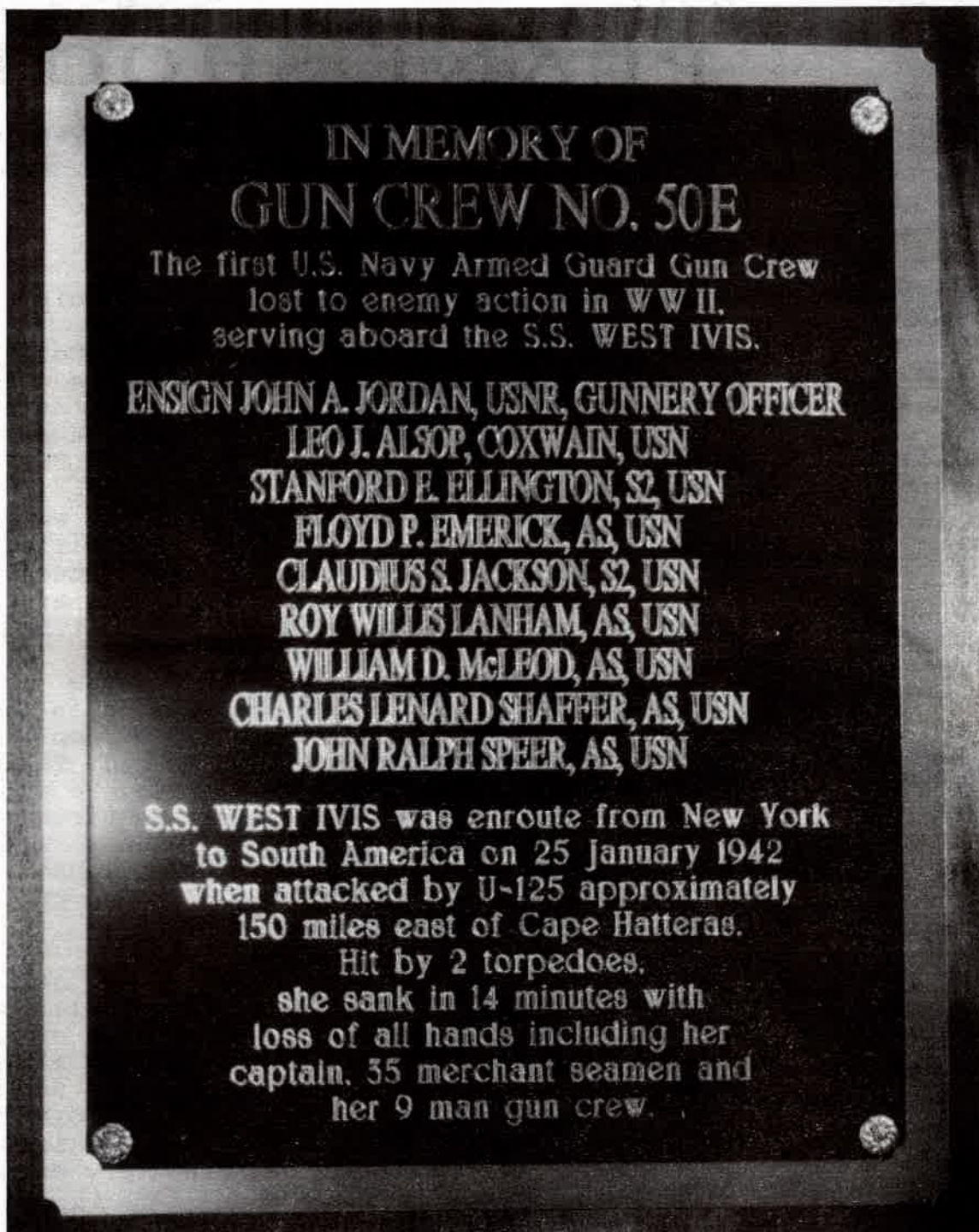


JULY-AUGUST, 1993

THE POINTER



This plaque was placed on board the S.S. John W. Brown 6/12/93 by the family of Roy Willis Lanham in remembrance and to honor all those killed in the sinking of the S.S. West Ivis.

THE POINTER

Officers for 1993

Charles A. Lloyd, Chairman & Secretary
5712 Partridge Lane
Raleigh, N.C. 27609
1-919-876-5537*

Rudy and Ellie Kozak
1994 Reunion Hosts
4950 Dory Drive
New Port Richey, FL 34652
1-813-842-2274

Lonnie D. Lloyd, Treasurer

Board of Directors

C. A. Lloyd	NC
L. D. Lloyd	NC
Don Gleason	KS
Joe Piccolini	CA
Walter Magalis	MD
Pete DeLa Cruz	IN
Ralph McNally	OK
Len Carlson	MN
Ray Didur	MI
Ralph Jacobs	IN
Robert Grossman	IL
Clarence Durham	VA
William Sache	MA
Jack Cross	PA
Francis Brummer	IA
Bob Ober	OH
J. F. Carter	LA
Robert Floyd	SC
Ken Niebuhr	WI
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Ed Kurlinkus	IL
Richard Kohse	WA
Jerry Groucher	NV
Elmer Vincent	LA

Chaplains

Lyle Kell	WA
Robert Aldrich	NV

ATTENTION

You know where you are.
You know where we are.
We know where we are
But we don't always know where you are.
Please notify us when you move.

Non-Profit Organization
Tax Exempt No. 74-2316668

Officers - Gunners - Signalmen - Radiomen - Medics - Waves - Boatswains - Coxswains - Ship's Company - Radarmen

* Remember, I can't move as fast as I did when I was in my twenties!
When you call, let the phone ring so I can get to it! cal

THE PLANE SHOOTER

Our Motto: "We aim- To Deliver" and "We-Did"

USN Armed Guard World War II Veterans

"PLAIN SHOOTING FOR PLANE SHOOTERS"

Dear Everyone:

July 4, 1993

Our "THANKS" go out to Wanda and Chet Colella, for their 2 years of dedication to make the Las Vegas reunion so successful. It takes a lot of planning to host a reunion and if things did not go to your likings, we are always looking for "VOLUNTEERS". I have enjoyed the cooperation from them. They came forward in 1990 and volunteered their services to host the "1993 Reunion" and they fulfilled their obligation well. They have again volunteered to be our hosts in '96 should we get a Hotel at the date and price acceptable in the City of St.Louis, Mo.

It was great to get together with those attending the 12th National Armed Guard Reunion in Las Vegas recently. We had approximately 1350 people for our dinner, the largest turnout we've had. The Clarion Hotel Ballroom can seat 1800 people. We will be on a FIRST PAY BASIS and the cutoff is March 10, 1994. Prices for Dinners, Breakfast, Tours will be in the next "POINTER". Plan for a "BUS TOUR" over to CAPE CANAVERAL on the Tuesday. I hope that we can can get a SPACE LAUNCH while there!!

We have booked 350 rooms and they will go fast!! I hope to get an additional 100, if at all possible. It does not cost anymore now than next spring. If we can fill up these rooms "early", we may be able to get more rooms. The room rates are \$60.00 plus tax. All prices will be in the next POINTER and I will keep you informed, A.S.A.P.. Vickie Hiatt is the sales person and she has been very cooperative in meeting our needs.

At our "business meeting", I explained the need to take a "BYE" on our "By-Laws", for the next three

In the Next Issue:
The story of the Bombay explosion!

years, whereby we could go back to a State we had previously held a reunion. It was passed overwhelmingly, after explaining it that we needed a Hotel with enough facilities to provide services to some 1200-2000, or more people. We had space aplenty in Las Vegas up to 5000 and with 9800 now on the mail out list, we would have been in lots of trouble if over 4000 plus the ladies had of signed up for the reunion. It is not our intent to shun any City, State or Area. Many Hotels are large enough, but \$100. is too much for most of our crew to pay.

WINNERS OF THE DRAWING IN LAS VEGAS:

01. JOHN WILSON 207 S. MORRIS ST., DOVER, N.J. 07801
02. JACK LONG 1701 N. INTER BLVD., WESTLACO, TX. 78596
03. HAROLD SCHIEWE BOX 223 ELLINWOOD, KANSAS. 67526
04. DAN SENESE 136 WYOMING AV. TORRINGTON, CT. 07790

I regret that I put "1994" as the date to place an Armed Guard Plaque on the USS INTREPID. It should have been 1993. Also, Rudy Kozak's Telephone Area Code should have been "813". (and I read it over dozens of times!!) I failed to put James Gailey's address with his wonderful article. It is: 271 Spur Rd., Greensboro, N.C. 27406 919-674-2121.

Many have asked-"Where did you get that beautiful name tag". Send \$3.25 (includes shipping) to:
BROOKLYN LANES (you can't beat the price)
% Bob Stubbs (nor the name tag)
11522 BROOKLYN RD.
BROOKLYN, MI. 49230

I would like to report that I won \$600.00 at Las Vegas. Of course it cost me \$800. to win it! And!! Yes!! At the dinner, I was served with a bowl of GRITS by a beautiful blonde, or was it a brunette? To tell you the truth, I never noticed her hair!!! Commander Robert Floyd (Ret) gave his service life routine, in and out of the "Scullery" to his guard duty watching a fence. We had our own Armed Guard Wave, "Mary Madrid Bauer", who gave us a report on how the WAVES got started and some of their duties at Treasure Island and elsewhere. Very interesting Mary, and THANKS!! Her husband, Cyril, was also an Armed Guard, entering the Navy in 1938. He served on 9 ships during WW II as a RM1/C.

Now back to our future NATIONAL REUNIONS! We hope that arrangements can be made to hold the 1995 Reunion in Long Beach, Ca. In 1996, we hope to be in St. Louis, Mo. and in 1997, we hope to get a hotel in Arlington, Va. or Philadelphia, Pa. Long Beach has the S.S. LANE Victory nearby at San Pedro. If we get enough to sign on early whereby it is feasible, we may get the S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien to sail down and join in and we can sail both ships out to Catalina Island. We were onboard May 15 and I wish all of you could have been onboard when the planes did a "RUN" on the ship. It was just spectacular!!

St. Louis, Mo. would be ideal site for 1996 and it would give us a central location of the U.S.A. We could take a riverboat cruise and visit the ARCH. We hope to get the S.S. John W. Brown to sail over to the city we choose for 1997. By the year 1998, 1999 and year of 2000, so many of us will be just a little older and if we played it by "EAR", most would not hear the music without hearing aids!!

Speaking of hearing aids!! It has been called to my attention that those hard of hearing be allowed to sit closer to the front of the room at the meeting so they can hear. Also, let the wheelchair people go through the CHOWLINE first, so they can get out of everyone's way. This could be applied to tours also and I think both should be taken into consideration and our hosts have been notified.

I would like to report to you that we can not sell our caps, pins, etc. at a profit. The prices that are on the ORDER FORM includes the actual cost of these items, postage, packets, etc. but "NO LABOR" or handling cost. If there is a few pennies left over, it is a donation to help cover "POINTER"s. I intend to stay within the law the best I can.

Those of you who hold MINI-REUNIONS, REGIONAL ONES or; whatever you call them, if you use the "ARMED GUARD TAX NUMBER", you must keep records and turn them in to the NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS so the total income and expenses can be added to and tallied to fill out the IRS Income Tax Forms which has to be filed by MAY 15th of EACH YEAR. This does not cost anyone anything to do this, BUT, it can cost the Association a large penalty and a loss of our Non-Profit mailing status. THIS IS THE IRS LAW. If I am in error, please show me the difference. I have sent a copy to most HOSTS. If I missed you, WRITE!

For those of you who visit the "S.S. LANE VICTORY", they have a BEST WESTERN HOTEL, 525 S. Harbour Blvd San Pedro, Ca. 90731 1-800-356-9609 nearby and is easy access to the ship. They give all Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen reduced rates, which includes a Continental Breakfast. There may be better ones that you may know about. This has been inserted as a "courtesy" to you who wanted to know. I hope to locate one lodging place near the other two ships so if you visit them, you can congregate.

Some of you may have written to the Bureau of Personnel in St Louis, Mo. and was told that you were not entitled to the "COMMEMORATIVE RUSSIAN MEDAL" awarded by the "RUSSIAN GOVERNMENT". I learned of this erroneous information being sent and wrote to the St. Louis Office and I corrected them and they checked out my information and found me correct. I do not know how many veterans this was told to and neither do they. Names were not recorded by them and they have no way of informing them so, I will give you instructions below.

IF you were aboard any ship carrying supplies to ports on the famous "MURMANSK RUN", which includes all the ports of Russia, you are entitled to the 40TH YEAR MEDAL. You are to show proof by sending a copy of your Separation Papers, a letter requesting your desire to receive it, giving the name of ship, it's cargo, date and port. (if known) . Send letter to:

YURI MENSNIKOV, ATTACHE/PUBLIC AFFAIRS
EMBASSY OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION
CONSULAR DIVISION
1825 PHELPS PLACE, N.W.
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036
1-202-347-4392

It may help to speed it up by putting ON THE FRONT LEFT BOTTOM OF ENVELOPE IN RED; ATT: NATHALIE

A RUSSIAN MEDAL PRESENTATION was held in Chicopee, Ma. May 2, 1993 hosted by Tom Dufresne and crew of the Western Ma. Chapter. Those receiving the medal were: Leonard Alix; John D'Amato; Roger Fournier; Arthur Frietas; Robert Fulton; George Hurley; B. Joseph Lak; Albert Le Beau; Joseph Malmborg and Albert Midgley. A medal was awarded posthumously to Max E. Biela GM3/C who was one of 7 Armed Guard KIA 4/30/44 on the S.S. William S. Thayer, sunk on it's way back from Murmansk along with 23 Merchant Seamen and 13 Russian Naval personnel passengers. Anthony Biela, brother of Max, received the medal.

The S.S. JOHN W. BROWN sails again, SEPT. 11, 1993. and the other ships sail again this year. The LANE VICTORY will sail October 2 and 3, 1993 to sail on their "50th Anniversary Commemorative Cruise". The S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN will sail Oct. 9, 1993. See the MAR/APR POINTER FOR ADDRESS to get all sailing dates. DON'T FORGET TO DONATE IF POSSIBLE.

THE MARINER's Museum, 100 Museum Dr. Newport News, Va. 23606 has asked that I inform you to not send money when sending for ship's photo. They will let you know if they have the picture, then the price.

All of you that have done so much to restore the 3 ships where all can go visit and even sail on, are to be commended for doing an outstanding job. It is crucial that there is funds are available when

needed to keep them afloat. The S.S. JOHN W. BROWN is in need NOW of donations to get her ready to go and take part in the NORMANDY-PLUS-50TH Invasion. BILL H.R. 58 was introduced Jan. 5, 1993 by Helen Bentley, Congresswoman from Maryland, whereby the monies, from older ships, being scrapped and sold, which are no longer of use can be used to maintain and support ships such these.

The BILL H.R.58 states: TO AUTHORIZE THE SECRETARY OF TRANSPORTATION TO CONVEY VESSELS IN THE NATIONAL DEFENSE RESERVE FLEET TO CERTAIN NONPROFIT ORGANIZATIONS.

Section 1. Short Title. This Act may be cited as: "MERCHANT MARINE MEMORIAL ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 1993" A letter or phone call to your STATE CONGRESSMAN, or; CONGRESSWOMAN is needed to show support NOW as it needs early passage to acquire the money to get these ships over for the NORMANDY REENACTMENT of the 50TH INVASION. This is not to celebrate, but a last chance to Honor those who took part and all of those who gave their lives that day and all the

days before and after. Just to think of having the ships like we sailed on, taking part of this Historical event is truly a dream come true.

"REUNION BOOK"

A reminder on the 1993 ARMED GUARD REUNION BOOK! For those of you who could not attend the Reunion in Las Vegas and could not get your picture taken, you can still get your picture, name and address in it by sending a "WALLET SIZE PHOTO" and \$12.50 to: REUNION MEMORIES, P.O. BOX 161939 Altamonte Springs, Fl. 32716-1939 before Sept.10, 1993. They will be delivered around "Thanksgiving". You can get your wife in, too, if in the same photo.

To all of you, we say, "Stay healthy and in touch". To those overseas on the mailing of the "POINTER" I regret that I can not answer all your wonderful letters but I do read them all. Maybe we will meet you in Portsmouth, England come May and June of 1994 and if visiting the States, try to make it during our Reunions. We will share our "GRITS" cal

In Memory of Our Departed Shipmates

Anderson	Clarence M.	Sun City	Ca	12/22/92
Bork	George F.	Toms River	NJ	93
Bragg	Seber	Brooks	WV	Virginia 6/9/93
Cameron	Art J.	Yacolt	Wa	Mary 93
Cook	Jermyn B.	Portland	Or	Allison 1976
Cronk	Charles	Blytheville	Ar	Lona 4/1/93
Davis	Howard Ray	Goochland	Va	* 3/26/93
Davish	John Mel	Hamilton	Oh	Beda 93
Dean	John A.	Port Huron	Mi	Marion 7/10/92
Decker	Louis W.	Cambridge	NY	6/92
Deputy	Harry D.	San Bernardino	Ca	Dorothy 12/13/92
Earle	Earl B.	Metairie	La	Francis 12/22/92
Frydlewitz	Walter J.	Point Austin	Mi	? ?
Gee	Oscar	Lobelville	Tn	9/11/92
Gerstein	James W.	Kansas City	Mo	3/92
Giles	Albert	Servierville	Tn	5/31/92
Goodlett	Gilbert O.	Corpus Christie	Tx	Ann 01/8/93
Greenway	William	Detroit	Mi	8/60
Hamm	Harold	Newton	NJ	Viva 3/3/93
Harris	Ben	Fair Oaks	Ca	4/30/93
Hodges	Murray H.	Olathe	Ks	Margaret 8/4/91
Holz	Edward C.	Winona	Mn	Regina 2/26/93
Kriletich**	Carl O.	Redwood City	Ca	Julia A. 5/20/93
Lee	Joe M.	Claremore	Ok	Pauline 93
Maconochie	John	Long Beach	Ca	*Doris 9/27/91
Malone	E. H.	Oklahoma City	Ok	? 93
McClelland	Sam	Jasper	Tx	91
Moran	Andrew F.	?	Oh	2/82
Morris	Raymond G.	Forestport	NY	Anna 5/29/93
Nice	George F.	Millersburg	Pa	Gladys 93
Norman	William M.	Fairfield	Oh	ANNA 3/5/93
Pledger	Lewis A.	Oklahoma City	Ok	Joan 93
Rossi	John	Norwich	Ct	3/24/93
Shannon	Andrew	N. Bergen	NJ	? ??/93
Shipman	Odell	Tulsa	Ok	5/6/93
Stindt	Fred A.	Kelsyville	Ca	93
Uth	Leon C.	W. Orange	NJ	Mary 5/93
Wilhelm	John F.	Holly Hill	Fl	Betty 6/2/93
Willis	Earl R.	Scottsdale	Az	* 92

IN MEMORY OF OUR SHIPMATE'S MATE.

Pietrala, Margaret M. Lehigh Acres Fl Jerome R. 3/11/93

** Kriletich was Regional VP of the GOLDEN GATE CHAPTER of the Merchant Marines whom I had a lot of correspondence with.

More Books That Are Great AG/MM Reading

"AMERICAN BIOGRAPHY"

A documentary by Herbert P. Hahn. Publisher: American MM Museum Foundation, Brigantine Books, 1672 Sumac Place, Corona, CA 91720-2979.

303 pages, 65 photos. Price: \$26.95. It's about the S.S. American Mariner during WW II and its life afterwards.

"GUNNER'S MATE"

Author: Bob Galati (Armed Guard from Tucson, AZ). Publisher: Innovatia Press, Inc., 1425 Maryland Dr., Irving, TX 75061-5723. Price: \$ \$9.95.

It gives his Armed Guard life on the S.S. Frederick H. Newell 43/44; S.S. Latta, 44/45; S.S. Madaket 3/45-7/45; and S.S. Samuel Gorton 8/45-3/46.

"GALLANT SHIP - S.S. STEPHEN HOPKINS"

Written by Raymond Witt. Price: \$10.00. Can be purchased through the S.S. John W. Brown Shipstores, P.O. Box 25846, Highland Town Sta., Baltimore MD 21224, 410-558-0646. (Notice Baltimore Tel. Area Code change.)

REGIONAL AND MINI REUNIONS, GET-TOGETHERS, ETC.

Please let me know of any errors so it can be corrected in next "Pointer."

ARMED GUARD, their Ladies and Guests are WELCOMED to attend any MEETINGS below. Write or call them to get information. I do appreciate other VETERAN ASSOCIATIONS for placing our ARMED GUARD NOTICES in their papers, Mags, etc. NOTIFY THE HOSTS, if possible, prior to attending a meeting.

Wyoming Armed Guard Contact: Bob Gerard 1604 Sheridan, Laramie, Wy. 82070 307-745-3532 for his next meeting in July at the Cheyenne "get-to-gether".

The 50th Anniversary of "NORMANDY INVASION" is in the planning stage. ONLY A FEW of the ARMED GUARD crew who has worked on these ships and just enough Merchant Seamen will be onboard going to ENGLAND and no paying personnel will be allowed. All three ships will be TAKING PART IN THE 50TH ANNIVERSARY EXERCISES with other ships and will carry cargo as near as possible to those of WW II.

Lansing, Mich. Area holds a FIRST WEDNESDAY--EVERY 2 MOS. at THE GOLDEN GATE RESTAURANT at 6435 South CEDAR, Lansing, Mi. (Exit onto 104 from I-96) Hosts: Carl Mescher 508 Wayland, E. Lansing, Mich. 48823 517-332-1027; or, Martin Vallee 1412 Brookwood, Flint, Mi. 48503 313-238-3392 AND AL WILBUR, 520 WOOD ST. EATON RAPIDS, MI. 48827 517-663-5301. They will also be the Hosts for the (OH-MI-IND-KY) fall Mini-Reunion to be held in FRANKENMUTH, MI. Sept. 13-16, 1993. Please contact Vallee for more info.

Illinois-Wisconsin Hosts for 1993 are: George and Lorraine Koehl R-1 Box 335 Darien, WI. 53114 Tel-414-724-5504 and the Regional Reunion will be held OCTOBER 8-10, 1993 AT THE "DELANVAN HOUSE" Delavan, WI. Virgil Meeks of Milwaukee will assist.

Ray Didur P.O.Box 282, Cement City, Mi. 49233 517-592-6941 will combine his "own" 4 Destroyers along with his Annual Armed Guard Michigan Reunion Sept. 11, 1993 to be held at the "SUPER-8-MOTEL", 2001 Shirley Dr., Jackson, Mi., 49202. 517-788-8780.

WA-OR-ID-AK will hold their next MINI-REUNION Sept EMBER 7-9, 1993 at the GITCHIE GUMBEE MOTEL, Ocean Shores, Wa.. Billie and Dick Kohse 2304 Lister Rd. N.E., Olympia, Wa. 98506 206-456-1946.

The "GALLUP'S ISLAND RADIO ASSOCIATION" P.O. Box 28085 Minneapolis, Mn. 55428 will hold their National Reunion 9/16-19/93 in New Orleans, La.

PLEASE READ CAREFULLY HOW TO ORDER ARMED GUARD JACKETS

*** **

NOTICE!! You can order an "ARMED GUARD JACKET" by sending DIRECT TO: "RICHARD and BILLIE KOHSE" 2304 LISTER RD. OLYMPIA, WA. 98505 (206) 456-1946 a \$30.00 CHECK; or; MONEY ORDER (includes Postage) GIVING: SIZES: SMALL-MED-LARGE--X-LARGE. It has the "ARMED GUARD EAGLE" on the back. For the "NEW OL'SALTS", the EAGLE was adopted at our 1985 NATIONAL REUNION at NORFOLK, VA. as our INSIGNIA.

For an "ORDER BLANK" that the ARMED GUARD have to offer, send me a S.A.S.E and I'll send you one. The bumper stickers and decals will be sent "FREE" with the Order Form. DO BE CAREFUL WHO TRY TO SELL YOU THEIR WARES. "DO NOT" use the ARMED GUARD LIST to "sell your wares" or; those of others. We have caps, lapel pins, pens, patches, belt buckles and books for sale and it is "strictly" our cost plus donation to the U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS. If you don't like them, send them back!!

The Rhode Island Chapter of the ARMED GUARD VETERANS are growing! Join in for a LUNCHEON MEETING on the 1st Wed. of each month at NOON at BICKFORDS in Warwick.R.I. They have erected an ARMED GUARD MONUMENT at the "Rhode Island Veterans Cemetery" and

will be placing a TIME CAPSULE there July 7, 1993 to be opened in the year of 2045. This will be the "100th Anniversary" of the ending of WW II. GERRY Greaves 143 E. Killingly Road, Foster, R.I. 02825 401-647-2212 headed up the commemorative affair.

TEXAS MINI-REUNION will be held at the Ramada Inn 410 NE and Nacogdoches St., San Antonio, Tx. 78258 210-828-9031. Hosts are: Dam Mock 8810 Silent Oaks, San Antonio, Tx. 78258 210-681-2120 and John Shirley 5605 Berkman Dr., Austin, Tx. 78723.

PLEASE NOTICE CHANGE FROM LAST POINTER:

Ks-Mo-Ok-Ne-Ar REGIONAL REUNION will be held Sept. 24-25, 1993 at the DISABLED VETERANS CLUB, CHAPTER 2, 8787 OLD SANTA FE RD., KANSAS CITY, MO. 64138. CONTACT: Ed Hollenbeck, 8704 Bannister Ter. Kansas City, Mo. 64134-1844 816-761-7448. They also meet at 11 AM til 1 PM for a LUNCHEON, every 2ND MONDAY at the Ramada Inn, 87th St., Kansas City, Mo. Contact Hollenbeck for info.

Oklahoma should contact RALPH McNALLY P.O. Box 423 Skiatook, Okla. (918) 396-2693 on their meetings at Perry's Cafe HWY 169-76th St. N. Owasso, Ok. They have a great time getting together.

UPPER PA. CREW meets at "PLATZ'S RESTAURANT", 101 Harrit Rd. Leighton Pa. 18235 215-377-1819. Host Clint Barr, 2340 Third St., Easton, Pa. 18042 215-258-3056 welcomes you to a great time.

LITTLE FERRY, N.J. AREA meets on the 1ST TUESDAY of each MONTH 11:30 AM luncheon at TRACEY'S RESTAURANT #4 Bergen Pike Little Ferry NJ 07643. Host William Weber, 460 Liberty St. A-101 Little Ferry, NJ 07643 (201) 641-1191 invites you to attend.

Pittsburgh, Pa. crew meets on the "3rd Sat." for a NOON LUNCHEON at the GREENTREE MARRIOTT. CONTACT: Hilary Makowski, 202 Wedgewood Crt., Carnegie, Pa. 15106 (412)-429-8510. NOTICE!! They will hold a picnic on SUNDAY JULY 18, 1993 at the CLOVERLEAF ESTATES WEST. (Y'all know where that is?)

CHICOPEE-LUDLOW, Ma. Tom and Priscilla Dufresne, 289 Munsing St. Ludlow, Ma. 01056 (413)-583-8580 hosts a "2ND SUNDAY" 9 A.M. BREAKFAST at the MOOSE LODGE #1849 244 FULLER RD., CHICOPEE, MA. and is assisted by Roger Fournier, Springfield, Ma. 413-782-9256; Sam Pitittieri, 413-592-1854 and Louis Carr 413-783-5904.

Albany, N.Y. AREA HOSTS, Henry and Joyce Carrangi, 11 BULLARD Av. QUEENSBURY, N.Y. 12804 518-793-0326 and crew meets at 12 NOON "4TH" SAT. of each month at the Marriott Hotel, 189 Wolf Rd. Albany, N.Y. PLEASE NOTICE THE change to the 4TH SATURDAY.

THE "NORTHEAST FALL REGIONAL REUNION" will be held OCT.16-19,1993 at the OMNI HOTEL, "TEN EYCK PLAZA" State and Lodge St., Albany, N.Y. 12207. Contact: Henry and Joyce Carrangi (ADDRESS IS IN THE PARAGRAPH ABOVE), for prices, etc. ALL ARMED GUARD ARE WELCOMED!! I'm carrying them some "GRITS"!!

Jeff and Mabel Haselden, 120 Richardson Blvd. Lug-off, S.C. 29078 (803) 438-1491 can advise when and where of S.C. meetings.

Richmond, Va. Crew meets at 1 PM for a "LUNCHEON" at MORRISON'S Cafe 7035 W. Broad St. Richmond, Va. on the "2ND SAT. Hosts Clarence and Helen Durham, 4813 Lowells Rd. Richmond, Va. 23224 804-233-6023.

In NORFOLK, Va. Contact: Ralph Womeldorf 1400 Garwood Ave., Virginia Beach, Va. 23455 804-464-1130 for Luncheon at the C & M Cafeteria, Va. Bea. Blvd

George Milk 449 St. James St. Port Charlotte 33952
813 627-6759 area meets at the Golden Corral-PUNTA
GORDA, FL. on the 3rd Tues. at 1:30 P.M. When vac-
ationing, join in with these Florida Crews.

Rudy and Ellie Kozak 4950 Dory Dr. New Port Richey
FL. 34652 (813)-842-2274 "will not" hold another
meeting until Nov.6. in that area. (Notice their
Telephone number change which is the A.G. No.)

Springhill, Florida area (and others) can contact
William T.Young 4206 Parkhurst La. Springhill, FL.
34608 904-683-9333. They "will not" hold another
breakfast until the 3RD Saturday of Sept.

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL. area meets on a "LAST FRIDAY"
IN THE MONTH" at JOHNNY'S CORNER FAMILY RESTAURANT
7180 U.S. #1 PORT ST. LUCIE 34952 407-878-2686 by
HOST KEN CLASEN, 552 S.W.Badger Ter. Port St.Lucie
FL. 34953-2909 407-879-7151.

Arizona Crew Host John Noyes, 4651 East 17th St.
Tucson, Az. 85711 (602) 790-4229 holds a 4th Sat.
of each Month, 11 A.M. meeting, at the Mountain
View Restuarant 1220 East Prince Rd., while Carlo
Traficano 108 N.Greenfield Rd. Apt-2117 Mesa, Az.
85205 602-396-6223 hosts a "1ST" Sat. of the Month
meeting at SHONEY Restuarant 1740 East Main St. in
Mesa at 10 A.M..

"PLEASE NOTICE!!! JUST IN TIME FOR THE POINTER!"
JOHN NOYES and CARLO TRAFICANO, (ABOVE) WILL HOST
THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD ARIZONA MINI" TO BE HELD IN
"BULLHEAD CITY, AZ." ON SEPT. 21-23, 1993. ALL THE
CREW AND LADIES ARE WELCOMED.

A MINI-REUNION of the following States: Wa.; Or.;
Ca.; Az.; Nv.; Ut.; Co. and NM, will be held Oct.
20-22, 1993 at the "Silver Club Hotel Casino", in
Sparks, Nv. and the host will be Carl and Thelma
Winder, 1734 Pilgrim Ave., Mtn. View, Ca. 94040
415-967-6493. Contact them for more information as
to time and events. If you receive this "POINTER"
in time, a "MEMORIAL SERVICE" will be held at the
NAVAL WEAPONS STATION, Concord, Ca. July 17, 1993
to HONOR all of the Armed Guard; Merchant Seamen;
Regular Navy; Army and Civilians, who were killed
that dreadful day when the S.S. E.A. BRYAN and the
S.S. QUINAULT VICTORY exploded and killed 320 and
390 more injured. All the crew, except those 11
men who had gone ashore on "Liberty" were killed.

LST CREW CONTACT: LST ASSOCIATION, Mike and Linda
Gunjak, P.O.Box 167438, Oregon, Ohio. 43616-7438
1-800-228-5870 for their "NATIONAL LST REUNION" to
be held in ORLANDO, Fla. at the CLARION PLAZA HOT-
EL SEPT.1-6, 1993. They have a great LST NEWSPAPER
with plenty of information on the LSTs service.

Destroyer Escort Assc (DESA) has a wonderful paper
called THE DESA NEWS and is published bi-monthly.
CONTACT: DON GLASER, DESA NEWS, P.O.Box 680085 Or-
lando, FL. 32868 (407)-877-7671. They will hold
their National Reunion in Nashville, Tn. 9/6-10/93

PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF M.M. VETERANS ARE IN SEARCH
OF THEIR AREA CREW and should contact James Colam-
arino 2904 168th SE, Bellevue Wa. 98008 (206) 746-
6984. Armed Guard are welcomed to attend.

Ralph Taylor, 426 Littlefield Dr. Lone Oak, Texas
75453 903-447-3180 is tryng to locate all Merchant
Marine crews in the area. Armed Guard, too!!

U.S.N. CRUISER SAILORS ASSC. are in search for all
"CRUISER" men of "WW II" and "KOREAN WAR". CONTACT
R.J. MACLEJOWSKI 55 Donna Ter., Taunton, Ma. 02780

S.S.JEREMIAH O'BRIEN ACTIVITIES! Check with "MARCI
HOOPER" Sales Rep., Fort Mason Center, Bldg-A, San
Francisco, Ca. 94123 for the "O'BRIEN" on sailing
date cruise tickets. DON'T MISS SAILING HER IF IN
THE AREA!! They will sail again OCTOBER 9, 1993.

The "DUKW"s Host Art Wells 1629 Sunset Ave. Chico,
Ca. 95926 916-342-1452 will announce their 1994
Reunion soon. He'd like your comments on the DUKW
book if you purchased it.

WE still hold our 1ST SAT. OF THE MONTH BREAKFAST
at "GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT", 1604 North Market Dr.,
Raleigh, N.C. off 4500 Blk of OLD WAKE FOREST RD.
behind RED LOBSTER in the NORTH MARKET WAY PLAZA".
Take 440 BY-PASS NORTH and get off at #10 Exit and
head North. If you come into Raleigh to stay over-
night, get a room on the "North Side" and you will
be close by, and then give me a call 876-5537 (AG)
or 872-7115-Res. if in town. Y'ALL COME ON!

Contact: Joe Piccolini 9724 Paseo De ORO, Cypress,
Ca. 90630 213-598-8326; Charles Savonna 8777 Coral
Springs Crt G-9 Huntington Beach, Ca. 92646 714-
960-6925; or, Thom Hendrickson 1531 S. Pomona-Apt-
A-30 Fullerton, Ca. 92632, (714) 870-5648, about
the Lane (V). They can use you on the guns.
The guns looked great!!

Contact: WALT MAGALIS, 5010 Leeds Ave., Baltimore,
Md. 21227 410-242-4375 about the S.S.JOHN W.BROWN.
Walt has been gracious in assisting those who have
needed help in finding the BROWN as she moves once
in a while. Keep up the good work, Walt.

Carl Kreidler, 15852 Via Eduardo St. San Lorenzo,
Ca. 94580 510-351-1954 "hard work" on the guns is
paying off as he, and others, are getting the "GUN
SIGHTS" repaired on the S.S.JEREMIAH O'BRIEN. They
are ready to show them off in England come 6/6/94.
Keep up the great job that you are doing.

Dear Mr. LLoyd

May 1993

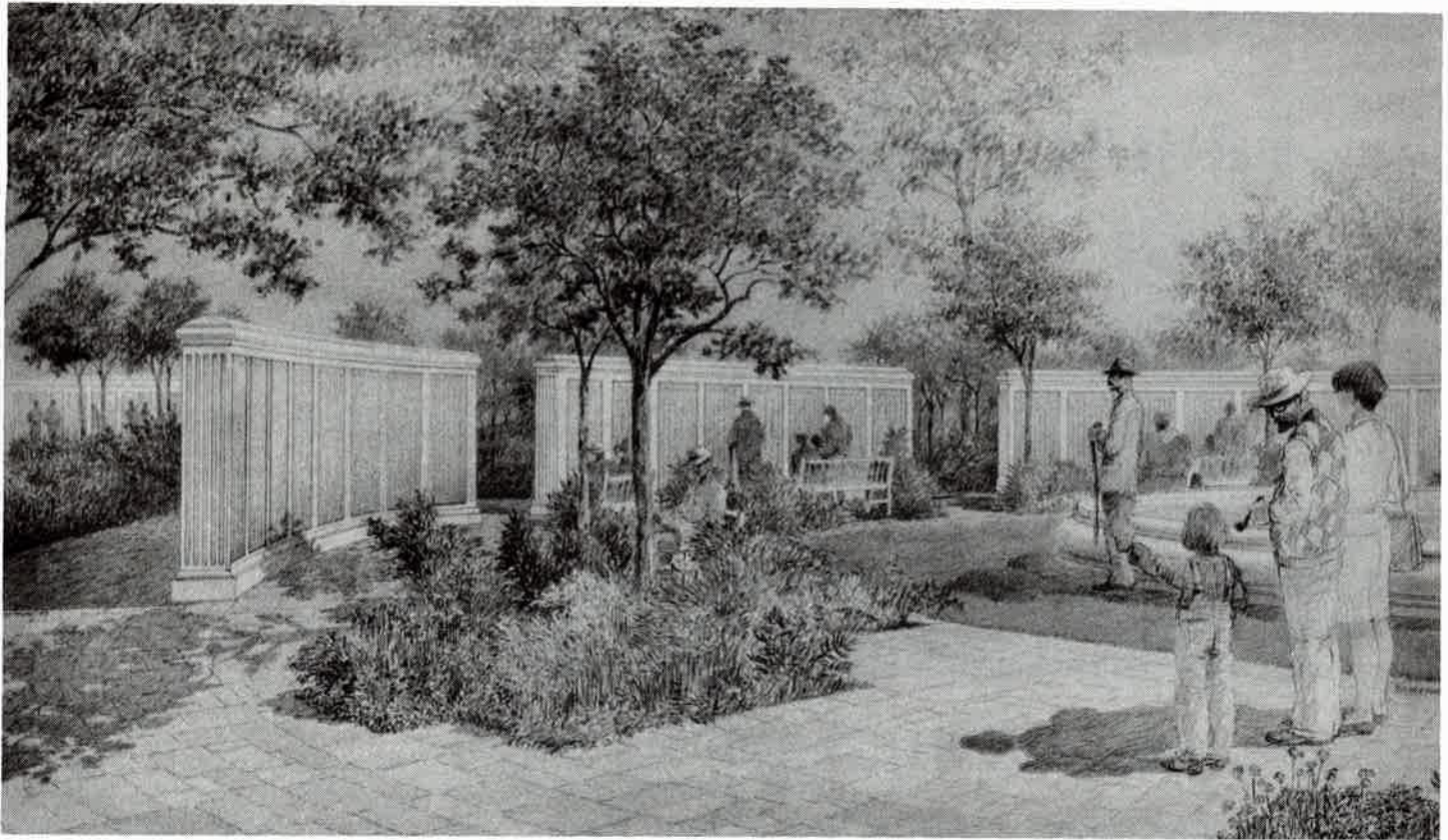
I am not sure what to write, but here goes anyway.
My husband, Harvey H. Huss 629 28 76 is one of the
U.S.Navy Armed Guard you are looking for. He joined
the Navy in Oct.1942 and trained at Great Lakes
Naval Training Center out of Chicago, Illinois. He
received his discharge on Long Island, N.Y., 9/45.

He served in the Atlantic hauling mostly munitions
but he doesn't know any of the names of his ships
he was on. They were not supposed to know or tell
anyone. He would like to know if there are any
records of the names of the ships he served on
during his time in the Navy.

Harvey will be 79 years old Aug. 23, 1993. He was
28 when he enlisted. We had 2 children at the time
and the kids and I had a pretty rough time after he
joined up, BUT WE MADE IT! I even did my share.
I went to work for a contractor building asphalt
runways at airfields, as a DUMP TRUCK DRIVER!! The
only names of his shipmates are Lionel Radley who
lived in Cadiz, Ky. in 1954 and Claude Archer
223 Stratford Dr., Richmond, Ky. 40475. We still
hear from them at Christmas Time.

We lived in California from 1945 til 1989 and if
we still lived there we would have gone to the re-
union in Las Vegas but we moved to Ohio to be near
our daughter. Our health is such that we can not
make long trips across country at this time. I do
hope you have a good turnout. Can you get Harvey's
name put in your computer so he can locate some of
his shipmates, to contact? Melba Huss, wife of:
Harvey Huss 9121 Bulaville Pike, Bidwell, Oh. 45614
614-367-7423

I receive many letters like this and thought you
may want to know this is how 2 were located and I
called to get permission to reprint her letter
and was told that they would be sending another
name as one of Harvey's old shipmates from Wichita
was coming to visit them next week. Y'all find 'em
and send them in and I'll see they get informed!!
* * * *



WALL OF LIBERTY

Chairman: Pierre Salinger

- WHAT:** The Wall of Liberty is a testament to mankind's shared responsibility for freedom. It represents the spirit of the American people who were prepared to fight for that freedom. The Wall of Liberty is the first monument in the world to honor **all Americans** who served in the European Theater of Operations (ETO) during World War II, including those veterans who are still living and those who have passed on.
- WHERE:** The Wall will be built in Caen, the capitol of Normandy, near the beaches where American armed forces first landed on D-Day, June 6, 1944, in the largest amphibious assault operation in history. The Wall of Liberty will be adjacent to Le Memorial, the world's largest World War II museum. The Wall of Liberty will be dedicated in June 1994 during the 50th anniversary commemoration ceremonies.
- WHO:** The Battle of Normandy Foundation is leading The Wall of Liberty campaign to record the names of the five million American ETO veterans from all branches of the armed services and from all ranks, private to general.
- HOW:** Veterans can register for The Wall of Liberty by calling **1-800-WW2-VETS**. Relatives or friends of veterans, as well as citizens who want to say "thank you" can also help to build this historic roll call of freedom's defenders. Funds for The Wall of Liberty will be raised by charging a minimal fee of \$40 for each World War II ETO veteran registered.
- The Foundation aspires to place the names of all American ETO veterans on the Wall. Corporate underwriting and individual donations above and beyond the \$40 registration fee will help carve a permanent place for those veterans or their families who are unable to afford the fee.
- INFORMATION:** To register and honor a relative or a buddy who shared the sacrifice and triumph of World War II military service in the European Theater of Operations, call **1-800-WW2-VETS** or write The Battle of Normandy Foundation, 1730 Rhode Island Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20036.

CONTACT: Beverly Siegel 202-728-0672

Family Reunion Off Okinawa

By Dan B. McCarthy

Easter Sunday, 1945, was the beginning of the bloody Okinawa campaign, and for the four Koole brothers from Kalamazoo, it was the occasion for them to get together in one of those rare wartime coincidences.

Spring of 1944, with the invasion of Okinawa a year off, a civic ceremony occurred in the city of Kalamazoo, Mich.

A fitting, memorable tribute it was in the lives of the military family of Gerald and Rena Koole. Five of the sons were serving overseas, three in the Navy, two in the Army.

One son, Joe John Koole, now living in Prescott Valley, Ariz., picks up on the story:

"With five of us in uniform, the mayor of Kalamazoo then, Louis W. Sutherland, presented our mother a plaque during a city hall ceremony honoring our parents, both of them now deceased. (My father had served in the 27th Infantry from 1907 to 1910 at Ft. Sheridan, Ill.) For the rest of the war, a flag hung in a window of our home representing the five brothers," Koole recalled.

In that Okinawa assault, four Koole brothers — Navy men Gerald, Jr., William and Joe, and Peter with the Army Signal Corps — were in combat at the doorstep of Japan's mainland. Okinawa was the last great amphibious campaign in WWII.

"Brother Tom, though, was in Army Signal Corps action in Europe," Joe said.

During Easter Week, 1945, four Kooles had a joyous reunion aboard a Navy ship off Okinawa, their COs

making the brotherly gathering possible. It was the first time they had been together since Feb. 1, 1942, when Peter enlisted and went overseas with the Signal Corps.

Joe Koole continued: "Tom had

The brothers had only about 20 minutes to visit before they had to board the small boat returning to the Auburn.

enlisted in the Army in September, 1939. He retired from service in 1962, after combat in Germany and Korea, and later transferring to the Air Force. Tom has two Bronze Stars, an Air Medal and a Commendation Medal.

"I went to sea as an armed guard aboard the MS Sea Serpent in the Atlantic Fleet; later I was on the SS William Pepperell. In 1944, I was assigned to the USS Auburn prior to her commissioning at Hoboken, N.J."

He was a gunners mate 2/c in the South Pacific when the Auburn (AGC 10) was the command ship, lying off Orange Beach 2, during the 5th Amphibious assault on Okinawa

with Rear Adm. Harry W. Hill commanding.

"During the assault the USS Louisville, my brother Bill's ship, was badly damaged in the superstructure by a kamikaze pilot's suicide attack. Aboard the Auburn a shipmate said to me, 'Hey, Joe, there's the Louisville over there!' I replied: 'the Lady Lou's got two stacks! His reply was: 'She got only one now!'

"And sure enough! When I met Bill later, he said that a kamikaze got 'em. The day after the Louisville was hit I asked the signal officer to send a message to the cruiser to see if he was all right. Our brother, Jerry, had sent a similar message from his battleship, the Idaho, also in the Okinawa attack.

"The good news came back to us. Bill was okay," recalled Joe enthusiastically, 41 years after the good news was received.

Okinawa combat had lessened on the island and aboard support ships when Joe Koole said he "got the feeling that my brother, Pete, was with his outfit on the island. I got another message sent off to his unit, telling him what ship number I was on."

"About a week later," Joe continued, "Peter came aboard the Auburn with one of his buddies. What a great surprise that was to me! Permission was granted later by my

exec officer for Pete and me to go aboard one of the small boats shoving off soon for the Idaho, where we could visit with Jerry."

Gerald Koole continues the account:

"That day my brothers came aboard, I was working around the aft deck and heard the public address blaring, 'Seaman Gerald Koole, report to the quarterdeck.' Well, when they call a seaman to the quarterdeck, the guy usually is in trouble. While I was pretending I didn't hear the PA message, I was busy wondering about what sort of a jam I was in. Then, the call came again, and they added: 'You have visitors.' I went up to the quarterdeck wondering who'd come aboard to visit me.

"What a funny but great feeling came over me when I saw Joe. After a handshake there was a big, brotherly bearhug! And Joe said: 'Do you know that fella over there?' I looked toward the 14-inch gun turret and there sat Pete with a mile-wide grin!" Jerry said.

The brothers had only about 20 minutes to visit before they had to board the small boat returning to the Auburn.

"Because of extensive kamikaze damage to the Louisville," Joe Koole said, "Bill couldn't leave his ship. However, about a week later Bill did come aboard the Auburn, and I passed along all the news about Jerry and Tom.

"And there was some talk about the tragic death several weeks earlier of Ernie Pyle. Everybody out there felt so bad about Ernie Pyle."

(Ernie Pyle, war correspondent and WWII author of books covering the battle zones, was with the 77th Infantry Division on Ie Shima, April 18, 1945, when a Japanese sniper's bullet ended his illustrious career.)

The Koole brothers' reunion was filed away among fond memories when another thrill occurred for Joe aboard the Auburn.



Aboard the battleship, USS Idaho, SM1/c Gerald J. Koole greets brothers Peter ('center') and Joe (John E.) on the right, during their first reunion in three years. Their 20-minute visit was during Easter week of 1945.

"Several of us were just sitting around off duty on the aft-deck when I spotted an officer of admiral rank approaching alone. I called 'tensh-hut!' and we all sprang to our feet. He returned our salutes and told us to sit at ease. I said: 'Your face looks familiar, sir. May I ask who you are?'"

"And he replied: 'Richard E. Byrd.' We talked briefly about the invasion and our part in the action, and Adm. Byrd left us there, pretty excited about meeting him," Joe Koole said. (Adm. Byrd was a Navy pilot and Antarctica explorer in 1930 and later. He established several bases for scientific research in a region known as Little America.)

Also aboard the Auburn during the early assault at Iwo Jima, says Joe Koole, was a former Secretary of the Navy and later the first Secretary of Defense, James V. Forrestal, but few personnel got to see him during his brief visit.

In January, 1946, when all five brothers gathered in the family home along East Butler Court, a Kalamazoo Gazette photographer arrived to find them in civilian clothes again, their first get-together in five years when the whole family was present.

"I recall Jerry and Bill got into some brotherly debate about the merits and combat of their ships.

Jerry boosted the Idaho and battle-wagon action. Bill reminded him of the three kamikaze strikes against the Lady Lou. I think they were both heading for a draw when I cut in to brag that each served aboard fine fighting ships, but I added: 'My ship had a lot of famous personnel aboard.' And that ended the arguments.

"The whole family counted our blessings during the reunion. Four of us were already in service when the five Sullivan brothers went down with the USS Juneau in battle off Guadalcanal," Joe Koole said.

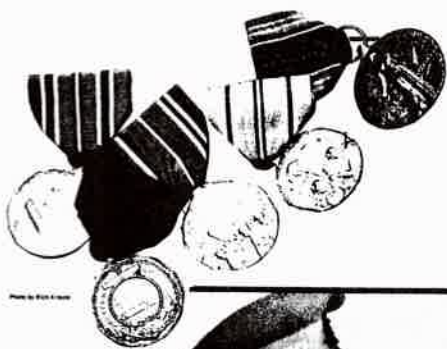
(The Sullivans, George T., 29; Francis H. 26; Joseph E. 23; Madison A., 22; and Albert L. 20, were the sons of Mr. and Mrs. Thomas P. Sullivan, Waterloo, Iowa. The Sullivans enlisted Jan. 3, 1942, with the proviso that they not be separated. Some 700 seamen were lost aboard the Juneau. A destroyer was launched in April, 1943, and christened the Sullivans.)

"Every Easter season," Joe Koole said, "holds special memories for my brothers and me. Peter died in 1980 and Bill in January. We're from a close-knit family. Our parents raised nine children, eight sons and a daughter."

Since 1943, Joe Koole said, he has been a continuous member of VFW Post 1527 in Kalamazoo. ■

Victory at sea

By WILLIAM GORDON



The Star-Ledger

THURSDAY, MAY 27, 1993



Some of the medals, at top, awarded to U.S. Naval Guard Jim Kerrigan of Bogota. Above, a wartime portrait of a young Alex Lombardi of Montclair, now chairman of the Northeastern Chapter of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard



Photo by Bob Ono

George Goldman of Teaneck, above, reflects back to his days in the Merchant Marine during WWII.

When Jim Kerrigan's thoughts go back to his time at sea in the war—some stark images arise.

One is of his ship's newly-tattooed young junior engineer lying dead in a pool of gasoline. Another is of four puppies roasted to death in crew lockers where they were stowed to keep them out of harm's way.

"We had picked the pups in Liverpool and were going to take them back to the states and make American citizens out of them," said Kerrigan, a 69-year-old Bogota resident, and U.S. Navy Armed Guard veteran of World War II.

George Goldman served in the Merchant Marine on board a tanker carrying gasoline and diesel oil when it was raked by a U-boat's machineguns and sunk by its deck guns in the mid-Atlantic. The attack killed the tanker's captain, 14 of the crew, and four of the Navy Armed Guard as they scrambled for their guns.

Goldman, 71, of Teaneck, recalls being in a lifeboat with about 20 shocked and injured survivors. In rising winds and seas, they were unable to maneuver the craft to locate missing shipmates who could be heard blowing whistles attached to their life vests.

"It's been 50 years and I can still hear the sound of those whistles blowing," he said.

When torpedoes from a German submarine sank Frank Priore's Liberty Ship in the wintry North Atlantic, the Navy Guard gunner watched from one of three lifeboats as the U-Boat surfaced and her commander conversed with the American skipper.

Priore, 71, a native of Newark now residing in Parsippany, recalls that the U-Boat passed cigarettes to the survivors and gave their captain sailing directions to Iceland. It then submerged, leaving the boats to their fate in a brewing storm.

Surviving veterans of the U.S. Merchant Marine, and the U.S. Navy Armed Guard, who served as gunners, radio and signalmen, and medics on the merchant vessels during World War II, have special reason this week to bring memory to bear on their often cruel—and little known—experiences at sea.

Fleet Week 1993 in New York/New Jersey Harbor is commemorating the turning point in "The Battle of the Atlantic," which occurred 50 years ago yesterday when the German U-Boat Command withdrew its wolfpacks from the North Atlantic after devastating losses.

The battle lasted throughout the war. When it was over, the allies had lost 2,840 merchant vessels, and 175 warships assigned to escort the convoys, most of them sunk by U-Boats. The loss in lives numbered 45,000, more than 15,000 of them civilian merchant seamen, Navy Armed Guard, and servicemen on Navy escort vessels.

The passage of half a century has not dimmed Frank Priore's memory of his first ship and its sinking in the Arctic Ocean north of Norway by torpedoes from a German U-Boat on Nov. 4, 1942.

"How could you forget such a terrifying thing," said Priore, a retired ironworker, and a native of Newark, who was a Navy Guard manning a bow gun on the S.S. William Clark, a Liberty ship on a run to the Soviet port of Murmansk.

Priore, a 20-year-old Seaman 2nd/class, had sailed from Brooklyn to Iceland aboard the Clark. It was one of the first Liberty ships built, and she was on her maiden voyage in the North Atlantic, with six twin-engine bombers and two locomotives lashed on deck, and tons of ammunitions in her holds.

"We were supposed to be formed into a traditional convoy off Iceland, but because earlier convoys were so badly shot up, they decided to let us go one at a time, half-a-day apart," said Priore. In the experimental solo "convoy" were 13 ships—five American, five British, and three Soviet, all strung out over the ocean, out of sight of one another, with a German observation plane tracking their every move for lurking U-Boats.

"It was a Fokker 88," recalled Priore. "You could see it hovering on the horizon. 'We all had the feeling that eventually we were going to catch it."

"Just before noon a torpedo hit us on the port side, just beneath the mess. Everything went dark, and the ship was dead in the water."

On deck, he found that his assigned lifeboat, Nr. 4, had been blown to pieces. He climbed into one of the three that were undamaged.

"When we had gotten away, another torpedo hit the Clark. The explosion sent deck gear raining down around us. The ship went down in a V-shape. You could hear the more buoyant bombers secured to the deck fighting and straining not to go down with her.

On the now silent sea, the U-Boat surfaced and its commander questioned the Clark's captain, who was in motorized lifeboat Nr. 1. The German officer had cigarettes passed to the survivors, gave the captain a general course to Iceland, and submerged.

"Our three lifeboats tried to stay together, but it got dark, and a helluva storm came up—it was full force—and blew for two days."

After days at sea, two lifeboats—including Priore's—were picked up by British fishing vessels. The captain's motorized lifeboat was lost.

Of the Clark's 80-man crew, half were lost. Only five of the 13 ships that had set out from Iceland for Murmansk survived.

Jim Kerrigan's first ship was the "S.S. Gateway City," an old Hog Islander, so called because it was built during World War I at the Hog Island shipyards on the Delaware River south of Philadelphia.

"It was a real old son-of-a-gun, a smoker, always pouring black smoke out of her stack," recalled Kerrigan, 69, of Bogota. "Yet they let her go anyway, in a convoy out of New York, packed with thousands of cases of dynamite, 500-pound bombs and up, and drums of high-octane aviation gasoline."

Kerrigan, a Navy Guard gunner, said his picturesque ship was ordered out of the convoy several times because her smoking was endangering the other vessels.

"They kept kicking us out, like we were a jinx," he said. "Once, for six hours we were dead still in the water, a perfect target for torpedoing, while the engine room crew worked to stop the smoking."

On another ship, the tanker Pan Massachusetts, an explosion of unknown origin set Kerrigan's ship afire in port at Avonmouth, England, killing three merchant seamen. One of



Frank Priore of Parsippany wearing Armed Guard cap

Photo By Warren Westura



Merchant Marine veteran Thomas Fraley of Port Monmouth

Photo By Jeff Huntley

them was a young junior engineer who had just gotten a tattoo.

"He was so proud of that tattoo," recalled Kerrigan. "He was playing cards with some of the guys and he kept taking the covering off to look at it."

Also killed were four puppies crew members had housed in their lockers.

Kerrigan escaped by leaping over the side in a lifejacket and making his way to the dock hand-over-hand on the ship's mooring line.

"I couldn't swim," he said. "Still can't."

Before Ray Quinn enlisted in the Navy at the age of 18, he had been an usher in a movie theater in Union City and had seen the graphic film, "Action in the North Atlantic" starring Humphrey Bogart and Raymond Massey.

"After seeing that picture over and over—it ran for six weeks—I wanted no part of being in the Naval Guard," recalled Quinn, a native of Seacucus, now living in Iselin.

Quinn joined the Navy. To his dismay, he was assigned to the Naval Armed Guard.

He recalled what it was like to be in a convoy plying the Atlantic in horrendous weather and impenetrable fog. His Liberty ship was the David Caldwell.

"We carried 500-pound bombs packed as high as my house, and trucks already loaded with military equipment and ready for the road," he said.

"We sailed at night, and no sooner had we dropped our pilot at Ambrose Lightship and were nearing the end of Long Island, than we heard depth charges being dropped. 'Not already,' I said to myself.

"A depth charge exploding sounds like you have your head in a steel drum and somebody is banging on it."

Quinn said the crossing took 18 days, with the convoy contending with savage storms, and fog so thick it caused collisions and ships to stray from assigned positions.

Quinn said that at night and in fog each ship trailed a device that resembled a paravane, but was called a "towing spar," which made a loud slushing sound and threw up a rooster-tail of white water.

"When you couldn't see anything else, you could see the phosphorescent white water and know how close you were to another ship," said Quinn.

George Goldman survived seven days at sea in an open boat after his ship, a Kearny-built tanker, the Patrick J. Hurley, was set ablaze and sunk by the deck guns of a U-Boat in the middle of the Atlantic.

Goldman, of Teaneck, called Jersey City his home when he joined the Merchant Marine at the age of 21 and shipped as a messman on the Hurley.

"We carried high-test gasoline and diesel oil from the big refineries in Aruba in the Caribbean to Avonmouth in England," recalled Goldman. "On Sept. 12, 1942, we were steaming 800 miles north of Barbados when a U-boat surfaced at 8:30 p.m.

"The sub swept our decks with machine guns and pumped armor-piercing shells into us. Our Naval Guard gun crews were cut down before they could reach their gun tubs. The gunfire killed everyone on the bridge and set the ship afire all along

her starboard side, destroying the lifeboats.

Goldman and an oiler from Camden named Buster raced to the port side, only to find the lifeboats already launched, and only a raft left on the cargo deck.

"The raft was cut loose and sent over the side," said Goldman. "The oiler said he would not go into the water because he was bleeding and the sharks would get him. I jumped in and swam to the raft. The sea was on fire from spilled fuel."

The raft soon had 20 men on board. They abandoned it when an overturned lifeboat floated by.

The survivors could hear men still in the water blowing whistles that were attached to their life vests, but because of their own state of shock, and rising wind and waves, could not maneuver to find them.

After seven days surviving on meager emergency rations, and tiny crabs and shrimp picked "like lice" from drifting seaweed, they saw a light on the horizon. It was a neutral Swedish ship carrying coffee beans to Brooklyn. They were taken aboard.

There's still some dispute about what blew up and sank Tom Fraley's ship, the SS Steel Traveler, an early 1930s vintage freighter he remembers as a "coal-burning old lady."

Maritime records say it was a mine, but Fraley, a native of Newark, and now a retiree living in Port Monmouth, thinks it was more likely a torpedo.

At the time, the 16-year old Fraley was in the ship's galley where he worked as a messman. It was a cold Dec. 18, 1944. The Steel Traveler had unloaded its cargo of military vehicles and food at Antwerp, and had started steaming back to Southampton in England.

"We were only half hour out on the edge of darkness when there was this thump and then a big boom," said Fraley. "I remember all the pipes coming down on my head. My ankle was broken, and a cut on my head later needed 32 stitches."

Whatever hit the ship did so dead center, under the Nr.3 hatch, on which the Chief Mate was standing.

"The mate was blown into the air," said Fraley. "When he came down he was impaled on a shattered piece of the hatch cover. He must have died instantly. 'The ship was split in two and went down in a V-shape.'"

There were only two dead—the Chief Mate and a fireman in the engine room.

"We were lucky," said Fraley.

After drifting about in a fog for three days, the survivors were picked up by a French corvette.

"They took us on board and gave us dry clothes and poured wine into us," said Fraley. "I was at a tender age and hadn't had any experience with wine, up to that point."

Jerome Becker, 67, of Little Ferry, a retired plumber, is keen in his recollection of his experiences as a U.S. Navy gunner on merchant ships during the war, and particularly of strange cargoes. He was 17 when he went to sea.

His ship's cargoes included high-test aviation gas from New Jersey to England, whole-wheat flour for army kitchens in France, German prisoners of war—one thousand of them—bound for internment in the U.S., and don-

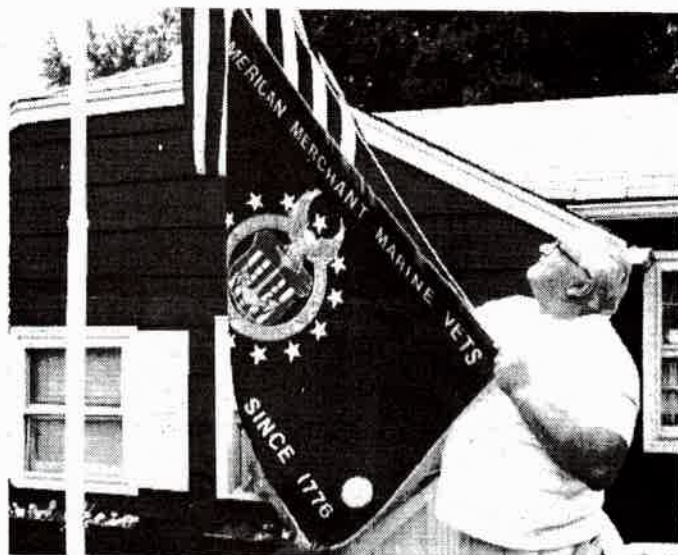


Photo by Jeff Huntley

World War II seafarer Thomas Fraley raises the flag of the American Merchant Marine Vets outside his Port Monmouth home.

keys of burden for American troops in Italy.

"They were short-legged donkeys we picked up in New York," he recalled. "They were kept in an upper hold where they could get air. They were taken care of real good."

It was while on the donkey-run that Becker's convoy came under aerial attack by German planes on April 11, 1944. It started at 4 a.m. while the New Jersey was on watch and he was first to warn his ship.

"I radioed to the bridge and all the ships opened up. It was like a 4th of July in the air. The German planes would drop flares on parachutes. They lit up the sea. It was so bright everything looked white. 'The attack lasted two days. Our ship was credited with knocking down a plane. We painted a swastika on our smoke stack.'"

Becker next found himself on another Liberty ship, the "SS Irving McDowell, with a thousand German

prisoners bound from Cherbourg, France, to the United States.

"They seemed to be glad to be out of the war," recalled Becker. "I remember they all had gallon-sized tin cans with a wire handle that was their messkit. They'd eat from it with their hands."



Photo by Rich Krauss

Navy Guard veteran Jim Kerrigan of Bogota, right. Below, Jim Kerrigan of Bogota (second from left) and his Navy Guard shipmates with their doomed puppies



Photo by Rich Krauss

Navy Guard veteran Jerome Becker of Little Ferry



Dear Charles:

3/31/93

Please accept my apologies for not contacting you long ago, to thank you for your untiring help in letting the WORLD know about us U.S.N.Armed Guard WW II Veterans.

I enjoy the POINTER very much and in particular the March-April 1993 issue. The stories are excellent and bring back memories of my DAYS AT SEA in the Armed Guard with over 120,000 miles in the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian Oceans during 1942-43-44.

As you would have no way of knowing, my participation in WW II was not planned for the A.G. duty. I had been in the Far East with Standard Oil Co. of New York in 1929-30-31, in the Philippines and China and had met many of the officers and men of the Asiatic Fleet.

I was greatly impressed with what I saw and the way they presented themselves and represented the UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. From my hilltop home in China on the Island of KU LANG SU off AMOY I used to see the "STARS and STRIPES WAVE" from the four stack destroyers sailed up the waters between the SONONY homes and the mainland AMOY, CHINA. WE often met the officers at the International Club at AMOY. One day I inquired what the real purpose of the destroyers being there and was told---TO TAKE YOU GUYS OUT OF HERE IF TROUBLE COMES! We all know now, the Japs were trying to overrun CHINA and in 1937, they sunk our ship, the PANAY in the Yangze River. To make along story short, I vowed that if the UNITED STATES ever went to war again, I'd join the U.S. NAVY!!

On Sunday evening, December 7, 1941, a news flash of the attack on Pearl Harbor--"THE DAY THAT WILL LIVE IN INFAMY", my mind was made up!! I got permission from my employer, the General Electric Co. in Lynn, Massachusetts to apply for duty. My wife would not sign because we had a four year old son and I was 33 years old!!

Nevertheless, I applied for and was accepted as a linguist and was given a commission as a Lieutenant (jg) for a post in "Operations 20G" in Washington, D.C. In the meantime, before actually calling up, I was to study with a Professor at Harvard University in Cambridge, Mass. We were to study cryptanalyst, codes and ciphers.

It so happened, Charlie, I never got to take part in Operation 20G. I was sent to Newport, R.I. to

train with a group of GOLDEN BOOTS! All were Commissioned Officers for 8 weeks of basics and training for future assignments. However, my orders never came through so at the end of 8 weeks, I was sent to the "ARMED GUARD CENTER 1st Ave-52nd St. Brooklyn, New York and was asked to relieve another communication officer on the USAT BRAZIL who was ill and in the hospital. I didn't give it much thought until the next day when I saw troops being loaded on board. I was called back to headquarters and I was informed that I had "better let my wife know" that I would be AWAY for a while. The ship sailed the next day in convoy to Casablanca, Africa for the invasion.

With the exception of a total of about a month when the BRAZIL was in drydocks for repairs, I was still the Communications Officer of the USAT BRAZIL until March of 1944, when, because of my knowledge of the Italian Language, I was assigned to the MS SATURNIA which was an Italian ship, still with the Italian officers and crew. The ship was taken over after the capitulation of Italy in April of 1943.

It was a great experience. The longest trip we made was from New York to Bombay, India; New Caledonia, Australia and finally back to New York to take soldiers for the big push in Cherbourg, France. I have forgotten how many days after D-DAY.

I did have the opportunity to use French, Italian, Spanish and some German. I had an exciting life, and I finally returned safely to my wife, family and friends with all my skin intact. My wife died in 1965, and my present wife and I are living here off the main stream. I am a member of the Navy League; Retired Officer's Assoc.; V.F.W., American Legion and the U.S.N.Armed Guard Assoc. I stayed in Reserves until age 60 and retired with 4 stripes.

However, at the age of 85 years old as of this writing, I have a crippling type of arthritis and must use a cane plus medication to keep me going. For all the work you are doing and have done for us "ARMED GUARD VETERANS of WORLD WAR II", I enclose a modest check for your DISCRETIONARY FUND.

May God continue to bless you and yours,

Most sincerely,
Howard C. Arnold 4118 Cleveland St. Hollywood, Fl.
33021-4714 1-305-981-5541

Thanks, Howard, for your kind remarks and donation. It is good to know that you appreciate the labor of love to the crew on my part, and others who assist. I hope we can help you celebrate your 100th. CAL

OH-MI-IN-KY

Regional Reunion

will be held

9/13-15/93 in

Frankenmuth, MI.

Hosts will be

Martin and Dawn

Vallee,

Flint, MI. 48503

313-235-3530.

Beautiful Place!!

(File or service number)
NAV. S. and A. Form 87
Form prescribed by Comp. Gen., U. S.,
November 3, 1943

NAVY PAY RECEIPT

(Ship or station)
I acknowledge to have received from the Disbursing Officer, in person and IN CASH, on account of pay, the sum of:

(Date)
\$
(Amount in figures)

(Amount in words)

Dollars

(Payee's signature)

(Rank or rating)

U. S. N.

Fingerprint
(Right index finger, if missing specify other digit impressed.)

(This receipt must be filled out without interlineations or erasures)

OP-16-33406-2



Nick Szkodzinsky (L), Mike Molinari (C), Al Lowe (R)

Hi Charlie:

Hope this letter finds you and your family feeling fine and in the best of health. The Lowes are well.

This letter is to report to you, OF THE GREATEST DAY THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS EVER HAD!! On MAY 31ST, 1993, WE--"THE ARMED GUARD" WERE INDEED HONORED ON THAT DAY AT THE USS INTREPID CEREMONY!! The USS INTREPID is now an AIR-SEA and SPACE MUSEUM. The INTREPID has different sections set aside for individual groups such as; "THE FIRST FLIGHT OF MAN"; "WORLD ONE"; "WORLD WAR TWO"; "SPACE", ETC. We will have a section for the ARMED GUARD in "WORLD WAR II" called "THE BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC". All of us are so proud of what we have accomplished to Honor the U.S.N. ARMED GUARD UNIT of WW II.

We also have a place on board the Lightship, the USS NANTUCKET in another exhibit called the "BATTLE OF THE ATLANTIC" where we placed an ARMED GUARD Plaque along with the MERCHANT SEAMEN'S PLAQUE on the Bulkhead with lights and photos of convoys, etc. It tells the public WHO WE WERE and WHAT WE DID!! After one year, they will be placed on the INTREPID.

Enclosed are two photos. One shows only the Memorial Wreath given to us by the Museum crew. The other is one of Nick Szkodzinsky (L), Mike Molinari (C) and myself on the right with the wreath taken near the 5" gun turret of the Destroyer, USS EDSON. Notice the size of the wreath!! It was beautiful. If you could just show it in the next "POINTER" and let them know it was for all the crew.

Nick and myself are flying on "CLOUD NINE"! We are the happiest guys in the whole wide world. So is the rest of the committee consisting of Lou Ritter, Mike Molinari, Jim DeMatties, Joe Schienberg, Phil Cooper and others. The committee from BROOKLYN and QUEENS got the ball rolling and got the job done!! We also contacted George Searles of the Merchant Seamen and told them of our plaque and they placed a plaque at the same time.

Well, Charles, Guess I'll close my letter to you--Hoping the good Lord will bless us U.S.NAVAL ARMED GUARD and the UNITED STATES of AMERICA. "LONG MAY OUR FLAG WAVE"!! Keep well and best to all.

Your Shipmate,

Al Lowe 2132 E. 13th St. Brooklyn, NY 718-336-8260

(Thanks Al for your wonderful letter and photos.)



Wreath Honoring U.S.N. Armed Guard Veterans

Dear Armed Guard:

5/5/93

Many thanks for the information you sent in the brown packet which I received yesterday. I'm sending a small donation to help with postage, etc.

You see, what I am interested in is locating someone who might recall an air attack on us when we were onboard a troopship off the Coast of North Africa about Mar.15, 1944. I was an Army replacement on my way to Naples, Italy and we had left Virginia on Feb.22, 1944 but had unloaded in North Africa at "GOAT HILL" before being reloaded on another Liberty Ship for Naples. I was in Co. B 84th Chemical Mortar Bn. in Italy and wounded 7/44.

Anyway, we were attacked off the coast by enemy aircraft and the Navy Armed Guard gunners shot a plane down. They got the pilot and we continued on to Sicily. I do not know the name of the ships. I do hope you guys have a nice reunion. Lodirect McDonald, 641 Shady Glen Rd. Anniston, Al. 36201 1-205-236-4361.

Thanks, Mac! Maybe someone remembers the event.cal

THE BATTLE OF NORMANDY FOUNDATION

Elizabeth A. Groover
Director, Member Services

REFER TO
PAGE 6

1730 RHODE ISLAND AVENUE, N.W.
SUITE 612
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20036

(202) 728-0672
FAX: (202) 728-0619
TELEX: 440328NORMANDY

SOUND SIGNALS FOR SIGNALMEN IN WW II

HM-----Silence Sound
 VO-----Negative Silence
 GM-----Wheel to Port
 SB-----Wheel to Starboard
 XX-----Execute any Signal but Course
 ZZ-----Resume Main Course
 G-----Report any Sound Signal
 W-----Do Not Repeat Last Sound Signal
 WE-----Waiting for Escort
 EW-----Escort is Waiting
 NO-----Cancel Maneuver Signals
 AA-----All Ships
 UD-----Not Understand
 MX-----Stream Paravanes
 MM-----Code Pennant
 OV-----Cancels All Outstandings

Prearranged Alterations of Course

S.S. COLINA 2/5/43 by Paul Hart Livingston-SM2/c

Feb. 6, 1943- Came aboard the S.S. COLINA today. It is a nice, new tanker,. It's just a month old. Sure we'll like it fine. Our Signal Group is made up of Ensign Jones, our communication Officer; Guidry-our new radioman and Dutch Schulz our signalman and Billy and I.

Feb. 7 and 8-Stayed on board getting things ready to leave.

Feb. 9th-----Was supposed to leave at 0500 but our anchor fouled up so until it was 1200 before it was fixed. That put us behind the Convoy so a destroyer stayed behind with us all day until we caught up with the Convoy, a little after dark.

Feb. 10-----Our position is 12. Did plenty of work today, read blinker about four hours straight.

Feb. 12-15----Everything went fine, except had hard luck on the 12th. I will put a special message about it later. Our T.B.Y. sure works good! It is a big help to the Convoy.

(a) Man over board from ship 7-1.

(b) Ships 6-1 and 7-1 have collidedXKeep clear.

(c) Ship 6-1 put on two red lights.

(d) Ship 6-1 reports four men killed and many injured. Ten foot hole in starboard side, taking water badly.

(e) Ships 6-1 and 7-1 drops out of Convoy.

(f) From DOG-6-64 you are getting too close to 54. Move to the right.

Feb. 15-----We are getting along fine with our work. Just got a blinker Msg. from 62 saying that the planes will make some low altitude runs over the Convoy to practice screening. We have the Battleship ARKANSAS and the heavy cruiser PHILADELPHIA with us. They send up planes every day to scout. I like to watch them late in the evening. The weather has been real cold most of the trip, so far. Guess it's always cold in this old North Atlantic. Hope to hit warmer weather soon. This is a fast Convoy with plenty of escorts but we ZiG-ZAG and that will make our trip, longer and faster. Have changed our position twice; from 12 to 64, but after 6-1, had to fall out, we moved up to 63, so that is our position now.

Armed Guard Herb Dewolf, 2079 W. Bristol Ave., Stockton, CA 95204, 209-465-4416 made some BOLOS, set in stone, from the lapel pins with the insigna used at Treasure Island Armed Guard Center (sailor loading the gun) and also the insigna used at Brooklyn, NY - Camp Shelton, VA with the Eagle clutching the sub and plane. He sells them for \$30.00 and donates most of the profit to the crew. He also has a necklace for the women at \$25.00 each. Some of you had written for his name. THAT'S HIM!

IRVING HILL

312 North Spring Street
Los Angeles, California 90012
(213) 894-5290

April 28, 1993

PERSONAL

Mr. Charles A. Lloyd
USN Armed Guard WWII Veterans
5712 Partridge Lane
Raleigh, NC 27609-4126

Dear Charles:

Thanks to your suggestion, the Navy has sent me their entire file of voyage reports and other related documents for the Solomon Juneau, the ship on which I served my Armed Guard duty.


One of the documents in that file was so moving to me that I thought you would want to read it and perhaps publish it in the Pointer. I enclose a memo written to the Navy (Commandant, Third Naval District) by the captain of the Solomon Juneau under date of December 12, 1943.

The memo is important to me because it not only evidences superb performance by a gun crew, but mostly because it shows the heartfelt appreciation of the merchant marine personnel for the efforts of the Armed Guard crew.

Here's a letter from the Captain of a merchant ship to the Navy. Most of the time, as I understand it, there was great tension between the merchant crews, particularly the Captain, and the Armed Guard detachment. Many complaints were recorded, by each group against the other group. This letter evidences a totally different situation. Here is a Captain who describes the Armed Guard crew as "always clean, polite, and well-mannered". He commends their devotion to duty. He commends the Armed Guard commander. He says he relied on the Armed Guard commander and sought his advice in many ways and will miss him. He prides himself in having brought home such a fine Armed Guard detachment, without any of them suffering a scratch.

I was not on the ship, of course, when this voyage took place and when this memo was written. I pass it along to you only as an example, beautifully and forcefully written, of the interdependence and affection sometimes encountered between merchant and Armed Guard personnel.

Yours,



Encs.

P.S. I have just found among the Navy papers sent me an order of the Secretary of the Navy dated 3-30-42 to all merchant captains. It orders that any merchant ship that might fall into the hands of the enemy must be scuttled. And it tells how to do the scuttling. I had never seen or heard of this order and I wonder if you had. It also might be something you could publish in the Pointer.

Op-23L-JH
(SC)S76-3
Serial 907923

NAVY DEPARTMENT
WASHINGTON

CONFIDENTIAL

March 30, 1942.

From: The Secretary of the Navy.
To: Master - S.S. SOLOMON JUNEAU Gross Tons 7176
Subject: Instructions for Scuttling Merchant Ships.

1. It is the policy of the United States Government that no U. S. Flag merchant ship be permitted to fall into the hands of the enemy.
2. The ship shall be defended by her armament, by maneuver, and by every available means as long as possible. When in the judgment of the Master, capture is inevitable, he shall scuttle the ship. Provision should be made to open sea valves, and to flood holds and compartments adjacent to machinery spaces, start numerous fires and employ any additional measures available to insure certain scuttling of the vessel.
3. In case the Master is relieved of command of his ship, he shall transfer this letter to his successor, and obtain a receipt for it.

FRANK KNOX

WEYERHAEUSER STEAMSHIP COMPANY
Newark, N.J.

S.S. Solomon Juneau
December 12, 1943

It would be an injustice to the U.S. NAVY and my gun crew not to mention their merits. Just completing six months voyage across the Atlantic, Mediterranean and Tyrrhenian Seas. During these months I had every opportunity to watch my gun crew both ashore and afloat. They were always clean, polite and well-mannered. During gun drills, day or night watches, they were always alert. I don't recall one occasion where any one of them were reprimanded for being inattentive to duty. During enemy attacks their fine training showed very good results. The five German Stukas painted on the vessels funnel, stands as a medal to the crew for which they rightfully deserve. During several sustained attacks these twenty-eight men battled their way through some gloomy looking chances. Now that the voyage has terminated and they will leave my vessel for a much needed rest and vacation of which they deserve. I regret to see any one of them leave and not return.

Philip M. Bolich (J.G.) Armed Guard Commander in charge has been of great assistance to me, not only in the excellent manner he has trained his Naval Gun Crew, but the effort and skill in training the merchant crew in gunnery. As a military adviser, I have found Lt. Bolich was always willing to assist in every possible way and on many occasions I have sought his advice. I will certainly miss Lt. Bolich on my next voyage.

It is a pleasure to know that I have brought home safe every member of the crew, and none suffered even a scratch.

BEST WISHES FOR THIS HOLIDAY SEASON AND A JOYOUS NEW YEAR



The S.S. Lane Victory, along with Liberty ships, John W. Brown, the Jeremiah O'Brien, and a couple of Navy escort vessels, have been invited to take part in the 50th anniversary of the "Landing at Normandy". What an experience: being part of an historic event, visiting 14 countries in eight months, and showing the world the quality of America's industry. This will be an expensive venture, and other obstacles stand in our way, but with our and Santa's combined efforts, it could come about.



AMERICA WORKS
NORMANDY '94

Ports of Call: SAN PEDRO • PANAMA CANAL • NEW YORK OR BALTIMORE • NORMANDY, FRANCE • LONDON, ENGLAND • BRUSSELS, BELGIUM • ROTTERDAM, NETHERLANDS • COPENHAGEN, DENMARK • STOCKHOLM, SWEDEN • HELSINKI, FINLAND • ST. PETERSBURG (LENINGRAD), RUSSIA • OSLO AND BERGEN, NORWAY • ST. JOHNS, NEWFOUNDLAND • MONTREAL, CANADA • TORONTO, CANADA • DETROIT, MICHIGAN • CHICAGO, ILLINOIS • HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA • PANAMA CANAL • SAN PEDRO

April 19, 1993

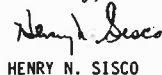
Dear Charles:

Thanks to your encouragement and the request from my old shipmate's nephew, enclosed is a lengthy narrative account of my years in the Armed Guard, etc. Since this is the 50th anniversary of my life raft experience, I feel it very timely and fitting to write my story and give my account of the ill-fated voyage of the SS Robert Bacon, etc.

Putting this in writing was quite a challenge, but the fulfillment of my intentions for many years, and with the help of my wife (married 8/50), who is now retired after many years of legal work, we have this down on paper!

Discovering The Pointer was a great day in my life, and we certainly want to say thank you for your diligent efforts and good work in making it possible for fellows like me to participate. Should you deem this printable, you have my permission to edit it to "make it fitting" in the Pointer.

Sincerely,



HENRY N. SISCO

50 YEARS LATER - RECOLLECTIONS OF 18 MONTHS
IN ARMED GUARD AND 15 DAYS ON LIFE RAFT

BY HENRY N. SISCO, GM2/C, USN

Soon after graduation from boot camp in San Diego in February, 1942, and after a few days of gunnery training at the destroyer base in San Diego I was then transferred to the Armed Guard Center, New Orleans, LA (NOLA), via Treasure Island. Upon arrival at NOLA I was one of a 12-man AG crew with an Officer in Charge, and sent on by train to Wilmington, NC to board the new Liberty ship, SS Francis Marion. At Charleston, SC, the Francis Marion was loaded with all kinds of war materials, consisting mostly of 100, 250 and 500 pound aerial bombs destined for India and the China war theatre. Even though we had a few scares going and coming, the Marion made it safely back to New York harbor at the end of 1942.

After a 25 day leave I reported back to NOLA and started studying for GROC, made that rank and then was assigned to new AG crew on the Robert Bacon, my second Liberty ship. Soon after our AG gun crew reported aboard the ship and it had its full complement of merchant seamen crew, we sailed up a river to an ammunition depot where the ship was loaded with a few thousand tons of Hercules powder, a very high explosive for bomb cases; then on to another rail yard where they finished loading the Bacon with thousands of cases of food supplies, Army trucks, jeeps and Sherman tanks, destined for Suez, Egypt, for the North African campaign, which, incidentally, ended ten days before we arrived there.

We sailed down the Mississippi to Pilotstown, LA, out in the German sub infested waters of the Caribbean to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba, and on to Cristobal, Panama Canal Zone, with our heavy load of cargo. Because of the South Atlantic sub menace, the Bacon was put through the canal and we sailed down the South American coast and around Cape Horn to Cape Town, South Africa. After many days of sailing alone, finally making it to the port of Aden, Arabia, where we were safe from subs, but there received a barrage balloon with its British attendant for protection against German bombers, and into the Red Sea, then on to Suez, arriving there June 6, 1943. After two weeks of unloading the Bacon we sailed back down the Red Sea and out into the Indian Ocean, destined for Mombasa, Kenya, East Africa.

It was July 4th, 1943, as we were headed out the Red Sea and along the coast of Somalia that I remember making conversation with our Gunnery Officer, Franklin T. Hamilton - really my first conversation I had had with him up to that time. Ensign Hamilton was from Lincoln, NB, a lawyer, and I was a 19 year old kid from Idaho, and our conversation was in regard to what we might be doing on July 4th if we were back home that special day.

After a very brief stay at Mombasa we sailed on to Cape Town, South Africa. It was 2:35 a.m., July 14th and three days out of Mombasa that the Bacon was struck by a torpedo. J. B. Whitehorse, an Indian fellow from South Dakota and one of the AG crew members, was standing lookout watch on the bow 3" gun and spotted the wake of the first torpedo and reported it to the officer on the bridge. The first torpedo missed the ship, but the second torpedo got us in the #3 hold, close to midship on the starboard side. My living quarters were closest to that explosion, and we always slept with our clothes on in war zones, so I jumped out of my bunk, donned my life jacket, but left without my shoes and hat. I was too scared to take time to get them. Up inside the stairs I headed for the boat deck. There was so much confusion that seemingly no one knew what to do. My assigned life boat, #2, was disabled, being directly over from where the torpedo hit. Two of the four life boats on the boat deck were rigged with motors when they were built. Because the ship was empty, it sank slowly, and was down at the bow. At about 3:15 a.m. the order to abandon ship was given.

Things started happening fast after that. Immediately the #4 motor boat with the Captain and only five or six other men was let down and off they went, and I never heard anything more about them. The #6 life boat, which was the other motor boat, was being let down with a few men in it, but it was swamped, due to having been improperly launched, and the men were spilled into the water and were later picked up by other boats. I suddenly found myself and 12 other men, including our gunnery officer, Hamilton, left aboard. One of those men, Carl E. Harris of Albuquerque, NM, BMGC, our AG crew Petty OIC, suggested that he and two other men would launch the starboard aft raft and the other ten of us would launch the portside aft raft. During that time amid all the confusion and no one in command, we were scurrying about on the ship, looking for a way off the ship, when one of the fellows thrust our ship's mascot, a dog named "Suzy," (named after the Suez Canal where she came aboard our ship from another ship we were tied up to for a short time), into my arms and asked if I would take care of her. Of course, at that time I didn't need anything like that to weight me down. Well, we managed to launch #4 raft and we all slid down a rope to the raft. The dog was tossed down to the raft from the main deck by one of the last fellows aboard the stricken ship. We had no more than gotten the last man down the rope and onto the raft when BOOM - a thundering noise shook the ship from the starboard side just aft of midship, and heavy crude oil rained down on all of us in my raft. The German submarine that had torpedoed us was nearby and fired another torpedo into the hull, since it appeared the ship was not sinking. That torpedo struck the ship and exploded in one of the ship's fuel supply tanks close to the engine room, causing the heavy rain of crude oil on us.

Because the ship was down at the bow and the propeller aft, the propeller was sticking up a ways out of the water, and it started turning a few revolutions. Our raft seemed to start drifting into the huge propeller, and it was a short scary moment until a couple of the fellows used oars supplied with the raft to push against the ship's side just forward of the turning propeller and miraculously veered our raft away from the propeller. We all knew that if we had drifted into that turning propeller it would have made hash of our wooden raft and what would have happened to us fellows. We drifted on around the aft of the ship and started moving away from it.

The sea began getting very choppy and rough and we all started getting sick, especially me, from having ingested some of the crude oil that rained down on us. That crude oil made me so sick, I spent most of that first day heaving, so I started those fifteen days on that raft with my stomach on "empty." Just a few minutes after moving away from the sinking ship I looked up in time to see a huge black object plowing toward us in the waves. I said, "LOOK! SOMETHING IS COMING RIGHT AT US!" At once we supposed it to be the sub that sunk us and it might be coming at us to ram us. The big black vessel turned away slightly and came to a complete stop. Just an instant before, one of the fellows said to our Gunnery Officer, Hamilton, "You had better get rid of your hat," the only thing that would have distinguished him as our officer, since it was known that the enemy would be looking for officers to take captive. Hamilton ditched his hat in a hurry. We were right; an officer from the conning tower of the surfaced sub hailed us, but none of us answered him. It was still dark, but dawn was breaking and we saw the sub move on to our other raft, some 150 yards or so from us. Carl Harris, on that raft, told me later that they asked the whereabouts of the ship's Captain and other officers, and our destination. They told them they didn't know, and that the ship was on delayed orders.

As it became daylight, the German sub went to each boat and raft, evidently in search of officers, and on one occasion the sub skipper told some of the survivors that land, (the east coast of Africa), lay 50 miles to the west, and hoped they would make it. During this time, as the sun rose, the Germans fired another torpedo into the Bacon, which was still afloat but listing to starboard. That was the last we saw of the Bacon and she sank very rapidly after the third torpedo.

A little later after that fateful morning the seas got very rough and we were tossed around a lot by high waves. I was so sick that I wasn't much aware of anything, except that we would get a glimpse of the sub, still in the area. Late in the afternoon of that first day our two rafts tied up together. The other raft had three men, and our raft had ten men. We divided the men up between the rafts, 7 on one and 6 on the other. Of the thirteen men on the two rafts, seven of us were Navy Armed Guard men, and the other six were Merchant Seamen.

I must mention before going further that our Gunnery Officer, Hamilton, was certainly a genius. He had the presence of mind before abandoning ship to grab up his .38 caliber pistol with 150 rounds of ammo, his Navy issue binoculars and amphib knife, and his Naval Orders concealed in his waterproof belt.

On July 15th, our second day on the rafts, the morning broke with calm seas and sunny weather, and we were all feeling much better. Our rafts were each supplied with a 10 gallon keg of water, a large metal container of rations of hardtack, pemmican and malted milk tablets, a gallon of kerosene, a hatchet and two blankets in a 5" or 6" metal cylindrical container. Also we found that we had a fish hook with some dried bacon rinds for bait. As the third, fourth, fifth and sixth days passed, nothing at all exciting happened, except that late in the day on 4th day (July 18th), we saw a plane flying high off in the distance. We had little hope that we had been spotted by that plane, but, hoping against hope, this was our first let-down.

We were getting thirstier and thirstier for water each day. Early on our Gunnery Officer, Hamilton, had wisely rationed us to only 8 ounces of water per day per man.

About 2 a.m., on the morning of July 20th, the sixth day on the raft, we were awakened by the sound of a motor. A distress flare was lighted, and then another flare; then the motor cut off. We suspected this was the sub and it had surfaced to charge its batteries, which was customary with WWII subs. These subs were battery-powered underwater and diesel-powered above water. The next morning, July 21st, at about the same time the same thing happened. We heard the drone of a motor near by and it would cut off when we lit a distress flare. In the afternoon about 3 p.m. (1500 hours), as I was scanning the horizon with Hamilton's binoculars I spotted what appeared to be a freighter type ship coming toward us. I created quite a bit of excitement as I called out this sighting to the guys on the two rafts. As the ship (nationality unknown) neared us it looked like we were going to be rescued - so much so, that the fellows on the other raft were about to drink up the remainder of their keg of water. Officer Hamilton gave the order to leave that water alone, (and he had his .38 pistol to back up his order!), since we were not sure we were going to be rescued. How true, because the ship slowed almost to a stop, looked us over from a distance, regained speed and headed away from us and the last we saw of that ship was as it disappeared over the horizon into the sunset. My, what a terrible let down we all experienced at this time. It surely looked as though we were destined to perish at sea.

About dark on the 7th day, the decision was made to separate the two rafts, put the 7 strongest men and "Suzy, the dog, on the one raft and let those men start rowing westward toward land. Officer Hamilton and I, the two Navy men, and four Merchant Seamen were left on my raft, making six of us. Two of these four Merchant Seamen were colored men, but that was no problem, as we all got along very well.

As it got daybreak on the morning of July 22nd, the 8th day, we spotted the other raft. They had rowed all night and we had gradually lost sight of them. I later learned they were rescued by an allied ship on July 28th, fourteenth day on the raft. The ship that rescued them and on which they were survivors, also got torpedoed a short time later, but they were all rescued by another ship a few hours later and all made it safely to land.

On our raft the six of us made the best of it, notwithstanding the hot equatorial sun, and thirst from lack of water to the point that we were on the verge of delirium. While on the raft I tried to quench my extreme thirst three or four times by reaching my hand over the side and wile no one would be looking, drink a few swallows of water out of my hand. I soon found out that this only compounded my thirst. I don't know if the other four fellows did this too. One thing that was certainly lacking among the provisions on our raft was something to catch rain water in. It rained hard a few times, and if we had just had a 2 x 2 foot square of canvas we could have caught several cups of rain water, but as it was, it was almost futile to try to collect any rain water to quench our thirst.

One of the colored fellows, Melville, from New Orleans, often prayed out loud in our desperation, and I prayed a lot, too, in softer tones. On the 13th day on the raft, July 27th, a sea gull lighted on our ear we had sticking up as a makeshift mast. One of the fellows, George Beedle, also from New Orleans, reached up and grabbed the bird by the neck, and in record time, using Officer Hamilton's knife, we killed, picked and stripped the bird's bones and had eaten all edible meat from that bird. Right after that I had an idea; I took a piece of the bird's entrails, threaded it on the fish hook and dangled it over the side about three feet into the water. Immediately an 18 or 20 inch fish latched onto it and we dragged the fish aboard. I again took the hook, baited it, and put it over the side and another larger fish grabbed it, but the fishline broke and the fish got away, and there went our fish hook, etc., and last chance to catch any more fish. We cut up the fish I caught, and I will never forget how that raw fish tasted.

I believe we all had a firm belief that divine providence was with us, after all, and indeed it was, because on the next day, our 14th day, July 28, 1943, as I was scanning the

horizon with the binoculars, as I did often each day, at about 10 a.m., I was suddenly amazed to spot a small land mass, the coast of Mozambique, East Africa. Because I had spotted CLOUDS about three times in the days before and called out "LAND!" none of the fellows took me seriously, until about noon that day when one of the other fellows finally took the binoculars and looked for himself, and said, "Sisco is right; there IS land over there!" and soon the other fellows were convinced of my discovery! Oh, what joy came over us! We put a man on each of our four oars and headed the raft westward. I was designated the navigator and called out, "pull right," or "pull left," and was also given the job of filling the round container that had had the blankets in it with sea water and dousing each man on the oars with sea water to cool them off when they needed it. We made some headway rowing that large 8' x 10' square raft, but as nightfall fell we were still a long ways from shore but we could see smoke from fires on land. As darkness fell we lost sight of land but kept rowing, using the Southern Cross (a group of stars seen only in the southern part of the world and called the Southern Cross because of the resemblance to a cross), as our navigational guide. The oldest man on our raft, Willy, Mr. Williams, 64 years old, had rowed all that afternoon and until nightfall, and finally just fell over from exhaustion. He had literally rowed himself to death. He had told us some days before that if we ever got back to land and back home, he wanted us to come to his home in New Orleans and have EVERYTHING COLD to eat and drink. We laid him to the side and I took over his oar and we continued rowing westward.

After rowing continuously for 21 hours, the 15th day dawned (July 29th), but we didn't see any shoreline, because of a hazy fog had engulfed the area west of us. We kept rowing, however, hoping that we would see the shoreline when the fog lifted. It did, and to our utter amazement and surprise, there right before our eyes about a mile away lay a beautiful sandy seashore! We started rowing all the harder, but were not making any headway. Then all at once, about 9:30 a.m., we were in the breakers and being propelled toward land, and we hit a coral reef. We all got off the raft and onto the reef, except Mr. Williams, our ailing colored man, whom we had to leave on the raft. The five of us started pushing the raft closer to the beach, walking on the coral - me in my stocking feet, getting sharp coral spikes in my feet.

As we got closer to the beach a native came out in an outrigger, jumped over on our raft, and in a very friendly way made motions asking how he could help us. We made signals that convinced him we needed water. He left his hat with us and off he went in his outrigger and returned shortly with a container of hot water - water that had been boiled, because of Malaria. We drank all the water we could possibly hold, then got the raft onto the beach. A few minutes later we were surrounded by natives who had hastily prepared a large bowl of cooked long grain rice with other ingredients in it. We used cut palm leaves for spoons and consumed the delicious rice.

A short time later we boarded a large canoe and headed up an inlet, eventually arriving at the natives' tribal encampment or village, and there were treated to an evening meal of delicious boiled chicken, rice, and another side dish or two. By this time we had eaten so much food and drank so much water that all we wanted to do was sleep and it was very hard to stand up and walk anywhere. And amidst the great thankfulness and joy we had in having our feet on old terra firma and still having our health (except poor old Willy, Mr. Williams, who was almost dead from complications which we later learned was due to drinking sea water), it was a great relief when one of the natives removed the coral spikes from my feet and gave me a pair of very large work shoes. I have never forgotten the kindnesses of those people.

As nightfall came on we wanted to lay out on the ground under the stars, but the natives would have none of that, and made us - almost carried us - inside a thick walled mud hut with a thatched roof and we slept on the dirt floor on palm leaves. All the next day (July 30th), we were under the care of the natives in the village until about 6:30 (1830 time), and as darkness came on the natives made motions telling us that we were to be moving out. We were then escorted by about three native men on each side of us, carrying their bows and arrows and chanting, which we understood was a way of protecting us from wild animals. Our colored man, Willy (Mr. Williams), was carried out by the natives on a makeshift stretcher.

In a short time we all made it down the narrow trail (very narrow for my donated big wide shoes!) to the inlet where there was yacht waiting for us. Our Gunnery Officer, Mr. Hamilton, had written a message and a native runner had taken it to the nearest seaport, Port Amelia, Mozambique, fifteen miles away, and delivered it to the Port Captain. The Port Captain sailed his own private yacht up the inlet and we were put aboard and brought to Port Amelia and put into the town's only hospital.

We finally were cleaned up, getting all the black oil removed from us, and checked over. We all were found to be in good condition except Willy, who died at the hospital two days later. After a two-day stay in the hospital we were lodged in the town's only hotel, right next door to the German Consulate. Mozambique, a Portuguese colony, was a neutral country during the war, because Portugal was neutral, the German consulate was there at Port Amelia. It was ironic that we were next door to the German Consulate, the warring nation that had sunk our ship, and looking up we could see their country's flag flying the world's hated swastika. The consulate personnel went about their daily business, as well as we Americans, without incident, although we knew they knew we were there.

About August 3rd our man, Willy, was given a Catholic funeral and buried on African soil by the Portuguese people. A group of those dear Portuguese men at Port Amelia were given charge by their government of us remaining survivors, and they tended to our every need, even taking us on a safari back into the interior in a 1936 Chevrolet stake body truck. That was a very exciting trip into the jungle, and would take up more space than I have here to tell about it. We did get a young lion, and brought it back into town with us. We spent a whole weekend back in the jungle and when we returned to town we attended another funeral, that of the Catholic priest who officiated at our Willy's funeral. He had taken sick with Malaria and died after he got home from a hunting trip because he neglected to take his preventive medication (Quinine) with him into the jungle.

After 18 days at Port Amelia, the five of us were put aboard a Portuguese coastal steamer, a combination passenger and cargo ship. We hit about every small port on the coast, dropping off cargo and passengers and picking up more passengers. On August 24th we arrived at Mozambique's second largest port, Beira, and transferred to a hotel there to await the arrival of our next American merchant vessel, which was the SS Julia Luckenbach, for transfer home to the USA.

Upon arriving in Beira I met my good friend and shipmate from the Robert Bacon, Carl E. Harris, that had taken command of our other raft after we separated from each other on the 7th day adrift. On August 31st Mr. Hamilton, Harris and I, along with some of the Merchant Marine survivors, reported aboard the SS Julia Luckenbach at Beira. The Luckenbach was heavily loaded with manganese ore, and sailed out for Durban and Cape Town, South Africa, about September 3rd. We entered the port of Durban on a cool morning about September 19th. After a brief stay at Durban we proceeded to Cape Town. As we were rounding the Cape of Good Hope near Port Elizabeth, about 2:20 a.m., on September 23rd, the Julia Luckenbach collided with a British tanker, the SS British Resolution, a newly built tanker fully laden with high octane aviation gasoline. We collided with the tanker directly amidships, and some gasoline storage tanks were badly ruptured and torn into by the Julia's bow, and much of that gasoline spilled out into the ocean about us, but miraculously, no fire started, or that could have been our worst tragedy. The Julia's bow remained stuck in the tanker's side until about 3:45 a.m., when the ships' officers, after conferring back and forth, decided that the British would sail their tanker back to Cape Town and our Julia would try to sail on to Cape Town. The Captain of our ship gave orders to back her away and get her bow out of the tanker's side, but made the mistake of moving forward at moderate speed, and this immediately caused the forepeak bulkhead to give way back from the bow, and because the Julia was of 1918 vintage, she had no watertight integrity

between the forepeak bulkhead, all the way back to the amidships to the engine room bulkhead. It was my lot to go on watch with another Armed Guard man on the bow gun at 3:50 a.m., the 4-8 watch, and as we headed up to the bow, or better said, DOWN to the bow to take our station we noticed that the bow and almost the whole forward part of the ship was beginning to take on water. We hurried back, and as I stood on the aft ladder leading to the bridge I told the other Armed Guard man, a member of the Julia's Armed Guard crew, that he should run up to the bridge and inform the control officers that we can't make it to the bow, that it was going under water. As I stood there on the ladder with my knees knocking, music came to my ears; the abandon ship whistle was sounded. I immediately made it on up the ladder to the first lifeboat and into that #1 boat as it was beginning to be lowered away, with Carl Harris right behind me, into the boat. Miraculously, the boats and some rafts all got filled with men and lowered within 2 or 3 minutes, just as the Julia was seen disappearing, with the bow going down first. One of the Merchant crew officers was lost. He believed the ship would remain afloat once the water reached the engine room bulkhead. One of the Armed Guard crew members was standing by this officer when the engine room bulkhead gave away. Everything happened so fast after that that both men jumped overboard. The Armed Guard man was able to swim away from the undercurrent section of the rapidly sinking Julia, but the officer of the Julia was a heavy man and couldn't swim away fast enough and was pulled under the waves with the sinking Julia. All the boats and rafts stayed close together, but because the seas were very rough, the noses of the boats and rafts were kept headed into the wind. We could see the sand on the seashore, but we couldn't make it because of the heavy waves, and we were all pretty sick, too. Twelve hours later our sister ship, the John L. Luckenbach, came along and rescued us after they on the J. L. Luckenbach were informed by the British patrol that it was OK to stop and rescue us. The J. L. had picked up our SOS, but didn't really know what had happened to the Julia, whether we had been torpedoed or what. On August 24th we arrived in Cape Town aboard the J. L. Luckenbach and immediately were detached from the J. L. and taken by S. African Army truck to an army base and fitted with South African Army uniforms. This was on Tuesday afternoon, August 24th, and we survivors of the Bacon and Julia Luckenbach were transferred to a much newer American merchant ship, the SS Robin Tuxford. The Tuxford's cruising speed was about 20 knots and we made it safely back to New York in about 15 - 19 days. Our Gunnery Officer, Hamilton, from the Bacon, and the Gunnery Officer from the Julia Luckenbach had to remain in Cape Town, along with other officers from the Julia, and tanker officers from the British Resolute, for a trial there to determine who was at fault for the collision of the two ships.

Back at the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, all of us Navy personnel got survivors' leave and eventually reported back to Brooklyn AGC for further assignment, after our records caught up with us there. Most of our Naval personnel survivors got two weeks of Naval rest camp, either at Haverstraw, NY or Deland, FL. Because I wanted to get out of the Armed Guard and on a warship, I did not "cotton" to the idea of rest camp right then, I expended my time and effort trying to get transferred into the fleet, even to the extent of shipping over for six more years from USNR to USN, as I was then on minority cruise in the Navy for DDW (duration of war). I was sworn in for six more years at the Brooklyn AGC, right in sight of the Statue of Liberty in New York harbor, November 28, 1943. I was proud to be in the U. S. Navy and had intended to make a career of service in the U. S. Navy. In my waiting around for some further word of transfer, I was suddenly notified that I was to be a member in another Armed Guard crew being organized there at the Brooklyn AGC. Several of us fellows were going through the clothing line, receiving heavy foul weather gear, and I suspected that this was a crew headed for a ship on a run to Mummansk, Russia, and I certainly didn't want any part in that! That very day, thankfully, and providentially, I believe, I ran right into my Gunnery Officer and raft mate, Franklin T. Hamilton, who had just arrived at the AGC after the trial in Cape Town. After our few words of greeting, I told him that I had, just that day, been put into a newly formed Armed Guard crew and that I had used my RRR leave time to get into the reg. USN from the USNR. Hamilton said, "Come with me," and up we went to the Commandant of the AGC. Hamilton represented me very well, explaining the episodes of two ship sinkings and our days spent on the raft. The Commandant took my orders and stamped CANCELLED on them and gave the order for H. N. Sisco to be sent by train to Deland, Florida, for two weeks' RRR, and upon my return to the AGC in Brooklyn, I was transferred into the Amphibious Forces, and landed up at Little Creek, VA at the Amphib Base for LST training.

I never saw Hamilton again until 43 years later. After obtaining his current address from the Navy Department, in February, 1986 I saw him in Los Angeles, where he had resumed his law career after he was released from the Navy in 1946. One of the biggest thrills of my life was seeing Hamilton after all those many years, reliving those eventful days of our lives, and sharing memories, pictures, and memorabilia.

On July 5, 1966, while living in Denver, Colorado, my wife and I made a short holiday trip to Albuquerque, New Mexico. As we neared Albuquerque I recalled that my old friend and shipmate from the Bacon, Carl E. Harris, hailed from Albuquerque. Upon arriving there I grabbed up a phone book, and sure enough, his name was listed; I called him, and in a very short time we were together, animatedly and happily hashing over our life raft experiences and getting caught up on what had happened in our lives since that time. We had some great get togethers after that, commemorating the 26th anniversary of our life raft experiences, taking a boat excursion trip on Lake Powell, Utah in August, 1969. In 1966 we lost our great shipmate, Carl E. Harris, after suffering from a respiratory disease for many years. After contacting and visiting Frank Hamilton in Los Angeles in February, 1986, we were saddened to learn shortly after that that he had suffered a severe heart attack and was then taken to a care facility in Reno, Nevada. I was able to visit him on two occasions. We last saw him on Thanksgiving Day, 1992. The passing away of these two fellows, Hamilton and Harris, has been a great loss to me.

After meeting Harris in 1966, he sent me a copy of his diary he kept on the raft, which I treasure very highly. And Hamilton, sometime after making contact with him, gave me copies of his Navy papers which he had preserved from both the ships we had lost. He also gave me his binoculars that I had used on the raft, and with which I spotted land. I'm very privileged to have these items in my possession.

Upon my arrival back to the Brooklyn AGC about January 2, 1944, I was transferred into the Amphibious Forces and sent to Little Creek, Virginia. At the Amphib Training Base there I had more schooling in gunnery, and after several weeks was assigned to a Landing Ship Tank (LST) crew. Our newly formed LST crew, including officers, boarded the train and arrived in Boston, MA, sometime about March 31, 1943. We were lodged at the Fargo Building in Boston, going by bus daily out to our new ship, the USS LST #909, doing daily tasks at the Hingham Shipyard in Boston to ready the ship for commissioning on May 11, 1944. After shakedown cruise and all the crew and officers were familiarized with our "new home," we sailed on down to New York City where an LCT was installed on our main deck on mammoth wooden beams for future LCT launching from our main deck in an invasion, which turned out to be Leyte beach head at Blue Beach on Dulag, Leyte, Philippines, October 20, 1944. After that came our second invasion on the LST 909 at San Jose, Mindoro Island, Philippines, December 16, 1944. As our LST was in a line with six other LSTs heading for the beach we were all attacked by 13 Kamikaze (suicide) planes. Our LST was attacked by three of them, and our gunners manning the 20MM and 40MM AA guns remarkably shot down the three planes just short of their target - our ship. We all felt that we had really been spared that eventful day, as the LST 738, ahead of us, and the one just aft of us, #472, were hit by suicide plains and were eventually destroyed.

Our next invasion was Lingayen Gulf, Luzon, Philippines, January 10th, 1945, and our last and final invasion was Okinawa Shima, Easter Sunday, April 1st, 1945.

All of our "boys" on the LST 909 were gratefully happy when on August 6th and 8th, 1945, the atomic bombs were dropped on Japan, bringing the war in the Pacific to an end. My really happy day came in October, 1945, when I learned that I would be transferred back to the USA for

sixty days' leave, 30 days rehabilitation and a 30 day reinstatement leave. I remained in the Navy until my six year enlistment was up in September, 1949, and then shipped over into the USNR for a four year term. I was recalled to Active duty during the Korean war in June, 1950, and served one year, 1952, serving on the USS Colonial, Landing Ship Dock (LSD) #18, in Japan and Korea. I don't regret one bit my 11 years Naval service, even though I had some rugged duty at times. I'm proud of our U. S. Navy, and would serve again if I were called upon to do so.

Two years after WWII I was converted to Christianity, and have lived for the Christ who died for me and all of us. I am grateful that my life was spared and I could carry out my promises to God that I made on that raft and those four Pacific invasions, and I was given opportunity to live a much better life and prepare for eternity.

--oo 00 oo--

*Suzy, the dog, made it back to the States, thanks to those fellows' ingenuity and persistence. It is my understanding the dog later received some notoriety in some newspaper.

DIARY OF CARL E. HARRIS, BM2C, USNR

Mr. Lloyd, this is a copy of the diary kept by Carl E. Harris, which I believe was mentioned in my narrative account. Mr. Harris was several years my senior and obviously realized the importance of some kind of record. You can't imagine the feelings I had when we met many years later and he brought out his diary as we spent many hours re-living our life raft experience!

Hank (Henry N.) Sisco

JULY 14, 1943:

Boarded raft at 0300.

Sub came alongside raft - hailed other raft nearby - fired third torpedo at 0315. Ship disappeared shortly afterward.

Lifeboat came alongside about 0600, and drifted in downwind -wind from south-east. Everybody sick. Later in morning tied to other raft. Rigged sail, set course west and north. South-east wind blowing steadily. Thirteen (13) men aboard the two rafts: F. L. Hamilton, Zecharty, Timm Raymond Wallace, J.B. Whitehorne, Sisco and myself in the gun crew. The dog "Suzy".

Merchant seamen were: Jim Colton, George Beedle, Tommy George, Melville, Williams and O'Connor.

4 days with nothing at all happening. July 18 at 1700 wind dies down, sea calm. Plane sighted at 1600, low, far away, flying north.

JULY 19: Shoot fish, ate some, hang some on mast to dry. No wind, calm sea.

JULY 20: Motor of plane heard at 0400. Light flare, sound of motor dies out in distance. At 1500 ship, freighter, large, comes over horizon. Changes course when she sights our two rafts. Signal with mirror gets no results. At 1800 rafts separate. Mr. Hamilton, Sisco, George, Beedle, Melville, Williams on Number four raft; White Horse, Timm Wallace, Leschiptz, O'Connor, Colton and Suzy and I on number three raft. Begin rowing.

JULY 21: Rowed all night. No wind, sea calm all day: nothing sighted.

JULY 22: Still rowing to westward. Wind from south-east. Sails drawing. Lookout spots rocket flare to eastward at 2300.

JULY 23: Sound of motor heard at 0400, believed to be sub. Sound stops suddenly when we light flare. Wind out of southeast, rain squalls in distance. Move the appliances to catch rain. It doesn't rain. Sea rough, wind steady.

JULY 24: Wind southeast, sea choppy. Moral of crew is low. I was most cheerful of those aboard. No land - nothing in sight.

JULY 25: Sea rough before was light, calmer at sunup. Rained at 1500, caught water, two oz. for each man. Suzy drinks off the deck, also Timm and Wallace. Make net of wire from splint out of first aid kit, catch small fish, about twenty. They taste good.

JULY 26: Cloudy, calmer in afternoon. Rough seas begin at 1200. Wind from southeast. Sails drawing. Talk of heaving Suzy overboard. Zimm and Elton drink salt water.

JULY 27: Timm refuses to stand watch. Everyone feeling low. Caught more small fish with net.

JULY 28: Ship sighted.



Charles E. Hoffert is shown presenting a plaque honoring the Armed Guard Gun Crew No. 50 KIA in the sinking of the S.S. West IVIS to Armed Guard Theodore Seward (R) and Charles Blockston, Merchant Seaman (C) which was placed on board the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN, 6/12/93. (See plaque wording on outside of "POINTER")

Hoffert's uncle, Roy Willis Lanham, was one of the nine Armed Guard KIA. Hoffert's mother and other members of the family attended and took the cruise during the BROWN's visit to Norfolk, VA.

Hoffert, a retired Army Officer, did research on the WEST IVIS and discovered that it was the first Armed Guard Gun Crew to be killed in WW II. Lanham was originally listed as missing in action because the WEST IVIS went down without a trace and no survivors to tell what happened. During the '60's, he began researching the ship's history. He gained copies of the German sub's log and was able to trace the ship's route and fate after it left the New York Harbor. The U-boat's log revealed 2 torpedoes hit the ship splitting her in two, sinking in 14 minutes. Men who were not killed instantly were dumped into the freezing, choppy waters.

Charles E. Hoffert
6721 Greenyard Road
Chester, VA 23831-1424

Dear Cal: June 3, 1993
My wife, Marilyn and I, recently visited Hawaii and took a tour of Pearl Harbor. It has changed a lot since I was there in 1944. I was extremely emotional when we toured the "ARIZONA" Monument. It is just beautiful. A tribute to those men who died on that terrible day in history.

On our way home we stopped over in San Francisco to see the S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN at the Fort Mason Center. I called Marci Hooper who was most helpful in giving us directions. We walked from our Hotel along the Embarcadero to Pier 3, and there was the O'BRIEN!!!! Words can not describe how thrilled I was!!! My wife and I spent 4 hours on board. It was just as I had remembered her. The ship is in great shape. Most of the guns on her are workable and painted. They look just great! I hope many members will have a chance to visit the ship. They will not be disappointed. Thanks!

James E. Pruiett 2008 S.Bocke Rd., Evansville, Indiana. 47714 (812) 476-4732

* * * *

Thanks James for letting us know that this ship meant so much to you. Many of us have had the same feeling. All the credit for these ships goes to: the ones who built them; the ones who sailed them; the ones who protected them; the ones who saved them; to those who have spent so many long hours getting them back in condition, ready to show and everyone who let others know. "KEEP 'EM SAILING". cal

Hello CAL: Enclosed find a poem or whatever it can be called. I'm not known or pretend to be a poet or a literary genius. I splashed this out during the big snow we had last winter. I had about three feet or so at my front door, and I live on the second floor! (believe that?)

Anyway, I tried hard to remember more details but drew a blank. Some things I do remember I couldn't find a way to put it down on paper. Maybe you can use it - I spent time at it and enjoyed trying to keep my memories a little fresh. If we could only remember all the things big and small, we could have volumes written, but alas, that was not meant to be.

Thanks for your attention, Jim May

THE S.S. WEST CHESWALD'S LAST VOYAGE

By James May

As the last lines were ~~heard~~, and the tugs pulled us away.
Little did we know we were headed for that fateful day.
The West Cheswald, an old ship, and some of her crew had seen battle before.
But she was out to settle just one more score.
As the days at sea keep passing away,
And that mighty oceans fury keeps pounding her hulk.
While could answer back, she would say,
Come on ocean I'll take all you've got.
Edna's ~~hus~~ to do out here as we head for the other shore.
Watches to stand, keep the guns ready to fire at a given command, and lots more.
Oh yes, don't forget the chipping and painting,
That is by far the most dreaded chore.
Remember when that North Atlantic really got rough?
You're in the gun tub on the bow.
Just staying on your feet was mighty tough.
With water breaking over, and soaking your brow.
The bridge and stern watch didn't seem that rough.
How about the dude who came aboard with the guitar.
Now we can listen to the music and sing in the shower.
But alas, he left us all ticked off and fuming.
Never played anything, all he got done was tuning.
Neither will we forget when the general alarm rings,
As you stumble in the darkness and the fright that it brings.
Many a night we slept in our clothes, all we had to do was grab our life jacket.
Head for the guns to see what is causing all this racket.
You stare out in the darkness and hope for the best
Suddenly, you see what you think is a corvette.
Yes, there it is, riding high and fast on that waves crest.
You know now there's a sub lurking just beneath the surface, and that's what shes after.
If she don't depth charge her out of there, this could turn into a disaster.
Things turn quiet and still now, and all you can do is wait.
All is left in the hands of those tiny escorts.
They alone will determine your fate.
And then off to the starboard you hear a roar, far worse than deafening thunder.
And flash, after flash, light up the convoy and the sky.
You think now it's a tanker and it's going under.
If they could bring that sub to the surface with the corvette standing by.
The gun crew would be ready, and acting swiftly,
They would give it a pounding with the four inch fifty.
For in the "Armed Guard" they have put their trust.
"Aim to Deliver" is the motto, and to us its an absolute must.
This is the most hated of the perils on the sea.
How about the collisions, they were always feared by me.
The fog and the icebergs and, yes, don't forget those damnable mines.
These are a few of the things that come to mind.
And so we all had time to share events like this.
Just sit in the mess hall, drink coffee, and reminiscence.
So as our voyage nears its ending, and the rough seas turn to calm.
We are guided to dock side and had endured no harm.
No sooner had the gang plank been lowered.
When the brass with their gold stripes came aboard.
They gathered the gun crew in secrecy, and told us of our plight.
And a very strong hint of there being a big fight.
Not telling us when or where it would be.
For they themselves, didn't know you see.
We traded our cargo for ballast, and explosives hidden in the hull.
To sink her was the purpose, no more did they tell us, that was all.
Added on a forty and new ammunition.
Two Army men to help with the transition,
Painted broad white stripes down the sides and across the holds.
Whatever our mission, we are still being left out in the cold.
After this was all done, they sent us off in secrecy some where to hide.
No mail coming in, no mail going out.
Just sitting there at anchor, wondering what this was all about.
We had plenty of time to talk and think.
And how nice it would be, if we only had a few beers to drink.
But finally after being isolated out there for a month, it came time to leave.
And we still didn't know what they had up their sleeve.
Toward the south of England we head once again.
The Captain pushing her for all she's got.
I'd venture to say that would be no more than ten knots.
The U.S. Fleet now comes into view and as they pass by and leave us behind.
Just watching those "Man-O-Wars" makes the chills run up and down your spine.
Planes are now appearing flying fast and high.
There are all kinds and so many they darken the sky.
And so it goes with all this commotion, that deep down inside you begin to feel the anxiety
and emotion.
And it keeps coming back into your mind
If we get hit sitting on these explosives, there won't be anything left of us to find.
Once more we are towed into the dock,
And what we saw there was somewhat of a shock.
Soldiers, vehicles, tanks, weapons of all kinds, as far as our eyes could see.
My, what a mystery this was turning out to be.

That evening they called us together once more
And told us we would be headed for that Normandy shore.
To scuttle the Cheswald to make an artificial harbor.
Her sailing days would be over, and to us a maritime martyr.
Now my thoughts go back as I recall,
For a chance to get in on a really big fight.
But now that I'm here and know the danger of it all.
Maybe I should have thought it over before making that call.
Late that night we slipped away and headed for that fateful day.
They told us just before we left, that once there we wouldn't be driven back.
Even though you are Navy, we could end up with a rifle and a pack.
There was a moment of laughter and joy, when someone asked if that included Kilroy?
By now the channel waters was churning with ships.
They said by days end sixty five hundred will have made the trip.
As the dawn wrestled with the night
Gen. Ike's finest had already started the fight.
The Navy blasting away with their big guns on the left and on the right.
Soon the krauts finally came to their senses
And they scramble to their positions to man their defenses,
As the landing craft were hit, blown sky high and shattered.
Get those men to the beach head was all that mattered.
With the water already showing splotches of red
The courageous coxswains steered their craft through the wounded and dead.
As this slaughter and carnage unfolds before our eyes.
It will be by the Grace of God if we to, are to survive.
So it goes on with the deafening sounds
Planes roaring overhead with gliders in tow.
Ready to fight when they hit the ground.
But its over for them right now if they hit the hedge row.
Look out above! Someone screams
As three planes are hit, smoking, diving and heading for our ship.
Luckily, all three miss and again we are saved.
But the three brave pilots have gone to a watery grave.
So on and on it goes, and the battle rages.
Someday history books will be filled with pages and pages,
Of all the heroes and heroics that came to play.
And it will go down in history as the "Longest Day",
Finally day slowly fades, and it turns to night
And we hope for the best.
And perhaps a few hours of well earned rest.
But no, don't get your hopes up high
For now there are flares, and they just seem to hang there, and light up the sky.
Now we hear the drone of the bombers
And the bombs come thundering down ever so close and often.
Would this old Cheswald turn out to be our everlasting coffin?
Why is it some close by are taken and other not?
Some say it is called luck, other agree with a nod.
But could that so called luck, perhaps, be the will of God.
Dawn again chases the night and there is more of the same, on and on it goes.
Ships keep coming in to unload troops and weapons on the beach.
Victory is their goal, but not yet within reach.
Now it is our turn to move into place.
The Captain deftly guiding her in and shells exploding deadly shrapnel on the bulk heads and on our deck.
The Cheswald is getting closer to being just another shipwreck.
Ensign Lorimer, is the one to flip the switch.
She shudders and trembles, and slowly settles to the bottom without a hitch,
And so our mission should be over and done.
But no Army men to man the guns
They didn't survive the initial run to the beach.
For now our departure is out of reach
As each day passes and things become calmer
And we have time to reflect
Of the fright and fears of those first few hours.
And perhaps trying to hide it so others won't suspect,
When you tighten up all over, and you get weak in your knees.
And you say to yourself, don't let this happen to me, please!
But if you can't shake it off, and overcome that feeling
You could end up a nervous wreck and that takes time for healing.
It's been said if you have no fear that you are not normal.
Believe me I passed that test and came through the turmoil.
After awhile we are out of there and go home for a brief stay.
The first thing my Mother asked me if I was okay.
And where were you when the Church Bells rang and they told us it was "D-Day"?
I said "I was there Mom, and you were with me all the way"
She looked up at me and smiled,
That said it all, there was no more to say,
It will be fifty years June the Sixth 'Ninety Four'
That this all came about and happened to be.
And there's more to this story that won't be told by me.
Other things I simply can't recall.
Surely as a young lad of nineteen,
You can't expect me to remember it all.



Lone Sailor

U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL
Washington, D.C.



DEDICATION

To the Officers and Men who sailed the ships of
World War II,
especially to those who lost their lives, and to
their families.

THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS "13TH" NATIONAL REUNION WILL BE HELD APRIL 10-14, 1994 AT THE CLARION PLAZA HOTEL, 9700 INTERNATIONAL DR., ORLANDO, FL 32819, (800) 366-9700, (407) 352-9700, FAX (407) 351-9111. THE HOSTS ARE: RUDY AND ELLIE KOZAK, 4950 DORY DR., NEW PORT RICHEY, FL 34652, (813) 842-2274. MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS EARLY! LET THE HOTEL KNOW YOU ARE A "U.S.N. ARMED GUARD VETERAN."



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