

## MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.



# SEA SERVICES SCUTTLEBUTT

April 2012



**Tony La Morte**

### A message from the President

WOW!!! The Museum's yard sale on 24 and 25 March netted a little over \$500---our best yard sale ever. The entire amount has been placed in our savings account for building expansion. Many thanks to the Museum members and friends who donated items for the sale and to those members who worked the sale. A special thank you must go to the Fred Juliano family and to Danny Meekins who went way above and beyond in the amount and value of items they donated for the sale.

On another note. Since the beginning of April and especially after Easter, many of the people who winter in Sebring have headed back North. This is evident at the Museum because the number of visitors has begun to drop. The summer months are an excellent time for local residents and groups to visit the Museum because they usually will have the Museum to themselves. ---Not only that, our volunteers could use the company.

The Board of Directors is considering reducing the number of days the Museum is open during the summer months. The Board is studying the options and has not yet made a decision. However, should the Museum's open days be reduced, we will open the Museum on any closed day for any family or organization that wants to bring a group to see the Museum. Any changes to the Museum open days will be published in the local newspapers, via e-mail, and on our website. Have a nice summer and don't get sunburned.

*Tony*

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**Hours of Operation**  
**Open: Wednesday through Saturday**  
**Noon to 4:00 p.m.**  
**Web site: [www.milseasvcmuseum.org](http://www.milseasvcmuseum.org)**

**April Museum Dinner Cancelled. Due to circumstances beyond the control of the dinner coordinator/primary cook the April dinner will not be held.**

**The monthly dinners will resume in May.**

**Welcome Aboard New Members**

Tori-Lynn and Nick Saraniti signed up for a one year membership in February. Tori-Lynn is a Pharmacist and Nick is a CEO. The Saraniti family resides in Boca Raton, FL.

Harold and Pamela Roebuck signed up for a one year membership in April. Both work for Highlands County, Harold as a Road Maintenance Supervisor and Gail is an Admin Coordinator. Harold is a Chief Petty Officer selectee in the U.S. Coast Guard Reserve. The Roebuck family resides in Lake Placid, FL.

William (Bill) and Hazel Smith reinstated their membership for one year in April. Bill and Hazel were members of the Museum during 2004 - 2010. Bill is a World War II Navy veteran who served aboard the USS HIGHLANDS. Bill worked as a Military Systems Analyst and Hazel was a Real Estate Sales Lady and Physical Therapist. Bill and Hazel reside in Vashon, WA.

A very hearty welcome aboard to our newest members. A sincere thank you to all our members for their continued support. Without member support, the Museum would not be able to pay its bills and would have to close the doors.

**Welcome Aboard New Members**

**Test Your Memory!**

1. Where did the air battle known as the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot" take place?
2. In 1944 there were two explosions at Port Chicago Naval Magazine in California. How many workers were killed? How many men received a court martial for refusing to load more ammunition unless better safety standards were implemented?
3. Where did the first underwater test of the atomic bomb take place and on what date?
4. What was the name of the first nuclear submarine?
5. Which U.S. Navy carrier had the first angle deck?

Answers can be found on page 12.

### **Birthdays/Anniversaries.**

The U.S. Navy Reserve turned 97 on 3 March 2012. On 3 March 1915, the U.S. combined 17 state naval militias into one force, the U.S. Navy Reserve.

The U.S. Navy Band turned 87 on 4 March 2012. The Navy Band was formed on 4 March 1925 and continues to project a positive image of the U.S. Navy.

The U.S. Navy Seabees turned 70 on 5 March 2012. Founded on 5 March 1942, the Seabees' "Can Do" spirit continues as strong as ever.

The 119th birthday of Navy Chief Petty Officer rating was celebrated on 1 April 2012. On 1 April 1893 the Chief Petty Officer rating was established by the Secretary of the Navy, Hilary Abner Herbert.

The 70th anniversary of the Doolittle raid was 18 April 2012. On 18 April 1942, 16 B-25s led by Lieutenant Colonel James "Jimmie" Doolittle, U.S. Army Air Force took off from the deck of the Navy's aircraft carrier USS HORNET (CV-8) to attack Japan.

### **In Memoriam**

Sad News. We recently learned of the passing of Wayne Kimler on February 18, 2012. Wayne was a WW II Navy veteran having served on the USS HIGHLANDS (APA-119) in the Pacific. Wayne resided in Naples, FL, and was a long time member and good friend of the Military Sea Services Museum. He will be missed. Our deepest sympathies to his wife Barbara and family.

Following is a memoir of Wayne written by Bill Smith one of Wayne's USS HIGHLANDS shipmates.



**USS Highlands APA-119**

*(The Museum would like to thank Bill and Hazel Smith for sending us the following article which includes his tribute to his friend Wayne Kimler and also describes some of Bill's experiences while serving on the USS Highlands.)*

## **A MEMORY OF WAYNE KIMLER And THE USS HIGHLANDS APA-119 IN WORLD WAR II**

**This story brings together a few of the experiences in the life of Wayne Kimler as contributed by his wife, Barbara, and from his shipmates on the USS Highlands in World War II.**

**Wayne died February 18, 2012 and was buried at Bushnell Cemetery, He is survived by his wife, Barbara, his children Cheryl Brown, David Kimler and Theresa Kimler, a brother Keith Kimler, ten grandchildren and nine great-grandchildren. Wayne worked as a comptroller and became a vice president.**

**His death, a loss to his family, was also a stimulation of memories in his few remaining shipmates.**

**During World War II Wayne was a sailor in the S Division (ships supplies-- food, clothes, tobacco, etc.) He was the master of the supply counter from which nearly all of his shipmates purchased candy, tobacco and garments. Almost every shipmate knew him by sight and what he did during tranquil sailing, but few knew what he did during General Quarters (battle status) and condition Able (a prolonged effort including battle status). During such times Wayne was a gunner (20 millimeter caliber) in a gun tub well elevated above the weather deck. This look-out provided a good basis for a book that he wrote about the USS Highlands in World War II.**

**Henry Sampley was the main cog in putting most of the reunions together, but Wayne and Barbara by living in Florida were important in coupling the Highlands ship to Highlands County, Florida and to the navy museum at Sebring in Highlands County after World War II.**

**Wayne liked to tell stories at the reunions. The Highlands anchored near the battleship Missouri when the enemy surrendered; Wayne liked to tell what he saw then:**

**"We secured from General Quarters when we entered Tokyo Bay. We had to go down and change into our whites. And no sooner did I step my foot out on to the main deck, this destroyer comes by. And it had General MacArthur's flag flying, so we were all called to attention and we all saluted as the general passed by. Then I watched the general climb the gangplank (onto the Missouri) and he disappeared for a while. Then I saw him come down the ladder into that area where the peace treaty was to be signed. He was putting his hands on the shoulders of officers sitting near the ladder."**

**I, Bill Smith from Moorcroft, Wyoming, had a few conversations with Wayne at the reunions. One talk which formed our friendship was how the Navy canceled our opportunity to become radio technicians, a path to a career as we then imagined. In boot camp you took tests to see what you could be trained for. Both of us were put on the list for radio technician and we waited expectantly for the call. But alas, the Navy saw fit to assign us somewhere else.**

Conversing again at another reunion we discussed our relationship with Northwestern University as our next reunion was scheduled for Chicago. We agreed to meet at the science center at the university because we both knew where that was. Sadly, I failed to go to that reunion that year, but my memory is that Wayne did visit Northwestern then. I believe Wayne's relationship to the university may have had something to do with the Navy.

A more intriguing story that Wayne liked to tell was about going on liberty in the city of Manila, Luzon Island in the Philippines. Most of the big buildings there had been crumbled from the war. Wayne's party stumbled on to an intact government building. They went in and came to an office; it belonged to the brother of the national leader of the Philippines. He invited them in and Wayne had a long chat with him.

This last story by Wayne was a tale of theft from the Highland's stores of cigarettes. Wayne sold cigarettes by the carton to anyone on the ship, probably at wholesale price. I fully understood, as Wayne told this story, just how a slick operator could accumulate a large quantity of cigarettes, but I never quite understood how they could be safely smuggled off from the ship. In any case it happened, and someone made a lot of money selling the cigarettes to natives and foreigners.

Wayne was smart and a good speaker, the shipmates at the reunions liked him.

Unheralded contributions to the success of the reunions were the spouses and children of the attending Highlands sailors. The ladies arranged travel requirements, forged acquaintanceships, kept the talk going, identified the appropriate restaurants, encouraged extra sight seeing and kept the coffee hot. As the men passed on, some of the surviving wives have maintained a stimulating internet friendship, along with humor and news. Barbara Kimler has been instrumental in this. Thank you gals for keeping us glued together! I continue this story and dedicate it to Wayne Kimler. What follows is a knothole view by a member of the USS Highlands who spent most of his time there below the weather deck.

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## **Aboard the USS Highlands APA-119 in World War II**

**October 5th, 1944** Commissioning of the USS Highlands, San Pedro, California

This abbreviated summary about our ship is from memory plus a quote from a booklet by Doctor Stanley W. Tuell and Corpsman Don L. Oelschlager, and from recollections of stories at our reunions. I have stuck to what I have experienced and how I evaluated it as a human being at that time.

After a five month shake-down cruise under Captain G. D. Lyon, during which most of the crew worked about ten hours a day and seven days a week, our new ship took aboard 1500 Marines from Hilo, Hawaii. In addition to the three medical doctors we already had, we picked up six more medical doctors, probably from Pearl Harbor, a grim omen of things to come.

Our 26 landing boats with crews and officers trained these Marines for three months to make landings on the beaches of Maui. Then we headed for a destination, unknown to the crew, under a new commander, Captain Michael Toal. One of the Tokyo Roses knew when we left Pearl, and some in our radio group secretly listened to her; our captain had forbidden doing that. The gist of her message was that you will never return home which was true for many of the Marines on board and for some of the Highlands crew.

A single APA (Auxiliary Personnel Assault) ship was a sitting duck for enemy submarines of which there were plenty when we got a little west of Pearl. So we traveled in convoys, about 10 to the convoy with ships about 1500 feet apart. We were guarded by destroyer ships on the flanks and in the middle of the convoy. The convoys followed a zigzag route, but the submarines often found us. The signal of an attack was when everyone heard a general call to quarters to man our battle stations. My battle station was in the emergency electrical generator room deep in the bowels of the ship, down a vertical ladder to the double bottoms. I was certain that if a torpedo hit us, I would never make it up to the weather deck.

The first clue our station had of what was happening was when we heard the depth charges exploding, which were very easy to hear in the bottom of the ship. At first the depth charges were close but the convoy kept underway at a 15 knot speed. If the depth charges could be heard getting farther and farther away, then you started hoping that a single destroyer had pinned the submarine down. But multiple submarines were difficult to analyze.

A destroyer might drop 3 to 6 depth charges against a single submarine. Over the active life of the Highlands, about one year, I estimate that we were attacked by submarines from 5 to 10 times. The Highlands was not hit by a torpedo and as far as I know none of the APAs in our convoy were hit. The destroyers must have either killed, damaged or scared into inaction the majority of the attacking submarines. Because of a passive secrecy, explanations of the attack were never given to the crew afterwards.

It became clearer where we were going when the Marines opened up strange looking, paper-mache models about 6 feet long on the weather deck in order to discuss their attack plan. They told us that it was Iwo Jima Island. Few of us knew at that time what that meant or its portent.

The Highlands stopped momentarily at Guam which had been recaptured by other Marines. A few of us went ashore to trade movie film. While there we saw our first and only, for some of us, a Japanese soldier, a prisoner, picking up cigarette butts with a stick and nail in front of the mess hall. A rare sight for there were relatively few Japanese prisoners from any battle. We had chowdown at the mess hall and it was first class.

Next we passed quite close to Saipan Island. A group of about 15 B-29 bombers had just taken off from the runway on Saipan. They went single file about 1500 feet apart along the top of Saipan at very low altitude, loaded to the gunnels with bombs trying to gain altitude. We knew where they were heading and for some of us, it lifted our spirits.

**February 19, 1945** A date the few of us left will never forget. Having put on clean clothes and underwear to help avoid infections in case we were wounded, we arrived at Iwo Jima about midnight to see an incredible shelling of Iwo by heavy naval artillery. See at night? Yes, those shells whistling and screaming through the air were like rockets and they exploded like thunder. It is in the day time that it's hard to see shells unless they deliberately trail smoke. This shelling had been going on for three days before we arrived and it continued with less intensity as long as we were at Iwo. Tension built subconsciously, no sleep that night. In the morning 1500 Marines and 43 members of the Highlands beach party fell in line on the weather deck to climb down rope nets to our landing boats below.

Most of them looked about 19 years old, very quiet, no talking, a bit grim; it was a bit scary to me. I caught the eye of one of the Marines and asked, "What group?" He said, "3rd Marines." Although the 5<sup>th</sup> Marines were the main group on board, I found out later from Jim Baize that we also had some of the 1st, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Marines on board. A Marine officer was in each landing boat; he carried a 45 caliber revolver on his belt and he stayed in the back of the boat. Each Marine carried an 80 pound pack, a 14 pound loaded rifle, a bayonet and two or three cartridge clips on his belt and he wore heavy boots. Each boat was manned by at least a coxswain, a motormac and a seaman from the Highlands.

The Highlands beach party consisted of two or three medical doctors, corpsmen (medical specialists), men of various technical specialties and equipment and supplies (telephone wire) that could help the Marines. The landing boats formed in waves at H-hour, 9:00 a.m. and raced toward the attack beach. From an air photo that I saw much later, the first waves were well-ordered and about 200 to 400 feet apart. When the third wave hit the beach, some enemy fire occurred. After that it was chaos, horrible wounds and horrible deaths, both of our Marines and of the enemy. Make no mistake, war is terrible. Do not say, "Send in the Marines," a sometimes offhand comment, unless you really know what you are talking about.

The attack beach must not have been long enough. It apparently had not been easy in the planning of the strike to find good beaches where the boats could land without crowding. The boats of the early waves could push their prows up onto the beach and unload the Marines to quickly dig fox holes. But some boats were hit by mortars and the supplies may have built up and got in the way or the tide may have changed. Later waves couldn't find an opening on the beach.

It was up to the Marine officer in the back of the boat or to the coxswain to command that the front exit door, hinged at its bottom, be laid flat so the Marines could quickly exit over it, but it was not clear in the deeper water just when to open the front door of the boat. Jumping into water of unknown depth is not easy with over 100 pounds of extra weight.

I have had bad thoughts about the revolver on the Marine officer's belt. Perish such thoughts! As the Marines crowded to the front of the boat, their weight forced the front below water level and water poured in, such boats never reached shore. Things got worse. Specialists started dynamiting the boats that were in the way.

One of the detonations blew part of a boat's motor about 100 feet and it hit the head of a member of the Highlands beach party. It killed him instantly and some of his brains oozed out upon the ground. Some of his shipmates at one of the reunions said that he was still only eighteen years old. I quote from pages 16 and 17 of the summary booklet by Tuell and Oelschlager in order to show that a member of the Highlands beach party was killed, because the current survivors cannot remember his name to identify him and it is not listed as a death in the booklet.

**"At noon on D-plus-one we recall, word ran wild through out the ship that the entire beach party had been wiped out. .. On D-plus two, February 21, we learned that the beach party was returning to the ship; at approximately 1700 they clambered aboard in ragged clothes and full packs. They were worn and weary, almost speechless. A few we hardly recognized. It was at this time that we learned that one of their group had been killed and three wounded."**

**Where is the body of the killed 18 year old beach party member now? Iwo Jima is not a big island-about 8 square miles but there is a very large graveyard there, row upon row upon row ... of white crosses, about 7,000 of them. It is reasonable that his body lies buried there, but what of his soul, his self-realization, his faith, his hopes, his mother's love for him? Are they buried there? I think not, I think not.**

**Because of ignorance of and passive secrecy, the Highlands personnel never knew the extent of our casualties until some years after World War II. A surprise booklet written by two of our ship, Doctor Stanley W. Tuell and Corpsman Don L. Oelschlager, appeared in our mail. It recorded a summary history of the Highlands, the names of ship's company and the estimated casualties.**

**The casualties listed are 1 killed, 2 missing and 7 wounded. This list is now known to be in error. The correct list is 4 killed, Samuale W. Frantz, Jimmie Harkrider, Edger O. Linke and the unnamed lad from the beach party; there were still seven wounded listed. Frantz, Harkrider and Linke were killed when landing boat number 13 was hit by a mortar.**

**Of the 1500 Marines that the Highlands carried to Iwo Jima, no one at the Highlands reunions knew of their casualties. In addition to human casualties, the Highlands lost nine of its 26 landing boats at Iwo.**

**James E. Baize, coxswain of landing boat number 13, and one of the wounded at Iwo, was blown semi-conscious out of his boat into the water. A Marine pulled him out and after a get well period, a rifle was shoved into his hands and a desire for his help expressed.**

**So Jim fought with the Marines for several weeks until he was hit by another shell, out of the kettle and into a pot. He spent about a year in military hospitals where they fastened his back together with metal screws. After discharge from the navy, Jim went to Purdue University on the GI bill and graduated as an engineer. After some experience as an engineer, he started and successfully managed his own construction company, Baize Corporation. Recently he started another construction company, Brookhurst Corporation, with offices in several cities. OH! Did I mention that Jim joined the navy when he was 15 years old. He gets things done, talks blue blazes rapid fire, crams a lot into life.**

**Meanwhile back at the Highlands, we started loading the wounded. The wounded came, about 4 to 10 at a time, lying in the bottom of landing boats from numerous APAs. They were pulled up from the landing boat, one at a time, using a rope, pulley and stretcher and on to the weather deck. Then they were moved in through the double doors to the officers mess hall which had been converted to a medical operating room. At condition Able, I was assigned as the electrician to winch number 4 located on top of the cabin deck, starboard side, just above the double door entry to the officers mess hall one deck below my station. The landing boats normally had about one half inch of water slopping around from corner to corner on the bottom of the boat. The water was red, blood red, no exceptions. The wounded were wrapped in tarps and it was impossible to see either their faces or their bodies. They made no sounds that I could detect, and I concluded they had been heavily dosed with morphine before they left the island.'**

Not often, but sometimes a few drops of blood would be dripping from the stretcher. I could vaguely hear sounds and people talking in the converted operating room. Once I heard someone say that they had taken a piece of shrapnel the size of a horseshoe from someone's hip. I was glad that I wasn't any closer. I never counted the wounded that we took aboard, but I would estimate it to be about 150 to 250.

The Highlands never anchored at Iwo and the propeller was often shut down. We stayed on the east side of Iwo more or less opposite the attack beach. We drifted in towards the island but the Highlands was usually within about 1 mile to a quarter of a mile of the attack beach so that the landing boats with wounded could find us. Two small shells exploded over the Highlands but did no significant damage.

We never knew just where those shells came from. The north side of Mount Suribachi was pockmarked with caves full of the enemy. One morning one heavy cruiser and two smaller cruisers moved up to within about a quarter of a mile of the north side of Mount Suribachi. Heavy artillery was fired toward the caves. After about half an hour, the cruisers withdrew. Everyone wondered about how much damage the cruisers actually did. Apparently the confidence level about that question was not real high, because in about 3 hours, the Marines had to climb up to those caves and spend about 4 more hours burning out those caves with flame throwers. There are exceedingly grim stories about what people found in those caves afterwards.

At night the Highlands joined the other large ships and withdrew from Iwo to hide from the kamikazes, but they found us anyway. One night a kamikaze came in right over the top of our masts. I did not see this myself, but others on deck at that time saw it. This kamikaze proceeded on and hit a medium size aircraft carrier, the Bismarck Sea, another kamikaze also hit the Bismarck Sea and it sank. Other kamikazes hit other aircraft carriers but they didn't sink.

The next morning the Highlands was ordered out to pick up survivors of the Bismarck Sea. Some survivors had already been picked up by small boats having conning towers. The Highlands would take 1 to 3 survivors off from each one of these small boats and these men appeared to be in fair shape. Our ship also rescued a large number from a large, drifting barge. Some men on this barge had been covered with a dark oil and appeared to me to be in a state of shock.

Other survivors from the same barge appeared to be in better shape, but they were all relieved to be taken aboard the Highlands. I was relieved also. There is something about helping other people in dire distress that can make a person feel good inside. According to the official record of their names, the Highlands took aboard approximately 200 survivors of the Bismarck Sea.

After eight days at Iwo and having seen the two U.S. flags that were being put up on the top of Mount Suribachi (There is no way to describe the feeling one has in a battle when suddenly you see that your flag has been raised over a disputed area.), the Highlands loaded with wounded and other survivors headed for Saipan Island, where there was a real hospital.

On the way some of the wounded died. Coming off watch from the main switchboard at midnight, I counted 17 corpses all in a group, wrapped in tarps, being carried down a ladder to the refrigeration spaces just aft of the engine room. At one of the reunions I learned from Stanley Lesser, Corpsman, that they had declared him to be an undertaker to help bury about six of the dead off the ship's fantail into the sea also at midnight. Stanley had to hold the head of one of the dead and he dropped it. The sound of the head hitting the steel deck sickened him. The watches on the main switchboard were rotated, so I didn't observe any more burials. But burying at sea suggests they filled up the refrigeration spaces with the wounded dead. Delivery of the wounded and other survivors to Saipan ended our mission at Iwo.

About this time the designation APA was changed to PA (Personnel Assault), presumably because it was not an auxiliary task but an essential part of the main battle fleet. But the crew always kept calling it APA regardless of the change.

After Iwo, the Highlands carried a new group of Marines to Tsugen Jima Island that protected Okinawa south of Japan. I'm not sure where these Marines were picked up, but it was probably on our first trip to Espiritu Santo in the New Hebrides islands east of Australia. Enemy Marines, allegedly so called because of their height, guarded a cannon emplacement on Tsugen. The cannons were destroyed in two days by our Marines with help from the Highlands beach party. Our forces suffered some casualties there but I never knew how many. I do know that an electrician and a member of our beach party, George O. Chavez, a personal acquaintance, was pinned down on Tsugen for hours by an enemy machine gun.

Some time later we entered Buckner Bay, named after a Marine general, but otherwise known as Nakagusuku-wan. A very, very large number of U.S. ships were anchored there. The kamikazes came in day and night. They came in high until they located a target and then dived. It seemed to me that all the ships just shot straight up and the kamikazes could not penetrate the hail of shells. But some got through. I only heard of the details of one case. A kamikaze with two under-wing bombs hit the side of an APA at its engine room, but didn't sink it. Either some of our officers visited this APA or were informed of the details. The engine of the aircraft and the two under-wing bombs penetrated the side of the ship, about one half inch thick of mild steel. The two bombs bounced around in the engine room but didn't explode. I doubt that the bombs could have penetrated, but strange things happen under the midnight sun. The engine room caught fire and all of the men in it, including the electrician on the main switchboard, were killed. There is not much in an APA's engine room that can burn except the asbestos wrapped around the steam pipes. Burning asbestos is almost inextinguishable, so the men never had a chance. I have it in my memory that this ship was the APA-118. Humm.

Next the Highlands picked up approximately 1500 army troops. I am fairly sure these troops were picked up the second time we visited Espiritu Santo. The Highlands carried them to Panay Island in the Philippines where our boat crews and officers trained them to make beach landings, as though they were attacking the beaches of Japan. We were quite near Iloilo, a town that had almost been destroyed by shell fire. I met a Philippine girl at Iloilo. She never so much as let me kiss her, but later we exchanged letters which I have kept; I wonder if she is still alive.

Almost everyone seemed to know that we were training soldiers to attack Japan and the Japanese must have known it also. My heart sank for I anticipated at least ten more years of war. Then the news came--an atom bomb had destroyed a city in Japan. Hardly any of us knew what an atom bomb was or what this meant.

August 15<sup>th</sup>, 1945 The USS Highlands APA-119 entered Yokohama Harbor (often called Tokyo Harbor) loaded with army troops of the First Cavalry and we anchored near the battle ship, Missouri, where the surrender was to take place. The harbor was crowded with ships, but not so dense that they would have been a good wipe-out target. We listened to the surrender over the Highland's loud speakers, I could not hear well and I missed hearing the great news that World War II had come to an end. I consoled myself by recalling the song that stirred a nation: "Remember Pearl Harbor as We Did the Alamo."

Well, that was then but this is now. I spent thirty-nine years in the Cold War after World War II and I understand to some extent both the Japanese and the Soviets. I feel no animosity toward them. I have often pondered this question, "Why was the Highlands placed so near the Missouri?" And I have concluded that it was due to that dreaded Captain Lyon who commanded our shake down cruise the first five months. Out of fear of Captain Lyon, our officers forced us to become very proficient so we probably stood out when we did the timed battle drills and in anti-aircraft practice against towed targets, thus they may have picked a top APA, loaded with troops to be near the Missouri. It's just a theory and theories are a dime a dozen, but the older I get the more I like this theory.

A last note about the battle of Iwo Jima. The quick capture of Iwo Jima was very important at that time in order to build an airfield there so our damaged and low-on-gas bombers could land more safely. The casualty rate of both our Marines and the enemy soldiers was very high, if you confront a U.S. Marine, circumstances permitting, say to him or her, "Thanks for being a U.S. Marine."

(Signed William B. Smith)

William B. Smith, with support from Hazel, my wife for 63 years. Electrician's Mate 2<sup>nd</sup> Class, USS Highlands APA-119, 04-07-2012

### **Binnacle List**

The Binnacle List contains reports of our members who are under the weather and could use the prayers of those of us that pray. They might also like a bit of cheering up.

No members reported.

If you are aware of any of our members who should be included in the Binnacle List, please send us an email at [navmargrd@gmail.com](mailto:navmargrd@gmail.com) or mail the information to the Museum at 1402 Roseland Ave., Sebring, FL 33870.

## Quotable Quotes

"The cost of freedom is always high, but Americans have always paid it. And one path we shall never choose, and that is the path of surrender, or submission."

**John F. Kennedy**

"When the people fear their Government, there is tyranny; when the Government fears the people, there is liberty."

**Thomas Jefferson**

## **Mail Recipients of Scuttlebutt**

If you are receiving the Scuttlebutt by mail and have an email address, please provide us your email address. You will not only save the Museum postage, but you will be able to see any color photos in color.

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[1scuttlebutt@att.net](mailto:1scuttlebutt@att.net)*

## **Answers to Test Your Memory Quiz!**

1. In the Pacific Ocean off the coast Saipan, one of the Mariana islands. During the battle on 19 and 20 June 1944, the Japanese lost about 433 carrier based aircraft and around 200 land based aircraft. The U.S. lost 123 aircraft, most resulting from night landings. The Japanese also lost three aircraft carriers, two sunk by U.S. Navy submarines and one sunk by Navy aircraft. By the time the Japanese fleet escaped to Okinawa, it had only 35 carrier based aircraft remaining.
2. On 17 July 1944 the SS E.A. Bryan and the SS Quinault Victory were tied up to the pier. The Quinault Victory was waiting to take on ammo while the E.A. Bryan was being loaded. There was 490 tons of ammo in 16 rail cars on the pier and 4,606 tons on the E.A. Bryan. At 10:18 PM there was an explosion on the pier and within six seconds the ammo on the E.A. Bryan detonated in one massive explosion. The E.A. Bryan was completely destroyed and the pier and the Quinault Victory were blown into segments. The 320 cargo handlers, crew members, and sailors on duty were killed instantly and 390 were wounded. Of the 320 killed 202 were African American. Of the 390 wounded, 233 were African-American. Subsequent to this disaster, 258 sailors refused to load ammo under existing conditions. The Navy convicted 208 of these men of disobeying orders in a summary court martial and subjected them to 3 months forfeiture of pay. The remaining 50 men (the "Chicago 50") were considered ringleaders and were convicted of mutiny and sentenced to reduction in rank to seaman apprentice and given prison terms of 15 years.
3. Near Bikini Atoll in the Pacific Ocean on 25 July 1946. Known as Operation Crossroads Baker. The device was suspended from an auxiliary craft and detonated 90 feet (27 meters) underwater.
4. USS NAUTILUS (SSN-571) commissioned 30 Sep 1954. On 3 August 1958, the NAUTILUS was the first vessel to complete a submerged transit of the North Pole. Decommissioned 3 Mar 1980 at Mare Island. Now a museum near the Naval Submarine Base New London.
5. After modifications the USS ANTIETAM (CV-36) emerged in December 1952 from the New York Naval Shipyard as the world's first carrier with an angled flight deck. The USS ANTIETAM (CV-36) went to sea in 1953.