

Now Hear This!

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USS Houston Survivors Assoc.
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(please specify which fund –
General or Scholarship)

Association Email Contact:

Contact@USSHouston.org

Association Founded 1946:

by Otto and Trudy Schwarz

Survivor Bill Ingram Speaks at Jacksonville Maritime Heritage Center



Paul Ghiotto, Curator, Survivor Bill Ingram, Michael
Rothfeld, President of FVPPi

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ATTENTION!

Register Now

For the

USS Houston CA-30 - 2014 Reunion

March 13-15, 2014

Hyatt Regency Downtown Hotel

Houston, TX

*Registration Form and Schedule of Events are included in this
issue*

You won't want to miss the Reunion!

**2014 Scholarship winners
will be announced at the reunion!**

Continued from page 1

Survivor Bill Ingram has been one busy guy. On Saturday, September 28th he spoke at the Maritime Heritage Center at the Landing in Jacksonville. The presentation was hosted by Paul Ghiotto, Curator of the Museum. Michael Rothfeld, President of FVPPI spoke about why Bill was chosen for the POW documentary, "Stolen Freedom" and Robert Mitchell of Rolling Thunder FL Chapter 4 introduced Bill and led the discussion. Bill spoke about his incredible story of survival during his 3½ years of captivity by the Japanese in Burma. Everyone in the audience was amazed by Bill's heroic story. Next, at the 2013 University of Florida vs University of Georgia football game, Bill was introduced to all 80,000 fans in the stadium. The game was televised on national TV. Finally, he appeared at Jacksonville's Museum of Science and History (MOSH) where he spoke and answered questions.

Bill Ingram, CA-30 Ambassador Extraordinaire



Salvaging of HMAS *Perth*

By Pattie Wright

In early September 2013, NG Jerry Ranger posted on the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Facebook site a report by a diver friend, which described recent salvage activities on HMAS *Perth*. The diver (who does not want his name to be mentioned—*editor.*), wrote:

“We were out this weekend doing the 6 monthly *Perth* and *Houston* dives and are sad to confirm what Tech Asia told us the other week about the *Perth*. The mid-section above deck where the bridge was has been completely removed, the bow guns have been damaged by what appears to be explosives with the barrels missing and the tops peeled off, the bow has collapsed completely. Although it is hard to be certain, but as the metal that was the superstructure is all missing and is not lying around as debris it looks although we could be wrong like purposeful attempt to salvage the steel. Mike is already in contact with the Australian Embassy in Jakarta who are looking to see if the wreck is actually protected as a war grave and if anything can be done. I dived her in May... and she was all there so it must have happened in the last four months. [Two other divers] dived the *Houston* this morning, we had breakfast but it seems to be untouched. It appears to be trend with WW2 wrecks in SE Asia.”

The Royal Australian Navy was informed and the Chief of the Navy, VADM Ray Griggs asked for an immediate report for briefing of the relevant government minister. He is an outstanding man and has been reported to have moved very quickly on the news.

The HMAS *Perth* Association, family and friends were informed of the situation at the end of October. It was also discovered that Australia does not have the wherefores to claim her in the sense of protecting her as a war grave. She, of course, lies within Indonesian waters. In fact, the [Australian] Department of Environment and Heritage doesn't even classify naval war graves as such; their designation is, rather, 'maritime military grave'. Not quite the same kudos. And no matter what name *Perth* is given now, she is in peril.

The sticking point for our government agencies is that the UNESCO 2009 Convention for the protection of Historic wrecks was not signed by either Australia or Indonesia. This lack of ratification seems to allow HMAS *Perth* to slip between the gaps of Australian government protection. The curiosity here is that a Japanese mini submarine was discovered sometime back...near 2007 and we have protected her. She lies just off Sydney Harbour. One would think that this quid pro quo situation would apply to our ships in foreign waters.

Rather a lot of heaven and earth has been moved to garner support to have something done about preventing further salvaging. To have it stopped. Sadly, whatever is happening is being done diplomatically, behind doors, as Australia and Indonesia are, at present, in a contretemps with accusations of spying and issues of asylum seekers. Potentially, HMAS *Perth* could be lost in the wash.

There seems little doubt that salvagers are out and about in the waters off SE Asia. A Dutch submarine, HrMS 016, has been completely lost to a salvage barge (Photo on the right). This salvaging is put at 21st October 2013 off the Malaysian island of Tioman—just off the east coast near Mersing. She too was a war grave. The Dutch navy has been informed of this desecration. The HMS *Prince of Wales* and HMS *Repulse* have also been got at.

There is no evidence about who is doing it. And I have no real evidence of who is managing our side of things, either.

The RAN has asked me not to go to the press as their recently placed initiatives could be foiled. I had to agree.

I have recently emailed Val Poss and she has told me how badly *Houston* has been pillaged, and how similarly the US government reacted to Val's entities to have the salvaging stopped.

Mother Nature will surely have their way with these two heroic ships.....but should a barge load of money-hungry bastards have their way with them first??? Remember, I am Australian!!

A RAN dive party is being gathered together to dive on *Perth* in March 2014. This will be the first archaeological dive to have been made on her. I will try to get a film crew together to accompany this party to document the event. Who knows? Both ships may survive if we keep up the pressure, but in all honestly I doubt it.

The lethargy of men. The softly spoken comment of 'I hope this doesn't happen on my watch' has already been heard. In truth, it is shameful.

=====



Curator Edward M. Furgol proudly wore his USS *Houston* (CA-30) polo shirt to the Navy Museum at the Washington Navy Yard the day after the deadly shootings to honor those who fell to a gunman's recent rampage.



Recent salvage operations on a Dutch Submarine

HOUSTON MARITIME MUSEUM

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

[Kristin Josvoll](#)

Director of Operations

[Houston Maritime Museum](#)

2204 Dorrington, Houston, TX 77030

Phone (713)-666-1910

Fax: (713)-838-8557

The Mailbag

Notes on news received via email at contact@uss-houston.org and via regular mail...

- Received an email **AWF1 Bryce Ricklefs, USN**, who wrote: "I am stationed at Pearl Harbor-Hickam as part of Executive Transport Detachment Pacific, a small squadron that flies the 4-star Commander, US Pacific Fleet on our Gulfstream V aircraft. We run in conjunction with the local Naval Operational Support Command (NOSC) for CPO 365. CPO 365 is a year-round training that trains PO1s to become CPOs in separate phases. As part of that training, we chose to organize ourselves into a "ship," to pay homage to and learn about the detailed history of a particular ship in Naval history. I personally conducted research into what ship I wanted that to be and chose the *USS Houston*. We will adopt the *Houston* as our ship for the entirety of our training this year. We are having a ship's logbook created, and I am reading *Ship of Ghosts* by James Hornfischer right now. I found your website, and I thrilled to see you are still a very active organization. I would like to know if there is any way we can work with you. Do you have materials you can send us? Also, are there any surviving members or family members that live in Hawaii that we can contact? Any input, help, or guidance you can give us would be greatly appreciated. I sincerely thank you for your time and look forward to hearing from you." I responded with suggestions for further reading; an invitation to attend our Association's 2014 reunion; and provided a copy of the Power Point Show, *Survivors of Sunda Strait*.
- Received via email from **Susan Guilford** the sad news of the passing on 13 September 2013 in Santa Fe, NM of **Jean Rentz Lansing**, 94, who was the younger daughter of *USS Houston's* chaplain, **CMDR Rentz**. I emailed a letter of condolence on behalf of our Association to Susan.
- 11/4/13: Received an email from an Australian, **David Hipworth**, regarding his great uncle **Thomas Frederick Smith TX8413**, who "is a survivor of the Japanese POW Camps at Batavia, Changi, Moulmein, Kilo Camps and the River Kwai," David wrote. "If I am lucky and he continues in good health then I would like to bring him to America in 2014 for the next reunion of your excellent Association." David attached some articles on Fred and an itinerary for a trip in early January 2014 to the River Kwai which David and Fred are planning. "If any of your Members and their Families would like to join us then they would be most welcomely received," David wrote. "Fred is still very spry and gets around playing golf (9 holes with cart) twice per week. While Fred was in the Bicycle Camp on Batavia and in the Burma Camps he worked alongside survivors of the *HMAS Perth*, *USS Houston* and the 131st Texas National Guard [Branch 5—*Dana*]. The article in the Australian publication of the POW's Barbed Wire and Bamboo mentioned this year's ANZAC Day march in Melbourne and the fact that the *USS Houston's* banner was proudly marching alongside that of the *HMAS Perth*, triggered me into looking up and Googling your Association, hence my correspondence to you today. I am taking my first trip to the USA with my Wife Gina in November, 2013 and we are driving from the West to East Coasts with a stopover in Houston to visit the *USS Houston* Memorial in Sam Houston park to lay some poppies for Uncle Fred in memory of his friends and mates and also the library of the Houston University. I wish your Association more years of continued success."

Crew Member Spotlight

Walter K. Schneck

By Joe McCain

Walt Schneck was my father-in-law's good friend. They first met in San Diego in 1940 (Fleet Music School) and maintained their friendship throughout the war and afterwards. Both eventually became members of the USS *Houston's* band.

Walt was originally from Waterloo, Iowa. He enlisted in the US Navy in 1936. In the autumn of 1940 he was assigned to the Asiatic Fleet where he served aboard the flagship, USS *Augusta*, as a musician. On November 20, 1940, the flag was transferred to the USS *Houston*. The entire ship's band, including the bandmaster, was transferred at the same time.

Walt went aboard the *Houston* as Mus2C but he soon was playing "first trumpet" in the band. The *Houston's* band was highly regarded and often performed in such prestigious locations as the Army/Navy Club and the Manila Polo Club.



On the night the *Houston* was lost in Sunda Strait, Walt's battle station was that of a loader for the port side "pom-pom" gun. When the order to abandon ship was given, Walt jumped over the side and managed to land in the middle of an empty life raft. As the life raft drifted alongside of the ship, men anxious to get out of the water were helped aboard by Walt. When they got closer to the stern of the ship, Walt decided things were too crowded so he left and started swimming. Shortly thereafter, the raft received a direct shell hit from the Japanese. There were no survivors and a small piece of shrapnel hit Walt in the hip.

Walt and a small group of other survivors drifted away to the north of the Japanese landing area. They got ashore on Java after two days and three nights of battling treacherous ocean currents. He remembered being wrinkled and oil-covered from his prolonged exposure to the sea. A rice paddy bath soon helped. He and his companions joined a small group of HMAS *Perth* survivors and managed to locate shelter for the night. The next morning a small child brought them some food and tea.

On their fourth day ashore, they made contact with a seemingly friendly native who offered to take the men to Tjilatjap where they thought it might be possible to escape back to Allied territory. However, after six days of making their way through the Javanese jungle, they found themselves exhausted and without food, so they lay down to sleep. When Walt and his friends awoke, they found themselves surrounded by Japanese soldiers. Their native guide had betrayed them.

The enemy soldiers first took them by truck to Serang but found it was too overcrowded for any additional prisoners. They were sent to the city jail at Pandeglang, instead. From there the men were taken to the Kempe-Tai Prison in Batavia where they were interrogated before going on to Bicycle Camp.

While at Bicycle Camp, the prisoners were paid tens cents a day for working (in Japanese “invasion money”) and allowed to buy tobacco, sugar, canned milk and a few other items from a Japanese-run version of a PX. After leaving Bicycle Camp, the men were sent to Changi Camp in Singapore for a few months.

In January 1943, Walt and other prisoners left Singapore by train and were then put aboard a Japanese ship with an eventual destination of Moulmein, Burma. From Moulmein, Walt’s group started south and he began forced labor on the Japanese “death railway” through the jungles of Burma and Siam (Thailand). The food shortages and living conditions became increasingly primitive as the railway progressed south. Walt developed tropical ulcers from scratches on his right hand. Three surgeries in camp followed - absolutely necessary to prevent further spread of infection – but the use of his hand was basically lost. 100 Kilo Camp was in a very swampy area and one of the worst on the railway. After reaching this camp, Walt’s weight dropped to around 85 pounds.

Unable to perform manual labor on the railway because of his hand, Walt eventually was sent to Kamburi in Thailand. From there, he went to Nakhom Pathom Dispensary where he worked as a cook for the patients there. He was at the dispensary when the war ended. Upon liberation, Walt was flown to Calcutta for hospitalization and recuperation.

Returning to the United States, Walt managed to buy a 1941 Chevrolet and enjoy some traveling. He also continued to serve his country by making speeches for the War Bond Drive.

After leaving the Navy, he owned and operated a restaurant in Corpus Christi, Texas.

Walt told several interviewers after the war that he thought the Japanese could never understand the Americans’ cheerful attitude. No matter how rough things were, the Americans

always came back to camp, after a dawn-to-dusk workday, singing and confident that someday other Americans would be coming to liberate them. Walt passed away in November 1976.

HMAS *Perth* *Notes From "Down Under"*

In a letter written recently to Trudy Schwarz, Diane Bancroft, daughter of HMAS *Perth* survivor Arthur Bancroft, reported on her experiences at the 2013 International Fleet Review. Diane wrote: "On the weekend of 5 October, Colin, his wife Cheryl, John and I went to Sydney for the International Fleet Review to celebrate 100 years of the Australian Navy. There were 20 Australian naval ships and 20 international naval ships, together with the tall ships, gathered in Sydney Harbor for the weekend. We went on board a ferry to view the proceedings. It was truly amazing.



After the ships sailed through the harbor we were invited on board HMAS *Perth-III* for a personalized tour of the ship. Then, the following night we were invited to a cocktail party on board. It was truly amazing and a bit emotional because it brought back lots of memories of Mum and Dad and how much they enjoyed the reunions they went to, and how proud Dad was to be a part of the HMAS *Perth* tradition.

**HMAS *Perth-III* at Sydney Harbor Bridge
(Photo: Diane Bancroft)**

There are still 3 survivors who live in with 2 still alive in received very special Captain of HMAS Goddard, who has of Mum and Dad. We have been included in celebrations..." –



**HMAS *Perth-III* at the 2013 International Fleet Review,
Sydney, Australia. (Photo: Diane Bancroft)**

HMAS *Perth-I* Sydney, together Perth...We also attention from the *Perth-III*, CAPT Lee very fond memories were very honored to the Fleet Diane Bancroft.

REGISTRATION FORM
72st Anniversary USS Houston Memorial Service/Reunion
March 13-15, 2014

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 14, 2014

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)

Baked Chicken with Smoked Onion and Mushroom Demi Glaze # _____ X \$35.00 = \$ _____

Vegetable Lasagna # _____ X \$35.00 = \$ _____

Saturday Brunch – 10:30 AM # _____ X \$25.00 = \$ _____

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

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

(Received after February 14, 2014)

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

Reception at the University of Houston (Friday) # _____

Bus seat needed to U of H # _____ Handicapped Access # _____

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

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

**USS HOUSTON (CA-30) SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION
AND NEXT GENERATIONS
March 13-15, 2014**

THURSDAY (March 13) - REUNION BEGINS

Registration & Hospitality room	6-10 PM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)
Scholarship Committee Meeting	4 PM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)

FRIDAY (March 14)

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

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

University of Houston Reception	12:30 PM – 3:45 PM
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12:30PM-12:45PM - Gather in hotel lobby to check-in prior to boarding bus.

1:00 pm – SHARP - Bus departs for University of Houston.

1:30 pm – 3:00 pm – University of Houston Staff

3:15 pm – SHARP - Bus departs for the return to the Hyatt Hotel.

Dinner	6:30 PM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Executive Director's Year-end Report• Announcement of Scholarship Winner		

SATURDAY (March 15)

Breakfast	8:30 AM – 10 AM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)
Hospitality & registration	10 AM – 11:30 AM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)

** Hospitality Room closed during meals & Memorial Service

Memorial Service setup	12:00 PM	Sam Houston Park
72 nd Anniversary Memorial Service 2014	2:00PM	Sam Houston Park
Hospitality**	3:30 PM – 8 PM	Arboretum (2 nd floor)

Dinner on your own.

Welcome Aboard



Board of Managers

...here to serve you!

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



President: Sue Kreutzer
Daughter of USN survivor Paul
Webmaster, archives, membership,
Scholarship Committee
Email: Sue@usshouston.org



Papish

Vice-President: Dana Charles
Son of USMC Survivor Bob Charles
Crew and POW camp records,
media specialist, researcher,
correspondent
Email: Dana@usshouston.org



Treasurer: Pam Foster
Daughter of USN survivor Eugene Crispi
Financial and IRS records,
Scholarship Committee
Email: Pam@usshouston.org



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



*We extend a hearty welcome
to those who have recentl
yjoined the Association...*

**Tony Whaley, son of Joseph Hoyt
Whaley**

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.

Members do not have yearly dues. However, we do operate based on the generosity of our membership.

Annual donations are gratefully accepted. We invite you to join with us. Click on <http://www.usshouston.org/memberform.pdf>
Fill out the form and send it in...!

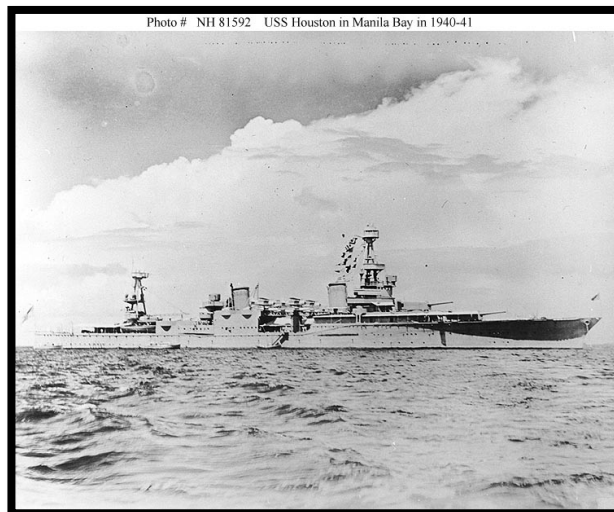
Association Website:

USSHouston.org

Also... check out our Facebook
group page at:

USS Houston CA-30

**USS *Houston* (CA-30)
in Manila Bay in 1940-41.**



Financial Report

By Pam Foster, Treasurer

July 13, 2013 – November 22, 2013

Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance	\$14,406.75
Receipts	415.46
Expenses	1,500.00
Ending Balance	\$13,322.21

General Fund

Beginning Balance	\$12,279.37
Receipts	2,606.52
Expenses	1,998.58
Ending Balance	\$12,887.31



Thank you

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

Bruce DeWald

In Memory of William Charles DeWald

Barnett Barmen

Edward Schwarz

Leo Chernev

Janet & George Bazaz

Leslie Tash

Lisa & Juan Arroyo

Linda Kohler

*In Honor of Trudy Schwarz and
in Memory of Otto Schwarz*

Trudy Schwarz

Laura Evalyn Stevens

Tony Whaley



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contactt@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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