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# USS BASILONE 824



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December 2006

Greetings Shipmates and Associate Members,

Well another year has come and gone with the finding of some shipmates and the loss of others. Newly found shipmates include Herbert Dent, Perry Buynack, Ken Haske, Bruce Stuckey, George Nazdam, Phil Rogers, Chester White, Jr, Martin, Neimiro, Paul Sarsany and Robert O'Malley.

We lost the following shipmates this past year Charles Holstein, Bernard Bickham, Norman Lape, John Hankinson, Francis Huck, Charles Doss, George Rafferty, James Servidio, James Smith, Jerry Smartz, William Cornwell, Robert Schafer and Jenner Kittle.

At the Business meeting the following items were discussed and approved by the membership. First was to decide if we wanted a reunion next year and it was unanimous that we did. If all goes well we will be in San Diego next year. Our men on the ground in San Diego, Ray Jones, Jim Goodspeed and Jerry Moorman have narrowed the time frame to September or October. If it is September we are considering joining up with Tin Can Sailors which is having its national meeting there in the beginning of September. So look for more info to be coming from one of us to you in the near future. Next we renewed that domain name and website contracts for another year. Due to the problems that TCS has had over the past several years we now only maintain a link to their website. The following donations were approved \$200.00 to Tin Can Sailors, \$250.00 to the John Basilone Foundation, \$100.00 to the color guard of the John Basilone detachment of the Marine Corps League for providing us with an Honor Guard for our memorial service at the John Basilone statue in Raritan. We also donated a set of pictures and ships' patches to high school to be used at Basilone Field. We also voted to raise the dues for 2008 to \$20.00 with life membership still at \$100.00. This year dues is still only \$15.00.

DUES IS DUE make your checks out to the USS Basilone Association and mail them to our treasurer Frank Crouse at 3103 Mt Carmel Road, Upperco, Md 21155.

The reunion this year was held in Newark, New Jersey and it appears that everyone had a good time. We started out with check in and a welcome dinner on Monday the 18<sup>th</sup> of September. The 19<sup>th</sup> saw us touring New York City, primarily on the Westside due to the United Nations General Assembly being in session. So we saw Broadway, Times Square, Grants Tomb, and several other sites. Wednesday the 20<sup>th</sup> was a free day with nothing planned to allow people to go to a Broadway show, shopping, see more sites in the city or just recuperate for the next round of tours. The 21<sup>st</sup> saw us touring Ellis Island and the Statue of Liberty. We then toured lower Manhattan starting at Battery Park, going to Wall Street, and Ground Zero. The 22<sup>nd</sup> we cruised around Manhattan and toured the USS Intrepid Museum. Yep the ship that got stuck and had to be dredged out of the harbor a week or so after we were aboard her. The 23<sup>rd</sup> saw



us have a luncheon business meeting which I already reported on. After the business meeting we went to Raritan, New Jersey where we held our memorial service at the John Basilone statue with an Honor Guard from the John Basilone Detachment of the Marine Corps League. We had a very special guest at this event, Clinton Watters. Clint is the only surviving member of the John Basilone-Lena Riggi wedding party. Clint was our guest at the dinner we held at the Il Forno Restaurant in Bridgewater, New Jersey and entertained us with stories of some of his liberties with John Basilone before Iwo Jima. We were supposed to go to the John Basilone concert after the dinner but due to a mix up between the Parade Committee and the concert committee they didn't have enough tickets for us so rather than split up with only some of us getting in we decided to go back to the hotel and do what sailors do on liberty and that was have a couple of drinks. Sunday we again proceeded to Raritan where some of us took in the John Basilone Museum, which had been remodeled and many of the items that were on display are now in storage. We marched as our own unit in the parade with the ships quarterdeck name board from the museum and were well received. As French Johnson said "I was in several parades before I joined the Navy and a few afterwards. However, the Basilone Parade was almost overwhelming. I had never experienced a continuous applause for a group of men from the beginning to the end of the parade. It was Awesome." After the parade we went on our way home. The John Basilone Parade is always held the last weekend in September, so if you happen to be in the area and would like to march in the parade just line up with the guys from the Tin Can Sailors and tell them you severed on the Basilone and you'll get a warm welcome from them. The only disappointment I had was that more of our New Jersey shipmates didn't turn out for the events in Raritan. Charlie Germershausen was the only additional guy that showed up from New Jersey for an event.

Finally, I would like to thank Perry Buynack for the copy of the cruise book he sent us. Special thanks to Jim Elliott for getting us a copy of the comic book that had John Basilones' exploits at Guadalcanal in it. The John Basilone Foundation for sending us several DVDs of their fundraising events. If I failed to mention anyone that donated something I apologize.

Next year in San Diego, if things go right.

Your Shipmate.

Philip E. Poplaski

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