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Bio's of new Governors

Hello, my name is Lauren Bagen and I am so excited to serve on the Board of Governors for the USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Association. Ever since I can remember, my grandfather, Louis Vilmer (VC-10 Radioman), has recounted his experiences from the war and I have developed a deep appreciation for those who have served and fought for our freedom in these United States. Over the years, I have been fortunate to attend many reunions including New Orleans, San Diego (for the 60th Anniversary), Minneapolis, and Phoenix, and have gotten to know many of the survivors and their families. Attending the memorial services and getting to know many of you has deepened my regard for the sacrifices made by the men of the Gambier Bay. It is my hope to be able to preserve your legacy for future generations.

Currently, I am a junior at the University of Texas at Dallas working on my degree in Electrical Engineering. I love cooking, baking, traveling, scuba diving, camping and backpacking with family and friends. I look forward to serving as a governor and hope to see everyone at the next reunion.



We are glad to have you on the board Lauren.



Mark Heint

I was born in Coldwater, Ohio in 1960 being the youngest of 2 sons to Gambier Bay survivor Charlie and Rita Heint. I graduated from Marion Local High School in Maria Stein, OH in 1979. I worked construction while going to a trade school to become a law enforcement officer. I took my oath as Mercer County, OH Deputy Sheriff in October of 1981. I worked as a reserve Deputy Sheriff and remained in construction before I became full time. I married Sandra Elaine Barna in 1984. We have 4 grown children, Ashlee Heint Botkin (Matthew), Mark Urban Heint II (US Army 2005-2009), now a student at Columbus State University in Columbus, OH, Cassandra Ann Heint a junior at

Wright State University in Dayton, OH and Spencer Michael Heint currently an Army soldier (Reserves) living at home. Ashlee and Matt are expecting their second child in February to join their son Izaak. *What a great looking family!*

Tom Westbrook

At our last reunion, Tom indicated if asked, he would be on the Board of Governors. Well he kindly said yes and said it would be a privilege. He is replacing Les Kennedy who passed away last Veterans Day. Tom is the son of survivor Charles Westbrook who crossed the bar in March of 2009. *Thanks Tom!!* Look for his bio in the next Scuttlebutt.

Mail Call- Letters & E-mails from you folks

RESCUED FROM THE WATER

That is the headline of a newspaper article that Carl “Whitey” Amundson sent to me from his local newspaper. Unfortunately the pictures of him in the article did not copy well.

The newspaper is highlighting those veterans who have been chosen to take an Honor Flight to see the World War II Memorial in Washington, D.C. Carl will

be flying to D.C. April 30-May 1st. on the South West Minnesota Honor Flight.

The article was all about Carl and him being in the Navy and on the U.S.S. Gambier Bay during World War II. He said he joined the navy because “in the navy, you always have food to eat and a place to sleep, adding that is why he didn’t enlist in the army, where soldiers have to sleep in fox holes and eat K-rations. After he was discharged he stayed in California where he worked as a machinist for the next 38 years. He married Bernice Bladen and they had two children. Carl was heavily involved with the VFW, serving as a post commander, district commander, and the chief of staff for the state commander in California. A couple of years after Bernice passed way in 2002, he decided to go home to Minnesota. He is now living in Chandler, MN where he now resides with his friend Fran Carlson. He and Fran travel every year to attend the reunion of the U.S.S. Gambier Bay. **Above picture is of Fran & Carl** (to find out more about the honor flights check out www.honorflight.org)



January 9, 2010 12:09 PM

Hi Marlene,

You might as well take our address off your Scuttlebutt mailing list as my father has been gone for awhile now. Charles Wickersham passed away on March 26, 2006 succumbing to prostate cancer at the age of 89. 7/14/16-03/26/2006.

Thank you,

John Wickersham

January 9, 2010 2:44 PM

John:

Thank you for the e-mail and letting me know about your Dad.

Do you know what division he was in and his rank?

The Association is being kept together by survivors plus 2nd and 3rd generations, in order to keep the story of the U.S.S. Gambier Bay alive for future generations.

Since we were not aware of his passing until now, we will toll a bell for him at our next reunion in Oct of 2010.

Our best to you and your family.

Marlene Hughes



Mail Call Continued

January 12, 2010 12:14 PM

Hi again,

From what I can gather he was a Lt. Commander in the U.S. Navy and was in the VC-10 Composite Squadron aboard the U.S.S. Gambier Bay. My information is sketchy but I remember he used to talk about Hux being a fine leader and friend during that time. He won a Distinguished Flying Cross and an Air Medal with three gold stars.

Thank you for tolling a bell for him.

Sincerely

John Wickersham

E-mail from George Bisbee

January 8, 2010 10:55 AM

Dear Marlene,

I just received the latest issue of "Scuttlebutt" and had a question. I assume that 2010 dues are due at this time. I would like to send an additional \$15 for someone who cannot afford dues.

In addition, I would like to order 5 copies of the "Men of the Gambier Bay" for my grandchildren. I didn't see what shipping and handling would be on the order sheet. Please let me know what the S&H would be for the 5 books. Thanks.

My dad, George E. Bisbee, was a TBM pilot aboard the Gambier Bay. It is only because of the Association that I know personal stories about him, since he never talked about what happened. Part of it was the sinking of the ship and part of it was losing his best friend, Hovey Seymour, in an accident at sea. My brother, Terry, was named for Hovey (Hoven Terrence Bisbee).

I am very grateful to a number of men from the Gambier Bay. Because of the efforts of Ed Hagerty and Hank Pyzdrowski, I was invited to the commissioning of the USS George Washington. That gave me an opportunity to meet many of my dad's shipmates, most told me stories about him. Two of them were Charlie Dugan and Owen Wheeler, and others who showed me so much kindness.

After the commissioning, I met with the Public Relations officer of the George Washington and gave him my dad's flight jacket he wore on the Fanshaw Bay. The Department of the Navy approved of the gift and it now resides in the museum aboard the ship. The cigars in the jacket pocket were included, except for one given to Hank

Thank you for your help with the books, and, thank you for your work with the Association and the rest of the Board and Officers who keep the "flame alive."

George Bisbee

*George sent me another e-mail about his Dad with pictures which I will put in our next issue of Scuttlebutt
Thanks George.*

E-mail from Fred Disipio-September 10,2010

Hi Marlene: Just got the info for the reunion, will try to make it. Had some edgy back surgery recently, a redo of all the hardware I had put in from being wounded,, screws, rods etc.,, I make many appearances during the year speaking about our action, so the GB is out there, all the time.... Other than that I am feeling pretty good, finally retired last year from the recording industry.... I think you are aware that at the National World War II museum in New Orleans, I was chosen as one of the representative sailors for WWII, when anyone goes there, you will come up to 5 Kiosks, Army, Air Corp, Marines, Coast Guard & Navy. I am the sailor, simply touch my picture on the kiosk, and my story will run,, so many many people have seen the GB on the screen of me.

Spent some time at the VA hospital, finally caught up with some of my records. When I finally was picked up on the 5th or 7th day, as you know I had drifted over 200 miles, towards New Guinea, so the PT boat took me directly to the nearest surgical center, which was an Army field hospital in the jungle of New Guinea at Finchaven. Army medical records have me being received on Nov 1st on the 7th day, the Navy has me being rescued on Oct 30th -the 5th day, but what is a couple of days between ship-mates.. Anyway hello to all the staff & shipmates....Anchors Aweigh

Fred Disipio

September 30, 2010

Hi Marlene: It looks like I will not be able to make the reunion. I still need more therapy because as I told you the surgery was fairly massive...al the screws & nuts & bars have to really settle in.. I was trying to rush it, but they put the brakes on. The Navy never changes you see, I have been home for quite some time & get around with normal activity, but long plane rides & all the hassle that goes with travel these days, would make it tough,, Everybody have good time.. Anchors Aweigh

Fred Disipio

Well Fred I let everyone know at the reunion about these e-mails but thought I would put them in the Scuttlebutt for everyone to read. Hope you can make it to St Louis in Oct. and you are better able to travel. Since you did not send a picture-I could not find one to insert.

From your Editor:

Please send me letters or e-mails and let me know how the world is treating you and yours. Pictures are always welcome.

Just a note to everyone- Have a blessed and Happy Easter.
Marlene Hughes



Quote from Ronald Reagan:

“ Freedom is never more than one generation away from extinction. We didn’t pass it to our children in the bloodstream. It must be fought for, protected, and handed on for them to do the same”