



78 LIFE MEMBERS and counting

# KNOX KNEWS

OUR HISTORY WON'T SAVE ITSELF!

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

[ussfrankknox.com](http://ussfrankknox.com)

Spring 2021



## ACTION ITEMS

**DUES ARE DUE:** Membership and 2020 Fundraising total; 2021 in review; You are the story!; Salute to Shipyard Crew – 1965-66; Newest Life Member, LCDR William Fell; New Orders – Bob Beachkofski SKD2, Jim Healy RD3; Seeing Eye Dog; \$1000 Dollar Party; Royal Reef Runners; Let's Take the Long Way Home!; Jim Healy Emerald Piper; TAPS.

## MEMBERSHIP and Fundraising - 2020

**Annual Dues** - \$30.00 per year those who pay annually I hope you are planning to renew in 2021. Roughly half of our members support us by writing a check annually to support the organization. **Dues are Due** – send to Margaret Watson, 3421 NW Coronado St., Corvallis, OR 97330. (Make check payable to Margaret Watson Treasurer)

The other half are **Life Members** who paid a lump sum to join this group, currently 87 strong. The rest of our funding comes from our Annual White Elephant Auction, \$2200.00 was raised in 2020.

Dues, Life Members totals are added to White Elephant Proceeds of \$2300.00 we are in good shape to continue our operations. Our major operating costs are Website Maintenance ([ussfrankknox.com](http://ussfrankknox.com)), mail cost for our Knox Knews. In addition, special projects, such as 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Coin, and publications in preparation are paid from funds available.

## 2020 in REVIEW

A year like no other with unique challenges. FKRA responded with timely publication of three regular newsletters; Knox Knews is published in print and on line at [ussfrankknox.com](http://ussfrankknox.com). We deepened our relationship with USS MIDWAY CV41 the final stop for our history and collections. AN expanded website under Tom Soltis is fulfilling our grandest dreams. WE shifted our reunion on line and a Reunion Social for shipmates 1944-55, 1956-65 and 1966-71. We added a popular **White Elephant Auction online**, raising \$2300.00. These events and more were a response to bringing the reunion to you. This year we'll endeavor reach more shipmates and spouses in person in Albuquerque or on line. Watch for details soon.

## YOU ARE THE STORY

Another appeal for pictures, stories of ordinary and unusual moments, letters, diaries, newspaper articles, foreign brochures, invitations, menus, POD Plans of the Day, Bar Napkins and Coasters etc. and favorite souvenirs.

Without your items there is no story. Without your recollections, there is NO history. Without these items no one will know what life was like aboard a GEARING Class destroyer that was the pride of the fleet, recovered from a catastrophic grounding and returned to the top of the fleet. You and I need to **PRESERVE** our history, our History **INSPIRES** new generations and **EDUCATES** the civilian community about how important the US Navy, and our Armed Forces, are to maintaining a balance of power in a world of competitors with our nation. SHARE – PLEASE!

**SALUTE TO THE SHIPYARD CREW 1965** – When the USS FRANK KNOX arrived in Yokosuka Naval Shipyard around Sept 24<sup>th</sup> 1965 the repair became the largest and most complex repair in the yard's history. Your story and pictures are important – I would like to send stories and photos to me for the news and ship's history. It is just as important to know about life during the reconstruction of the FRANK KNOX as it is to hear the stories of those who lived aboard during the salvage. I hope you will agree and share – PHOTOS and STORIES. Please, no one will ever know if you, and friends, do not share. Thanks!

## NEW LIFE MEMBER

**William Fell, FC2**, joins the life member ranks. He served from December 1949 to October 1953 aboard the USS FRANK KNOX, later retiring as a LCDR. Fell gets credit for taking a young Orv Krieg under his wing and guiding him to greatness as a Gunners Mate. Orv became the second President of the Frank Knox Reunion Association. Orv referred to Fell as the “finest petty officer I ever served with.” Now association members can learn more about Korean War experi-



**DON GREER, BT3**



**SHIPYARD CREW**



**BOB BEACHKOSKI, SKD2**

ences and the difficulties of shaping future leader Orv Krieg!

**BOB “BEACHIE” Beachkofski, SKD2 – New Orders (Picture of Bob in uniform and at 101.)**

Bob transferred to a new duty station at the young age of 102 years and 10 months. He was our most mature shipmate. Bob was a plank owner on FRANK KNOX. He enlisted with the designation V plus 6, Victory in WWII plus 6 months. His family posted a notice listing a short review of a full and happy life. He attended eight FK reunions, shared his pictures, diary and recollections with us. Priceless documents thanks to Bob and his family.

During the pre and post Commissioning equipment upgrade, Bob assigned guards, and guarded, the new radar, stored in a warehouse, and **Top Secret** at the time. He resumed his **disbursing duties** only to find shipmate AL SMITH RD1 in and out of the supply office for parts and installation requests. AL SMITH’s diary and pictures will soon be shared with you thanks to his daughter, Helen. Al and his radar team accounted for six Japanese planes guarding Halsey’s Third Fleet.

**JIM HEALY RD3**

Jim also received new orders. His sudden passing shocked us all. Jim, and his wife Sue, attended 24 FK reunions, always carrying his bagpipes, and usually dressed in his finest kilts as a member,



JIM HEALY, RD3



JIM HEALY

and Assistant Pipe Major of the Emerald Society Pipe and Drums. He organized the 2019 FK Reunion Pipes and Drums performance. Jim was a super tour guide in Chicago, telling us who died where, police stories from his career and guiding the tour driver to see a lot extra sights and had the driver loving every minute of the tour. The FK Board has decided to have a **Jim Healy Emerald Piper** at all future reunions to honor Jim. Look for Jim’s

picture next to the TAPS section.

**\$1000 PARTY** – Roger Deppen, MM2 is the source of this story. The FRANK KNOX was refloated August 24, 1965, 0530 in the morning. The forward fire room and engineering spaces, once flooded by the grounding on Pratas Reef, were filled with foam. Number 3 boiler had an air leak and number 4 had ruptured tubes and was taken off line the night before refloating. The after emergency diesel was the ship’s power. The ship was towed stern first into Kaohsiung Harbor and placed in the Fourth Chinese Naval Shipyard, 26 August, for temporary repairs. Temporary repairs were completed 20 September. A Court of Inquiry into the grounding was also completed. The ship was towed toward Yokosuka with number 3 boiler repaired and able to come on line.

Deppen recalls as the ship approached Yokosuka permission was received to power up the plant and steam into Yokosuka bow first. The captain called down to main control and offered \$1000 is they could put number 3 boiler on line, power up the port screw and steam into Yokosuka. The machinist mates turned to and powered up the port engine. The ship reversed itself and steamed into Yokosuka using her port engine. Deppen recalls that the \$1000 threw a heck of a party. When

I asked Don Greer BT3 about the party he answered "I never saw any money or attended any party."

FKRA will buy drinks if the Machinist Mates and BT's involved are in the room at our reunions so this inequity is resolved.

### **"DARK WAS THE NIGHT, ROUGH WERE THE SEAS. – Newsweek**

These lines came from Newsweek magazine, July, 1965 and begins a story about the grounding of the USS FRANK KNOX July 18, 1965. "Dark was the night, rough were the seas. Seven miles from the Communist China Pratas Islets USS FRANK KNOX grounded." This appears to be the nautical equivalent of "It was a dark and stormy night." that Snoopy often was writing in the **Peanuts** comic strip.

Fact check – The night was moon lit. The seas were calm Tide at Pratas Reef was slack. The chart shows one island as part of the reef. The photo taken approximately 1100, 7-1-1965, the morning the ship grounded shows calm water. The "Royal Reef Runners" know the truth.

Hats off to them!

### **"LET'S TAKE THE LONG WAY HOME"**

As boys the likely rule in your home may have paralleled mine – up with sun, or animals, chores done, home by dark or the dinner bell. Picture this scene if you can

– Bob Harp EM3 had just left FRANK KNOX after 30+ days on the reef, working like a dog. He was finally able to get a fresh water shower and some decent chow. While in Yokosuka he received new orders sending him to —. His orders included a flight home to Travis AF Base, then to San Diego and his new ship. Many servicemen were grabbing transportation on the new Boeing 707 jets to San Francisco; Bob drew a vintage C-130 aircraft that flew from Clark AFB in the Philippines, to Guam, then to Midway Island for fuel. Next stop, was a fuel stop in Hawaii, except the loaded C-130 had mechanical problems shortly after takeoff, aborted and was vectored to Midway Island where the heavily loaded plane attempted a safe landing. The hard landing did some damage to a tire. The landing also caused the C-130 to careen down the runway, fighting for control, to remain on the runway. Midway did not keep spare tires so the tire was ordered. The next day the tire was delivered to Guam. After some additional delay, the tire was delivered to Midway Island, the following day.



**C-130**

The tired sailors, already 48 hours into their journey were provided some beer to consume while waiting for their tire to arrive, the aging C-130 to be repaired, and the next leg of their flight began to hit the beer pretty hard. After a while words were exchanged and a few fists flew. The command

at Midway Island had seen enough of the drinking and now less than well-dressed passengers. Confined until the wheel arrived from Guam, the third day of their trip home arrived.

Wheel repair complete, the command escorted the passengers, including Harp, to the plane and told them don't ever come back here. The aging C-130 with a new tire, took off for Hawaii leaving behind the remote Midway Island, gooney birds, WWII history and little else. Next stop, Hawaii 13+ hours away and the beginning of day four.

After fueling in Hawaii, Harp and his fellow passengers settled in for a 14 hour flight to Travis AFB near San Francisco. Upon arrival Harp planned to go see his girlfriend. The kindly Air Force pilot offered to give Harp a ride south to his girlfriend's home. As they approached the exit Harp asked the pilot if he would stop at the gas station so he could clean up from four long days of travel. After cleaning up Harp called the home and his girlfriend arrived to pick him up and return him for a well-deserved rest, from 35 days on Pratas Reef, Yokosuka Navy Base, travel to Clark AFB, Guam, Midway Island, Hawaii and finally San Francisco. Bob Harp EM3 that is quite a story.

### **"A" IS FOR APPENDIX**

WWII veteran Irv Eisenberg RM3 has contributed several stories to our newsletter. A recent conversation with him revealed a wartime operation on Irv with a front row seat.

Eisenberg looked young. He was young enough that he did not shave. The captain CDR Ford looked at Irv one day and told him "Get rid of that peach fuzz, Eisenberg!" Irv had to find his way, at sea, to his first shave. Soon after Irv realized he was not well and sought out the corpsman. Told to rest, he checked back in the following day. This time he was sick, really sick. The corpsman advised the Captain that he suspected Irv had appendicitis. You can visualize the chain of events. A Message to the task force commander and arrangements to transfer a patient at sea. Rig for a high line transfer at sea. Rendezvous at sea and transfer the patient by highline to a ship with a doctor and full medical facilities. "I don't remember a thing! Irv recalled.



**WWII OPERATING ROOM  
PATIENT FACE DOWN!**

Now Irv's memory returns as he recalls there were two doctors to operate on him. Appendicitis confirmed Irv is prepped for surgery on board a ship in the operating suite. The doctors gave Irv a spinal, numbing him waist down. Irv looks up to see – MIRRORS! He's going to have to watch his own surgery. Not many of us watch as we get a shot, seeing that needle go into your arm. Irv is watching as the two physicians operate and repair his appendix. Appendix repaired, Irv is returned to the USS FRANK KNOX for duty in the radio room. I am happy to say those war time surgeons did a fine job. Irv is still with us 75 years later and he's had his COVID shots thanks to the VA.

### **HEALY EMERALD PIPER**

The Frank Knox Reunion Board wanted to honor Jim Healy RD3 for his reunion attendance and many unselfish contributions to the FKRA. He will be most remembered by many for his pipes and

kit. To keep Jim with us at each reunion it was decided to have a piper at each reunion going forward to be known as the Healy Emerald Piper. Reunion organizers will contact police, fire and civic pipers for talent at each reunion site to have a piper at the reunion representing Jim. A small fund will be set aside in our budget to pay for the piper and we'll accept you donation to this fund if you would like to honor Jim.

**As reported above:**

James S Healy, RD-3, Chicago Police Sgt., Emerald Piper, passed away suddenly January 29, 2021. He was a Life Member. See our new obituary section on the website. Jim attended 26 reunions. Condolences to Healy family, 4637 N Kilborn, Chicago IL 60630



**JIM HEALY RD3**

Robert "Bob" or Beachie" Beachkofski, SKD2, passed away in Appleton W, February 4, 2021 at the age of 102 years, 10 months. He was a Life Member and WWII Plank Owner. Obituary on our website. Bob attended eight reunions. Condolences to: [Clairebeach@yahoo.com](mailto:Clairebeach@yahoo.com)

Catarino Arellanes, FN – His son reported that Catarino or "Cat" passed away 12/12/2020. He shared unusual pictures taken of Tsingtao, China 1945, the people, pier and operations at sea. FRANK KNOX escorted capital ships to Tsingtao to accept the surrender of a large part of the Japanese fleet, October 1945. The ceremonies took place at the race track in the city. Tsingtao was visited again by FRANK KNOX in early 1946 and again in 1948. The city later fell to the Communist Chinese Forces. Condolences to: Arellanes Family, 200 Charlotte Ave, Anaheim, CA 92805-5553.



**JIM HEALY RD3 LEADING EMERALD PIPERS**

Donald Abel CS1 10/69-3/71 Rockford, IL 07/18/2019  
Evert Dorsten SK1 03/54-06/55 Celina, OH 10/02/2020  
William J "Bill" Kelly CSSN 11/51-4/53 Marion, OH 03/8/2019  
Charles Whitehead, LTJG QMC 7/68-3/71 Pensacola, FL 2019

**Fair winds and following seas, gentlemen.**



**CATARINO "CAT" ARELLANES, FN**