

# U.S.S. LOWNDES – APA 154

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The following shipmates, spouses & guests were in attendance  
at the 12<sup>th</sup> reunion in Las Vegas, Nevada:

Agnes & Bill Bensie	Ed. King	Leo & Margaret O'Brien
Lavada Boyer	David & Joanne Long	Ed. & Dolores Person
Margaret Campbell	Don & Shirley Lorenzi	Jenny Porter
Jim Chilcote	Mary Martin	Warren & Albena Proctor
Lori Copper	Margaret McGrody	Arthur & Marjorie Rauseo
Stan & Mona Dunn	Ed. McKellar	Earl & Frances Robertson
John & Leby Dyer	Jim & Sheree McKellar	Dee Rodgers
Joe & Betty Erlandson	Jon & Susie McKellar	Eugenia Sanchez
Joe & Loreta Freitas	Mike & Jerry Michalski	Maureen Sanchez
Mary Gebhart	Roland & Becky Moore	Jan Trober
Pamela Hennessey	Eileen Murray/Netta Jones	Glenda Tuppan
Alonzo & Oniece Hodgson	Mike/Mary/Ryan Murray	Walt & Jackie Umbarger
Dick & Roseanna Jones	Nancy Martin	John Vernale
Bud & Jean Kautz	Patricia Murray	Robt./Sheldon & Scott Warnberg
	Patrick Murray	

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## Results of the Lowndes Lovelies Annual Raffle:

1 <sup>st</sup> Prize	Lowndes afghan *	- Mike Michalski
2 <sup>nd</sup> Prize	\$150.00	- John Dyer
3 <sup>rd</sup> Prize	\$ 75.00	- Sally Cary
4 <sup>th</sup> Prize	Flags of Our Fathers book**	- Margaret Campbell
5 <sup>th</sup> Prize	Flowers from Hawaii***	- Lori Copper

\*Knit & donated by Sally Cary CEO    \*\*Donated by E. Max Cole    \*\*\*As usual From Stan Dunn

*Note: After all these years it was great to see Sally win something at the raffle, she has worked very hard organizing this annual event of our reunions. Thank you!*

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October 19<sup>th</sup> marked two very important events at our banquet at Bally's:

Stan's and Mona's 36<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary.  
Bud & Jean's granddaughter (Lori Copper's) birthday.  
(It was appropriate & fitting that Lori won the Hawaiian flowers.)

## ***Catherine Morrissey***

This letter is way over due. I do indeed apologize. Thank you for sending me the newsletters, I enjoy them as much as John always did. When each letter arrived John wouldn't move until he finished reading every word. He was always saying the different things that happened, I would say "Why don't you write that down and send it?" He would say he was going to, but never got around to do it. Goes to show you, never put off what you can do this minute. Does not seem possible it was a year on Aug. 13 John passed away. He loved fishing! Could catch fish when no-one else could, they would go to the same spot but couldn't catch a one. We buried his fishing rod with him and the different caps he wore. John took his nephew and two neighbors to Japan on his ship. I don't know where he left them off, John visited his brother Bob. On April 1<sup>st</sup> John would remember that day, if only he had put all the things down on paper. Compared to Pennsylvania it's like living on another planet here in Idaho. (*Jim Chilcote, take notice.*) This climate is awful for asthma sufferers. However, you should see the sunsets here, they are so beautiful. John worshipped Penn State football team, we didn't live too far from there. Please continue sending me the newsletters.

## ***Frank Wanits***

We received the information and the news about the reunion in Las Vegas, but unfortunately for us we were not able to attend, we visited our daughter and her husband in Seattle during the last week of September and the first week of October. We both have had a few health problems in the last two years, but everything is OK now. I had a lump removed from my arm and it was diagnosed as a lymphoma and received radiation treatments. Went through follow-up tests for a year (once every 3 months) now changed to every 6 months – so far everything is OK, that's good news. Five of our six children live in New York, all within driving distance, so we get together quite often. Hope we can get together in some future reunion.

## ***Lois Chappell***

Just a few lines to say we missed seeing everyone at the reunion in Las Vegas and hope we can make the next one. Howard is all healed now and flying around on his walker. He had a bad infection in his stump and was in the hospital several days but didn't have to have more of his leg removed. We are leaving for Florida right after Christmas.

## ***Joe & Reta Freitas***

Had a nice time in Las Vegas, was nice to see everyone again. Hope we will be able to make it to Nashville next year. We came home for Christmas and had nice weather. I think we brought it with us from the desert.

## ***Joe Erlandson***

Here is the newspaper clipping you requested at our Las Vegas reunion: Seventeen ships were docking in San Francisco with 4612 Pacific Veterans, the transport USS Lowndes from Manila, Philippines leading the parade with 1886 aboard. The Lowndes docked at Pier 15.

## ***Mike Michalski***

Our first stop on our maiden voyage from the States was the Hawaiian Islands, Oahu, Honolulu. We were greeted by a group of Hawaiian girls in grass skirts that did the hula dances on our deck. As they danced, the lady in charge told us what each hand movement indicated and said to us "Now boys, watch their hands." And received a huge laugh in response from the gang. A day or two later we were given a four hour liberty from 1300 to 1700 ( 1:00 to 5:00 PM). When we went ashore the ship was docked at a wharf and as my buddy, Chuck Murray stepped on the wharf he pointed out the bullet holes where the Jap planes during their attack had peppered the wooden wharf where we were walking. While ashore I decided to get some canned goods, potatoes, onions, etc. Chow aboard the ship wasn't the greatest, so I knew it wouldn't improve when we took on a load of troves. On our return the ship wasn't where it was when we left it – it had been moved out into the bay and tied up alongside of the other APA's in our group. We were taken from the wharf to the Lowndes in one of our landing barges (an LCVP). However when we arrived at the ship the ladder wasn't down to board the ship as it was when we left. What we had to do to get aboard was to climb up 40 feet from water level to the deck on a cargo net thrown over the side. It would have been a little more than a bit of an exercise – except for the fact that I had both hands and arms loaded with two big bags of groceries. I made it, but it did take time and an effort. Later, aboard the ship I was talking with a cook and a baker and when they found out what I had – a little deal was "Cooked up!" I traded some of my canned goods, etc. and later received a piece of pie or a slice of cake, or other food that the crew was never served. So the extra effort paid off.

## ***Leon Fougnyes***

Truly regret that I wasn't able to attend the Las Vegas reunion this year. This has been a difficult year – prostate cancer, 47 radiation treatments – cataracts in both eyes, plus macular degeneration in the right eye. Also the beginning of Alzheimer. Otherwise OK. Catherine has her problems too. Both knees are replaced. Regards to the crew, had a memorable time in Washington, D.C. Keep me posted, I may make the next one.

## ***Julia Jurica***

Hope all is fine up north. Our lives were pretty good in all. I had my left knee operated on and it's O.k. I walk well, keep up with all my work so far. John is fine and still works on some furniture. Had a real bad drought, no rain for three months and it was so dry that even the trees went bad. Then we got about five inches of rain.

## ***Frank Miller***

Just a short note to let everybody know we are thinking of them. I have made a promise not to plan on the next reunion until it gets close to the date. It seems at my age – 75 – it gets harder to predict one's health. We sure would have liked to make the Las Vegas one this year, but my foot swelled up so bad with the gout I could not walk and couldn't make it this year. This is the first letter I have written, wasn't able to hold a pen since August. What a year 2000 was. WOW! 2001 is going to be our year and we hope it will be a banner one for us and all of my shipmates.

## ***Reuben Johnson***

Thinking of everyone at reunion time. Great to get together and enjoy.

# ***How the War was Won***

## ***Dick Jones***

I don't know what day it was after D Day at Iwo Jima, but the Lt. JG on my boat #3 exclaimed "What's going on?" The ships were all lifting anchor and leaving at top speed. "Jones he said, I'm not going to spend the night out here." (Never mind the fact we -- my crew and me -- had been there three nights.) "Catch that ship. 154!" At full throttle we pulled alongside the ship. The davit before the bridge came down and the Motor Mac, don't remember his name hooked the ring on the front of the boat, L. V. Taylor (Millington, TN) deck hand tried to hook the back ring and couldn't. We were jerking all over the place. Big me, I said "Let me hook it." I grabbed the line and pulled it through the ring and pulled the line up to tie it off. The next thing I knew, I'm in sick bay with my head stitched up. Three years ago I read the ship's log. The Captain said he slowed down to get the boat aboard the ship as Richard Jones the coxswain was hurt. They went back to full speed because of an impending air raid. Wonder if I can sue the government for "Scrambling my brain -- just kidding. Is there anyone who remembers the name of the Motor Mac on #3 boat, or the Lt. JG?

*Note: Did this have a lasting affect on Dick?*

## ***Thomas (Tear Dog) Godby***

I just finished reading the newsletters that you sent me. It was nice reading about the reunion, and other events that happened on the ship. One comment sparked my memory. If you were a shellback, and that foul deed that happened to your mustache was on the eve of us crossing the equator on our way to Espiritu Santo, New Hebrides, then I think I remember you. I swear, I had nothing to do with that event. But if you were to ask me if I had anything to do with the same foul deed that happened to "Red" Castine the same night, I would have to crawl under the 5<sup>th</sup> amendment to keep from self incrimination. However, the next day when you shellbacks hauled us poor, innocent and helpless pollywogs up to King Neptune and his Royal Court for trial, you more than got even. The memories are still vivid in my mind. I have to commend Captain Perdue for letting us have the initiation. A lot of captains in the convoy didn't allow it. I would not have missed it for the world. It was a good experience, and hey, I made it through. A few days before crossing the equator I saw "Red" with a canvas tube sewed up. It was around 3" in diameter and about 24" long called a "shillelagh". He would flaunt it in front of us pollywogs. While he tamped it full of rags with a broom stick. Some of us guys figured, we better get our licks in first. He got even with me the next day when I was dunked into the vat full of water, fuel oil and garbage. Every time I came up for air, he dunked my head under. I think I was pretty close to drowning. Ha Ha. It was fun.

*Note: Castine, can you elaborate on Tom's tale?*

*Tom found us through the internet and e-mailed me his address.*

## ***Joel Rodriguez***

Sorry I couldn't be with you at the reunion in Las Vegas. At the same time I was in Vegas I did not arrive until Sunday at the Plaza Hotel downtown. Stayed there until Wednesday. This was right after the Lowndes reunion. Want info on the next reunion.

*Note: Joel. see last page of this newsletter.*

## **Jan Trober**

I am happy to have had the opportunity to have my life touched by so many wonderful men & women. Las Vegas was the third Lowndes reunion I have attended with my parents. Each time I go I get to speak and visit with some of the finest people. I may not always remember your names, but I will never forget your smiling faces. I hope to see all of you again in Nashville.

## **Lebby Dyer**

Bud, I hope you and Jean are over your red eye trip. We are both as well as can be. Want to thank the powers to be for all that was done on the Las Vegas trip. We thought it all worked out real well, to be in such a large hotel. We think most everyone had a good time. I know we did.

## **Wallace & Jackie Richards**

Enclosing a newspaper clipping about Mom's 100<sup>th</sup> birthday. She had 211 sign the guest book and received 152 cards. Also greetings from Bill and Hillary (co-presidents, I suppose), the Nebraska governor, our U.S. senators and congressman. She didn't have a spare minute from 2:00 'til 5:00 PM as someone was lined up continually to greet and talk with her. Biggest surprise of the day was Mike Michalski's arrival. He had flown to Kansas City and rented a car and drove to Nebraska City. Mom was thrilled to think that he would come all that way just for her. It really made her day. We had almost 70 family members with her in church at the 11:00 AM service. Filled one half of the church. Virginia and all her children and grandchildren, Keith's and all his family but one son made it and all five of ours came and almost all the grandkids.

*Note: Her children are the late Norman Richards, Virginia Duncan of Nebraska City, Wallace Richards of Columbus and Keith Richards of Bloomington, IN. She has 15 grandchildren, 41 great-grandchildren and 3 great-great grandchildren. Our hats off to a grand lady.*

## **Don & Shirley Lorenzi**

Enclosed, my dues. Congratulations on another good reunion. It was great to see everyone again. Shirley and I celebrated our 50<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary in September. Took a seven day cruise of the Mediterranean and a 7 day bus tour of Italy. Now we are looking forward to Nashville, TN next October.

## **Earl & Frances Robertson**

Just a short note to let you know our opinion of our trip to Las Vegas. In one case, we only had 2-1/2 days there because of plane schedules, however I/we feel we more than received our moneys worth. My only complaint, if you can call it that, was the banquet meal but we lived with it. Don't blame Bob Mulvihill for that. It was a Las Vegas oddity.

## **Leo & Margaret O'Brien**

We really enjoyed Las Vegas, even though we left a few dollars there.

# TAPS

Day is done

Gone the sun

From the lakes

From the hills

All is well, safely rest.

God is nigh

Fading light

Dims the sight

And a star

Gems the sky,

Gleaning bright

From afar,

Drawing nigh,

Falls the night.

Thanks and praise,

For our days,

Neath the sun,

Neath the stars,

Neath the sky,

As we go,

This we know,

God is nigh.

## Clifford W. Schaffer

Cliff was born October 14, 1925 in Limeport, Pennsylvania and passed away on September 16, 2000. Last February he was diagnosed having ALS (Lou Gehrig's Disease ). Joined the Navy November 1943 at Allentown, PA. In Sept 1944 in Astoria, Oregon he boarded the Lowndes as a Fireman 1c, he was a plank owner. His watch stations were in the boat group and as master at arms of the ship. General quarters station as a member of the repair party. Left the Lowndes January 1946 with the rate of MoMM3c. Last active duty Jan. 1946 at Bainbridge, Missouri as a MoMM3c. He married Mary Natysyn on June 22, 1946. As a civilian he worked as an assembler for Mack Trucks for four years. Truck driver for Tose-Fowler Trucking for 34 years and upon retiring loved every minute of it. He and Mary were fortunate to be able to take many trips and cruises after his retirement. Survivors are Mary and 3 grandchildren. He was a mainstay in the Lowndes Reunion Group and in 1992 was co-host with Bill Taylor of our reunion in Harrisburg, PA. You all will remember the two of them entertained us with their rendition of "Schnitzelbank" as they also did at the West Palm Beach reunion with a parody using their own composition of the lyrics. His happy smiling face will surely be missed.

## Carmel J. Fesi

My wife, Evelyn died September 12, 2000 at 6:55 AM. Funeral was held Sept. 15 and burial at Garden Memories Cemetery in Houma, Louisiana.

### *The following shipmates have gone down to sea the past year.*

James G. Davenport	05/24/2000
Glenn W. Forgay	11/27/1999
Robert J. Henkels	03/29/2000
James C.(Tex) Holderman	06/12/2000
Jack B. Weatherbie (Hovey)	06/06/2000
Walter Karson	01/14/2000
Chuck J. Munson	04/00/2000
Clarence (Bear) Ringo	02/08/2000
Clifford W. Schaffer	09/16/2000

Dec. 2000-7

This is an e-mail received by a shipmate of my 1<sup>st</sup> ship (USS Reid ) from a friend of his who flies Sh-60B's off the USS Hawes.

It wasn't until a few days ago that we started doing something that I feel may be the first thing I've seen in my short Naval career that has truly made a difference. Right now we're supporting the USS Cole and her crew in Aden. When the attack occurred we were a day away. Just by luck we happened to be on our way out of the Gulf headed towards the Suez and could get there in a relatively short time. I know what you have seen on CNN, because we have seen it too. Just want you to know that what you have seen does not even scratch the surface. I'm not going to go into it for obvious reasons. But I will tell you that right now there are 250+ sailors just a few miles away living in hell on Earth. I'm sitting in a nice air conditioned state room, they're sleeping out on the decks at night. You can't even imagine the conditions they're living in, and yet they are fighting 24 hours a day to save their ship and free the bodies of those still trapped and send them home. As bad as it is, they're doing an incredible job. The very fact that these people are still functioning is beyond my comprehension. Whatever you imagine as the worst, multiply it by ten and you might get there. Today I was tasked to photo rig the ship and surrounding area. It looked so much worse than I had imagined, unbelievably really, with debris and disarray everywhere, the ship listing, the hole in her side. I wish I had the power to relay to you all what I have seen, but words won't do it. I do want to tell you the first thing that jumped out at me – the Stars and Stripes flying. I can't tell you how that made me feel...even in this God forsaken hell hole our flag was more beautiful than words can describe. Then I started to notice the mass of activity going on below, scores of people working non-stop in 90 plus degree weather to save this ship. They're doing it with almost no electrical power and they're sleeping (when they can) outside on the decks because they can't stand the smell or heat or the darkness inside. They only want to eat what we bring them because they're scared of eating something brought by the vendors. Even with all that, the USS Cole and her crew are sending a message guys, and it's that every acts of cowardice and hate can do nothing to the spirit and pride of the United States. I have never been so proud of what I do, or the men and women that I serve with as I was today. There are sixteen confirmed dead sailors who put it on the line for all of us, and some of them are still trapped here. Please take a minute to pray for their families and say a word of thanks for their sacrifice – one made so that we can live the lives we do. All of you that serve with me, thank you. All of you that have loved ones that serve, thank you.

Please feel free to pass this on to those you think will appreciate it.

V/R

LT Landry

*Note: After reading this account from an eye witness it makes a person wonder how the media, so intent on getting the news out bother to get all the facts sorted out before it hits the public.*

## Dan Wisdom

Thanks for the reunion album, it was great and I always enjoy seeing the Lowndes crew and the Lovelies. Just wish I could attend, but have to keep the nose to the grind stone. Hey! Guess what? 4 more years and I'll have the magic number of 30. No, I'll not be 30, but I'll be able to retire or anyways, I'll have them by the ----- and can go for the gravy several more years. Lera still works for SW Bell something with computers, I never figured out what. Oldest son is married and working, will attend nite school. Youngest son, Stephen attending Louisiana Tech majoring in professional aviation and getting all his Aviation ratings. Oh! My pocketbook. He hopes to join the Air National Guard in New Orleans, which has a fighter base, possibly become a pilot for them. Well for me! Just work and the old chair/remote. Decided to start Karate class, sure helps my joints. Sorry I couldn't make the reunion, but think of all the friends we have met in the years past and wish all the best to all.

### Farewell to the APA's & LPA's

My father-in-law, Gordon Russell Holley, an old APA man and coxswain, served on the USS Lowndes – APA 154 as she sailed the Pacific on shakedown cruises and training exercises and made beach landings on Iwo Jima and Okinawa. I have witnessed the pride of his fellow crew members at many reunions in having served on the Lowndes, and can't help but feel a little sadness that the end of an era has come. We must give a farewell salute to a vessel that played an important role in preserving our liberty throughout World War II.

## Mildred Binney

I am writing a different kind of letter because there's so much to say about our experiences this past year. Buell had a stroke January 25<sup>th</sup> and we have done many things since that time. He was paralyzed on the left side, unable to eat, and lots of other complications. Then we went to Chillicothe for 5 months as he recovered, became stronger, but still could not eat. He got into Rusk Rehab in Columbia and they made real progress, as much as possible, including eating. He then went to David's for 2 months, waiting to get in at the new Veteran's Home in Cameron, MO. He is now there, making progress and maintenance, and eating everything in sight! He enjoys company, running the halls, knows everyone, thrives on attention, and is rather spoiled. If you happen to be close, please drop in and say HI to him.

His address is: Buell Binney  
Missouri Veteran's Home  
1111 Euclid  
Cameron, MO 64429

*Note: I'm sure he would like to hear from any of his shipmates.*

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I plan to attend to attend the reunion in Nashville, TN \_\_\_ Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City, State & Zip \_\_\_\_\_ Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Return to: John Dyer – 115 Sea Steppes Ct. – Jupiter, Florida - 33477



Dec. 2000-9

## NASHVILLE REUNION – OCT. 10 – 13, 2000

The following is a fervent plea from Lebby Dyer please make a note of this:

Rooms at the Radisson hotel in Nashville are \$79.00. (Regular rates are \$129.00 to \$149.00). This price is for 20 rooms. If less than that we don't know what the price will be. If we don't get interest I don't know how we can go on. We must stress to shipmates this is really hard to go at a distance, so we need everyone's co-operation. If you say you are going and something happens that you can't go, it will be all right to cancel. No payment is due until arriving in October. Hotel has all food facilities.

There is a shuttle to Opryland hotel, Grand ol Opry, General Jackson and the river taxi.

You pay \$3.00 for a pass to use all the time you are there. This will eliminate the hiring of a tour bus.

The Radisson will help arrange tours, John and I can stop on the way to Indiana in July and arrange tours.

There is a shuttle available at the airport - \$11.00 one way or \$18.00 round trip.

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**Please contact the Dyers or Dick Jones as soon as possible in January.**

***Need to have a rough count in January to block rooms at the Radisson Hotel to assure our reunion's success. This is a requirement issued by the hotel.***

***John & Lebby Dyer  
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