

KNOX KNEWS

"It is only through shared stories and pictures that we live on and do not die."

2017 – Spring

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REUNION: Chicago Reunion Reservation forms are in the mail to all on our list. Another copy is attached to this newsletter. Reserve your room and plan to attend. The reservation number is: **1-847-437-6010**

One first time member is planning on celebrating his 78th birthday with us on Friday, September 15th. And when Ed Ewoldt shows up we'll celebrate his very special birthday as well (see below). We're buying the cake and everyone is invited.

Saturday keynote speaker Captain Fred McLaren, USN, MS, PhD. is now promoting his second book "Silent and Unseen" a sequel to "Silent Waters" already published by the University of Alabama Press. Fred is an arctic scientist on the faculty at University of Colorado, Boulder. He will talk to us about mapping the Siberian Ice Shelf when Captain of USS Queenfish. We'll also get a look at the Siberian Shelf today and how it looked in 1975 when secretly mapped by Queenfish. Exciting stuff; you'll be on the edge of your chairs about the escapes.

PICTURE NEEDED: US Army barge 5346 tied up alongside the Knox the afternoon of July 19, 1965. The Knox was grounded on Pratas Reef. Knox crew off loaded 5" shells and hedgehog ammunition from the forward magazines and service areas. After the shells were on the barge 53,000 gallons of fuel was pumped from Knox into the barge. KNOX KNEWS needs a picture of the barge and ammunition. We're offering a \$100 gift certificate if we publish your photo and full credit. We're also offering \$25 gift certificates to anyone who submits a photo to us. All photos will be returned immediately after copying.

DARK AND STORMY: The fleet tug USS Munsee STF-107 towed a 20-ton Army Barge 6535 to Pratas Reef, diverted from a transit with the barge. The Knox was aground and maneuvering to place the empty barge alongside the Knox on 19 JUL 1965 took great skill. Standing by Knox at a safe distance the crew of Munsee watched the unloading of 5" and hedgehog ammunition & then the pumping of 53,000 gallons of fuel into the barge. Typhoon Gilda was in the area and the calm seas of the day before changed rapidly. On 20 JUL 1965, the Knox's log stated "1750 – Barge 6535 is smashing against the starboard quarter of the ship. True wind 049 deg. Speed 30 kts. 1902 – Barge clear of the ship. Many small leaks." Large swells and bad weather continued. Munsee then towed the Army Barge 6535 back to Vietnam for offloading. She returned to Pratas Reef to tow the Knox to Kaohsiung, Taiwan for inspection and salvage recovery work. Hats off to the officers and crew of USS Munsee for assisting the Knox under storm conditions. (Other tugs and salvage vessels arrived and were assisting also.)

100 YEARS AND COUNTING – Ed Ewoldt, YN-3 '46-'47 will turn 100 years old this year. Ed attended 21 Knox Reunions before his sight prevented further travel. Ed is scheduled to attend this year's reunion in Chicago September 13-17. Ed would love to hear from shipmates @ edsword5@aol.com or 228 So. Williston, Wheaton IL 60187-5914. At Ed's last reunion he sat down in front of a video camera and recorded some of his experiences. Look for Ed's interview to show up on our website ussfrankknox.com in the near future.

PETROLEUM ENGINEER –At last year's reunion there was a tall Texas gent, a veteran of WWII and the Korean conflict. His name is Russell Judah. In real life, Russell had a long career as a Petroleum Engineer. He served as a US Navy

Officer during the Korean War on USS Frank Knox. He also served in the US Coast Guard during WWII riding gasoline tankers in the Pacific. WWII gasoline tankers rarely convoyed because they were a sailing bomb my neighbor Arthur Webster tells me. He wrote a book about his experiences titled "Down to the Sea". The tanker crews were US Merchant Marine sailors and officers with a military detachment to handle the guns mounted on the tankers for protection while sailing alone. Interesting and exciting reading.

THE LAST RIDER(s) –

Have you ever wondered when the Knox was transferred to the Greek Navy? Who were the last people off the ship? What happened to the white sign in the wardroom – "Give me a fast ship for I intend to go in harm's way. JP Jones". Where did the bronze Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy go? The ship's bell? Some of these questions are answered in a special submission to Knox Knews by Bob Lakin. His email is quoted below.

"Based on official papers I have, Frank Knox was decommissioned on or about January 31, 1971 and transferred to the Greek Navy a few days later. My orders for temporary duty to H.S. Themistocles (D-210) were dated January 28. The officers Sandy (Sanford [Sandy] Rugen, First Lieutenant) and I remember (we think!) being aboard at that time were Jack Davis, CO; Rich Wyatt, XO; Bob Horn, OPS; Will Schellenberger (sp?), Weapons; Frank Bryant, Engineering; ? Schnaubel, DCA; and Pat Stroop, (?). Obviously, there were more. Frank and I were the only two people assigned temporary duty to assist the Greeks once they took over the ship through the NATO program. Our job was to help the Greek crew prepare the ship before leaving for Greece which was around the end of May, 1971. My orders were through May 21.

When the rumors turned to fact that Frank Knox was to be decommissioned, the crew turned to the unique task of preparing to turn the ship over to the Greek Navy which was bringing a crew to San Diego. Apparently, the NATO agreement was that the ship was to be transferred in "good" condition and ready to get underway for a trip to Greece. Since we had recently returned from a six-month WESTPAC deployment we have normally entered a down-time to make repairs and conduct maintenance. Instead we had a bit of a crash program to get the ship ready. Part of my job as Supply Officer was to re-

inventory equipment and other valuables that might be attractive souvenirs, make sure spares were aboard, close out the shop's store and disbursing functions and deal with food issues. Other departments had their hands full with transfer related tasks. All sensitive communications and operations manuals had to be dealt with. I don't know what happened to ordnance. Engineering had equipment to service and fix. At the same time, various crew members started getting orders to other places which caused disruption.

Of course, Captain Davis wanted to make sure the ship was painted and looking good, even if superficially. The bulk of that project fell to First Lieutenant Sandy Rugen and his division. When it came time to paint the anchors, chains and hause holes, each anchor had to be lowered a bit. After painting was completed, the anchor was raised. Apparently on one of them too much strain was put on a swivel link and all of a sudden it parted. The anchor crashed to the bottom, the ship shook and Sandy heard "Mr. Rugen report immediately to the Captain's quarters" over the 1MC. This was just a few days before the scheduled decommissioning ceremony. A diver and crane were put into service, a replacement swivel link was procured from a moth-balled destroyer and everyone settled down.

As I recall the Greek officers were knowledgeable and capable. Of course, they realized that while they were in San Diego, it was a perfect opportunity and place to get as many parts as possible and get equipment fixed or upgraded. They had a small time-frame to get lots done. I don't recall the specific NATO transfer arrangements, but the big picture was that the Greeks were financially entitled to get a little of this and a little of that. However, they wanted lots of this and that. They arrived with an amazing supply of Metaxa and Ouzo. Some was clearly for entertaining and spreading good will, but much more ended up being used for "bartering" on the base and repair facilities. It reminded me of the old practice of using coffee as cumshaw to get things done - but on a huge scale. Frank and I had our hands full trying to keep a lid on this activity, but it was nearly impossible.

In addition to acting as sheriff, the bulk of my job was to assist my counterpart, who spoke broken English, in getting food and parts. Frank focused on the issues with machinery and propulsion. All and all I think the two of us really

enjoyed our experience greatly. The Greek wardroom was a fun-loving group as was the rest of the crew. I recall being asked to arrange a quick trip to Las Vegas for a bunch of the officers. We got cars, drove over, made plans for dinner, going to casinos and staying over. They all went in uniform and appeared quite impressive. In the morning when we were to meet and leave, one officer couldn't be found. He was finally spotted in the same casino he had been in the night before. He had been there all night. His jacket and tie were off, his shirt partially unbuttoned, his face unshaven and he was losing his last few dollars. I had to lend him money for food on the way back. They LOVED Las Vegas.

I was sad when I learned the H. M. Themistocles had been sunk in a target practice exercise. The ship had been through a good deal from seeing the end of WWII, to running aground, to being rebuilt and raising to a high level of service again in WESTPAC to serving the Greek government.

I received a very nice letter from the Greek commanding officer after my transition service was completed which is attached.

I hope this note gives you a bit more insight into the last days of Frank Knox in its U.S. Navy service.

By the way, Sandy Rugen doesn't really use email but he can be reached at home by phone at 401-322-7612. Or cell 401-382-8674. His address is 61 Bayview Road, Charleston RI 02813. Frank Bryant's home phone is 843-884-2080 and cell is 843-442-4403. He is at 1064 Meader Lane, Mt. Pleasant SC 29464. I am sure either would be pleased to talk with you.

Best, Bob Lakin" (End of e-mail.)

Thank you, Bob, for adding to our Frank Knox history.

BATTLE OF MIDWAY 75th ANNIVERSARY, JUNE 4-6, 2017

San Diego's USS MIDWAY Aircraft Carrier Museum is one of many sites across the U.S. and its' territories where celebrations of the battle's 75th Anniversary will take place. Hundreds of books have been written about the battle and its' significance as the turning point in the Pacific Theater during WWII. The history leading up to the battle is beautifully displayed in a series of multi-media displays is especially informative. The 14-minute movie "Voices of Midway" has

won several awards. The movie covers the stories of men, on both sides, who fought in the battle including torpedo bomber pilot “Tex” Gay the “sole” survivor of USS Hornet’s torpedo squadron. Torpedo squadrons from USS Lexington and USS Enterprise lost most of their planes with over 70% of the pilots and crews killed.

REUNION CHICAGO - SEPTEMBER 13-17, 2017 Reserve your room now. Call 1-847-437-6010; Specify USS Frank Knox Reunion to receive the \$109.00/night reunion rate. More rooms just made available!

Use the enclosed Reunion Reservation form to make Saturday banquet and tour reservations.

Our reunion speaker Fred McLaren, Capt. USN Ret. is ready to talk secret missions and arctic science. He has just released his latest book “Silent and Unseen”. Fred received the Explorers Club Lowell Thomas Medal for Ocean Exploration.

IN MEMORIAM

Richard Everett Horton, BM-1, 6/23/2016

James O. Beshears, YNC, 5/28/2016 '47-48

Arvil Dial, CS-3, 01-17-2017 '61-64

Ed S. Lowell, 06-19-2016

Grant to them O Lord eternal rest

And let the perpetual light shine upon them

May their souls rest in peace and be escorted to the Supreme

ADMIRAL of the UNIVERSE

ADDRESS CHANGES – to Harry Chandler, VP, Membership; email
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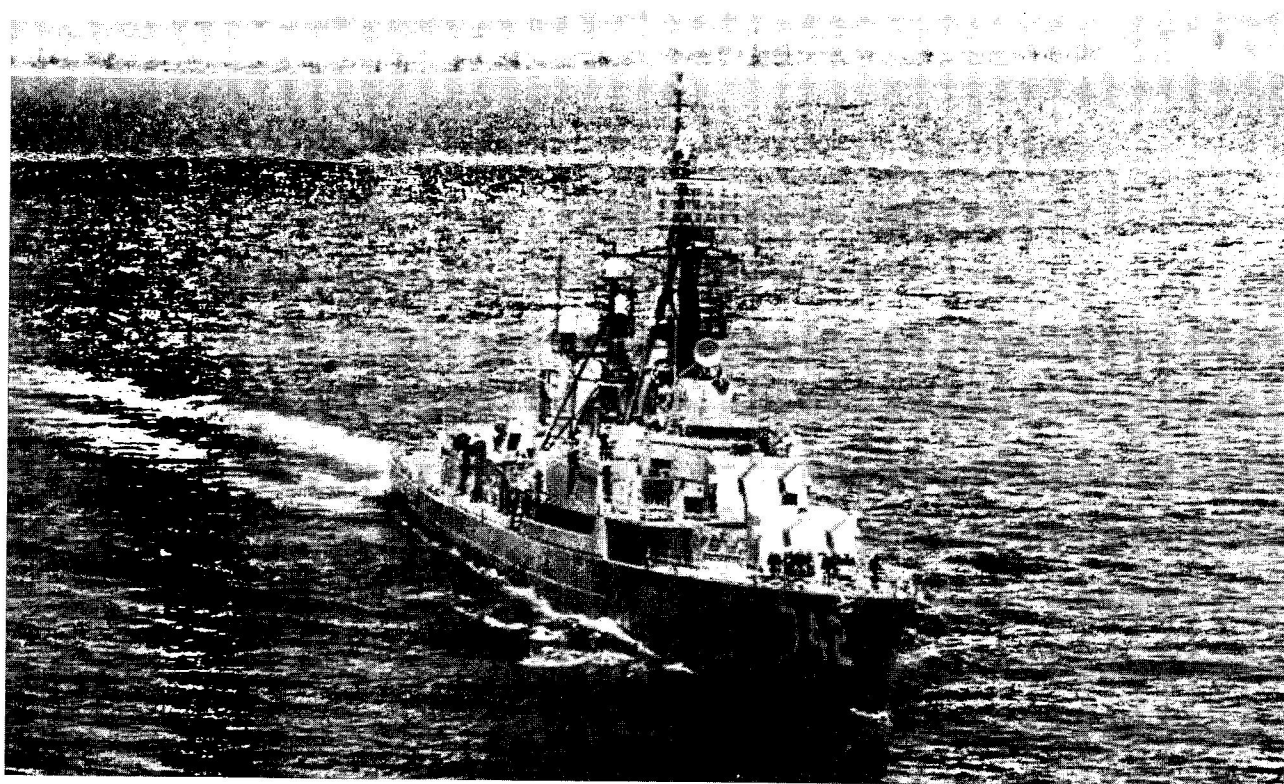


Photo located and submitted by Bill Atkinson, YN-2.