

Jan. 2005-1

# U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154

January 2005 Newsletter

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Mark your calendars for the 2005 reunion to be held in the Chicago area  
September 15 thru September 18, 2005  
At the Hilton Garden Hotel Inn Oakbrook Terrace  
In \*\* Oakbrook, Illinois.

See enclosed hotel brochure  
and reservation sheet for prices and  
information regarding reservation deadline.

Rate is \$79.00 for 3 days before and 3 days after  
Be sure to mention USS Lowndes Reunion.

Check in: 3:00 PM Check out: 12:00 PM  
Covered parking available

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The following shipmates, spouses & guest were in attendance at the reunion in  
Branson, Missouri

David, Odess & Jeremy Brinkman  
Max Cole  
Louis & Pama Danek \*  
Mary & Mark Gebhart  
John & Marilyn Hess  
Jeffrey & Cindy Hess \*  
Don Henderson \*  
Mike & Pam Hennessey  
Alonzo & Oniece Hodgson  
Bud & Jean Kautz  
Ed. King & Lavada Boyer  
David & Susan LaBay \*

Jesse & Brett LaBay \*  
David & Joanne Long  
Jim & Debby Meehan  
Don & Shirley Lorenzi  
Leo & Margaret O'Brien  
Warren & Albena Proctor  
Arthur & Marjorie Rauseo  
Earl & Frances Robertson  
Dallas & Lorene Stratton  
Bill & Amelia Taylor  
Jan & Perry Trober  
John Vernale

\* 1<sup>st</sup> timers

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Put your thinking caps on, Jan is considering having another Lowndes "Giveaway" after the banquet. Please help her with items for the event. A schedule of activities will be sent as soon as it is available. There will be many attractions to visit. There will be a complimentary shuttle within 5 miles.

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Illinois was organized as a territory Feb. 3, 1808 and admitted to the union Dec. 3, 1808 as the 21st state. Nicknamed the Prairie State. Known as the Lincoln state though Abe Lincoln was born in Kentucky and became the sixteenth president of the United States. Many notables were natives of Illinois, Jack Benny, Black Hawk, Edgar Rice Bourroughs, Walt Disney, Benny Goodman and Ernest Hemmingway to mention a few. Many attractions include the Art Institute, Field Museum, Museum of Science and Industry and the Mellennium Park.

\*\*Oakbrook is a suburb of Chicago that is the home for the Chicago Cubs and the Chicago Bears. Yes, I know, we didn't do so well in 2004 but we still have hopes.

## **E. & F. Robertson**

The year 2004 has fast come to an end. Where did the time go? Time flies when you're having fun, shopping, doctors and pharmacies—like we need that kind of fun. In April we went to Oklahoma City for the USS Oklahoma ship reunion. Earl was stationed at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7, 1941 assigned to that ship. Luckily, luckily he had a broken wrist and was in the hospital on that fateful day. He witnessed much of the bombing of the harbor that day. His records, of course went down with the ship which was capsized. His name is listed as missing in action on at least one memorial, but correctly on other memorials. Jan and Perry chauffeured and we plan to return in '05 to visit places we missed. In June we went to Earl's 50<sup>th</sup> yr. alumni reunion. Very few of his class were there. Attending the Lowndes reunion in Branson we toured the campus of the College of the Ozarks, a gigantic marvelous place where the students pay no tuition but work so many hours to keep the school going. No city smog to mar the church or other buildings. It was great being in Branson and hoping to make the next one in Chicago. Had a lot of car trouble coming home and thanks to Mary and Mark for receiving our call for help. A kind person used his cell phone to call Mary. Had the car towed back to Springfield, MO for repairs. It was in the shop twice, but we finally made it home. Such is the saga of the Robertson's. (See May 2002-8) for more on Earl.

*Ed note: I'm familiar with Springfield. In 1941 5 of us fellows reached that city only to have a rear spring on my '36 Olds break. Lucky tho, found a junk yard that only had a '34 Olds spring. Bought it, (3/4" short). Months later the other one snapped so I replaced it with another '34, kinda evened it out.*

## **Lois Chappell**

Just a few lines to tell you how much we missed the reunions and all the fun we had. Howard is doing so much better with new medication and seems to be content there in the nursing home. His health has stabilized. I

read the letters to him when we receive them. Our son Don has been in contact with David Brinkman via the computer. He found the web site for the Lowndes and is so excited, he spends hours reading about it and has downloaded many pages, pictures and info for Howard. David sent a Lowndes history calendar. Howard has me read from it and he remembers many details about it. Enclosed dues and look forward to hearing from all of you.

*Just in case you slide over the roster list here is Howard's address: 34065 Route 18, Wampum, PA. Take a few minutes to bring him up to date re your activities.*

## **Marty Fife**

My mother, June Zinkgraf enjoys the U.S.S. Lowndes newsletters. Please continue to include her in your mailings. She instructed me to enclose a check for the dues. I hope it helps. New address is: 5500 W. 9<sup>th</sup> #105, Amarillo, TX 79106.

*Yes, Marty, with the ever increasing cost of printing and postage it will help. Thank you.*

## **Leo O'Brien**

Now that the World's Series and playoffs have ended I have no excuse but to write. First off we were happy with the results and the Red Sox Nation is relieved of the "Curse." Margaret and I enjoyed Branson very much all of the shows were excellent. We were both impressed with the College of the Ozarks and the fact that the students did not pay tuition but worked their way through. The Museum on campus had something of every phase of life, very impressive. And the Veteran's Museum with those 50 life size bronze soldiers marching was breath taking. With all there was to see and do we still missed our friends, Clark and Dottie and the Richard brothers and of course, Howard and Louis Chappell. We also missed Margaret McGrody and were sorry to hear of the loss of Jim Chilcote, her brother-in-law. David Brinkman outdid himself with videos and tapes of the U.S.S. Bayfield.

Jan. 2005-3

**Shirley Wetzell**

Leo O'Brien (cont'd)

My brother-in-law was with the Marines at Korea and was transported there aboard the U.S.S. Bayfield. I have yet to show that segment of the tape to him. \*\* Max Cole gave us a little excitement along with his friend, Don. We have since heard that they are well and have returned safely to New York. Mary and Jan did a marvelous job; the hotel accommodations were excellent with the restaurants and pubs on the premises plus the veteran's memorabilia and pictures down stair. As usual we enjoyed the banquet and give-away. Thanks to their husbands, Mark and Perry, the men behind two nice women. Thanks to John Vernale, we had an experienced chauffer to get to the shows and to Springfield. He also arranged to make reservations to the Shoji Tabuchi violin show, which was an extremely enjoyable show, with the polytechnic displays and fine music. John was able to change his flight and as a result got home a few hours early. Getting through the winter and look forward to the reunion in Chicago in '05.

*\*\*Ed. Note: I phoned Max Oct. 7<sup>th</sup>. He sounded very upbeat, reported he stayed in the hospital until Oct. 5<sup>th</sup> when he and his companion, Don, finally flew back to New York. On the way to Branson he spent 2-3 days in Springfield visiting a college classmate, who was on Corregidor and captured and spent 3 years in a concentration camp. Dropped from 200 lbs. to 90 lbs. He related many horror stories while a prisoner. Max's last words to me, "See you next year."*

### **Larry Holderman**

My father, J. Charles Holderman was a mailman on the U.S.S. Lowndes. I would like to know if anyone on the ship might have some pictures of my father that could be e mailed to Me - larryholderman@our-town.com

### **Chuck Rodger**

My grandpa, L. B. Rodgers served on the USS Lowndes, 1944-1945, we both would love to receive the newsletters.

Just wanted to let you know that my parents, Sterling L. and Velma Hornsby, celebrated their 60<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary on Oct. 7, 2004. They were married in Long Beach while the Lowndes was moored there. Billy Biggers, my father's good friend was the best man. Because they didn't have a real wedding ceremony we gave them a big party, complete with a wedding cake. I finally found the answer to the whereabouts on Billy Biggers. When I found out his middle name was -Wilson- I checked the Social Security Death Index. Billy died in Alabama on May 29, 1997.

*Ed. Note: The above party noted by Shirley was exactly the same thing that occurred for Jean and me in Feb. 1994. Our kids did the same for us for our 50<sup>th</sup>.*

### **Nancy Gatewood**

I have procrastinated enough. Please accept my donation to help with cost of mailing. I really enjoy reading all the news. The "Lowndes" has a neat web-site. I really enjoy it. Our sons (4) have reached the age where they are interested in the history of World War II. Our younger son, Todd has been in contact with some of you, Jack and I married in 1946 after the Lowndes decommissioning. Like lots of the service men we had to get jobs and struggle for years. So busy – and Jack never lived near any of his service friends and never talked about it. I know there has been a lot of work put into the web-sites. Keep up the good work, it is wonderful! Jack still works. We have been blessed with good health. Five years ago Todd set me up to take a class for Dummies (I did) It's great. Being a sewer I now have sewing, embroidering machines all connected to the computer. Never too old to learn.

*Ed. Note: And I thought I was doing fine just learning how to turn the damn thing on and off.*

It takes 600 grapes to make 1 bottle of wine.

Jan. 2005-4

## **Thomas Baker**

I was on board the Lowndes when it was commissioned, I made warrant while on board and did not leave until after Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

## **David Brinkman**

Odess and I are building a new home. It's on the main river going into Columbia, SC about 1 mile from downtown on a location where Sherman crossed the Broad River on the way to burning Columbia, it turns out that this lot was a dump during the civil war and we had to clear out tons of old bricks and wood before excavation could begin. The neighboring homes were 160 and 150 Castle Road. The county investigated and informed us that the correct address of our lot would really be "Postal Address 154" or "PA 154" Castle Road. Now is that a coincidence or what??

*Ed. David will inform us when the new address will take effect. Couldn't happen to a nicer family.*

## **W. & J. Richards**

All was going well until August when Wally developed a superficial thrombo-phlebitis in his lower left leg in July. Dr. prescribed antibiotics and bextra for 2 weeks and warm moist packs. Shortly after he was diagnosed with a bladder infection, so again a round of antibiotics. We thought he had this under control so we went to Madison, WI for his army reunion. On the second day he ran a fever and felt lousy, went to Emergi-care where he was told he had prostatitis. A week later he had surgery. Jackie is good and back to work. Wally's Mother was 104 October 29<sup>th</sup>. We believe she will outlive all of us.

*Ed. You two take care so we can see you*

## **Bill Taylor**

It was good to see all at the reunion in Branson. Amelia and I enjoyed the reunion in

Branson. Amelia and I enjoyed the reunion activities and we certainly appreciated all the work Mary Gebhart and Jan Trober did to make it a successful and fun filled event. The tour of the College of the Ozarks mill and Ralph Foster Museum was great. It certainly gives one an appreciation for the many advances that have been made in our lifetime. We enjoyed the Jim Stafford show very much. All activities were good and everything was well planned. Thanks to Earl and Frances for having two great daughters.

*Ed. Note: Bill sent several newspaper articles regarding the closing of the Indianapolis Athletic Club. We had our fourteenth reunion at this club in 2002 hosted by Walt and Jackie Umbarger assisted very ably by Marty and Rowana.*

## **D. & S. Lorenzi**

As we have become accustomed to, the reunion went well, the Saturday dinner felt like Xmas with all those gifts. Again, many thanks to the young girls for all their efforts to make us old geezers feel important. After Branson Shirley and I spent 4 days in Chicago and 4 days visiting relatives near Pittsburg, PA. Overall we traveled thru 10 states and drove 4800 miles. Not bad for someone who is about to celebrate his 80<sup>th</sup> birthday. Thanks, Bud, for the effort over the years to keep the APA 154 memory alive.

## **Art Wilson**

I was a member of the amphibious group and on boat #9. I still think of my buddy, Harley Hughes as you recall he was in the beach party. We became close friends. As I wrote before he left his shipmates July 20, 2000. Will try to e mail more often as the old pump is doing better after 5 bypasses and 60% still going. Hope all have a good 2005.

*David Brinkman has created two web sites that will make interesting reading:*

<http://www.usslowndes.net/Lowndes/decklog/dindex.htm>

<http://www.usslowndes.net/Lowndes/wardiary>

## **E. Max Cole**

Want to set down my adventures of last October at the Lowndes reunion. It was great to arrive in Springfield and Branson—Springfield being my home town. It would take a couple of police dogs to find any friends or relatives in the area these days. I did contact Pat Turner, the mother of the movie star Kathleen Turner and we visited an old college buddy of mine in a rest home. I can remember when he didn't rest so much. My friend Don Henderson acted as my driver and aid. All the sea dogs at the pizza party will remember him. Happy I got to visit the Ralph Foster Museum, noting how much it has grown. My sister worked for Ralph Foster for 30 years. Also saw the first nights theater event. Next day I was taken with the ailment that sent me to the Branson hospital. It had to do with prostate and heart. It sure slowed me down. Then Don fell on his face in front of the hotel. Had 2 black eyes, looking like a 2<sup>nd</sup>-rate boxer who lost. I was stuck by how friendly everyone was at the hospital and just about where ever we were in Branson and Springfield. Even the food was good. We got accommodations at a friendly but drooping motel exactly like Tony Perkins motel in Hitchcock's movie, murder wasn't on the bill , but the coffee was pretty bad. I sure hope to attend the next reunion in 2005. In closing I want to express my thanks to the kindness of the Lowndes seamen and lovelies, and for the gifts, the flag draped 3-D Patriotic scroll, and the CD & DVD of the Lowndes given by David Brinkman. I even take a bow to Bud with his loyalty and energy for us guys. I hope all mates and other mates enjoy a great 2005.

## **Rueben Johnson**

I enlisted in the Navy December 8, 1941 at the recruiting office in Minneapolis, Minnesota and reported to Great Lakes Naval Station. After two weeks 6 of us were transferred to the Naval Air Station in Seattle, WA Short boot camp. This was a 3 day train trip, everybody traveled by train then. At Seattle NAS worked with radar needs on the

PBYs. Was sent to Alaska. A naval air facility was being set up near the northern entrance to the inland passage with appropriate defense from the air and sea. Got the place organized with a galley, bunkhouse and docks set up. Dammed a mountain stream and piped it in for our water supply. A real "Hilton" of our day. By this time the Japanese had occupied U. S. island in the Aluetian chain and who knew what they had in mind to do next so it was urgent to take precautions to do what could be done with what we had at hand. On a sea worthy craft up past Kodiak Island, Anchorage, etc. Very cold windy conditions. The spray from the waves over the bow froze and would build up to the point we would have to chip it off so it didn't weigh us down. Suffice it to say the Japanese didn't get reinforcements and supplies. It ended in suicide for this entire force. Went home on leave and met a very neat gal. Later in 1944 got another leave and I just happened to have a diamond ring in my jumper so quite appropriately I gave it to Dorothy, she is the neat gal I mentioned before. We married on June 21, 1944. Boarded the Lowndes October 14, 1944 as a CM3c. My shipmates know the rest of the story as we were in it together.

*This is a condensed version of the entire story sent to me. Will have more in a later newsletter.*

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### 2004 Give-a-way



Mary Gebhart & Jan Trober

Jan. 2005-6

Now that I have a captive audience, read of our experiences at the Branson reunion. Jean and I arrived one day early and in the early PM visited the pub in the hotel. However we found that the O'Briens, Rauseos, Longs and John Vernale beat us there. After imbibing of the sugar builder uppers it was decide to take in a show. Thanks to John he got on the land line and reserved tickets for the little group for the Shoji Tabuchi violin show. David long had already arrange for tickets for him and Joanne. Jean and I owe a thank you to David "No crap" Long as he offered to drive us to the theater. John chauffeured the rest of the couples. It was an extremely enjoyable show, polytechnics and stage effects were spectacular. While on the subject of shows. The whole reunion group attended the Jim Stafford show. We all were instructed to remain in our seats after the performance. Then we were taken to the first rows and Jim was seated in our midst for a photo taken by an assistant. Below is an attempt to reproduce the photo in this newsletter as it was e mailed to me post haste.



A trip to Ripleys Believe it or Not! Proved to be a very interesting display of artifacts of unusual items. Especially interesting to Arthur and Marjorie was watching coins spin around a large bowl and disappearing from sight. Roy Rogers-Dale Evans Museum and Happy Trails Theater was a place to sit and relax before continuing to the Ralph Foster Museum. The group did quite

a lot of walking, how much can this group of recycled teen-agers endure? On to another Point of interest the college of the Ozarks. The grounds were immaculate and maintained entirely by the students. In return they paid no tuition. We saw a grist mill reminiscent of olden times. Had lunch at the restaurant on the premises



COLLEGE OF THE OZARKS  
*"The College That Works"*  
POINT LOOKOUT, MO. 65726  
Incorporated in 1906 as The School of the Ozarks

The Fruit Cake Jelly Kitchen was another stop to favor those who have a sweet tooth and want to replenish their cravings.



We visited the Veterans Memorial Museum where there was the world's largest Bronze Memorial Sculpture seventy feet long and weighing fifteen tons consisting of fifty life-size soldiers storming a beach. Each figure was modeled after an actual combat veteran, one from each of the states. The walls were covered with the names of the men and women who gave their lives to defend freedoms in the many conflicts of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Over 500,000 names were inscribed. To say the least it was awe inspiring.