



In This Issue

- Reunion Highlights
- Letters to Home
- Survivor Report Project Complete
- Foss Family Bequeaths

2021 REUNION

Sept 23-26

Annapolis, MD

More information and registration information coming in the spring!

EMMONS FAMILY REUNITES VIRTUALLY AS REUNION ATTENDANCE NUMBERS SHATTERED

The COVID pandemic has brought unprecedented challenges as we all continue to adapt to major changes in our daily lives. And although the format went from in-person to virtual, the USS EMMONS Association made certain one thing didn't change....staying connected by way of our annual reunion celebrating the EMMONS shipmates, the special EMMONS Family bond and honoring the memory of the lost shipmates.

Attendance Record Set

Response to the Legacy Committee's announcement of the upcoming Zoom reunion was beyond all expectations. Attendance at the October 2nd get together totaled 124, including 34 attending their first reunion, many of whom were shipmate families we had never connected with before.

With late shipmate Ed HOFFMAN's son Tom hosting, participants were first provided the opportunity to meet and hear from three EMMONS Family members checking in from around the world.

Guest Speakers Highlight Evening

First up was John Dawkins from Halesworth, England. John spoke of the 1/192 scale model of the EMMONS he built from scratch, sharing a video of the model and explaining his rationale for choosing to honor the EMMONS and her crew.

Following John was professional diver and photographer John Chandler from North Carolina, who shared his experience as a participant in the 2001 discovery of the EMMONS wreck and his time photographing the ship.

(continued, see REUNION, page 3)

LETTERS TO HOME OFFER INSIGHT INTO EVERYDAY LIFE ABOARD THE EMMONS, SHIPMATES' THOUGHTS AND DREAMS

Considered one of the most valued sources of historical importance, providing details not available elsewhere, letters written home during a sailor's time at sea tell the story of the American experience in WWII in a very personal way. These letters to mothers, girlfriends, wives and children that tell of everyday life aboard ship, have become time capsules in envelopes.

Mail was an invaluable lifeline to those at home and at sea. The power a simple letter from home

had on the morale of a sailor during WWII is inconceivable to many of us. It's no surprise that Plank Owner and Okinawa Survivor Charles CORDREY, MailMan 3c, was possibly the most popular shipmate aboard the EMMONS, although bakers YECHE, HUBAL and GRANA, surely were a close second.

Letters to home take on greater significance regarding those who made the ultimate sacrifice, never having had the opportunity to tell their stories.

(continued—see LETTERS, page 2)

EMMONS HISTORY COMES ALIVE IN NEW EDITION OF SURVIVOR REPORTS

In their own words, written days after the kamikaze attack of the EMMONS on April 6, 1945, survivors shared exactly what happened to them on that horrific and tragic day. Reading their firsthand accounts opens a window to the moment when the attack began and shows sailors helping injured shipmates to safety and how they were rescued. It depicts, in simple yet astonishing words, the heroism and selflessness of all aboard the ship that day.

We now have a new 500+ page, hardbound *Survivors' Reports* book, complete with typed transcriptions of all 62 accounts, courtesy of EMMONS family member Cheri YECKE. The book is available for sale, both hardbound and on a flash drive, with all proceeds benefiting the Scholarship Fund.

In the days following the attack on the EMMONS when many of the survivors were being evacuated aboard the USS WAYNE, Lt. John Griffin, Jr. asked the survivors to document what they experienced during the attack.

Those handwritten accounts were published as a booklet in the early 1980s by the USS EMMONS Association, with copies given to the shipmates. The reports have proven to be a valuable historical resource, while providing all of us insight into the thoughts and experiences of the crew that day.

With extra copies of the original *Survivor Report* booklet no longer available and the difficulty in reading the handwriting of many of its accounts, Cheri has spent the past year meticulously transcribing each of the 62 reports and pub-

lished them in this new edition, complete with the original reports, their transcribed versions and an index to the 124 shipmates whose names are referenced in those reports.

This intimate and moving record of EMMONS history is certain to become a family heirloom for descendants of the shipmates and a valuable resource for anyone interested in the EMMONS legacy.

To order your copy, use the enclosed form or order online at our website's Ship's Store.

WE NEED YOUR HELP!

We have several photos in our archives of EMMONS shipmates who we're unable to identify and we know many of you out there will recognize your loved ones. Visit our website's Photos page and let us know if you can help.

LETTERS (continued from page 1)

And, like many others, EMMONS veterans often chose not to share their stories, whether because they found it too painful to tell, or considered their story insignificant compared with their shipmates who lost their lives. For them, their personal correspondence could be the only trace left behind.

Ross Elliott, nephew of Ensign Ross T. Elliott, Jr., who gave his life at Okinawa, recently came across letters written home by his uncle. These letters, written at a time when the future of the war, as well as his own future, was unknown, provide insight into life aboard the EMMONS as well as his hopes and dreams for the future.

He wrote in January, 1945, just four months before the Okinawa attack, of his four hours spent on watch in the director that afternoon and the sunburn that resulted. He tells his parents of his role

as a teacher on board, giving lectures on guns and recognition of planes leading him to believe he may want to pursue teaching as a profession. And he closes writing of his plans to retire, marry and "settle down to the quiet routine of civilian life."



Ensign Ross T. Elliott, Jr.

The historical significance of these letters, offering valuable insight into the wartime experience and life aboard ship, let alone the hopes and dreams of those who sacrificed so much, is much too valuable to ignore.

We ask our second, third and fourth generation EMMONS Family members to seek out this correspondence from your loved ones and, if you feel it in your heart, to share it with the Legacy Committee so that we might catalogue and share it with your EMMONS Family, helping us gain insight into our EMMONS heroes and life aboard ship. Email us at ussemmons@gmail.com with any information.

EMMONS ARTIFACTS ENTRUSTED TO ASSOCIATION

The Association was honored recently as George FOSS, son of Lt. Cdr. Eugene N. FOSS, on behalf of his family, granted the Association guardianship of several articles of EMMONS historical significance held by his late father.

Included among the photo album, citations that accompanied his father's medals and more, was the original certificate signed by Secretary of the Navy George M. ROBESON in 1873 appointing the ship's namesake, George Foster EMMONS, Rear Admiral.

The certificate was presented to Gene FOSS by Admiral EMMONS' granddaughter, Frances Emmons PEACOCK, sponsor of the USS EMMONS.

In honor of their father's service, and that of all the shipmates, it was George and his family's wish to share this memorabilia with the Association with the comfort of knowing it will be preserved and shared with their EMMONS Family for generations to come as we continue our work to honor the memory of the ship and her crew.

REUNION (continued from page 1)

Kurt Reese closed out the guest speaker portion of the evening from Okinawa, Japan, by talking of his time diving the EMMONS, the annual memorial services held there and the change he's seen in the condition of the ship over the past 18 years. In his words, "She's starting to show her age."

The program then switched gears with Eleanor YATES' introduction of our 2020 Griffin/EMMONS scholarship recipients Lyuka Devers and Jake DeGregory. Both made the EMMONS Family proud through the sharing of their essays addressing the EMMONS' role in the Okinawa campaign and the sacrifices made by the shipmates.

The evening came to a close with the memorial service traditionally held each year at the reunions honoring the memory of the shipmates lost at Okinawa and EMMONS Family members who passed away during the past year. Kurt wrapped up the service by sharing his video of the April memorial dive, bringing to a close the EMMONS Family's time together for another year.

If you missed the reunion, not to worry....visit the Reunions page of our website to view a recording of the evening.

NOW AVAILABLE!!

2021 Scholarship Application

\$5000 in Awards

Application available at www.ussemmons.org
or email us at ussemmons@gmail.com

Submission deadline May 31

TREASURER'S REPORT

July 1, 2019 to June 30, 2020

OPERATING FUND

Operating Fund Balance 7/1/19		9,168
<u>Receipts</u>		
Dues		2,626
2019 Reunion Income	(a)	6,521
General Fund Contributions		1,934
<i>The Emmons Saga</i> Book Royalties		48
Misc Income (CapOne VISA Rewards)		152
		<u>11,281</u>
<u>Disbursements</u>		
2019 Reunion Expenses		(10,096)
2021 Reunion Expenses (deposits)	(b)	(1,200)
Reunion Video Projector & Screen	(b)	(885)
Transfer Excess Memorial Plaque Funds to Sch. Fund	(b)	(789)
Newsletter Expense		(401)
Website Expense		(276)
Office Expense		(230)
Taxes		(25)
Misc. Expense		(72)
		<u>(13,974)</u>
Operating Fund Balance 6/30/20	(b)	<u>6,475</u>

SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Scholarship Fund Balance 7/1/19		93,672
<u>Receipts</u>		
Association Fundraising		1,534
Okinawa Fundraising		1,220
Excess Plaque Fundraiser from Operating Fund		789
Scholarship Fund Memorial Gifts		135
Investment Div and Cap Gain Income		3,732
Investment Market Gain/Loss		1,509
		<u>8,919</u>
<u>Disbursements</u>		
2019 Scholarship Awards		(5,000)
Scholarship Fund Balance - 6/30/20		<u>97,591</u>

NOTES: (a) Because the fiscal year begins July 1, the 2019 Reunion Income excludes registration fees received prior to that date
(b) The decrease in the operating fund balance is attributed to the 2021 reunion's advance deposits, the one-time purchase of video equipment for reunions, and the transfer of funds to the Scholarship Fund



Don't be left out and uninformed. Add our email address ussemmons@gmail.com to your contacts to avoid our correspondence ending up in your spam folder.

USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION

c/o Thomas Hoffman.
36078 Huntington Street
Millville, DE 19967

Phone: (610) 417-5163
E-mail: ussemmons@gmail.com



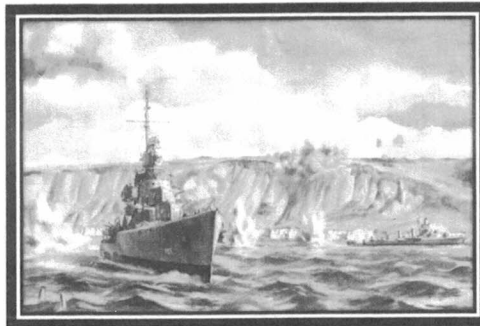
USS EMMOMS (DD457 / DMS22)

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

 **JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP**
"USS EMMONS REUNION"

NOW
AVAILABLE

The USS Emmons:
Eyewitness Accounts
from Survivors of
the Battle of Okinawa



PRESERVING
THE EMMONS
LEGACY

Read first-hand accounts of the heroism and selflessness witnessed by the shipmates during and immediately following the kamikaze attack on the EMMONS. See story page 2.

USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION

ORDER FORM

See story on page 2
of Newsletter

USS EMMONS: Eyewitness Accounts from Survivors of the Battle of Okinawa

All proceeds benefit the Griffin/Emmons Memorial Scholarship Fund

Orders shipped domestically may also be placed at our Ship's Store at www.ussemmons.org.

SHIP TO: Please print clearly

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

CONTACT INFORMATION:

PHONE _____

EMAIL _____

NAME (if different than above) _____

ITEM	QTY.	PRICE*	TOTAL
Hardbound Book		\$40	\$
Flash Drive		\$25	\$
Optional Scholarship Fund Contribution			\$
TOTAL			\$

*Prices include domestic shipping only via media mail.

PAYMENT/SHIPPING:

My Payment is enclosed.

Make check payable to USS Emmons Association and submit with this form.

Amount Enclosed: \$ _____

FLASH DRIVES:

I request my flash drive delivery by December 25.

HARDBOUND BOOKS: Due to shipping delays with the publisher and carriers, **we cannot guarantee delivery of hardbound books by December 25.** For orders received by November 30, we will make every effort.

I request my book delivery by December 25.

Books and flash drives are shipped separately.

Orders shipped domestically may also be placed at our Ship's Store at www.ussemmons.org. A 3.5% processing fee is included in the online price for credit cards and PayPal.

Comments: _____

Mail completed form with payment to:

USS Emmons Association
c/o Thomas Hoffman
36078 Huntington Street
Millville, DE 19967

All proceeds benefit the Griffin/Emmons Memorial Scholarship Fund.
Thank you for your support! If you have any questions or need an update on the status of your order, email us at ussemmons@gmail.com.

Internal Use Only

Date Order Received _____	Date Pmt Received _____	Amount _____	
___ USPS	___ Check # _____		Date Shipped _____
___ Email	___ Website Credit Card		Books _____
___ Website	___ PayPal		Flash Drives _____