



PIPELINE

Sept. 2015

Outgoing president's message

By Pat Hurton

The 20th reunion of the USS Caliente Association concluded in New Orleans on Sunday, Sept. 13. Festivities for the reunion commenced with a reception on Thursday, Sept. 10. On Friday the 11th there was a bus tour of New Orleans with lunch at Lake Pontchartrain. The tour took us through some of the devastated areas of the city. Observing how high the water rose and the recovery efforts that are still necessary, ten years later, provided us with the knowledge of how devastating Hurricane Katrina was.

On Saturday morning we held the annual business meeting. The Treasurer reported that the association had received two substantial donations. Each was for \$1,500. One was in the name of Joe Benziger. Joe was a key person in the establishment of the association. The other was in the name of Bob LeGacy. Bob was the person who thought there should be a reunion of USS Caliente WWII and subsequent shipmates and put out the idea. That idea led to the first USS Caliente reunion in 1989 in New York City.

Without Bob's idea and Joe's immediate support the association would not exist. Both passed early this year and we owe them a deep debt of gratitude.

The business meeting also included adoption of a revision to the by-laws allowing for an alternate way to run the association. Jeff Sturgis was proposed as chairman of a committee consisting of Jeff, Greg Perett, Mike Copeland, Steve Selzer, Dave Ludemann and Tom Rawlinson. The committee was voted in as our new elected officials. I will stay on as treasurer of the association with the other functions that Norm and I performed to be accomplished by Jeff and his teammates.

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Change of Command

By Jeff Sturgis

It was a landslide! After a change in the by-laws the "'72 Crew" was unanimously elected at the New Orleans reunion as a leadership committee to keep the "Caliente Reunion Ship" afloat in the future. The Saturday night banquet saw the change of command with Norm Street and Pat Hurton retiring to the "reserves" after many years of outstanding active service to the association. Norm and Pat received much deserved praise from all in attendance for their stewardship and hard work on our behalf, and they will continue to be "active reserves" by continuing some of their work and serving as advisors to the new governing committee.

The '72 Crew consists of Mike Copeland, Dave Ludemann, Greg Perett, Tom Rawlinson, Steve Selzer and yours truly. We all served together in the Supply Department on the Cal in 1972 and are committed to keeping the Client Reunion Ship afloat for as long as we can. However, as we noted at the

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Because we received such substantial donations, I proposed that we place another plaque in the name of the USS Caliente. We presently have the USS Caliente Nameplate at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington D.C. and a plaque in the Memorial Courtyard at the National Museum of the Pacific War in Fredericksburg, TX. La Jolla, CA, just north of San Diego has a great Military Memorial at Mt. Soledad. I proposed and it was accepted that we place a USS Caliente plaque at this memorial. Subsequent to the reunion it has been suggested that we explore the possibility of placing a plaque in Long Beach, CA, the home port of the Cal. I will explore that possibility

After the business meeting, a lot of shipmates visited the National World War II Museum. The Museum is first class and is in the middle of a \$325 million expansion adding state-of-the-art programs and exhibit space. Unfortunately one of the areas being relocated and expanded is the area featuring the Pacific Campaign. In the Boeing building, a WWII Marine pilot was volunteering as a docent. My wife, Charleen, and I were with John and Diane Creedon and were mesmerized by the stories of the two WWII veterans.

On Saturday evening we held our banquet. Entertainment was provided by shipmates Greg Perett and Jeff Strugis. The Levee Jazz Band trio also entertained us. They were outstanding. In June, Charleen and I attended a reunion of her dad's ship the USS Salt Lake City (CA-25). They performed a ceremony called the "Two Bell Ceremony" honoring shipmates who have passed before us. We were very moved by the ceremony and thought it a very dignified and appropriate way to honor USS Caliente shipmates who have passed on. The ceremony was performed just prior to dinner. The leader of the jazz trio, Larry Talerico, is a former Army band member and played Taps for us at the conclusion of the ceremony. I believe all were moved by the ceremony and I hope it is performed at future reunions to honor those who have passed. After dinner we were entertained by Greg and Jeff. Greg and Jeff have become a great part of our reunion entertainment calendar. They always get the after-dinner entertainment off to a rousing start.

The only WWII veteran of our association able to attend this year's reunion was John Creedon. When John was ready to retire for the evening we sent him off with one of his favorites — "Anchors Aweigh." Prior to John dancing his way out of the banquet room, the trio played "God Bless America" to finish the salute to John.

Sunday morning was time to say farewells and goodbyes and to wish "fair winds and following seas" to our shipmates. Charleen and I had a great time in a wonderful city and hope all who attended had a similar great experience.

We have always welcomed and encouraged shipmates' sons, daughters or other family members to accompany their Caliente crew member to reunions. This year Connie Coia was able to accompany her dad Joe to New Orleans. I believe Connie and Joe both had a great time and they will make every attempt to attend our next reunion. We ask any of you who need someone to accompany them to ask and encourage your offspring or other family members to attend you. Charleen and I can assure you that, after attending 15 USS Caliente reunions you will be welcome and have a great time.

This will be my last input to the Pipeline as association president. At the 2002 Las Vegas reunion Bob Howard was elected president of the association, Norm Street was elected vice president and I was elected treasurer. In 2008, at the San Antonio reunion, I was elected president and Norm retained his vice president position. Without the help of Norm the association

probably would have suffered a slow death after San Antonio. Membership was in a decline and attendance at reunions was growing smaller. Norm put together a team of shipmates to seek out other Cal crew members and encourage them to join the association. Membership more than doubled over the next few years and reunions remained viable. A shipmate who was instrumental in finding other shipmates was Milan Nikevich. Milan was able to come to our Chicago reunion but passed away earlier this year. We all owe Milan many thanks for his efforts.

Although the presidency and vice presidency are not full time jobs the ability to summon the drive and energy when necessary to keep the association viable and successful is almost impossible without support. Norm and I have supported each other over the past 13 years and have given the association our best. When one of us was down the other was always up and when one of us didn't want to perform a certain function the other always picked it up. We served because of a strong desire to keep the association vibrant and viable. We hope our shipmates enjoy the association and our reunions — especially the one part neither Norm nor I can take credit for — the Pipeline. We were very fortunate to have Karl Seitz take over the Pipeline with the December 2008 issue and since then he has done a masterful job in the putting together, editing, publishing and distributing the Pipeline. Norm and I want to thank Karl for his efforts.

Karl has volunteered to continue publishing the Pipeline but needs all of you to submit your stories. As previously mentioned a story can be a paragraph, a page or a novel. You don't have to worry about anything except putting your words on paper. Karl will make it come out like a



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.

Pulitzer Prize winning article. Norm I hope you all will continue to support the association and attend reunions as often as possible.

There is one person whose help and support I could not have done without. That person is my wife of 50 years, Charleen. When Ron Hengl approached me in Las Vegas to become treasurer she gave me her blessing and promised to support me. When Bob Howard felt his time was up in San Antonio and I decided assume the



Karl and Pat Seitz at reunion.

responsibility of president, she again gave me her blessing and again promised her full support. Charleen has been, and is, involved in several community organizations and has served in various positions with those organizations. Having her support and being able to share experiences with her regarding other organizations problems, issues and troubles was invaluable to me. When my enthusiasm sometimes waned Charleen would always remind me why I took the job on in the first place. Without her by my side I couldn't have been able to serve the association as I did.

Last year, at the Chicago reunion, Jeff and his teammates indicated they would take over the leadership at the New Orleans reunion. At our business meeting they were unanimously voted in as new officers. I look forward to our new leadership under the direction of Jeff Sturgis.

Again, thanks to all of you for supporting Norm and I over the past 13 years. We both look forward to attending future reunions as just attendees.

2016 Reunion-Boston

By Jeff Sturgis

The next reunion will be held in Boston, Massachusetts, the "birthplace of liberty." Research has already begun on finding a suitable venue.

As you may know, the association tries to move the reunions around the country so that the travel requirements fall as equitably as possible on everyone over a five-year span. The most recent reunions before this year's in New Orleans have been held in Chicago, Albuquerque, Norfolk, Minneapolis and San Diego. After Boston we are looking to returning to the West Coast in 2017.

We try to stay with cities that require at most only two hops on commercial flights in order to facilitate travel for shipmates. Please consider registering for the Boston reunion when the final information comes out at the beginning of next year. In the meantime, if you have ideas for future sites, please send them in to Jeff Sturgis at email address: jandssturgis@roadrunner.com.



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.

Sturgis *Continued from page 1*

reunion, we can't do it alone. An "all hands on deck" plea was made to ask everyone at the reunion, anyone who has ever attended a reunion, and even those of you out there who have never been to a reunion to man your stations to keep the ship afloat and make future reunions a reality. We challenge every shipmate who reads this to make our yearly reunions a priority on your yearly calendar. It's a great way to see this great country. Since my wife and I retired, we have used the Caliente reunions to travel to many wonderful cities; cities that we may never had visited otherwise. The reunions have also provided us with the opportunity to reconnect with old shipmates and to meet many new shipmates from other eras who have their service on the Cal in common. It is especially gratifying to meet our WWII veterans and to hear stories of the very first days of the ship. The comradery built while swapping sea stories with shipmates who had similar experiences is priceless. In New Orleans, the highlight of Saturday's banquet was the "Two Bell" ceremony conducted by Pat Hurton where we remembered the passing of our shipmates with two strikes of a ship's bell. The emotions were also strong as we sang "Anchors Aweigh" and "God Bless America" at the end of the evening as we recognized John Creedon, our WWII veteran.

We hope that many of you who read this will consider joining us next year in Boston if you are at all able. In addition, if you are able to attend, consider bringing your spouse, significant other, son or daughter or grandchild. We have welcomed many family members over the years at the reunions. What a great way to help answer the typical question we often hear from our offspring, "What did you do in the Navy?"

As Pat mentioned in New Orleans, the attendance at our reunions has been in the 30-40 range, a number that is barely able to cover the guarantees that we must make to the hotels with which we contract. In addition to encouraging your attendance, we also asking that if you do intend to attend, you commit early and send in your registration fee. Hotel contracts levy cancellation fees that start as early as six months before the date of the reunion. That means that the association can be liable for thousands of dollars in the event of a cancellation as happened with the Baltimore reunion. So when the information comes out at the beginning of the new year about the Boston reunion, we hope that you will seriously consider attending and send in your registration as soon as you are able.

We from the '72 Crew are looking forward to keeping the reunions going, and we believe we can do that with your help. In addition to encouraging your attendance at reunions, we encourage your input. Please don't hesitate to drop me an email at jandssturgis@roadrunner.com or contact me at 84 Old Woodman Hill Rd, Minot, ME 04258 with your ideas or suggestions.

Thank You from the '72 Crew

The '72 Crew wishes to express its sincere appreciation to Norm Street, Pat Hurton and Karl Seitz for all they have done for the association. As you have read earlier, Norm and Pat are "semi-retiring" and passing on some of their duties to us. Pat will continue as treasurer and website manager. Their hard work and determination have contributed to the survival of the association as we battle the inevitable difficulties of the passage of time. Without their efforts, reunions would have ceased several years ago. They will remain in the "active reserves" by sharing their time and expertise to enable the survival of the association for the near future. A heartfelt "well done" goes to both from all of us who have benefitted from their dedication.

Not to be forgotten is the editor of the Pipeline, Karl Seitz. He has the tremendous task of putting together the newsletter that binds us together between reunions. He has put to good use the expertise that he gained during his career in journalism and used it to our advantage. His dedication to editing articles and searching out information and obituaries of shipmates who have passed away has made the Pipeline an indispensable part of our association. We salute his efforts to bind us together and to keep us abreast of latest information that keeps the association informed. Thank you, Karl.

Sea Stories

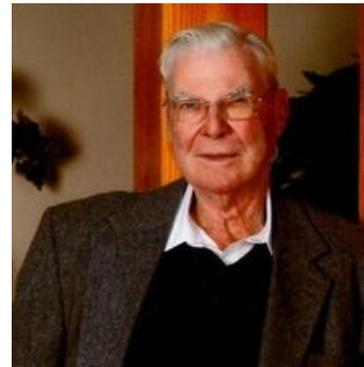
By Jeff Sturgis

During the reunion in New Orleans, hundreds of sea stories were swapped, much to the enjoyment of all who attended. If just 10 percent of these stories were written down and sent to Karl Seitz, our Pipeline editor, he would have enough material for the next ten years. Therefore, we hereby are challenging all of you in the association to write down at least one sea story and send it in to Karl. You don't have to be an English major or a published author to share your stories. Being an accomplished editor, Karl can make any of us sound like a Pulitzer Prize winner! So get those stories in, no matter how long they are to Karl at seitzao53@gmail.com or 1212 30th Street South, Birmingham, AL 35205-1910 and share your experiences on the Cal with all your shipmates.

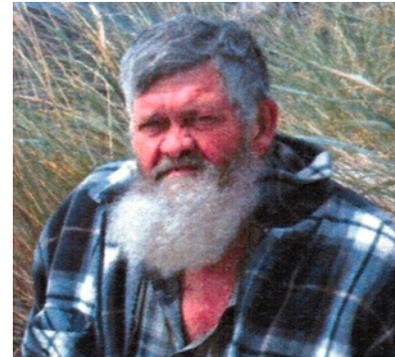
Taps

John W. Gargulak, 87, died peacefully on his wife's birthday, 5 Sept. 2014 in Cudahy, WI. John served on the Caliente in 1945 and 1946 as an FN2. Mary L. Gargulak, his wife of more than 60 years died 3 Jan. 2014 at age 79. A devout Catholic, John founded a cabinet shop in the early 1950s that continues today as Midwest Millwork, a lumber and building material dealer under the direction of his sons and son-in-law. Survivors include children John (Isabelle) Gargulak, Mary Jo (Harry) Savagian, Martin (Jacquelyn) Gargulak, 12 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. A funeral Mass was held at Nativity of the Lord Church 11 Sept. 2014 with entombment at Holy Sepulcher Cemetery in Cudahy. For more about John's time on the Cal, see his son's memory on page 12.

Clarence E. Heath, 83, of Watonga, OK, died 26 May 2015 after a long battle with COPD. Born 2 Dec 1931 in Alamota, KS, he served on the Caliente from 1952 to 1953 as a BM3. After leaving the Navy, Clarence returned to Oklahoma to farm and ranch. To supplement his income, he worked at U.S. Gypsum Co. for several years. He was a past master of the Canton Masonic Lodge #418, past patron of the Order of Eastern Star and a member of Canton Christian Church. He served on the Soil Conservation Board for 15 years and on the Blaine County Fair Board for several years. He is survived by his wife, Charlene; two sons, Paul (Penny) and Greg; two sisters, Mary Venters and Virginia Jasper; one brother, John (Bessie) Heath four grandchildren and four great grandchildren. Funeral services were held 30 May 2015 at Canton Christian Church with interment at Canton Cemetery, Canton, OK.



Robert P. Monroe of Reedsport, OR, died 5 March 2015 in Key West, FL. Bob served on the Caliente from 1966 to 1968 as an SF2. Born 8 Sep 1944 in Vacaville, CA, grew up in Fort Collins, CO. After his four years in the Navy, Bob worked at Sun Plywood and then as a correctional officer in Oregon. He was a hunter, fisherman and traveler. Bob was predeceased by his first wife, Linda. He is survived by children Melisa (Chris) Hovey, Marsha Rollins and Robert Monroe II, nine grandchildren, his wife Burnadine Dawkins Monroe, her three children, whom he called his own, Dean, Eric and Lori Dawinks and a grandson. A memorial service was held in Reedsport 12 July 2015.



Milan Z. Nikceovich, died 23 Jun 2015 at his home in St. Augustine, FL, with his family at his side. Born in Coello, IL and raised on the southeast side of Chicago, Milan served on the Caliente from 1952 to 1955 as a BMSN. After his Navy service, Milan traveled the world as an auditor for Amoco Oil for 35 years. He was an active member of the Izak Walton League of American, Dolton, IL, chapter. He contributed to the success of this organization through his labors and contributions to the Pipeline. He and his wife attended Caliente reunions, most recently last year in Chicago. Milan is survived by his wife, Barbara, children James, Jill (Darin) and Jana (Fred) and three grandchildren. A memorial service was held at

Abraham Lincoln Veterans Cemetery in Chicago.

Robert Wayne Stanfill Sr., 76, of Camden, AR, died 24 Aug 2015 at the Ouachita County Medical Center. Robert served on the Caliente from 1958 to 1961 as an SN. He was a member of Lakeside United Methodist Church of Camden. Robert is survived by his wife of 56 years, Nancie; sons Robert Wayne (Kelly) Stanfill Jr., Ronald Eugene (Laurelle) Stanfill and Jeffery Scott Stanfill; brothers Paul Stanfill and Gary Coston; sister Donna (Cecil) Hooks; eight grandchildren, three step grandchildren and two great grandchildren. A memorial service was held 28 Aug. 2015 at Harmony Grove United Methodist Church in Camden.

Reunion attendees

The following members and guests attended this year's reunion in New Orleans:

Larry and Ida Baker 1957-1960 LTJG
 Wailen (Red) and Ann Bennett 1961-1962 FT3
 Paul Cannon 1969-1972 GMG3
 John and Zelda Coleman 1960-1964 MMFN
 Mike Copeland 1971-1973 SK3
 Joe and daughter Connie Coia 1951-1952 CS3
 John and Diane Creedon 1943-1945 GQM1
 Herb Dorsey 1963-1964 LTJG
 Ed Fordyce 1960-1962 PN3
 Dillard and Judith Givens 1958-1959 EN3

Pat and Charleen Hurton 1964-1966 SK2
 Bill and Nancy Lawler 1969-1970 LTJG
 Dave Ludeman 1969-1973 SK3
 Jim and June Niquette 1950-1954 BM3
 Greg Perett 1969-1972 LTJG
 Tom Rawlinson 1971-1973 CS3
 Shelby and Mary Sanders 1962-1965 EN2
 Karl and Pat Seitz 1961-1964 PN2
 Steve and Linda Selzer 1971-1974 CS3
 Norm Street 1960-1962 RD2
 Jeff and Susan Sturgis 1970-1972 LTJG
 Geoff Underwood 1969-1972 RD3

Two Bell Ceremony



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, known 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.

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.

And now we honor:

- i) USS Caliente shipmates who served during WWII and have passed away (toll two bells here)

ii) USS Caliente shipmates who served between WWII and the Korean War and have passed away (toll two bells here)

iii) USS Caliente shipmates who served during the Korean War and have passed away (toll two bells here)

iv) USS Caliente shipmates who served between the Korean War and the Vietnam War and have passed away (toll two bells here)

v) USS Caliente shipmates who served during the Vietnam War and have passed away (toll two bells here)

This past year we lost two shipmates who were instrumental in the founding of the USS Caliente Association. It is because of them that so many USS Caliente shipmates were and are able to reunite and share stories and renew old friendships

i) A shipmate who was one of the first to help form the USS Caliente Association – Joe Benziger (toll two bells here)

ii) The shipmate who had the idea to form the Association – Bob Legacy (toll 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 (toll two bells here)

2) To those who guard the honor of our country ... upon the sea ... in the air ... and on foreign soil (toll two bells here)

3) Let it be reminder of the faith they confide in us (toll two bells here)

4) Let us who gather here not forget our obligations, and in silence, breathe a prayer for our absent (toll two bells here)

5) Let us offer a silent a silent prayer for our departed shipmates. This moment of reverence we dedicate to the memory of our shipmates who have gone before us (toll two bells here)

Bugler plays taps slowly after the ringing of the bells.



Photo by Pat Seitz

Bus tour passengers surround their guide at one of New Orleans older cemeteries. Visible from left are Larry Baker LTJG, 1957-60, Greg Perett, LTJG, 1969-72, Jim Niquette, BM3, 1950-54, Ed Fordyce, PN3, 1960-62, Pat Hurton, SK2, 1964-66, our tour guide, Mike Copeland, SK3, 1971-73. Largely hidden behind Niquette and Fordyce is Norm Street, RD2, 1960-62.



At this table
Pat Hurton, SK2, 1964-66, Karl Seitz, PN2, 1961-64, Jim Niquette, BM3, 1950-54, Jeff Sturgis, LTJG, 1970-72, and Dave Ludermann, SK3, 1969-73, gather one morning.

Photo by Pat Seitz

And at this one

Shelby Summers, EN2, 1962-65, John Coleman, MMFN, 1960-64, Zelda Coleman, Mary Summers, Charleen Hurton and June Niquette gather around a second table.

Photo by Pat Seitz

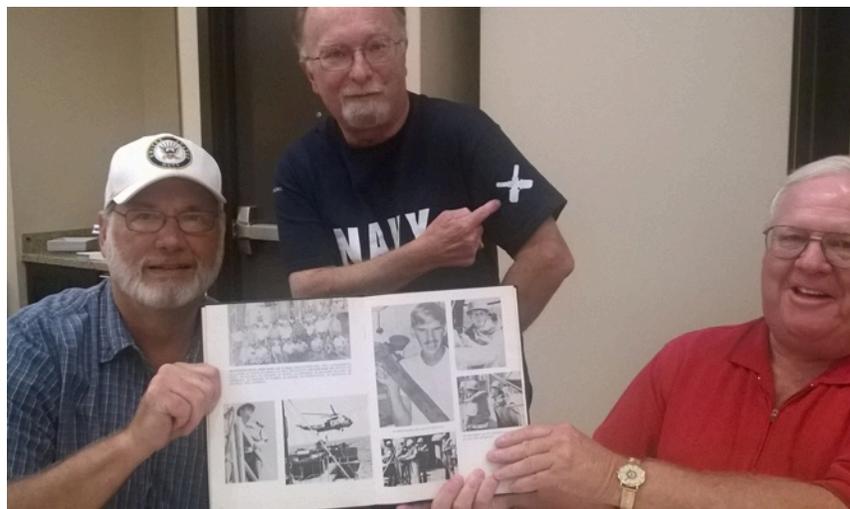


Photo by Tom Rawlinson

Steve Selzer, CS3, 1971-74, Paul Cannon, GMG3, 1969-72, and Mike Copeland, SK3, 1971-73, hold a cruise book for camera. When this picture was posted on the USS Caliente Facebook group, Bob Kubarek, GMG2, 1969-73, let it be known that they were showing his picture.



Dillard and Judy Givens, EN3, 1958-59.



Diane and John Creedon, GQM1, 1943-45



Levee Jazz Band Trio



Joe and Connie Coia, CS3, 1951-52



Red and Ann Bennett, FT3, 1961-62

All photos on this page are by Charleen Hurton



Photos by Tom Rawlison and Pat Seitz

The French Quarter has diverse attractions. Tom Rawlison, Mike Copeland and others found Bourbon Street. Down on Decatur Street, Joan of Arc was seen by others.

Memories

Finding two friends in occupied Japan

By John P. Gargulak

Editor's note: This memory from John W. Gargulak's service on the Caliente is extracted and adapted from his son's letter reporting the elder Gargulak's death. John W. Gargulak's obituary is found on page 6. John W. served on the Cal in 1945 and 1946 as an FN2.

There is quite a story behind the photograph that accompanies this memory. Two of dad's neighborhood friends were serving in the Army. They were to have been part of the invasion force and were stationed in Tokyo after the surrender. Dad received special permission to take the train from Yokohama to Tokyo in order to pay them a visit.

In Tokyo he asked a MP for directions to their unit. The MP told him it was split between two places, in different directions, so he had to make a choice. Dad took a streetcar and the conductor let him know when to exit. With further good fortune, he not only chose the correct base, but his friends were in the mess hall having lunch.

The photo is from a second meeting where his friends had use of a jeep and were able to visit Tokyo. Dad always remembered how dignified and respectful the Japanese citizens were. The war was over and that was that. His two friends were sure glad that the invasion wasn't necessary, because they would have been in the thick of things.

I agree with Pat Hurton's comments in the June 2015 Pipeline. It is important to remember our veterans and honor their service. My father was barely 18 years old when he entered active duty. He always downplayed his service; because he had friends who endured some very difficult situations along with some who made the ultimate sacrifice.

