

# *Scuttlebutt*



***MILITARY SEA SERVICES MUSEUM, INC.***



***Jul/Aug 2023***



**John Cecil**

## **A message from the President**

As you are aware, the heat of summer is upon us. Please take a minute to refresh your knowledge of heat exhaustion and heat stroke. Heat exhaustion occurs when your body loses excess amounts of water and salt, typically from sweating. On the other hand, heat stroke is a serious medical emergency that occurs when your body is unable to control its internal temperature.

Celebrations of the 4th of July, and associated fireworks safety precautions should also be reviewed.

On 4 August, the MSSM will be celebrating the United States Coast Guards, 233rd birthday, and the Marine Corps Reserves, 107th birthday on the 29th. Have a safe and enjoyable summer.

## **Museum Happenings**



Former USCG Boatswain Mate 1st class Eric Heestand is pictured at left beside the USCGC Munro parade model. A veteran of 10 years of active duty and the reserve service, Eric served on several cutters and shore stations. Eric is the only USCG member active at the museum. In the picture at right, are examples of Marlinspike Seamanship, donated by Petty Officer Heestand. Marlinspike seamanship broadly refers to the use of, working with, and storage of ropes, knot tying, and rope maintenance. Some seamen even take it as far as creating decorative works by splicing, whipping, lashing, and knotting contributions to the museum are greatly appreciated, shipmate. particular ropes, or lines,, as they are called once cut and prepared for work. Your contributions to the museum are greatly appreciated, shipmate.

## Memorial Day 2023 & MSSM 25th Anniversary



Gray clouds moved out and the sun shone during the 2023 Memorial Day festivities at the Military Sea Services Museum on 5-29-2023. Florida 18th district Congressman, and Naval Academy graduate, Scott Franklin was the keynote speaker.



MSSM President John Cecil and Congressman Franklin cut the ceremonial cake with a military saber.

Immediately following the Memorial Day ceremonies, guests entered the Military Sea Services Museum for refreshments provided by the museum staff. Close to 75 guests enjoyed tours of the facility. A storyboard was set up, depicting the proposed building extension. There were several comments relating to the history being displayed, the progressive layout of the museum and the fact that very few guests knew that the museum existed. Once again, the staff was instrumental in providing pertinent examples of our motto, "Where History Comes Alive".



## USS Indianapolis CA35

July 1945



**Captain Charles B. McVay III**  
**Commanding Officer**



The USS Indianapolis was built in Camden, New Jersey. The ship was launched in 1931 and commissioned by the U.S. Navy the following year. A Portland-class heavy cruiser, the Indianapolis was 610 feet 3 inches long and displaced 9,950 tons. It carried a main battery of nine 8-inch guns and eight 5-inch antiaircraft guns. Powered by eight boilers turning four steam turbines, the ship could reach speeds of more than 32 knots (nautical miles per hour). In its first years, the Indianapolis operated in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans. The ship carried U.S. Pres. Franklin D. Roosevelt on three cruises, including a “Good Neighbor” visit to South America in 1936.

In late July 1945 the Indianapolis was sent on a high-speed voyage to deliver cargo to a U.S. air base on Tinian, one of the Mariana Islands, in the western Pacific. No one on board knew that the cargo consisted of parts for atomic bombs. The Indianapolis traveled from San Francisco to Tinian in only 10 days. After completing the delivery on July 26, it proceeded to Guam and then was sent to Leyte Gulf, in the Philippines. The ship had traveled about halfway to Leyte when it was hit on July 30 by two torpedoes from the Japanese submarine *I-58*. The Indianapolis sank in about 12 minutes.

Of the nearly 1,200 men on board, as many as 900 survived the sinking. They were stranded in shark-infested waters with no supplies aside from life jackets and a few life rafts, however it took four days for help to arrive. Because of communications errors and other problems, the ship was not reported missing when it failed to arrive in Leyte Gulf as scheduled on July 31. The survivors were discovered by accident on August 2, when they were spotted by a passing U.S. naval aircraft. By that time only 316 of the men remained alive and were rescued. The U.S. government delayed reporting the tragedy until August 15, 1945, the same day it announced that Japan had agreed to surrender.

The commanding officer of the Indianapolis, Capt. Charles B. McVay III, was among the survivors. He became the only ship's captain in the U.S. Navy to be court-martialed in connection with the loss of his ship in combat in World War II. In February 1946 McVay was found guilty of negligence for having failed to steer the ship on a zigzag course to help evade enemy submarines. He was found not guilty of another charge: having failed to promptly issue orders to abandon the ship after the torpedo attack. The military court recommended clemency, and the sentence (a decrease in seniority) was set aside. Upon his retirement in 1949, McVay was promoted to rear admiral. He committed suicide in 1968. Many survivors of the tragedy believe that McKay had been scapegoated by the U.S. Navy. They contended that the captain had been ordered to zigzag only at his discretion and that poor visibility before the attack made that inadvisable. At the court-martial, the commander of the Japanese submarine *I-58* testified that zigzagging would not have thwarted the torpedo attack. In addition, McVay's request for a destroyer escort had been denied. It later came to light that the U.S. Navy had known that Japanese submarines were operating in the area, but McVay had not been warned (perhaps to avoid revealing that the Japanese navy's secret code had been broken). Following a campaign to clear McVay's name, in 2000 the U.S. Congress passed a joint resolution exonerating him. In 2001 the U.S. Navy placed in McVay's record a memorandum noting that **the** resolution had absolved him from blame.



**Commanding Officer  
Mochitsura Hashimoto**



**Japanese Submarine I-58**

## **'Little Boy' and 'Fat Man'**

### **August 1945**

In 1940, the U.S. government began funding its own atomic weapons development program, which came under the joint responsibility of the Office of Scientific Research and Development and the War Department after the U.S. entry into World War II. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers was tasked with spearheading the construction of the vast facilities necessary for the top-secret program, codenamed “The Manhattan Project” (for the engineering corps’ Manhattan district). Over the next several years, the program’s scientists worked on producing the key materials for nuclear fission—uranium-235 and plutonium (Pu-239). They sent them to Los Alamos, New Mexico, where a team led by J. Robert Oppenheimer worked to turn these materials into a workable atomic bomb. Early on the morning of July 16, 1945, the Manhattan Project held its first successful test of an atomic device—a plutonium bomb—at the Trinity test site at Alamogordo, New Mexico.

By the time of the Trinity Test, the Allied powers had already defeated Germany in Europe. Japan, however, vowed to fight to the bitter end in the Pacific, despite clear indications (as early as 1944) that they had little chance of winning. In fact, between mid-April 1945 (when President Harry Truman took office) and mid-July, Japanese forces inflicted Allied casualties totaling nearly half those suffered in three full years of war in the Pacific, proving that Japan had become even more deadly when faced with defeat. In late July, Japan’s militarist government rejected the Allied demand for surrender put forth in the Potsdam Declaration, which threatened the Japanese with “prompt and utter destruction” if they refused.

General Douglas MacArthur and other top military commanders favored continuing the conventional bombing of Japan already in effect and following up with a massive invasion, codenamed “Operation Downfall.” They advised Truman that such an invasion would result in U.S. casualties of up to 1 million. In order to avoid such a high casualty rate, Truman decided—over the moral reservations of Secretary of War Henry Stimson, General Dwight Eisenhower and a number of the Manhattan Project scientists—to use the atomic bomb in the hopes of bringing the war to a quick end. Proponents of the A-bomb—such as James Byrnes, Truman’s secretary of state—believed that its devastating power would not only end the war, but also put the U.S. in a dominant position to determine the course of the postwar world.

On August 6, 1945, during World War II (1939-45), an American B-29 bomber dropped the world’s first deployed atomic bomb (Little Boy) over the Japanese city of Hiroshima. It was the first nuclear weapon deployed in wartime. The explosion immediately killed an estimated 80,000 people; tens of thousands more would later die of radiation exposure. Three days later, a second B-29 dropped another A-bomb (Fat Man) on Nagasaki, killing an estimated 40,000 people. Japan’s Emperor Hirohito announced his country’s unconditional surrender in World War II in a radio address on August 15, citing the devastating power of “a new and most cruel bomb.”

**Hiroshima**, a manufacturing center of some 350,000 people located about 500 miles from Tokyo, was selected as the first target. After arriving at the U.S. base on the Pacific Island of Tinian, the more than 9,000-pound uranium-235 bomb was loaded aboard a modified B-29 bomber christened Enola Gay (after the mother of its pilot, Colonel Paul Tibbets). The plane dropped the bomb known as “Little Boy” by parachute at 8:15 in the morning, and it exploded 2,000 feet above Hiroshima in a blast equal to 12-15,000 tons of TNT, destroying five square miles of the city.



Hiroshima's devastation failed to elicit immediate Japanese surrender, however, and on August 9 Major Charles Sweeney flew another B-29 bomber, Bockscar, from Tinian. Thick clouds over the primary target, the city of Kokura, drove Sweeney to a secondary target, **Nagasaki**, where the plutonium bomb “Fat Man” was dropped at 11:02 that morning. It was built to produce a 22-kiloton blast.












**'Little Boy'**



**'Fat Man'**

# July 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						<div>1</div> 
<div>2</div>	<div>3</div> <b>Vietnam Vetans ASSN Meeting</b> 1800 call (860) 480-2550	<div>4</div> 	<div>5</div>	<div>6</div>  <div>1946</div>	<div>7</div>	<div>8</div>
<div>9</div>	<div>10</div>	<div>11</div>	<div>12</div> <b>MSSM Board Meeting</b> 1630	<div>13</div>	<div>14</div> 	<div>15</div>
<div>16</div>	<div>17</div>	<div>18</div> 	<div>19</div>	<div>20</div>	<div>21</div>	<div>22</div> 
<div>23</div> <b>MSSM Monthly Dinner</b> 1430	<div>24</div>	<div>25</div> 	<div>26</div>	<div>27</div>	<div>28</div> 	<div>29</div>
<div>30</div> <div>Female Sailors</div> 	<div>31</div> <div>NATIONAL Mutt DAY!</div> 	<p>Buffalo Soldiers were United States Army regiments formed during the 19th century to serve on the American frontier that primarily comprised African Americans. On September 21, 1866, the 10th Cavalry Regiment was formed at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The nickname "Buffalo Soldiers" was purportedly given to the regiment by Native Americans who fought against them in the American Indian Wars, and the term eventually became synonymous with all of the African American Soldiers.</p>				

# Aug 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
		1	2 MOAA Meeting 1800	3	4 	5 Battle of Mobile Bay 1864 Admiral Farragut orders "Damn the torpedos, full speed ahead"
6	7 Vietnam Veterans Assn Meeting 1800 Call (860) 480-2550	8	9 MSSM Board Meeting 1630	10 	11	12
13 	14	15	16	17	18	19  1946
20	21	22	23	24	25	26 
27 MSSM Monthly Dinner 1430	28	29 	30	31		
	<p><b>Agent Orange</b> was a powerful herbicide used by U.S. military forces during the Vietnam War to eliminate forest cover for North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. The U.S. program, codenamed Operation Ranch Hand, sprayed more than 20 million gallons of various herbicides over Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos during 1961 - 1971. The spray contained the deadly chemical dioxin, which later was proven to cause cancer, birth defects, rashes and severe psychological and neurological problems among the Vietnamese and returning U.S. servicemen and their families.</p>					

Let's face it, - English is a crazy language.

There is no egg in eggplant, nor ham in hamburger; neither apple nor pine in pineapple. English muffins weren't invented in England or French fries in France . Sweetmeats are candies while sweetbreads, which aren't sweet, are meat.

We take English for granted. But if we explore its paradoxes, we find that quicksand can work slowly, boxing rings are square and a guinea pig is neither from Guinea nor is it a pig..

And why is it that writers write but fingers don't fing, grocers don't groce and hammers don't ham? If the plural of tooth is teeth, why isn't the plural of booth, beeth? One goose, 2 geese. So one moose, 2 meese? One index, 2 indices? Doesn't it seem crazy that you can make amends but not one amend? If you have a bunch of odds and ends and get rid of all but one of them, what do you call it?

If teachers taught, why didn't preachers praught? If a vegetarian eats vegetables, what does a humanitarian eat? Sometimes I think all the English speakers should be committed to an asylum for the verbally insane. In what language do people recite at a play and play at a recital? Ship by truck and send cargo by ship? Have noses that run and feet that smell?

How can a slim chance and a fat chance be the same, while a wise man and a wise guy are opposites? You have to marvel at the unique lunacy of a language in which your house can burn up as it burns down, in which you fill in a form by filling it out and in which, an alarm goes off by going on.

English was invented by people, not computers, and it reflects the creativity of the human race, which, of course, is not a race at all. That is why, when the stars are out, they are visible, but when the lights are out, they are invisible.

P.S. - Why doesn't 'Buick' rhyme with 'quick' ?

Go figure!

*Thanks Lou.*

### **Mailed Copies**

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