

THE BLUE BONNET



Volume 76, Issue 4 • December, 2018

"Galloping Ghost of the Java Coast"

Newsletter of the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations®

Now Hear This!

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Association Phone Number:

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USS Houston Survivors' Association
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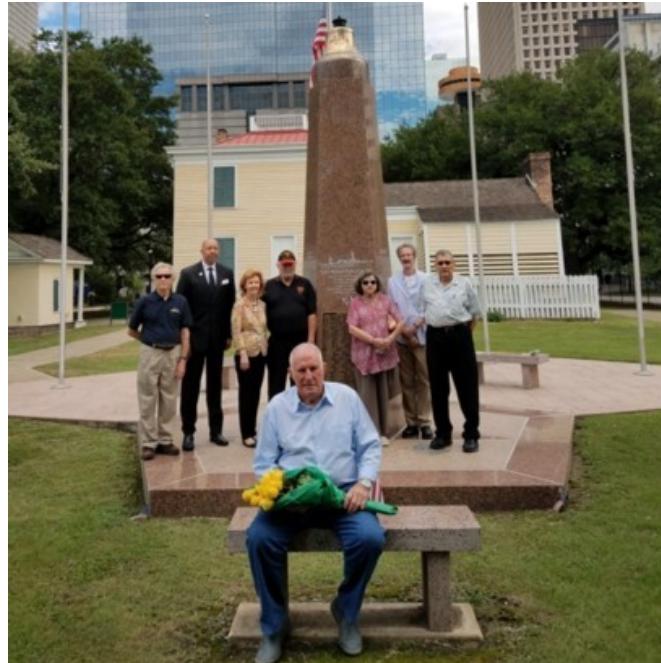
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Association Founded 1947

By Otto and Trudy Schwarz

Son of HMAS Perth (D-29) Crewman Visits USS Houston (CA-30) Monument



6 September 2018: Welcoming George Hatfield, Jr. at the USS Houston CA-30 Monument in Houston, TX were: (L to R): John K. Schwarz; Robert Dembo III; Nana Booker; Steve Waldner; NG Lin Drees; Don Kehn, Jr; Ron Drees. (Not pictured: JoAnn Dombroski, NG Matt Rejmaniak and his mother).

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George Hatfield, Jr. Visits USS Houston CA-30 Monument

By John K. Schwarz

No, this isn't a photo of a March gathering; rather, it's a photo of a wonderful opportunity we had on a hot September day (September 6th) for a 'mini-gathering' at the beautiful USS Houston (CA-30) monument in Houston, TX.

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The occasion was a visit to the U.S. by Mr. George Hatfield, Jr., the son of an HMAS *Perth* crewman who perished in battle on the fateful night of 1 March 1942. George was not to be born for another three months after this loss—a story which led to his acute interest in learning about the ship, his father, and the experiences that his father and his shipmates went through.

Mr. Hatfield planned for a U.S. trip since he has friends in the La Grange, Texas-area and he hoped to meet with as many “USS *Houston* CA-30 folks” as possible. Arrangements were made to hold a gathering at The Heritage Society in Houston. Most of those in attendance are pictured here, including Robert Dembo III, acting Director of Veterans Affairs for the city of Houston, and Nana Booker, Honorary Consul Emeritus of Australia. (Not pictured are: JoAnn Dombroski, Matt Rejmaniak and his Mother). All in attendance were treated to George’s thoughtful slide presentation which included his description of what it was like to visit his father’s gravesite—the waters above HMAS *Perth*—the previous March as part of a memorial service held at sea at both the *Perth*, and *Houston* ship sites. George said, “My presence was to illustrate it was not only the grave of the *Perth* but also the grave of 353 Australian sailors (my father being one of them).” George said he was filled with many emotions, yet the experience enabled him to ‘connect’ in a way with a father he never knew, whose life experiences he never shared.

Those in attendance enjoyed George's presentation, particularly the very lively question/answer portion.

As a token of appreciation to George's meeting with us, the Association presented George with a USS *Houston* (CA-30) hat, challenge coin and bell pin.

We thank George and are pleased to have shared this wonderful gathering with such a fine man from Down-Under who shares so much in common with us.



Enjoying dinner together on 27 September 2018 (L to R): Brian Davis; Mary Morgan, RADM Samuel Cox, USN (Ret); Kim Roller; Bernice Harapat; Jason Witty; Dana Charles; Stacy Glover-Witty.

Dinner with RADM Cox In Washington State

Members of the USS *Indianapolis* survivors' group and two members of our Association's board of managers enjoyed having dinner with RADM Samuel J. Cox, USN at a Gig Harbor, Washington restaurant on 27 September 2018. RADM Cox, the Curator of the Navy, and Director of the History and Heritage Command, was kind enough to have dinner with NW Washington-area members of both groups while he was on a business trip to the “Evergreen State.”

Hornfischer Receives Major Award



Author James D. Hornfischer recently received the prestigious Samuel Eliot Morison Award for his work in maritime history, which included these books: *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors; Ship of Ghosts: The Story of the USS Houston, FDR's Legendary Lost Cruiser and the Epic Saga of Her Survivors; Neptune's Inferno: The U.S. Navy at Guadalcanal; and The Fleet at Flood Tide: America at Total War in the Pacific*. Our Association is eternally grateful that Mr. Hornfischer chose USS *Houston* (CA-30) and her crew as the subject of one of these excellent books.



From the desk of the Executive Director
John K. Schwarz

By now I trust you are all aware of the wonderful, new opportunity our Association has to make a direct, permanent and lasting contribution in support of our principal reason for continuing to exist, which is: to perpetuate the memory of the USS *Houston* CA-30. I refer to the ship model placement scheduled for March 1, 2019 at The Heritage Society, Houston, TX, located near the site of the glorious USS *Houston* (CA-30) Monument.

The installation of this model is truly historic on many levels. First, consider the story behind the building of this particular model, well chronicled in this edition of The Blue Bonnet. Check out the remarkable connections between another WWII hero, his thoughtful and generous grandson and our beloved ship. Next, consider this: Due to the Monument's location, we have had direct connection to The Heritage Society since 11 November 1995 and yet we have not had a strong relationship there. Because of the installation of this model our relationship with The Heritage Society has never been stronger. We have been very fortunate to have developed a terrific relationship with the current Executive Director of The Heritage Society, Mrs. Alison Bell. Alison has not only enabled us to make this placement happen, but she has also consented to help us test the marketing of some of our merchandise on-site. She has also approved the placement of our model in a room that will enable hundreds of visitors the opportunity to see it. It is our hope that the model will help bring a better understanding of our ship to every visitor to the Monument. It doesn't get much better than that. We thank Mrs. Bell and her entire staff at The Heritage Society for helping to make this happen.

To all of you who have financially contributed to this initiative, our sincere thanks. For those who have not yet donated, there remains plenty of time to do so (please see page 14).

For those yet to make travel arrangements to Houston, Texas this March do what you can to get in early on Friday, March 1 as the model unveiling is scheduled for 2:00 p.m., with buses leaving the hotel at 1:15 p.m.

Also, we have placed **ALL** of our current merchandise on sale! See the announcement on page 10. This offers a great way to gift someone (including yourself), while also demonstrating your contribution to the memory of the ship. I urge you to act fast since inventory levels are diminishing.

Hope to share this upcoming 'Day of Remembrance' with as many of you as possible. Meanwhile, be well. Happy Holidays!

John

NEWS FROM JAKARTA

By
CDR GREG R. ADAMS, USN



It has been another busy fall here at U.S. Embassy Jakarta: a full bilateral and multilateral exercise calendar; move to a new embassy building; and a steady stream of U.S. senior leader visits. The overall US-IDN bilateral defense relationship remains strong and continues on a positive trajectory.

I am very happy to report that the USS *Houston* (CA-30) display case has found its new home on the second floor of our new embassy building between the cafeteria and mail room. This ideal location allows for maximum visibility, foot traffic, and is very easy to bring our guests to see on their way in or out of the embassy.

U.S. Embassy Jakarta had the pleasure of hosting several senior Navy and Marine Corps leaders to our new embassy building over the last few weeks, which also includes the opportunity to showcase the new location of the *Houston* display case, and the never-missed-opportunity to raise awareness about the *Houston* and her brave crew. Our visitors included: Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral John Richardson, 29 – 31 October; Commander, Office of Naval Intelligence (COMONI) Rear Admiral Robert Sharp, 31 October – 03 November; and Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC) Brigadier General Robert Sofge, 06 – 12 November.



Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) Admiral John Richardson



**Commander, Office of Naval Intelligence (COMONI)
Rear Admiral Robert Sharp, USN**



**Deputy Commander, Marine Forces Pacific (MARFORPAC)
Brigadier General Robert Sofge, USMC**

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All three leaders expressed their support to the Navy History and Heritage Center (NHHC), U.S. Embassy Jakarta, and the Government of Indonesia in their commitment to protecting the site of the *USS Houston*. They were equally proud to hear about the recent activities of the Survivor's Association and Next Generations.

Mr. Lewis Grow of the U.S. Embassy Economic Section and I were fortunate to have a meeting with Director General for Spatial Management at the Ministry of Marine Affairs and Fisheries Bapak Brahmantya Satyamurti Poerwadi.

It was my pleasure to turn over 128GB of data as provided by NHHC related to the 2014 dive survey on the *Houston*. I hope this data and the gesture of cooperation can help move us closer to designating the site of *Houston* a Maritime Conservation Zone.

Ms. Geneve Menscher, U.S. Embassy Jakarta Pol-Mil Officer and I met with members of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs this afternoon to get their perspective on GOI progress towards designating the site of *Houston* a Maritime Conservation Zone. Nothing yet, but the Ministry plans to hold an internal ministerial meeting this coming Friday to determine the 'next steps'. I remain optimistic.

Very Respectfully,
CDR Greg R. Adams
Naval Attaché,
Embassy of the United States,
Jakarta, Indonesia



**USS Houston Model
Donated in Walla Walla, WA**

Walla Walla, WA resident Jim Sonne recently donated a *USS Houston* (CA-30) model he built from a kit to the Fort Walla Walla Museum where it is on display in honor the ship's captain, CAPT Albert H. Rooks, USN, who was a graduate of Walla Walla High School. After high school graduation, Rooks, a native of Colton, Wash., (14 miles south of Pullman) and a descendant of pioneer Whitman County, WA farmers, graduated on 6 June 1914 from the U.S. Naval Academy, and began his career in the US Navy. While serving as the commanding officer of *USS Houston* (CA-30) CAPT Rooks was killed during the Battle of Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942. He was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for "extraordinary heroism, outstanding courage, gallantry in action and distinguished service in the line of his profession as commanding officer of the *USS Houston* during the period of Feb. 4-27, 1942, while in action with superior Japanese enemy aerial and surface forces..."

On a placard beside Jim's model of the *Houston*, the museum connected the Rooks family with another Walla Walla High School graduate—a sailor who once delivered the Union-Bulletin newspaper to CAPT Rooks' mother, Ruth Rooks. During a Sunday inspection aboard the *Houston* one day, CAPT Rooks saw an issue of the Union-Bulletin in the locker of Wilber Smith, SM1/c. That's when Rooks discovered Smith had been his mother's newspaper carrier. Wilbur Smith survived the sinking of the *Houston* and as a POW was forced to build the Burma-Thailand Railroad.

Today, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers maintains Rooks Park, just east of Walla Walla, which was named in CAPT Rooks' honor.

Crew Member Spotlight

US Navy Bandmaster SIDNEY M. ZERAMBY

By Joseph L. and Marlene Morris McCain

US Navy Bandmaster Sid Zeramby was a living legend who served continuously from 1917 until the 1960s. With a pocket full of his beloved cigars and his left sleeve covered with hash marks, Sid was a natural leader who mentored literally thousands of Navy musicians. He is remembered here for his many years of service and dedication and the part he played in the story of *USS Houston, CA-30*.

Born in 1899, Sid enlisted in the Navy at Boston during World War I. His first sea duty was aboard a transport ship, *USS Northern Pacific*. In his long Navy career, he would later serve aboard such famous ships as *USS Lexington*, *USS Augusta* and *USS Houston*.

Bandmaster Zeramby trained the men of the Asiatic Fleet Flagship Band and brought them aboard *USS Houston* when the flag transferred from *USS Augusta* at Manila in November 1940.



Sid left the *Houston* in September 1941 to return to stateside duty and was replaced by Bandmaster George Galyean. Galyean survived the sinking of the *Houston* by Japanese forces on March 1, 1942, and was able to return home along with the

four other surviving members from *Houston's* band.

One of Bandmaster Zeramby's popular band groups was "Sid's Syncopators" which performed in much of the Orient and French Indochina from 1937-1941. During World War II, he formed yet another group that provided entertainment for our armed forces serving in the Pacific Theater.

During his career, he held the following Bandmaster positions: Allied Forces Southern Europe (AFSE), Pacific Fleet Band (1953), CINCPACFLT, Naval Training Center (Great Lakes). Sid also organized the first all-black Navy Band in 1942. He was a well known composer as well. For example, he wrote the march "Task Force 58" which became the official march of the Navy units in the Western Pacific.

Sid Zeramby was always supportive and encouraging where his bandmen were concerned. He had a wonderful sense of humor, a ready smile and seldom forgot a name once he had met someone. Sid was known to jokingly time band practice sessions by the available cigars remaining in his shirt pocket. The picture with this article shows Sid (with cigar in hand) leading practice on the *Houston's* quarterdeck, probably about August 1941. The sailor on the extreme left is Mus2C Edgar Morris who wrote his parents that he "would rather play anything on the *Houston* than get to play what I asked for" on another ship. Such was his feeling about his ship and bandmaster that Edgar didn't mind setting aside his instrument of choice, the trombone, to become a pianist for the ship's orchestra or play the peck horn in the band.

Sid Zeramby and his wife, Senne, lived in Long Beach, California after his retirement from the Navy. Surrounded by keepsakes and memories of well over forty years, he passed away in 1976.

The Mailbag

By Dana Charles

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

- 9/30/2018: Received the following email from **Tom Jowett, Vice Chair, HMS Exeter Association**:
“Good Morning, We were in touch a good few years ago, & I would like to bring you up-to-date, and dare to ask a question or two! The crew that served on “*Exeter*” and interned as PoWs is now down to three survivors. Reunions are still held on the weekend closest to 1st March (the date of the sinking) in Exeter, mainly attended by descendants, but where a wreath is laid at the stained-glass window in Exeter Cathedral dedicated to those that didn’t return and those that have since departed. Over recent years we have been joined by crew members and their descendants of the recent *Exeter*, a type-42 destroyer. Increasing the membership and hopefully ensuring that the memory will be kept alive. (Especially now that the wreck has disappeared!) Now to the questions: Is there a similar organisation for the *USS Pope*, she left Surabaya with *Exeter* and *Encounter* and was caught by the same fleet, I believe that the survivors were also interned initially at Macassar... The reason for asking is that seven telegraphists were taken from Macassar to Ofuna, the IJN-run interrogation centre near Yokohama (2 lads from *Pope*, 4 from *Exeter* and 1 from *Encounter*). I have been tasked with trying to find out what happened to these lads during the time 1942 to 1945, their records show being kept at Ofuna, but they reported being sent to Kanagawa Radio Station... All avenues have so far shown “Nil” results.... I am wondering if there are any descendants of the two telegraphists still around, importantly, did their Fathers speak on their return? We have located the descendants of the four *Exeter* lads. It is these “girls”—now in their fifties, sixties and seventies—that are looking to find out more about their Father’s (and Grandfather’s) activities and experiences. Thanks, Tom. **Tom Jowett, Vice Chair, HMS Exeter Association**. “Semper Fidelis” -Always Faithful.
- 10/1/2018: Wrote the following reply to **Tom Jowett**: “Dear Tom, It’s great to hear from you. Thank you for your email. I hope things are going well for the HMS *Exeter* Association. FYI: There are two survivors of *USS Houston* (CA-30) still living today. Both are in their 90’s, and are doing well. Unfortunately, neither of them has been able to attend our annual *USS Houston* (CA-30) “Day of Remembrance” gatherings in Houston, Texas where we honor and remember all the ships of ABDA, especially the crews of the *Houston* and HMAS *Perth* (D-29). We hold our event as close as possible to the date of 1 March—the date both *Houston* and *Perth* were lost at the Battle of Sunda Strait in 1942. Our next “Day of Remembrance” will be held on 1 – 2 March 2019 in Houston, TX... I have forwarded your email to the daughters of two *USS Pope* survivors whom I met at our “Day of Remembrance” in March 2018. I believe they will be willing to contact you regarding their father’s POW experiences... I am glad to hear that the crew of HMS *Exeter* continues to be remembered there. We were horrified to learn that the ship, itself, has disappeared... FYI: Each year our Association invites a British representative to our annual Memorial Service in Houston, Texas to remember the British warships which served in ABDA during the Pacific War. We will never forget the crewmen of these ships. Best regards, Dana.”
- 10/5/2018: Received an email from **Cyrille Pontens** in which he asked for information about an accidental collision between *USS Houston* (CA-30) and the Cannonnière *Française Francis Garnier* which supposedly happened on the Huangpu River in Shanghai, China on 1 April 1933. Cyrille wrote that his grandfather **Louis Maurice Muller Quartier Maître** of the French Marine was seriously injured because of this incident.

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- 10/8/2018: I wrote an email reply to Mr. Pontens as follows: "Dear Mr. Pontens, Our Association's historian reports that we do not have the USS *Houston* (CA-30)'s Deck Logs for 1933 which would show some information about any incidents which occurred in that year. He suggests that you visit the website of the U.S. National Archives and Records Administration (NARA-II). If the *Houston*'s Deck Logs from 1933 still exist, NARA-II should have them. For information go to: <https://www.archives.gov/> Our historian suggests that you find "the Deck Log for that day--or, say, a day before & day after that date." Meanwhile, if you have, or find, any information regarding a 1933 collision, we would be very interested in reviewing it. Thank you for contacting us."
- 10/11/2018: Received an email from **Ryan McKittrick** of Hutto, Texas, who asked for information and a photo regarding **Raymond Nickelson**—a USS *Houston* (CA-30) crewman who was Ryan's grandfather's best friend while they were growing up in Milan, Indiana. Ryan wrote that his father, Raymond McKittrick, was named in Mr. Nickelson's honor. Ryan said he had searched the Internet and had ended up doing an open records request via the National Archives in St. Louis, which sent him Raymond's records but no US Navy Photo. His "last ditch effort" was Milan High School in Indiana, he said. This last week they emailed Ryan a photo of the Senior Class of 1939 and there was Raymond Nickelson. The school later sent Ryan a clearer photo that Ryan "was able to clean up just a bit." "Mr. Nickelson never had any children, and his sole brother passed away, also without any children, in the early 2000's," Ryan wrote. "I saw one of the crew pages where a short bio was written. I would like to write a short bio on him from what information I obtained from the Archives and what little I know about him being from Milan, Indiana."
- 10/11/2018: I replied to Ryan as follows: "Dear Ryan, Thank you for sharing the photo and the story regarding your search for information about crewman **Raymond Nickelson, MM2/c, USN** who was Killed in Action when the *Houston* was sunk on 1 March 1942 at the Battle of Sunda Strait. I sincerely appreciate your efforts. We would welcome the biography you intend to write about Mr. Nickelson. Email it to me and I will forward it to the webmaster... Meanwhile, you may be interested in attending our Association's next annual USS *Houston* (CA-30) "Day of Remembrance" weekend on 1 – 2 March 2019 in Houston, TX. This event will include our annual USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Service on 2 March at which we will remember and honor all of *Houston*'s crewmen. FYI: I've attached our Association's newsletter (April 2018 issue) which covers our March 2018 "Day of Remembrance" so you can get a sense of what happens at these annual events. If you'd like more information on the 2019 "Day of Remembrance," just let me know. Again, thank you for all of your efforts in regards to obtaining information about Mr. Nickelson. We shall never forget him; we shall never forget any of the courageous crewmen of USS *Houston* (CA-30).
- 10/25/2018: Received an email from **Gail Vecsey of Florida**. She wanted some information on her uncle, **Edward (Eddie) Dering Garwood** who died at 80 Kilo Camp in Burma. She found a death certificate was wondering if the officer who signed it was the Commanding Officer of USS *Houston*. "Can anyone tell me about 80 Hilo camp? Does anyone have pictures where I could see if I can find my uncle?" she wrote.



Raymond Nickelson

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- 10/25/2018: I wrote the following email reply to **Gail Vecsey**: “Dear Gail, Thank you for your email regarding your uncle, USS *Houston* (CA-30) crewman **Edward D. Garwood, USN**, who died as a POW of the Japanese while working on the Burma-Thailand Railway during the Pacific War. I am very sorry for your loss... The USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor who signed Mr. Garwood’s POW Record regarding his death was **Dr. W. A. Epstein**, who was the *Houston*’s medical officer, and was also a railway POW himself. The place where your uncle perished was called “80 Kilo Camp,” which was a POW Camp located 80 kilometers from the main base camp at Thanbyuzayat, Burma on the north-eastern end of the line. He was one of 77 USS *Houston* survivors who died as a POW of the Japanese. Only 291 crewmen (out of the original crew of some 1,050 sailors and Marines) survived until the war ended in August, 1945... Today, there are only two of these USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors still living. Both are well into their 90’s... FYI: Supposedly, the remains of all American POWS who died during WWII along the Burma-Thailand Railway were transported either back to their hometowns, or were buried at the Punchbowl Cemetery in Hawaii. I’m sorry I cannot provide you with more information on where your uncle may be buried. I see that you work for the Department of Veterans Affairs. Perhaps you may have access to some VA records which might provide more veterans’ burial information(?) Our Association today only has photographs which were passed down to us from survivors. Unfortunately, group photos of the ship’s 1942 crew were not taken. Any photos, which the crewmen had in their possession during the ship’s final battle, went down with the ship. So, I’m afraid we may not have any pictures of your uncle as a crewman... FYI: Recently, another next-of-kin told me that he found a picture of his USS *Houston* relative in a copy of his uncle’s high school yearbook...! Thank you for contacting us. Sincerely, Dana Charles.”

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 to 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>.

USS HOUSTON CA-30 ITEMS FOR SALE

Now Hear This...

HOLIDAY 'SHIP'S STORE' SALE ON NOW!

Every item reduced...!!!

Visit our website's 'Ship's Store' at www.usshouston.org/shipsstore.html and see all of the USS Houston CA-30 items at their discounted prices!

A great way to obtain Holiday gifts while honoring USS Houston CA-30.

Ample quantity on most items except limited sizes available as indicated for the following clothing items:



Hats: A limited supply left!

Only one ladies jacket left; XS (great for petite female)

Men's polo's: 1-XXL, 4-XL, 1 med., 5-2XL, 6-Lg.

Ladies Polo's: 1-XL, 2-small, 1-med.

T-Shirts: 7-med., 2-2XL, 2-small

Act fast to purchase these remaining in-stock items while they last!



(At left: Men's Polo Shirt)

All in-stock PINS on sale now:



Let's wear our USS Houston CA-30 items with pride
and tell the USS Houston CA-30 story if asked!

Announcing...

-THE NEW MERCHANDISE ORDERING PROCESS-

Visit the Association website at www.usshouston.org/shipsstore.html and select the item(s) you want to purchase. All items have been discounted and the new prices are listed.

There are **TWO OPTIONS** to choose from to place your order (Utilize any ONE of these options):

- 1.** Send an email to our Association correspondence address- contact@usshouston.org with the following information:

- Indicate the specific item(s) you want
- Provide your shipping address
- Provide your email address
- Provide your phone number

—OR—

- 2.** Phone in your order to John Schwarz at (703) 867-0142

- Note: if you are choosing to phone in your order provide the same information as indicated above.

You will be called or emailed if further clarification is needed concerning your order.

Shipping:

- Once placed, your order will be prepared for shipment and taken to the U.S. Postal Service to obtain the most reasonable rate available.
- You will be notified of the cost of shipping which needs to be added to the total cost of the item(s) you have ordered. Add the total amount of your item(s) plus shipping and make your check out to: **USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association**. Please write the word "Merchandise" on the "memo line" of your check.
- Mail your order payment check to: **USS Houston CA30 Survivors' Association & Next Generations, c/o Pam Foster, 2065 Sutter View Ln, Lincoln, CA 95648**

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

Day of Remembrance 2019

**77th Anniversary of the loss of
USS *Houston* (CA-30) and 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 1—2, 2019

FRIDAY (March 1)

Installation of USS Houston (CA-30) Model at The Heritage Society

2:00 p.m.

- Unveiling of USS *Houston* (CA-30) scale model and its display case
Speaker: Bill Thoet

A Bus will leave from the hotel at 1:15 p.m. to take guests to the Heritage Society.

Registration/Hospitality 6:00 – 10:00 p.m. Hospitality

Dinner 6:30 p.m. Hotel

- Executive Director's Year-end Report—Special Video Presentation
- Keynote Speaker: Mark Lardas, author of ***The Cruiser Houston (Images of America)***

SATURDAY (March 2)

Breakfast 9:00 – 11 a.m. Hotel

- Speaker: Dana Charles, "Survivors' POW Experiences," a pictorial presentation
- Speaker: Don Kehn, Jr: "Asiatic Fleet Tales."

Busses will depart from the DoubleTree promptly at 1:15 p.m. for the Memorial Service. Please be aboard by 1:00 p.m.

**2019 Memorial Service
(25th Anniversary Service)** 2:30 p.m. Sam Houston Park

Dinner 7:00 p.m. Hotel

Entertainment 9:00 – 11:00 p.m.

- Vibraphonist: Harry Sheppard and Pianist/Sing-a-long Leader: Dana Charles

McCANDLISS' USS HOUSTON MODEL TO BE DISPLAYED AT HERITAGE SOCIETY

During his lifetime the late naval architect Robert Kerr McCandliss designed many ships—both full-sized and “model-sized.” But the man who once worked on the design of the world’s first nuclear-powered submarine, was also a WWII fighter pilot, a POW, and the builder of a scale metal model of *USS Houston* (CA-30), soon to go on display at The Heritage Society in Houston, Texas.



Robert Kerr McCandliss



Holding a photo of his grandfather, Robert Kerr McCandliss, Bill Thoet sits beside the 6-foot-long scale model of *USS Houston* (CA-30) which his grandfather built.

According to his grandson Bill Thoet, Robert Kerr McCandliss grew up in China where his parents were medical missionaries. During WWII, he was fighter pilot with 361st Fighter Group based in Britain, covering Allied bombers over Germany. On 7 October 1944 he was shot down and became a POW in East Germany. There he used tin and solder to make an oven. Later on, when POWs were to be transferred to Russian hands, he made a mold of a U.S. Army colonel’s insignia and gave all the insignias he created from it to his fellow American POWs for their uniforms, making them all colonels. Robert was released after VE Day, May 1945. After the war, he graduated from MIT with a Master’s Degree, trained in naval architecture, and found employment at the Electric Boat Company where he worked on *USS Nautilus*, the world’s first Nuclear-powered submarine. After that, he worked on virtually every class of US submarine up to Los Angeles Class. He quit after *USS Thresher* sank, and then worked at David Taylor Naval Research and Development Center until 1972. He worked on the Spruance Class destroyer until 1978 – 1979, and then became a consultant.

After Robert passed away in 2002, Bill Thoet, inherited all of his grandfather’s models, including the twenty-five pound, 6-foot-long scale model of *USS Houston* (CA-30). Powered by batteries and equipped with an old-style remote steering control, the sea-worthy *USS Houston* (CA-30) model is made of tin stretched over a wire frame and is all soldered together.

Bill remembers his grandfather taking his grandchildren out to watch his models on the water. One day, a model tug boat sank. Rather than reaching down into the water to retrieve the model, his grandfather built salvaging equipment to bring it up. Universal Studios once offered Robert McCandliss a job building ship models. But, he turned it down because he didn’t like the fact that most of the models were built to be blown up.

Bill first heard of *USS Houston* (CA-30) a few years ago when it was reported in the press that a trumpet from the *Houston* had been found. He contacted *USS Houston* (CA-30) Survivor Howard Brooks, who told him the story of the ship and her survivors. After Howard passed away, his widow, Silvia Brooks, gave John Schwarz all the correspondence which had occurred between Howard and Bill. John contacted Bill and within a few weeks, John saw the model for himself, and arranged to have the model placed on display at The Heritage Society in Houston. John also launched an effort to raise funds for the model’s custom display case to be built by Michael Aufiero of Shrewsbury Craftsmen (See page 14).

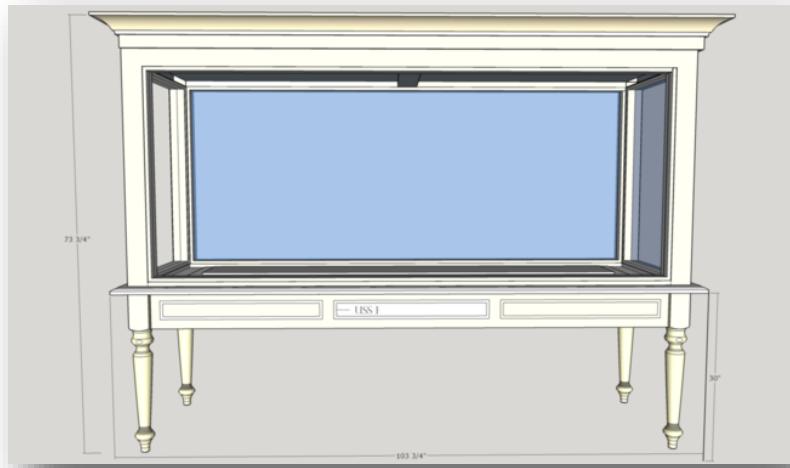
Bill is very pleased that his grandfather’s model will be on public display. He is scheduled to deliver some remarks at The Heritage Society when the model and its new case are unveiled there at 2:00 p.m. on Friday, 1 March 2019, during our Association’s “Day of Remembrance” weekend. — Dana Charles

DISPLAY CASE NEEDED

On Friday, March 1, 2019—seventy-seven years after the loss of USS *Houston* (CA-30)—this beautiful, 6-foot-long, seaworthy model of USS *Houston* (CA-30) donated by Bill Thoet is scheduled to go on display inside The Heritage Society building, located on the same grounds as the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Monument in downtown Houston, Texas.



Shrewsbury Craftsmen of Shrewsbury, NJ, the creator of the beautiful wooden case that houses the 14-foot-long USS *Houston* (CA-30) model featured at the National Museum of the U.S. Navy in Washington, DC, has designed and is now constructing this new custom-built case—which will include Sapele Mahogany solid hardwoods, LED lights, and glass.



WE NEED YOUR HELP:

Please make a donation toward the construction of this case! Help our Association continue to achieve our mission of perpetuating the memory of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and her crew by placing this beautiful model on public display. Our goal is to raise \$10,400 by February 1, 2019. Your donations will help us minimize the amount of money we will otherwise have to draw from our Association's General Fund. All tax-deductible donations made out to the "USS Houston (CA-30) Survivors' Association" should be mailed to our treasurer Pam Foster, 2065 Sutter View Ln, Lincoln, CA 95648 (please note "ship model case" on your check).

To those folks who have already donated: THANK YOU...!

**75TH ANNIVERSARY OF
BURMA-THAILAND RAILWAY COMPLETION
REMEMBERED**

At 11:00 a.m. on 16 October 2018 the 75th Anniversary of the Australian POW work on Hellfire Pass, Thailand, and the completion of the Burma-Thailand Railway was commemorated at the Australian Ex-Prisoners of War Memorial in Ballarat, Victoria, Australia. The service remembered "the 2,700 Australians who died as a result of the deprivation, brutality, disease, and starvation while working on the Burma-Thailand Railway construction project, and those who returned with the scars." For more information: <https://www.dva.gov.au/.../commemor.../domestic-commemorations-5>



PRINCE RICHARD VISITS KANCHANABURI

On 18 October 2018 Prince Richard, Duke of Gloucester, KG, GCVO (Below, Center) walked the length of the "Bridge Over the River Kwai" and visited the War museum in Kanchanaburi, Thailand along with the British Ambassador Mr. Brian Davidson, Defense Attaché Colonel Roger Lewis, his wife Kimberley, and members of the embassy staff. (Also pictured on the right: Rod Beattie, Managing Director of the Thailand-Burma Railway Centre, Kanchanaburi, Thailand).



In Memoriam

Dorothy Dodson Prunty



May 30, 1920 - August 4, 2018
Plano, Texas
Widow of Luther Prunty, 131st FA/2nd BN, US Army

Meet your...

Board of Managers

*...here to serve you!**



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Email: Bernice@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!



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](#)

* The Board of Managers is available to members for questions, concerns, input, or to clarify any matter regarding the Association via email (to contact@usshouston.org), phone, or regular mail.

Thank you!

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

Donations

In Memory of David Flynn

Donna Mae Flynn

In Memory of Trudy Schwarz

Donna Mae Flynn

Other Donations

Melissa Ellsworth

Pam Foster

Richard Gans

Bernice Harapat

Christopher Harrison

Captain Charles Hewell

John & Mary Ann Keller

Sue Kreutzer

Michael & Jo Marie Reilly

John Schwarz

Leland & Susan Stewart

Thomas Underwood

2018 AmazonSmile donations: \$124.28 YTD

Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

January 1 – November 16, 2018

GENERAL FUND

Beginning Balance:	\$24,553.04
Receipts:	+12,350.39
Expenses:	<u>-13,887.01</u>
Ending Balance:	\$23,016.42



SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Beginning Balance:	\$19,086.13
Receipts:	+3,701.73
Expenses:	<u>-3,000.00</u>
Ending Balance:	\$19,787.86



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contact@ussHouston.org or Bluebonnet@ussHouston.org.

All articles submitted are subject to editing.

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

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Happy Holidays!



REGISTRATION FORM

77th Anniversary USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association & Next Generations™

Day of Remembrance

March 1-2, 2019

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, 2019

**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

Eggplant Lasagna # ____ X \$35.00 = \$ ____

Sonoma Chicken # ____ X \$35.00 = \$ ____

Saturday Breakfast – 9:00 AM # ____ X \$33.00 = \$ ____

Saturday Dinner – 7:00 PM

Baked Tilapia # ____ X \$35.00 = \$ ____

Slow Braised Short Ribs # ____ X \$35.00 = \$ ____

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

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

(Received after February 21, 2019)

Total Enclosed: \$ ____

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, 2065 Sutter View Lane, Lincoln, CA 95648