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USS BASILONE

824



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December 2002

Greetings Shipmates and Associate Members,

Well we'll start out with some exciting news. The official USS Basilone website is under construction. As you know Tin Can Sailors allows us to have a message board on their website as a courtesy. They also allow us to have a brief history of the ship and a few pictures. The new website belongs to the Association. Our webmasters Bob Talamo and Frank Stepka are working diligently to get us up and running. Bob has gotten us our domain name. To get to the new website use the following web address www.uss-basilone-dde-dd824.org/ The site already has a number of pictures and forums opened. I understand that as construction goes along that more things will be available. In the future you will be able to download/read the association newsletter on line at the associations' new website. So it is vitally important that you give us your correct e-mail address. You can give it to either myself or to Bob Talamo. My e-mail address is Pepumkc8@aol.com Bob's e-mail address is bobtal1@speakeasy.net or you can leave it at the association website. If I have an e-mail address for you in the association roster this will be the last newsletter you get by snail mail. Bob is looking for old POD's, poems and stories about the ship. So if you have anything of interest you can upload it to the website. Frank will continue to be our contact for Tin Can Sailors.

DUES IS DUE NOW. Dues is still only \$10.00. If you intent to pay by check make the check payable to the USS Basilone Association and mail it to our Treasurer. His address is Frank Crouse 3103 Mount Carmel Rd Upperco, Md 21155.

I would like to thank Jim and Dee Goodspeed for hosting the reunion in Placerville, California, our first one on the west coast. Jim kept telling me that things on the west coast were done differently and they are. Almost everyone arrived on Monday a lot of us had never been to California and decided to make the most of it. Optional tours began on Tuesday with a tour of San Francisco with the usual stops. On Wednesday those that signed up went to the Napa Valley to check out the wine. On Thursday we split up as there were 2 tours available that day. Some of us went to South Lake Tahoe for a little gambling. We also got a little bit of television history tossed at us. The ranch used in the Bonanza TV series is over by North Lake Tahoe. But the opening scene when they ride up over the hill is on the South Lake Tahoe side. We say it from a distance. The tour guide, Jerry, gave us another tidbit of information and that was that the top 5 feet of Lake Tahoe are the property of the state of Nevada. Don't ask me why. The other tour on Thursday went on a Hard Rock Mine tour down into the mine and also had a walking tour of a couple of gold rush towns. In the evening we went to the oldest hardware store west of the Mississippi. On Friday we began our regular reunion tours with the first stop being Sutter's Fort. Then it was

on to Old Town Sacramento where we saw the Pony Express and Wells Fargo Museum. We had any opportunity to shop and site see some of the old buildings. The it was on to the California Railway Museum which was pretty impressive. On Saturday we went to the site of Sutter's mill the site that started the California gold rush of 1849. We had an opportunity to pan for gold and were shown how to do it by a wonderful reenactor who wore authentic costume. The memorial service was held at the gold discovery site on the west branch of the American River. On the way to the gold site we took a small side trip on to the property of a Johnny Cash hit song Fulsom Prison. It was a somewhat forbidding place but it had more deer and wild turkey in one place than I had every seen before. The reason for that is there is no hunting allowed on this piece of state property. Jim and Dee even did a post reunion tour Yosemite National Park. The banquet was a western style barbecue which was quite good. The entertainment was very interesting. If you recall there was a reverse wagon train going from west to east to celebrate the nation bicentennial and our sing was a part of that. He told us some wonderful stories and sang some great songs.

The business meeting was held on Friday. It was decided that we would have a reunion in 2003. I made my usual threat of having the next reunion in Nome, Alaska in January but that didn't get anyone to volunteer to host the next reunion. So I did. I and guys from Buffalo, New York will be your hosts from August 14-17, 2003. Why Buffalo? Well the reason is simple John Basilone was born here. In an unrelated aside, Jack Price and his wife, stayed at the San Francisco Marine Memorial Club and found out that they have a John Basilone room there. At the business meeting we approved the donation of \$250.00 to Tin Can Sailors' for the Ships' Preservation Fund. Jack Price has consented to be our representative to look into a proposal from Phil Dilloway about an Excellence award contest between the ships that made up CortDesDiv14, I not sure of the number is right. I would like to take this opportunity to correct an oversight I think I made in my last newsletter. I believe I failed to mention that

the Thumbs Up flag from the first Vietnam cruise is now in our possession. I believe Dan Hallinan loaned it to us. So thanks Dan and if it wasn't you thanks to whomever did give it to us. Now I would like to thank Eugene Perschbacker for presenting us with a National Ensign that is from the ship. According to Eugene there was some kind of leak in a space where flags were stored and when this was discovered the decision was made to get ride of the flags even though they were stored in plastic bags. Eugene managed to save one and he presented it to the association at the meeting. It was accepted on behave of the association by the ships' historian George Christenson. The flag was used in the closing ceremony at the banquet.

It is my sad duty to inform you that the following shipmate have died this past year. Oliver Fowler, Jr, Robert E. Lee Stokes, Bernard Secoski, Loren Sommerfeld, Fred Hamlett, Clarence Gaffney, Harry Dozier, John Owens, James Skonieczny, Richard Seely, James (Dusty) Rhodes, John Behuncik and Benny Hudnell.

The following people have been dropped from the roster as they have moved and let no forwarding address, are deceased or are in some other way incapacitated.

Tom Mercer, Steven Lichten berg, Leland Kuhl, Gary Collamer, John Ebel, Bernard Davidson Associate Member, F B Coleman, Byron Whitaker, Emil Nych, Cliff Harris,

Charles Petevich, John Marcinek, Edward Malec, Anthony Burakowski, Robert Wahls, Bart Napurano, Bruce Fordham, John Stillwell, James Pitts, Woodrow Aiken, Wayne Spell, David Benkoff, Ray Chabot, LeRoy (Vic) Nelson, Robert Terek and Charles Olive.

The following people are newbies or have been dropped from the list a found again. Lee Shaver, Fred Clemens, Harry Dwinell, John Gotimer, William Booher, Leo Leonard, John A Lane, Roger Southwick, Rollie Welcher, Peter Farragher, Russell Middleton, Vernon Brown, David Constantine, Bernard Matuszewski, Ron Edelstein, Darrall J Maguire, Bill Gill, Harry Archible, Phil Singleton, Willard Tessin, William McCombs and Ken Grabarczyk.

I hope you all have had a nice holiday season and the guys in Buffalo and I hope to see you in August.

Your Shipmate,



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