

SCUTTLEBUTT

USS Gambier Bay Newsletter

December 2019



Survivors from the last Taffy 3 Reunion, held in San Diego, October 24-27, 2019. Thank you to all family members and friends who helped get your survivor to the reunion.

**Back Row/L to R - Bob Schuler (St. Lo) Don Wilson (Kitkun Bay), Norm St. Germain (Gambier Bay), Glen Osborn (St. Lo), Dean Moel (Gambier Bay).
Front Row/L to R - Herbert Bounds (St. Lo) Darrell Bennett (Gambier Bay) George Feliz (Gambier Bay) Carl Amundson (Gambier Bay), Jack Bacastow (Kitkun Bay).
Not pictured but in attendance - Vern Kimmell (Raymond) and Morrie Maier (Fanshaw Bay)**

PRESIDENTS CORNER

Hello Gambier Bay Family!

What a great time we had in San Diego at our 2019 Taffy 3 Reunion with all of the survivors and their families. We reconnected with our survivors, friends, and family. This year we had quite a few family members attend for the first time. As you know, traveling is not an easy task anymore and I just want to relay **A BIG THANK YOU TO EVERYONE WHO ACCOMPANIED SURVIVORS TO THE REUNION.** . We are so grateful to our family and friends who bring survivors to the reunions.

Inside you will find tons of photo highlights from the reunion, beginning with The Welcome Reception, our memorial service at Fort Rosecrans, with that surprise Missing Man F16 Flyover, our luncheon, the display of the Taffy 3 ships and the Yamato models, along with the simulated battle performed at Santee Lakes, our City of San Diego Tour, and the dinner banquet.

I wanted to share a couple important developments that your Board of Directors discussed at the Board and Membership meeting:

- This was our **last reunion** for the USS Gambier Bay, we hope in the future one of the other ships may invite us to join them.
- Your Board members will remain the same until their resignation. We will continue to have yearly Board meetings, via conference calls, to discuss finances and any items that may need our attention. Updates will be published in the Scuttlebutt.
- Our Scuttlebutt will now be **published twice a year** with a winter and summer issue.
- **Our website and Facebook page will continue** – this is a great way to continue to reach out to our families and connect with new families. If you have photos, stories, newspaper articles, etc., for the website - - please email them to me at pk_grond@yahoo.com
- Our ship store has limited items for sale – this is one way for the Association to continue to have an income to support the mailings of the Scuttlebutt and cover the cost for the website.

Should you have any questions regarding our membership meeting or questions about the Association, please feel free to contact me at pk_grond@yahoo.com.

Now for a special recognition I want to thank Marlene Hughes for organizing not only the 2019 Taffy 3 reunion but our reunions starting back in 2007. It is a tremendously time-consuming job to coordinate all the events, memorial service, food, and transportation. She has done such a great job pulling it all together. And, don't forget she is also our Treasurer and Scuttlebutt editor. WE LOVE YOU MARLENE AND APPRECIATE YOU SO, SO MUCH – THANK YOU FOR ALL YOU DO FOR THE ASSOCIATION.

As it has been since survivors stated the Association - - - Our mission is to continue to honor, recognize, remember, and keep the memory alive of all who served on the USS Gambier Bay/VC-10.

Paula Grond
President



SHIPS MERCHANDISE FORM

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING COSTS

	QUANTITY	TOTAL COST
Freedom's Cost Lithograph \$100.00	<hr/>	<hr/>
The Men of the USS Gambier Bay Hard Cover Book \$40.00 (Temporarily out of stock)	<hr/>	<hr/>
USS Gambier Bay Hat \$25.00	<hr/>	<hr/>
USS Gambier Bay Mouse Pad \$12.00	<hr/>	<hr/>
USS Gambier Bay Womens Bling Shirt Black S-M-L-XL - \$38.00 XXL- XXXL - \$45.00 Shipping time is 2 weeks from order	<hr/>	<hr/>
I Love the Men of the Gambier Bay Button \$3.00	<hr/>	<hr/>
USS Gambier Bay Coffee Mug \$12.00	<hr/>	<hr/>
USS Gambier Bay Refrigerator (4.5x5.5) Magnet \$3.00	<hr/>	<hr/>

RECONCILIATION TOTALS ON NEXT PAGE



SHIPS MERCHANDISE FORM
ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING COSTS

QUANTITY

TOTAL COST

Personalized Laser Etching Tile

\$40.00

Shipping time is 2 weeks from order

OTHER OPTIONS FOR ETCHINGS FOR DESIGN AND WORDING AVAILABLE

SEE SEPARATE ORDER FORM FOR EXAMPLES

(CONTACT PAULA AT pk_grond@yahoo.com for questions/orders)

Air Craft Carrier

Lone Sailor

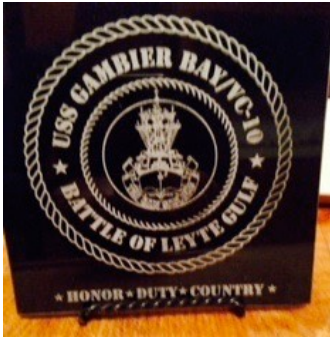
US Flag

Example: Tin Can Destroyer

Wording for Top Line Inside Circle

Wording for Bottom Line Inside Circle

Wording for Bottom **Outside** of Circle



TOTAL ITEMS ORDERED

TOTAL ORDER AMOUNT

Name_____

Address_____

City/State/Zip_____

Contact Phone_____

Email Address_____

Mail Form and Check (**payable to USS Gambier Bay Association**) to:

Marlene Hughes

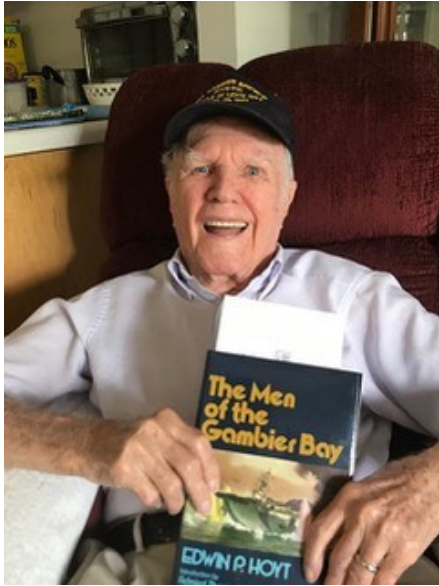
USS Gambier Bay Association

2228 E. Greenlee Road

Tucson, Arizona 85719

Mail Call

Received these pictures of Gordon Smith from his niece Phyllis Lane back in June. He is 96 years old and living in St Louis. He was 22 years old when he was on the USS Gambier Bay.
(*Hope this finds you well-you look great!*)



I have received many thank you's from the reunion and appreciate them all, here are two notes which were mailed to me.

November 2019

Dear Marlene,

It was nice to see you again. You look wonderful with your short haircut. I was only there for the Memorial and Luncheon. You did a really amazing job. When the jets flew over, I was so moved. Proud! Than you for all you did. There is so much you did we all know nothing about. Thank you Thank you Thank you.

Angela Davis (I loved your note Angela and it was great to see you again. But I had help with everything and Warren Stirling was instrumental in getting the flyover. Till we meet again.

November 18, 2019

Dear Marlene,

Just a note of thanks to you for the years of hard work to honor the hero's of the Gambier Bay, the Kitkun Bay and Taffy 3. I am particularly grateful because I know how much my father has looked forward to, and honored by each reunion. Thank you to Bob as well for letting you pursue this passion that has benefited all of the survivors, families & friends. The 75th Anniversary was so wonderful. Thank you on behalf of the Bacastow extended family.

Dan Bacastow

P.S.-The check is to help the association cover costs.-thank you!

(Wow thank you for the kind words Dan. I will miss seeing all of the Bacastow family after becoming close since 2014, especially your Mom and Dad, Diane & Jack. Also thank you for the check. Till we meet again.)

Mail Call Continued

July 6, 2019

Hello Marlene,

I just read the July, 2019 Scuttlebutt news and it is so wonderful that five survivors will be attending the reunion.

Some time ago I ordered a lithograph of the USS Gambier Bay. More recently I took it to a local framer who did a beautiful job in framing it.

The Lithograph was presented to our Union County, S.C. Veterans Affairs Officer, Mrs Cindy Fore, to be displayed in her office for all visitors to see. A Union, S.C. sailor, Ernest James Smith, was KIA when the ship went down on 10/25/1944. He was my cousin.

I am sorry the photo has a glare in it but it is the only one I have.

May God bless all the survivors, families, and friends of the USS Gambier Bay.

Sincerely,

Judy Smith Davis.

(Thank you for sending the photo of the framed Litho. I am so glad you liked it. I wanted to drop the other picture but I was having problems including this one. I just upgraded my computer. All the best to you and so you know we do not have any more lithos for sale.)



Judy Davis

Mrs. Cindy Fore
Union, S.C. Veterans Affairs Officer

Below are more pictures from the reunion.



A Big Thank You!!!!

Barbara Winkler
SoCal Quilts of Valor Foundation
City of Bellflower, Coordinator

Barbara Winkler, a coordinator of SoCal Quilts of Valor (a local chapter located in the City of Bellflower, California) serves thousands of veterans through the Quilts of Valor Foundation. In recent years she has provided quilts at previous USS Gambier Bay and Taffy 3 reunions. This year the Bellflower Chapter donated a quilt for Alexander Lasiw, a USS Hoel survivor.

Since 2004, her team has awarded over 5,500 hand-crafted quilts to veterans who have been touched by war, giving each a warm and tangible reminder that they are appreciated. The purpose of the Quilts of Valor Foundation is to honor our veterans' service to the country, welcome them home and help in their healing. Barbara personally sews 50 – 75 quilts each year and facilitates the entire process as she recruits volunteer quilters, coordinates weekly sew-days, special events, and obtains donations of fabric, services and meeting space. Through her cheerful and tireless efforts, many lives have been improved. She established liaisons with many local groups servicing our veterans, given speeches for other charitable groups and organized volunteer quilting events for local companies. Each quilt requires about ten yards of materials, and many hours of design, cutting, sewing, pressing, quilting the layers, binding, labeling and washing. The group has received numerous responses from the veterans and their families about how much their quilt means to them. The SoCal QOV group has been given several awards and certificates of recognition for their work.

A big thank you to Barbara, and all the SoCal Quilters who volunteer countless hours to continue to honor, remember, and recognize all of our veterans who have served their country.



Survivors, Family Members, and Friends,

It was decided at our October 2018 Board of Governors meeting that the **2019 Taffy 3 - 75th Anniversary of the Battle off Samar Reunion in San Diego, California**, will be the last reunion that the USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Association will host for our ship or the Taffy 3 Group.

The USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Association is dedicated to preserving the honor and memory of the men of the Gambier Bay and her air group, VC-10. In addition, through our Scuttlebutt publication, Facebook page, and website we will continue to honor, recognize, and remember all who helped fight an epic battle against hopeless odds on that gloomy morning of **October 25, 1944**. The men never gave up, many of them gave their lives in the process, and they all helped write one of the US Navy's most amazing stories of heroism.

As the years go by and more of the men who served on the Gambier Bay and in VC-10 cross the bar, the Association is being joined by an increasing number of their children, grandchildren, and others who wish to continue to honor their memory through Facebook posts and sending in stories, newspaper articles, memories, and photos for our website – www.ussgambierbay.org.

With the dissolution of future reunions, we are reaching out to you to help sustain the Association with becoming a member or a one-time or yearly donation to help alleviate the printing/postage costs for our Scuttlebutt publication, and to assist with the maintenance fees associated with the website. Additionally, our ship store will continue to have limited merchandise available for you to purchase. **If you would like to become a member and/or contribute either yearly or make a one-time donation, please make your check payable to USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Association and mail to Marlene Hughes, 2228 E. Greenlee Road, Tucson, Arizona 85719.**

If you have any questions, please contact or see one of our Board members. Thank you for your continued support of the Association!

USS Gambier Bay/VC-10 Board of Governors



In Memoriam

Shipmates who have crossed the Bar



Murray Elsworth Brown FORT WORTH--Murray Elsworth Brown, 96, passed away peacefully on Monday, July 29, 2019. He will be remembered as a loving husband, father, grandfather, great-grandfather and friend to many he had the pleasure of knowing over his long, active, and adventurous life. Funeral: 1:30 p.m. Thursday, Aug. 8, in the Greenwood Chapel. Entombment: Greenwood Mausoleum. Reception: 2:30 p.m. Thursday in the Live Oak Room at Greenwood. Visitation: 6 to 8 p.m. Wednesday, Aug. 7, at Greenwood. Memorials: In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to Saginaw United Methodist Church where Murray was a member for over 61 years, to support children in the U.S. and overseas (Murray and Mary supported 25 children for over 30 years) to veterans organizations, or to [your favorite charity](#).

Murray was born on a farm near Creelman, Saskatchewan, Canada, on July 7, 1923, to parents, Benjamin F. Brown and Elvira Jane Thomson Brown. He was proud to serve in the [U.S. Navy](#) for three-plus years as World War II began one month later. Murray served on the USS Pyro, an ammunition carrying ship; the USS Gambier Bay (CVE), a small aircraft carrier sunk on its maiden voyage in the battle of Leyte Gulf; and briefly on the USS Knox. After an honorable discharge from the Navy, Murray married the love of his life, Mary, in 1946 and moved to Texas with two small children to attend Texas Wesleyan College in Fort Worth on the GI Bill. He graduated in 1953 with a major in accounting and minor in social sciences. After returning to Regina, Saskatchewan, Canada, for a couple of years, the family returned to Texas, and dad pursued his career employed with Weaver and Tidwell. Murray decided to open his own bookkeeping and tax service in the mid-1950s when he purchased a building on North Main and enjoyed the many friends he came in contact with through business and recreation. Murray loved traveling in the U.S., Canada, and abroad, and attended numerous ship reunions all across the United States and overseas. The last reunion of the USS Gambier is scheduled for this October in San Diego. Dad enjoyed his toys: campers, RV's, boats, and, most of all, small planes. Murray was predeceased by his parents; his wife of 57 years, Mary; two infant children, James Carson and Rose Mary; and brothers, Frank and wife, Tess Bradford, Vernon, and Clarence and wife, Jackie. SURVIVORS: Murray left behind daughters, Donna Middleton (Michael) of Garland, Carol Slimp (Donald) of Hewitt; grandchildren, Stephen Hickman of Garland, Brian Middleton (Kimberly) of White Settlement, Mandy Roberts (Terry) of Conroe, Karla Wolfe (Durward) of Tomball; great-grandchildren, Mia, Madeline, Taylor, MaKenna, Riley and Colton; brother, Roy and wife, Bette; sister-in-law, Joan Brown; and numerous cousins, nephews, nieces, and their children. (We will miss you Murray. His friend Curt had sent me a picture of him on July 14th and then just 15 days later sent me an e-mail telling me the sad news of his passing. The last reunion we saw Murray was in 2007 in San Antonio. Always loved his stories. Rest in Peace. We tolled the bell for you at this year's reunion.)



In Memoriam

Shipmates who have crossed the Bar



Helen Beasley Ketcham- 3/18/1927-8/5/2019

Helen lived in Tallahassee for eighty years. She attended Leon High School where she played the bells in the band. Helen loved music and at one point in her life was an avid square dancer. Helen's working years were spent side by side with her husband's (Billy Ketcham) CPA practice.

Helen is survived by one sister, Faye B Shelton, of Tallahassee, a son, Clay (Patti) Ketcham of Tallahassee, daughter Karen (Randy) Melton of Wiggins, MS; six grandchildren; Brett (Laura) Ketcham, Lindsay (David) Lockhart, Blane (Jenny) Ketcham, Clint Bond, Luke (Natalie)

Bond, Rhonda (Kevin) Aiken; and seven great grandchildren. Helen also left behind many nieces and nephews and many wonderful friends.

A private graveside service will be held at Roselawn Cemetery followed by a memorial service at 10:30 am on Saturday, August 10, 2019 at the McGuire Center at Westminster Oaks Retirement Community. A reception for friends will follow the service.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests memorial contributions to Big Bend Hospice, 1723 Mahan Center Blvd., Tallahassee, FL 32308 or Faith Presbyterian Church, 2200 N. Meridian Road, Tallahassee, FL 32303.

(Rest in Peace Helen. Her husband Bille was part of VC-10 as a AOM 2/c)

Ygnacio Hinojosa Avila SS2/c 7/14/1952

Marcus Henry Bahr Sr. S2/c 12/27/2008

Kenneth Milton Neugart S2/c 1/18/1997

James Barthlow S2/c. 10/29/2004

Thomas E. Clavell Jr. AMM1/c 11/1985

Raymond A Tribbett RM1/c. 7/26/1985



Editor's Notes:

First off the 75th Anniversary reunion was a tremendous success. As they say it takes a village, well it took many people to make this anniversary reunion happen. Thank you to Warren (USS Johnston) for doing the Memorial Service-it was wonderful and we even had a fly-over. To Jan Loomis (Gambier Bay) for all the support, doing the program, getting donations and other miscellaneous stuff that only she could do. To Paula Grond (Gambier Bay) for handling the raffle, the 50/25/25 raffle, helping with stuffing and making sure we had the right stuff in all the packets. Also a big shout out to Lucille G., Pat Jones, Linda S., Joann Sosa for helping me during the reunion. I know I am forgetting some people-thank you from the bottom of my heart.

The reunion started with a reception and PO1 Daniel Rodriguez, USN & Lt. Lara Yamada, SC, USN delivering an excellent kick-off presentation about the Battle off Samar with comments by Captain (Commodore) Patric Thien who delivered the primary address that evening.

On the morning of October 25th over 300 people attended the memorial service at Ft Rosecrans National Cemetery. We had 12 Taffy 3 survivors present at the reunion and they sat in the front row for proper recognition.

The service started with a fly-over, missing man formation which gave all of us chills. A presentation by Warren Stirling dealing with the historic aspects of the Battle off Samar as well as personal involvement, sacrifice, and the spiritual meaning of conflict. We had a young man by the name of Sam Santiago lead us in patriotic songs, he sang at the 2014 Taffy 3 reunion. We had the support of the U.S.Navy Band Southwest, U.S. Navy Color Guard and the U.S. Marine ceremonial detail who did a flag folding ceremony.

At the Luncheon following the memorial service we were honored to have Jonna Doolittle Hopps, the granddaughter of WWII Gen. Jimmy Doolittle who read a letter the general had written to his wife at the conclusion of WWII in which he detailed his feelings regarding the war and some warnings and admonition for times to follow. We also received numerous Proclamations from the City of San Diego, State of California and the Consulate of the Philippines.

We were honored to have Taffy 3 Model Ship Builders show a display of 1:96 scale models of all the ships of Taffy 3 as well as a reproduction of the Japanese battleship Yamato to show the size difference. They put them in the water at Santee Lake park on Saturday morning which was wonderful. Some of the survivors were able to maneuver them on the water and commented on how moving it was to look at their ships once again.

On the final evening of the banquet we were honored to have retired Admiral Samuel Cox, director of U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command make a presentation regarding the the possible discovery of the USS Johnston in almost 20,000 feet off the coast of the Philippine Islands. The ship was discovered in July 2019 but they delayed the announcement to coincide with when the ship was actually lost. Sunken ships are considered to be hallowed ground so they are not disturbed and their exact location is not disclosed.

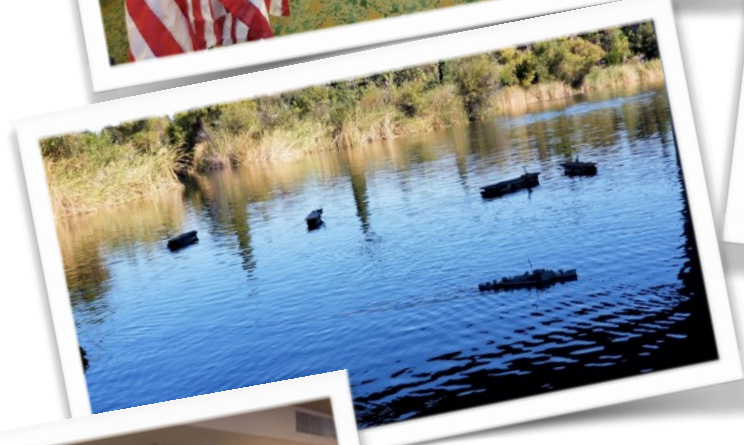
We had the San Diego Muses, a vocal trio singing songs made popular by the well-known Andrew Sisters back in the 1940's. And the last thing we did this evening was to have the raffle (I won a free night at the hotel) and the 50/25/25 raffle. We also had the bottle of 16 year old Canadian Whiskey (last man standing bottle) which Clete Ring won at the very first Gambier Bay Reunion in St Louis In 1972. I brought little plastic shot glasses and we got some of our survivors and or proxies to come up and toast. You will find many pictures on the next few pages of the highlights from the reunion.

This may have been the last reunion but I will still be your Gambier Bay Treasurer and Scuttlebutt editor.

Merry Christmas and a Healthy and Happy New Year to one and all.



Reunion Photos-Reception and the Taffy 3 model ships & Luncheon



Reunion photos-memorial service on
10/25/19



Reunion photos of the Banquet, San Diego Muses & raffle



Board of Governors & Officers 2019-2021

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11. Norm St. Germain, Governor
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Telephone: 541-736-6759
12. Dean Moel, Governor
1761 Racine Avenue, NE, A-1
Solon, Iowa 52333
Telephone: 319-430-4348

In Appreciation

Thank you to all the names listed for your donation, buying 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.

**Rebecca Bartlett
Carl Amundson
John Bennett
David Leon-Guerrero
Marian Blas
David Ryan
Pat Jones
Paula Grond
Jim Brockman
Lauren Selmeier
Lucas Barnlund
Barbara Tanaka
Julie Wall
Lou Amundson
Lucille Gutzwiler
Tom Westbrook
Dale Halterlein
Billie Schowengerdt
Sarah Brannaman
Phil Young
Cindy Amundson
Katie Glenn
Larry Steiner
Neil Steiner
Steve Shively
Robert Glenn
Shan Dawson
Theresa Beckett
Nancy Ring
Barbara Corbello
Dave Lewis
Mike Stephenson
Lynn Brown
Sussan Mayrant
Jack Bacastow**

**Natalie Long
Daniel Bacastow
Gail Ring Byrne**

Below is the beautiful medallion coin we gave out at the reunion. Taffy 3 Logo on one side and 75th Anniversary dates on back side.



Below Marlene & Bonnie Amundson are holding up the beautiful flag that Bonnie had crocheted for me. It brought me to tears, thank you so much Bonnie.



APPLICATION FOR USS GAMBIER BAY ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP

SURVIVORS/WIDOWS DO NOT PAY DUES

Membership dues are \$15.00 annually or \$100.00 for Lifetime Membership

Both options include a subscription to our newsletter, Scuttlebutt

Membership Application (please check one)

_____ \$15.00 annual dues
_____ \$100.00 lifetime dues

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

**Please indicate if you would like your
Scuttlebutt subscription emailed
or send via the US mail.**

Additional Information

Survivor Name: _____

Crossed the Bar Date: _____

Survivor Rank/Rate: _____ **Division:** _____

Member relationship to survivor: _____

**Please Mail Application and Dues
(payable to USS Gambier Bay Association)
TO
Marlene Hughes
2228 E. Greenlee Road
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012**

The Latest Scoop from around the " Scuttlebutt"

Return to
Marlene Hughes
2228 E Greenlee Rd
Tucson, AZ 85719-2012
Address Service requested

