



81 LIFE MEMBERS and counting
100 maximum

KNOX KNEWS

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

ussfrankknox.com
Crew Album Posted

Fall 2020



Action items –

2020 – **Reunion Auction** featuring rare and special items – all proceeds go to our Association.

2020 – **Reunion on line Social** – Call in dates and times listed; Reconnect and Remember

2020 – **30th Anniversary Coins for 2020 Dues payment** – Eight left. Claim yours now!

2021 – **November 1 begins our 2021 Dues season, Refuel the Ship for 2021!**



**TURBLENT TIMES –
REFUELING THE KNOX 2021
(PICTURE OF KNOX refueling in 1945)**



Frank Knox 1950 Rough Seas

It is time to refuel the Frank Knox!

+Our annual WHITE ELEPHANT AUCTION is on line this year.

[Auction opens Sunday **November 8th** at 12pm Eastern time and goes through Saturday, **November 14th**, 5pm Eastern time.

This our traditional fund-raising event to raise money and refuel the ships passage for the year 2021. There are a number of special items to bid on. Bidding is easy. Text your item number and bid or, email us

your bid. Text 541-250-1329 or email mewatson1425@msn.com

Either way, you will be in the bidding for some very special items. Winners will be announced for each item and payment requested Sunday November 15, 2020.

Auction Items:

1 – *Waltham Boxed and Gimbaleed Chronometer*, #16,629,572. Manufactured in 1908. Restored. Serviced in 2012 and 2020. Valued over \$600.00. Minimum opening bid - \$250.00



2&3– 30th Anniversary *proof coin polished gold* with super fine details. Two coins are available. Opening bid \$10.00



4&5 – 30th Anniversary *proof coin matte gold* with super fine details. Two coins are available. Opening bid \$10.00



6 – KANWAL *lighter* 1960's with the blue and white crest, ship of the year, personalized "Ben & Liz". Opening bid \$10.00



7 – PENGUIN *Lighter* 1963-4, ship engraved on one side, opposite side is the DESRON-9 **Asiatic Squadron**, Concord Squadron trip including Mombasa, Iran, Australia. A real treasure. Excellent condition. Opening bid \$10.00



8 - *Match book cover*, dress navy blue DDR 742, picture of ship opposite, is the *Rough Rider* symbol. Fine condition. Safe. Opening bid \$5.00



9 – *Matchbook cover*. Color picture of ship, roughrider symbol – multicolored, medium blue grey ship. Opening bid \$5.00

10 – Coffee Table Publication – Soft Cover – Mt. Soledad National Veterans Memorial. Seventy-six pages of beautiful photos and the history of the memorial where USS Frank Knox has a plaque in the number one slot of their section, a plaque dedicated at the 29th Annual Reunion in 2019. Opening bid \$25.00 

11 – USS HALSEY DDG-97 Commissioning Program, July 30, 2005. Admiral Halsey and USS Frank Knox bonded immediately when our ship reported to Halsey’s Third Fleet. Opening bid \$20.00 

12 – USS MICHAEL MONSOOR DDG 1001 Commissioning Program, January 26, 2019. The MONSOOR is a Zumwalt class DDG, built in Bath, Maine, home of FRANK KNOX. Opening bid \$20.00 

13 – Coffee, 2 ½ pound selections from the winner of micro-roaster of the year, Bird Rock Coffee. “the 12 best coffee roasters in the US” – Forbes. Opening bid \$15.00 for the coffee made by the man who beat Starbucks. (Story included.) 

14 – Pair of Coffee Cups – US Navy and Frank Knox embossed cups perfect for your coffee. Minimum bid \$20.00 

15 – Ship Model – USS CONSTITUTION – 12” long, 2’ wide and 9’ high. Taut rigging and heavy stitched sails that will not wrinkle. High quality woods and base. Minimum bid \$35.00 

16. Two-inch coin, Shield plus Arleigh Burke Fleet Trophy 1968. Opening bid \$10.00. 

17. Two-inch coin, Shield plus Ship of the Year, 1964. Opening bid - \$10.00 

18. Two bottles of Wine – Oregon Pinot 2028 Holstein Vineyard AND Oregon Chardonnay – 2019 Koosh Vineyard. Shipped direct to you from Granvillewines.com. Opening bid \$30.00 

19. Commissioning Program, USS Portland LPD-27, includes Program, official ship’s photo and 4 date-of-commissioning- postcards for collecting or sale. Opening bid \$20.00 

20. Frank Knox Windbreaker (L) – one only- modeled by Don Yegge, GMG-3. Opening bid \$20. [\$50 value.] 

21. Frank Knox Windbreaker (M) – one of two – Same as #20. Opening bid \$20.00 [\$50 value.]

22. Frank Knox Windbreaker (2XL) – one of two – Same as #20. Opening bid - \$20. [\$50 value.]

Text item number & \$ bid to 541-250-1329; or email bid number & \$ bid to mewatson1425@msn.com

1965 – Pictures and stories needed for upcoming publication “STRANDED – official records and recollections of the most dramatic salvage in the Pacific – EVER.

Editors Note: After exchanging notes with leaders in the Gearing Class Association I believe FRANK KNOX is ahead of the change and challenges in this world of COVID 19.

We’ve posted a video history, on our website, of the reunion association’s history and current year activities. We’ve scheduled our traditional **White Elephant Auction online starting November 8th and ending November 14th** with great items for you to bid on. Last, we’ve scheduled three nights for you to call in, or video connect, with reunion association members to include everyone possible in our activities – this is the first of all annual effort to connect with as many shipmates as possible.

WHO WILL TELL YOUR STORY – WE WILL!! Catching up with -

The WWII torpedo crew – I recently learned the identity of another of the Torpedoman from **WWII, Billy Jack Smith**. Bill was tall but slight of stature and could in WWII trim, fit inside the 23’ wide torpedo tubes to clean them. Senior Torpedoman Gerald Harms, TM-1 was in charge, tall with broad shoulders, too wide to fit inside the tubes for cleaning. Bill was just the right size and used often in this role to keep the tubes “spotless” at the direction of TM-1 Harms.



Billy Jack Smith

I learned about Billy Jack from long-time family friend Beverly Mitchell and Bill’s daughter, Kathy Better. The torpedomen also manned the hedgehog mounts just beneath the bridge during anti-submarine battle stations. Harms preferred the starboard side; Smith was assigned to the port-side mount. One day, stationed at the hedgehog mounts, Harms and Smith watched as a Kamikaze appeared in front of the ship flying right at the FRANK KNOX. The KNOX’s guns opened up, 5”, 40mm and 20mm. Pieces of the Kamikaze flew off as the plane “just missed the mast of the Knox and struck the ship following them with a thunderous explosion’. Harms and Smith, exposed on the O-1 level beneath the bridge, went from relief to astonishment when the ammunition report was completed; “5000 rounds we shot at that plane and it didn’t go down” recalled Harms in his diary.



G. Harms w/flag

Harms passed away in 2017 at his home in Oregon; Smith passed away near Schererville, IN. Mitchell continued to connect with the Frank Knox Reunion Association and is a Life Member. Mitchell referred me to Kathy Better for additional information. She kept Billy Jack's story alive – Who will tell your story? – We will if you will share it with our Association. We'll make sure your story and pictures will be recorded and preserved.

THE FIRST RIDERS – In touch with

WWII Veteran Bob Beachkofski, SKD-2 – Bob is 102 years young and our oldest living member. Bob writes an occasional letter to all of us, receives birthday greetings from many on his mid-April birthday and receives a weekly call from fellow shipmate Irv Eisenberg, RM-2, another WWII veteran. Bob is closely monitored by his daughter and family. He lives in Menasha, WI not far from Appleton.



Bob Beachkofski, SKD-2

Irv Eisenberg, RM-2, who phones Bob regularly is in his 90's, living with his wife, in Great Neck NY. In addition to phoning friends he is part of a group called the "ROMEOS", which stands for Retired Old Men Eating Out. Irv is a source of many stories and is known to welfare check on this Editor who is likely around 20 years younger.

Russ Judah, LCDR is another WWII veteran living in Houston TX. He attends our reunions regularly, last in 2019. He plans to be at the 2021 reunion in Albuquerque. Russ was a Merchant Seaman Cadet riding gasoline tankers during WWI; when torpedoed you don't go down, you go UP was the expression used for these ships. Russ served aboard USS FRANK KNOX during the Korean War. Russ returned to his petroleum engineering job following the end of his recall to duty.



**Judah & Huber
Mt. Soledad**

Paul Stout, QM-2 – WWII sailor still lives in Senath, MO. His last reunion attended was 2008.

William Foley, BM, COX – lives in West Roxbury, MA. We can reach William through his son, Kevin.

Hank Huber, LTjg – Hank donated his 1952 diary to the Reunion Association; it joins several other diaries we publish. Hank's diary is the only Korean War record of daily life we have so far. Thanks Hank!! In one entry Hank writes about hitting a

30' whale (not the first or last time this happened to the KNOX. Another moment was a loose depth charge rolling around on the main deck aft. Hank's solution was to wrap a 1' line about his waist and tether the other end to three seamen. Hank then corralled the depth charge, and rode it, until the three sailors could help him stop the rolling charge and get it back into the depth charge rack. There are many more 1952 adventures he relates – these for another KNOX KNEWS.

Hank is a retired Professor of Forestry at Michigan State University now living in a retirement community in East Lansing MI. He reunited with fellow shipmate Russ Judah, LCDR, at our 2019 Reunion in San Diego.

THE LAST RIDERS – Where are they? –

Bob Lakin, LTjg, Supply Officer – Bob stayed aboard after the Greek Navy took over the ship but remained in San Diego to get familiar with their new purchase. The Greeks kept a “wet ship”, serving alcohol aboard. IN September 2020, Bob phoned me from the pier where his boat is moored. He and assembled a crew to move the boat from Marblehead Harbor to Manchester by the Sea Harbor in MA for storm avoidance. Bob shared the Greek “take over” of Frank Knox. Another officer, with Engineering officer, Frank Bryant, LT and three enlisted men that I would like to contact to hear their stories. Bryant and Lakin's stories were printed two years ago in Knox Knews and are available on our website ussfrankknox.com.



Helo Arthun

The On-Board Salvage Crew – July 18 – August 27, 1965 – These volunteers were aboard during the four phases of the salvage of the USS Frank Knox from Pratas Reef. Stars and Stripes - called the salvage “the most dramatic salvage in the Pacific ever”, and it was successful! I'm collecting stories and pictures from these men for a new publication titled STRANDED – Official Records and Survivor recollections of the Frank Knox salvage.

Helo Evacuation Pilot, LTjg George Arthun, recently sent in pictures of the helo he flew on the crew evacuation mission. First delivering evacuated crewmen to USS MIDWAY CV-41;



Arthun with helo

next a photo of the inside of USS HORNET Museum and Arthun with the same helo. (note – the UH-2a/b helos went through a modification to add second engine and improved avionics. The UH-2a/b models flown to evacuate FRANK KNOX crewmen were single engine models. – ED) The same helo is now in the USS HORNET CV-12 Air and Space Museum. You can visit the museum and touch your history. Following Naval active duty George trained as a commercial airline pilot flying the Boeing 767 as his last aircraft. He lives in Spokane WA.

Rodger Mullinix recalls “riding the wire up about 20 feet to the helo”; later in the evacuation the helos were lower and the winds trickier according to those who rode the helos.

Revisiting the Last rider(s) Lakin – Supply Officer Bob Lakin and Engineering Officer Frank Bryant – What a way to go! Instead of picking up orders to their next duty station Bob Lakin LTjg Supply Officer chose to join a group of Greek Officers and sailors as they trained-up in their new ship onboard FRANK KNOX (now named HMS THEMISTOKLIS). There were parts galore to gather, training and on board excuses and several social events including a farewell trip to Las Vegas. Then East via the Panama Canal, to new duty with the Greek Navy. Lakin and EO, Frank Bryant, and three enlisted volunteers, one from Operations, Weapons and Engineering were the “last Rough Riders” on the ship. If you are one of the volunteers, enlisted or officer we need your story and any pictures so contact us – PLEASE.

STRANDED – Publication about the most dramatic (and successful) salvage in the Pacific ever” has been through two reviews and is being assembled with many never before seen pictures of the ship and the damaged condition when finally floated off the reef August 24, 1965. The publication is a tribute to those volunteers who worked long days and nights in dangerous and unpredictable conditions, surviving three typhoons, to ride the ship off the reef and then to Kaohsiung Taiwan for evaluation and repair before a trip to Yokosuka Japan for rebuilding and repair. The next step is an initial editorial review, followed by another round of review before going to publication. If you have a story or a picture IT IS NOT TOO LATE TO MAKE IT INTO THE PUBLICATION. Phone me at 619-992-9449 so I can record your story and scan your pictures. Steve Cross, VP Communications.

55 YEARS AGO – FRANK KNOX WAS GROUNDED ON PRATAS REEF – The ship’s log of 21 July reports three men in the on-board salvage crew “are with motor whale boat at GRAPPLE. (ARS-7)” At 0800. In the log of 22 July at” 1108 – Motor whaleboat crew returned by helo.” The motor whale



Swaney with Flag

boat was returned likely on the 24th or 25th, because on the 26th all ships were directed to depart the area for typhoon evasion. Then BMSN Richard Swaney recalls, I steaming behind a larger ship during stormy weather for was he said was “a long time”. As COX you are responsible for the lives under your care and the motor whaleboat, very seaworthy, but with limits. The three survived, as did the motor whaleboat thanks to Swaney’s skill. CDR Price, Swaney’s Division Officer aboard recalls Swaney was likely the best small boat handler he experienced in the Navy. BMCS {Picture



Swaney as CPO

of Swaney w/ flag and as a Chief.] He recalled the the 38 days on Pratas Reef “taught me almost everything I needed to pass all the rating exams.” [If you have a chance to read the upcoming publication STRANDED, you will understand why the many salvage rigs and situations encountered by salvors and crew was an advanced degree in ship handling and salvage operations. ED]

Swaney became a coxswain in an unusual way. He was riding in a boat when the coxswain of the boat made several unsuccessful approaches to the ship. “Let me try”, volunteered Swaney. He made the landing the first try. His skill was confirmed when he handled the Frank Knox motor whaleboat during rough weather off Vietnam. He approached a mine sweeper to pick up classified orders; Ens Price was aboard. The mine sweeper was rolling. Close alongside, the mine sweeper rolled and was suddenly above the whale boat, diving down and “grazed the motor whaleboat, cracking the hull” recalls Price. Swaney’s quick reactions maneuvered the whaleboat to a safe distance according to Price. Had Swaney not reacted in a timely and proper way “we would have been crushed” recalls Price. Swaney became the coxswain for Frank Knox during the 38 days on the reef and beyond.

STRANDED – Official Records and Survivor Recollections of the most Dramatic Salvage Operation in the Pacific – Ever. The first two drafts of this publication are complete and reviewed by those interviewed. A copy of the draft with photos will be on the way to the first editing phase the week of October 12th.

Speaking of pictures and interviews – a picture of the Frank Knox the moment she was refloated was sent in by **Rodger Mullinix**. He also sent in pictures of FRANK KNOX being towed in to Kaohsiung, Taiwan by USS CONSERVER (ARS-12). Richard Swaney sent in several pictures from the shipyard in Taiwan, believed to be correct because the I-beams installed (to stabilize the port and starboard side of the bow) in Taiwan are not visible in these pictures. Swaney also sent in a picture of three KNOX sailors (Barry, Sandy and Byron) standing in the seven by 12 foot hole blown

open during salvage operations. The comment on the photo “It’s a wonder we didn’t sink.”

Don Greer sent in pictures of his survival knife and flashlight that most engineers kept in case the ship broke in two while on the reef. Many other firsts are Part of this unique, first time group of stories from the crew perspective. Frank Knox Reunion Association is supporting this publication to honor the on-board salvage crew on the 55th Anniversary of the salvage operations.



Don Greer

A copy of **The Special Certificate** issued to each volunteer we locate – help us by sending us information about the location of these volunteers so we can tell their story. Help us help them.

Captain Pete Sandrock – Note to all about the Blue Water Sailors act. – Hey, Steve,

Thanks for the Newsletter prod about filing Agent Orange claims. It got me going on my prostate cancer claim.

Main point: Go through your state or county Veterans Services Office. If you do it alone, you’ll screw it up.



Special Certificate

Here’s the advice from my Veterans Services Officer:

My advice for them is file now, as soon as they can. If not for themselves for their spouses (if they have them). Also to get prostate checked regularly, if they aren’t already dealing with prostate issues. They can always apply and donate to a charity of their choice if it’s a matter of pride or not wanting to take from the VA. These are benefits veterans are entitled to- and claiming them is important because the VA has admitted they exposed you guys to hazardous toxins in service of your country. It’s more likely than not what is causing their health conditions (if they are listed on the VA’s Agent Orange presumptive list).

I started my claim online via the DVA website. The online process was a mess. I called customer service. “We can’t help.” So I called my **local county Veterans Service Office**. Twenty-four hours later they filed my claim with all the supporting documents, including forms never mentioned on the DVA website.

You'll need your DD-214.

It helps to have documentation of deployment details. I had the attached Command History from the '69 deployment. I think it would be possible to find histories for other deployment through this link:

www.history.navy.mil/about-us/contact/directory.htmlarchives@navy.mil.

At least that's where I recall getting the '69 history.

Go here to find Frank Knox qualifying dates 1967 to 1970 **<https://www.hillandpon-ton.com/blue-water-navy-vietnam-map/>**

I'm most worried about Rich Whitehead and Jay Barabash.

Pete

NOTE: The 1969 cruise history is loaded on to our website ussfrankknox.com.

TAPS:

Richard Whitehead, LTjg lost his battle with Parkinson's disease a year or so ago. Pete and I just learned he passed away in Flagstaff AZ. He attended an officers reunion in San Diego in 2014.

Two shipmates recently lost their wives. Larry Eddingfield, LTjg (Capt. USN Ret. lost his wife Barbara early in the COVID lockdown of a heart attack in San Diego.

Jay Barabash, LTjg, (LCDR USN ret.) lost his wife Peg in February 2020. No cause of death was given.



USS Frank Knox (DDR742) Reunion Association
 Harry Chandler, President: hchandler64@gmail.com, 928-925-9490
 Stephen Cross, VP Communications: stephencross@earthlink.net, 619-922-9449
www.ussfrankknox.com



“DUES ARE DUE” Orv Kreig

If you haven't already paid dues for 2020, in the words of Orv, “Dues are Due”

2021 Membership Renewal, Life, Life Membership & Membership Application

It's that time of year again; to remind you the Membership Dues are due. We would appreciate you filling out the information below and sending it with your check to:

USS Frank Knox Reunion Association c/o Margaret Watson, Treasurer 3421 NW Coronado St., Corvallis, Oregon 97330
 Tel: 541-757-8067 **PLEASE MAKE YOUR CHECK PAYABLE TO “MARGARET WATSON”**

Annual Dues Renewal: \$30 **Lifetime Dues (one-time payment):**

Age 60 – 69,	\$300
Age 70 – 79,	\$200
Age 80 – 89,	\$100
Age 90 + ,	Free

Membership dues include Master Roster (to be mailed out early March), newsletters and mailings, special pricing for the Reunion activities, and voting privileges on matters before the membership at the annual business meeting. Even if you are unable to attend the reunion, your dues will help support costs to maintain and preserve our **USS Frank Knox Reunion Association** - membership roster, website maintenance (ussfrankknox.com), mailings and to preserve our Mission Statement: “The USS Frank Knox Reunion Association conducts reunions and other meetings to foster camaraderie with the officers and sailors who served aboard the USS Frank Knox (DDR-742) during her 27 years of service in the US Navy. The Reunion Association will maintain a factual narrative of the ship and men who served aboard USS Frank Knox.” **If you have a special talent and would like to offer your assistance, help is appreciated.**

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION/RENEWAL		
APPLICANT INFORMATION - JOIN		
Name:		
Date of birth (optional):	Wife/Companion:	
Address:		
City:	State:	ZIP Code:
Phone/s:	Rank when on board:	Years Served on Ship (mo/yr to mo/yr)
E-mail:		
MEMBERSHIP DUES FOR CALENDAR YEAR INCLUDE: MASTER ROSTER, REUNION PRICING & NEWSLETTER		
NOTES:		



SAVE THE DATE:
September 22-25, 2021
30th Annual USS Frank Knox Reunion
Albuquerque, New Mexico

Watch for updates on the website: www.ussfrankknox.com Dates and hotel information will be posted on the website as soon as confirmed. Please plan on making your hotel reservation early. If you do not have internet access, please feel free to contact a board member. Official reunion registration will be sent out by March, 2021.