

# U.S.S. EMMONS

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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

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## 2017 REUNION

**Reunion is still in planning stage. Site and date are yet to be finalized.**

**Info to follow.**

## REUNION'S MOVE NORTH FAILS TO HINDER ATTENDANCE

After meeting in the Connecticut, Massachusetts, and Hudson Valley, NY, areas the past nine years, the reunion committee hoped its decision to move the 2016 venue a bit further north to Portsmouth, NH, would not negatively affect attendance. Fears were alleviated when registrations, including 7 crew members, climbed to reach 70, surpassing last year's attendance.



*Jim KORNEY and Pepper JAY prepare to cast the wreath at the water's edge of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard*

A highlight of the weekend was the first-time attendance of several Emmons family members, including Martha HORWITZ, daughter of the late S. Gerald HORWITZ; this year's first place scholarship recipient Alaina SHORT, granddaughter of crew member Paul DODD, and her parents, Tom and Ann (Dodd) SHORT;

T.J. PATTON, brother of crew member Bill PATTON; and crew member Ed KROM, along with 12 of his family members representing four generations of Emmons family.

Activities began Friday at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, including a memorial service honoring the USS  
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## REUNION BANQUET PROGRAM FEATURES SCHOLARSHIP AWARD PRESENTATION

The annual reunion dinner banquet included presentation of the \$2000 Lt. John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Memorial Scholarship Award to Alaina SHORT, granddaughter of crewmember Paul DODD and daughter of Tom & Ann SHORT. Academic demands kept Isaac Bird, recipient of the Honorable Mention award, from attending.

Those in attendance were treated to Alaina's reading of her scholarship application essay, which addressed the prompt: *"For the past 10 years, a group of men and women has found itself to be the guardian of the*

*resting place of the 60 men who made the ultimate sacrifice for their country aboard the USS Emmons at Okinawa on April 6, 1945. What do you feel inspires these divers of today to protect, memorialize and record the Emmons at the bottom of the ocean? What does this mean to you personally as a member of the Emmons family?* Alaina's and Isaac's essays can be read on the Scholarship page of our website.

The 2017 scholarship application is now available on our website. Deadline for submission is May 31, 2017.

## EMMON SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS INCREASED FOR THE 2017-18 ACADEMIC YEAR

The Lt. John J. Griffin/USS Emmons Memorial Scholarship was established to help preserve and promote the legacy of the USS Emmons and the men who gave their lives aboard the Emmons at Okinawa in defense of their ship. Since the scholarship was introduced in 2010, the program has engaged 20 students in an in-depth study of this legacy, something they will carry with them throughout life. It also continues to serve as a valuable outreach tool, attracting the attention of Emmons family members who may not have been aware of our existence.

Benefiting from generous dona-

tions and memorial contributions, along with moderate investment gains, the scholarship program awards have grown over the years, most recently offering a \$2000 award, along with a \$500 honorable mention award in 2016.

**Beginning in 2017, the Association membership approved increasing the primary scholarship award to \$3000, with an honorable mention award of \$1500.** Not only will the increase better equip the award recipients to face the rising cost of a college education, but it will help attract scholarship applicants which, in turn, assists our effort to introduce the next generation to the Em-

mons legacy.

It is only through the generosity, passion and respect shown for the Emmons and her crew by all those who continue to support the scholarship, that we are able to offer this program and sustain its growth. The committee extends heartfelt thanks and appreciation to all who help make this scholarship program a success.

The scholarship application for the 2017-18 academic year is now available for download on our website at [www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org), or you may request a copy by emailing us at [ussemmons@gmail.com](mailto:ussemmons@gmail.com).

### REUNION

(continued from page 1)

Emmons' 60 lost shipmates, lunch and a tour of the shipyard and museum. The shipyard was established during the John Adams administration in 1800 and is now tasked with the overhaul, repair and modernization of U.S. Navy submarines.

The memorial service was held at the shipyard's chapel. Built during WWII, it was renamed Thresher Memorial Chapel

in memory of the 129 submariners and shipyard personnel who lost their lives aboard the USS Thresher, which sank during post-overhaul dive trials in 1963. The service concluded with a casting of the memorial wreath at the water's edge accompanied by a bugler's taps.

Friday afternoon included a



*Scholarship recipient Alaina Short with parents Ann and Tom.*

gathering at the hotel's hospitality room for a viewing of the April memorial dive and an update on the rapid deterioration of the ship based on reports and video provided by Kurt REESE and Chuck DECESARI. Also included was a showing of the documentary, *Change of Tides: The William Roberts Story*. Produced by

Bill's grandson, Chris HOLZSCHUH, it tells the story of Bill's experiences aboard the Emmons. The video can be viewed on our website.

Saturday's Association Meeting acted on routine business matters at hand, and included the approval to increase the scholarship awards (see story, page 2).

The Saturday evening banquet was highlighted by presentation of the \$2000 Griffin/Emmons Scholarship award to this year's recipient, Alaina Short.

**NOW AVAILABLE!!**  
2017 Scholarship Application

\$3000 Award  
\$1500 Honorable Mention

Application available at  
[www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org)  
or email [ussemmons@gmail.com](mailto:ussemmons@gmail.com)

Submission deadline is May 31

## IN MEMORIAM

Emmons Shipmates and friends were saddened to learn of the passing of **Billy Ray DEESE** on August 10 in Lancaster, SC. Bill was a Seaman on the Emmons and, as a member of a Main Battery handling room crew, was wounded in the final attack.

Physical difficulties kept Bill from attending reunions in recent years, but he remained steadfast in his relationship with shipmates and friends of the Emmons Family.

Shipmate **Ed HOFFMAN**, Secretary of the USS Emmons Association and Emmons Newsletter Editor-in-Chief for the past 28

years, passed away while attending the Emmons reunion in Portsmouth, NH, September 23. Ed was a Quartermaster aboard the Emmons and a wounded survivor.

Known as the historian of the Emmons Association, Ed was a passionate and enthusiastic member and was thought by many to be the backbone of the Emmons Family. With his friendly, caring demeanor, he was most often the first point of contact for family members inquiring about their loved ones who served on the Emmons.

## NOTES . . . . From the Reunion Log

Although no members of our Okinawa chapter of the Association were able to attend this year, Kurt REESE made certain to provide us with a video presentation of the April memorial dive and a report on the ship's condition presented at the Friday get together.

Treasurer Tom HOFFMAN also reported on the fundraising efforts done by Kurt and Chuck DECESARI benefitting our scholarship fund. \$2437 was raised this past year through challenge coin and t-shirt sales, bringing the total raised to date of \$5800. Thanks guys for your ongoing support over the years!

\* \* \* \* \*

Also included in the Treasurer's report was an update on the funds raised by Kevin King's USS Emmons diver certification program. That report, however, is already outdated, as just before press time, word was received that 10 more divers were recently certified. This resulted in another \$500 check on its way, bringing the total raised to-date for the scholarship fund to \$2050.

We're proud to know of the success of Kevin's program and pleased with his desire to honor the lost Emmons shipmates. Congrats Kevin and thank you!

In their journey to New Hampshire for the reunion, Ed KROM, Jr. and his father, crewmember Ed KROM, took a side trip to Bath Iron Works, birthplace of the USS Emmons. Discussion with their tour guide led Ed, Jr. to ask about the availability of any information on the Emmons.

The result was 15 official Naval photos of the Emmons during her build, christening and launch. A few we have in our archives; however, several are included that we have not seen before.

The photos can be viewed on our website. Ed, thanks for the valuable addition to our archives!

\* \* \* \* \*

Jim KORNEY updated everyone on the Emmons' participation in the Veterans History Project. Interview videos have been submitted and are on file for several shipmates.

Jim indicated he has the necessary information and paperwork and is willing to assist anyone wishing to submit additional materials. We encourage anyone interested to contact us using the contact information on the outside panel of this newsletter and we'll put you in touch with Jim.

Once again, attendees responded generously with personal care items for the veterans home initiative coordinated by Jessica CIPARELLI. Commandant Peggy LaBrecque from the New Hampshire Veterans Home in Tilton, NH, was on hand at the reunion banquet and again at the veterans home to personally accept the donations. At the Home, Jessica met with crewmember Ed Greenlaw, currently a resident of the NHVH, who was pleased and excited to see reunion photos and touched by the personal notes to him and wife Evie reflected in the card from his Emmons family.

Ed & Evie have been faithful supporters of our efforts and regular attendees of reunions until the recent decline in health.

\* \* \* \* \*

Those in attendance at the Association Meeting were given a preview of the new Emmons website by Mike ESPOSITO. The site is back on-line with a new look after a brief absence for maintenance and upgrading. If you haven't already done so, be sure to check it out at **www.ussemmons.org**.

## EMMONS NAVIGATIONAL INSTRUMENT RETURNS TO ITS BEGINNINGS

Bob Diehl, son of the late crewmember Raymond "Pappy" Diehl, recently informed us of his quest to find a suitable place of honor for an Emmons parallel rule that his dad proudly displayed above his workbench for years. Parallel rules are instruments used by navigators to chart a ship's course. While his dad spoke little of his time aboard the Emmons, especially that fateful day in April, 1945, the significance of this device and what it represented to his dad was always very clear.

With this in mind, Bob felt it necessary to find a place

where this piece of Emmons history could be preserved and shared with others. His efforts led him to Robert Davis, President of Maryland Nautical Sales, Inc., the eventual successor of Wilfred O. White & Sons, Inc., the company of that manufactured the parallel rule. It is now prominently displayed at its Baltimore office.

The story was featured in Maryland Nautical's newsletter, along with photos and a brief history of the Emmons' service during WWII. The Emmons article can be viewed on our website.

**USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION**

c/o Thomas Hoffman.  
3136 Northampton St.  
Bethlehem, PA 18020

Phone: (610) 691-7770

E-mail: ussemmons@gmail.com



*USS Emmons (DD457, DMS22)*

**We're on the web at  
[www.ussemmons.org](http://www.ussemmons.org)**

 **JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP  
"USS EMMONS REUNION"  
AND TELL YOUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS!!**



*Shipmates (front row from left) Bill Roberts, Bill Patton, Warren Sparks, Tony Esposito, Armand Jolly and Ed Krom with their Emmons family at this year's annual reunion (story page 1).*

 **SINCERE WISHES FOR A WONDERFUL HOLIDAY AND A HAPPY, HEALTHFUL NEW YEAR** 