

# U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154

## JANUARY 2009 NEWSLETTER

Editor: Wm. "Bud" Kautz-CCBW, 34782 Hiawatha Trail-McHenry, IL 60051-(815)344-6326  
redlabelbuddha@comcast.net

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The following Reunion members were in attendance at the San Francisco Reunion:

Shen Adams & Mary Vergin	Vernon & Beverly Freitas	Dee Rodgers & Jill Cummings
Ann & Kelli Brewster	Stuart & Allie Hyde	Ina Mae, Charles & Iris Ross
David, Odess & Jeremy Brinkman	Robin & Randall Kerr	Roger, Lee Solley & Cathy Brown
Ashlee Brown & Mike Johnson	Don & Shirley Lorenzi	John & Bridgett Solley
John, Lebby & Mike Dyer	Jo McCarthy & Sam Petruzelli	Bill & Amelia Taylor
Joe & Loreta Freitas	Leo & Margaret O'Brien	John Vernale & Mary Fuggetta

Sorry to report that your editor, Bud & Jean unfortunately were unable to attend due to health problems. Since our reunions were started in St. Louis, MO in 1989 . This is the first one that we have missed attending.

The 2009 reunion will be at the Milwaukee Marriott West in Waukesha, WI. Which is in the proximity of Milwaukee, WI. Area. Sept. 17<sup>th</sup> thru Sept. 20<sup>th</sup>.

Details regarding the itinerary will be in a future newsletter When the reunion organizer has finalized them.

Please fill out and return the enclosed stamped and addressed post card as promptly as possible. We need an approximate count of attendees to make this a successful reunion.

The General Mitchell International Airport services the Milwaukee area.

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A big thank you to Pam Hennessey for providing the souvenir pens commemorating the 2008 reunion in San Francisco. She even saved one for her old man though he wasn't in attendance. See? Clout does help.

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Milwaukee, thought to be "Good Land" or "Rich Land" in the Menominee & Potawotomi Indian language and established in 1846. More trivia about Wisconsin, it is considered the beer capital of the world where many breweries were brought into being, such as Leinenkuel, Miller, Pabst, Calumet and the Huber. Huber brewed Chicago's favorite German-style lager for the Berghoff Restaurant located in the "Windy City." Also noted for the Green Bay Packers football team that played in the Super Bowl game years ago and because the weather was so cold it became known as the "Ice Bowl" and that led to the scheduling of the Super Bowl games in either warmer climates or domed stadiums. Incidentally The Green Bay Packers won the Super Bowl that year. The Harley Davidson Motor Co, originally began the manufacturing of the motorcycles in Milwaukee. The state flower is Papilionacea ( Viola to those not versed in floriculture).

## *Leo O'Brien*

Bud, we all missed you in San Francisco and hope that you are managing with your physical ailments. Fortunately you have a good caretaker, "Jean." The Whitcomb Hotel was right on Market St. It was very convenient to the BART and street cars and busses. Seniors paid 50 cents. Stuart Hyde arranged for a nice hospitality room and provided a convenient continental breakfast of cereal, bananas, coffee and sweet rolls. John Vernale and the Solley family were a big help. On Saturday we went on a bus tour up to the Golden Gate Park. There were some spectacular views looking down on the city and the bay. In the afternoon we took a boat cruise and because it was Fleet Week there must have been a million people down on the Embarcadero all with the same idea. When we finally got on our boat and put out on the bay the Blue Angels put on another show, only more spectacular. My heart was in my mouth as these super jets roared across the bay from different directions not too far above the Golden Gate Bridge and shift belly to belly as they passed each other. And it was interesting to go under the bridge and turn around and come back in. Earlier we had gone over the bridge and back again on our bus tour. While on the harbor cruise we saw the liberty ship, Jeremiah O'Brien out in the bay. There were more people on the main deck then when the USS Lowndes was fully loaded and ready for combat. The O'Brien was similar to the Lowndes but was not outfitted for the landing craft. We were treated with some vocal entertainment by 5 lovely ladies dressed in Navy attire and they sang some song as from the '40s and '50s. It was a nice touch. We missed Earl and Frances Robertson and of course Jan and Angela and Dave and Joanne Long. Margaret and I visited Arthur Rauseo in Haverhill Crossing Assisted Living and found him in good health and spirits. Arthur is in a first class home and seems to be happy there even though his memory is slipping. Send him a card.

"Thanks for the souvenir pens, Pam."

*"Some of you may remember when we were in the San Diego reunion while in the docks the O'Brien was tied up very near us and Margaret is correct, it looked very much like the Lowndes."*

## *Sharon Rauseo Widmann*

I hope this finds you both in good health. Here is an update on my Dad. He is no longer living in Georgetown. We have moved him to a beautiful assisted living facility in Haverhill called Haverhill Crossings. They have memory impaired unit there which is where my Dad lives. He has a one bedroom apartment and care 24/7. It had become very unsafe for him to be by himself even for short periods of time. I just wanted to let you to be aware of where my Dad was and hoping you could inform the rest of the Lowndes crew that he kept in touch with. He can be reached at Haverhill Crossings (978)556-1600 by asking for an aide in the Harbor program and then asking for him. They are very good at getting him on the phone, but at this point it is getting harder for him to have a phone conversation. I had turned off my moms computer in the spring and there has been something wrong with the phone lines in the house. The house has been on the market and my brother and I had been working on it all summer. Neither of them ever threw anything out! I found cards that I sent in high school, which was a VERY LONG time ago. Also found hundreds of pictures from all the reunions. They always had such a good time with all of you. Please feel free to email or call me. I will keep you updated on my Dad.

Arthur Rauseo  
c/o Haverhill Crossings  
254 Amesbury Rd.  
Haverhill, MA 01830

*"<Email,[srauseo@usa.net](mailto:srauseo@usa.net)>*

*"My phone No.(303)428-7284. My brother, Jim can be reached at (978)353-7724."*



## Bill Taylor

Greetings to all as Amelia and I continue to reflect on the good time we had in San Francisco. Our trip home went well. We left SFO late because the Blue Angels also left Sunday at noon. Southwest did not seem to be in the mood to compete with them for runway rights. Despite the delay in San Francisco the lost time was made up and we arrived in Baltimore before our scheduled time. Stuart, Amelia and I want to commend you for making the kind of decisions you made relative to planning the reunion. Fleet week was what we needed to give us the feeling that we had when the fleet was in during the war, and during the war we never saw San Francisco when the fleet was not in. The planned activities worked out well and I particularly appreciated the bus trip over the Golden Gate bridge and the boat ride under the bridge. As you pointed out 63 years have gone by since our return to the US on the Lowndes. Your management efforts to keep the cost in range for us in an expensive city is appreciated. That includes the hospitality room breakfasts which not only kept costs down, they were a point of assembly before the day's activities began and I feel the idea is one worth using in the future. Being entertained by the Blue Stars of the USS Hornet during and after dinner pretty much made complete a reunion that will be remembered for a long time by all who attended. The list of good restaurants you gave worked out well for us. We used only one, The Blue Muse which was within walking distance for us. Save and Odess, thank you for your presence and many contributions which help make our reunions memorable events. Bud, get well. Keep your activities within the bounds your doctor and your wife set. Best wishes.

*"Yes, Bill I'll do my best to listen and abide by Jean and the many doctors I have to listen to. I say many because that's what is. Jean and I are very sorry to have missed attending this one, it's the first we have not been with the reunion members."*

*There is a full report from Stuart regarding the successful reunion on following pages of this newsletter.*

## John & Lebbly Dyer

We lost one of our small bags as luggage was transferred from a cab to the car our son, Mike, had ordered to take us to the airport. In doing so they must have left it in the cab. The reunion was great. Stuart did a great job. I have never seen so many people and cars in one place as the day we went to the harbor. Bud, we missed you and all your input. We were pretty tired due to the 3 hour difference and the long plane ride.

## Craig A. Gieseke

This is to advise you that my father-in-law, Jack M. Lotsey, has been diagnosed with cancer of the stomach and esophagus. The diagnoses were just made on Friday, October 10<sup>th</sup>, during the 20<sup>th</sup> reunion of the USS Lowndes crew in San Francisco. He had wanted to attend this year's reunion, but was unable to due to health reasons. My son-in-law, Clifford Dillard a Navy Chief stationed at NAS Mayport, had planned to attend with him. Jack served aboard the USS Lowndes during the battle of Iwo Jima; he was part of the medical detachment assigned to the ship. Jack and his wife, Margaret of 58 years, live in Jacksonville, FL. Jack is 92 and will be 93 on January 1, 2009, God willing.

*"Jack boarded the Lowndes on Dec., 23, 1944 and left on Oct. 24, 1945. Craig, I received your e mail too late to notify his former shipmates at the reunion. Jack had sent me a humorous story used in the Jan. 2008 newsletter. Our prayers go out to Jack. He mentioned in an e mail that he was looking forward to attending the SF reunion."*

## David Brinkman

Took the red-eye home and was able to check in at work, do the cub scouts and started downloading the video and pictures to my PC. I will start sending out some pictures to the others. Stuart, you did a great job on the 20<sup>th</sup> reunion. We really enjoyed it and it was very memorable. With all those wonderful San Francisco sites and "diverse" things that we experienced. I have a feeling that this will be one of those life events that Jeremy will always remember.

## **Brinkman** (con't)

We missed you, Bud, even Jeremy seconded my comment saying, "There is something missing in this reunion "...also Jeremy is used to having a surprise "gift" at the banquet...and asked why he isn't getting any this time. I simply explained to him that it's because Ms Jan isn't there to "bring them" and no traditional afghan for door prizes either. Please don't get disappointed if the photos don't come up good...because we didn't get a good focus and set up. We missed you for that too. Overall we had a great time in San Francisco. We have heard more war stories from each of the sailors: Hyde, O'Brien, Vernale, Lorenzi, Dyer, Taylor, Solley and Adams memory of his late father. It was another successful reunion event. We also enjoyed the free continental breakfast we had for four consecutive days at the hospitality room, courtesy of Stuart and the Lowndes. San Francisco was a blast! The hospitality room was really nice with an incredible view of the beautiful City Hall The Blue Angels flying over the city were an amazing sight and sound. You can see photos

## **Ann Brewster**

Thank you for putting dad's (James V. Ross) obit in your newsletter. Mom is still trying to figure out how you knew. We (Mom, myself & my daughter) considered coming to the 2008 reunion. My brother, Charles Ross and his wife, Iris of Germany did too. Dad was always talking about the things that you have done for the reunions, etc. so I would like to say Thank You.

*"As you all know they all did attend the San Francisco reunion. What you may not know is that I had USS Lowndes hats for one of the early reunions and Charles, Sr. purchased one, gave it to Charles, Jr. who wore it on each of his missions during the Gulf War in the early 1990's."*

## **John Vernale**

As for San Francisco. it was great

seeing everyone. I have to say Stuart did a great job. San Francisco is really congested with people and cars. We went to City Hall, 4 blocks away. It was a beautiful building, gold dome and beautiful rotunda. We were surprised to see two men and two women lined up to get married, it's legal in San Francisco. There were quite a few couples. We rode on the trolleys, it was 50 cents for seniors, they give a stub, which is good for the return trip. Leo and I checked the hotel restaurant. A bowl of oatmeal was \$7.00 and two eggs \$9.00. Stuart set up a continental breakfast for us the first day. I went out and bought more cereal, bananas, pastries and coffee. We had that for breakfast the rest of the week. That bottle of scotch Bud donated wasn't touched for 3 days. We went to see the Blue Angels on Friday, a sunny day, not a cloud in the sky and the temperature was 72 degrees in the city. We were at the bay, Bud, with the wind coming in from the bay, we all froze. I wish I had a camera, we all hugged each other it was so cold with the sun shining, I'm sure some of the guys haven't embraced their wives in a long time. It really was a sight. Some of us arrived on Tuesday or Thursday. A bus arrived with 35 men, young and old all dressed in Black Leather, they all had pierced ears, nose and nipples. I have to say they were all respectful. I will be leaving for Florida in Nov.9th and returning April 12<sup>th</sup>.

## **Robin Kerr**

Thanks to David Brinkman I was able to secure my Dad's Navy records. I found out that he served on board the Lowndes for eight months and participated in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns. He also served for 9 months on the U.S.S. Preserver, for 6 months on the U.S.S. Nauset, and for 17 months on the U.S.S. Falcon.

"Robin, I hope that while you were at the San Francisco reunion you were able to get some answers regarding your Dad's service while aboard the Lowndes."



## **Stuart Hyde** (S.F.Host)

Greetings! The USS Lowndes Reunion in San Francisco ended Oct. last night – Oct. 11<sup>th</sup> With a banquet attended by 44 members of the Lowndes family, And entertained by the Singing Blue Stars of the USS Hornet, who serenaded us with such songs as “I’ll ne Seeing You,” and “Bei Mir Bis Du Schoen,” “Sentimental Journey,” and ending with “ I Left My Heart in San Francisco.” The group began each day with a continental breakfast in the Hospitality Suite. Friday featured a viewing of propeller aeroplanes rehearsing acrobatics for their part in the Fleet Week performances of the Blue Angels and the Canadian Flying Team, the Snowbirds. Saturday began (after breakfast) with a 3-1/2 hour bus tour of the City, including a drive across the Golden Gate Bridge, and viewings of the Palace of fine Arts (the only remaining building from the 1915 Panama-Pacific International Exposition), The Palace of the Legion of Honor (an accurate replica of the Paris original, a panoramic view of the City and Bay Area from top Twin Peaks, Chinatown, North Beach, the Ferry Building, and ending at Fisherman’s Wharf. Most of us went aboard a sightseeing boat, which went under the Golden Gate Bridge at exactly 0300 hours, sixty-three years after the Lowndes was approaching San Francisco on a voyage from Saipan carrying 12 Naval Officers, 72 Army Officers, 57 Marine enlisted men, and 1,475 Navy enlisted men. (Alas, at 2000 on October 13, 1945, our destination was changed to Seattle! Unlucky 13<sup>th</sup> for more than 1500 passenfes, and around 550 men of the Lowndes.) During our boat tour we had close-up views of all sides of Alcatraz, and watched (and HEARD) the Blue Angels performing their routines above and on all sides of us.

*“How many of the Reunion group remembers the pools that we bet on as to the exact time we would pass under the Bridge?. I donated money to that pool, but never won anything. Guess I never picked 0300. Another bit of trivia, Jim Frieden spent a very short time behind bars at Alcatraz while on a tour years ago. As I receive more information from Stuart regarding the reunion I will pass it along if not*

*in this one, but in future issues.”*

*“When the Lowndes continued on to Seattle I (Bud) had my 44 points and left the Lowndes headed for Great Lakes Training Station for the three days it took to give me my honorable discharge from the Navy on Oct. 27, 1945.”*

## **Don & Shirley Lorenzi**

The hotel was grand as was the service. We enjoyed the visit very much – on a scale of 0 to 10 we give it an 8. The neighborhood was a surprise and interesting as were the black leather male guests at the time. (I guess we have lived a sheltered life.) We , however came home with fond memories of the hotel and San Francisco. Hope to visit again soon.

## **Lois Chappell**

Just a line to let all know I'm well and enjoying my winter here in Florida. We are having our winter now, 40 degrees over night and 75 degrees in the daytime but we are suffering through it as we soak up the sun and play a little golf, and try to keep up with all the parties and dances. My home is in a community of people my age. I just want to say thanks for sending me the newsletters. It's good to hear from everybody. I am well, but have been quite busy. Have sold my house, it only took 4 days so I had to start packing. What a job getting rid of 60 years of (stuff). I bought a nice trailer in my brother-in-law's camp ground by a lake for the summer and a double-wide in Florida for the winter. I don't want my children to feel obligated to help me, so while I have my health I decided to make the move. I have another brother and son in Florida where I live, so I won't be alone. I hope all is well with everybody. I think of all the great times we have enjoyed together, but life changes. Have a great time at your reunions and maybe I'll be able to attend one in the future.

*“Wish you the best in your new home.”*  
*Lois, you really know how to hurt us Northerners. Here is Lois' new address:*

595 Fairway Court  
Plant City, FL 33565

## Joyce Dubois

We love getting the Lowndes newsletters and we miss going to the yearly reunions. Frank has had a TID, but continues to slowly improve. Hope all is well and happy with all.

## Frances Robertson

After living on the same street for 58 years and in the same house for 37 years, we accumulated a lot of stuff. It was very difficult to move, but we put some stuff in storage, took some things with us, & donated a great deal to the needy. The girls were concerned about me living alone, so Ruth built a room onto her place just for us. Earl went into the hospital in late August. He had a strep infection that settled around the knee replacements he had done many years ago. He had several surgeries and went into rehab. After a month stay in two hospitals, he definitely wanted to come home. Released from the hospital, he did his IV therapy & ended up in the hospital. They said he has pneumonia and congestive heart failure & an infection in his blood. While on a routine visit to see him, he decided to walk out. Said he had enough of doctors & hospitals, poking and probing. Then the fun really began. Had to get oxygen into Ruth's home & set up another round of IV therapy. Thank God for Ruth's ingenuity. He is doing great & looks good. Ruth & Jan have found all new doctors for us & they are only 15-20 minutes away. So far & both of us are doing well. We live in the county now instead of the city. Note our new address & phone No.

4848 Babiak Rd.  
French Village, MO 63036  
(573)358-7175

## Jackie Umbarger

This has been a rather stressful year due to Wally's health problems. We have had numerous lab tests, x-rays, ultra sounds, 2 colonoscopies to rule out our allergies, bowel, Krohns & cancer of which he had none of the problems mentioned. They finally put him on Questran which helped but still has a problem

now & then. We had planned a trip, "Railroading in the Rockies" but cancelled due to his health. In July we vacationed at my niece's cabin in Estes Park, Colorado. Friends of ours love Colorado and offered to drive us in their van for the opportunity to go and share expenses. Sure enjoyed having someone else do the driving. In September, we went to Topeka for Wally's Army reunion. We are at the age that every year we lose one or so of the group, so our number is dwindling. We plan to go to Jefferson City, MO. To attend our grandson's graduation from the State Patrol Academy on Dec. 19<sup>th</sup>. We are thankful for another year and the many blessings we have received from the LORD, family and friends.

*"Did you know that the San Francisco Cable car is the only moving National Memorial?"*

## Reta & Joe Freitas

We did enjoy what we were able to see of the air show, we did not get to see all of it. We decided not to go on the bay cruise. We also had a good dinner.

*"Sorry about the refund, sometimes these things just don't work out to our satisfaction although David Brinkman did his best about getting a refund."*



They say it's creamed chipped beef on toast. But you know what Lowndes crew members call it.