



PIPELINE

June 2015

Acting President's message

By Pat Hurton

Now that spring has sprung and summer is upon us, I hope you are all making final plans to attend the New Orleans reunion. It is a great city with many, many things to do and great places to eat. Charleen and I are really looking forward to our first visit to the "Big Easy." The room rate is great and the location of the hotel is within walking distance of the French Quarter. For those that haven't sent in your attendance form yet, I encourage you to do so quickly. It really helps in my planning to have an accurate head count. (Reunion agenda is found on page 7, sign-up form is on page 8.)

This is the time of the year to remember those who served our country. Memorial Day is a very special day and I was glad to see so many news outlets etc. reinforce the difference between Memorial Day and Veterans Day and how they are celebrated in a different manner. Memorial Day is a solemn day of remembrance for those who gave their lives to protect our freedom. Families gathered on Memorial Day should remember why the day exists and what and who we are giving honor to. Families gathered on Veterans Day pay honor to all who served. Whether a veteran passed in war, passed in peace or is still living, remembering them is an important act.

My first memories of a solemn and respectful national service for fallen service personnel are from the late 1940s. On the 11th hour of the 11th day of the 11th month of that year, an entire country stopped, two minutes of silence were observed and the sacrifice of those who died in war were remembered. The day was Armistice Day (now known as Remembrance Day). The dignity of the services in London, the laying of a wreath by King George VI, the regimental military bands and the lone bugler playing the Last Post will never fade from my memory.

Last year, the British honored those who lost their lives in World War I by placing 888,234 ceramic poppies in the moat surrounding The Tower of London. It was a magnificent display of remembrance for those Britain's who lost their lives defending their country. (Google 2014 Poppies Tower of London to view the awesome display).

The poppy became the symbol honoring WWI vets (and subsequently all who gave their lives in war) through an act of a Canadian physician, Lt. Col John McRae. After presiding over the funeral of a friend



2015 Reunion
New Orleans
10 Sep-13 Sep

and fellow soldier who died during the Second Battle of Ypres (WWI), he wrote a poem. The poem, "In Flanders Fields," reflects McRae's observation of the red poppies growing over the graves in a field in Flanders, Belgium. It reflects the tragedy and sometimes futility of war. I encourage you to read (or re-read) it. In my opinion, it is a most fitting reminder of the perils of war and its consequences at the same time paying honor to the fallen.

After coming to America, I learned that Memorial Day (originally Decoration Day) is even older than Remembrance Day. After the Civil War the practice of decorating soldier's graves started to gain in popularity. Spreading from the South to the North and, after Abraham's Lincoln's assassination, the recognition of the shocking number of soldiers (more than 600,000) who gave their lives for their cause took on a new cultural significance. The practice of decorating graves grew in formality. In 1865 national military cemeteries were created for the Union dead. Today Memorial Day ceremonies are held at veterans' cemeteries across America. Thanks to many non-profit organizations and armies of volunteers, the graves all have flags.

Charleen and I attend Memorial Day services at the veterans' cemetery closest to our home. The small town (625 residents) of Igo, CA is about an hour and a half drive from Chico and is the home of this beautiful veterans' cemetery. The cemetery is surrounded by peaceful countryside, with low rolling hills that are covered in greenery. Our two sons usually attend with us and we are proud they recognize the sacrifice of our war dead. We know they and their children will continue to honor veterans in the future. Before it was consecrated in the early 2000s, there was no final resting place for veterans in Northern California. The closest veterans' cemetery was far south, outside of Sacramento, CA. The drive was five hours or more depending on where you lived in Northern California. The state of California and the Veterans Administration procured the land in Igo and provide the upkeep for this beautiful cemetery.

While some of you probably live a distance from a veterans' cemetery, I hope you all have one you can visit on Memorial Day, participate in the services and honor our comrades who fell in war.

Veterans Day presents an opportunity for those veterans who are still alive to pass on their memories and experiences during their service. This important part of Veterans Day will enrich the lives of our offspring and relatives by providing them first-hand knowledge of what service personnel go through. My grandfather served in the British Army during WWI. He was severely wounded and had a steel plate in his head as a result of damages to his skull. My father served in the British Territorial Army (National Guard) post World War II and his brother served in the U.S. Army during the Korean War.

I wish I had the opportunity to talk to my grandfather about his Army experiences. Unfortunately his injuries affected his memory and this was not possible. As for my father, I was too interested, in my younger days, in playing with my mates to question him about his Territorial Army experiences. After we moved to America a couple of years after my uncle's discharge from the U.S. Army, I was older and wiser. I talked to him about his days in Korea. He couldn't drive when he got drafted in 1951, so naturally, in line with good thinking, he was given a truck driver MOS. He related great stories about his experiences in Korea. I then started to talk more to my dad about his experiences in the Territorial Army. He was proud of his service and happy to tell me his stories.

I hope all of you are able to relate your stories to your offspring. In a country where less than 1 percent of our people serve in the military, our stories are an important part of maintaining the remembrance, passing on the tragedies of war and the importance of our military.

For us Navy vets there are a couple of significant events that occurred around this time of the year. In the Battle of Coral Sea in May 1942, the USS Lexington and USS Yorktown led the American-Australian task force. Although the Lexington was sunk and the Yorktown seriously damaged, the task force thwarted the Japanese in South East Asia, and the damages inflicted on them severely impacted their capabilities. Another significant victory in the Battle of the Pacific was the Battle of Midway in June 1942. My father-in-law was aboard the USS Salt Lake City during this battle. The Japanese lost four carriers and were primarily on the defensive for the remainder of the Pacific War. I was able to hear the stories of his time on the USS Salt Lake City as were our two sons. This was another important piece of my gaining understanding of the perils and tragedies and horrors of war and offered first-hand reflections to our sons. My stories of being aboard the Caliente from 1964-1966 cannot offer first-hand knowledge of combat.

The Navy has played a significant role in defending our country starting with the Revolutionary War and we can all be proud of our service. These memories should be captured and memorialized. We are constantly asking for contributions to the Pipeline and I hope the foregoing emphasizes the importance of remembrance for us and the passing of those stories to future generations. It doesn't matter whether one was a "stoker" or a "sniper," an "E-1 or an



USS Caliente Association
President: Vacant
Vice President: vacant
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.

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

E-9,” a W-1 or a W-5” or a lofty “O-1 or O-11,” all of us served and all have important stories to pass on. Because the Pipeline is “on the Internet,” it can be read by any person who “clicks on” the USS Caliente URL. Your story(ies) will live forever as they should. Send stories to Karl.

Hope to see you many of you in New Orleans. Send your form in now!!! Proper Prior Planning Prevents Pxxx Poor Performance!!

Taps

Sam Diaz, 84, died 23 Dec 2014, two weeks after suffering a stroke. Sam served as a SN on the Caliente in 1952 and 1953. He was born 18 Aug 1930 in Santa Barbara, CA. After leaving the Navy, he was a Santa Barbara Police Department officer for 13 years. He then joined the UCSB Isla Vista Foot Patrol until retiring in 1980. He is survived by his wife Eliza Alice, children Samuel, Nancy (Robert), David (Cora), Dennis, Julie (Vern) and Rick; brother Lawrence (Eva) and numerous nieces, nephews, grandchildren and great grandchildren. He was predeceased by his parents, two sisters and two brothers. One of those brothers, Louis, served on the Cal at the same time as Sam, also as an SN.



taken 1952, Sasebo, Japan

Karen Fordyce, 71, wife of Ed Fordyce, PN3, 1960-62, died 13 Apr 2015. Born Karen Ann Walter 14 June 1943 in Iowa City, IA, she graduated from the University College of Cosmetology. She married Ed 6 Feb 1965. Karen was a member of the Mount Vernon United Methodist Church and active in women’s Bible study. In addition to her husband of 50 years, Karen is survived by her mother, Lois Wallace, daughters Lorrie (Brad) Dahlman, Shelly (Adam) Brinkmann and Emily (Eric) Joldersma; 12 grandchildren; sister Karol (Edward) Lacher; brothers Larry Walter, Dale (Pamela) Walter and James Mark Wallace; brother-in-law Richard Fordyce and nieces, nephews, aunts, uncles and cousins. Karen is buried at Mt. Vernon Cemetery in Mt. Vernon, IA.



Susan Lee Gauthier, 62, wife of Laurence R. Gauthier, SN, 1963-65, died 3 Oct 2014 at Stanley R Tippett Hospice Home in Needham, MA. Born Susan Lee MacFarland 2 July 1952 in Boston, she was raised in Brighton, MA. Susan worked for more than 20 years for M&I Corp. in



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.

Braintree, MA. She then worked for S.B.L.I. Corp. in Woburn, MA until deteriorating health forced her to leave. In addition to her husband of 41 years, Susan is survived by her mother, Clare MacFarland, sons Jason L. Gauthier, Laurence R. Gauthier and his fiancée Amanda and Bryan J. Gauthier; two grandchildren; brother Robert W. (Karen) MacFarland; nieces, nephews and extended family. She is buried at Knollwood Memorial Park in Canton, MA.

Editor's note: Susan Gauthier's death was discovered while the editor was trying to find a valid e-mail or postal address for her husband, Laurence R. Gauthier. Messages to his e-mail address bounced in March and a Pipeline mailed to his Brockton, MA address was returned as not forwardable. Laurence apparently moved from Brockton to Andover, MA when Susan entered hospice care. However, his current address has not been found. If anybody knows it, please inform Karl Seitz at one of his addresses on page 3.



Frederick L. Geer, 90, died 11 Oct 2014 in Warren, OH. Fred served on the Caliente in 1945 and 1946 as Seaman First Class. He was born 29 Aug 1924 in Erie, PA. After his discharge, he returned to Warren, where he married Gertrude Leinhart 9 Apr 1965. Fred was very involved with the sports program at Western Reserve University and retired from ITT Grinell when it closed. He was predeceased by his parents and daughter, Nancy Click. In addition to his wife of 49 years, he is survived by grandchildren Greg Click Sr., Deanna (Jim) Gardiner and Vanessa (Robb) Groner; four great grandchildren, three great-great grandchildren and three nieces. He was cremated and inurned at Sager Memorial Cemetery in Bristolville, OH.

Kathryn Gregor, wife of Bob Gregor (see following obituary) died 15 Nov 2014 in Grand Prairie, TX after a long battle with lung cancer. Born Kathryn Irene Faircloth 5 Oct 1939 in Saratoga Springs, NY, Kathy grew up in Schenectady, NY, before moving to Orange County, CA, in 1968 where she met and married Bob. Once retired, they moved to Grand Prairie, TX, to be near her son George and his family. Kathy was predeceased by her parents, brother Paul Francis Faircloth, sister Nancy Monica Faircloth and daughter Donna Lee DeMassio Treff. For survivors, see Robert's obituary. Kathy was active with Friends of the Grand Prairie Library until shortly after her diagnosis with lung cancer.

Robert "Bob" Gregor died 10 Mar 2015 at the Hospice House at Huguley in Burleson, TX, after a brief battle with lung and liver cancer. Bob was a BT3 on the Caliente from 1955 to 1958. At his request, his daughter-in-law Bridgett DeMassio reports, "He had very little pain and did not suffer. Any pain he had was managed very well at the hospital and then hospice. His passing was very peaceful and during the last few days of his life he told us many times that he had a wonderful life. He was at peace with the knowledge that he was dying and stated that he was ready to be with Kathy." Bob was born 13 Aug 1937 in Cleveland, OH. He retired in 1997 after more than 20 years as plant maintenance manager of the Orange County Water District in California. He was an avid Ford flathead V8 hotrodder. Bob is



survived by sons Robert (Ralinda), Kirk and Rick; three stepchildren, Stephanie (Joe) Dempsey, George (Bridgett) DeMassio and Kathleen (Doug) Ramsey, and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Bob and Kathy were inurned at Westminster Memorial Park in Westminster, CA.

Robert L. LeGacy, 89, died 5 Feb 2015 at Greenbriar Terrace Rehabilitation in Nashua, NH. Bob served on the Caliente from 1943 to 1945 as a BM2. It was Bob's desire for a reunion of his World War II shipmates that lead to the formation of the USS Caliente (AO-53) Association. Born in Swampscott, MA, he graduated from Monument Mountain Regional High School in Great Barrington, MA, before enlisting in the U.S. Navy where he was a member of the first crew of the Caliente. For his service, Bob was awarded a Silver Star, four Bronze Stars, the American Defense Service Medal, the China Service Medal, the Navy Occupation Service Medal, the WWII Victory Medal and the Good Conduct Medal. He owned and operated R.L. Legacy & Son Inc. of Westford, MA for 39 years with his son Wayne. In Westover, Bob served as an auxiliary police officer for 23 years, a volunteer firefighter for 12 years, a member of the Board of Health and of the Affordable Housing Committee. In addition, he belonged to a large number of business, civic and social organizations. Bob was predeceased by his parents and siblings Helen J. Kashian Whitcomb and Melvin H. LeGacy. Bob is survived by his wife of nearly 25 years, Nancy LeGacy, sons Robert (Jai), Wayne (Debra) Gary (Brooke) and James (Wende) LeGacy; daughters Jane, Robin and Allyson LeGacy; sister Diane B. Keefner; 15 grandchildren, 12 great grandchildren and several nieces and nephews. He was buried in Pine Grove Cemetery, Westford, MA.



David Edward Reynolds died 10 Mar 2015 at his home in Decatur, IL. David Eddie served on the Caliente as a SK3 in 1969 and 1970. According to shipmate Larry Wallace, David was bedridden the last 20 years of his life because of numerous diseases, including Parkinson's, that his family believes resulted from exposure to Agent Orange during his service on the Cal. David was born 2 Jul 1947 in Decatur, IL He married Vicki Cheryl Baker 6 Jan 1974. He worked at the U.S. Postal Service for 30 years as letter carrier and distribution clerk before retiring in 1996. David was predeceased by his parents and brother Joe Reynolds. In addition to his wife, he is survived by sons Eric (Monica) and Cory (Ginger) Reynolds, two grandsons, sister Vera Nauta and all of his beloved Boxers.





USS CALIENTE (AO-53) NEW ORLEANS REUNION



Hyatt Place, New Orleans, Louisiana 10 September – 13 September 2015

Reservations can be made at the Hyatt Place, 881 Convention Center Boulevard, New Orleans, LA by calling 1-888-233-1234 and identifying yourself as part of the USS Caliente Reunion. The room rates are good for three days prior to and three days post the reunion dates. The group rate is \$109.00 per person plus 14.75 percent state and local taxes plus a \$1.00 occupancy fee per room. The cutoff date for reservations is 11 August 2015. Valet Parking is available at \$29.00 per car per day.

AGENDA FOR THE REUNION

Thursday 10 September

- a) Hotel Check-in
- b) 3:00 PM until 6:00 PM – Reception (hors d'oeuvres will be provided)

Friday 11 September

- a) 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM -Continental Breakfast
- b) Free Time

Saturday 12 September

- a) 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Continental Breakfast
- b) 9:00 AM – Annual Business Meeting
- c) Free time until banquet
- d) 6:30 PM – Social gathering in banquet room
- e) 7:00 PM – Dinner

Sunday 13 September

- a) 7:00 AM – 9:00 AM – Continental Breakfast
- b) 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM – Farewells and Goodbyes

**2015 New Orleans Reunion
Sign-Up Sheet**

Shipmates Name: _____

Spouse or Guest Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ **State:** _____ **Zip:** _____

Telephone: _____

email: _____

Years on Cal: 19__ to 19__ Rate/Rank while on Cal _____

Registration Fee:

\$175.00 per person x _____ persons = \$ _____

Registration Fee includes the reception, continental breakfast (Friday, Saturday & Sunday) and the Banquet

Additional Guests:

**Please return to: USS Caliente Association, c/o Pat Hurton,
156 Greenfield Drive, Chico, CA 95973-0185**