

Now Hear This!

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Association Founded 1947

By Otto and Trudy Schwarz

USS Houston (CA-30) & HMAS Perth (D-29) Honored On 75th Anniversary of Their Loss



Trudy Schwarz (widow of Otto C. Schwarz); Teresa Reilly (widow of John Reilly); Eunell Weissinger (widow of William Weissinger); and Don Kehn, Jr. (Association Historian) lay a wreath at the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Monument during the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Service on 4 March 2017.

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75th Anniversary of the Battle of Sunda Strait Remembered

By John K. Schwarz

A week like no other was presented February 28 through March 4, 2017 in Houston in honor of the 75th anniversary of the loss of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29) thanks to the efforts of many great people.

We experienced a wonderful evening on Tuesday, February 28th at the Houston Maritime Museum, which included a fascinating lecture on

(Continued on next page)

(Continued from Page 1)

USS *Houston* CA-30 by Bill Withers, followed by the unveiling of a beautiful 6-foot model of USS *Houston* CA-30 produced by Bob Ivey. Our gracious hosts, museum Director Leslie Bowlin and Curator Nathan Kyllonen, deserve our sincerest thanks.

On this same evening (February 28th) the Archaeological Institute of America/Houston (hosts Becky Lao, Amy Potts) hosted a screening of the movie ***The Bridge on the River Kwai***, which was introduced by Dr. Jay Thomas of the U.S. Naval History & Heritage Command (Navy Yard, Washington, DC).

On Wednesday, March 1st, we attended a special reception marking the opening of the Australian National Maritime Museum's 75th anniversary exhibition entitled "Guardians of Sunda Strait." What a great exhibition it is! It will remain in Houston until June 30th after which it will travel to Sydney and Perth, Australia. This wonderful work was made possible by the efforts of Consul General Alastair J.M. Walton, Nana Booker-Honorary Consul Emeritus of Australia and Curator Lindsay Shaw. The evening also included the premier of a beautiful musical piece entitled "Overboard," which is dedicated to the memory of the Battle of Sunda Strait—a surface battle in which USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29) were lost along with a total of approximately 1,000 brave servicemen. This wonderful piece of music, written by librettist Leah Lax and composer Mark Buller, held all in attendance spellbound. The evening culminated with an inspiring speech delivered by Mr. J. Thomas Schieffer, former U.S. Ambassador to Japan and Australia.

We were back at the Archaeological Institute of America on Thursday, March 2, 2017 to hear a brilliant presentation by the aforementioned Dr. Jay Thomas who offered a tremendous level of insight and understanding as to the

current state of USS *Houston* CA-30, as well as the efforts underway to attempt to protect her from salvagers. Our thanks go out to our gracious hosts Becky Lao and Amy Potts who facilitated a standing-room-only question/answer period with our Board, Bernice Harapat, and Trudy Schwarz.

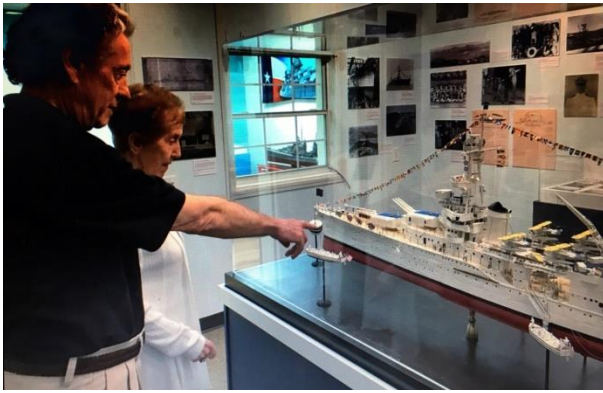
All of this led up to our "Day of Remembrance" activities commencing Friday afternoon, March 3rd with a private tour of the "Guardians of Sunda Strait" exhibition at the beautiful Julia Ideson Library in Houston.



Saturday Morning Breakfast (Photo: Dennis Flynn)

Brilliant presentations were offered during our Friday night and Saturday morning activities by: Don Kehn, Jr., Association Historian & Author; Captain R. Mark Stacpoole, USN, former American Legation, U.S. Naval Attaché to Jakarta, Indonesia; and Dr. Jay Thomas. Thank you very much, gentlemen!

The week culminated with a simply marvelous and touching Annual Memorial Service at the USS *Houston* CA-30 monument in Sam Houston Park on Saturday, March 4th. A divine break in the otherwise poor weather conditions of the day allowed the Service to be conducted. Despite the weather, the annual Memorial Service was attended by more people than ever! Many thanks to everyone who made this week so memorable. Thanks especially to those people who contributed their photos of our activities to this issue of the Blue Bonnet, including: Barry Barlow; Dennis Flynn; Joe McCain; Sandra Karcher; and Dana Charles.



1 March 2017: John & Trudy Schwarz visit Bob Ivey's CA-30 model at the Houston Maritime Museum.



1 March 2017: At the Houston Maritime Museum: Nathan Kyllonen, Curatorial Assistant; Sue Kreutzer; Don Kehn, Jr.; John Schwarz; Trudy Schwarz; and Leslie Bowlin, Museum Director.



Former U.S. Ambassador J. Thomas Schieffer addresses a 1 March 2017 dinner gathering at Houston's City Hall.



Sylvester Turner, Mayor of the City of Houston, speaks at the Ideson Library on 1 March 2017.



4 March 2017: Active duty officers from the armed forces of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Australia, and the United States pose with the Sea Cadets, Houston Division for this group photo after the 75th Anniversary Memorial Service in Sam Houston Park, Houston, Texas. (Photo by Barry Barlow)

Day of Remembrance 2017
Snapshots
Photos by Dennis Flynn



(More photos on Page 14)



From the desk of the Executive Director
John K. Schwarz

Having our Association co- founder Trudy Schwarz with us attending all of the 2017 “Day of Remembrance” events was truly an honor and a very touching experience that was thoroughly appreciated by all who surrounded her. Trudy was interviewed on 1 March and subsequently appeared that evening on a local Channel 2 news broadcast. She did a marvelous job and aside from Otto or our survivors, there could be no better spokesperson for our Association. So Trudy, we are so happy and blessed to have had you with us for this memorable 75th anniversary week!

We want to sincerely thank all of the people who participated and contributed to all the things that occurred honoring this 75th anniversary. We are honored to have such cherished partnerships with such dedicated folks in and around the Houston area. Our thanks to the Houston Maritime Museum, The Archeological Institute of America, the Australian Chamber of Commerce, the Australian Sister Cities Association, and the U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command (Washington, D.C. Navy Yard). We also wish to thank Carl Salazar, Director of Houston’s Office of Veterans Affairs who, on behalf of the Mayor of the City of Houston, presented us with a proclamation, naming March 4, 2017 as “USS *Houston* Day.” (During the Memorial Service, I presented the City with a plaque on which a photo was mounted showing the “1,000 volunteers” in downtown Houston in 1942). We are also grateful to the City for providing a tent, sound system, and two technicians for our Memorial Service. Many thanks also to Roy and Dorlene Gideon for providing cookies! All of these wonderful people have demonstrated a phenomenal level of dedication to the remembrance of the men of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29).

One big THANK YOU to all of our Association members who came out and joined us once again to honor the men of the USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29). May the crewmen of *Houston* and *Perth* who were lost in battle on 1 March 1942 rest in eternal peace while they “Still Stand Watch Over Sunda Strait.”

Two significant scholarship program updates: Since its inception in 1999 the internal scholarship program has made 14 awards, providing a total of \$31,250.00 to further the education of what has been, thus far, all USS *Houston* CA-30 descendants. Since its inception in 2008, the (external) U.S. Naval Academy Foundation USS *Houston* CA-30 Memorial Scholarship has already helped produce THREE Officers currently serving in the U.S. Navy. The four other awardees are progressing satisfactorily at the U.S. Naval Academy toward that same end.

John
Son of Otto and Trudy Schwarz
Association Co-Founders

Listen to “Overboard”

The Houston Grand Opera Company commissioned a song commemorating the 75th Anniversary of the loss of USS *Houston* (CA-30) and HMAS *Perth* (D-29). To hear this beautiful work, click on the link below:

<http://www.uh.edu/engines/Overboard.htm> (Dr. John Lienhard’s website contains audio for the HGOco song, “Overboard”)

Also, here’s the link to Dr. John Lienhard’s radio story about the Battle of Sunda Strait:

<http://www.uh.edu/engines/epi3115.htm>

75th Anniversary Observances Around the World

We have received reports from around the world of 75th Anniversary of the Battle of the Java Sea and the Battle of Sunda Strait observances. Below are some of these observances:

THE KINGDOM OF THE NETHERLANDS



(At Left) Commemoration in The Hague on 27 February 2017. The man seated in the middle is FELIX JANS (93) survivor of the Hr. Ms. *Kortenaer*, which was sunk on 27 February 1942 at the Battle of the Java Sea.

JAKARTA, INDONESIA



(At left) RADM Sam Cox and RDML Donald Gabrielson visited the USS *Houston* (CA-30) model that the Naval History and Heritage Command had made in the Philippines to put on display in the Indonesian National Maritime ("Bahari") Museum as part of a larger exhibit put together by British, Dutch, and Australian maritime museums on the Battle of the Java Sea and the Battle of Sunda Strait. "The purpose of the exhibit was to raise awareness in Indonesia of the *Houston* and Allied ships to hopefully ensure that the wreck of the *Houston* is not disturbed...The model was very graciously funded by the Naval Historical Foundation," RADM Cox wrote in an email.

AUSTRALIA



At Sydney's Garden Island Chapel, Sunday, 26 February 2017
(Far Left): *Perth* Survivor Frank McGovern and Anthony Mills next to a HMAS *Perth* I stained-glass window.
(Left): The HMAS *Perth* National Association:
Back Row, L-R: Terry Blanch, son of MECH I Spencer Blanch, KIA in *Perth* I, Darryl Briggs, David Stewart. Front Row, L-R: Christine Gee AM, daughter of the late AB Alan "Elmo" Gee, *Perth* I survivor; Frank McGovern, *Perth* I survivor; Christine Stewart, daughter of the late Bandsman John "Tubby" Grant, *Perth* I survivor; George Hatfield, son of PO George Hatfield, KIA on *Perth* I; Mike Kay, Secretary/Treasurer NSW Area; Anthony "Timber" Mills, NSW Area President.

AUSTRALIA (CONTINUED)



At the Australian War Memorial, Canberra ACT,
Tuesday, 28 February 2017

Commodore Michele Miller, RAN, former Commanding Officer of HMAS *Perth* III, having laid a wreath. In rear, from left to right: Commander Steve Youll, OAM, RAN (Ret.), HMAS *Perth* Association Committeeman; Mrs. Jan Chattaway, widow of Able Seaman Frank Chattaway, OAM, HMAS *Perth* I Survivor and POW; Mr. Alex McGown, Naval Association ACT Section.



At Melbourne's Shrine of Remembrance,
Wednesday, 1 March 2017

(Far Left): HMAS *Perth* I Survivor David Manning prepares to lay a wreath. (Photo by Peter Wilson)

(Left): Mr. Richard Mendelsohn, Honorary Consul for Victoria representing the Kingdom of the Netherlands; Captain Tony Defrias, US Attaché, Canberra; Mark Shaffa, Lt. Col, US Army; US Navy Lieutenant Ricardo Elizalde, Victoria Barracks, Melbourne; Megan Douglas, US Consulate, Melbourne.



At the Church of St John the Evangelist, Fremantle, WA
Sunday, 26 February 2017

**USS HOUSTON (CA-30) AND HMAS PERTH (D-29)
REMEMBERED
IN THE U.S. CONGRESS**

In Congress on Thursday, March 2, US Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) remembered these brave men who 'Still Stand Watch Over Sunda Strait.'

Here is his statement:

75TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SINKING OF THE USS HOUSTON

Congressional Record, March 2, 2017 <<https://www.congress.gov/congressional-record/2017/03/02/senate-section/article/S1574-1>>

115th Congress, 1st Session

Issue: Vol. 163, No. 37 — Daily Edition

Mr. CRUZ. Mr. President, yesterday marked the 75th anniversary of the sinking of the USS *Houston* (CA-30), the ``flagship" of the U.S. Asiatic Fleet, which fought bravely against the Imperial Japanese Navy Battle Fleet. During an engagement on March 1, 1942, the USS *Houston* and the Australian cruiser HMAS *Perth* were sunk at the Battle of Sunda Strait, suffering a combined loss of nearly 1,000 servicemen; the surviving sailors and marines became prisoners of war. After the war, it was revealed that they had been sent to Japan and then transferred to the mainland and used as slave labor for construction of the Thai- Burma Railway. Only 266 men from the Houston's complement of 1,008 and 214 of the Perth's complement of 681 returned home after the war. The news of this horrific loss hit the Lone Star state hard, but with typical Texan gusto and determination, it prompted a mass recruiting drive for volunteers to replace the lost crew. On Memorial Day 1942, a crowd of nearly 200,000 witnessed 1,000 "Houston Volunteers" inducted into the Navy. An accompanying bond drive raised over \$85 million, enough to pay for a new cruiser and an aircraft carrier, the USS *San Jacinto*. This historic event speaks to the American spirit and grit as well as our enduring alliance with Australia.

In honor of this occasion, we remember the brave men of Texas, and all of those from the Greatest Generation, who gave so much to preserve freedom in the Pacific and fight for America. They fought for country and liberty in the face of impossible odds. These sailors, soldiers, and marines represent America's unbeatable determination.



Meet our 2017 Scholarship Recipients

USS Houston (CA-30) Annual Scholarship Recipient



Chris Karcher

Our 14th internal scholarship award winner, Chris Karcher, is the great-grandson of CA-30 crewman Richard H. Gingras. Chris is currently in his senior year at Edinboro University majoring in computer science. He is currently an NCAA swimmer at Edinboro University. Chris participated in the Boy Scouts from the rank of Tiger Cub, and earned his Eagle Award. He was a percussionist in school bands and still plays in a local community band when he can. Academically gifted, Chris finished in the top 10 of his high school graduating class and has been recognized by Edinboro University as a scholar-athlete. He is a member of two collegiate honor societies and is in the Honors Program at Edinboro.

U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Recipient



Alana N. Stern

The USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Scholar, recipient of a scholarship established by the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivors' Association and Next Generations® in memory of the ship and her men, is Alana N. Stern. She graduated with distinguished honors from Gonzales High School in Gonzales, TX. Alana was a member of the National Honor Society and Mu Alpha Theta. She was also an officer for several community service clubs and participated in many community service events, such as coaching track for grade school students in the area. Alana was very active in her church youth group and held the position of vice president. She also held a spot on the varsity cheerleading, powerlifting, and track teams throughout all four years. Under Foundation sponsorship, Alana attended Greystone Preparatory School at Schreiner University in Kerrville, Texas.

...NOW HEAR THIS...!

INTERNAL ANNUAL SCHOLARSHIP PROGRAM UPDATE

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

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

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

Each year the amount our Association can award to the Internal Scholarship recipient depends on your generosity. The scholarship award available for 2018 will be \$3,000. Donations are always accepted and appreciated, and are necessary to perpetuate this program.

You can also remember the USS *Houston* CA-30 Scholarship Fund in your will, estate planning, or beneficiary designations. All donations are tax deductible.

Donations should be made out to: USS *Houston* CA-30 Survivors' Association. Please note on your check: "Scholarship Donation."

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

To-date and after approximately 18 years of program implementation, we have awarded **14** scholarships totaling **\$31,250.00**. This is an extremely successful program outcome by any measure.

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



Past Internal Annual Scholarship Winners

- 2004 – Gene Bankhead, grandson of Gene Crispi
- 2005 – Katy Fort, granddaughter of Cecil Chambliss
- 2006 – Gerald Agin, grandson of Gerald Agin
- 2007 – Jenny Garrett, granddaughter of Joe Garrett
- 2008 – Raymond Davis, great nephew of George Davis, Jr.
- 2009 – Alex James, great nephew of John Stefanek
- 2010 – Kevin Swick, grandson of John Reilly
- 2012 – Cody Karcher, great grandson of Richard H. Gingras
- 2013 – Laura Reilly, granddaughter of John Reilly
and Maggie Tuttle, great niece of Howard Brooks
- 2014 – Stephanie Daigre, granddaughter-in-law of Gene Crispi
- 2015 – Stephen Reilly, grandson of John Reilly
- 2016 – Emily L. Kovacs, grand-niece of John Stefanek

Past U.S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Winners

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



U. S. Naval Academy Foundation Scholarship Program

Due to the generosity of our Association members and friends, and since its inception in 2008, this permanent scholarship—the USS *Houston* (CA-30) Memorial Scholarship—has been awarded seven times. This scholarship award enables a year of preparatory military school education, which helps these candidates enter the U.S. Naval Academy (USNA). We are pleased to report that so far three scholarship recipients are currently serving in the US Navy as officers. The four other recipients are progressing satisfactorily towards graduation. What a lasting tribute to the legacy of the men of USS *Houston* (CA-30)!

Notes from Here and There...

Three Crewmen from the U.S. submarine *USS Houston* (SSN-713) visited the “Cruiser *Houston* Collection” at the University of Houston’s library on 9 March 2017. Our Association’s Historian, Don Kehn, Jr. provided the men with a tour.



4 officers of the watch row ashore CAPT Ivan Ingham, RAN, the departing Commanding officer of HMAS *Perth* III at Fleet Base West in Australia on 9 December 2016.

In collaboration with the *USS Houston* CA-30 Survivors’ Association and Next Generations® the Houston Maritime Museum has opened a new exhibit “*USS Houston: Ships Named in Honor.*” This exhibit not only tells the unique histories of the four ships that have been named *USS Houston*, but also the heart wrenching saga of the brave men who fought against all odds during WWII. This permanent exhibit is centered on the heavy cruiser *USS Houston* CA-30 and her crew who fought in the opening chaotic months of the Pacific War.




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

- 12/6/17: Received the following email: "I am so happy to find a contact for information about the *Houston*! My uncle, Bobby Botham, was killed in the Feb 4, 1942 bombing, 10 days before his 22nd birthday. Any news surrounding his death was classified at the time and the family only discovered last year that he had been aboard the *Houston*. He was the oldest of 4 children and had neither wife nor children when he died. He is now survived only by 4 nephews and 3 nieces, but his death changed his family forever and he has not been forgotten. We know so little about him and to my knowledge, have only a single photograph of him. I would be pleased to add that photo and the accompanying newspaper article to the *Houston* archives. I also have so many questions: When did he join the *Houston*'s crew? Did he die in the initial bombing or was he part of the ill-fated rescue crew? Did he perhaps play basketball (he was 6'4")? I've seen a photograph of the entire crew, is it possible to know which of those tiny people is him? If you have any information or can point me in the direction of those with answers, I would be so very thankful!" – Diane Botham Jones
- 12/6/17: I replied to Diane as follows: "Diane, Many thanks for emailing the news article regarding the 1942 loss of your uncle, Willard Robert (Bobby) Botham. It is very sad to read that he was so young at the time of his untimely death. Again, our deepest sympathy for the loss of this brave man... Would you mind if I print this news article in the next issue of our Association's newsletter, the Blue Bonnet (named after the newsletter printed aboard the *Houston*)? I would like to give our 3 still-living survivors an opportunity to see the photo, and see if perhaps they might recall Bobby. I can't promise anything. All of our remaining survivors are in their 90's now. But, you never know. – Dana" *[Note to Survivors: If you have any information on Bobby Botham, please let me know: Email address: contact@usshouston.org; Mailing address: PO Box 2457, Kirkland, WA 98083. Thanks, Dana Charles]*
- 12/7/16: Received the following email: "I was wondering if you could put me in contact with the right person(s). My name is Terri Jackson and my grandmother, **Dorothy Beesley**, was the girlfriend of **Ray Rowan** when he was killed on the *Houston*. She kept a scrapbook with pictures and a few clippings of him but I really don't know a lot about him. I was wondering if you could help me find his family or anyone that might have known him so I could ask them some questions about him. I have tried to keep his memory alive as much as I can since he didn't get the opportunity to have a family and children of his own. Thank you so much for any information you can provide. Terri Jackson." *[Note to Survivors: If you have any information on Ray Rowan, please let me know. Thanks, Dana Charles]*
- 12/27/16: Received the following email(s) from Wen Bei as follows: "My grandfather, named **C. K. Bei**, was a crew member served in the USS *Houston* CA30 during WWII and was killed by enemy action on first of March 1942... As my father was passed away 15 years ago, I would not be able to get any more information about my grandfather's death...Your attention to this email is appreciated. I am living in Australia and I can contact the US Consulate General in Melbourne if it is an alternative source. Regards, Wen Bei."
- 12/31/16: I asked Sue Kreutzer for help in locating information on Mr. Bei, then replied to Wen Bei as follows: "Dear Mr. Bei, Thank you for your inquiry regarding your grandfather, C. K. Bei. I have asked a colleague to help me do some research on Mr. C. K. Bei. Meanwhile, do you happen to know Mr. Bei's



date and place of birth? This information may help us locate some information on your grandfather. Again, thank you for contacting us.”

- 1/3/16: Received the following email from **Wen Bei**: “Hello Dana, Thank you for contacting me. In regards to my grandfather’s death, I have done further research and found some updated information. My grandfather’s surname in English spelt as Pa instead of Bei which is in modern Chinese name spelling, therefore his full name should be spelt as **Mr. C.K. Pa**... I know that he was born in 1905 in Shanghai, China...Attached is a copy of my grandfather’s photo with other three men. My grandfather is the first person from right. And as I was told that my grandfather’s duty on *USS Houston* was very close to the captain. Captain’s Assistant? The above information might be useful. Yours Sincerely, Wen Bei.”
- 1/4/17: Wrote the following email to **Wen Bei**: “Dear Mr. Bei, Thank you for emailing the great photo of your grandfather, **C. K. Bei**, and thanks for mentioning his close proximity to the captain of *USS Houston* (CA-30). I will pass your email along to my colleague for that she may also have this information. Again, thank you for your information and photo.” *[Note to Survivors: If you recognize Mr. Bei, please let me know. Thanks, Dana Charles]*
- 1/18/17: Received the following message on Facebook from **Louise Garcia**: “Good afternoon Robert, well its afternoon here in Brisbane Australia, 4:10pm to be exact. Your probably wondering what a lady from Australia is doing contacting you and asking to join your group? My Grandfather, **Roy Stuart Turner** was sick berth attendant and survivor of the *HMAS Perth* sinking in March, 1942. It is recorded my Grandfather helped save 12 Americans from the water, including *Houston*’s Doctor, **Commander William Epstein, USN**. Apparently, they continued their friendship after both survived the POW camps, writing to each other throughout the years. I was wondering if you know of the family? I'd love to get in contact with them.”
- 1/18/17: I replied on Facebook with the following: “Louise, Thank you for joining our *USS Houston* (CA-30) Facebook group! I'm sorry to report that our *USS Houston* (CA-30) Survivors' Association and Next Generations® has lost contact with Dr. Epstein's family as far as I know. However, with your permission, I will place your message in our next Association newsletter (April 2017 issue) and see if anyone from Dr. Epstein's family, or anyone who knows the family, responds.” -- Dana *[Note to Survivors: If you have any information about Dr. Epstein's family, please let me know].*
- 2/27/17: Received the following email from Australian writer **Natali Pearson**: “You may remember me from a few months back when I wrote an article in *Inside Indonesia* about *HMAS Perth* and the Australian National Maritime Museum. I just wanted to let you know that I have a new article out, in *The Conversation*, about the missing Java Sea wrecks and about the threats faced by WWII wrecks in Indonesian waters. I mention *USS Houston* and quote [John Schwarz] on the need to protect these wrecks. Please find a link: <https://theconversation.com/ghost-ships-why-are-world-war-ii-naval-wrecks-vanishing-in-indonesia-72799> I wish you all the best on this most important anniversary. Please do let me know if you have any comments or feedback. Regards, Natali Pearson, PhD Candidate, Museum and Heritage Studies/Asian Studies.”
- 3/5/17: Received the following email from **NG Dale Dollar**: “**Elbert Reves** was my cousin. Can you tell me his job aboard the *USS Houston*? Any information you can provide will be appreciated.”
- 3/6/17: I replied to Mr. Dollar as follows: “According to our Association’s records, which were reconstructed after WWII ended, your cousin’s rating aboard ship was Radioman 3rd Class (RM3/c). Although the ship’s records were lost when the *Houston* was lost on 1 March 1942, one might guess that your cousin’s battle station was in the ship’s radio room. I’m afraid we have no additional information about him.” *[Note to Survivors: If you have any information about Mr. Reves, please let me know].*

(Continued on page 22)

(Photos: continued from page 4)



CAPT R. Mark Stacpoole, USN
speaking at the Friday Night Dinner.



(L to R): Laura Flynn; Trudy Schwarz; Silvia Brooks; Donna Flynn; Teresa Reilly; Kathleen Reilly; Michael Reilly; Linda Swick at the Friday Night Dinner.
(Photo by Dennis Flynn)



Dr. Jay Thomas, Naval History and Heritage Command, speaking at the Houston Museum of Natural Science on 2 Mar 2017.



(L to R): Trudy Schwarz; Silvia Brooks; Donna Flynn; Teresa Reilly; and Eunell Weissinger at the Memorial Service on 4 Mar 2017. (Photo by Dennis Flynn)



Daughters of USS Houston (CA-30) Band Members participated in the wreath-laying ceremony at the Memorial Service on behalf of all Next Generations.
(L to R): Marlene McCain (daughter of Ralph Edgar Morris); Patti Watters (in teal blue); Jackie Schneck (in red); and Suzie Tschoerner (in pink) (3 daughters of Walter K. Schneck). (Photo by Joe McCain)

SEA CADET PARTICIPANTS REPORT...

"On March 4, 2017, I participated in the color guard for the USS *Houston* survivor ceremony. When I was asked to be on the color guard I was very honored, these men put it all on the line for freedom, and it was very special for me to be a part of the ceremony. On my way to the event I was very confident. We've done this several times so I knew we were prepared. During the ceremony I felt very good about it, we were doing great. When it was all over everyone was coming and complementing us so I felt we did a good job. I was very honored and so happy I had the opportunity to take part in this ceremony." **PO2 John Aguiar**, Houston Division, USNSCC.



"On the way to the *Houston* Bell Ceremony, I was feeling both nervous and excited at the same time. I didn't want to mess up, and yet at the same time I was excited that we would get to help out with the event. When I got there, I was asked to be part of the Color Guard. This was very exciting because I had wanted to do color guard for a while. During the function, I got to go practice with the color guard and help present the colors. I was nervous that I would mess up, but I got a refresher on how to do the left rifle movements, and then felt confident that I could do it. When it was over, I felt very excited that I did everything right, and proud that I got to help with the event. I got to meet many of the Commodores and high ranking military officials, not just from the U.S., but from other countries such as Australia as well. I am proud to have received a USS *Houston* Challenge coin from a Retired Navy Captain from WWII. Now, I feel confident that if I have to step in and help the color guard again, I will be even more prepared." **SA Alina Full**, Houston Division, USNSCC.



Being a new recruit to the Sea Cadet program, when on my way to the ceremony, I was very nervous because I had no clue what I was going to have to do in front of so many people. However, I was excited to meet the relatives of U.S.S. *Houston* survivors and officers from around the world. When I arrived, I was relieved to just be standing off to the side for what I thought was going to be the entire ceremony, and for most of the ceremony I was. An hour later, a few minutes before the wreath laying ceremony, a female recruit stepped out of the escort line and proceeded to walk to the back of the crowd because she was not feeling well. Being the next in line, I was ordered to take my place as an escort for the wreath laying ceremony...At this point I was scared to death, but tried my best not to show it to everyone around me. I felt that I was a recruit being led off to the slaughter. Nevertheless, when the female recruit finally returned right before the ceremony started, she told me that I had the option to leave and return to my previous post, but I declined. I knew that I could do it and I wanted to make my commanding officers proud. So, I watched closely as the cadets in front of me performed their duties, then when it was finally my turn, I did everything that I saw them do. At the end of the day, I was proud of myself for conquering my fears and doing what I knew I was capable of...Overall, I had a great time and I would do it again in a heartbeat. I met many wonderful people, including Fred Hekking, son of Doc Hekking from the Royal Dutch Army, both of whom were POWs, he shared many of his own personal experiences from World War II and told us how proud we should be to be Americans."

SR Samantha Delaney, Houston Division, USNSCC.



(Photos by Barry Barlow)

PATROL BOAT SALUTES SAILORS ON ETERNAL PATROL

By CMDR Fenn Kemp, RAN

Photo by LSIS James Whittle, RAN

The crew of the Darwin-based patrol boat, HMAS *Maryborough*, has marked the 75th anniversary of the sinking of HMAS *Perth* (I), with a midnight ceremony over the wreck in the Sunda Strait. The ceremony took place at 12:30am on 1 March – the precise time that *Perth* sank. Commanding Officer of *Maryborough*, Lieutenant Tom Mobbs said his crew had been honoured to undertake the solemn duty. "We were so proud to have honoured those lost," Lieutenant Mobbs said. "The qualities of heroism and leadership demonstrated by those in *Perth* are as important now as they were during the battle in which she was sunk."



The crew of HMAS *Maryborough* conducts a memorial service in the Sunda Strait for the 75th Anniversary of the sinking of HMAS *Perth* (D-29) and USS *Houston* (CA-30).

The story of *Perth* remains one of the most heroic and tragic in Royal Australian Navy history. On 1 March 1942, the Royal Australian Navy light cruiser and the United States warship USS *Houston* confronted a Japanese naval taskforce. Outgunned and dramatically outnumbered, both ships fought with honour and courage until each sunk after running out of ammunition. At the time of her loss *Perth*'s ship's company totaled 681, comprising 671 naval personnel, six Royal Australian Air Force personnel (for operating and servicing the aircraft) and four civilians (canteen staff). Her Captain, Hec Waller went down with the ship with 349 naval personnel and three civilians. Four naval personnel died ashore without having been taken prisoner. A further 106 men died in captivity. *Houston* lost 696 sailors and marines with 368 captured, many of those captured suffered a similar fate to their Australian counterparts.

Wreaths were laid by *Maryborough* in memory of both Australian and American personnel lost. The site of the *Perth* wreck remains vulnerable to local shipping and illegal salvage operations which have damaged the wreck in past years.

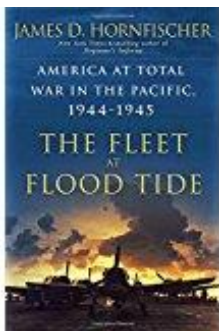
However, the future of the site is looking brighter with Indonesian President Joko Widodo acknowledging the 75th anniversary of the *Perth* sinking. The President also reaffirmed a commitment to strengthen cooperation in the area of maritime cultural heritage, in a joint maritime statement with Australia's Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull during his recent Australian visit.

Lieutenant Mobbs said his crew would take lessons from the deeds of those who fought in the battle. "These qualities are linked and are present at all ranks in Navy, guiding the way for us all to be our best when it matters the most," he said. Captain Waller and the men of *Perth* are also remembered through the naming of an initial entry officers course division 'Waller' at the Royal Australian Naval College, at HMAS *Creswell*.

Australian National Maritime Museum experts and authorities from the Archaeology Research Centre at the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture are planning a joint dive on *Perth* to establish its current condition. For more information on the battle and the ship, visit: <http://www.navy.gov.au/hmas-perth-i>

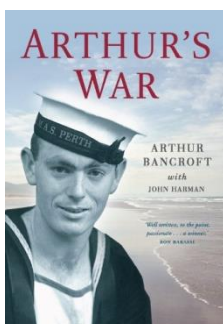
Source of this article: <http://news.navy.gov.au/en/Mar2017/Fleet/3550#.WMxbY4WcE5s>

Recommended Books:



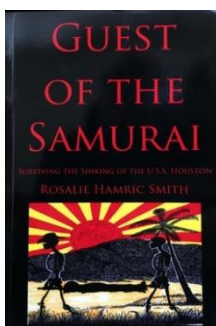
James Hornfischer's excellent new book, *The Fleet at Flood Tide-America at Total War in the Pacific 1944-1945*, discusses the various U.S. Naval campaigns in the Pacific between 1944 and 1945, including the invasions of Saipan, Tinian, Guam, and more. Mr. Hornfischer examines the contributions of Raymond Spruance; Kelly Turner; Marine General "Howlin' Smith;" Draper Kauffman; Paul Tibbets; as well as chronicles the lives of Japanese combatants and civilians facing defeat. Outstanding!

--Dana



Written by Arthur Bancroft with John Harmon, *Arthur's War* details the remarkable story of HMAS *Perth* (D-29) crewman Arthur Bancroft, who managed to survive not only the sinking of HMAS *Perth* (D-29) and the construction of the "death Railway," but also the sinking of the Japanese hell ship, *Rakuyo Maru*. The book also tells the story of Mirla, who never lost hope that Arthur would return from the war. A great read written by a great man!

-- Dana



Guest of the Samurai is the personal story of USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor PFC James Gee, USMC, as written for and told to his nurse, LT. Rosalie Hamric who was the Charge Nurse at Guantanamo Bay for the POWs who were survivors of the *Houston's* loss and who spent the whole war in POW camps run by the Japanese. Recommended! -- Dana

You Shop, Amazon Gives

By Pam Crispi Foster, Treasurer

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

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REMEMBRANCE DAY
75th Anniversary
USS Houston CA-30 / HMAS Perth D-29

REMEMBER

Seventy-five years since our Houston went down,
We remember with pride and never a frown.

We remember our heroes who were oh so brave,
As their ship went under while our flag still did wave.

Our loved ones we honor today in our quiet way,
Knowing words will never express all we wish to say.

As they stand watch from up above,
They must certainly feel all of our love.

In the gentle breeze the Bluebonnets still sway,
Stirring our memories of this fateful day.

One by one they have met their final rest,
All of them heroes, all of them our very best.

Lest we forget--our heads do we bow,
Remember Forever--that is our vow.

*Though I cannot be with you,
Know that I am there in spirit,
For we are connected in a special way...*

*Nancy Greenwald
Daughter of Clarence Schilperoort (1917-2010)
USS Houston CA-30 Survivor*

USS HOUSTON (CA-30) ITEMS FOR SALE

DVD "Last Stand" (8 oz.) \$20.00
 Bumper Sticker (1-3 is 1 oz.) \$2.00
 Challenge Coin (3 oz.) \$10.00
 Bell or Monument Lapel Pin (specify type)
 (1 - 6 pins is 1 oz.) \$3.00
 Ship Lapel Pin (specify silver or gold highlights)
 (1 - 3 pins are 1 oz.) \$4.00



Polo Shirts - Short Sleeve, Navy Blue
 with Gold Embroidery of the USS Houston:
 Men's - sizes M-2XL \$25.00
 Women's - sizes S-XL \$25.00
 (Shipping Weight-10 oz.)



T-Shirts (size Medium) (9 oz.) \$10.00
 T-Shirts (size Small, large, and X-Large) (9 oz.) \$20.00
 T-Shirts (size 2XL or 3 XL) (9 oz.) \$25.00

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

Shipping Costs:

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

Make checks payable to:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association

Mail checks to:

Sue Kreutzer
 43156 Meadowbrook Cir.
 Parker, CO 80138

Questions? Email: Sue@USSHouston.org

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



Blue Ball Cap



Brown & Black Ball Cap



Women's Polo Shirt



Men's Polo Shirt



T-Shirt

Include the following information
 (please print clearly):

Name
 Address
 City, State and Zip Code
 Phone Number
 Items Ordered, Size and Quantity

Meet your...

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* 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.

Membership

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

Welcome Aboard!

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



Association Website:
www.usshouston.org

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

In Memoriam

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

William “Bill” J. Stewart



1920 – 2016

Independence, Kansas

USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor (Navy)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Alois “Al” Kopp



3 May 1918 – 25 January 2017

Minnetonka, Minnesota

USS *Houston* (CA-30) Survivor, Navy

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

(Continued from page 13)

- 3/8/17: Received the following email from **NG Dennis Flynn**: "I have to tell you that this was the best USS *Houston* memorial service ever! I thought last year's was the best, but this year's was beyond that! The Dinner and Breakfast events didn't have an empty seat. Great speakers! Also, one of the largest gatherings for the USS *Houston* Memorial Service Saturday afternoon. Roy the cookie man almost ran out of cookies. The light rain stopped as the service began, that was super. All the speakers for the three events I attended were absolutely wonderful. John, Sue, Dana and Pam did a marvelous job organizing this event. I met so many wonderful folks, it was hard for me to keep track. The Flynn's had a truly wonderful time. This weekend paid respectful honor to the men of the USS *Houston* and HMAS *Perth*. Take Care.....Dennis"
- 3/11/17: Received the following email from **NG Mike Nelson**: "Hello, I am looking for any information that you may have of a crew member of the USS *Houston* CA30. He is my uncle (my father's brother) **S1 Kenneth Lyle Nelson** Service # 3286956 born 5/29/1922. Died March 1, 1942 in the battle of the Java Sea. If you have any information, or leads to information that I may peruse, I would greatly appreciate it. Mike Nelson."
- 3/12/17: I replied as follows: "Dear Mr. Nelson, Thank you for contacting us regarding your uncle, **Kenneth L. Nelson, SM1/c, USN**, who perished along with some 700 of his shipmates on 1 March 1942 during USS *Houston* (CA-30)'s last battle, the Battle of Sunda Strait. I am very sorry for your loss... The ship's records were all destroyed when the *Houston* was lost during that final battle. As a result, I'm sorry to report that I have no information about your uncle, other than the date of his death. However, I would like to put your inquiry in the upcoming issue of our Association's newsletter, the Blue Bonnet, to see if any of our three remaining survivors may remember your uncle. I don't wish to get your hopes up too high, though. These men are all in their 90's now, and may not recall anything pertaining to Mr. Nelson. But we'll try.... Other possible sources of information include: The National Archives (NARA-II), and Ancestry-dot-com. Again, my deepest condolences on the loss of your uncle." – Dana *[Note to Survivors: If you have any information on Kenneth Nelson, please let me know. Thanks, Dana Charles]*
- 3/12/17: Received the following note from Trudy Schwarz: "Dear Board Members, Just a very special "Thank You" for all your work to remember the ship and her beloved crew. You always go above and beyond, and please know how precious you are. Blessings from Trudy."
- 3/15/17: Received the following email from **NG Linda (Reilly) Swick**: "Wow!! What a great time all the Reillys/Swicks had at the "Day of Remembrance." Everything went like clockwork and we enjoyed all the speakers. The Doubletree was very accommodating to all our needs, and we appreciate that you took care of the arrangements for our Mom. That was so thoughtful of you!! The Memorial Service was so beautiful and the execution was flawless, including the lack of rain - impeccable timing!! Until you have planned something like this, people have no idea how much time and effort goes into it. So many details!! You are the unsung heroes of the Second Generation who hold us together, and we can't thank you enough!! We look forward to seeing you next year, unless you plan to visit our corner of the world. With much gratitude and appreciation, Linda, Chuck, Kevin and Daniel and the entire Reilly clan."
- 3/15/17: Received the following email: "Hi Dana, Thanks for the great song and article!!! We all loved the reunion and it was great seeing you again. I can't thank you enough for all the time you spend on all our behalf!!" **Linda Swick**
- 3/15/17: Replied to Linda Swick as follows: "Hi Linda, Thank you for your kind words. I am so happy to hear you had a great time at our 'Day of Remembrance 2017.' I always enjoy being with you and your wonderful family! -- Dana"



Kenneth L. Nelson, SM1/c, USN



Crew Member Spotlight

George Clyde McCandless SF3/c, USN

(May 8, 1921 – October 20, 2015)

By Matt McCandless

Born on May 8, 1921, in Lewisville, Idaho, George was the oldest son of Zula Winchester McCandless and Clyde Ulysses McCandless. Upon his graduation from eighth grade in Lewisville, like many of his generation, George left home and began working at the early age of 14. His employment began as a ranch hand for the 7L Ranch in Centennial Valley, Montana. Our dad described his job as a “ranch hand,” but he was a Cowboy, confirmed by letters from a friend in Nevada. They broke horses, herded cattle as well as haying. He spent two seasons at the 7L and made it back home (Lewisville) for the winter.

Dad signed an Oath of Allegiance, on March 7, 1940 and joined the Navy and went to San Diego, CA for training. On May 5, 1940, Dad was told he made his school (radio school). [He came aboard USS *Houston*] sometime in October, 1940. Dad told us that after being trained in radio school that he really did not like it and asked his CO if he could be a ship fitter. He was taken into the ship fitter gang on Nov. 1, 1941; tough duty, which included painting the stack while underway. It was so hot that the paint sizzled as it was applied.

He certainly liked writing and receiving letters from his folks. His last letter home was dated January 28, 1942. In it he talked about missing his folks, yet remaining optimistic: “Well so far it looks like we are holding our own and, personally, I think we have them on the run.” Dad’s folks received a telegram from Rear Admiral Randall Jacobs on March 14, 1942 which said that Dad was missing in action in the performance of his duty. On May the 11, 1943 his folk were contacted by the International Red Cross via Switzerland that their son was a prisoner in Japan. Dad had a chance to write his folks in camp a few times and they were able to write him. Dad’s correspondence to them was in October, November, and December of 1944. On September 22, 1945 his folks received a telegram that Dad was liberated from the Japanese.

Dad told us kids a few stories about the POW camps. He and a shipmate sneaked out of camp at one corner to get persimmons. We asked him why he did not just escape (I was ten years old or so). He explained why. Another time he and the same buddy stole some sugar and rationed it among folks. He also told a story about liberation: Planes were parachuting food and supplies into camp when a drum of fruit cocktail’s chute did not open and hit concrete by the latrines. Fruit cocktail was all over! Dad and a few other men left camp early (against recommendation) and hopped on a narrow gauge railroad. After a Hospital stay in Guam and then a flight to San Francisco, he went to Farragut Idaho Naval hospital and then reentered civilian life.

[After the war,] he went to work for the Union Pacific Railroad and there he met a spirited young lady, Nellie “Gorgeous” McCandless. She had already been working for the railroad four years as a telegrapher. Mom had more seniority than Dad and Dad was reminded of that throughout the years. They were married in King Hill, Idaho on Sept 16, 1947.

Dad and Mom built their first house in Shelly, Idaho. Their first child Patrick Dennis was delivered stillborn in 1951. Their second child, Teresa Lynn, was born November 3, 1952 followed by Brian Kerry on November 2, 1953. In July 1955 Nellie's youngest sister and husband (Ruby and Jesse Woods) were killed in an auto accident, leaving their three children orphaned—Kathleen Marie, Jesse Dan and April Kay Woods then living in Yakima, Washington. The children and their Grandmother (Nellie's mom) came to Shelly, Idaho. On September 2 Mom gave birth to Gregg Scott. Mom and Dad then moved to Blackfoot, Idaho. On November 25, 1956 Mom gave birth to Matt Kevin. Dad and Mom had a full house!

In the summer of 1960 Dad, as a relief agent, brought the family to West Yellowstone, Montana—a grand extended vacation for the kids, with lots of good memories. In 1960 Dad and Mom moved their family to Butte, Montana and he took the freight agent job. The UP railroad moved the family to Butte and our home was a residence above the freight depot in the middle of the tracks. Lots of adventures were had in Butte, for Dad and Mom as well as the kids; lots of great food and the best bars in the nation. The people of Butte, Montana are the best and the area in and around Butte was a great place to grow up.

In 1969 Dad and Mom moved the family to Pocatello, Idaho with some reluctance from the kids. Dad took the freight agent job and then the position of Manager of division accounting and Mom took a job at J.C. Penny's. We children endured many joys and trials. Dad and Mom were always there when needed. They were wonderful Grandparents for the grand children as well. All their children went out into life with George and Nellie's abilities and perspective. These attributes have served us well.

In the last chapter of Dad and Mom's life they lived in Boise, Idaho at Marquis Assisted Living's Friendship House. They were cared for by an amazing of staff.

Dad was always inventive and creative. When he was young, he rigged up a washing machine motor to churn butter. At first the belt was a little loose and there was cream all over his Mom's pantry. He made a spoon and pipe in prison camp. In Butte he built a sturdy camper for his 1956 Dodge Power Wagon on the freight depot's platform. He put a caboose stove in at Butte and a wood stove in the basement of the home in Pocatello, under an opening in the cold air return, so that the whole house would be heated. At the UP freight depot when the railroad in Pocatello got their first computer (bigger than a refrigerator) Dad devised a method to help the system that used the key punch cards. Dad calmly put several stitches in a mare's chest that had run through a barbed wire fence at Inkom, Idaho. He was very resourceful and gifted.

Dad helped all of us in many ways throughout our lives. He was honest, hardworking and level headed. Not a disparaging word about any person. (Maybe a few people while he was driving?) Throughout the years Dad and Mom opened their home to all of us and our friends. No judgement, just compassion. He was accepting and supportive, determined, positive, ambitious and self-taught. He was amazingly resilient. There aren't enough adjectives to describe him and his life. His family and friends miss him dearly.



Thank you!

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

Donations

December 1, 2016 – March 15, 2017

In Memory of Joe Hoyt Whaley

Tom Whaley

In Memory of Samuel T. McMaster

Bridget McMaster

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2016 Amazon Smile Donations Earned: \$61.35

2017 Amazon Smile Donations Earned: \$21.78 YTD

Financial Report

by Pam Foster, Treasurer

FY 2017

January 1, 2017 - March 29, 2017

General Fund

Beginning Balance:	\$20,593.63
Receipts:	+9,778.74
Expenses:	<u>-8,911.11</u>
Ending Balance:	\$21,461.26



Scholarship Fund

Beginning Balance:	\$15,780.46
Receipts:	+2,804.26
Expenses:	<u>-3,000.00</u>
Ending Balance:	\$15,584.72



Published by:

USS Houston CA-30 Survivors' Association and Next Generations® (April, August, December)

Editor: Dana Charles

Proofreaders: Pam Foster, John Schwarz, Sue Kreutzer

Distribution: Dana Charles, Pam Foster

Articles or information may be sent to:

contact@usshouston.org or Bluebonnet@usshouston.org.

All articles submitted are subject to editing.

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MGYSgt William Steve Cutrer, USMC (Ret.), grandson of the late survivor William Weissinger, with his daughter Stefany at the USS Houston (CA-30) Monument on 4 March 2017. (Photo by Sandra Karcher)