

U.S.S LOWNDES – APA 154

May 2010 NEWSLETTER

Web Site: <USS Lowndes>

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STAMPS



When the public first demanded a stamp commemorating the Flag Raising picture, the US Post Office initially rejected the idea out of hand. "No living person(s) can appear on a US stamp," they replied. But the public demand was so great that Congress pushed for the stamp. It was issued just five months after the Flag-Raising. On the day of issue, people stood patiently in lines stretching for city blocks on a sweltering July day in 1945 for a chance to buy the beloved stamp.

For many years, this was the biggest selling stamp in the history of the US Post Office. (Over 137 million sold.)



A retouched copy of the original photograph. Issued in 1995 to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of the first Iwo Jima stamp.

Anyone remember these?



Lowndes – APA 154 Model



Responses to PROPOSED USS LOWNDES WEBSITE (1)

David Brinkman

The endowment fund sounds like a good way to go and Odess and I would be glad to manage this. The cost of the web site is about \$95 a year and a \$15 a year for the name: www.usslowndes.net. Believe it or not, the cost of these things are going down. A fund of 2500 might earn enough money to cover the web costs. I have a lawyer friend that may have some ideas on how to do the endowment fund. Let me talk to him. At some point in the future, I would also submit the data from the web site to the National Archives to ensure that it is not lost.

In the meantime, we need to be thinking of what to do with our USS Lowndes reunion group's treasury. It appears that not many of us are going to last too many more years and we more than likely will forego any more reunions to enable having a discussion regarding this subject. Need input from member.

Bonnie Welker White

The family of Harley Max Welker is in total agreement with you that the USS Lowndes web site should be preserved, so we're in favor of doing whatever it takes to assure that. Also we're in favor of submitting the data to the National Archives to ensure that it is not lost and is available to future generations. Thanks to you for all your hard work. Keep us posted on what needs to be done to make this happen.

Jan Trober

I am in agreement – If David would like to take it on, I support that. Preserving the history of the USS Lowndes – APA 154 is very important. Regarding the Reunion group funds – I refrain from giving my input. Those funds, I feel, should be decided by the men of the USS Lowndes.

John Hess

Go with it. You have my vote. Right, David does fit the bill.

David Long

I think that is great. I vote yes and will contribute to the fund. It is sad that we will not have any more reunions, but that is being realistic, we are victims of the clock.

Jan Przbylski

That rocks!!!! I love that web site. I found my Dad's name in the deck log. I'm going to print them out and send them to my Mom. She'll get a kick out of it. Thank you sd much. I'll spend more time with it soon. I appreciate the information Bud.

Don't thank me, Jan. David Brinkman has included the deck log along with many more interesting facts of our ship on the web site. He has done a terrific job of Making the Lowndes a part of history on the web

G. S. Adams

I think it's a wonderful idea.

Pam Hennessey

Dad, I think the idea of an endowment to fund the Lowndes website is a wonderful idea. It would be a good way to keep the Reunion Group linked (in addition to the newsletters) in the event there are no more reunions. Your newsletters could be published on the website and maybe have to mail paper copies to those without Internet access (thereby saving postage). I know David would do a great job, and I think it is very important for all the shipmates to keep in touch. However, I will miss seeing everyone at the reunions, it's a great group of people.

Shirley Hornsby Wetzell

Count me in, My Dad, Sterling L. Hornsby, took his last voyage Dec. 24, 2009, but I want to continue to honor his memory and that of his former shipmates.

**Additional responses to proposed
USS LOWNDES WEB SITE**

Earl Robertson

I think it should go to either fund, the Lowndes website that David Brinkman does or be given to the US Navy Memorial in Washington, DC. Either one is good with me unless someone has any other suggestions they can bring up.

Susan LaBay

I will answer for my Dad, Alonzo Hodgson. I think that he will agree that the memory of the USS Lowndes should be perpetuated. Dad will be visiting me and I'll have him read the proposal and get his definite feelings in regard to it. He had a knee replacement last summer and is doing well, but slowing down. We sure do appreciate David's efforts toward the Reunion Group and fully support using the funds to create and maintain the Lowndes website and the National Archives effort.

Gordon Buck

Bud, I'm sure all the crewmen of the Lowndes join me in letting you know how much we appreciate your tireless efforts for all these years to keep the "Fraternity" together. We also appreciate David Brinkman's input and assistance. His Dad would have been proud of him. Time is winding down for all of us plus those who have already left are so proud to have served our country and received recognition to be called "Lowndesmen."

I'm sure I speak for David in regard to Gordon Buck's plaudits for our efforts in trying to keep the "Fraternity" above water. We appreciate the kind words expressed by Gordon, thank you.

Thank you, David, for the information about my Dad, Alex Richard O'Neal. He passed away in 1984 and my Mom in 2000. I have a grandson that was named after my Dad and was in the Marines. He was in Camp Pendleton, CA. In Iraq two times. He would like to know as much as possible about his great grandfather as possible. We must keep the memories alive of the greatest people. Our country needs to know how much they all gave.

Hank Rafalski

I'm writing in behalf of Howard P. Thomas who was aboard the USS Lowndes in 1945 while at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. He's still around and very much a part of his community in Folsom, CA near Sacramento. He's wondering if there will be any more reunions coming up. "His friend".

I have received a phone call from Howard and am waiting for more information regarding his tenure on the Lowndes. Howard boarded the Lowndes on Dec. 1, 1944 as a RM and had a medical transfer from the Lowndes at a later date.

Trivia time

Several years ago I made note of the fact that I and several buddies were returning from a trip to the Smoky Mountains. We stopped at Indianapolis, IN to visit the Indy race track. I had a 1936 Oldsmobile at the time (1941) and was allowed to take a spin around the track. However, an attendant sat in the passenger seat and saw that I didn't attempt to speed around. It cost me 25 cents for the privilege. The upshot of this tale is that my son, Bill upstaged me in 2007. He was on one of his bike tours to raise money for the Indianapolis Zoo and the diabetes fund and pedaled around the track a couple of times. Where it cost me a quarter it cost him nothing.

Stuart Hyde

Hi, Bud, Like you, I'm going through lots of physical problems, but because we've both been achievers, it's my belief that neither of us is ready for the old folks home. *Sometimes , I wonder.* I came across something I wrote and read at the banquet at the San Francisco reunion. Maybe this will be of use in a newsletter. Please let me know if there is anything I can do to help you in your ongoing role as "Keeper of the Lowndes." Sixty-four years ago, a group of young men, some in their teens, were aboard The USS Lowndes. Most of us were barely trained in our shipboard duties when we arrived. The ship was commissioned in Sept. 1944 and after provisioning in Seattle, San Francisco, San Diego & San Pedro, left for the Hawaiian Islands for 4 months of training. During that trip, drills were held every day – man overboard, abandon ship, collision & fire drills. The next 4 months were spent practicing invasions. We invaded Maui perhaps as many as twenty times, delivering battle-ready Marines to the beaches. Gradually as we learned our duties, we became more confident & cohesive & efficient. All units including boat crews & Beach Platoon began thinking of themselves as team members of a part of competent fighting ship. That's where the bond began. On Feb. 19, 1945 we transported 1,500 Marines & Seabees from Saipan to Iwo Jima Landing them on Red Beach II. For several days our landing craft delivered reinforcements, food, fuel, ammunition & medical supplies. Returning to our ship with wounded Marines for treatment by our small staff of surgeons & hospital corpsmen. We landed our Beach Battalion of 43 men on Dog-Day plus 1. When we retrieved them on Feb. 24, 4 of our shipmates had been killed & 13 seriously wounded. This affected all of us & there our bond became greater. On Mar.4 we carried wounded Marine casualties to hospitals on Guam. Of the 321 injured men we treated we lost only one due to his injuries. 1-1/2 months later we delivered

wounded Marines to Okinawa where we were in constant danger from Kamikazi attacks.

Bob Wurth

In response to the "Newsletter". I've certainly enjoyed it in the past, but also realize that it just doesn't happen. Thanks to your dedication and effort. As to the future? We are all getting close to the end, so this is just a thought, maybe once or twice a year would be sufficient to keep crew members basically informed as to what's going on. Another thought would be to find a younger generation person that would be willing to take over the job. Sorry about the delay in the response.

Thanks for the suggestions. Working on the younger generation idea. Anyone else have thoughts on this subject?

Jan Trober

Bud, Haven't heard from you since Christmas and was wondering if everything is okay with you and Jean. *(All's well).*

Both of my folks are doing as well as can be expected. Mom turned 86 in January. Mom and Dad had their 64th (I think or 65th) anniversary in January. Dad has had a series of injections done to his eye. I'm not sure if his eyesight is improving but it is not getting worse. He has to use a big light and a magnifying glass to read his Newsweek Magazine. Dad had a pacemaker inserted November 30, 2009. My Mom fell again and fractured her hip about a week before Dad's surgery and went to rehab. The rest of us are doing good. Mark and Mary stay busy with her job and his business. Sister-in-law, Angie Turin has put her life on hold to take care of Perry's Mom who is in poor health and her son who broke his neck, back and shattered his pelvis in a terrible motorcycle accident. Perry has his band "Typical Bill" that gets together every week. They play classic rock to hard rock and can really get loaded sometimes.

"Hang in there guys"

May 2010-5

**Connie (Mike) &
Geraldine (Jerry) Michalski**

TAPS

Day is done.

*Gone the sun
From the lakes
From the hills.
From the Sky
All is well.
Safely rest.
God is nigh.*

*Fading light.
Dims the sight.
And a star.
Gems the sky.
Gleaming bright.
From afar.
Drawing nigh.*

Falls the night.

*Thanks and praise.
For our days.
Neath the sun.
Neath the stars.
As we go.
This we know
God is nigh.*



KINDRED SPIRITS & PARTNERS IN LIFE

Died 61 days apart after 61 years of marriage. Jerry and Mike were long time residents of Austin, Texas. Mike was born Dec. 13, 1914 and last years were impacted by Alzheimer's disease, passing away on August 15th at the age of 94. Connie was born in Sunnyside, TX. Enlisted in the Navy Mar. 3, 1942 at Houston, TX. He served in the Pacific as a Machinists Mate on the Lowndes, He boarded the Lowndes as a MM2c on Sept. 14, 1944 becoming a Plank Owner and saw action at Iwo Jima and Okinawa. Left the ship Dec. 13, 1945 as a MM1c in San Francisco, CA. Discharged at Camp Wallace, TX. He took pride great pride in getting the ship underway from a dead stop in 45 minutes (normally took 2 hours). As a civilian was a partner from '46 to '47 at Rollin Electric, Co. '47 to '56 managed Worth Elect. Co showroom. '56 to '65 owned and managed Ideal Lighting Co. In May 1965 hit the highways representing Lightolier, Halcolte & Kichler fixtures mfg's. for 30 years covering 5 states. Upon his retirement at the age of 80, Kichler created a salesman integrity award in his honor.

Geraldine 'Jerry' Michalski was born in Evansville, Indiana and moved to Texas at the age of 16 where she worked in the family

grocery store. After graduating from business school, she worked as an accountant in Houston. She and Mike met after he returned from WW II and were married in 1947. They volunteered at a hospital gift shop and ran the 'Next to New' Shop. She was also office manager for Mike during his career. Jerry's year long battle with lung cancer and grace, ended on October 15, 2009 at tyjhe age of 83. They are survived by their daughter, Dr. Renee Michalski of Waco, Texas.

Many former shipmates and spouses may remember the outstanding job they and Renee did hosting the Lowndes reunion in San Antonio, TX. The highlight of the reunion was, with's Mike's assistance and efforts two plaques were installed on the wall at the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, TX. The plaques were placed there in honor of Donald Bowman and Norman Richards, both members of the Lowndes Beach Party and KIA at Iwo Jima.

Sterling L. Hornsby

Sterling was born on September 27, 1920 in Brown County, Texas and passed away on December 24, 2009. When he was 15 years old he worked for the CCC. Enlisted in the Navy June 7, 1940 at Dublin, Texas. He served on his first ship, the USS Elliot stationed at Pearl Harbor. She was one of the ships that left for the Johnston Islands on December 5, 1941. He was just stepping onto the deck on Sunday, December 7, 1941 for the 8 to 12 watch, when the captain said, " Pearl Harbor has been attacked, we have to go back." Sterling, Said, " There were all kinds of rumors floating around, including they sank one of our battleships." He said the crew couldn't believe that was true, until they arrived at the Harbor and saw the ships burning, devastation all around. His best friend, J. P. Lynch was his shipmate, and he learned that his brother had died on the USS Arizona. The Elliot patrolled the coast of California for several months looking for enemy submarines, then took part in the battle in the Aleutian Islands.



He boarded the Lowndes September 16, 1944 in Astoria , Oregon as a SM1c. He was in Long Beach, CA in October and married Velma Stewart Robertson on October 7, 1944. Billie Biggers served as the best man. Later he had the chance to make Chief, leaving the Beach Party to join the Signal Corp. His daughter, Shirley Hornsby Wetzell said he felt sad that he couldn't go onto the beach at Iwo Jima with the men he'd trained with. Left the ship in Portsmouth, VA as a Chief petty officer on April 17, 1946 when the ship was decommissioned. Watch and general quarters stations were on the signal bridge. Later duty assignments were at Key West, 1946 - 1947, Newport, R I 1948 - 1950, Charleston, SC 1950 - 1951, Norfolk, VA 1952 - 1956, Dallas, TX 1956 - 1959, San Diego, CA 1959 - 1960. Last active duty in 1960 recruiting station as a CPO. Retired from the Navy June 1960 and was on active reserve until February 1970. As a civilian employed at Federal Reserve Bank from '61 to '65. American Building maintenance and finally retired from the work force in 1989. He is survived by his wife, Velma of 65 years, 5 brothers, 1 sister and 2 daughters, 1 son and 7 grandchildren and 12 great-great grandchildren. He was buried January 4, 2010 at DFW National Cemetery, with full military honors.



Harold Ralph Singer

Born in Independence, KS on April 13, 1927 and departed February 17, 2010. He served his country with the US Navy on the USS Norton Sound (AV 11) and the Lowndes beginning in 1945 when America claimed victory in WWII, to 1948. Ralph boarded the Lowndes August 13, 1945 and left April 15, 1946. Received an honorable discharge, re-enlisted. Following his service he returned to Indiana where he began his career as a design engineer. Harold's career ran the design engineer gamut. He worked in the aerospace industry, specifically in the Apollo program, helping to design the propulsion systems of the early rockets. Though his was not a household name, many of the products he helped design are used by millions. At his favorite job, M&M Mars, he designed a machine that would cut only the best part of the peanut for use in Snickers candy bars. He is survived by his wife of 30 years and the love of his life, Bonnie Neal Singer. 8 children, 13 grand children and 4 great grand children.

Arthur Lee Wilson



Nov.25, 1925 – Aug. 24, 2009

Landing craft operator, lost by 5 Japanese fire; Completed all invasion operations in the Pacific Siapan, Leyte Philippines, Yokohama, Including Iwo Jima-wounded in forehead, refused "Purple Heart" due to human carnage he observed throughout the invasion. Saw the first and second raisings of the American Flag. Okinawa-wave leader at Blue Beach 1, transported first load of Marines & Seabees of invasion and was part of the continuous amphibious landing operations. Received 3 Presidential Unit Citations for actions above & beyond call of duty. Served on the Lowndes Dec. 8, 1944 – Jan. 21, 1944 as a deck hand. He is survived by his wife, Lillian of Henderson, Nevada. After his discharge from the service. He served on the ship from December 8, 1944 until January 21, 1946 as a deck hand and participated in the Iwo Jima and Okinawa campaigns



Biloxi Reunion – 2003

Warren Elbert Proctor

Warren passed away November 2009 at the age of 91. He boarded the Lowndes September 15, 1944 and served as a Chief Petty Officer on the ship. His family had requested the Patriot Guard Riders attend his funeral in honor of his military service. He was a coxswain on one of the landing craft that took in Marines to the beach at Iwo Jima.

"No other data available."