

Newsletter of the U.S.S. Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations

Now Hear This!

Association Address:

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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

Three Generations Visit the Newest HMAS *Perth*



Jessica Daigre, Pam Foster, Dana Charles,
Kathleen Charles, Judy Fung, and Eddie
Fung aboard HMAS *Perth III*

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For more details on this special visit to
the HMAS *Perth III*, see page 2

ALERT!

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

**Hyatt Regency Downtown Hotel
Houston, TX**

*See page 17 for the
registration form.*

2013 Scholarship \$3,000
**Application forms being accepted
through November 1st**
See page 8 for more information.

Visit to HMAS *Perth* III (continued from page 1)

On 13 June 2012 in San Francisco, 6 family members and friends of USS *Houston* CA-30, representing 3 generations, visited the 3rd Royal Australian Navy warship to bear the name of the Western Australian Capital, Perth. The HMAS *Perth* III—a long-range fast frigate—was in San Francisco on a rare visit to the USA as part of a special cruise, according to RAN officials. Our association was asked to keep her visit a secret until approximately a week before her scheduled visit to San Francisco when RAN officials gave our Association approval to invite our USS *Houston* CA-30 family aboard. Although the invitation was “last minute,” six west coast-based people arrived at Pier 30 in San Francisco harbor early to take a special 10:00 a.m. tour of the ship conducted by the ship’s Deputy Supply Officer LT Mark Lucking, RAN. LT Lucking graciously led association vice president Dana CHARLES (son of the late USMC CA-30 survivor Bob Charles) and his wife Kathleen, association treasurer Pam Crispi FOSTER (daughter of the late USN CA-30 survivor Gene Crispi) and her granddaughter Jessica DAIGRE (great granddaughter of USN CA-30 survivor Gene Crispi), 131st FA/2nd BN Survivor Eddie FUNG and his wife Judy on a 1-1/2 hour tour which included many compartments of the Australian warship.



HMAS *Perth* III is a very impressive ANZAC Class frigate which is the eighth and most up-to-date frigate built for the RAN. Commissioned on 26 August 2006, the 118-meter-long warship is not only the newest Major Fleet unit in the RAN, but is also the first ship of her class to undergo the Anti-Ship Missile Defense (USMD) upgrade which has been tested and approved for installation in the other seven ANZAC Class frigates.

While the first warship to bear the name HMAS *Perth* (the light cruiser HMAS *Perth* I, which was lost with USS *Houston* CA-30 at the Battle of Sunda Strait on 1 March 1942) carried an all-male crew of 681, the crew of 185 aboard HMAS *Perth* III includes men and women. According to LT Lucking, the 25-30 women aboard the ship perform many of the same tasks as the men.

The commanding officer of HMAS *Perth* III, CAPT Malcolm Wise, RAN, is the senior-ranking officer among all ANZAC frigates, according to LT Lucking.

All tour-goers thoroughly enjoyed the tour and are very grateful for the opportunity to tour the powerful warship bearing the name HMAS *Perth* III.



New Website of Interest

A new website with illustrations of POW life at Changi (Singapore) prison in WWII is available at www.changipowart.com.

Military Times Hall of Valor Website

The “HALL OF VALOR” contains 104,987 valor award citations of heroes from the U.S. armed services and can be found at <http://militarytimes.com/citations-medals-awards/>

From the desk of the Executive Director

John Schwarz



It is indeed wonderful when we can engage in opportunities during the period in between annual reunions where we can demonstrate who we are and what we are about. This year is no exception as later in this BB edition you will see VP Dana Charles's account of the tour some of our folks were able to take aboard the current HMAS Perth III while berthed in San Francisco, CA. Our apologies for only being able to give very short notice of this but that was caused by military protocol which we of course fully respect. Hat's off to Dana Charles for a terrific job of coordinating this. Coverage of this tour has made the current edition of the 'Perth Pundit' (Winter 2012).

There may be something coming up in the September timeframe to commemorate the USS Houston SSN-713. If that does develop we will certainly let you all know just as soon as we know anything further. Meanwhile, plans for a USS Houston CA-30 display are taking shape in yet another museum- the Houston Maritime Museum in Houston, TX. This initiative is in its early stages as we are just beginning to assemble some items to begin what will be a USS Houston CA-30 exhibit. I urge you all to check that museum out on the internet or in person if you are close enough. We will keep you all posted on further developments, particularly if additional items are required for the display. This is an example of yet another opportunity to directly contribute to our mission of "perpetuating the memory of the USS Houston CA-30".

I would like to focus the attention of the rest of this article to Association finances which have become challenging for us as is the case for most, smaller non-profits around the nation at this point in time. Our Association finds itself in a much different world then back in Otto's days when he could make a quick call out to a large number of Survivors anytime any finances were needed and that would be that or, when he could get reasonable rates while dealing with family owned businesses such as the Allen Park Inn. Please don't be misled by our published account balances in each Blue Bonnet edition and perhaps think that it means we are in a 'comfort zone' financially and that continued donations are not needed. As an example, last year's reunion cost well over \$7,000.00 and as Sue has well stated previously, that money is not necessarily fully covered by registration fees. As for scholarship funds, we are in relatively good shape for this year as we have accumulated through donations, almost what it will take to make this year's award. We still are a little short there, and the ability to generate the cost of the next award means we can stabilize at the least, the current account balance offering interest bearing potential and better assurance of a program for the long term future of the Association. See Jane Matthews' article on page 8 for more on scholarship funding needs.

So, the real bottom-line to this is that we need to continually make the friendly reminder to **all** of our members to please consider making your donation for the year. Whatever you can offer helps, there is truly financial strength in numbers. The more of our over-all group that donates, the healthier our finances become.

In the meantime, your Board continues to work at reduction of operating expenses wherever we can. We are still requesting help from a volunteer to store a nominal amount of reunion materials we currently place in a commercial storage facility at \$59.00 a month.

For all of those who have already made contribution this year, this is thanking you very much for that support to the Association devoted to the men of the USS Houston CA-30.

John

HOUSTON MARITIME MUSEUM

Donations Welcome

As was mentioned in my “From the Desk” article on page 3 in this Blue Bonnet, work on the establishment of a USS Houston CA-30 exhibit at the Houston Maritime Museum has begun. The Director, Ms. Heather Desforges, writes:

We are asking for both financial donations for the small expenses that come along with creating the new display area as well as donations of artifacts, photos, etc. ...we are trying to gather some more material to ensure that the exhibit commemorates the Houston in the way it deserves. If you could reach out to the members of the USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations for support, that would be much appreciated.

*Regards,
Heather*

For those having something to offer; please contact Heather at the museum directly either by phone, email or postal mail. Let's do our men proud with this additional opportunity and offer up what any of us have that would appropriately carry out the mission of the “perpetuation of the memory of the USS Houston CA-30”.

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



Picture of USS *Houston* CA-30
which has recently been
donated to the
Houston Maritime Museum

In Memoriam

Our sincere condolences to the family
of Mary L. Schilperoort

Widow of USS Houston survivor
Clarence "Skip" Schilperoort, USN



In Memoriam

Myrtle Carswell Campbell

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

HMAS *Perth*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Alf Coyne



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

In Memoriam

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Where Are They Now?

Updates from Two Scholarship Winners

Katy Fort writes...

As you know, I graduated from Wakulla High School in Spring 2005. I started at Florida State University that following fall, graduating in Fall 2009 with a Bachelors of Science degree in Chemistry with minors in Physics and Mathematics (it sounds much more daunting than it really was ☺). I'm still not sure how I decided upon chemistry as a major, but I never doubted my decision and thoroughly enjoyed all of my classes (including my various dance and education courses I took on the side ☺).

After graduation in 2009, I took a few months off to just relax – something I encourage every recent graduate to do. My sister had received an internship in Dublin, Ireland, that summer, so I ended my "early retirement" and she and I traveled Europe for almost a month. Having studied abroad in Ireland in 2008, I had already been bitten by the travel-bug. I loved every minute of being over there and would go back in a heartbeat! Upon returning, I began my search for a "big-kid" job as I like to call it. I had been seasonal worker with the US Forest Service, working as a dispatcher during the summer wildfire season, while at FSU, so I was working there and volunteering at the local elementary school when I ran across the position I'm at now. Quite by chance, I discovered that the Southern Scholarship Foundation, the same organization where I had lived as student, was in need of a Foundation Liaison. I wasted no time contacting the President/CEO and, well, I've been there ever since! Working for a non-profit organization has taught me so much -- ranging from how to deal with a board of directors to seeing the impact you have in students' lives – students that may have not been able to attend college without this opportunity. It has truly been an amazing experience.



Katy Fort
2005 Scholarship Winner

While I love my current position, I always knew that was not where my life was leading me. During a mission trip to Honduras last August, I finally accepted that I was meant to work with children and, with my science background, working with children in the medical field was something that just clicked and made sense to me. This led me to my upcoming adventure – attending school to become a physical therapist. After months of applications and finishing up prerequisite courses, I am so excited to have been accepted into the Doctorate of Physical Therapy program at Florida Gulf Coast University in Ft. Myers, FL. I'll start classes this Fall. I am more than ready to start this next chapter in my life! It'll take three years to complete the program, but knowing of the service I will be able to provide upon graduation is more than enough motivation.

I'm not naïve enough to think that any of this would have been possible without the generosity of the scholarship provided by the USS Houston Scholarship Fund. Knowing I had such an honorable group of people believing in me is worth more than I can put into words. Thank you for allowing me the opportunity then, and now, to be part of the elite group of scholarship recipients. I only hope I can continue carrying on the traditions of our Greatest Generation. I am proud to be the granddaughter of Cecil Chambliss, USS Houston Survivor.

Katy Fort



Jerry Agin
2006 Scholarship Winner

Berniece Agin, spouse of Gerald L. Agin, survivor of the USS Houston, sent this terrific picture of her grandson, Jerry Agin, and provided this update. Thanks, Berniece!

Berniece Agin writes...

Gerald (Jerry) Agin, was the recipient of the 2006 scholarship and has become a great asset to the community and often mentions how he appreciated the help he received from the Association. Jerry graduated from college with a degree in Law Enforcement in 2008 and has since been a police officer for the cities of Plainview and St. Charles, MN. Jerry also works with the boat patrol on the Mississippi River for Winona County, MN, during the summer when he is not on duty.

Chaplain Rentz - a Hero Among Heroes

The following passage is excerpted from **SHIP OF GHOSTS** by James D. Hornfischer. Copyright © 2006 by James D. Hornfischer. Excerpted by permission of Bantam, a division of Random House, Inc. All rights reserved. No part of this excerpt may be reproduced or reprinted without permission in writing from the publisher.

“Exhausted from treading water, Jim Gee paddled in search of something buoyant to cling to, finally catching sight of a Seagull floatplane pontoon drifting loose. As he approached, he found a bunch of *Houston* survivors holding on to it, perhaps twenty of them, some badly burned. The ship’s chaplain, Cdr. George S. Rentz, was among them, doing what he had been put on the earth to do: minister to those in need.

Gee had little need of his chaplain’s services. The Marine private was not injured, merely tired. He clutched the side of the float, gathering strength and wind for another run toward shore. When he finally set out again, he discovered that no one, not even a strong-swimming Marine, could contend with the currents off Java. “I could feel myself being carried out to sea. There are certain things you can just tell. I could tell that I wasn’t going in a straight path.” He found just enough strength to return to the pontoon.

Gee got back in time to witness the making of a Navy legend. Chaplain Rentz, at fifty-nine, had been the oldest man on the ship, nine years senior to Captain Rooks and only about a year away from retirement when the *Houston* went down. The native of Lebanon, Pennsylvania, had been a pastor at churches in Pennsylvania and New Jersey before joining the Navy during World War I. That war was nearly over when Rentz, as a junior-grade lieutenant, was named acting chaplain to the Eleventh Marine Regiment, deployed to France in October 1918, just a month before the armistice. After the war, Rentz fulfilled a series of sea-duty assignments in the peacetime Navy, making commander in 1924. He needed nearly two decades more

continued on page 16

NOW HEAR THIS!
Scholarship Update

2013 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD
\$3,000.00

Scholarship Program Applications are being accepted from June 1 - November 1, 2012. Applications and specific information about applying may be obtained anytime by visiting www.usshouston.org/scholarships.html or by email to Scholarship Committee Chair Jane@USSHouston.org or by writing me at:

Jane Matthews
836 Kendal Drive
Broadview Heights, OH 44147

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

To follow up on what John Schwarz has written on page 3, this is what we are trying to achieve with the USS Houston CA-30 Scholarship Fund. Although it may seem like the scholarship fund is very healthy, we continuously need to raise money each year to grant a scholarship. In order to award the scholarship at a \$3,000 level, we need to maintain a balance of \$13,000 in the fund – a reserve of \$10,000 plus the \$3,000 award that is being granted. So an additional \$3,000 must be raised each year to sustain a \$3,000 award. If the fund falls below the \$10,000 level, the scholarship amount will automatically be reduced to \$2,500 or less. If we award scholarships without raising the amount of the scholarship, the Scholarship Fund can be bankrupt in approximately 4 years or so. It is imperative that funds be raised each year to sustain our successful internal scholarships.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

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.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

Donations to the Scholarship Fund in any amount are always greatly appreciated and are tax deductible. We sincerely appreciate all donors who make our scholarships possible.

Please make your check payable to:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association

Write “Scholarship Fund” on the memo line and mail it to:

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

We need to increase the number of people donating. We cannot do this without your help!!

Jane Matthews
Scholarship Chair

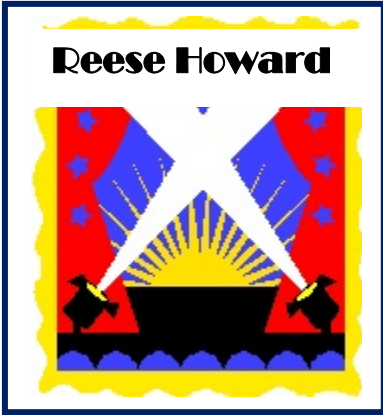
Did you know...?

...that the Department of Defense recently issued a letter stating that “effective immediately, flag presentation verbiage for military funeral honors ceremonies conducted by the Department of Defense will be standardized. The following verbiage will be used when presenting the American flag during the funeral service:

‘On behalf of the President of the United States (the United States Army; the United States Marine Corps; the United States Navy;’ or the United States Air Force), and a grateful Nation, please accept this flag as a symbol of our appreciation for your loved one’s honorable and faithful service.’” The United States Coast Guard is also invited to use the same verbiage.

Crew Spotlight

Reese Howard



What a privilege it was for my husband Tim and me to pay a visit to survivor Reese Howard in April. Reese lives in Bee Spring, KY, which is a rural community with a population of about 1300.

Reese's story is similar to many of the *Houston's* crew and yet his is, well, his and that makes it special. Here are some of his thoughts and memories.

Reese's battle station was on the 5-inch anti-aircraft guns and when the ship fought its last battle, he was on the hoist bringing up ammo. When it was time to abandon ship, he had no life preserver, so he went to the other side of the ship and got one!

He remembers helping a fellow crewman named Nick put on his preserver and then they jumped into the water on the port side. He ended up swimming with Fred Howard (KIA) for a while and then eventually made it to a life raft in which there were about 20 other men. He hung onto the raft until the morning when he decided to swim again and finally made it to shore in company with Stanley Woody. The Japanese eventually brought the life raft to shore.

The Serang Theater was his first prison as it was for most men, but Reese was one of only ten men who were taken out early by the Japanese to do some special work. He is thankful to have been in that group. Following this time, he was moved to Singapore, then Malaya, and then shipped to Moulein, Burma, to work on the Burma-Siam Railroad ("Death Railway"). After completion of the railroad, he was taken to Saigon along with 49 Dutchmen! He still cannot account for why he was placed with the Dutch for this duty, but he remained in Saigon until the end of the war.



Reese Howard
USS *Houston* CA-30 Survivor

Reese remembers being airlifted back to New York via Moulmein (Burma), Calcutta (India), and Cairo (Egypt) and says there were some beautiful sights along the way including the Taj Mahal and the pyramids. The best sight of all though was the United States of America! He spent several weeks in a hospital in Jamaica, NY, and then went back home to Winchester, KY.



Tim and Jo Klenk (Next Gen.) with
Survivor Reese Howard

Reese has spent most of his life farming, working on oil pipelines - and fishing! He has three children, one of whom lives with Reese. Another son's middle name is "Rooks" in honor of Captain Rooks.

Thanks, Reese, for your dedicated service to our country and for the sacrifices you made as a POW.

by Jo Klenk

DÉJÀ VU

As the New York Yankee great Yogi Berra once said, "It's like déjà vu all over again." Bill Ingram could make good use of that famous quote since he revisited the exact location in San Francisco where he stood 71 years ago!



Bill Ingram
November 4, 1941



Bill Ingram
June 15, 2012

Note to Survivors

A note recently came to our Association mailbox which bears sharing. Samuel Mall wrote:

"I recently read the book, Ship of Ghosts about the USS Houston and her survivors. I am astounded, amazed and awed by the heroic resilience, resourcefulness, bravery and strength of the men who survived her demise, and then endured such horrific torment at the hands of their Japanese captors while building the death railroad.

I do not know if any of these brave heroes are still alive, but if they are, would you please pass on my endless gratitude and admiration. Know also that I solemnly salute and hold in honor your fathers, uncles, and family friends who fought so bravely, but did not survive.

Such heroes are the backbone and foundation upon which our freedom and country was built and stands.

Sincerely,
Samuel J. Mall

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):

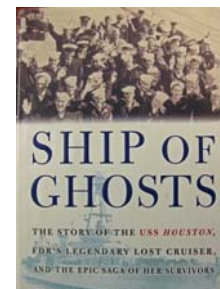
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Address

City, State and Zip Code

Phone Number

Items Ordered, Size and Quantity

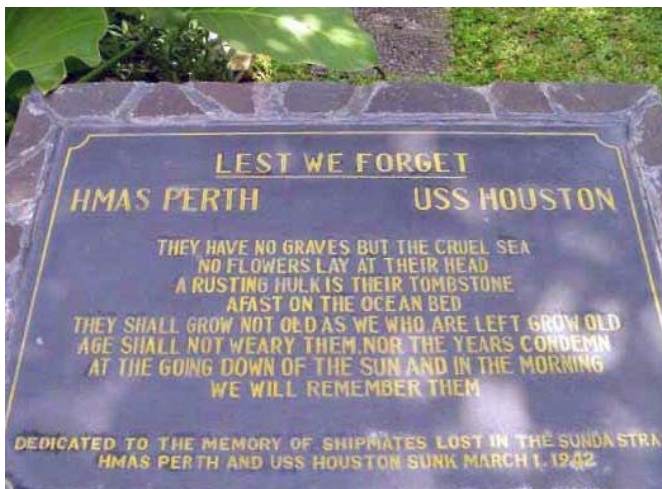


Ship of Ghosts
autographed by author
James Hornfischer

Questions? Email: Jane@USSHouston.org

70th Anniversary Remembered at Sunda Strait and Java

From Australia, Tara Bolton, daughter of HMAS *Perth* survivor Don (Sandy) McNab writes in a recent issue of Perth Pundit that a group of HMAS *Perth* I relatives and descendants recently visited Sunda Strait and Java to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the 1 March 1942 loss of HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* CA-30. According to Bolton, the visitors included: James (Jim) WRIGHT (Son of Thomas King WRIGHT, KIA); Robert GRAY (Son of Robert GRAY, KIA); Peter GRAY (Grandson of Robert GRAY, KIA); Michael GRAY (Grandson of Robert GRAY, KIA); Tara N. BOLTON (nee McNAB; daughter of Donald McNAB, Survivor); Peter D. McNAB (Son of Donald McNAB, Survivor); Patrick O’LEARY, Sr. (Son of Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); Brendan O’LEARY (Grandson of Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); Phillip O’LEARY (Grandson of Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); Patrick O’LEARY IX (Grandson of Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); Patrick O’LEARY, Jr. (Great Grandson of Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); Gary MORSE (related by marriage to Patrick John O’LEARY, KIA); and Paul KIGHTLY (Nephew of Herbert "Bert" Louis SIMONS, Survivor).



Plaque at the Australian Embassy in Jakarta remembering HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston*.

(Photo: Perth Pundit)

According to Ms. Bolton's article, the group arrived in Jakarta, Indonesia (formerly Batavia, Java) on 29 March 2012. The next day, the group visited the Australian Embassy in Jakarta where they held a special ceremony at a HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* CA-30 Memorial which stands on the embassy grounds. Tara BOLTON and Patrick O’LEARY, Sr. "laid two wreaths for HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* at the memorial...Much to our surprise and delight each member of the group was presented with a framed photo of the serving men of HMAS *Perth* in 1941 with the wording ‘with the compliments of the Australian Naval Attaché Jakarta.’ And also a silver Navy pen and pencil set. Brendan presented four caps with the crest of the HMAS *Perth* and ‘Lest we forget’ inscribed on the back. We are extremely thankful to the (Military Attaché’s offside Chief Petty Officer) Brendon Roberts,

RAN for organizing this very special occasion for us,” Bolton wrote. Ms. Bolton explained that on Saturday, 31 March the group boarded two boats and cruised some 7km over to the site of HMAS *Perth* where, after tying the two boats together, they conducted a memorial service. “After the laying of the wreaths by each family group, the British Ensign Flag acquired by Brendon O’LEARY, on which we had all recorded a message, was weighed down and sent down to the *Perth*,” Bolton wrote. “Peter GRAY on behalf of the family said a few words and a short prayer before committing Robert’s mother’s ashes, and Paul’s Mother’s ashes to the *Perth*. Bolton threw the Australian flag that was flying throughout the service into the Sunda Strait,” she said.

Moving some 3km to the site of USS *Houston*, the group encountered rough seas which made it impossible to tie together the two boats for the service for USS *Houston*. Bolton explained that “the service was relayed by two-way radio between the two boats. Peter McNAB laid a wreath and bouquet over the site of the ship after Jim WRIGHT recited the Ode. It was a somber trip back with our thoughts of the *Perth* and *Houston* and their final journey but everyone agreed that the trip, commemoration service and laying of tributes was an experience way beyond all our expectations... We have all been left with a lifetime of memories,” Bolton wrote.

*Dana Charles, Vice President
USS Houston CA-30 Survivors Association and Next Generations.*

*New Book Release
from "down under"*

Ray Parkin's Odyssey

Pattie Wright, author

The biography of Chief Petty Officer Ray Parkin will be available in bookstores in Australia from 18 September 2012, published by Pan Macmillan. It is just shy 700 pages and will retail for \$49.99 [Australian].

The book has been written by Pattie Wright, author of 'The Men of the Line' (Miegunyah Press, 2008). After taking four years to write Ray's biography, it is to be hoped that the men who contributed to its pages - the precious few surviving from HMAS Perth and their compatriots in USS Houston, ex-POW's of the Thai Burma railway and those from Ohama, in Japan - will approve. It has been written for all of you in mind.

For those not au fait with the history: In 1939, Ray Parkin was serving in the Australian light cruiser, HMAS Perth. At first glance he looked every inch the archetypal petty officer that he was - tough, practical and a model of naval discipline. Yet Ray was no ordinary sailor, despite a lack of formal education he had the soul of an artist, and a philosopher's enquiring mind.

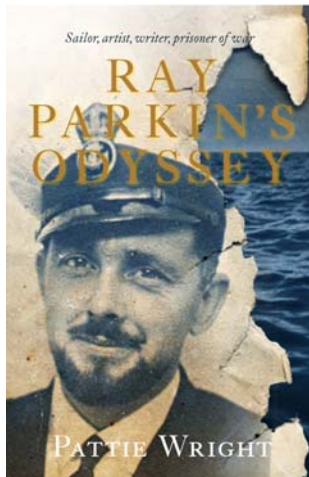
As HMAS Perth was embroiled in war - first in the Caribbean, then the horror of the Mediterranean campaign and finally into the fight for South East Asia - Ray was to become both a witness and a chronicler to the conflict through his meticulous diaries and his minutely observed watercolours and sketches. When Perth was sunk off the coast of Java, Ray was one of the survivors. After a valiant attempt to sail back to Australia in a ship's lifeboat, he surrendered and spent the rest of the war as a prisoner of the Japanese. First, in

building the Thai Burma railway and then working as a slave labourer in a Japanese coal mine. The horrors and privations of those years saw some of his most memorable artwork - documenting both the beauty of the natural world and the savageries and humiliations of the POW experience.

These were also the years that saw the founding of life-long friendships with fellow prisoners Weary Dunlop and Laurens van der Post. These seemingly lost years gave Ray the material for three exemplary books he would publish after the war, each one documenting his experiences: 'Out of the Smoke', 'Into the Smother' and 'The Sword and the Blossom'.

Ray died in 2005, acclaimed not only for his art and his wartime trilogy, but also for his prize-winning masterpiece, H. M. Bark Endeavour, an extraordinary evocation of Captain Cook's ship and the voyage up the east coast of Australia in 1771.

This extensively researched biography, illustrated by 100 paintings, photographs and sketches is the first full and comprehensive account of Ray's life and wartime experiences. Using first-hand accounts from filmed interviews with Ray himself as well as access to his letters, diaries and unpublished memories, Pattie Wright has written a book that is powerful, moving and compelling. To obtain the book, see the following website: http://www.panmacmillan.com.au/display_title.asp?ISBN=9781405039970&Author=Wright,%20Pattie.



HMAS Perth

Notes from "down under"
(continued)

Perth's David Manning wrote that he and wife Audrey have happily now reached the great grandparent stage for the first time. Their granddaughter Megan had a baby daughter named Layla and all is well.



Arthur BANCROFT, Fred SKEELS and Norm FULLER having just received their Honorary Life Membership of the Naval Association of Australia, West Australia Section on April 14th.

New Book by James Hornfischer



Jim Hornfischer, author

James "Jim" Hornfischer, great friend of this Association and author of **Ship of Ghosts** about the USS Houston, recently wrote:

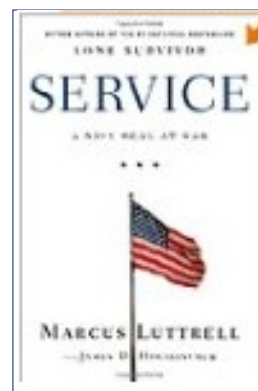
"After completing work on my latest book on World War II, **Neptune's Inferno**, I was given a rare and exciting opportunity: to coauthor a book with legendary Navy SEAL Marcus Luttrell, author of the runaway bestseller **Lone Survivor** (2007). The result of our collaboration,

Service: A Navy SEAL at War,

has just been published by Little Brown. It tells a war story like no other, following Luttrell and his brothers from SEAL Team 5 on their six-month deployment into one of the hottest killing fields in the world at the time, Ramadi in Anbar

Province, where a great victory was won over Al Qaeda in 2006.

The book is meant a tribute to the servicemen and women of all branches who served alongside Marcus and make our nation's security possible, as well as those of previous generations on whose shoulders they were fully aware they stood.



Working with Marcus was a privilege and writing about operations in the modern era a challenge. I'm proud of the book, deeply so, and I hope you'll be interested."

Editor's Note: You can click [here](#) to get the book online at Amazon.com.

Banana Money

By Joe and Marlene Morris McCain

It is fall 1945. On a shady street in Rangoon, a U.S. Air Force sergeant stops to examine the litter at his feet. The enemy forces have fled the city. The sergeant realizes that the paper debris is actually thousands of rupee notes of various denominations. As he bends closer, he notices that the rupees also carry the inscription, "The Japanese Government." He picks out a few to take home as souvenirs.

At about the same time, in the Philippines, a gaunt but happy American soldier is lighting his cigar with nothing less than a burning Japanese Government thousand-peso note. As he puffs contentedly, he wonders how much longer it will be before he can return to his family's farm in Illinois.

And, in Singapore, at Changi Prison Camp, an RAF radio operator gathers together his meager possessions in anticipation of returning to England. He owns very little after so many long years as a Japanese captive, but still has his POW-made razor, an ID tag and a few worn notes of Japanese Government paper currency. His closest friend, a sailor from the USS Houston, may have wondered why this Japanese "banana money" was worth the trouble to take home but supposed it might make an interesting souvenir to show family and friends.



This Japanese "invasion money" was paper script issued by their Military Authority to replace local currency that they seized after conquest of various nations in SE Asia. All hard currency, including on a personal level, was confiscated and replacement was given in military issue notes. Even small denominations of centavos, cents, shillings, etc. were in paper only. All notes were printed with the name of the issuing authority, "The Japanese Government," and were in the denomination of the conquered country. The first letter of the overprint on the face of each bill indicated its intended destination for use.

B was for Burma, M for Malaya, P for the Philippine Islands and O was for Oceania (British New Guinea, Gilbert and Solomon Islands).

The Japanese used seized local hard currency for the purchase of materiel necessary to continue their war of aggression. The Japanese also required all local native populations, as well as POWs, to surrender what British, American or other legitimate currency they possessed and to accept the Japanese issue in exchange. Because in Malaya the Japanese ten-dollar note bore the image of a banana tree on its face, the derisive term "banana money" came into popular use to generically describe all local Japanese military script.

Early in the captivity of Allied prisoners in the Singapore area, the Japanese paid ten cents a day to prisoners who worked. Thus, a full month's labor allowed the earning of the small sum of three dollars in Japanese military invasion money. This could buy a small amount of dried fish, cooking oil or perhaps local fruit such as a few bananas at a small hut which was set aside for a canteen near Japanese headquarters. Those prisoners who traded their watches, fountain pens, rings and other possessions

for invasion money were also able to supplement their diet in small ways with food purchases at the canteen. From the start, the Japanese food ration for prisoners was allocated on the basis of food only for those who could work. This did not mean that the issued rations were denied to men who were too sick, but rather that the POWs themselves had to stretch an already inadequate supply of food to cover the sick—an extra twenty per cent of the population. Some POWs donated a percentage of the small amount of earned wages paid in Japanese script to establish a fund for men who were in the hospital. The extra food that was purchased as a result of this fund could sometimes make the difference between life and death of some sick prisoners.

As the war continued, more and more invasion notes were printed to supply the Japanese authorities with money when required. The result was massive inflation with a corresponding depreciation in the value of the currency. In the Philippines, the locals began referring to their Japanese peso and centavo notes as “Mickey Mouse Money” - an expression of contempt for its growing depreciation. By the time the war ended, the Japanese invasion money was without value. Large amounts of captured notes were destroyed but much was brought home as war trophies. After the Philippines liberation, even the Red Cross handed out Japanese notes to American soldiers for souvenirs (after first punching two holes in each note).

Private parties who had received Japanese invasion currency as exchange for their own money were never given any compensation after the war. Japan signed the Treaty of San Francisco in 1951 and, as a result, made restitution on a federal, but not a personal, level.

No one knows how much souvenir Japanese invasion currency may still exist today. But for ex-POWs and others formerly under Japanese government control in SE Asia during the Pacific War, “Banana Money” will never be forgotten.

“Chaplain Rentz – a Hero Among Heroes”, continued from page 7

to find his ultimate calling as shepherd to the survivors of a U.S. Navy cruiser in extremis.

The surplus pontoon, taking on water through a hole in its top, was slowly losing its buoyancy. Several times during the night Rentz tried to swim away to keep it from sinking. “You men are young, with your lives ahead of you,” he said. “I am old and have had my fun.” Each time, a different sailor from the group ignored Rentz’s entreaty and retrieved him.

At one point Lloyd Willey saw Rentz huddled with a sailor on the float. The kid, seaman first class Walter L. Beeson, was hanging on, head down, apparently wounded, though it was hard to see where or how badly. He didn’t have a life jacket. According to Beeson, Rentz, unhurt himself, told me his heart was failing him; told me he couldn’t last much longer.” Gasping for breath, the chaplain said a brief prayer for the men in the group, removed his life jacket, and offered it to the young sailor. Perhaps ashamed to take it, Beeson accepted it but declined to put it on, at least not until Rentz had kicked away from the float and submitted to the sea. According to Jim Gee, “No one realized what had happened. It’s just one of those things that one minute he’s there, and the next minute you look around and you take a head count, and sure enough, he wasn’t there.” Only when the finality of Rentz’s sacrifice had sunk in did Walter Beeson pull on the life jacket. The group stayed together and drifted the rest of that night, humbled by the spirit of their chaplain right to the end.

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, 2012)

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

Meet your ...

Board of Managers

...here to serve you!

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Welcome Aboard!

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



Marvin Leath Bain, Jr. – son of Marvin Bain
Richard Bain – son of Marvin Bain
Earl Hooper – nephew of Lloyd Hooper

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 the [Membership Form](#), fill it out and send it in.

Association

Websites:

USSHouston.org

Our primary website

USSHouston.blogspot.com

Blog for current news

Website

We are currently working on a "facelift" for our website. If you cannot find what you are looking for, please feel free to contact Sue Kreutzer by phone at 303-840-5362 or email at sue@usshouston.org.

NGs **Tim and Jo Klenk** will be moving from Illinois to Florida at the end of August. Tim still does daily exercises as he continues rehabilitation from a stroke. He received a gold medal after he walked across the finish line of a 5K race in June in last place in a “blistering” 1 hour and 35 minutes.

Johan VanLeer recently sent a copy of a letter which was written by J.F. van Wagtendonk, President of the Foundation of Japanese Honorary Debts, to the Prime Minister of Japan regarding the abduction of Dutch boys over 10 years old during Japanese military occupation of the Netherlands East Indies. The letter requests that the Japanese government acknowledge and “rectify the violation of human rights during World War Two by the Japanese military.”

★★

Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

April 1 – July 20, 2012

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 11,803.11
Receipts	801.48
Expenses	<u>0.00</u>
Ending Balance	\$12,604.59

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$ 7,564.59
Receipts	979.87
Expenses	<u>-466.45</u>
Ending Balance	\$ 8,078.01

Sick Bay

Survivor **David Flynn** is recovering from a heart attack.

Jerry Waxman is recovering from an aorta valve replacement and a triple bypass surgery which he had on August 14th.



Thank you

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

In memory of Mary Schilperoort by: John & Sue Kreutzer, Joan & Stan MacArthur, and Jeanette Schilperoort.

Other donations by: Trudy Schwarz, Richard Bain, John & Sue Kreutzer, David & Donna Mae Flynn, Matt & Jane Matthews, Patricia Mintzer, and Berniece Agin.



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