button. Also, your employer may match your gift so be sure to inquire about it. **THANKS!**



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Jo Klenk
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Thank you

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

Trudy Schwarz, William Lynch, John and Sue Kreutzer, Billie Marie Johnson, Carol Ann Hess, and Kathleen Coughtry