

SCUTTLEBUTT

A Quarterly Newsletter

June 2011

Presidents Corner

Hello Gambier Bay Family!

Our Reunion Committee has finalized our 2011 reunion in Omaha for October 19-23, 2011. Please check inside for all the details on registration, hotel, board and membership meeting dates/time, and our excursion events. I look forward to seeing you and meeting new survivors and family members who will be in attendance. We will again have a raffle at our banquet and this year we will also have a silent auction, which will include many items obtained from the Tucson Gem & Mineral Show! As you know, ticket sales at the raffle help tremendously with the Association finances and your support is greatly appreciated. If you would like to donate items for the raffle or silent auction you can send them to me or Marlene, or you can bring them along with you to the reunion.

As a reminder, this year the Association will have its annual Board meeting and bi-annual membership meeting. The membership meeting agenda will include the election of our officers and governors for the years 2011-2013 and will also include an update from our Historical Committee on their procedures of tracking and recording your historical memorabilia that is placed in your community.

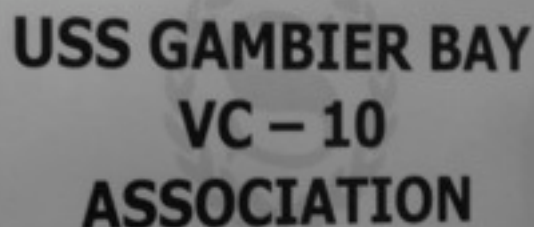
Our website is growing and we are constantly updating and adding new information to the site. Should you have any information, stories, photos or articles that you would like to contribute, please contact me. Marlene and Tony Potochniak will be working together to update the lists of our KIA and those who have crossed the bar so we can keep this information current on our website. Tony is one of the founding members of the Association and he has a great historical website – www.ussgambierbay-vc10.com – check it out! Should you have any information regarding a survivor who has crossed the bar, please contact Marlene with that information at mahhome@cox.net.

Remember to check out all of our items in our ship store. We have some new Tee shirts available as well as mugs, hats, lapel pins, and our all time favorite the Freedom's Cost lithograph by Richard Moore. Please contact Marlene if you are interested in purchasing any merchandise.

Once again, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support, encouragement, and open communication to not only me but to the entire Board. We are here to serve you and to keep the memory alive and honor all of our husbands, brothers, grandparents, uncles, and friends who served on the USS Gambier Bay. Should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me or one of the other Board members.

I will see you all in Omaha!

Paula (LaRocco) Grond



USS GAMBIER BAY
VC - 10
ASSOCIATION

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERS AND SUBSCRIPTIONS ARE NEEDED TO CONTINUE OUR ASSOCIATION AN PUBLICATION. PLEASE HELP IF YOU CAN!!

SURVIVORS DO NOT OWE DUES

THE DUES ARE \$15.00 ANNUALLY OR \$100.00 FOR A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP.

PLEASE CIRCLE ONE OF THE NUMBERED OPTIONS BELOW.

- 1. ENCLOSED IS \$15.00 FOR A SUBSCRIPTION TO THE SCUTTLEBUTT.**
- 2. ENCLOSED IS \$100.00 FOR A LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP.**
- 3. I CAN'T AFFORD TO PAY FOR A SUBSCRIPTION AT THIS TIME. PLEASE KEEP ME ON THE MAILING LIST.**
- 4. YOUR SHIPMATE OR SQUADRON MATE HAS PASSED AWAY. PLEASE KEEP ME ON THE MAILING LIST.**
- 5. PLEASE REMOVE MY NAME FROM YOUR MAILING LIST.**
- 6. I WOULD LIKE THE SCUTTLEBUTT E-MAILED TO ME (INCLUDE E-MAIL BELOW)**

NAME _____ **\$** _____ **CK#** _____

ADDRESS _____ **CITY** _____

ST _____ **ZIP** _____ **PHONE#** _____ **FAX#** _____

RANK/RATE _____ **DIV** _____ **E-MAIL** _____

SPOUSE'S NAME _____

PLEASE SEND TO:

**MARLENE HUGHES, TREASURER
USS GAMBIER BAY/VC-10 ASSOCIATION
2228 E GREENLEE RD
TUCSON, AZ 85719-2012**

**ANY ADDITIONAL MONEY WILL BE CONSIDERED A DONATION
AND GREATLY APPRECIATED!!**

In Memoriam

Shipmates who have crossed the Bar

Hugh A. Bell (1923-2011)

88, of Glasgow, died Thursday, April 28, 2011 at the Commonwealth Regional Specialty Hospital. He was the son of the late John Evans Bell and Margaret Suerilda Eastham Bell. He was a retired salesman for Sherwin Williams. A U.S. Navy Veteran, he sailed aboard the USS Trinity, an oil tanker, and aboard the USS Gambier Bay, an aircraft carrier, during his military career. He fought in five major battles and received several medals, including the African-European Medal, American Area Medal, American Defense Medal, World War II Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. His highest rank was Quartermaster 1st Class. He was a member of the Glasgow Baptist Church.

He is survived by his wife: Virginia Lee Bell; six children: David Bell, Mark Bell, Peggy Billips, Mary Hurtgen, Donna Gordon and Terry Bydlik; twenty-three grandchildren; eleven great-grandchildren; several nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by two brothers: Dennis Bell and Avery Bell; two sisters: Charlene Langston and Sylvia Cross.

Funeral will be 2:00 P.M. Sunday, May 1, 2011 at the Hatcher & Saddler Funeral Home with entombment at the Happy Valley Memorial Gardens, with Chapter 20 DAV providing military honors. Visitation will be after noon on Sunday until time for services.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Commonwealth Health Foundation "The Hospitality House" P. O. Box 1868 Bowling Green, KY 42102-8984.

Lowell Mayrant (1920-2011)

Lowell Mayrant of Huntsville, Texas passed away at 91 years of age in Conroe Wednesday, the 15th of June 2011. He was born in Lufkin, Texas to Samuel Norvell Mayrant and wife, Mary Myrtle Land Mayrant the 29th of February 1920.

Mr. Mayrant is survived by his beloved wife of more than 70 years, Jewel Marie Mayrant; sister, Earlene Brock and husband, Virgil Brock of Lufkin, Texas; daughter, Ginger Fogg and husband, William Fogg of Houston; and son, Gary Mayrant and wife, Susan Mayrant of Huntsville; grandchildren, Barbara Hamrick of La Grange, Texas, Lt. Colonel Richard Fogg of O'Fallon, Illinois, Charles Bryce of Huntsville, and Jennifer Mayrant of The Colony, Texas; eight great-grandchildren and one great-great grandchild. Brothers, Portland and Samuel N Mayrant Jr.; and sisters Oneida Stapp Belcher, Zelma Wilson and Eulene Milwee preceded Mr. Mayrant in death.

Mr. Mayrant served his country like many of the Greatest Generation. He was stationed in the United States Navy aboard the U.S.S. Gambier Bay during World War II. The ship sank at The Battle of Leyte Gulf in 1944 and Mr. Mayrant floated in the sea for 68 hours. He was awarded the Purple Heart for injuries sustained in the battle.

He earned an Associate Degree at Lee College in Tennessee and finished with a Masters and Bachelors Degree from Sam Houston State University in Huntsville. He became a professor at SHSU primarily in the

In Memoriam

Lowell Mayrant- sociology and criminology departments. Mr. Mayrant retired in 1985 after 27 years as a professor at SHSU.

He was a longtime member of the Assembly of God Church and taught Sunday School for many years at First Assembly of God in Crockett, Texas. He was also an entrepreneur engaging in many different successful business ventures throughout the course of his life. He enjoyed hunting and fishing with his children and grandchildren and was an avid collector of memorabilia and antiques.

Memorial services will be held at First Baptist Church of Huntsville Tuesday, the 21st of June at 10:00 a.m. Following will be the Internment at Houston National Cemetery at 1:30 p.m. Pastor Jon Weygandt will officiate the ceremony and grandson Chuck Bryce will deliver the eulogy. Visitation will be at Sam Houston Memorial Funeral Home Monday, the 20th of June from 5:00 to 8:00 p.m.

The family wishes to thank Dr. Ali Bhuriwala and the extended family of health care professionals from Consider The Lilies who worked faithfully to care for "Poppa."

The family requests with gratitude that memorial contributions in Mr. Mayrant's honor be directed to The Nantz National Alzheimers Center or The Wounded Warrior Project.

Those wishing to leave memorial condolences for the family may do so at www.shmfh.com.

Marie Josephine Zorn (1929-2009)

Marie J Zorn, 79 years old was called home to be with her Lord Jesus Christ on Friday, Nov. 6, 2009 in Mesa, AZ.

Marie was Born on Dec. 27, 1929 in Venice, Calif. to Thomas James and Goldie May Caldwell. Marie was very active in her church, St Mary's Catholic Church in Kingman, in the Belles of St Mary's. She also belonged to the Teamster Retiree Association in Kigman. Marie was a registered nurse and loved her children and grandchildren.

Marie was married to Calvin Otis Zorn for 31 years. He preceded her in death in June 1994. Also preceding Marie were her parents, two brothers and three sisters.

Survivors include her son, Carl Otis Zorn and his wife Debbie of Kingman; her daughter Rita May Fancon and her husband Derek of Mesa. Marie is also survived by nine grandsons and one granddaughter.

Services were held at Falconer Funeral home in Gilbert, AZ on Saturday, Nov. 14th, 2009



In Memoriam



Marie Dehn of Pompano Beach, Florida, It is with great sadness that our beloved aunt, Marie Dehn passed away on Saturday, July 31, 2010 at Hospice-By-The -Sea in Boca Raton, Florida. Marie was born in Manhattan, New York to Anna Marie Caivano and Bartholemew A. Romano. Growing up she attended Horace Mann Grammar School and Emerson High School in New Jersey. Marie and her husband Harold (deceased) moved to Florida from New Jersey in 1957. She was a legal secretary for Broward County Title Company/Lawyers Title Insurance until 1978, and until March 2009 she worked for MacLean and Ema Law Offices in Pompano Beach. Marie joined the Holy Cross Hospital Auxiliary in 1978. She tirelessly dedicated an extraordinary amount of time and talent helping the Auxiliary with many functions and events including the Annual Charity Ball, as well as, serving as Parliamentarian for many years. In February 1984, Marie also become an active volunteer in the hospital. She became a life member of the Auxiliary, served as President in 2007-2008, and was honored as Volunteer of the month in September 2003. She was part of a special category of Volunteers serving over 20,000 hours dedicating a total of 26,603 hours at Holy Cross. Marie also lent her talent to serving as a patient visitor, but her passion was working with Father Jim Nero as an Eucharistic Minister in the Spiritual Care Department. Marie was worldly and had a passion for travel. She went on many trips with her friends (which she referred to as the "FUN GROUP") among them were Aileen Gould, Mary Ellen and Lucho (deceased) Sologuren, Phyllis and Herb Kaplan and Barbara and Bernie Pease. Marie was selflessly devoted to her family. Preceding Marie in death was her husband of 43 years, Harold E. Dehn, who had been a USS Gambier Bay survivor, her sisters, Camille Cilli of Scottsdale, AZ; Grace Hammett of Lighthouse Point, FL. She is survived by her nieces and nephews, Debbie Mattaliano, West Palm Beach, FL, Karen Hammett, Deerfield Beach, FL, Paul Hammett, Lighthouse Point, FL, Eugene Cilli, Aspen, CO, Carol Antal, Scottsdale, AZ, Robert Cilli, Denver, CO, Bruce Weber, Summerville, SC, Roy Weber, Lake Placid, FL, 10 Great-Nieces and Nephews, and many friends all of whom will miss her dearly. Family and friends will be celebrating Marie's life on Thursday, August 5, 2010 from 1-3 p.m. and 7-9 p.m. A Mass of Christian Burial will be held on Friday, August 6, 2010 at 11 a.m. at St. Coleman's Catholic Church, 1200 S. Federal Highway, Pompano Beach, with Father Jim Nero officiating. A Musical Presentation from Terese Anello will be offered during the Mass. Entombment will follow at Forest Lawn North Memorial Gardens, 200 W. Copans Road, Pompano Beach, FL. Arrangements under the direction of FOREST LAWN NORTH FUNERAL HOME, Pompano Beach, FL.

Elmar S. Waring Jr. (1916-4/1/2009)

Merlyn Wee (1922-11/1/2008)

I just became aware of the last four obituaries



2011 Reunion in Omaha

Crowne Plaza Hotel-Omaha-Old Mill

OCTOBER 19-23RD CALL 402- 496-0850 TO MAKE RESERVATIONS NOW.

Specify the Group Name USS GAMBIER BAY/VC-10 REUNION



CROWNE PLAZA

- Priority club rewards hotel.
- Plaza Grill open for Breakfast and Dinner.
- The registration fee for this reunion will be \$80.00 including 3 breakfasts, a lunch and a dinner. A registration form is in this Scuttlebutt as well as tour information.
- Check in 3PM Check out 12PM



GUEST ROOM FEATURES

- Crowne Sleep Advantage Program.
- 223 rooms with complimentary wireless internet access, Color TV, CD Player, Free Morning Newspaper delivered to room & hairdryers.
- The rate for a standard room is \$82 & 18.16% tax=\$96.89.
- Complimentary Hospitality Room



SHUTTLE SERVICE

- Complimentary Shuttle service within 5 miles of hotel
- Complimentary Shuttle service available to/from Eppley Airfield
- Parking for registered guest only
- Conveniently located at I-680 and Dodge Street

Remember to make your reservations early!

Omaha!

Oh! What Great Surprises

2011 Itinerary for the Reunion:

Wednesday, Oct 19th-3pm-11pm- Hospitality Room open

Donations will be taken for drinks & snacks.

5pm-8pm-Welcome Reception in Hospitality Room

Thursday, Oct 20th- 7am-11pm-Hospitality Room Open

8:30 am- Historical Driving Tour w/Guide

1:15 pm-Return to Crowne Plaza

3:00 pm Board of Governors Meeting

Friday, Oct 21st- 7am-11pm-Hospitality Room open

9:30 am Depart Crowne Plaza

9:45-11:40 Father Flanagan's Boys Town Tour

11:40-1:00 Lunch at Boys Town Cafe

1:15 pm Return to Crowne Plaza

2:00 pm Membership Meeting

6pm-7pm-Cash bar with Raffle

6pm-11pm-Dinner Banquet & Entertainment

Saturday, Oct 22nd-7am-11pm-Hospitality Room open

11am- 3pm-Memorial Service & Lunch

Lunch served after service- (this is included in Registration fee)

Dinner on your own or take out in Hospitality Suite

Sunday, Oct 23rd-Hospitality Room will be open all day-stay until you have to leave

SHIP'S STORE

WE HAVE THE FOLLOWING ITEMS IN OUR INVENTORY:

PRINTS OF FREEDOM'S COST	\$55.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Hats	\$25.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Lapel Pin	\$8.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Button Pin (see below)	\$4.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Mouse Pad (see below)	\$10.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Luggage Tag (see below)	\$7.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Travel Mug (see below) (4)	\$22.00 w/shipping
USS GAMBIER BAY Coffee Mug (see below) (5)	\$22.00 w/shipping
USS Gambier BAY Polo Shirt (see below)	\$30.00 w/shipping

The polo shirts are embroidered and come in Men's & Ladies sizes S,M,L,XL-XXL is \$1.50 more
Color is Navy Blue with Yellow Embroidery. These take couple of weeks to get in once ordered.



SHIP'S STORE CONTINUED:



I was able to order more of these t-shirts which are pre-shrunk. However they are charcoal color with the name of the ship & October 25, 1944, Battle of Leyte Gulf on the left sleeve. Price is \$20 w/shipping

BOOKS:

THE MEN OF THE GAMBIER BAY BOOK IS OUT OF PRINT AS OF JANUARY 2009. I am still looking into having a publisher print the book by digitally copying our paperback and then having it published so we can sell it on our website and other websites to make money for the association. So look for news in the future.

No more copies of "Last of the Tin Can Sailors" left.

MAKE A DONATION OF \$50.00 YOU WILL RECEIVE A SHEET OF 20 STAMPS (THEY ARE .39 CENT STAMPS) with the picture of Freedom's Cost. (Only 3 sheets left)

The polo shirts will be made to order and will take approximately 2 weeks to make.

The shipping is included with the prices making it easier to know the cost.

Please send orders with check or money order to:

USS Gambier Bay/vc-10 Assoc
c/o Marlene Hughes
Treasurer
2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012

E-mail-mahhome@cox.net
520-326-0747

In Appreciation

Thank you to all the names listed for your donation, buying something from the ship's store, subscription or lifetime membership. All of this helps the association spread the word about that fateful day on October 25, 1944.

Gary Brown
Norman Van Dine

Cap. Joseph D. McGraw USN Ret
Tom Westbrook Chris Shelvik

Nancy Poncer
Donald Slimp

Board of Governors & Officers 2009-2011

1. Paula Grond, President
13632 Carpantino Ave
Bellflower, CA 90706
Telephone: 562-866-1192
E-Mail: pk_grond@yahoo.com
2. Norman Loats, Vice-President
432 Rivera Terrace
Corona Del Mar, CA 92625-2165
Telephone: 949-760-0387
Fax: 949-721-1412
3. Marlene Hughes, Treasurer
2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012
Telephone: 520-326-0747
Fax: 520-326-0747
E-Mail: mahhome@cox.net
4. Jack Turner, Reunion Chair
3532 S Eudora Way
Denver, CO 80237-1075
Telephone: 303-756-4189
Fax: 303-756-4189
E-Mail: Shirljack44@msn.com
5. Susan Turner, Secretary
14875 Creekside Lane
Longmont, CO 80503
Telephone: 1-303-485-8815
E-Mail: susanturnerma@hotmail.com
6. Tom Westbrook, Governor
24 Bishop Lane
Menlo Park, CA 94025-6317
Telephone: 650-854-6653
E-Mail: westpony@yahoo.com
7. Lauren Bagen, Governor
1944 Paris Ave
Plano, TX 75025
Telephone: 972-489-7281
E-Mail: laurenbagen@gmail.com
8. Lucille Gutzwiler, Governor
212 W Edgemont
Wenatchee, WA 98801
Telephone: 509-663-01406
E-Mail: Luciqutz@genext.net
9. Edward S. Hagerty, Governor
8310 Norman Creek TR
Bloomington, MN 5537-3835
Telephone: 952-897-1272
E-Mail: EHagerty@aol.com
10. Susan Bagen, Governor
1944 Paris Ave
Plano, TX 75025
Telephone: 972-517-7928
E-Mail: bagen@verizon.net
11. Chris Stammen, Governor
4846 State Route 705
New Weston, OH 45348
Telephone: 937-338-3914
E-Mail: estammen@embarqmail.com
12. Mark Heintl, Governor
8329 ST RT 119
Maria Stein, OH 4580-9701
Telephone: 419-925-4412
E-Mail: heintl_22@hotmail.com

USS Gambier Bay/VC10 Reunion Registration Form
October 19th-23rd 2011
Omaha, Nebraska

Name: _____ **Phone:** () _____ - _____

Address: _____

City _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Name On Badge: _____ **Are you a survivor?** _____

Spouse Name On Badge: _____

Guest Name On Badge, Relationship; City & State: _____

Guest Name On Badge, Relationship; City & State: _____

Guest Name On Badge, Relationship; City & State: _____

Guest Name On Badge, Relationship; City & State: _____

**Please indicate with an * next to the name if this is the persons first reunion-
Use additional paper if necessary.**

Registration:

Early Registration for **\$80** per person ends September 1st. If you send the registration in after **September 1st** but by **September 20th** the rate is **\$85** person.

Registration after **September 20th** but by **Oct 1st** the rate is **\$90** per person.

The registration fee includes **Dinner Banquet, Memorial Service Luncheon, 3 breakfasts, reunion goodies and miscellaneous reunion expenses.**

Early Registration-# of people _____ x **\$80** per person= \$ _____ .00

By September 20th-# of people _____ x **\$85** per person= \$ _____ .00

After September 20th # of people _____ x **\$90** per person= \$ _____ .00

Dinner Banquet: Choose Flat Iron Steak _____ or Fillet of Salmon _____

Luncheon: Choose Grilled Pork Tenderloin _____ or Chicken Cordon Bleu _____

All entrees are served with Garden Salad, Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables and Dessert.
Warm rolls and butter and either coffee or ice tea.

Tours are listed below.

Registration for Tours: Omaha's Historic Downtown

Thursday, October 20th, 2011

8:30 AM

Depart Crown Plaza

9:00-11:00

Historical Driving Tour with Guide

"Introduction to the city of Omaha"

Begin the day with a guided tour of Omaha's past, present and future. Guide gives your group an overview of Omaha's points of interest. Tour includes the historic Gold Coast District, Riverfront area sites, the Old Market District, Warren Buffet's residence & office, building where Rueben sandwich was invented, the striking Joslyn Castle, St. Cecilia's Spanish Cathedral, Birth place of former President Gerald Ford, Pioneer Park with it's nearly life-size sculpture of entire wagon train complete with wagons & oxen and much more...

11:15-12:45

Lunch at the Historic Bohemian Café

Includes Kolache Making Demonstration

The Bohemian Café is a Czech landmark since 1924. Luncheon group menu includes a choice of Roast pork, Chicken Cutlet or Czech style sauerbraten! Meal Includes soup, dumplings, Sauerkraut, bread, coffee & Tea! Presentation is about the Omaha Czech community and the history of the Bohemian Café.

Group lunch also includes a demonstration on Kolache making is given to the group by one of the café cooks.

Father Flanagan's Boys Town

Friday, October 21st, 2011

9:30 AM

Depart Crown Plaza

9:45-11:40

Father Flanagan's Boys Town Tour

Tour a national historic landmark - Father Flanagan's Boys Town. Learn the story of Boys Town from the very beginning to the daily operations of Boys Town today! Boys Town is its own city with its own police department, post office and mayor elected by the children themselves. Tour includes guided driving tours of the Boys Town campus, visit to the Hall of History museum and the restored 1920's Father Flanagan House.

11:40-1:00

Lunch at Boys Town Café

Lunch can be on your own. There is generally a swearing in ceremony on Fridays. Young adults being admitted to Boys Town will talk about changing their troubled lives by coming to Boys Town. It's a wonderful way to see Boys Town in action.

1:15 PM

Return to Crown Plaza

Omaha's Historic Downtown tour \$40.00 x _____ = \$ _____

Father Flanagan's Boys Town tour \$30.00 x _____ = \$ _____

Grand Total-Registration & Tours= \$ _____

Please mail both forms & check made out to USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Assoc.

Any questions please call me 520-326-0747

**2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719**

Mail Call

From: Susan Bagen

Subject: Navy Marriage Announcement

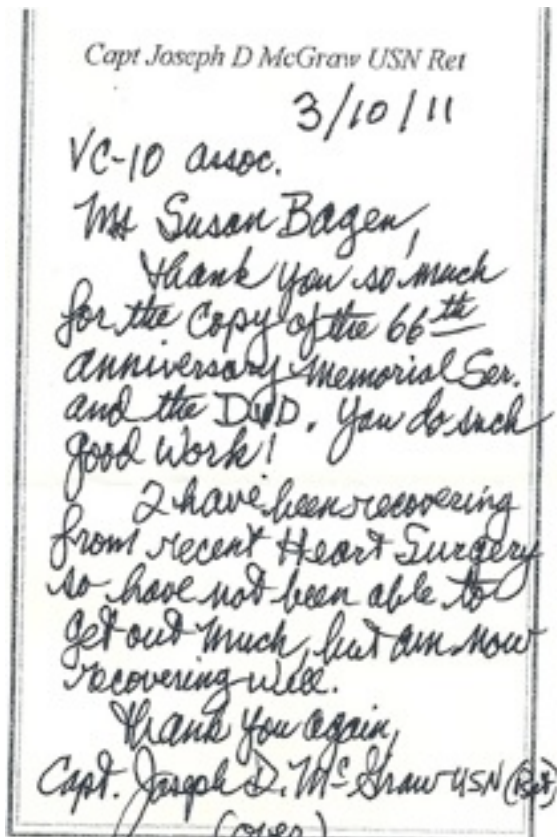
Date: May 30, 2011



Ralph & I are proud to announce the marriage of our daughter Lauren to Victor Buhl. They wanted to be married before Victor deploys soon, so it was a very short engagement

Lauren is Lou Vilmer's granddaughter and is on our Board of Governors. We were lucky to meet Victor at last years Gambier Bay reunion in St Louis. We wish you and Victor the very best.

This note was sent from Joe McGraw to Susan Bagen. We hope you are feeling better now and thank you for the donation.



Please accept a small
donation for the work
of the VC-10 - Gambier Bay
Assoc.

Mail Call Continued

This note came from Chris Shelvik-

Inclosed I am sending you a check for \$40, \$25 is for a hat and \$15 is to pay dues as I still like to keep in contact the men of the Gambier Bay.

I was on the LCI 337 Rescue ship of which we picked up survivors of 4 of the ships sunk.

This winter in Yuma, AZ, I was visiting in Algodones, Mexico for the day and ran into a fellow whose Dad was Skipper on the Samuel B. Roberts. Its a small world.

Thanks for all your hard work. Chris Shelvik

Chris- Thanks for the kind words and the dues. It truly is a small world.

This was written by Cliff Cleaveland on the timesfreepress.com on 6/2/11

Navy hero will not be forgotten

Countless heroes are among the 1.5 million American military personnel killed in action. Many heroic deeds led to commendations, the highest being the Congressional Medal of Honor. Sometimes decades pass before extraordinary bravery is fully recognized. Two soldiers who died in the Korean War almost 60 years ago were posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor by the President last month.

In this week of Memorial Day, I pay tribute to Robert Thomas Browne, M.D.

On Oct. 25, 1944, a U.S. Navy task force, code-named "Taffy 3," suddenly encountered a vastly superior Japanese flotilla off Samar Island in the Philippines. The main U.S. force had been lured away by a clever decoy. Three destroyers, four destroyer escorts and six small carriers guarded Leyte Gulf, where numerous troop and supply ships unloaded.

Adm. Clifton Sprague ordered the ships and all available naval aircraft of Taffy 3 to attack. Fighter aircraft dropped depth charges and strafed enemy ships. Ammunition exhausted, the airmen made repeated dives on the Japanese ships. False radio messages were generated to suggest a much larger U.S. force. Smokescreens were laid.

In a chaotic battle of two hours, three Japanese cruisers were disabled. Believing he faced overwhelming opposition, the Japanese commander withdrew his forces. The three U.S. destroyers and carrier USS Gambier Bay were sunk. Other ships were badly damaged. Casualties were high. A calamitous defeat was averted.

The victory was the one of the most remarkable in U.S. naval history. “The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors” by James D. Hornfischer provides a fine account of this battle.

Heavily outgunned by Japanese cruisers and battleships, destroyer USS Johnston attacked the heart of the Japanese fleet, firing its 5-inch guns and launching all of its torpedoes. His ship literally shot to pieces, Lt. Ernest Evans gave the order to abandon ship. Evans perished. For his courageous leadership, he received the Congressional Medal of Honor.

The ship’s doctor, Lt. Browne, ignored the order to abandon ship as he carried one badly wounded sailor after another from the wardroom to the deck. He helped the more able into life jackets before lowering them over the side. He would not abandon his patients. As survivors watched from the water, a salvo obliterated the wardroom just after the doctor had re-entered.

Lt. Browne was awarded the Navy Cross.

The image has persisted in my thoughts. I have tried with little success to learn more about Dr. Browne.

He was born in 1916 in Detroit. His home of record at the time of his death was Peoria, Ill. He graduated from the University of Illinois College of Medicine, Chicago, in 1942. He appears slender with a slight smile in his class photograph. Following a year’s internship at St. Louis City Hospital, Dr. Browne began active duty in the medical corps of the U.S. Navy Reserve in July 1943. He was the ship’s doctor from the christening of the USS Johnston in Seattle in October 1943.

My repeated searches have turned up no family, friends or classmates of Dr. Browne. I could not locate an obituary in his hometown newspaper. I felt an obligation to keep his memory alive.

Dr. Browne illustrates the powerful bonds of devotion that link men and women in battle. Personal safety is sublimated to the needs of others. Sacrifice becomes a reflex. As a physician, he further embodied the highest ideals of service to patients.

Beyond the sales, cookouts and Indianapolis races of Memorial Day weekend is the obligation to remember and to honor the many who sacrifice to keep us safe.

Email Cliff Cleaveland at cleaveland1000@comcast.net.

Does anyone remember Lt Browne? If you do let me know and I forward the information. I thought this was a great story to share with everyone.

USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Reunion 2011 in Omaha, Nebraska



Save the Date

Oct 19-23rd 2011

Come join the Gambier Bay Association Commemorate

The 67th anniversary of the sinking of the USS Gambier Bay (CVE-73).

Bring your children, grandchildren, nieces and nephews. Let them be aware of the strong history your ship had in WWII.

The Latest Scoop from around the

“ Scuttlebutt”

Returns to

Marlene Hughes

2228 E Greenlee Rd

Tucson, AZ 85719-2012

Address Service requested