

February, 2007

Knox Knews

Plans for the 2007 Reunion at San Diego, California are coming along. We have made arrangements with Holiday Inn at the Zoo and are currently working with Walt DeFelice who lives in San Diego concerning Tours, etc., more information forthcoming. It's going to be another grand reunion.

If you plan to attend the reunion at San Diego now is the time to order your name badges if you do not already have them. They are very helpful when meeting "old" shipmates who think they haven't changed in forty or fifty years. The mens badges read:

USS FRANK KNOX DDR-742
YOUR NAME RATE/RANK (*when aboard*)
MONTH/YEAR - MONTH/YEAR

Ladies badge

NAME
CITY AND STATE

they have magnetic backs eliminating poking holes in your clothes. Either drop me a line or e-mail.

Received some notes with Dues payments, JOE DEMPSKY wanted me to pass along his guest LEE LOCKE attended the reunion at Branson. Sorry if I missed mentioning anyone else, I don't always receive the names of guests.

Note from JIM and PAT WILSON, Redmond, OR that they were sorry to miss the Reunion and said Pat has written a children's book and wish to donate it to the Auction in San Diego. Many thanks to Jim and Pat.

A sad note received from BARBARA MATTHEWS informing us FIRLE REDBURN passed away December 5th. Don and Firle were with us for many reunions. Our deepest sympathy to Don and his family.

HUGH GUSCETTI said he really enjoyed the latest Knox Knews and also expressed he would have liked to hear Ken Sewell's talk about the December 1950 "incident". He was aboard the Knox at the time and was caught in the shower when GQ sounded and spent the next hours half-dressed and itching from the drying soap! We are all looking forward to Ken's book and perhaps a movie. Hugh also recalls another incident when we were "bird dogging" for the carriers when our fighters requested permission to fire on suspicious planes. I told Hugh I do remember as Gun Captain of Mount 52 we had many sightings of aircraft but they always stayed out of range of our 5" 38's.

The following is from William T. Emery, Lewisburg, PA, an excerpt from Tin Can Sailors:

The USS FRANK KNOX (DDR-742) left Long Beach in September 1961 for a two-and-a-half year transfer to the WestPac home port of Yokosuka, Japan. After a Formosa patrol and other WestPac activities, the Knox left Yokosuka for Subic Bay after Christmas 1961. While the ship was operating out of Subic Bay, she participated in a movie called *No Man is an Island* with Jeffrey Hunter as the U. S. Navy sailor George W. Tweed who was the last sailor left on Guam after the Japanese invaded the island. The movie was filmed in the Philippines while the KNOX was at Subic Bay during January 1962. The KNOX's part in the movie was to pick up Tweed after he warned the navy about a Japanese

gun on the island guarding a bay. During the filming of the pick-up of Jeffery Hunter (Tweed), the KNOX would put out a black smoke screen, and an explosive would be set off behind the ship as a *miss* from the Japanese gun Tweed had reported.

The first day a UDT man came on board with a 5-inch shell casing full of explosive attached to a board. I was on the fantail to watch the action as we went through the run to *pick up* Tweed, and the Knox released the black smoke, but the explosive did not detonate. A few days later we went back out for another film run, but this time the same UDT man returned with a Filipino to assist him. I was on the fantail again and saw the second explosive, a three inch shell casing. I asked the UDT man what was in it, and he said it was full of plastic explosive. I left and went down to the machine shop before the film run started.

As the KNOX made its turn, the movie special effects crew started water blowing across the fantail. The members of the crew that were watching went forward of Mount 53. Right after that as the explosive was being put into the water, it went off prematurely. I heard the explosion and, almost immediately, felt the ship pick up speed. About 30 seconds after the explosion, one of the other electricians ran into the shop and said there was an accident on the fantail. The captain took the ship back to Subic Bay at 25 knots and ordered a full back-down when we got to the pier. Two men were carried off the ship before it was completely tied up. One was the UDT man, who was killed immediately; the other was the Filipino, who died four hours later at a Subic Bay hospital. The explosion blew out the mesh that was between the middle and bottom lifelines on the fantail. It also blew a hole approximately 6 inches by 18 inches in the back of the ship about a foot below the main deck. After the accident, fire hoses had to be used to clean the main deck on the fantail. The KNOX was tied to a pier for almost 24 hours with everything running as if we were at sea so that it could get under way in less than an hour. After the issue of a Filipino being killed on a U. S. Navy ship was resolved by the diplomats, we resumed flight operations with the USS MIDWAY (CVB-41).

Harold Ringstrom EMFN/EM3
USS FRANK KNOX (DDR-742)
April 1961 to August 1962

I had previously mentioned the Knox did not have torpedo tubes when I was aboard 1950 - 1954 and received this from Cdr. Lionel Price (Ret):

After you had served aboard the Knox, the ship underwent extensive modifications. It became a FRAM II destroyer, geared up as a radar picket ship*. As such, it took on INTEL capabilities, with a very large CIC and sophisticated ECM. (Accordingly, during our patrol in the Gulf of Tonkin in the summer of 1964, we determined that North Vietnam was up to something just two weeks before the Maddox and Turner Joy were attacked. Another story.) At any rate, during the FRAM II conversion, the ship reconfigured for three mounts (six 5"38's), two torpedo mounts (six torpedo tubes) which I believe were for the MK 46 torpedo <check me out on this one - it could have been an earlier model>, as well as the VDS (Variable Depth Sonar) - designed to go below the thermoclines for target acquisition), twin 50's fore and aft, multiple small arms for boarding parties, plus depth charges that were already in place. The ship was probably one of the most versatile war ships in the Navy at the time. The Knox, from 1963 thru 1965, had won just about every award the Navy had to offer. (The Marjorie Sterritt Battleship Fund Award, Our Navy Magazine's Ship of the Year Award, and every Battle Efficiency and Engineering "E" available, as well as the Supply Corps "S" award. We had even set the UNREP record for the Pacific. The down side to this was that we had won the Battle Efficiency "E", which was published while we were sitting on the Pratas Reef in the South China Sea, in July of 1965. Needless to say, the jokes Navy wide were painful to say the least. The chant, KNOX ON THE ROCKS, by our fellow sailors from around the fleet, precipitated a lot of barroom brawls.

I look forward to reading about the incident relative to the Russian submarine encounter in 1950. That should be a good one.

By the way, if any of our shipmates, that were aboard the Knox when we ran aground, would like to contribute their side of the story to the book, then please let me know or have them contact me directly. I would need to be in two way communication with them. (For those who are writing their own books concerning the incident, they can contact me as well for dates, times, places, etc. Their

work will be just as important to the overall picture as any. Future sailors will learn for it all.) I look forward to San Diego next year and God willing I'll be there. In the meantime, fair winds and following seas, and may God bless.

Lionel

**Editor's note:*

I was under the impression the Knox was always considered a "radar picket ship" in 1950.
Orv

Another sad note received:

SAM GARRO, SH2 1951 - 1954 PASSED AWAY DECEMBER 15, 2006

VERNON JOHNSTON, MM2, 1957-1960 informed us Franklin Leon Mosier (non-member) BT3, who served on the Knox 1958-1961 passed away April 3, 2006. Vernon also sent pictures of "Knox on the Rocks", 1965.

JIM BESHEARS YNC, recently had a bout in two hospitals and a rehab unit until finally going into Merrill Gardens an assisted-living facility. Jim sent along info that may not be known to everyone. When he arrived at Merrill Gardens (fully covered by MediCare) the admitting lady asked if he was a vet. She gave him paperwork to fill out and submit to VA Regional Office. They will let him know how much he is entitled each month, which is applied to his monthly charge of \$2940. The maximum to which he will be entitled is \$1470 per month which reduced his monthly dues to fifty percent of his charges and is effective as long as he's there AND under the care of his physician. So, for \$1470 a month....and on a month-to-month basis (lease)....he has a 2 BR apt., not furnished, weekly house cleaning, and all meals. Meals are available from 0730 to 1800 daily, and you order from a menu. Transportation is available twice weekly to keep medical appointments; all apts have satellite TV. Food servers wear a badge with name. For each year of service, a logo button is attached to the badge; most food servers have eight buttons on their badges. There is an iron clad rule against tipping, so he think it speaks well for the company that supplies food servers ... without tips ... have been here that long. Each apt has your own private phone (your expense). There are 90 apts (all occupied, with a waiting list) with 97 what they call "residents." That's because 7 apts have both spouses in residence. The food is great, the people are loving and caring; was damn lucky to get in here.

Please change addresses to:
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Jim Beshears #223
355 W. Westchester Pky
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(972) 264-4481

I'm sure Jim would like to hear from some of his shipmates.
Orv

We are getting more and more inquiries about taking a cruise for our Reunion. We are checking on cruise lines for more information, some of the things we've found so far; ***Think you'll be bored?*** Think again. There is so much to do on cruise ships today, you'll wear yourself out before you get bored. There are pools, casinos, shops (duty free), restaurants, lounges, fitness centers and spas. Many ships also have movie theaters, miniature golf, trap shooting, shuffle board, even surfing! Then there are the ports of call! You can choose the Caribbean, Southern, Eastern or Western; Alaska; Hawaii; Central or South America; Mexico; and more. With a wide variety of Shore Excursions you won't be bored.

What about Seasickness? Most of today's cruise ships are stabilized you probably won't know the ship is moving. But, if you are worried, there are plenty of seasick remedies that are effective.

What about those mega-liner, they're awfully big and crowded aren't they? Well, they are big, that's for sure. And there are lots of people on them, but they are so big you can always find that it is not too crowded. You could consider a small ship cruise. There are many that hold 100 - 200 passengers. There are many options available with as many destinations.

What about price? Cruises are expensive, aren't they? Actually, a cruise is one of the best vacation bargains you will find! Remember, your cruise vacation includes your accommodations, often including airfare, transfers from the airport to the ship, transportation between several ports, **ALL YOUR MEALS**, snacks (several dining choices available for every meal and in between, including room service), entertainment (Las Vegas style shows, comedians, discos, etc.) on board activities and parties.

You might want to consider a Reunion Cruise, give us your input.

Special Military Earnings Credit for Social Security

If you served in the active duty military before January 2001 you can get up to \$1200 a year in earnings credit for the years you served. When you apply for Social Security bring your DD-214 to your Social Security Office. You only get this benefit if you ask for it. To read more, go to the Social Security Website at: <http://www.socialsecurity.gov/retire2/military.htm>. You do not need to be a retiree to qualify for this benefit, so please tell your friends, neighbors, etc.

Under certain circumstances, special extra earnings for your military service from 1940 through 2001 can be credited to your record for Social Security purposes. These extra earnings may help you qualify for Social Security or increase the amount of your Social Security benefit.

Special extra earnings are granted for periods of active duty or active duty for training. Special extra earnings are **not** granted for inactive duty training.

Note: Social Security cannot add these extra earnings to your record until you file for Social Security benefits.

Service in 1978 through 2001

For every \$300 in active duty basic pay, you are credited with an additional \$100 in earnings up to a maximum of \$1,200 a year. If you enlisted after September 7, 1980, and didn't complete at least 24 months of active duty or your full tour, you may not be able to receive the additional earnings. Check with Social Security for details.

Service 1957 Through 1977

You are credited with \$300 in additional earnings for each calendar quarter in which you received active duty basic pay.

Service in 1940 Through 1956

If you were in the military during this period, including attendance at a service academy, you did not pay Social Security taxes. However, your Social Security record may be credited with \$160 a month in earnings for military service from September 16, 1940, through December 31, 1956, under the following circumstances:

- You were honorably discharged after 90 or more days of service, or you were released because of a disability or injury received in the line of duty; or
- You are still on active duty; or
- You are applying for survivors benefits and the veteran died while on active duty.

You cannot receive credit for these special extra earnings if you are already receiving a federal benefit based on the same years of service. There is one exception: if you were on active duty after 1956, you can still get the special earnings for 1951 through 1956, even if you are receiving a military retirement based on service during that period.

I have been able to procure a new patch, this one is the Coat of Arms of the USS FRANK KNOX. It is in the shape of a shield with an anchor and four stars on a field of blue, across the top is USS FRANK KNOX and under the anchor DDR 742. It is now available at the cost of \$5.00. We have had some shipmates inquire about the "Rough Rider" patch as not the patch they recall from their time aboard. All Ship Store merchandise shipped First Class.

ATTENTION -- EXTREMELY IMPORTANT

There is a FAKE so-called Veterans Organization operating out of Beech Grove, Indiana that has a primary goal of soliciting money through telephone calls with the spiel they are giving telephone cards to our military men and women.

This outfit calls itself INDIANA VETERANS RELIEF FUND

They are using a storefront address at 157 Bethel Ave., Suite B, Beech Grove, IN 46107. Telephone (317) 783-1974.

Indiana Veterans Relief Fund is operating under a blanket organization called **Common Ground Charities, Inc.** A **Michael Q. Risley, Jr.** is listed as Director of Fund Raising and a **Tanya Risley** is shown to be Office Manager.

I visited the location and talked with Ms. Risley. The rented office space is essentially a telephone "Boiler Room". I viewed about a half-dozen people sitting at a small work area facing three walls wearing headphones and mikes making phone calls. The front office room and rear office room are unkempt and dirty with no trappings of a veterans organization. No flags, no wall pictures, no sign of *any* patriotism. I confronted Ms. Risley with some pointed questions. "How many telephone calling cards have been issued to American troops?" (She said they gave some to departing troops at Camp Atterbury but couldn't tell me when or how many.) "How much money has been solicited since this operation began last year?" (She told me the figures had not been compiled and are not available.)

Ms Risley informed me they are legal. I informed her there is a difference of being legal on paper and morally correct in practice! (I am convinced this outfit is only interested in lining their own pockets with cash from proud Americans whom think they are helping our military men and women in uniform.)

The Indiana Consumer Protection section of the Attorney Generals Office appears to be interested in this situation after talking with them at length. IF WE CAN'T SHUT THIS OUTFIT DOWN WE CAN AT LEAST GET THE WORD OUT:

VETERANS & CONSUMER'S BEWARE!

Donald F. Myers, USMC Retired

Department of Indiana, Marine Corps League

Director of Public Relations

Contact point Indianapolis Marine Corps League Office:

(317) 546 7228 (or write Marine Corps League, POB 2351, Indianapolis, IN 46206-2351 (Attn:

Director of PR D.F. Myers

Coming up next will be the invitation to the reunion in San Diego. We are finalizing the events and the banquet for a grand time in San Diego. As soon as you receive the flyer make your hotel reservation and decide upon the tours you want to attend.

If you receive any inquiries from shipmates asking about the reunion remind them that only current paid up members receive the application. You are receiving this Newsletter because you are paid up. Keep up the good work! See you in San Diego!

