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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

April/May 2015

In This Issue

- Memorial Plaque Dedication
- 2015 Reunion News
- 70th Anniversary Memorial Dive
- Jr. Memberships Help Bring Next Generation on Board

2015 REUNION

Groton, CT

September 24-27

More information
coming soon!

LOST SHIPMATES HONORED IN IMPOSING CEREMONY; LARGE EMMONS FAMILY TURNOUT FOR DEDICATION

Fifty-eight persons, representing four generations of the Emmons Family, were present for a ceremony dedicating a USS Emmons Plaque at the Naval Heritage Center in Washington, DC last month.

The plaque was commissioned by the Association to honor lost Emmons shipmates and carries the inscription: "In Honor and Remembrance of our 60 Souls Lost 6 April 1945 Okinawa."

The ceremony took place in the Center's Adm. BURKE Theater, where a statuette of the Lonesome Sailor, spotlighted in front of a theater-screen view of our Emmons Plaque, formed a dramatic setting for our event.

Paul HALEY, Director of Planned Giving for the Navy Memorial, conducted the proceedings, and after an invocation introduced Donna JOLLY, who extended welcome on behalf of the Association's Legacy Committee. Tom HOFFMAN recognized the presence of some notable Family attendees and related how the proposal for a memorial plaque was activated and became reality with financial

support from the Korney and Shaub families.

Ed Hoffman read the names of the 60 Emmons crew members who gave their lives on April 6, 1945.

At conclusion of the ceremony, groups paused for picture-taking, then moved on to the Center's Memorial Plaque Wall to view our Emmons Plaque, already on prominent display, and the many other historic exhibits before re-assembling for lunch in the Presidents' Room.

Departing the Heritage Center, most of the Emmons folks spent time together just outside in the Naval Plaza where the famed Lonesome Sailor statue keeps watch over the Plaza's vast "Granite Sea" map of the world.

Exact replicas of the plaque as displayed on the Memorial Wall can be purchased for \$150 through the US Navy Memorial. Download the order form from our website or contact us and we'll send you the form.

PLANS IN PLACE FOR SEPTEMBER REUNION; REGISTRATION INFO TO FOLLOW

The attractive coastal Connecticut shore area will again provide the setting for the upcoming Emmons Association Reunion.

The 2015 gathering of the Emmons Family will be September 24-27 at the Hilton Garden Inn in Groton, CT.

Groton is the home of the U.S. Naval Submarine Base and is adjacent to the U.S. Coast Guard Academy in New London and the popular coastal and scenic towns of

Mystic Village and Stonington, both attractive touring and shopping spots.

Groton and our hotel are just off of Interstate I-95 and are equi-distant between the airports of Hartford and Providence.

The Reunion Committee is presently preparing a mailing with full registration and hotel information which everyone will receive soon.

OKINAWA WEATHERMAN SMILES ON DIVER FRIENDS FOR 70TH ANNIVERSARY EMMONS MEMORIAL DIVE

For the first time in several years, favorable weather allowed our friends at Okinawa to carry out the annual memorial dive to the **USS Emmons** – this one the 70th anniversary dive – on the scheduled date, April 4.

With Kurt REESE reporting: "The day was cloudy and overcast with a little bit of rain. The ocean had some gentle swells but nothing too bad. Showtime at Chuck's (DeCesari) port was 0600. We loaded up the boat and headed out to the Emmons.

"On our first dive we placed the flag and a wreath on the plaques and attached a stars and stripes pennant.....to the remaining portside 20mm. AA gun. All in all, everything went off without a hitch."

(Note – The memorial plaque and builder's plaque replica had

earlier been cleaned and relocated to a more stable location on the ship's hull, aft of the port boat davits.)

"On the second dive," Kurt continued, "we took group photos and retrieved all memorial items. By this time, the current had picked up due to tidal changes and the wind was picking up, so we had to abandon additional plans."

Participating in this year's dive, along with Kurt and Chuck DECESARI, were: Erik PFARR, Darlene FONG, Tom MATSUMOTO, Angela BOYS, Blair BURTON, Masayoshi KONDO, Satoshi ODANI, Dale FARIA, Nicholas CHRISTENSON, Robert LEE, and Michael DUENAS.

Floral wreaths for the memorial dive were again made by Susann LAMMER. Though she and her husband Josh now live in the States, Susan continues to supply

the wreaths as she did when they were part of the dive group at Okinawa. Susan and Josh enjoyed getting acquainted with the Emmons Family when they attended the Reunion Banquet in Connecticut last year.

SCHOLARSHIP REMINDER

Applications for the Lt. John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Memorial Scholarship for the 2015-2016 academic year are still being accepted. The deadline for submission is May 31st. Included is a second "Honorable Mention" award of \$500! The application can be downloaded now from the USS Emmons website at www.ussemmons.org, or by emailing the committee at ussemmons@gmail.com.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In Memory of James A. Mooney and Arthur L. Blumer

Anne Marie Patton

In Memory of Shirley J. Hoffman

Ed & Regina Hoffman

In Memory of Stanley L. Fisher

Norman Geer

In Memory of Capt. & Mrs. Eugene N. Foss

Paul & Karen Foss

In Memory of David and Gerald Horwitz

Jeffrey A. Horwitz

In Memory of Robert J. Glutting, James A. Donnelly and Harold Jay

Peter, Wendy & Jessica Ciparelli
Dennis & Donna Jolly



Emmons shipmates Tony Esposito (standing) and Bill Patton, seen here at the WWII Memorial, joined their Emmons Family and Friends in Washington, D.C., for the dedication of a plaque in memory of their lost shipmates (see story, page 1).

IN MEMORIAM

Shipmate **Robert J. GLUTTING**, an **Emmons** Plank Owner, died January 28 at The Villages in Lady Lake, FL.

Bob was a Water Tender on the ship, and was Oil King, a post carrying responsibility for receiving and storing fuel oil.

With his wife Carol, Bob was an enthusiastic member of the Emmons Association and attendee at reunions. In reporting his passing, their son Tim said "The reunions and time spent with all of you meant the world to him."

In a message from Ginny Donnelly, wife of Shipmate **James A. DONNELLY**, Ginny wrote: "It is with a heavy heart I write to tell you Jim answered his final roll call Thursday, January 29."

Jim was an **Emmons** Plank Owner who rose to the rating of Torpedoman 1/c during his time aboard.

Jim was a co-chairman of the **Emmons** crew's first get-together in Boston in 1953 and, though dealing with the rigorous onset of Parkinson's Disease, was able to attend, with Ginny, until last year.

Shipmate **A. Robert READ** died March 11, in Warminster, PA. We were advised of his passing by his daughter Betsy.

Bob was a quartermaster on the **Emmons** who trans-

ferred with Emmons shipmates **Jim DONOVAN** and **Joe POMYKALA** to "new construction" on the **USS Richard P. LEARY**.

Bob assumed a leadership role in the **Leary's** latter-day association and reunion activities while maintaining contact with his former **Emmons** shipmates.

Shipmate **Harold JAY** died peacefully March 16, at his home in Marina Del Rey, CA. Recognized as the patriarch of the Emmons Family, his passing came just three days before his 97th birthday.

Harold, a Plank Owner and an Electrician on the **Emmons**, rose to the commission ranks in his later Navy career.

Harold's association with the Emmons Family was especially precious, inasmuch as he had been privately mourning the loss of all his earlier shipmates for many years – result of a false report circulating that "the **Emmons** had gone down with loss of all hands." It wasn't until 1998 and the advent of the internet that he learned the real story, made contact with the Association and was able to reunite with shipmates and their families at the Reunion in West Palm Beach, FL. Until 2014, he hadn't missed a Reunion.



Now HEAR This!

The Plaque Dedication provided the occasion for Shipmate James QUEEN, from Valdes, NC, to re-unite with the Emmons group for the first time, and he did so in impressive fashion.

James was accompanied by 13 family members, including: his two sons and wives, two grandsons and wives, three great granddaughters, and two great-grandsons.

Welcome, all, to the Emmons Family!

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Dedication of the Emmons Memorial Plaque was especially poignant and fulfilling for Norman GEER, from Bowling Green, OH, who joined the Emmons Family for the first time for the ceremony in Washington.

One of the Shipmates being honored was Norm's father, Lt.(jg) Stanley L. FISH-

ER. Norm was not yet one-year old when his family learned his dad had been lost with the **Emmons**.

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On January 16th, Christopher HOLZSCHUH, grandson of Emmons crew member William Roberts, hosted the first public screening of his documentary, *Change of Tides: The William Roberts Story*. Chris, a history major at Rowan University, along with three of his college classmates, independently produced the film documenting his grandfather's life aboard the USS Emmons.

"The WWII generation is dwindling every day. These stories need to be told," said Holzschuh. The powerful 20-minute documentary can be viewed on the News page of our website at www.ussemmons.org.

It's been said, "Any publicity is good publicity" and that's what occurred for the USS Emmons recently in Washington, D.C. Parents allowing their children to play on the Vietnam Women's Memorial caught the public's eye through a photo that went viral on the internet, being viewed over 2 million times.

The disrespect of such actions gained special attention, because captured in the photo's background was crew member Ed HOFFMAN, in town for the dedication of the Emmons memorial plaque (story page 1). The expression of disbelief on Ed's face resulted in thousands of comments of the photo, noting Ed's USS Emmons hat and the disappointment that our veterans have to witness such disrespect. Some even did research, coming back with comments about the history of the Emmons in WWII.

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USS Emmons (DD457-DMS22)

We're on the web at
www.ussemmons.org

JR. MEMBERSHIPS BRING ABOARD OUR NEXT GENERATION OF EMMONS FAMILY

Response to the recent dues reminder is evidence of the continued support of our efforts to keep the **Emmons** legacy alive. Treasurer Tom HOFFMAN thanks everyone who has so far remitted their dues, including a number of new members.

Especially encouraging are those of our younger generations who, through our new Junior Membership, have become connected to the **Emmons** legacy and are becoming the face of our future. We welcome the following Junior Members to the **USS Emmons** roster:

Isaac BIRD, grandson of crew member O'Neil L. Infanto (KIA)

Katie FLORY, granddaughter of George C. Flory
Jonathan KOLODNY, great-nephew of Lt.(jg) David Horwitz (KIA)

Alexander NEWMAN, great-grandson of crew member Billy Ray Deese

Hudson PALACIO, great-grandson of crew member Harold Jay

Keaton PALACIO, great grandson of crew member Harold Jay

Lillia WILSON, great-granddaughter of crew member William D. Copeland

Zane WILSON, great-grandson of William D. Copeland

Junior Memberships are available for \$5 to those 18 years of age and younger, providing an early opportunity to become part of honoring and preserving the memory of the **Emmons**. Regular memberships are available for \$25 (discounted to \$40 for both husband and wife).

If you have not yet sent yours, please consider doing so by mailing your check today to USS Emmons Association, c/o Tom Hoffman
3136 Northampton St., Bethlehem, PA 18020.