

U.S.S. LOWNDES - APA 154

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May 2000 News Letter

TWELFTH ANNUAL U.S.S. LOWNDES REUNION

The reunion in Las Vegas will include the following: Cost per person (double occupancy) will be \$295.00 same as it was for Washington, D.C.

3 Nights at Bally's.
Buffet breakfast every morning.
Show at Bally's.
Tour of Las Vegas
Tour of interest (Transportation to Hoover Dam - Tentative with possible stops at the town of *Henderson and **Boulder Dam City.)
Banquet. Informal attire.

* In Henderson anyone with a sweet tooth can visit Ethel M Chocolate factory and discover how America's gourmet chocolates are made and receive a free sample. Visit and tour the marshmallow factory and also receive a complimentary sample. Visit Ron Lee's World of Clowns, witness the making of clown and animation sculptures.

** Boulder City - visit the historical section and see the collection of buildings that were built in the 1930s during the construction of Hoover Dam and remain intact. Hoover Dam was completed in 1935 and tours are available for the hardy individuals.

Bob Mulvihill is in the process of making all arrangements. He took care of our last reunion in Washington, D.C. and did a fine job, at our business meeting it was brought up and agreed that he take over for the 2000 reunion in Las Vegas.

As of this date these plans are tentative and as soon as a definite schedule is available it will be in a future news letter. Enclosed with this issue is a stamped addressed post card. Please fill it out and drop it into a mail box or use carrier pigeon if desired. We do need an estimate of who and how many will attend. Need your cooperation and will appreciate your response as promptly as possible, by July 1st. If there are to be guests, include their full names.

Below is a partial list of attractions on the strip in Las Vegas:

Imperial Palace Auto Collection featuring over 200 antique, classic and special interest cars.

King Tut's (An exact replica) and Museum located on the Luxor's attraction level.

Magic and Movie Hall of Fame. See a live comedy show in the "Comic Magic Theater.)

Liberace Museum memorabilia and rare piano collection, automobiles and rhinestone samples from his glittering wardrobe.

Kasmar Feist

Bud, you took me by surprise to hear from you. Here is a little about myself. I was aboard the Lowndes from the shake down and to Norfolk - '44 to '46. I got out of the Navy in 1946 and went right into the Army engineers in August 1947, put in 22-12 years and retired in 1967. I served in three wars, WW II, Korea and Vietnam in '67 just before I retired. Got married in '54. Living here in Albuquerque, New Mexico since retiring from the Army. Am retired now after building homes around with a big construction company.

(Note: Received his name from Lela Kindle with no street number, just the name of a town in North Dakota. Would you believe it? The letter found its way down to New Mexico. Sometimes the United States Postal Service scares me.)

Wm. J. Bornhorst

This is what I remember over 55 years ago. In October, 1944, I was at Fort Pierce, Florida in amphibian small boat training. I was shipped to Seattle, WA and sent to Pearl Harbor on the 24th of December. Don't remember how long I was there, I was on work party daily unloading cargo ships. Our orders came through and we were taken to the U.S.S. Lowndes. I can remember thinking how lucky I was because we were assigned to the Beach Party! Having heard about some of the parties on the beaches, I couldn't wait. Later, after I saw the Marines studying island maps of Iwo Jima, I found out what I was in for! I don't know how long the ship and crew had been together, so I didn't get to make too many friends. I left sometime after Okinawa as a S1c and deck hand. My few friends were in my immediate group. A funny thing happened. Sometime later, I was aboard the U.S.S. Hobson tied up in Norfolk. Sitting topside one day and lo and behold, who came into the bay, The Lowndes! I was able to get to visit her, they only had a skeleton crew aboard and I knew no one. She was being put into a local graveyard. I never came to any reunions because I didn't know anyone. One guy I do remember was a poor yeoman* who lost half of a beautiful handle-bar mustache. You wouldn't know him, would you Bud? I do remember a young boy like me and I think his name was Cenares, from New York and he was a hell of a cartoonist, in fact he drew some pictures of our ship and landing craft for the skipper. Went on a 4 day leave from Oakland with him. On the way back we heard about the Big Bomb being dropped on Japan! Remember another guy named Hail I went on a few liberties with. The thing that got me started was a communiqué from Jack Hovey. One fellow that stuck in my mind Shy, for some reason I never forgot them. Shy was in the same group as me and I think he was wounded on Iwo. Shy, I remember loved cigars and was a heck of a nice guy and then hearing of one who was dealt a bad hand from a cold deck prompted me to write this letter. I forget many names and faces, but I will never forget my first gal - U.S.S. Lowndes.

*(Note: * Sorry Bill, must set the record straight, that was no yeoman, that was me - Bud a MoMM and like Shy I smoked a lot of cigars and also a pipe. Years later in 1969 when I got up to 2 or 3 dozen a day I finally quit, cold turkey and haven't had one since. Try to make a future reunion, you may be surprised how many former shipmates you will remember - there are three already, Shy and Hail and me.)*

Mary Fearing

Everything is the same around here in Minnesota. Dean and I became grandparents again, now we have 24 between us plus two great grand kids. We are both fine. Dean is still driving cars for the garage and keeping busy with the house and yard. We are going to Iowa in May and Niagara Falls with our senior citizen group in June.

Happy 86th birthday to Ed. McKellar - April 29, 2000.

James V. Ross

Ina and I attended the Iwo Jima Survivors Reunion on February 21-26, 2000 at Wichita Falls, Texas. Major Douglas Jacobson, Ret., Medal of Honor recipient was a special guest. He noticed my Lowndes cap and said to me "I was on the Lowndes when we landed at Iwo Jima." If anyone has information on the 3rd BM 23rd Battalion I would appreciate you sending it to me.

(Note: Maybe J. Shelton Scales, Col., USMC, Ret. may have some recollections regarding that matter to send to you Jim. Let this be a formal request. Could be that John F. Fiske USMC may remember a thing or two. Jim has sent me a list of 34 books written about the Iwo Jima campaign. Anyone desiring this list, just drop me a line.)

Joseph Freitas

Finally getting around to writing to you with our new address:
620 Bennigton Ave. - Turlock, CA 95382 - (209)669-1165.

We left our winter home in Tecopa, CA April 1st, it gets too hot here in the desert in the summer. We stay here for the mineral baths which helps our aches and pains, soaking in the baths a couple times a day. In Turlock we are just 87 miles from Las Vegas and plan to attend this year's reunion. Also one of our grandsons joined the Navy. Has only been in a couple of weeks and had boot camp at Great Lakes, IL. He should be okay, but probably a little homesick.

(I'm sure that most of us remember that feeling.)

James Born

Just received the last news letter and got a kick out of the fact that your off spring attended the reunion in Washington, D.C. By the time we get to see you, our son and his wife will be 53 years old. Also see page 3/99-2 of the last news letter, Earl, it was the U.S.S. Nevada that was beached. If you have any stories about Okinawa, please send them to me. I have a girl back east who has been writing to me and would like first hand stories. I took her dad off the U.S.S. Yorktown in the battle of Midway. She is writing about the battles.

(Note: I only have 2 stories regarding Okinawa - 1 by Joel Rodriguez, page 4 in the October '97 and 1 by Jim Davenport, page 5 in the August '98 news letters. If you don't have them available I can make copies for you. Have been trying for several years to put together a booklet about Okinawa similar to the Iwo Jima one, but have had little success. Crew members - please note.)

John F. Fiske - USMC

Enclosing a check for the Iwo Jima booklet. My wife was in the Navy during WW 11 and was stationed in Washington, D.C. We met three years after the war. Bud, I showed the photo of you with your handle bars - she said "What a handsome man."

(See? Contrary to what my shipmates say about me, it can't be all that bad, so there.)

THIS & THAT

On March 27, 1794 George Washington and Congress authorized the creation of the Navy.

On April 4, 1818 Congress also decided that the U.S. flag would consist of 13 stripes and 20 stars with a star to be added for each state.

J. Shelton Scales

In the last news letter, John Fiske, Marine replacement on the Lowndes bound for Iwo Jima, said he didn't recall "Col. Shelton Scales". Probably the reason: I was at that time a Major and known as Jim Scales, CO, 3rd Bn, 23rd Marines and attached units. I took my meals with Skipper Perdue, A fine gentleman. I have good memories of APA 154.

This is a little late but, I'd like to thank Mike Michalski for the enrollment to receive the Nimitz News Letter. It makes interesting reading.

Maggie Frieden

Guess it is too early to think yes or no about going to Las Nevada for the Lowndes reunion. Sure would like to go. It all depends on how the harvest goes. Seems like Jim is going to work forever. So everything is on hold right now.

(Looking through previously issued news letters I came across a notation that Jim loaned one of his shipmates aboard ship 50 cents. Wonder if the loan was ever repaid?)

Sally Cary

Have finished the afghan for the reunion this year. Will be home in Pennsylvania first of May and hopefully the usual prompt response. Prizes will be announced in the next news letter. Good luck!

Sally has informed us that her mother passed away on Christmas Day last year. However she did make it to her 100th birthday on Dec. 16, 2000.

The following have indicated their intentions to attend the Las Vegas reunion:

Jim Born & guests

Sally Cary

Margaret Campbell

Lori Copper (Kautz)

Joe & Loreta Freitas

Pam Hennessey (Kautz)

Ralph & Randalyn Jones (Tuppan)

Bud & Jean Kautz

Ed. McKellar

Jim & Sheri McKellar

Jenny Porter (Kautz)

Glenda Tuppan

Looking through a previously issued news letter I came across this notation: Jim Frieden loaned one of his shipmates 50 cents wonder if he ever was paid back.

This may seem a bit early but, some serious thought should be given to where and when our annual reunion will take place in the year 2001. Please give it some thought.

Helen Butler

Here is an update on Jim Davenport. He's doing okay considering that he has ALS (Lou Gehrig's disease.) He seems to lose ground weekly, he is depressed despite efforts to cheer him up. We are moving him to Marning Side Manor in the nursing home section this week. He thinks and talks about the good times at the Lowndes reunions. Please keep in touch with him.

*(Cards can be sent to him at 602 Babcock Rd. - San Antonio, TX 78201
or reached at (210)731-1230.)*

Mildred Donaldson

I am writing to you about the mail you send to Dona Lee for Herbert D. Lemley. She no longer will be able to get your letters to forward to my uncle. He lives in a different area than I do so this would be best for everyone.

(Note: His address is P.O. Box 362 - Dermott, AR 71563.)

Theresa Halbauer

I have been wanting to write you about my brother, Vincent Halbauer, since he is unable to do so himself. Vince has had a real struggle since his knee operation March 31, 1997. The operation went well, but he had three extremely dangerous infections which did a lot of damage. Apparently, he also had several strokes while in the hospital and one made the leg that was operated on draw up to his chest. He was transferred back and forth between the VA hospital and nursing home several times for three months. The infections damaged his brain and made his dementia worse (this was diagnosed in June 1995). The nursing home was lax in caring for him and he lost a great deal of weight (down to 106 lbs). I finally convinced the doctor to let me bring him home. It took quite a few months to build up his strength and weight and many hours to get him to walking again. I and my family feel that his recovery is truly a miracle. Vince used to look forward to receiving the news letters. But since Vince can no longer read the news letters, I suggest you discontinue sending them. He turned 80 on March 13th this year.

(We will abide by her wishes and stop sending the letters after this one.)

(Had a telephone call from Jack Hovey the other day and he sounded fairly chipper considering his situation. He is still undergoing chemo treatments and has one scheduled this week - May 3rd. He sends along greetings and well wishes to his former crew members. They have sold their home and are in the process of selling their boat. Here is his new address and phone number. I'm sure he would like to hear from any of his old shipmates.)

**Jack Hovey/Weatherbie
1400 W. 13th St.
Upland, CA 91786
(909)985-6075**

Joyce Ringo

My husband - Clarence (Bear) Ringo, Jr passed away on February 8, 2000. Services were conducted February 8th at R.M.C. in Madisonville, Kentucky with burial in Blackford Cemetery. He owned and operated a store in Blackford, KY for 28 years. He was a crew member of the U.S.S. Lowndes and a life member of the V.F.W. We had been married 35 years. Among his survivors are a daughter, Sybil Oldham, three grand children and one great grand child. He enjoyed each and every news letter and read every word.

(Joyce has sent me over 120 photos that Clarence took. Some in the islands of Philippine, Eniwetok, Mariannas, Midway, Ulithi, Iwo Jima And Okinawa. Besides the U.S. there are some in Panama, China, Mexico and Amori, Japan. Many are of shipmates aboard the Lowndes. Will sort them out and bring 'em to the reunion.)

Frances Karson

This will probably be my last letter to you. My first and only love (Walter) passed away on January 14, 2000 from the cancer of the sinuses. All that is left now are sad and happy memories. He was sick only three months and had no pain. Walt was born September 1914 and joined the Navy on December 1943, he boarded the Lowndes December 1944 at Pearl Harbor as a S1c. Stood regular watches at the helm and GQ at the aft 6" gun. Left the Lowndes November 1945 as a coxswain. In civilian life he was a machinist, motion picture projector repairman, projectionist, motion picture camera technician and serviced motion picture equipment. Among his survivors are 2 children and 8 grand children.

(Note: I didn't know it until much later that Walt worked at a firm in Chicago less than a 1/2 mile from a commercial photo studio that I was manager of before opening my own with a partner in 1964 until I retired in 1988.)

Chuck Munson, Jr.

Sorry to inform you that my dad passed away shortly after his 77th birthday . Chuck was born on April 14, 1923 in Minneapolis, Minnesota. Joined the Navy in August 1942 at Des Moines, Iowa. Boarded the Lowndes September 1944 at Astoria, Oregon as an Ensign. He was assigned to the amphibious boat group and stood watch as assistant communications officer. He was line officer at his general quarters station. Along with other officers he served as a censor of outgoing mail. *(I wonder if he was the one that did an extensive cutting holes in my letters home?)* Left the Lowndes in San Francisco on December 18, 1945 and the same day was assigned to the U.S.S. Latimer - APA 152 as communications and promoted to Lt. JG. Last active duty was at Great Lakes Naval Base in June 1946. After discharge from the Navy he attended Northwestern University Law School September 1946 to September 1949 and received a Juris Doctor degree. Practiced law in Bettendorf, Iowa September 1, 1949 until his demise. Also former Police Magistrate '49 - '54. Married Marilyn October 13, 1951. Survivors include 2 children and 1 grandchild.

(Chuck participated in the wreath laying at the Navy Memorial in memory of lost shipmates)

(They will all be missed by their former Lowndes crew members.)