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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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2016 REUNION

The reunion is in the planning stage. Site and date are yet to be finalized.

Info to follow and watch the website for updates.

www.ussemmons.org

IDEAL WEATHER, AREA ATTRACTIONS & SPECIAL VISITORS PRODUCE ANOTHER ENJOYABLE EMMONS REUNION

Pleasant New England weather enhanced enjoyment of important area attractions as the Emmons Family met for their annual Reunion in Groton, CT, in late September. The Groton Hilton Garden Inn was headquarters for the gathering.

The U.S. Coast Guard Academy in near-by New London afforded an exceptional locale for our Friday program and, working with Academy officials, our reunion committee took full advantage.

Our traditional memorial service was conducted in the inspiring setting of the Academy's Memorial Chapel under direction of Chaplain Fr. Keith SHULEY, with participation by the Academy color guard.

Our group was then ushered across the picturesque campus for a guided tour of the Coast Guard Museum. There, among the documents, displays and artifacts, they became fully acquainted with the striking history of the world's oldest life-saving service. The tour concluded with lunch in the Officers' Club.

Friday afternoon's information session

provided the Family with a large-screen visual update of a very active year for the Association. This included Kurt REESE's video of the 2015 memorial dive and placement of wreaths at Okinawa; clips of the *Emmons'* segments in a French documentary marking the end of WWII; and Bill ROBERT's grandson's filmed tribute to his granddad: *Change of Tides*.

The Friday night Association buffet and ensuing gathering in the hospitality room gave everyone a chance to renew relationships and catch up on personal activities. The Association meeting Saturday morning heard reports and considered action on several new issues.

The annual banquet Saturday night was the setting for official recognition of Chris CIPARELLI as winner of this year's Emmons/Griffin Scholarship Award. Enjoyment of the occasion was heightened by appearance of his Mom, Wendy, who was able to take leave from confining medical treatment to be present.

Another banquet highlight was attendance by Emmons friend Yu MIYAJI and (see **REUNION** on page 2)

2015 SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PRESENTED AT ANNUAL REUNION

The \$2000 Lt. John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Memorial Scholarship Award was presented to Chris CIPARELLI at the reunion's Saturday evening dinner banquet. Chris, the grandson of Armand & Elsie JOLLY, is working on his Master's Degree in Educational Technology at the University of St. Joseph in Hartford, CT. He shared his essay with all those in attendance at the banquet program.

Isaac BIRD, the \$500 honorable mention recipient, was unable to attend, but sent his heartfelt thanks and

appreciation for being honored with the award. Isaac is the grandson of Josephine MORROW, sister of crew member O'Neil INFANTO, who gave his life aboard the Emmons. He is in his first year at Loyola University Maryland in Baltimore.

The scholarship application for the 2016-17 academic year is now available at the USS Emmons web site at **www.ussemmons.org**. Awards of \$2500 will again be awarded. Deadline for submission of the applications is May 31.

YU MIYAJI DELIVERS MEMORABLE REUNION MESSAGE

The Reunion committee was excited to learn that Yu MIYAJI would be attending our September Reunion and immediately made plans for her to be part of the program. She and her husband Jan were able to mingle and get acquainted following their arrival Friday evening. She then addressed the Family at the Banquet Saturday night. Following are excerpts from her talk:

"My first encounter with the *Emmons* goes back to 2010. I still remember vividly when its shape emerged from the blue depth as we descended (on our dive). When we had gone deep enough to make out almost the entire ship, I was overwhelmed with the majesty of the sight.

"The detail and preservation of the ship was amazing. I could see the guns, ladders, wires, a big hole from the attack, etc. What made me very emotional was when I saw the crew's quarters. I realized this is where actual people lived, young sailors who spent 24 hours there and ate, slept, worked. I could almost hear the explosions in my head. I thought about the people who perished and went down with the ship.

This was the moment I decided to write a story on the *Emmons*, to research the history of the ship, its crew and its final battle.

"Soon after, I went back to Okinawa to learn more. I met Chuck and Kurt, who know most about the *Emmons*. Without them and their in-depth knowledge, it would have been impossible to gather all the facts. I went back several more times to dive the *Emmons* with them. *Emmons* was no longer a mere shipwreck, but a piece of living history that allowed me to relate to WWII.

"I also did research on the Japanese pilots that steered the Kamikaze planes that struck the *Emmons* and was very excited when Chuck found the engine of an airplane near the *Emmons*. A local Japanese diver was able to narrow down the engine, based on its type and location, as belonging to one of two kamikaze squadrons, but we were never able to exactly identify the plane or pilot.

"In 2010, I published my first article on *Emmons* and the missing pilots in my newspaper, which has seven million

readers. After it came out I received many responses from readers, from surviving kamikaze pilots and families of WWII pilots, who I then visited, trying to locate where their grandfather, uncle or relative might have died.

"Through Chuck, I learned about the Emmons Association. In 2011, I visited Armand Jolly and talked with Tony Esposito and Ed Hoffman and wrote a series of articles about Emmons survivors and their life after the war. They told me about the reunions and how much they meant to them and their families. I always hoped one day to be able to participate. I am so glad this has finally come true."

(REUNION.....continued from page 1)
her husband Jan LEMMERDING. Yu made several dives to the wreck of the Emmons, including the 2010 memorial dive, as a reporter for the Japanese newspaper *Asahi Shimbun*. She is now chief of the paper's San Francisco bureau.

Photos of activities throughout the Reunion can be viewed on the Reunion page of the Emmons website at www.ussemmons.org.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

In Honor of Edwin L. Hoffman's 90th birthday

Ed & Regina Hoffman

In Memory of Robert J. Glutting

Carol, Tim & Annie Glutting

In Memory of the Men of the Emmons & Family Members Lost This Past Year

Nancy & Rick Slimmer

In Memory of Lt. (jg) David Horwitz & S. Gerald Horwitz

Leon Horwitz



2015 SCHOLARSHIP RECIPIENT CHRIS CIPARELLI WITH GRANDFATHER ARMAND JOLLY.

LEGACY COMMITTEE ANNOUNCES RECONNECT WITH SHIPMATE

Determination by granddaughter Melissa TERPENING, and with the help of the Emmons Legacy committee, resulted in the addition of shipmate Edwin J. KROM, Sr. to the Emmons Association roster. Ed, a survivor of the Okinawa attack, lives in Kingston, NY and was a Seaman aboard the Emmons. Melissa found us on our website and worked with the Legacy Committee to bring her grandfather on board. Melissa and her Uncle Ed, Jr. expressed plans to join us, along with Ed Sr. and other family members, at the 2016 reunion. Welcome aboard Ed!!

NOTES From the Reunion Log

A special welcome and official recognition of our Reunion awaited attendees on arrival in Groton.

A letter from Congressman Joe COURTNEY, read: "On behalf of the Second Congressional District I would like to welcome the USS Emmons Association for your annual reunion and celebration of the many servicemen who served aboard the USS Emmons. This Saturday is a time of remembrance for all the shipmates who served aboard the USS Emmons who made the ultimate sacrifice.

"On this day we celebrate the sacrifices all of you have made, and in honor of your service we greet you with great respect in the City of Groton and throughout southeastern Connecticut."

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Family members arriving at the Reunion on Thursday were startled to learn that Warren and Fern SPARKS, who had made reservations, would not be attending.

While readying for the next day's trip on Wednesday evening Warren took a tumble and suffered a broken hip. Hospi-

talization and treatment followed, of course, but he was able to come through without complications.

A month later Fern underwent knee surgery, adding to their restriction of autumn activities, but she reports both are now recovered and looking forward to heading South in a few weeks.

* * * * *

Isaac BIRD, recipient of this year's honorable mention Scholarship award, is the first relative of a lost Shipmate to claim an award since the program's inception.

Isaac is the great nephew of Neil INFANTO, who lost his life in the *Emmons* last battle on April 6, 1945

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Two friends from the Okinawa chapter of the Association were able to be with us again at Groton.

Chuck DECESARI was in the States on business and arranged his travel schedule to swing by and participate.

Susan LAMMER and her husband Josh now live in eastern Connecticut. Josh was traveling on a work assignment, but Susan was able to attend the banquet

with children Charlie and Jackie. Susan continues to make the wreath and sends them to Okinawa for the Emmons Memorial dives.

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First prize in the reunion's raffle benefiting the scholarship fund went to Leon HORWITZ, brother of David HORWITZ, who gave his life aboard the *Emmons* at Okinawa. Leon was the proud recipient of a custom-framed watercolor painting of the *Emmons* at sea done by Eileen KORNEY, granddaughter of shipmate Jim KORNEY. Eileen is a graphic design major at Roger Williams University in Bristol, RI, and the 2014 recipient of the USS Emmons scholarship.

★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★
★ **NOW AVAILABLE!!** ★
★ **THE LT. JOHN J. GRIFFIN** ★
★ **USS EMMONS** ★
★ **MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP** ★
★ **APPLICATION** ★
★ **AT WWW.USSEMMONS.ORG** ★
★ **\$2500 IN AWARDS** ★
★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★★

USS EMMONS TRAINING CENTER BECOMES A REALITY

After more than a year in the making, September 3, 2015, was the official dedication of the USS Emmons Training Center at Camp Shields, a U.S. naval facility at Okinawa. Captain Michael MICHEL, Commander, Fleet Activities Okinawa, presided over the ceremony, while Kurt REESE

represented the USS Emmons Association.

Work to prepare the building began in 2014 and was made possible through a team of volunteer sailors and civilians. Ben STEVENS, a Mass Communications Specialist, and Erik RICK, Education Ser-

vices Officer, were among those who were instrumental in seeing the project through and kept us updated with ongoing reports of its progress. The main hallway now exists as a commemorative foyer including framed photos and videos of the *Emmons* and her crew.



Signage is placed on the training center and a look inside at the commemorative foyer.

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USS Emmons (DD457, DMS22)

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



Another fine turnout of the Emmons Family at this year's reunion in Groton, CT. See story page 1.

BEST WISHES FOR WONDERFUL HOLIDAYS AND A HAPPY, HEALTHFUL NEW YEAR