



Now Hear This!

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USS Houston Survivors' Association
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 1947

By Otto and Trudy Schwarz

The Schwarz & Flynn Families Visit U.S. Navy Yard and Arlington National Cemetery



USS Houston (CA-30) Family members: Donna Mae Flynn; Trudy Schwarz; John K. Schwarz; Cletus Flynn; Dennis Flynn; and Fulton Flynn visited the USS Houston (CA-30) Model at the Museum of the U.S. Navy in Washington, D.C. on 14 September 2016.

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A September Visit to Arlington & the Navy Yard

By John K. Schwarz

Donna Flynn, widow of USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor David C. Flynn, contacted me in early September 2016 concerning a visit she and some of her family members intended to make to Arlington National Cemetery and the Museum of the U.S. Navy. Over the next few days, plans were made, and I arranged to have my mother, Association Co-founder Trudy Schwarz,

(Continued on next page)



(Continued from Page 1)

come down from New Jersey by train to join the group—a 'mini gathering' of USS *Houston* CA-30 family members.

The weather couldn't have been nicer as we all gathered on September 13 at a hotel near the Iwo Jima Memorial, then went out to dine at Mr. Peter Bota's "Metro 29 Diner," where we ate huge portions of terrific Greek/American fare, and our discussions were robust and engaging.

The next day we proceeded less than a mile to our first stop, Arlington National Cemetery. We all stayed together as a group and ceremoniously placed fresh, yellow roses on the USS *Houston* CA-30/HMAS *Perth* marker on McClellan Drive and on the following USS *Houston* CA-30 survivors' graves, all resting in Section 12: Phillip 'Joe' Gans; Otto C. Schwarz; John Stefanek; David C. Flynn; and William Batchelor.



9/14/16: The Flynn's and Schwarzs gather next to the USS *Houston*/HMAS *Perth* marker at Arlington.

This was an emotional exercise for all of us, including Donna, who was making her first visit back to David's grave since his burial, and of course, Trudy, who stood by Otto's side for so many years of this Association's existence in support of his efforts. For me, as one of the four sons (next generations) in attendance, the overwhelming sentiment was the feeling of being just flat-out proud—a feeling I have each and every time I visit the graves of these brave men.

Next we walked on up to the Arlington House, the Robert E. Lee Memorial and museum at the very top of the cemetery grounds. The view that day was breath-taking. It seemed that the Pentagon was just a stone's throw away, down and to our right. The Washington, DC skyline extended directly ahead and all the way to our left.

After a short break, we went to our scheduled appointment for a chaperoned tour of the Navy Yard facility, including the Underwater Archaeology Branch; the Naval History & Heritage Command of the Department of the Navy; and of course, the museum housing the original model of the USS *Houston* CA-30. Many thanks to the NHHC's Director, Rear Admiral Samuel Cox, USN (Ret.) for making our arrangements.

And what a tour it was! We were ushered into the Underwater Branch where we saw the "purloined trumpet," which was found a few years ago next to the remains of USS *Houston* (CA-30). The instrument has been soaking in a special liquid—a necessary treatment due to its many years in salt water. It is hoped that the trumpet will be able to be restored to 'display' condition, and that possibly, traceable DNA can be extracted for identification purposes. We also saw several other retrieved USS *Houston* artifacts that are all being housed and readied for an anticipated enlarging of the USS *Houston* CA-30 exhibit in the museum.

From there, we took the short walk over to the museum to see the greatest ship model display one could ever imagine: the original Boucher model of USS *Houston* CA-30. The 14-foot-long model was beautifully lit, and was still as magnificent as it was when it was unveiled in 2011 after a comprehensive restoration process.

At the end of our tour, we all were contented to return to the hotel to freshen up and have a bite at the hotel restaurant. After I got Trudy safely on her train back home, and bid good-bye to the Flynn's, it was obvious everyone involved had a terrific, moving, emotional, and satisfying visit to the nation's capital, and the places and things so dear to all of us.





From the desk of the Executive Director

John K. Schwarz

As our calendar (and fiscal) year comes to a close, I am proud to point out that due to your continued generosity, we will be able to continue to pursue opportunities for permanent remembrances of the USS *Houston* CA-30. One such project currently in progress is a proposed memorial plaque for display at the hotel standing on the former grounds of the "Bicycle Camp" on Java. We also should be able, for the foreseeable future, to award a modest yet significant scholarship to one of our CA-30 descendants, or other interested, worthy candidate. Again, all of this is possible because of your support, and we truly thank all of you who contribute to our funding.

We are busy these days preparing for a most memorable "Day of Remembrance" in Houston, TX on 3 – 4 March 2017, which will mark the 75th anniversary of the loss of USS *Houston* CA-30 and HMAS *Perth* (D-29). The Houston Maritime Museum, the Australian National Maritime Museum and our Association are planning a wonderful set of events which will pay tribute to these gallant ships, their Captains, and crews. We hope you will plan to attend.

Dana Charles, our Association VP/Correspondent/Researcher and Bluebonnet Editor, continues his brilliant work in those functions. Sue Kreutzer works diligently on reunion planning, merchandise coordination and of course, the web page. She also facilitates the Board of Managers throughout the year with our monthly meetings. Pam Foster handles all financial matters, accounting, and tax submissions and distributes all hard copy Blue Bonnet newsletters. These folks also do double duty on the Scholarship Committee along with "Next Generationer," Scott Ingram (son of Bill). Many thanks to Bernice Harapat who is heading up the proposed 'Bicycle Camp' plaque project. We simply would not be where we are, doing what we are able to do, without these dedicated folks who deserve all the thanks anyone cares to offer them. A day does not go by without they having my/Trudy's appreciation.

March is right around the corner, many details will be offered in this edition, I urge all interested parties to make your plans early and secure great, reasonably priced travel arrangements.

Most of all, stay well,

John

*Son of Otto and Trudy Schwarz
Association Co-Founders*

...NOW HEAR THIS...!

INTERNAL ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

Applications for next year’s scholarship program competition are being accepted beginning June 1 with the deadline for submission extending to November 1.

To apply for the scholarship applicants can go to www.usshouston.org and click on the scholarship tab, scroll down to bottom of the page and click to download the application packet.

Application packets can also be obtained by writing to John Keith Schwarz, 2500 Clarendon Blvd. Apt. 121, Arlington, VA 22201.

Each year the amount our Association can award to the Internal Scholarship recipient depends on your generosity. The scholarship award available for 2017 will be \$3,000. Donations are always accepted and appreciated, and are necessary to perpetuate this program.

You can also remember the USS *Houston* CA-30 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. Please note on your check: “Scholarship Donation.”

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

To-date and after approximately 15 years of program implementation, we have awarded **13** scholarships totaling **\$28,250.00**. This is an extremely successful program outcome by any measure.

We thank everyone who has donated and participated in this worthwhile endeavor.



Past Internal Annual 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
- 2013 – Laura Reilly, granddaughter of John Reilly and Maggie Tuttle, great niece of Howard Brooks
- 2014 – Stephanie Daigre, granddaughter-in-law of Gene Crispi
- 2015 – Stephen Reilly, grandson of John Reilly
- 2016 – Emily L. Kovacs, grand-niece of John Stefanek

Past U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Winners

- 2010 – Stephen Scales
- 2011 – Lenue Gilchrist,
- 2013 – Robert Z. Sutherland
- 2014 – Evan S. Hovenden
- 2015 – Megan Cessna
- 2016 – Anthony R. Powers, Jr.



U. S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Program

Due to the generosity of our Association members and friends, and since its inception in 2008, this permanent scholarship—the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Scholarship—has been awarded six times. This scholarship award enables a year of preparatory military school education, which helps these candidates enter the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA), and helps produce proud Navy and Marine Officers. We are pleased to report that so far 100% of our scholarship recipients have been graduating from the USNA and are serving, or will serve, as officers in the U.S. Navy and U.S.M.C. What a lasting tribute to the legacy of the men of USS *Houston* (CA-30)!



BANGOR, Wash. (Aug. 26, 2016) Capt. Michael Lewis, the 13th commanding officer of the Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine USS Houston (SSN 713) and the keynote speaker for the event, arrives at Houston's decommissioning ceremony at Naval Base Kitsap Bangor. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 1st Class Amanda R. Gray/Released)

USS Houston (SSN-713) is decommissioned in Washington State

The 360-foot-long Los Angeles Class submarine USS *Houston* (SSN-713) was decommissioned on 26 August 2016 at 10:00 a.m. in a ceremony held at Naval Base Kitsap in Bangor, WA. The Master of Ceremonies was LTCDR Jason Glab, Executive Officer of SSN-713. The Invocation and Benediction were provided by Chaplain LT Barry Barlow, CO, U.S. Sea Cadet Corps, Houston Division. CMDR Scott McGinnis, USN, SSN-713's Commanding Officer, presented Welcoming Remarks, followed by Guest Speaker Remarks by CAPT Michael Lewis, USN, Deputy Commander, Submarine Squadron 19.

The nuclear-powered USS *Houston* (SSN-713) was launched on 21 March 1981, and commissioned on 25 September 1982, sponsored by Mrs. Barbara Pierce Bush. With a hull diameter of 33 feet, the submarine displaced 6,000 Tons when surfaced, and 6,900 Tons when submerged. Her crew included 15 officers and 120 enlisted men.

The SSN-713 was the fourth U.S. Navy warship to carry the name USS *Houston*, named after the City of Houston, Texas. Captured in WWI, the German freighter *Liebenfels* was commissioned as the first USS *Houston* (AK-1) in 1917 and served in various Atlantic and Pacific convoy duties. She was decommissioned in 1922. The second U.S. warship to bear the name *Houston* was the heavy cruiser USS *Houston* (CA-30). The third *Houston*, a light cruiser, was launched as USS *Houston* (CL-81) on 19 June 1943 after CA-30 was lost at the Battle of Sunda Strait (1 March 1942). Our Association thanks all crewmen of SSN-713 for their service and extends best wishes for the future.

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

- 8/9/16: Received the following email: "Hello, I am writing a book about my father's 30 year Navy career (not on the *Houston*) and am looking for the meaning of the phrase "Little Ocko." I see that there was a USS *Houston* newsletter in the 1930s and 40s with a column titled, "Little Ocko Says." I am wondering if there is any connection. In the audio tapes I made with Dad, before he died, for use in this book, he uses the phrase and I am eager to find its correct meaning. If you are able to give me any help, I would appreciate hearing from you. Thank you in advance for your time, **Frank J Zwolinski.**"
- 8/9/16: I replied to **Mr. Zwolinski** as follows: "Dear Frank, Thank you for your email regarding the phrase/name "Little Ocko." I'm sorry to report that I cannot find any mention of that in any of our USS *Houston* (CA-30) archives. However, I will be happy to publish your letter in the next issue of our newsletter (December 2016 issue) to see if any of our 6 remaining survivors can shed any light on the phrase/name. Again, thank you for your email." *[Survivors: Please let me know if you can help explain what "Little Ocko" means. Email me at: dana@usshouston.org, or write me at: PO Box 2457, Kirkland, WA 98083. Thanks! Dana Charles].*
- Received an email from **Lost Battalion NG Terry Shields**: "The 72th Reunion of the Lost Battalion 131st Field Artillery & USS *Houston* was held July 21 – 24, 2016 with around 45 attending. **Robert Hanley & wife Eileen** and **Bill Ingram** were our two survivors who attended, both Navy. Widows: **Jimmie Pryor, Leeta Ficklin, Teresa Reilly, Lee Robinson, Dorothy Johnson, Rosalie Gregg, Hazel Leatherwood, Marie Matlock, Hortense Offerle, and Dorothy Prunty** looked as lovely as ever. On Thursday evening and again Friday afternoon we skyped with **Eddie Fung** and **wife Judy** since they were unable to come this year (this was great! Eddie, Robert and Bill had a great visit). This year, there was a new approach to having speakers. One Next Generation member from the Army, Navy & Marines (**Randy Matthews** son of the late **W.F. "Hook" Matthews; Val Poss** daughter of the late **Valdon Roberts; and JoAnn Wychopen**, daughter of the late **Charley Pryor**) spoke about what it was like to be a child of a POW. There were a few tears & some laughter mixed in. We missed those of you that couldn't make it & hope to see you next year! It will be in Granbury, Texas at the **Hilton Garden Inn**. The Date is: August 3-5, 2017 departing on Sunday the 6th. Please mark your calendars and looking forward to seeing you next year. **Terry (Ogle) Shields**, Daughter of the Late **Ray Ogle-Lost Battalion 131 Field Artillery.**"
- 8/25/16: Received the following email: "**Sept. 27, 1934**. I have a picture of my mother and a Captain of the USS *Houston* on the above date. I'm trying to confirm the Captain's name to compare to the signature. My mother **Maria Squires** was "Little Ms. Galveston" at the time. She may have been part of a presidential party. Do you know of any records that might help me get more details? Linda Truax"
- 8/26/16: After consulting with Don Kehn, Jr, I replied to Linda Truax as follows: "Linda, Our Association's USS *Houston* (CA-30) Historian Don Kehn, Jr. reports that the photo definitely is of **CAPT Walter B. Woodson, USN**, who was Commanding Officer of USS *Houston* (CA-30) at that time. I'm sorry to report that our Association archives do not contain any information regarding CAPT Woodson..."
- 10/17/16: Received the following email: "I am looking for relatives of **Charles Collings**. He is my uncle, my mother's only brother. He had two sons, **Patrick** and **Michael**. I would like to get in touch with them; I haven't seen them in over 50 years. I know he spent the war in a Japanese prison camp, I am his namesake. Thank you for your help. All the Best, **Charley Tull.**"
- 10/17/16: Replied to Mr. Tull via email as follows: "Dear Mr. Tull, Thank you for contacting us regarding your uncle, **U.S.S. Houston (CA-30) Survivor Charles M. Collings, SF2/c, USN**. Unfortunately, our



Association's records lack much postwar information on Mr. Collings and his sons. I will post your inquiry in the upcoming December 2016 issue of our Association's newsletter to see if one of our 6 still-living survivors may have some information..." *[Survivors: If you have any information to share regarding Charles M. Collings, please let me know. – Dana Charles]*

- 10/20/16: Received the following email reply from **Mr. Tull**: "Hello Dana, I had never read the accounts of the men onboard the *Houston* before, but did on your website. I was crying like a baby. Knowing that my uncle was one of those who survived the sea battle only to be tortured for three and a half years after that. He never ever talked about what happened. He joined the Navy in 1932 and after the war he stayed in and retired in 1952; he was a Chief Ship fitter, E-8, I believe. He passed away on June 16, 1976 at the age of 61. He died of lung cancer. Because of my Uncle Charles and my Dad and his brothers I too joined the Navy in 1965. I was onboard the USS *Altair* (AKS 32). I got off active duty in September 1968 and received my Honorable Discharge in June of 1971. Thanks for all your help and for listening. All the Best, **Charley Tull.**"
- 10/21/16: I replied to **Charley Tull** as follows: Dear Charley, Thank you for sharing information about your family's service, and your service, to our country. Thank you also for your interest in your uncle, **USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor Charles M. Collings.** The WWII ordeal of our USS *Houston* (CA-30) survivors was/is truly remarkable. Attached is a scan of a copy of Mr. Collings' original "POW service record," which was kept early on during his captivity. The survivors who kept this record lost contact with Mr. Collings sometime in October 1942 when, because of his special technical skills, the Japanese transported him via a Japanese "hellship" to a POW labor camp in Japan. Below are some general notes pertaining to Mr. Collings' POW captivity. If you have any questions, please let me know...Sincerely, Dana."



(This photo at left was received in email on 27 October 2016): Former Army Assistant Secretary and John K. Schwarz's friend, Dean G. Popp, attended the recent Memphis-Navy game at Navy Marine Corps Stadium in Annapolis and arrived early to enjoy the warm-ups and the march-on of the Brigade of Midshipmen. He spotted this plaque commemorating the USS *Houston* and sends this picture along with his highest admiration for those that served, died, and survived to preserve the *Houston's* legacy in our nation's history. -- JKS

U.S. Pacific Fleet - SUNDA STRAIT (Aug. 17, 2016): Royal Australian Navy Chief Petty Officer Naval Police Coxswain Sean Goff salutes as U.S. Navy Musician 2nd Class James Baty plays a bugle call while hospital ship USNS *Mercy* (T-AH 19) passes the wreckage of HMAS *Perth* (D29) and USS *Houston* (CA 30) in Sunda Strait. *Mercy* is sailing to the final mission stop of Pacific Partnership 2016 in Padang, Indonesia. Upon arrival, partner nations will work side-by-side with local military and non-government organizations to conduct cooperative health engagements, community relation events, subject matter expert exchanges and a SAR exercise to better prepare for a natural disaster or crisis. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Lindsey E. Skelton)





USS HOUSTON (SSN-713) CREWMEN REMEMBER CA-30

At 1400 CDST on 20 October 2016 *USS Houston* (SSN-713) crewmen presented a remembrance wreath at the CA-30 Memorial Monument in Sam Houston Park, Houston TX. The CO of the boat, CDR McGinnis spoke at the ceremony. He was accompanied by a junior officer (a LT(jg) and a Third Class Petty Officer (Machinist Mate Nuclear). With the *Houston* Party was Rear Admiral Thomas Ishee, USN. RADM Ishee is currently Deputy Commander, Joint Functional Component Command for Global Strike. The submarine *USS Houston* (SSN-713) had carried the wreath on their last WESTPAC. The ceremony was part of the City of Houston's Navy Week activities which started on 17 October. – CAPT Chuck Hewell, USN (Ret.)



Day of Remembrance 2017

75th Anniversary of the Loss of
USS *Houston* (CA-30) & HMAS *Perth* (D-29)
DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Houston by the Galleria
5353 Westheimer Road, Houston, TX, 77056
(713) 961-9000

Tentative Schedule of Events March 3-4, 2017

FRIDAY (March 3)

Registration & Hospitality Room 6-10 PM Hospitality

If you are joining the group for dinner on Saturday evening, please review the McKinley Bar & Grill's menu and let Pam or Sue know what you wish to order for dinner.

Dinner 6:30 PM Hotel

- Executive Director's Year-end Report-Special Video Presentation
- Announcement of Scholarship Winner
- USNA Scholarship Announcement
- Speaker: Don Kehn, Jr. previewing his soon-to-be published book, In the Highest Degree Tragic: the Sacrifice of the Asiatic Fleet in the East Indies during WWII
- Keynote Speaker: CAPT Mark Stacpoole, USN, will review his time as U.S. Naval Attaché in Jakarta, Indonesia and the status of efforts to protect the ships

Break

Video Presentations:

- Just A Common Soldier
- HMAS Perth Tribute to 33 Years of SSN-713 Service: Brothers In Arms
- Marine Survivor Ned Gallagher: "Recalling a WWII ship's sinking."
- 2015 Ceremony aboard USS *Sampson* over the *Houston* – Indonesian video
- Jim Hornfischer: "Ship of Ghosts: USS *Houston* at the Battle of the Java Sea"

SATURDAY (March 4)

Breakfast 10 AM – Noon Hotel

- Presentation: Houston Maritime Museum
- Keynote Speaker: Author Jim Hornfischer on his new book The Fleet at Flood Tide

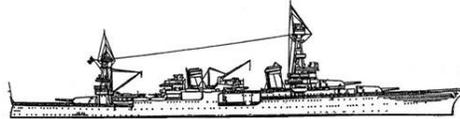
Busses will depart from Doubletree promptly at 12:30PM for the Memorial Service. Please be aboard by 12:15 p.m.

2017 Memorial Service 3:30 PM Sam Houston Park

Dinner 7:00 PM McKinley Bar & Grill
Each guest is responsible for their own payment.

Optional Pre-“Day of Remembrance 2017” Activities

The 75th anniversary of the loss of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29) is being remembered in various locations throughout Houston beginning Tuesday, February 28, 2017. All USS *Houston* Survivors, Families and Friends are invited to attend any of these events. Special hotel room rates still apply at the DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Houston by the Galleria.



75th Anniversary of the loss of USS *Houston* (CA-30) & HMAS *Perth*

Houston-area Remembrances

Tentative Schedule

February 28 – March 3, 2017

(Please provide own transportation)

6:30-8:30 pm Tuesday, 28 February 2017 - Archaeological Institute of America/Houston hosts screening of “Bridge on the River Kwai,” in the Wortham Giant Screen Theater, followed by discussion.
(Houston Museum of Natural Science: 5555 Hermann Park Drive, Houston 77030)

5:30-7:30 pm Wednesday, 1 March 2017 - Australian National Maritime Museum exhibition, “Guardians of the Sunda Strait: The wartime loss of HMAS *Perth* and the USS *Houston*,” premieres with a reception and presentation of Houston Grand Opera’s special song created in commemoration of the anniversary. The exhibition runs through the end of June 2017, and will then travel to Sydney and Perth, Australia.

(Julia Ideson Library: 550 McKinney Street, Houston 77002 – across the street from City Hall)

6:30-8:30 pm Thursday, 2 March 2017 - Archaeological Institute of America/Houston and US Navy will present a lecture on the exploration and preservation of the wrecks of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29).

(Houston Museum of Natural Science: 5555 Hermann Park Drive, Houston 77030)

TBD Friday, 3 March 2017 - USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors’ Association and Next Generations® are invited for a special tour of the ANMM exhibition, with refreshments after.

(Julia Ideson Library: 550 McKinney Street, Houston 77002 – across the street from City Hall)



REGISTRATION FORM
75th Anniversary USS Houston CA-30 Day of Remembrance
March 3-4 2017

DoubleTree Suites by Hilton Houston by the Galleria
5353 Westheimer Road Houston TX, 77056
(713) 961-9000

For hotel reservations, please [click here](#)

DEADLINE – MUST BE RECEIVED BY FEBRUARY 21, 2017

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

Grilled Atlantic Salmon # _____ X \$33.00 = \$ _____

Chicken Piccata # _____ X \$33.00 = \$ _____

Saturday Breakfast – 8:00 AM # _____ X \$33.00 = \$ _____

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

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

(Received after February 21, 2017)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Saturday Group Dinner # _____

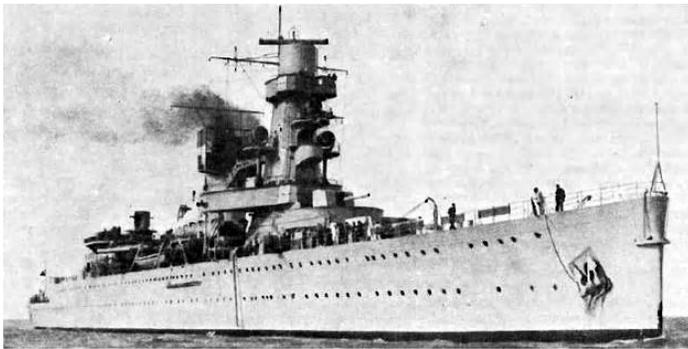
Please include a check for the total cost made payable to: USS Houston-Next Generations (your check is your receipt). Payment is non-refundable.

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

Sunken Allied Ships Removed From the Java Sea Floor

By Dana Charles

The Defense ministries of Britain and the Kingdom of the Netherlands have reported that the remains of six WWII warships sunk off the Indonesian coast during the WWII Battle of the Java Sea have been removed, possibly by unknown scrap metal salvagers. Recent expeditions to the Java Sea area to



HNLMS De Ruyter

document the ships prior to next year's 75th anniversary of the Battle of the Java Sea made the discoveries of the missing British, Dutch, and American ships, which include: the British heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter*; the British destroyer HMS *Electra*; the British destroyer HMS *Encounter*; the American submarine USS *Perch*; the Dutch light cruiser HNLMS *DeRuyter*; and the Dutch light cruiser HNLMS *Java*.

The February 27, 1942 Battle of the Java Sea was one of the deadliest defeats of the Pacific War for American, British, Dutch, and Australian naval forces by Imperial Japanese naval forces. The defeat allowed Japanese invasion forces to land and occupy the entire Dutch East Indies seventy-five years ago. Approximately 2,200 Allied sailors perished during the battle.

Missing Dutch Warships

In 2002 amateur divers discovered the remains of the Dutch warships HNLMS *DeRuyter*, HNLMS *Java*, and HNLMS *Kortenaer* on the seabed of the Java Sea. But, a recent international expedition to the wreck site to place plaques on the wreckage of the vessels made the startling discovery that the ships had vanished. In the Netherlands, the De Telegraaf newspaper ran a front page story under the headline: "Mystery in the Java Sea." The Netherlands Defense Ministry said, "The wrecks of HNLMS *De Ruyter* and HNLMS *Java* have seemingly gone completely missing. A large piece is also missing from HNLMS *Kortenaer*...Divers found only traces of the ships while sonar showed imprints of the wrecks on the ocean floor...An investigation has been launched to see what has happened to the wrecks, while the cabinet has been informed."

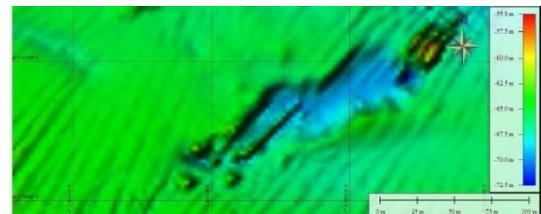


Figure 10 Hr. Ms. De Ruyter Wreck Site

Sonar shows a hole where DeRuyter should be

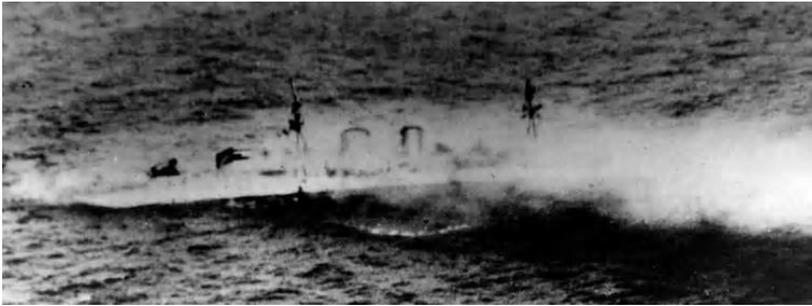
More than 900 Dutch and 250 Indo-Dutch sailors perished during the Battle of the Java Sea, including the Allied fleet commander, Dutch Rear Admiral Karel Doorman. The wrecks of the Dutch ships had been viewed as sacred war graves. "The desecration of a war grave is a serious offense," said the Netherlands Ministry of Defense. Top Dutch officials reportedly reacted with anger when news of the salvaging reached them.

Missing British and American Ships

In a statement the United Kingdom's Ministry of Defense said that "Serious concern" had been expressed to the Indonesian government. The Ministry condemned the "unauthorized disturbance of

any wreck containing human remains,” and requested Indonesian authorities take “appropriate action to protect the sites from any further disturbance... Many lives were lost during this battle and we would expect that these sites are respected and left undisturbed without the express consent of the United Kingdom...It is British Government policy that our military wrecks are offered appropriate protection and management.”

The British heavy cruiser HMS *Exeter* had a crew of approximately 700 men. 54 crewmen died when the Japanese navy sank the *Exeter* on 1 March 1942. After the *Exeter* went down, the Japanese



HMS *Exeter* sinking on 1 March 1942

managed to rescue most of the crewmen, who then became prisoners of war. Both HMS *Encounter* and HMS *Electra* had 145-man crews. Both ships were overloaded with allied sailors rescued from other ships destroyed during the Java Sea battle when they, too, were sunk.

Salvagers in SE Asian Waters

Salvagers, often pretending to be fishermen, have reportedly located the WWII ship wrecks in the waters not only around Indonesia, but also Singapore and Malaysia. Off the coast of Malaysia in 2014, the remains of HMS *Prince of Wales* and HMS *Repulse*, containing some 800 Royal Navy sailors, were found to have been ravaged by unknown salvagers.

Andy Brockman, an archaeologist and researcher in maritime crime explained in an article published in [The Guardian](#) that “[Salvaging] is like a cottage industry... Basically, they use explosives and grabs to rip things apart. You get basis steel. In a single engine room you have a lot of non-ferrous metals, copper and brass, which have a premium on the scrap metal market.”

Indonesian Government’s Viewpoint

Meanwhile, the Indonesian government is refusing to accept blame for the missing warships. According to [The Guardian](#), “Bambang Budi Utomo, the head of the Indonesian National Archeological Centre, part of the education and culture ministry, said on Thursday that [Indonesia](#) could not be expected to protect the sites without assistance. ‘The Dutch government cannot blame the Indonesian government because they never asked us to protect those ships. As there was no agreement or announcement, when the ships go missing, it is not our responsibility.’ Indonesia’s navy said the ships should not have been disturbed but it was not its responsibility to protect them. ‘The Indonesian navy cannot monitor all areas all the time,’ navy spokesman Gig Jonias Mozes Sipasulta told Agence France-Press. ‘If they ask why the ships are missing, I’m going to ask them back, why didn’t they guard the ships?’”

Sources: [The Guardian](#); the BBC; NPR.

RADM Cox's Reaction to the Discovery of the Missing Warships

LATE BREAKING NEWS: *As this issue of the Blue Bonnet was about to be published, we received a copy of the following 28 November 2016 email from Rear Admiral Samuel Cox, USN (Retired), Curator of the Navy and Director of the Naval History and Heritage Command to Jacques Brandt, Chairman of the "Karel Doorman Fonds" in the Netherlands. In this email (below), RADM Cox expresses his views about the discovery of the missing warships and he also explains what he intends to do about the situation. – Dana Charles.*

Dear Mr. Brandt,

Thank you for sharing the results of the diving expedition, and I share your regret and sadness at the result. The Royal Netherlands Navy fought with great valor against overwhelming odds, along with Australian, British and U.S. allies, and those Sailors deserved to have their last resting place remain undisturbed. The anguish that this news must bring to the families of those Sailors lost in this campaign must be considerable.

We have been working through the U.S. Embassy in Jakarta as best we can to try to convince the Indonesian Government to protect war-grave sites of allied warships in accordance with their own cultural resources laws. Our focus has been on USS *Houston* and HMAS *Perth*, but as the process moved forward, we had hoped that the protection would be extended to the warships of all nations. The process has been very slow going, and regrettably as it turns out, too slow.

Your report does not mention USS *Pope* (DD-225,) which went down in proximity to HMS *Exeter* and HMS *Encounter*, and presumably has shared their unfortunate final fate.

At this point, I cannot speak for whatever diplomatic or legal actions the U.S. Government might be able to take. However, my intent is to recommend up my chain of command that the strongest possible action be taken as a deterrent to any such additional activity around the globe.

With respect,

Sam

Samuel J. Cox
RADM, USN (Retired)
Director of Naval History
Curator of the Navy
Director, Naval History and Heritage Command





NG Ed Schwarz; Association Co-Founder Trudy Schwarz; and Executive Director John Schwarz flank the original Thomas Freeman painting "They Sold Their Lives Dearly" during the Museum's unveiling of the USS Houston (CA-30) model in November 2011. (Photo by: Sandy Flynn)

ASSOCIATION DONATES PRINT TO THE MUSEUM OF THE U.S. NAVY

Our Association has donated a 22"x 17½" print of Tom Freeman's beautiful painting depicting USS *Houston* (CA-30) fighting at Sunda Strait, called "They Sold Their Lives Dearly" to the Museum of the U.S. Navy. According to Executive Director John K. Schwarz, the Navy plans to use the print in a USS *Houston* (CA-30) display at a new U.S. Navy Museum. The Association's Board of Managers unanimously voted to purchase and to donate the print during its November 2016 teleconference.

You Shop, Amazon Gives

By Pam Crispi Foster, Treasurer

Many of us already shop online at [Amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com). Did you know that Amazon has a program where they will donate a portion of your purchase price to the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations®? There is no additional cost to you or to the association and the proceeds help to perpetuate the memory of our ship and the sacrifices made by her crew. Visit our website: www.usshouston.org and click on the AmazonSmile link or go to the website shown below. This is a win-win situation for all of us.

- Amazon will donate 0.5% of the price of your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to the **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations®** whenever you shop on AmazonSmile.
- AmazonSmile is the same Amazon you know. Same products, same prices, same service.
- Support the **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations®** by starting your shopping at [http://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2814051](https://smile.amazon.com/ch/74-2814051).



Past



Present

and Future USS HOUSTON is.. ?

*W*ell, what kind of ship will the next Houston be,

One is now decommissioned, the other on the bottom of the Sea.

One a Cruiser, the other a Sub,

No corny comments about rubba dub dub.

The Colors can be seen on the Ceremonial Deck,

The other was seen when all the guns flashed, keeping the enemy in check.

One beneath the waves silently prowled,

The surface ship was in your face, it had big guns that howled.

Different missions in different times,

Both stood watch, the bells marked the time.

Binoculars and lookouts made it easier to look,

In a sub though, it better be by the book.

The call turn the ship, that way.. go,

Drop a pan and the Chief rips your a..stinging rebuke, thanks for the torpedo.

Both have a history, one led by Rooks,

The battle was epic, one for the books.

The last patrol a success, led by McGinnis,

A silent patrol, it's time ceremonially finished.

Now the question is, what will USS Houston be next,

I hope the message is loud and proud, not sent by a text.

One Houston slipped to the bottom of the Sea,

The other stood on her tail, the down was an up or somewhere bubble, hey watch your head,

There I was, minding my own business in bed.

That's the question to me,

A ship on the surface or one you will rarely see?

Written by: Chaplain Barry Barlow ©



Lost Battalion Monument Re-Dedicated in Jacksboro

On November 2, 2016 members of the Lost Battalion Association, including "Next Generationers," gathered at the new Faith Community Hospital in Jacksboro, Texas to re-dedicate a memorial plaque which had previously stood at the old hospital in Jacksboro. The plaque will be installed at the base of the new hospital's flagpole. Among the attendees were: Rosalie Gregg; Dorothy Prunty; and Marie Matlock.





HMAS Perth III Returns to Australia After Operation Manitou

HMAS *Perth* III returned to Fleet Base West in Australia on 11 November 2016 following a six-month deployment to the Middle East. The ship had been a part of Operation Manitou, countering terrorism, piracy, and drug smuggling with patrols in the Persian Gulf, Gulf of Aden, Red Sea, and parts of the Indian Ocean. It was the *Perth's* first patrol to the Middle East. Her crew of 192 patrolled more than 25,000 nautical miles since leaving Rockingham, Australia on 7 June, according to an article in the Weekend Courier, written by Tim Slater. "Commander Australian Fleet Rear Admiral Stuart Mayer said HMAS *Perth* had served as part of the multi-national Combined Maritime Forces and had been at the forefront of maritime security," the article said. Although the ship did not catch any offenders on the high seas, Commander Australian Fleet Rear Admiral Stuart Mayer said it played a vital role in keeping waterways safe.



Commanding Officer of HMAS *Perth*-III, Captain Ivan Ingham (center) celebrates the 26 August 2016 birthday of HMAS *Perth*-III with the ship's youngest member, Seaman Boatswains Mate Bridget Hopkins and oldest member, Petty Officer Maritime Logistics - Chef Renato Franz. The *Perth* was on patrol in the Middle East region as part of Operation MANITOU.

USS HOUSTON (CA-30) ITEMS FOR SALE

DVD "Last Stand" (8 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
 Ship Lapel Pin (specify silver or gold highlights)
 (1 - 3 pins are 1 oz.) \$4.00



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-10 oz.)



T-Shirts (size Medium) (9 oz.) \$10.00
 T-Shirts (size Small, large, and 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

Shipping Costs:
 1 oz. – 6 oz. = \$4.00
 7 oz. – 12 oz. = \$7.50
 13 oz. – 5 lb. = \$10.50

Make checks payable to:
USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association

Mail checks to:
 Sue Kreutzer
 43156 Meadowbrook Cir.
 Parker, CO 80138

Questions? Email: Sue@USSHouston.org

Blue Ball Cap ("USS Houston CA-30", 10 oz.) \$15.00
 Brown Ball Cap ("USS Houston CA-30", 10 oz.) \$5.00
 Brown & Black Ball Cap
 ("U.S.S. Houston CA-30 2nd Generation", 10 oz.) \$5.00



Blue Ball Cap



Brown & Black Ball Cap



Women's Polo Shirt



Men's Polo Shirt

Meet your...

Board of Managers

...here to serve you!

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Son of USN survivor Otto Schwarz
Association strategy/outreach, Special Projects,
Scholarship Committee, Membership liaison
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Treasurer: Pam Foster
Daughter of USN survivor Eugene Crispi
Financial and IRS records,
Scholarship Committee
Email: Pam@usshouston.org



Membership

Our "USS *Houston* family" continues to grow weekly as more and more folks want to know about the gallant crew of USS *Houston* CA-30. If you have relatives and friends who have not yet joined our Association, please encourage them to join us! Members do not have yearly dues. However we do operate based on the generosity of our membership. All donations are gratefully accepted. For more information and a membership form, click on: <http://www.usshouston.org/memberform.pdf>, fill out the form and send it in!

Welcome Aboard!

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



Association Website:
www.usshouston.org

Facebook Group Site:
[USS Houston CA-30](#)

In Memoriam

In addition to remembering those of our USS *Houston* (CA-30) Family who have passed on from this life, the **Blue Bonnet** also remembers HMAS *Perth* (D-29) and 131st/ 2nd BN survivors and their family members who have recently passed away.

They too will never be forgotten.



In Memoriam



Tom Ficklin



Died: 17 August 2016
Dallas, Texas

Son of Frank Ficklin
131st Field Artillery/2nd Battalion



Thank you!

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

Donations **July 24, – November 23, 2016**

In Memory of David Flynn
Fulton and Ellen Flynn

Other Donations

Bruce DeWald
Bernice Harapat
Sue Kreutzer
John Schwarz
Trudy Schwarz

2016 Amazon Smile Donations Earned: \$61.35

Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

Fiscal Year 2016
January 1, - November 23, 2016

General Fund

Beginning Balance:	\$16,937.05
Receipts:	+7,341.32
Expenses:	<u>-4,803.67</u>
Ending Balance:	\$19,474.70



Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance:	\$12,332.34
Receipts:	+3,047.86
Expenses:	<u>-0.00</u>
Ending Balance:	\$15,380.20



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Views expressed by contributors are not necessarily those of this Association, its members, or its Board of Managers.

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**HAPPY
HOLIDAYS!**