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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

April 2018

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2018 REUNION

Saratoga County, NY
September 20-23

DEADLINES

Hotel - Aug. 25
Registration Form-Aug. 25

For information:

www.ussemmons.org
or call 610-691-7770

DATE AND LOCATION SET FOR 2018 ASSOCIATION REUNION IN SARATOGA COUNTY, NY

Plans are in place for the 2018 USS Emmons reunion – September 20-23. The Hyatt Place Saratoga/Malta hotel in New York will serve as our base of operations.

Named for the 20 or so natural springs that bubble to the surface there, Saratoga Springs sits north of the Hudson Valley, at the foothills of the Adirondacks.

Peaceful Time to Visit

While Saratoga remains a rousing summer destination when the famed Saratoga Race Course is open, we'll be visiting shortly after the course closes and the hordes have gone home, when the leaves begin to change and the area takes on a slower pace, and per the Saratoga slogan, plenty of health, history, and horses.

Our Friday outing will take us on a tour of the Saratoga Battlefield where the Patriots earned a crucial victory during the

American Revolution. While there, we will honor the lost Emmons shipmates with our annual memorial service, followed by lunch, before returning to the hotel.

Following the Saturday morning Association meeting, free time will be available to explore all the area has to offer.

Special Keynote Speaker

A highlight of the weekend will be the Saturday evening banquet and program when our keynote speaker will be Donald Emmons PEACOCK, great-great-grandson of George Foster EMMONS, the ship's namesake (see story page 2).

To secure one of the blocked rooms at the group rate, don't delay in registering. Information was mailed out in March, but can also be obtained on our website www.ussemmons.org, email ussemmons@gmail.com or call 610-691-7770.

RETURN OF JAPANESE GOOD LUCK FLAG PROVIDES FAMILY WITH SENSE OF CLOSURE

Over 70 years ago, a young Japanese soldier, Takato OGUCHI, left his family to fight for his country. With him he carried a good luck flag known as yosegaki hinomaru in the Japanese language.

Made of delicate fibers, folded and carried in the pockets of soldiers, these flags were parting gifts for soldiers deployed into battle, signed in elegant calligraphy by friends, family and neighbors. The long-standing tradition provided soldiers a link to their loved ones and their call for duty.

Takato died on the battlefields of New Guinea, where disease and starvation claimed more Japanese lives than enemy action. His remains were never returned to the family, leaving them with many questions. For his funeral, they resorted to burying sand of the island in his grave.

In 2015, shipmate Tony ESPOSITO and son Mike received a good luck flag from the family of a deceased WWII U.S. veteran who presumably held the battlefield souvenir as a memento of his service. Through their internet research, Tony and Mike quickly learned of the deep significance of these flags because most Japanese families never learned how their loved ones died and never received remains. It was agreed they should do what they could to return the flag to the family of the fallen soldier.

With the help of Yu MIYAJI, they learned the soldier's name and were able to track down the family in his hometown of Shimosuwa, Japan. This past January, the flag was on its way home.

Yu reported that, being a small town with families there for generations, the family and city recognized

(Continued—see FLAG on page 2)

GREAT-GREAT GRANDSON OF SHIP'S NAMESAKE TO ADDRESS REUNION

It was 1838 when the USS Emmons' namesake, George Foster EMMONS, sailed with the U.S. South Seas Exploring Expedition, known as the U.S. Ex Ex, as a lieutenant on the *USS Peacock*. Their mission was to explore the treacherous, uncharted waters of Antarctica and the South Pacific and to chart the waters of the Pacific Coast of North America.

During the Mexican War, Emmons served on several ships and took part in land engagements in California.

As commanding officer of the *Hatteras* during the Civil War, he captured Clear Key, Florida, and Pass Christian, Mississippi, while also capturing numerous confederate ships.

In 1863, he served as Captain of the Fleet under Admiral Dahlgren off Charleston, and back in the Pacific, he served as CO of U.S. Steam Sloop *Ossipee*, assisting in the formal takeover of Alaska from Russia in 1868.

In 1872, Emmons was promoted to Rear Admiral. His last command was the Philadelphia Navy Yard until retiring in 1873.



Frances Emmons Peacock prepares to christen the USS Emmons.

Fast forward 68 years to August 23, 1945, when Francis Emmons PEACOCK christened the U. S. Navy's newest war machine, the *USS Emmons DD457*. With the Secretary of the Navy having named the destroyer to honor her grandfather's illustrious naval career, Ms. Peacock represented the Emmons/Peacock family as Sponsor of the ship.

Fast forward 73 years to our upcoming 2018 reunion when Donald Emmons PEACOCK, Frances' grandson, and great-great grandson of Rear Admiral George Foster Emmons, will be our keynote speaker.

As it turns out, the Peacock lineage of the Emmons family has continued the sailor tradition, for Donald is Chairman of the Lynx Educational Foundation and serves as a captain aboard the Tall Ship *Lynx*, inspired by the original historic tall ship from the War of 1812—*The Privateer Lynx*.

At a time when our Navy consisted of only 17 ships, special permission was granted to owners of private ships, such as the *Lynx*, to prey on British shipping, in turn drawing enemy warships away from engaging our naval ships and blockading our coast.

Exploring the role played by these "Privateers," today's *Lynx* provides a training ground for children and adults, giving them the opportunity to experience life aboard the ship while exploring the role played by privateers in American history.

We are honored and excited to personally welcome Donald and wife Nancy into our USS Emmons family at the reunion in September and anxiously await hearing from the Emmons family first hand.

FLAG (continued from page 1)
many names on the flag. The family expressed its heartfelt appreciation for the return of the flag and how much it means, finally providing them the closure that was missing for so many years.

In his thank you note to Tony, Takato's nephew, Hirotaro OGUCHI, stated (as translated), "My father used to tell me about his proud

brother and I feel like he is now right here with me."

To celebrate, a press conference and small ceremony for the family was held in Shimosuwa for their fallen hero.

The USS Emmons Association is proud of the work done by Tony, Mike and Yu to help promote healing and closure over the loss of life from the war.



Nephew Hirotaro Oguchi and a government official proudly accept the return of the good luck flag.

HELP US KEEP THE MEMORY ALIVE! We receive dues from less than 50% of our members. We hope to surpass that mark for 2018, but we need your help! Every dollar of dues received directly supports our efforts throughout the year. We appreciate all of you who have submitted yours already (especially our 14 junior members). If you have not yet sent yours, it's not too late!

Annual dues are \$25 (discounted to \$40 per couple) or \$5 for junior members 18 years and younger. Checks may be made payable to USS Emmons Association and sent to:

Tom Hoffman, Treasurer, 3136 Northampton St., Bethlehem, PA 18020.

MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTIONS

The USS Emmons Association acknowledges the following memorial gifts received over the past 9 months. These gifts celebrate the lives of loved ones while supporting our efforts to keep the Emmons legacy alive.

In Memory of Wendy Ciparelli

Jessica Ciparelli
Nancy & Rick Slimmer

In Memory of Ed Culkin

Tony Esposito

In Memory of Ed & Jackie Culkin

Lauren Lynch

In Memory of Paul Dodd

James & Katherine Bucci
The Dodd Family

In Memory of Bob Glutting

Tony Esposito

In Memory of Ed Greenlaw

Tony Esposito

In Memory of Ed Hoffman

Tony Esposito
Nancy & Rick Slimmer

In Memory of David Horwitz

Jeffrey Horwitz
Leon Horwitz

In Memory of S. Gerald Horwitz

Jeffrey Horwitz
Leon Horwitz

In Memory of Samuel Horwitz

Leon Horwitz

In Memory of Elsie Jolly

Jessica Ciparelli

In Memory of Bill Roberts

Tony Esposito

In Memory of Richard Kidd

Armand Jolly
Susan Ludlow
Tom & Diane Hoffman
Pembroke Historical Society, Inc.
June R. Gillette
Patricia A Sudimack

In Memory of Ed Krom

Sue Gannon
Tom & Diane Hoffman
JBT Corporation
Armand Jolly
Phyllis Ketterer
Judy & Ken Nebel
Nancy & Rick Slimmer
Bruce & Shirl Vickerson
Eleanor Yates

In Memory of Edward Kurtzman

Daniel Kurtzman

In Memory of Bill Patton

The Dodd Family
Tony Esposito

In Memory of Joseph Pomykala

Tom & Diane Hoffman

In Memory of All Emmons Shipmates

Kevin & Jody King
Nancy & Rick Slimmer

IN MEMORIAM

James W. Flory, 53, son of *Emmons* Plank Owner George Flory, passed away December 12th. We were first notified in October by his brother Mike that Jim was undergoing chemotherapy and radiation for cancer.

Jim was a graduate of the University of Wisconsin and the University of Minnesota Law School. Some may remember Jim as having attended past Emmons reunions with his father and other family.

DEADLINE NEARS FOR GRIFFIN/EMMONS MEMORIAL SCHOLARSHIP

Honoring the memory of the
Emmons and her crew!

\$3000 & \$1500 Awards

May 31 Submission Deadline

For information, visit our website at
www.ussemmons.org



Now HEAR This !

Kevin KING notified us that despite his move to the States, his Emmons specialty dive certification program in Okinawa will continue without missing a beat. Described as a hard-charging Marine and scuba instructor, Chris BREEN's respect for the Emmons and her crew had him eager to take over the reins.

We extend our appreciation to Chris and look forward to a long, meaningful relationship, wishing him success with the program. Welcome to the family Chris!

* * * * *

And speaking of Kevin, his *Diving the USS Emmons* book was a popular item at the September reunion, having sold 23 copies to those present. Out of his respect for the Emmons and her crew, Kevin offered these at/below cost to Emmons family members and now **through the enclosed insert**, he is able to extend the offer to everyone.

As one who purchased books for himself

and each of his children, Tom HOFFMAN personally recommends it as a professionally done, well-researched pictorial documentary of the Emmons sure to be passed down for generations. His willingness to offer the book to us at no profit to himself is another sign of his sincere desire to honor those who served aboard the Emmons.

* * * * *

Going through some old boxes of his father, Capt. Eugene FOSS, his son, George, recently came across a log of the USS Emmons from her commissioning to February 28, 1945, shortly before her sinking.

While the travels of the Emmons are well documented in *The Emmons Saga*, this detailed log is now available on our website.

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We are grateful for the continued respect shown for the Emmons and her crew by Yu MIYAJI and her passion for sharing the Em-

mons story with her readers in Japan.

As a follow-up to her earlier Emmons articles in one of Japan's national newspapers, Yu recently published an article about our 2017 reunion. Her editors were very interested how memories of Okinawa have been carried on to the next generations through the Emmons Association.

* * * * *

Since the Association established the \$5 junior membership a few years ago, we've been pleased to welcome new members of the next generation, ages 18 down to 1.

This year we have a new youngest member on record at -6 months (yes, minus 6). Baby girl IVILL, is the future daughter of Doug and Sara (HOFFMAN) IVILL. Due in June, Doug and Sara felt it's never too young to get them started. We agree!

Proud grandparents-to-be, Tom & Diane, will be on hand to present her with her membership card when the big day comes.

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USS Emmons (DD457-DMS22)

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



Hirotaro OGUCHI (center) poses with a picture of his Uncle Takato OGUCHI and Takato's WWII good luck flag recovered by shipmate Tony ESPOSITO and now safely back in the hands of the family. See Story, page 1.