

USS Caliente (AO-53) Association



PIPELINE

December 2017

Portland reunion recap

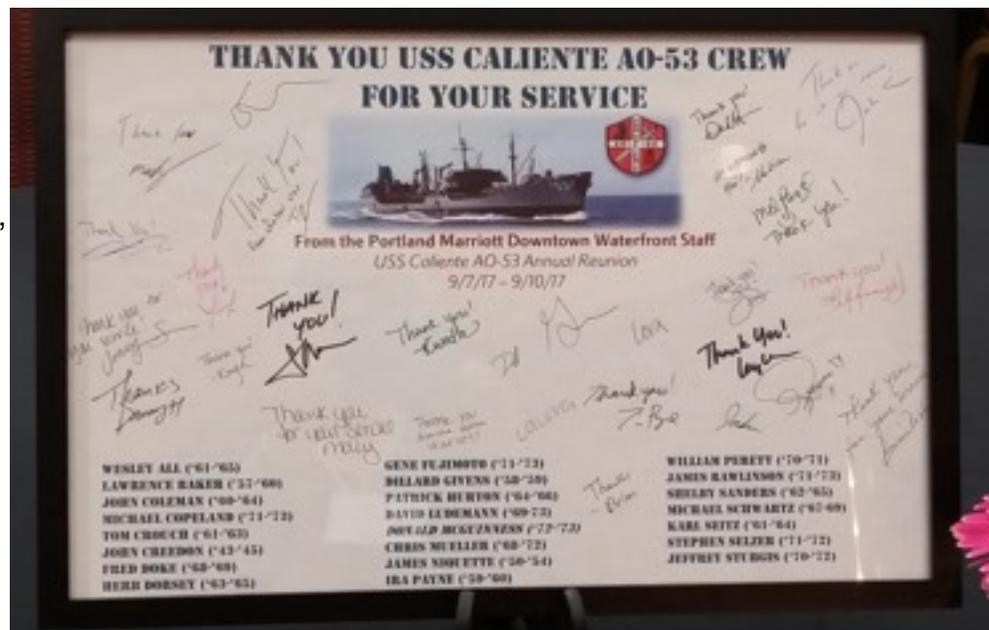
By Jeff Sturgis

The reunion got off to an inauspicious start as those of us who flew in on Wednesday, Sept, 6, were met by a thick brown haze that filled the skies in and around Portland. The haze was a result of several wildfires that were active upriver in the Columbia River Gorge. Fortunately the wind shifted to a west wind that blew the smoke back into and beyond the Gorge towards Idaho. The skies were clear as shipmates arrived on Thursday and renewed acquaintances at the afternoon reception.

Following breakfast on Friday, we all headed out for a tour. Due to the fires, the original itinerary up the Columbia River was switched to a trip to the coast for lunch in Cannon Beach, site of the famous Haystack rock formation in the Pacific Ocean, followed by a visit to Fort Clatsop, the site of the 1805-06 winter quarters for the Lewis and Clark Corps of Discovery. An interesting rest stop on the way was at a restaurant and souvenir shop surrounded by large antique lumbering machines that were used in the lumbering industry in the Pacific northwest. The final stop on the tour was in Astoria at the Astoria Column, a 125' tall tower that sits on a hill in the town of the same name. Some of us climbed the 164 steps to the top to get a magnificent view of the Columbia River as it flows into the Pacific Ocean.

Saturday's breakfast was followed by the annual business meeting. The Executive Committee

This framed and signed Thank You greeted reunion attendees in Portland, courtesy of the staff at the Marriott Portland Downtown Waterfront. The attendee list has some unavoidable flaws, but the sentiment expressed was greatly appreciated.



of Mike Copeland, Dave Ludemann, Greg Perett, Tom Rawlinson and Steve Selzer were recognized for their service. After his financial report, Treasurer Pat Hurton was also lauded for his dedication to the association. After a spirited discussion, St. Louis was selected as the destination for the September 2018 reunion.

The rest of the day on Saturday was free time for attendees to visit the Portland attractions of their choice. Notable during the weekend was the Portland Dragon Boat Festival that took place on the Willamette River from the park located right across the street from our hotel. Tents for participants and vendors covered the park with a large crowd of spectators and participants at the races. Sixty-six dragon boats each with 20 paddlers, a drummer keeping the beat and a person on the tiller raced in groups of four for championships in mens, women and mixed categories.

Also, about two blocks from the festival, some of us ran into competing Alt-right and Antifa demonstrations that started at the waterfront and then moved downtown. My wife and I were caught between the two groups as a strong police presence, with some in riot gear, did a great job keeping the antagonists apart and kept the demonstrations from breaking out into violence. It was an exciting afternoon!

Of course, the culmination of the weekend occurred on Saturday night at our annual banquet. Fifty-three people attended the banquet with great food provided by the Marriott staff and music by the Jazz Interlude, an outstanding jazz trio. The banquet started off with the moving Two Bell ceremony that recognized all the members of our association who have passed away during the past year. As the names were read off, two bells were rung for each individual as the *Navy Hymn* was played in the background. The ceremony ended as the plaintive sound of *Taps* sounded.

As usual, the JG's, consisting of Greg Perett and Jeff Sturgis, offered several songs for everyone's entertainment. The highlight of the evening was a



salute to John Creedon, one of the founders of the association, and the lone WWII veteran in attendance. All the shipmates formed two lines and offered a hand salute as John and his family left at the end of the evening to the strains of *Anchors Aweigh*. It was a moving tribute to an outstanding veteran who is loved by all.

Sunday morning brought the final breakfast and fond farewells as most of the attendees prepared to leave for home. All in all, it was a wonderful reunion with some great memories. Old friendships were renewed and new ones made as the sea stories flew as thick as ever. There were also several albums, pictures and cruise books to spark more memories. Notable was the attendance of many spouses and a few children and even grandchildren of shipmates. As they left, many promised to do their best to attend the next reunion in St Louis in hopes of continuing the legacy of our ship, the USS Caliente.

Dues reminder

It's been a while since we reminded shipmates about our voluntary dues. While our budget isn't large, we do have some expenses. It costs a little over \$300.00 for each issue of the Pipeline to be sent out. While many of us receive our copy of the Pipeline by email, there are still many for whom we have no email address and to whom it is mailed. We are proud of the Pipeline which goes out four times a year and of the great work of Karl Seitz who volunteers his time to



USS Caliente Association
Chairman: Jeff Sturgis
Executive Committee: Mike Copeland, Dave Ludemann, Greg Perett, Tom Rawlinson and Steve Selzer
Treasurer: Pat Hurton
Pipeline Editor: Karl Seitz



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

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 treasurer Pat Hurton, 156 Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA 95973-0185.

Chairman Jeff Sturgis can be reached via email at jandssturgis@roadrunner.com or by mail at 84 Old Woodman Hill Rd, Minot, ME 04258

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

put out each edition. There are also expenses incurred for maintaining our website. Pat Hurton is responsible for that as well as our Facebook page. Pat also does a great job acting as the treasurer and writing the checks for association expenses.

In addition to these minimal expenses, it's nice to have a little cushion in case we slip over budget at one of our reunions. As we all get older and our members pass away, the attendance and our financial margin at the reunions dwindles. We do our best to keep the registration fee as low and affordable as possible while still covering our expenses. Reunion hotel arrangements are made about 10 months in advance. A deposit is required when the contract with the hotel is signed, usually before Jan. 1. These arrangements are made with the stipulation that we are responsible for a minimum charge even if we don't hit our targeted attendance. So if attendance falls off so that we can't cover our expenses from the registration income, we still have to make up the difference.

Karl and Pat have done a great job keeping our expenses to a minimum. You can help keep us solvent by sending in your dues. The suggested dues amount is \$10 per year. Dues are voluntary and no one is excluded if he is unable to send them in. However, your dues payment does enable us to continue to send out the Pipeline, maintain the website and to help us guard against the inevitable day when our reunion attendance becomes unsustainable.

Please help keep the USS Caliente Association afloat by sending your dues to:
USS Caliente Association
c/o Pat Hurton
156 Greenfield Drive
Chico, CA 95973-0185

St. Louis Preview

By Jeff Sturgis

Arrangements for the St. Louis reunion are starting to take shape. We have chosen the Embassy Suites Downtown for our reunion which will be held Sept. 6-9, 2018. We got an excellent rate of \$139 for a king bed suite and \$149 for a double queen bed suite. These rates will also be good for two days before and after the reunion dates.

There had been some discussion about picking a weekend when the Cardinals were in town. However, being a baseball town, room rates go up and room availability goes way down when they are in town. But, there is hope for the baseball fans among us. The Cardinals are in town on Monday, Sept. 10, to play the Pirates. Those who want to see that game can stay two extra nights at the low reunion rate to take in that game.



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

The hotel includes a complimentary breakfast and complimentary happy hour in the room rate. Our reunion room will be on the same floor and near the breakfast setup, so we'll be able to get our breakfasts and bring them to our room where we will have beverage stations also set up. The hotel is downtown and is 14 miles from the airport. Rapid transit service is available for \$2.50, as is shuttle (\$17.00) and taxi (\$40) service. Valet parking will be available at a reunion discount of \$24 per day. There is also a public parking garage available across from the hotel. The hotel has created a web page for our reunion that has all the pertinent information and enable youth make your reservations. You can find it at: http://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/S/STLWAES-CAL-20180906/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG. [editor's note: be sure to include the entire underlined code in your browser query, my software refuses to include all of it in the hyperlink] You may also call toll-free 1-800-362-2779 (1-800-EMBASSY). If you do make reservations by phone, you must remember to mention that you are with the Caliente reunion. The deadline for reservations at the reunion rate is August 16, 2018 so make your reservations early.

There are many things to do and to see in St. Louis. Many restaurants, several museums and waterfront attractions and parks are within walking distance of the hotel. Also, there is ample public transit to get you to attractions that are further away. As usual, we will be sponsoring a tour of the local attractions on the Friday of the reunion. Please see Pat Hurton's description of the tour, which follows. We had a great turnout in Portland and we are hoping for a similar turnout in St. Louis. As usual, if you have any questions please contact me by phone at 207-782-8323 or by email at jandssturgis@roadrunner.com.

Friday's tour

By Pat Hurton

Our St. Louis tour, starting at 9:00 AM, will cover the highlights of the city of St. Louis, including the Eugene Field House Museum, the Anheuser Busch Brewery and the Lafayette Park area that contains many old houses. Next we will head to Forest Park and drive by the Zoo, the Art Museum, the Muni Opera and the Science Center. We will stop at the Civil War Museum for a tour and then proceed to St. Charles. St. Charles is the first state capitol of Missouri and the place where the Lewis and Clark expedition started. We will have lunch (no host on Main Street and then a tour of the original State Capital. After departing St. Charles we will head back to St. Louis stopping at the New Cathedral for a tour. The Cathedral contains some beautiful mosaic art covering the walls and ceiling. We will then return to the hotel, passing by the Fox Theater and Powell Symphony Hall arriving back at the hotel around 5:00 PM.

Taps

Bernard A. Buscher died 19 June 2017 at age 88 in Lakeland, FL. Bernie served on the Cal 1958-60 as a LTJG. He was born 23 Jan 1929 in Miami, FL Bernie enlisted in the Navy at age 17 and served for 23 years, retiring in 1969 as a LCDR. After a second career in property management, he and his family retired to Florida. Bernie is survived by his wife, Joan, sons Bernard (Robin) and Douglas (Megan) Buscher, daughter Karen Jones, five grandchildren and three great grandchildren. He is interned at Jacksonville (FL) National Cemetery.

Start with Navy Hymn

Two Bell Ceremony

History of the Navy Hymn

The Navy Hymn was written in 1860 by William Whiting, an English writer and hymnist. It was written as a poem for a student who was about to sail for America. John Bacchus Dykes, an English clergyman and hymnist, set the poem to music in 1861. The Hymn became the Navy Hymn after it was played for devotional use and benedictions at the Naval Academy, in Annapolis MD, in 1879 by Lieutenant Commander Charles Jackson.



History of Bells in the Navy

Bells have a centuries-long tradition of varied use in navies and merchant fleets of the world. They have been used for signaling, keeping time and providing alarm. Their functional and ceremonial uses have made them a symbol of considerable significance to the United States Navy.

American ships of the Revolutionary War period and our early national years adopted many of the practices and traditions of the British Royal Navy, including the use of bells. In 1798, Paul Revere cast a bell weighing 242 pounds for the frigate Constitution, also known as today by its nickname “Old Ironsides”.

In days past, two bells (toll two bells here) marked the end of the routine day aboard ship. It also was time for tattoo (a signal on drum, bugle or trumpet for soldiers or sailors to return to their quarters) and soon, taps would sound throughout the ship. Certainly this is a most appropriate time to honor our departed sea service shipmates.

The Ceremony

A table is set containing;

- 1) A red rose to signify the blood our departed shipmates shed
- 2) A crystal glass of water to quench their thirst for freedom
- 3) Salt to remind us of the pain they feel lest we forget them
- 4) The china is bone white as is the purity of their hearts and sacrifices

These items are placed on a white linen table cloth that could be used as a clean bandage for their wounds. We take this time to remember them. The place we set for them, this evening, is a special place, as is the place we hold for them in our hearts, our minds and our Navy.

This year has seen our Navy suffer two life taking mishaps. Seven sailors aboard the USS Fitzgerald (DDG-62) and ten sailors aboard the USS John S. McCain (DDG-56), lost their lives in these tragic mishaps. We pay tribute to our lost brethren. (two bells here)

As all of us know our wives play a major part in our Navy life. We would like to honor those wives who passed away, or we learned about, in this past year.

- 1) Josephine Benziger wife of Joe Benziger who served on the Cal 1945-1946, Fay Payne wife of Ira Payne who served on the Cal from 1969-1970, Margaret E. Urling, wife of Red Urling who served on the Cal from 1955-1958, Ruth Ann Duncan Whittaker, wife of Robert J. Whittaker who served on the Cal in 1943 (two bells here)

And now we honor our shipmates who passed away, or we learned about, in the past year;

- 1) Walter J. Bigos Jr., Gunnersmate 2nd Class (two bells here)
- 2) James Fred Briggs, Jr., Radarman 3rd Class (1966-1967) (two bells here)
- 3) Robert E. Buckingham, Watertender, 1949 (two bells here)
- 4) Bernard A. Buscher, LtJg, (1958-1960) (two bells here)
- 5) Cesidio "Joe" Coia, Culinary Specialist 3rd Class, 1951-1952 (two bells here)
- 6) Walter J. Deprater, Storekeeper 3rd Class, 1955-1956 (two bells here)
- 7) Verlon E. Dolihite, Electricians Mate 3rd Class, 1970-1972 (two bells here)
- 8) Edward G. Everett, Boatswains Mate Chief, 1967-1968 (two bells here)
- 9) Kenneth D. Fronk, Fireman, 1969-1970 (two bells here)
- 10) William F. Hatzel, Culinary Specialist 2nd Class, 1965-1968, (two bells here)
- 11) Thomas R. Hightower, Radioman 3rd Class, 1945-1946 (two bells here)
- 12) Fred R. Lanker, Seaman, 1953-1955 (two bells here)
- 13) Larry G. Lottman, Boatswains Mate 3rd Class, 1966-1967 (two bells here)
- 14) Larry L. McClintick, Electricians Mate Chief, 1962-1964 (two bells here)
- 15) Donald D. Moyer, LtJg, 1951-1953 (two bells here)
- 16) Raymond A. Nutter, Seaman, 1960-1962 (two bells here)
- 17) Gordon Lyle Peterson, Electricians Mate 2nd Class, 1968-1972 (two bells here)
- 18) Lon Ryan Smith, Seaman, 1954-1955 (two bells here)
- 19) Thomas V. Strain, Fireman, 1950-1952 (two bells here)
- 20) Paul M. Tague, Seaman, 1959-1960 (two bells here)
- 21) Donald R. Tobie, Electronics Technician 2nd Class, 1964-1965 (two bells here)
- 22) John M. Treiber, Seaman, 1959-1962 (two bells here)
- 23) Roger Clay Weast, Fireman, 1968-1970 (two bells here)
- 24) Earnest L. "Red" White, Coxsmen, 1945-1946 (two bells here)

25) And lastly to all our other shipmates and wives who passed away this last year and are unknown to us (two bells here)

“Would you please bow your heads”

- 1) “The toll of the ship’s bell reminds us of the reverence we owe to our departed shipmates, (two bells here)
 - 2) To those who guard the honor of our country....upon the sea...in the air... and on foreign soil, (two bells here)
 - 3) Let it be a reminder of the faith they confide in us, (two bells here)
 - 4) Let us who gather here not forget our obligations to our absent shipmates and wives, (two bells here)
 - 5) Let us offer a silent a silent prayer for our departed. This moment of reverence we dedicate to the memory of our shipmates and their wives who have gone before us” (two bells here)
- Bugler plays taps slowly after the ringing of the bells.

The table is now removed from the floor signifying that our shipmates are not present with us for this meal.

Breakfast



A partial view of the crowd gathered for breakfast and conversation at 2017 Reunion.

Photographs: The following individuals contributed pictures to the Pipeline coverage of the Reunion in Portland: Charleen and Pat Hurton, Chris Mueller, Pat and Karl Seitz and Susan Sturgis.

Our tour



Charleen Hurton.



Barbara and Chris Mueller at International Rose Test Garden in Portland, OR.



Royal Rosarian and Pat Seitz.



Mike Copeland completes his inspection of antique logging railroad gear at Camp 18 Logging Museum and Restaurant in Elsie, OR.

Reunion Attendees

Wes All, Pendleton, WA; Larry and Ida Baker, Rancho Palos Verde, CA; Thomas and Marian Butler, Riverside, CA; John and Zeldia Coleman, Jena, LA; John and Diane Creedon, Larchmont, NY, with granddaughter Kristin Kvernlund and friend Lauren Ogden; Tom Crouch, Tuscon, AZ; Fred Doke, Falls City, OR; Herb Dorsey, Bethesda, MD; Gene Fujimoto and Marie Muligan, Middletown, RI; Dillard and Judy Givens, Sebastian, FL; Pat and Charleen Hurton, Chico, CA; Ernie and Gloria Lozano, Yorba

Linda, CA; Dave and Martha Ludemann, Millington, TN; Dan and Marie Martinez, San Leandro, CA, with niece Brenda Sisson; Shirley McGuinness, Poway, CA, with son David and grandson Garrett; Chris and Barbara Mueller, Redondo Beach, CA; Jim and June Niquette, Port Ludlow, WA; Ira Payne, Orangevale, CA, with daughter Gina Cox; Greg Perett, Arlington, VA; Tom and Jean Rawlinson, Indianapolis, IN; Shelby and Mary Sanders, Carthage, MS; Skip and Barbara Schembari, La Cañada, CA; Michael and Jeanette Schwartz, Boerne, TX; Karl and Pat Seitz, Birmingham, AL; Steve and Linda Selzer, Edingurgh, IN; Jeff and Susan Sturgis, Minot, ME; Red Urling, Mt. Vernon, WA; Phillip Zimmerman, Mt. Vernon, WA, with daughter Amanda and son William.



Tour attendees gather outside the visitors center at Fort Clatsop National Memorial in western Oregon near the Pacific Coast. Fort Clatsop was the winter headquarters of the Lewis and Clark expedition in 1805-1806 before it set off on its return trip and a report to President Thomas Jefferson.

The memorial includes a replica of the relatively small fortified structure that the expedition constructed to protect itself against weather and possibly unfriendly Native Americans in the area.

After this stop our tour headed back to Portland,, stopping in Astoria, and then following the Columbia River valley.

At the hotel, more breakfasts, meeting, banquet



Charleen Hurton, Jean Rawlinson, Mary Sanders, Gina Cox and Judy Givens.



Skip Schembari



Gina Cox with father Ira Payne.



Dave and Martha Ludemann.



Shirley McGuiness,, widow of Cal skipper Don McGuiness, is flanked by Gene Fujimoto, Herb Dorsey, Jeff Sturgis and Greg Perett.



Wes All and Tom Crouch.



John and Diane Creedon.



Red Urling.



Judy Givens with June and Jim Niquette.



Marie Martinez and Brenda Sisson.



Amanda Zimmerman.



John and Zelda Coleman.



John Creedon departing.

Shipmates at 2017 Reunion in Portland

