

U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154

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March 2000 News Letter

*Set aside the following dates for our Twelfth Annual Reunion in Las Vegas:
October 17 -18-19-20, 2000*

See page 3/00-3 of this news letter for comments by Joel Rodriquez regarding Bally's. Bob Mulvihill set it up similar to the last reunion in Washington, D.C. - Room, 3 buffet breakfasts, bus for day tour, hospitality room for the price of \$295. per person, This will include transportation to and from airport, hotel, 3 nights at the hotel, reunion dinner and a show at Bally's. This is just the starting point and tentative plans could be changed. We have to start somewhere.

We have received contributions to the Lowndes Reunion Group for 2000 from the following members:

- | | | |
|-------------------|------------------|------------------------|
| Agnes Bensie | John Fiske | Earl Robertson |
| Edward Benson | J. C. Holderman | Bill Robinson |
| LaVada Boyer | Sterling Hornsby | Joel Rodriquez |
| James Bussard | John Jurica | Marlene Rezza Schadler |
| Howard Chappell | Edward King | Dallas Stratton |
| Mitchell Chasteen | John Lackey | Bill Thomas |
| Harry Contreras | David Long | Bernard Tracz |
| Frank DuBois | Clark Martin | Walter Umbarger |
| John Dyer | Bill Markus | John Vernale |
| Virginia Duncan | Frank Miller | Robert Wurth |
| Joe Erlandson | Warren Proctor | |

Thanks to Lela Kindle we have located another long lost shipmate of the Lowndes:
Kasmar Feist - 424 Garcia NE - Albuquerque, NM - 87123 - (505)296-3491

The above makes a total of 38 states in the union that we have been in contact with members of the Lowndes Reunion Group

FLASH! FLASH! FLASH!

We interrupt this news letter with the announcement that Bill & Sheri have presented Jean and I with a grandson - William Michael on February 22, 2000. We now have 5 grand daughters and 3 grand sons.

Bud Kautz' lovely daughter, Pamela and her Husband Michael Hennessey want to thank the crew of the U.S.S. Lowndes for allowing us to be part of your wonderful reunion in Washington, D.C. Everyone treated us great and made Pam and I feel very welcome. Your news letter editor has asked if we would contribute an article for an upcoming issue concerning the reunion. Well considering Stephen King, John Grisham, Tom Brokaw, plus Click & Clack have contributed to the news letter, naturally we were quite flattered by the request. So as they say on Saturday Night Live, "This is our story and we're sticking to it!" Although the reunion dinner at Hogate's, overlooking the Potomac river had been the crowning event of the week's festivities on Saturday night. Pam and I had decided to stay on a few more days, until the following Wednesday actually. We are from Madison, WI, and through the governor's office (Madison is the capital of Wisconsin) were able to get tickets for a VIP tour of the White House. Our tickets were for Tuesday morning at 8:45 AM. This ticket allowed us to enter through a restricted entrance. The tour is conducted by members of the Secret Service. Our tour group was comprised of twenty five persons. You are feeling a bit of awe when you enter as this is a National Treasure of historical significance. It was built to be a home for our first president, George Washington, however he never lived in it as it wasn't completed during his term in office. Most of the rooms are designated by colors. Not unlike your own homes, for example, the Red room, the Gold room, the Green room, etc. The following rooms are what we saw on the tour: The Library Room was a laundry area originally until 1902 when Theodore Roosevelt had a renovation and it became a gentlemen's ante-room. In 1935 it was remodeled as a library. Which meant no more card playing, tale swapping, cigar smoking "Good old boy's" room. The Vermeil Room, also called the Gold Room, serves as a display room and is used for formal occasions and as a ladies sitting room. There are portraits of six First Ladies in this room, including Eleanor Roosevelt, Lady Bird Johnson, Jacqueline Kennedy and Nancy Reagan. The China room is where almost every past president is represented by state or family china or glassware. This room was redecorated in 1970 and it retained it's red color determined by the portrait of Mrs. Calvin Coolidge. The china is displayed in glass cases cut into the walls. The Blue Room, which serves as a reception room for visiting diplomats, acquired it's blue color during the administration of Martin Van Buren in 1837. This room was refurbished by the Clintons and an original sofa that had been part of the furniture, but discarded by a previous First Lady, was located in Pontiac, Michigan in the break room of the General Motors plant in Pontiac. It was restored and returned to the Blue Room. The Map Room, which was used by President Franklin D. Roosevelt to follow the course of W.W.II, now serves as a private meeting room for the President or the First Lady. On one wall hangs a rare 1755 French version of a map charted by a Colonial surveyor, Peter Jefferson (Thomas Jefferson's Father). The East Room, also the "Public Audience Room," has little furniture and is traditionally used for large gatherings like after dinner entertainments, concerts, press conferences and bill signing ceremonies. There have been seven presidents who have lain in state in this room, including John F. Kennedy in November 1963. The State Dining Room which can seat as many as 140 guests became the official dining area during Andrew Jackson's administration. It is a very ornate room which is modeled after a neoclassical English house of the 18th century. The entire tour took about one hour to complete. It was extremely interesting and very enjoyable to view this historic house of the good old US of A. Now, "The Reg" says "If there is interest another article could be done!" Everyone take care. Enjoyed being with you in D.C.

Note: Mike (Reggie as he is known by his Cheesehead friends) is a member of the elite security force that carefully watches over the Governor of Wisconsin, both at the Capital and at the Mansion. He also has been known to hoist a few with the 'guy after a bit jogging around town.

3/00-3

J. C. Holderman

Due to health reasons, on December 10th of last year we moved to Good Tree Retirement Community. On July 13, 1999 (My birthday) we sold our home in Roscoe, Texas and are living in a patio home (1300 sq. ft.) where all the maintenance including yard and landscaping is taken care of. Everything is so convenient, doctors, bank, grocery stores and of course Walmart. A nurse on duty 24 hours a day, seven days a week and can be at our house in four minutes. We love it here, even though we miss our friends in the Roscoe area. We had lived there 47 years. Another reason for the move was to be near our son and family. We were visiting our daughter in Hampton, VA at the time of the reunion and planned to go to D.C. but Doris was put to bed for two days with severe back pain. Did get to visit the Norfolk Navy Yard and saw lots of ships in port until Flayed hit and then again after the storm when they returned to port. Would like to see my former shipmates. My new address and is 2100 Good Tree - Stephenville, TX - 76401 - (254)918-6095.

Joel Rodriguez

Mary and I really enjoyed the great reunion in Washington, D.C. This was our fifth visit to D.C. Last October I took a group of people to Las Vegas. We went to see the newest casino on the strip, it is called "Paris in Las Vegas" It's really something to see, just like Paris, France, inside and outside. It is connected to the first class casino called "Bally's". (*This is the casino that Bob Mulvihill is looking into for our reunion in 2000*). I'm sure that whoever attends will enjoy it. I am sorry that Ed. King and I lost the spot of being the youngest in our group.

Agnes Bensie

Missed seeing all of you in D.C., but will be in Las Vegas. (God willing). I have been keeping busy in '98 and '99, went on a 16 day cruise though the Panama Canal, spent ten weeks each year in Florida, three weeks in California and one Las Vegas. Also I took charge of my 50th class reunion. It was great. Took a class in computer at our community college. My son , Bill, Said there is no way I'm going to Las Vegas without him.

Edward E. Benson

On April 1 1945 during the "Demonstration"" landing on the southeast coast of Okinawa - next to the Lowndes the Hinsdale (APA 120) was hit on the starboard side by a Kamikaze inflicting heavy damage, killing 63 crew members and Marines of the 2nd Division. The Hinsdale was beached and the Marines were placed aboard an LST returning to Saipan. After repairs at Guam the Hinsdale returned to the east coast of the United States via the Panama Canal. This information was given to me by a crew member and a Marine.

Ed. King

Vada and I had a great time in Washington, D.C. and it was good to see all the old shipmates again and meet with their family members. Sorry we didn't get to the reunion on time, but the weather wouldn't allow it. Another incident comes to mind. How did I get a hole in my boat at the line of departure? The only way I could figure was the weather was windy, cold and wet. The ship was rolling at anchor. Marines, sea sick even before they were loaded on the LCVPs. I remember when we were lifted from the cradle on No.4 hatch, port side, one of the rigging lines had too much slack and hit the cradle. Oh well! Who knows after 55 years? 'til the next reunion.

General Custer was the first to wear an arrow shirt.

3/00-4

Sally Cary

Shirley and I really enjoyed our trip to D.C. For me it was great to see everyone. The three of us (Eileen, Shirley and I) had fun rooming together. I know the other two gals complained about my snoring, but I can't hear myself when I'm asleep and I'm sure the other two think the same when they're asleep. We enjoyed the tours and by the end of the night we were ready for bed. Our bus driver did a great job with that huge bus. Also our tour guide did a fine job. Having my daughter work out the pattern for the Las Vegas reunion. I'm staying with her in Casa Grande, AZ for the winter. Went to Niagara Falls for two weeks over Thanksgiving then home to get ready for Arizona and visit mom who turned 100 on the 10th. of December. Had a party for her at the home. Will leave Arizona and be home in PA April 30th.

Jackie Richards

In September Wally and I took off on a two week trip to Colorado, Wyoming, Montana, Idaho, Washington, Oregon, California, Nevada and Utah to visit relatives. On October 30th. Had a big 99th. birthday party for Wally's mother (Florence Richards) in Nebraska City. Keith and Lorraine sure enjoyed the reunion with the group! We did too in Texas in '95. Maybe we can all make it to Las Vegas Next year.

Dick & Roseanna Jones

Thanks for the pictures. We had a great time in Washington, D.C.!! Looking forward to the reunion in 2000.

Cliff & Mary Schaffer

We enjoyed the reunion in D.C. Bob Mulvihill did a good job. Hope to see everyone in Las Vegas.

Reuben Johnson

We trust you had another great reunion, which is as it should be. We were with you all in spirit anyway. The best in the new millennium! Bud, it isn't everyone that we have sent greetings to for 54 years.

(Gee! Has been that long?)

Earl Robertson

First off, the group photographs were fine, everyone was in the open and looking happy to be there. *(Yes, last year there were a few individuals that didn't heed , "If you can't see me I can't see you).* Frances had cataract eye surgery after we returned from Washington, so far, the right eye. The other one will be done in 7 or 8 months down the line. As of now, everything is under control.

Robbie says he always gives 100% at work:

12% on Monday 20% on Thursday
23% On Tuesday 5% on Friday
40% on Wednesday

(This guy walks into the psychiatrist's office wearing only shorts made of saran wrap. The psychiatrist says, " Well, I can see you're nuts.")

This & That

Dan Wisdom

Our family is growing, son Matt was married on October 2, 1999. Wish everybody a Super Y2K. Congratulations!

Congratulations are also in order for Dave and Modesta Brinkman on the birth of their son Jeremy Jacob Brinkman, 9lb. 6 oz. on August 3, 1999.

(Gee, Roberta, that makes you a grandmother, enjoy.)

Joe and Reta Freitas became great grand parents in 1999.

(Joe, the walnuts you sent to Jean and I were put to good use. They made my chocolate banana split taste even better than normal. Have you ever chopped them up and used 'em, in an omelet? (terrific!)

Some facts about our western neighbor.

The site of our next reunion is Las Vegas (*"The Meadows" in Spanish*) was first settled by the Mormons in 1855. In 1864 the U.S. Army established Fort Baker. In 1867 Las Vegas left the Arizona Territory and joined Nevada. The town was established in 1905. It's growth really started in 1931 when the Nevada legislature legalized gambling. It was after World War II when large hotels along the brand new "Strip" was developed. There are 50 wedding chapels in the city and it is the Marriage Capital of America. There are no city or state income taxes. Popular nearby tourist attractions are Hoover Dam and Lake Mead (*The largest man-made lake in the U.S.*), Lake Mojave, Red Rock Canyon, and the Death Valley National Monument. Sagebrush is the state flower, precious gemstone "Virgin Valley Black Fire Opal."

Mike Michalski

Bud, a while back you wrote and asked me about the 1917 Maxwell I had. It wasn't a big car like the one you described, it was about the same size and looked like the steel Model T Ford touring. Steel, meaning the radiator shell was steel, it was painted black to match the fenders. The Maxwell I had was a four cylinder job with floor mounted shift lever between the front passengers. It was painted a light cream color and had natural light oak spokes and wheels. Jerry and I belonged to the Antique Automobile Club or Horseflies carriage Club. There were annual antique tours in different cities. It's funny how things work out - we hosted the 7th tour of that organization too. Like the Lowndes crew, the members were from all walks of life - lawyers, business owners, you name it, but we had one thing in common - we all loved old cars and the entire families participated and dressed accordingly, from the turn of the century to the flapper era in the twenties. I'm trying to catalog three of the reunions and misplaced about half of them. At this age life stays interesting - you're always hunting something.

What Mike left out was their scavenger hunts in the antique cars. Wearing dusters and hand operating the wind shield wipers by hand in the rain. Re your last comment, Mike, "People with well organized desks and files will never feel the elation of finding something that they felt had been lost forever.

Things we were forced to do as kids:

Go to bed early - Now we can hardly stay awake to watch the late news.

Stop running in the house -Now we run o treadmills inside the house for exercise.

Eat all your food, "Don't you know there are starving children? Now we're dieting 'cuz we ate too much.

3/00-6

Dear Bud & Shipmates:

I write to you all today with a heavy heart. As you know, my health has been bad for some while. I spent some time off and on in the hospital since our reunion in Myrtle Beach, SC. Well on Thanksgiving day, That which you never want to hear, finally came to pass. I was diagnosed with terminal cancer. It seems to be a fast moving type that has completely engulfed my body. I have a few months at best. I wish to thank all of you that sent Evelyn and myself Christmas cards and most welcome notes. We thought we would make Las Vegas but that is no longer in my future. The comradeship, friendship, love and caring that you wonderful people bestowed on us during the three reunions, San Diego, San Antonio and Myrtle Beach will be remembered as some of the most cherished days of our lives. I have been dealt a bad hand from a cold deck, but folks, I will play every card I have in my hand. I could continue to write for hours about the years that have passed when we were all young and ready to give everything we had to give for our country, but you all know we did our part and more. Like it is said, some of the stories you hear makes you think, were we all really in the same war we thought we were? But I will tell you this, we surely were there, everyone of us. I will soon see many of our shipmates that have left us, so don't feel sorry for me. I have been blessed my whole life with a wonderful lady, children, grandchildren and great grandchildren, and above all, the classiest people that walk this earth. I love you all. Evelyn will let you know when the Man upstairs decides to take me home. God bless you all.

Your shipmate Jack

Good by R. E. Shy

PS: My special thanks to the greatest crew, Carmel Fesi and Leo O'Brien to name a couple.

I received this communiqué from Jack (Hovey) Weatherbie shortly after Christmas 1999.

John Dyer

Just a note to let you know about the Dyer family. The year 1999 was not a good year for us. In May Leby developed a facial nerve pain called Trigeminal Neuralgia. We tried all medications all summer but that did not help. In August Leby had Radio Frequency surgery to relieve the pain. This left the right side of her face numb. In July tore a cartilage and had microscopic surgery. Also in July I found out that I had Cardiac Myopathy. Due to all our problems we returned to Florida on September 7th. Leby still walks to the ocean every day, but I can't make it that far so I ride my bike. Other members of our family have had problems too. We all are looking forward to a better year in 2000.

(Many of you may remember that John and Leby hosted a very successful U.S.S. Lowndes ninth reunion in West Palm Beach, Florida. We wish the Dyer family well.)

John Lackey

I've kept myself pretty busy preparing for the holidays last year. Have made pecan pies for my family and friends. For Thanksgiving and Christmas I made 75 pies, also 600 bon bons for the kids. One year I made 1500 bon bons, but cut down lately. Made over 200 pounds of peanut brittle, it's very easy in the microwave.

(Hey John, how about catering our next reunion in Las Vegas?)

Joan Macpherson

Don was looking forward to the reunion in Washington, D.C. He loved being with all of you and going over the war one more time. We planned to go to New Zealand and try to find his "Mr. Robert's ship" the "Kopara". Thank you for sharing your lives with us the past several years. It meant a lot to both of us. Thanks for the news letters, please keep me informed. Enclosed dues for 2000.

Walter Umbarger

Jackie and I have really enjoyed attending U.S.S. Lowndes reunions. My congratulations to all the hosts and hostesses for a great time. Bob Mulvihill did a fine job too. We missed San Diego and Hawaii for different reasons, and we plan on attending Las Vegas this year.

Walter & Albena Proctor

Thanks for the hotel room refund for the night we missed and a lot of other things that were done for our benefit. Thanks also for the pictures. The one of the Moores was really good. Their daughter wanted one so they had another one made.

(If anyone wants a copy of other photos, just let me know. Numbers are on the back.)

I (Warren) will try to get something written and send it to you.

(You're on record now Warren.)

(Yesterday is history, tomorrow is a mystery, today is present that's why they call it a gift.)

Frank Miller

Made a New Year's resolution to drink as much as I can, eat as much as I can and sleep until the sun shines up my posterior. Frances asked "What kind of a resolution is that?" I told her one that I can keep.

(Gee, Frank, now you tell me, I've been making all the wrong ones all my life.)

Frank Boris Lafayette DuBois

Is now 79 years of age, feeling pretty good and still able to play golf (not very well - nor able to compete with Jack Nicklaus or Arnold Palmer, but it keeps me going!) Joyce and I are still able to square and round dance (Round dancing is the art of dancing figures cued by an instructor.) I very fondly remember my years in the Navy. Wish I could have stayed 20 years, but my parents needed my help around the homestead that they weren't able to take care of. As in French "Chest La Vi" - Such is life. Joyce and I are attending a Spanish class and find it very interesting. We are not very good as we and our classmates stumble thru the class - you should hear our translation, but keep your ears plugged. Hope all members of the Lowndes are alive and well.

(Joyce served in the Navy and she and Frank were dance instructors at one point of their lives.)

Mrs. Florence Richards

So glad you met my son Keith and Lorraine at the reunion. I have a nice family, only wish I could see them more often. Maybe I will live to see the year 2000. Mike Michalski called me one evening.

(As of this writing Mrs. Richards made 2000, God bless her.)

Mitchell Chasteen

Always appreciate the news about our crew members of the Lowndes.

Howard Chappell

Feeling pretty good. Still taking three treatments a week.

(I talked to Howard a couple of weeks ago and he and Lois always sound so cheerful. Wish some of it would rub off them and onto me. They are such a great couple.)

Maggie Frieden

Received the latest news letter and we sure enjoyed reading it. Sure wish we could have been in Washington, D.C. This has been one busy summer with Jim and the grain. Started July 4th with wheat, then Soya beans, then corn. The farmers were crying because of low yields but Jim says they came out pretty good, the corn was so dry they didn't have to pay to have it dried. He was busy in December shipping it out by truck and train. We have been in fairly good health this past year. Have two new great grandbabies, that makes five. Sure hope we can get to the next ship's reunion.

(Note: Have just been informed that Jim spent 2 minutes in solitary confinement at Alcatraz.)

3/00-9

John F. Fiske - USMC

I was with the 24th Replacement draft which boarded the U.S.S. Lowndes - APA 154 on December 31, 1944 at Maui, Hawaii. From Maui we went up to Pearl Harbor for a few days and then went to the Marshall Islands. We got there during the night and when I went topside in the morning and looked across the water I swear I never saw so many ships. From there we went to Saipan and there were maneuvers to practice for the landings on Iwo Jima. I believe when we were a day or two from Iwo there was a general quarters, "This is no drill." Many of us wondered if we would be swimming whether we wanted to or not. On the morning of the landings we were treated to steak and eggs, which is normal* in the Marine Corps. before an invasion. I believe it was four or five other Marines and myself who were picked to go ashore and unload 55 gallon barrels of gas. We got to the beach around 0900 and got all the barrels unloaded when the landing craft got swamped. We were on the beach for quite awhile before we saw a landing craft from APA 154 and made a beeline for it so to be able to get back to the ship. The boatswain thought at first that we were deserters. If I recall they would not let us back on the ship until the next day or so. When we got back on the ship all of the replacements had already gone ashore. We went ashore the next day and joined up with C Company First Battalion, 23 Marines, Fourth Division and went into action the next day. We left Iwo on March 16 and went back to Maui and started to prepare for the invasion of Japan. Thankfully the atom bomb came along and a year later I went home. This is what I remember after 55 years. At the time I was only 18 years old. I was put on mess duty for 30 days from the day we boarded the ship and at the end of 30 days I told our officer I would stay on mess duty until we got to our destination. It was a way of killing time and I didn't mind it a bit. The Fourth Marine Division has had a reunion every year since 1948. Our reunion this year will be held in Washington, D.C. I don't recall Col. Shelton Scales. Enclosing a check for dues.

(That's also a normal procedure in the Navy too. Had it happen a few times.)*

Lela Kindle

I have no idea that I will ever get to attend a Lowndes reunion. Since my George is no longer here. He sure planned to attend and was hoping there would be one closer. As he was a cattleman and that sure took up his time. Our son is continuing to follow in his dad's footsteps. I was looking through some USS Lowndes papers that I had received and found a little book George brought back with names and addresses of the guys that were on the ship with their personal signatures.

(Following is the list of names that Lela sent, I have tried to contact them, but if anyone in our reunion group has been in contact with any of them, please let me know.)

Ray LeClaire Brown	MoMM2c	Robert E. Lange	
Wm. Wallace Caldwell	MoMM2c	Leonard Roy LeMaitie	S2c
Dale Dee Conover	S2c	Garnett Reese	S2c
Albert Earnest		Delphis Harold Ricks	S1c
Casimer Feist	S2c	Charles Curtis Sampson	S2c
James Warren Flud	S2c	William L. Shupe	S1c
Robert Keith Foy	S2c	Freddie Leon Stone	S1c
William W. George, Jr.	S2c	Clifton W. Taylor	
Damen Wilbur Johnson	Lt. Comm.		

(The addresses from Lela are over 50 years old, but you never can tell. Some people never move.)

Commander Perdue To Assume New Command

Commander Charles H. Perdue, 44, of 3120 Goldsmith St., San Diego, has been detached from duty as Assistant Personnel Officer, Eleventh Naval District, to assume command of a new attack transport, it was announced today. Commander Perdue, who has resided in San Diego since 1926, has been on duty at District Headquarters for the last 10 months, having reported here in February 1941, from the Fifteenth Naval District, Canal Zone. A native of Macon, Georgia, he was graduated from the Naval Academy in 1921. After a tour of duty aboard battleships he resigned from the Navy to enter private business and joined the Naval Reserves. He served as commanding officer of the Second Division, U. S. Naval Reserve, in San Diego for 10 years. Called back to duty in May 1940. Commander Perdue was ordered to the Fifteenth Naval District, where he served successfully as Commander, Inshore Patrol, Atlantic, and Commanding Officer, Section Base, Cristobal; Convoy and Routing Officer; and Assistant Chief of Staff for Readiness, Panama Sea Frontier.

Capt. Perdue returned home from leave and reassignment after commanding the attack transport U. S. S. Lowndes for 16 months in the Pacific. Capt. Perdue placed the Lowndes in commission in September, 1944, after serving 19 months as assistant personnel officer of the 11th Naval District. Capt. Perdue traveled 61,000 nautical miles aboard the Lowndes. His ship took part in the original assault landings at Iwo Jima and Okinawa, and carried initial occupation troops to Aomori, Japan, from the Philippines in September, 1945.

(The above was published in the San Diego Union. A copy of the article was furnished by Connie (Mike) Michalski.)

John Vernale

I know it's about time that I write, but in the winter we Italians hibernate. Hope everybody is in good health, warm and cozy. As for Sally and I, we're OK. Still visiting the same doctors. In our spare time we visit with our two year old grandson, he really lights up our life. Last week, we were in bed and I asked Sally for some sex, she said "No." I asked her if that was her final answer, she said "Yes." I said I would like to call a friend. I'm now sleeping in another bedroom. Hope to see you in Las Vegas.