

# USS Caliente (AO-53) Association



# PIPELINE

March 2012

## President's message

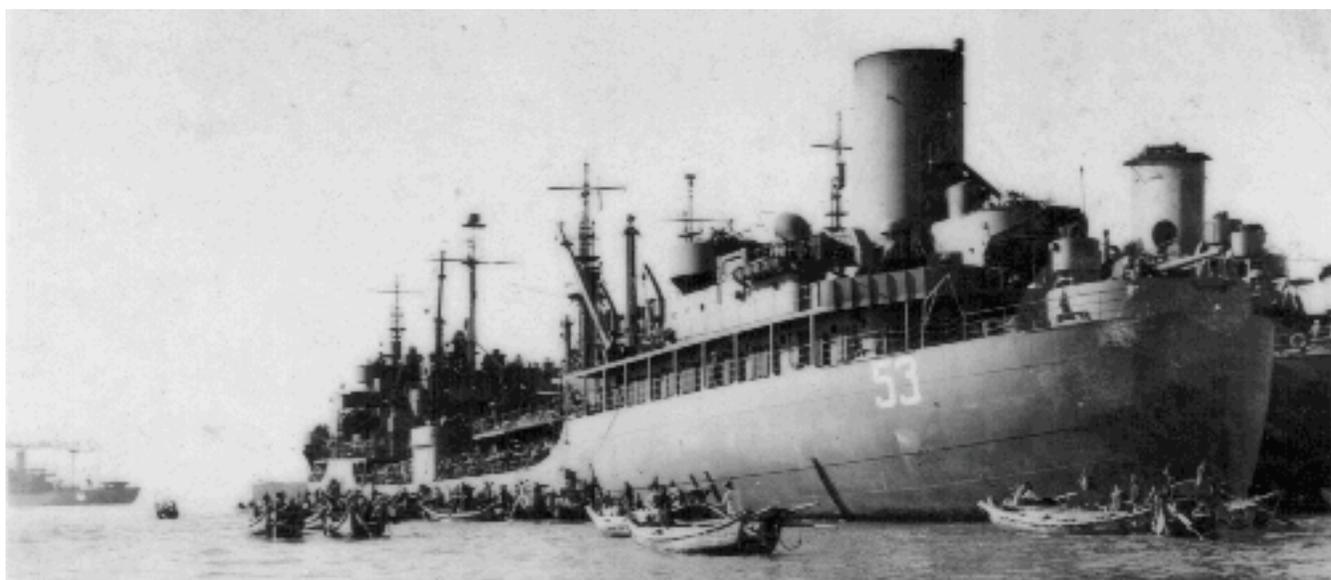
By Pat Hurton

I hope that everyone has had a good start to the New Year. Although the tornadoes that hit some parts of the country were very devastating to those areas it appears that most of us had a fairly mild winter. I sincerely hope that none of you or your families were affected by the devastation caused by these horrible acts of nature.

The effect of mother nature (from heat to cold, from tornadoes and hurricane to rain and snow) is tremendous in both an obvious (tornado) and subtle (rain) manner. No matter what your views are on global warming or climate change, one cannot deny that we are affected by our environment. The effect of our environment on us from the devastation of a tornado, to the high food prices due to crop shortages caused by the lack of rain should be recognized and the cause(s) understood to the best extent possible.

I have two other matters that I want to emphasize.

The first involves the immediate short term. In the January Pipeline I mentioned the potential 2012 Albuquerque reunion. and asked for a positive response from those who intend to attend. I also stated that I will assume "no response" will indicate that you do not intend to attend. I received less than 15 responses so I have to assume no one else is interested in attending. For those of you who did respond, I thank you greatly.



Richard Heaton, QM3, 1945-48, provided this picture taken in late 1946 at the north end of the Suez Canal, Port Said, Egypt. The Caliente was on its way to Tanger, Morocco, for liberty. Then on to Philadelphia to unload. After two weeks, the Cal went back to the Persian Gulf for another load. The crew made four trips to the Persian Gulf for oil.

Norm Street and I have decided to solicit commitments to attend one last time. The present indicated number of room nights is not enough to guarantee the low room rate we have been quoted. I believe we will be able to get the previously quoted rate if attendance picks up quite a bit and I can get back to the Marriott very shortly.

For those of you who didn't respond but intended to attend and respond later, I ask you to consider the planning aspects of a reunion and the value of getting an early indication of the number of persons who will attend. I usually commit to the hotel in early February to guarantee the room rate and banquet rates. This has been impossible to achieve this time.

You may not be interested, but we have not made the committed number of room nights for the past three reunions. The early commitment by a lot of you told me that even if we didn't achieve the total number of room nights, with the help of the hotel's event manager, an appeal to the hotel's general manager would obtain a waiver of the commitment. This has resulted in relief from what could have been a significant expenditure of the USS Caliente's funds. Although this relief came in sort of a "by gosh and by golly fashion" I mention it to reinforce that long-term (if you consider nine months long term) planning and a commitment by all involved is critical to having great reunion. It does take time to research DJs, photographers, tours, events etc. Remember ---- poor planning results in ---- poor performance.

If the Albuquerque reunion is to happen, it will take effort on the part of all of you to respond **RAPIDLY** and indicate your attendance if you are going to attend. This will allow Norm and I some time for planning. Norm is going to help in soliciting attendance but please also respond to me directly either by phone at (530)343-4040, email at [gigandpat@digitalpath.net](mailto:gigandpat@digitalpath.net) or snail mail to 156 Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA. 95973-0185. Charleen and I are planning several trips this year and I have already planned most of them. Can you do the same?

The second matter involves the longer term future of the Association. Norm and I have committed to the association through the Albuquerque reunion (if it is to be) and the Baltimore "70th anniversary of the launching and commissioning of the USS Caliente (AO-53)" reunion. We both, however, expressed that we need to have somebody step forward and assume our roles. This must happen sooner rather than later. Working alongside us would be of great value to the persons who will lead the Association in the future and would not put the immediate pressure on anyone to "figure it out for themselves."

To give you the background behind my reasoning for persons to step forward now, I offer the following. While balancing this month's USS Caliente bank statement vs. the checkbook I noticed that the first time I did this was in December of 2002 when I took over as Association treasurer. I worked with President Bob Howard for the first six years and came to understand how much assistance, from all hands was necessary in the running of the Association. Bob undertook the vast majority of efforts for the Association from publishing the Pipeline to organizing reunions. He visited potential hotels, found photographers, DJs etc. and organized very enjoyable events. Bob did not do all these things out of a desire to be a "one man band" but out of lack of other volunteers.

In late 2008 I took over as president of the Association from Bob. For almost ten years I have been an officer of the Association. Since I took over as president, I have been lucky to have

the cooperation and efforts of Norm Street and Karl Seitz.

As we all know Karl provides the Pipeline. I only have to provide the President's Message and the "Welcome Aboard" section. Karl has undertaken all the rest of the efforts. His background as an editor has been obvious in the professionalism of the Pipelines he has produced.

Norm Street has also provided invaluable assistance. Norm put together a team that researched Caliente rosters, made phone calls, wrote letters and sent emails that resulted in tremendous growth in the number of Association members. He maintained the USS Caliente website and has been instrumental in making our reunions a success. He sought out the best hotels, got great rates and found activities that have been a pleasure to all.

As you can see it takes a lot less effort for one person if others are willing to help. Pipelines don't write themselves and reunions involve quite a bit of planning that should (must) be done well in advance to cohesively pull together the pieces necessary to make that reunion a success. Persons must step forward and continue the successful operation of the Association.

In summary of both items, the responses (or lack thereof) to the Albuquerque reunion indicate that our members are either so comfortable that the reunion will be a success that one does not have to plan and can just decide to attend at the last minute or that the organization as a whole is tired of attending reunions. I hope that the latter is not the case. The lack of persons indicating



USS Caliente Association  
President: Pat Hurton  
Vice President: Norm Street  
Secretary: Red Ward  
Pipeline Editor: Karl Seitz



The Pipeline is the official quarterly newsletter of the USS Caliente Association. It is a place to share your memories. Please send them via e-mail to [seitzao53@gmail.com](mailto:seitzao53@gmail.com) or by regular mail to Karl Seitz, 1212 30th St. South, Birmingham, AL 35205-1910.

Masthead picture of USS Caliente (AO-53) used with permission of Dan Davis.

Association dues are \$10 per year due Jan. 1, payable by Jan. 15. Checks should be made out to The USS Caliente Association and mailed to Pat Hurton, 156 Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA 95973-0185.

that they want to assume a leadership role in the Association indicates that the Association may want to just gracefully fade away.

Why should the Association continue? An organization that allows persons with a common denominator to meet and communicate with each other can provide a wonderful opportunity for all involved. In addition to sharing stories, learning about, meeting and communicating with persons who are outside our day-to-day existence can give us insight and understanding of the diversity of all persons and ideas. The organization can provide the opportunity to visit different localities around our great country that we may not normally visit. Varying the site of those locations can provide the opportunity for the different members to attend a reunion and not impose unnecessarily long travel and/or high cost on the member. Learning and understanding can never be a bad thing.

In summary, I have now served the Association for almost ten years and will continue to assist up through the Baltimore reunion. Norm and I both stated at the Norfolk reunion, we need volunteers to take over our slots and continue to keep the organization alive. Both of us will not serve beyond the Baltimore reunion.

Will anyone phase in and contribute some part of their life to continue an Association that provides us with, a forum to interact with shipmates, a newsletter that shares memories of our service days and allows for the reading of the different experiences of our shipmates and an Association that organizes a periodic gathering of those who are able and have the desire to share memories in person?

If no one steps up in the very near future, then we will not have an Albuquerque reunion but only a Baltimore reunion. If anyone is to step up the experience of Norm and/or I would be of great assistance to them and we suggest they step up sooner rather than later. If no one steps up the Association will probably cease to exist.

If I get sufficient responses to continue planning the Albuquerque reunion, I will firm up plans and forward sign-up sheets in mid/early April.

### **Welcome aboard:**

We would like to welcome aboard Marion Whittaker who lives in Bayonne, NJ. Mario was a BM3 when he served aboard the Cal from 1970 to 1973

### **In memoriam:**

We are sad to note the passing of a former shipmate and the wife of another:

Gerry Edward Requarth, 77, died Feb. 3, 2012, at his home in of Murray, Ky. Gerry served on the Cal from 1951 to 1955 as a PO3. He retired from the City of Murray after 30 years with the natural gas system. He is survived by daughter Sherri (Kyrile) Catlett of Murray;



A reminder if you are on Facebook, Jack Hughes has created a Facebook group for former crew members of the USS Caliente (AO-53) and their families.

stepdaughter Sheila (James) Stewart of Murray; son Eddie (Staci) Requarth of Texarkana, Texas; stepson Daniel (Belvia) Holskey of Murray; sister Jane Ann Pindell of Arkansas; 15 grandchildren and two great-grandchildren. Gerry attended his first Caliente reunion last September in Norfolk.

Barbara June Timbrook Stafford, 76, wife of Erich E. "Pete" Stafford, died Feb. 1, 2012, at the Clark Regional Medical Center in Winchester, Ky. Pete served on the Cal from 1955 to 1956 as an HM2. Barbara was a retired registered nurse. In addition to her husband, she is survived by three children, Susan (Roger Baton) Williams of Winchester, Erich J. "Pete" (Mary ) Stafford of Gaithersburg, Md., and Virginia (Wayne) Robertson of Pittsburgh, Pa.; six grandchildren and eight brothers and sisters, Wanda (Bob) Grady, Tini (Bobby) Clark , Ike Timbrook, James (Leanne) Timbrook, Jack (Fran) Timbrook, Mark (Suzie) Timbrook, Lewis (Dena) Timbrook, and Michael Timbrook.

## **Editor's message**

By Karl Seitz

As you can see in the President's message from Pat Hurton, the Caliente Association is at a crossroads. While the immediate question is whether the reunion in Albuquerque will be held later this year, the bigger issue is the future of the organization.

We all know the USS Caliente Association will eventually disband when the number of former crew members declines below the level needed to maintain the organization. There are even provisions in the bylaws for how the disbanding is to be done. However, that event ought to be far in our future. We still have members who were on the Caliente at the beginning of its 30 years of service. The youngest crew members at the end of those 30 years are now in their late 50s. Some members may be even younger as spouses and other relatives can be accepted into membership.

But to continue as a group, we need new leaders. Pat Hurton and Norm Street have done wonders the past several years. The Association is stronger for their service. We should all be grateful, even as we recognize that such service takes a personal toll. Pat and Norm have decided the toll has reached such a level for each of them and their families that they must step down after the Baltimore Reunion in 2013.

For those who wonder, I have told Pat that I will continue to edit the Pipeline through the Baltimore reunion, and I am willing to continue as editor beyond that date if the next president wishes me to serve. I am not, however, a candidate for president or vice president. My talents do not fit those offices.

While there are exceptions, the best source for new leadership is probably those who served on the Caliente after about 1960. Most individuals in their late 50s, 60s or early 70s retain enough of the personal energy that the presidency and vice presidency require. Nor should we forget that we may need a separate treasurer. Pat's accounting background has allowed him to serve as both president and treasurer since 2008.

A third or more of all the people who ever served on the Caliente probably served after 1960.

I understand from Norm that there has been some difficulty in recruiting new members among the crew of 1970 and later, but that still leaves a decade's worth of members from which new leadership can emerge. Not to mention older members who still have the ability and urge to help our organization sail into the future, avoiding the reefs of apathy that are all too close.

Now is the time for you to step forward, not to take over immediately, but to prepare for the transition that will take place in about 18 months. Ask Pat what you can do now to help. If you know another member who would make a good leader, encourage him to get involved. The organization you save will be your own.

\* \* \*

And don't forget to share your stories and pictures with the Pipeline. We're light on stories this issue, in part because of the short time between the January and March issues. But we should be back on schedule for the June Pipeline. That leaves you a little over two months to put your story on paper or in an e-mail and get it to me at one of my addresses on page 3. We need pictures, too, preferably in jpeg format if sent electronically. Remember, only you and your contributions can make this newsletter what we all want it to be.

### **Find yourself and your shipmates**

Clyde and Lori Goodhue have digitized the microfilm of the USS Caliente Muster Roll for the period of Oct 1943 through 1970. It covers all shipmates, dates they boarded, dates they debarked, dates of promotions etc. Unfortunately, the muster roll after 1970 is not available to the public because the Navy began using Social Security numbers for service numbers, which creates privacy and identity theft issues.

Clyde has offered to provide a DVD of the muster roll to any member who wants one for \$40. He can be contacted at:

Clyde Goodhue  
45 Oakwood Drive  
Hyde Park, VT 05655  
(C) 802-760-0350  
(H) 802-888-7669  
Email: [goodhue11@myfairpoint.net](mailto:goodhue11@myfairpoint.net)

### **Thoughts of a Californian on a rainy day**

By Pat Hurton

Northern California had a very mild winter. While that makes for a less dreary winter it is very bad from an economic standpoint. The ski resorts had to open late and have had limited snow packs resulting in less enjoyment for the skiers and, of course, less revenue from lower use of the ski areas. It looks like for the next week or so we will get some very much needed rain and snow. If we can't fill up the reservoirs during the winter and have a substantial snow pack (for runoff) in reserve, then summer water supply becomes a serious issue for the farmers south of Sacramento, down the central valley, to Bakersfield.

Runoff from the snow pack provides the majority of the water supply in California. It seeps

into the aquifer all year replenishing the underground water supply. No snow pack — no runoff. That affects most of the nation as California is the primary supplier of agriculture to the country. Seventy five percent of California’s water supply comes from north of Sacramento and 85 percent of all California water is used for agricultural purposes. Less water, less crop yield resulting in higher prices. Although California is the largest user of Colorado River water, the Colorado River provides only about 10 percent of California’s water, so the winter weather in Northern California is not only critical to us Northern Californians but to all the nation.

California may be the land of “fruits and nuts’ to many, but it is the breadbasket of the nation from an agricultural standpoint. California can supply the hot dog and hamburger that you eat at a sporting event or picnic, the popcorn you eat at the movie and the movie itself. As you are enjoying your olives the largest supplying area for olives in the USA is 30 minutes due west of Chico in Orland, California.

Don’t forget your iPhone, iPad or equivalent smart phone. Although the iPhone etc. are not made in California they were conceived and designed here. If you question the facts in this short spiel you will probably use Google or Yahoo to search for answers. Both bought to you from my ex home in Silicon Valley.

The foregoing was not a paid California Chamber of Commerce dissertation nor was it intended as a political statement (the Pipeline has always stayed away from taking political or religious views and will always do so while I’m involved), but just something I was thinking about while complaining about the rain when I wanted to go out and wash my car. Amazing the things I sometimes think about when left without anything to do on a gloomy day.



Bob Beeter, SK3, 1966-68, visited the Caliente memorial plaque at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, Texas, in December and provided these pictures. Meanwhile, Warren Froscheiser, FTG3, 1965-68, calls the plaque “Pretty impressive!!” and has provided a link to it on the museum’s webpage. Click on USS CALIENTE (sixth ship on list) to view the plaque. Because of the limits of the editor’s production techniques, you will need to copy and paste the address into your browser.

<http://www.pacificwarmuseum.org/SearchPlaques.asp?LastLetter=c>



Another of Bob Beeter's pictures from the National Museum of the Pacific War.



This picture of Norm Street, RD2, 1960-62, on the Caliente in 1960 or 1961 was forwarded by Norm from Miguel Ronquillo, RD2, 1958-61, who found it in his collection of pictures.