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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

August 2015

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## 2015 REUNION

Groton, CT

September 24 - 27

### DEADLINES

Hotel Rooms--Aug 31

Registration--Sept 5

See story at right

## COAST GUARD ACADEMY PROGRAM INCLUDED IN REUNION'S RETURN TO MYSTIC/GROTON AREA

Registration packets have gone out and follow-up emails have reminded everyone of next month's gathering of the Emmons Family in Groton, CT.

The 2015 Emmons Association Reunion will be held September 24-27 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Groton.

Those of us who attended the 2008 Reunion in Mystic remember the many visitor-friendly features of the Mystic/Groton area of Connecticut that prompted the committee's choice as a return site. Unique attractions include the renowned Mystic Seaport, Olde Mistick Village and numerous other historic/scenic shopping attractions, aside from our own special program of activities.

The week's agenda will begin Thursday with registration and greeting of arrivals in the hospitality room.

Friday, a bus will carry us to the US Coast Guard Academy in nearby New London where arrangements have been made to conduct our traditional memorial service in the USGA Memorial Chapel. This will be followed by a tour of the Coast Guard Museum and then lunch in the Officers' Club.

On returning to the hotel, we will gather in the hospitality room for an information session, updating us on activities of our friends at Okinawa and other programs of the Association.

The evening will be given over to continuing greeting and socializing at a buffet dinner hosted by the Association.

President Armand JOLLY will preside at the annual crew/Association meeting Saturday morning. All Association members are invited to attend.

Climax of the week-end's activities will be the Reunion Banquet Saturday night. Program highlight will be announcement and presentation of this year's John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Scholarship awards.

Everyone is reminded to make reservations with the hotel by calling 877-782- 9444 and specifying Group Code EMR. Deadline for receiving our group rate has been extended to **August 31**. The Hilton Garden Inn is located at 224 Gold Star Highway, Groton.

If you did not receive a Registration Form, it can be downloaded from our website at [www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org).

**SURPRISE REUNION VISITOR** We recently learned we will be visited at the Reunion by Yu Miyaji, San Francisco bureau chief for Japanese newspaper Asahi Shimbun.

Attendees at the 2011 Reunion will remember seeing copies of her articles written after diving on the Emmons and interviewing Shipmate Armand JOLLY. She plans to write another article about the Reunion.

## CIPARELLI AND BIRD NAMED MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENTS

The USS Emmons Legacy Committee is pleased to announce Christopher CIPARELLI as this year's recipient of the \$2000 Lt. John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Memorial Scholarship award and Isaac BIRD as recipient of the \$500 Honorable Mention award.

Chris is the grandson of shipmate Armand J. JOLLY and son of Peter and Wendy CIPARELLI. He attends the University of Saint Joseph, West Hartford, CT, where he is working toward his Master of Arts Degree in Education.

Isaac is the son of Lawrence and Sandra BIRD and grandson of Josephine Morrow, sister of shipmate O'Neil L. INFANTO,

who gave his life aboard the *Emmons* at Okinawa. Isaac begins his undergraduate studies the fall at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore, and has been very active in theatre and volunteer work.

The Legacy Committee extends its thanks and appreciation to all of this year's applicants for their participation and acknowledges their honor and respect for the *Emmons* and her crew as evidenced in their essays.

A formal announcement of the scholarship results will take place at the reunion dinner banquet.

## MCMICHAEL RECIEVES PRESTIGIOUS FRENCH AWARD; DEDICATES IT TO HIS EMMONS SHIPMATES

A momentous honor was recently bestowed on one of our shipmates, Grover MCMICHAEL and thereby, in Grover's words, "on the whole Emmons crew."

Grover, who lives in Newnan, GA, received a letter in April from the French Consul General in Atlanta informing him that he was being awarded the French Legion of Honor "with respect and affection, in recognition of your noble contribution during World War II and in remembrance of those who sacrificed their lives for the cause....."

The award was conferred in a ceremony at the Georgia State Capitol on June 4.

The Legion of Honor is France's most distinguished decoration and is bestowed to recognize special contributions and acts of bravery while fighting for the liberation of her country during World War II. The record of anyone recommended for the award goes through lengthy scrutiny by the French Embassy in Washington and the Grand Chancellery of the Legion of Honor in Paris.

Grover's recommendation for the award came from a high school faculty member in Newnan where he has regularly shared the *Emmons'* story – including her Normandy/Cherbourg/Southern France in-



*Shipmate Grover McMichael receives the French Legion of Honor.*

volvement -- with history classes.

A Sonarman on the *Emmons*, Grover emphasizes that he accepted the award but it belongs to all his shipmates.

## CHRIS DEGREGORY NOW COMMANDING USS MONTEREY (CG61)

Captain Chris DEGREGORY has moved to his new assignment as Commanding Officer of the guided-missile cruiser *USS Monterey*. He officially took over as CO in a Change Of Command Ceremony in Norfolk August 7.

Chris is a grandson of Emmons shipmate Thaddeus TENEROWICZ.

The ceremony took place on the hangar deck of the cruiser before the assembled ship's company and with many members of Chris' family and friends in attendance.



*Capt. Chris DeGregory, USN*

Guest speaker was Rear Admiral Bruce H. LINDSEY, system, displaces 9,800 tons and carries a complement of 360 officers and crew.

Following remarks and reading of orders by the departing commanding officer, Captain Richard CHEESEMAN, Captain DEGREGORY addressed the gathering as the new CO. The Emmons Association was represented at the ceremony by Ed HOFFMAN and Tom and Diane HOFFMAN.

ering as the new CO.

In his remarks, Chris paid particular homage to the legacy of his grandfather and to his affiliation with the USS Emmons Association.

A luncheon followed in the hangar space and Chris then personally conducted a tour through all levels of the vessel for those in attendance.

The *USS Monterey* is one of 27 ships of the *Ticonderoga* Class of guided-missile cruisers, and like *Emmons*, is a Bath-built "Boat." It is equipped with the Aegis weaponry

## IN MEMORIAM

It was with deep sadness that we learned of the passing of four members of the Emmons Family:

A message from his wife on his Destroyer History web site informed his many friends and associates of the passing of **David MCCOMB**. Dave was a universally-recognized authority on destroyer history, founder of the

Destroyer History Foundation and a special Emmons friend.

Josephine MORROW, sister of lost shipmate O'Neil INFANTO, advised us of the death of **John PANTO** in Baltimore. John was a boyhood friend of Neil's and attended several reunions.

**Winifred D. KRUEGER**, sister of lost shipmate John DONALDSON,

passed away last August in Bethesda, MD. Mrs. Krueger attended the 2005 reunion in Washington.

Son Robert informed us that **Rose E. DIEHL**, widow of shipmate Raymond M. DIEHL, passed away in February. Known as "Pappy" among the crew, Ray passed away in 2012.

## 70<sup>TH</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF WAR'S END BRINGS EMMONS INQUIRIES

Seventy years ago, on August 15, 1945, Imperial Japan announced its surrender, bringing WWII to an end. Only four months earlier, our beloved USS Emmons fought her last fight which helped make that possible.

Over the past several months, we've heard from two Japanese reporters and a French production company, all looking to commemorate the 70<sup>th</sup> anniversary and wanting to learn more about the role of the Emmons' and US Navy's role in the last days of the war in Japan.

First, Marie Linton, based in Japan, and Paul Jaulin from Paris, contacted us regarding a documentary they were producing. Working with the USS Emmons Association, Kurt REESE and Rich ANGE-LINI, the necessary photos, videos and documentation were provided. The program will be broadcast September 9<sup>th</sup> on French TV and Marie has promised us an English version which she expects to be completed soon.

Next came Masamine Kawaguchi of the Yomiuri Shimbun, one of the largest Japanese newspapers. Requesting permission to use Emmons documentation from our website, Masamine was following up on the origin of a plane engine found at the Emmons site. The article generated contact from the sister of one of the pilots involved in the April 6, 1945, attack. It was published in June and can be read on our website at [www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org).

Most recently we heard from Iori Sagisawa, who is working for Japanese news wire service Kyodo News on a photo essay about those who experienced hardship in the war and the sites where the battles took place. It is his desire to gain information to share with the Japanese people to help them learn the story of the *Emmons*.

Iori informed us he and other Japanese divers dove several times on the *Emmons* recently, including August 15<sup>th</sup>, when they commemorate the anniversary of the end of the war. On that visit, the divers "...offered flowers on the screw of the *Emmons* to pray the souls of American victims may rest in peace."

### APPEAL FOR VETERANS' DONATIONS IS RENEWED

Again this year, the Reunion Committee is asking attendees to bring toiletry or other personal items to the reunion for distribution at the local Veterans' Home and Hospital. If you cannot attend the reunion, but would like to participate, items may be sent to Donna Jolly, 585 Old Slocum Rd., Hebron, CT 06248.

This will be the fourth year for this continuing project in which Emmons Family members have shown generous concern for others who have served our country with delivery of such items to veterans' facilities in the New England area.

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*USS Emmons (DD457-DMS22)*

We're on the web at

**[www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org)**

## PLAN TO NAME EMMONS BUILDING AT OKINAWA BECOMES REALITY; DEDICATION IS SCHEDULED

It was just about a year ago – in conjunction with a story and photo from *Windjammer*, the publication of Commander Fleet Activities Okinawa – that we reported an effort underway to name a building at Camp Shields after the *Emmons*.

Camp Shields is a Navy facility on Okinawa, adjacent to Kadena Air Force Base and headquarters of the Commander of Fleet Activities.

Interest was directed toward a building that was just beginning to be utilized as a training center. With a proposal to name the building The USS Emmons Training Center in honor of *USS Emmons*, the project soon got underway.

The CFAO Training Department began coordinating restoration plans and a volunteer team of Sailors and civilians “turned to” converting the main hallway into a commemorative foyer.

Although the facility is already in use, formal completion of the project will take place with dedication of The USS Emmons Training Center on August 27. Chuck DECESARI and Kurt REESE have been invited to take part and speak at the ceremony.

NEWSLETTER will report on the dedication with photos and credits to the groups and individuals who activated the project.

**REUNION DEADLINES:**

**HOTEL DEADLINE EXTENDED TO AUGUST 31  
REGISTRATION DEADLINE SEPTEMBER 4**