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# USS BASILONE

# 824



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December 2001

Greetings Shipmates and Associate Members,

Well another year has come and gone and it's time for another newsletter. I hope that things have gone well for you this past year and that you have a happy holiday season.

I want to thank Bob and Jean Barkalow and their helpers for putting on another great reunion for us in Charleston this past October. Thursday was check-in day with all the hubbub that entails. Setting up the check-in table, Ships' Store, Memorabilia tables and getting caught up on what's been going on in our lives with our shipmates.

Friday we split up into 2 groups for tours. One group toured historic Charleston while the other group toured Drayton Hall. The groups then switches places in the afternoon. We got to see a great deal of the city. Battery Park was quite interesting, among other things it had a memorial to the men who died on the USS Hobson which was cut in half by the USS Wasp. As some of you guys recall the Wasp also beat up the Basilone during a refueling in the Med. Drayton Hall is an interesting place. It is a house with no furnishings. The thing that I found interesting about Drayton Hall was that it was occupied by the family until the late 60's or early 70's and that even at this time there was still no electricity or running water. So essentially it was unchanged since it was built in the 1700's. While on the tour of historic Charleston we had an opportunity to shop and sample the local food specialties. We also saw the old Citadel building which is now painted pink and is a Best Western Hotel, I think. The highlight of the day was going to the new Citadel and watching their dress parade. They had an Honors presentation and they officially accepted the plebe class into their Corps of Cadets. And The Basilone and the USS Langley were acknowledged as being present.

Saturday was our busiest day we went to Patriot's Point and toured The USS Yorktown and USS Laffey. Our memorial service was held aboard the Laffey. Shortly before the service we learned that a former captain of the Basilone had passed way his name was Robert E. Lee Stokes. Lunch was on board the Yorktown in the CPO Mess. We then toured the Yorktown which had a lot of interesting displays on carriers. It also has a Medal of Honor display and John Basilone's name is there. After lunch we went on a tour of Fort Sumter which was very interesting. I had not realized that in the Spanish-American War that they had actually put a new gun battery into the old fort to protect Charleston harbor. A strange occurrence happened on the way back to the landing for some reason the tour boat ran out of beer. They must not have realized how thirsty sailors can get when they are out to sea, even if it is only the harbor. I also understand that this also happened to the Basilone somewhere in Turkey during a Med. deployment.

After the tours and before the dinner dance we held a business meeting. The treasurer, Frank Crouse gave a report on the association finances and said that anyone who wanted to look at the books was welcome. He also reported that we had more dues paying members this year than at anytime in the past. We made a number of contributions this past year. \$50.00 went to the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation for a monument being built in Norfolk to remember men who lost their lives at sea while their ships were home ported in Norfolk. \$50.00 went to the Southwest Texas War Memorial & Heritage Foundation for the restoration of the USS Orleck. She along with the USS Joseph P. Kennedy in Fall River, Ma will be the only 2 Gearing class destroyers left as museum ships. We also made a \$250.00 contribution to the United Way of New York for the September 11th relief fund. At the meeting we also authorized a donation of \$50.00 to

help restore the USS Olympus. This was Admiral Dewey's flagship during the battle of Manila Bay and it is currently in Philadelphia just tied up. We also authorized a \$250.00 donation to Tin Can Sailors. Our message board is part of the TCS website and they provide us with other valuable services. If you are interested in joining Tin Can Sailors drop me a line as I have applications for the organization. On another note look for the pre and post FRAM Basilone patches in a future addition of TCS Magazine. George Christenson, the ships' historian, informed us that he had been approached by some members of the Laffey crew wondering if we would like a some space on the Laffey to display Basilone memorabilia. Chris said he was not sure if we should take them up on their offer for several reasons so after a little discussion the matter was tabled. We talked about getting our own website, separate from TCS, but getting someone to design one is cost prohibitive, at this time. Chris has talked to Tom Pelton of TCS and Tom said that if we had some one qualified he might turn over the Basilone page to us to control at sometime in the future. I informed the members that were present that HBO had contacted me to say that no production date had been set yet but that the John Basilone documentary was still planned and that after it had been shown that we would be able to buy it through them for our archives. I also informed everyone that 2006 will be the 25th Anniversary of the John Basilone Parade in Raitan, NJ. So if anyone of you New York City or New Jersey guys want to host a reunion this would be the time then we could all march in the parade. On a personal note I would like to apologize to Hank Hepsoe. Hank made a motion and in my haste to try and hurry along things as the meeting was going much long than I had planned I flat missed the second to his motion and just blew right on by to other business. The banquet was next and we had several speakers among them Joe Gamboa and the Marine advisor at the Citadel who gave a great speak about John Basilone. However, the highlight of the evening was the speech given by Bud Yingling (a former X.O. of the ship) on how some of his wardroom managed to get from behind the bar at the Fort Story Officers' Club the piece of fresh water hose that said USS Basilone Umbilical Cord and how he managed to keep it. Bud presented the hose to the association after he told us the story. I received a card from Audrey his wife informing me that Bud went into the hospital after the reunion. I have sent a get well card from the association.

Now for what you guys on the West coast have wanted this is your year. The reunion is being hosted by Jim and Dee Goodspeed from 23-29 September in Placerville, California. This is in California Gold Rush Country. I know that some of you were hoping for San Diego but the Sacramento area is where we'll be. Jim and Dee already got a lot of stuff lined up already such as the hotel, RV site and other things. Jim and Dee have come up with what I think is a great idea for West Coast reunions (not they have to be done this way). But a lot of us will be coming in anywhere from 1 to several days early to get some other sites in besides what is on the reunion tour list. Well Jim and Dee have arranged some pre/post reunion tours as well as some optional tours so you don't have to do it all on you own. Jim has told me that his first mailing will be going out 15 January 2002 that the reunion packets will be going out on March 15th. The reason for this is that buses for tours are in great demand so we have to act fast. As of this letter Jim's computer is still down so if you have any questions feel free to contact me from Friday evening until Sunday night as I'm on the road Monday to Friday or if you have Jim's phone number contact him that way.

I want to thank , I believe it was, John Berger who was in touch with a member of the USS Joseph P Kennedy and was told that more than just the mess deck tables were taken from the Basilone before she was sunk. Among the other items from the Basilone that are on the Kennedy are Whip Antennas, Bridge Equipment , SPS 10 Surface Radar Motor which is still operational, Gun parts and checkoff lists, manuals and blueprints. So we are in a sense still afloat.

The Ship's Store has the usual items available. We have unfortunately had to raise the price of hats and patches after all these years. Hats are now \$12.00 and patches are

now \$10.00. If you are interested in what else is available at the Ship's Store contact Mike LaLonde 1560 Camphor Dr. Lakeland, Fl 33803.

DUES IS DUE. Yes it's that time of year again. Dues is still only \$10.00 and it is payable now. If you pay by check make your check out to the USS Basilone Association and mail it to Frank Crouse 3103 Mt Carmel Rd Upperco, Md 21155. As always if you happen to pay your dues twice it will be applied toward next year.

It is may sad duty to inform you that the following shipmates have passed away since I last wrote to you Richard Anderson, Ed Ardonya, Donald Bebee, Louis Blair, David Brindle, William Campbell, Chester Cantrill, Joseph Chucko, Robert T Dickson, Peter Garrett, Robert Kapas, Charles Kletecka, Angelo Pettinato, N Bates Pulliam, Michael Saparito, John T Tansey, Bernard Secoski, Oliver G Fowler, Jr and Robert E Lee Stokes (C.O USS Basilone).

The following people have been dropped from the roster and have been added back into the search list as they have moved and their mail was not forwardable. Ray Welch, Fred Clements, Melvin Newell, Gordon Turner, Michael Moscynski, Robert Bergosh, Welzie Jullian, Robert Wahls, Jack Croad.

The following people have been added to the roster. Carl Aber (72-73), Donald Bailey (74-77), Larry Barr, Warren Bayreuther (50-52), Robert Beck (71-74), Thomas Berry (74-77), Blake Blakey (72-75), Don Boucher, Carroll Bourn (58-58), George Brame (63-66), Mark Carney (71-72), Thomas Claflin(67-69), Steve Cox, Russell Curry (53-54), Ray Dahl (70-72), Dan Davidson, Russell Dillingham (61-64), Richard Duffy (67-68), Peter Fantasia, Clifford Gorham (Butler) (49-53), James Gowens, (69-72), Joseph Gray, Richard Hagerdon, R. Michael Haggerty (61-62), John Haines (70-73), Daniel Hallinan (65-67), Glen Hamilton (64-65), Fredrick Hamlett, George Helm (59-62), James Henderson, Robert Hinson (74-76), James Holleran, Arlie Howell (66-68), William Hughes (64-65), Ray Jones (67-69), Richard Keim (55-57), Joseph Kilbitz (49-52), Harold Kingcaid (60-62), Francis LaVallee (61-63), William Lawton (64-66), Danny Linville, Lonnie Litaker, Lester Luckey (55-59), John Martens, Steven Matthews (75-77), Dennis McDermott (64-65), Fred Miller (52-53), John Millette, Louis Morgan (49-51), David Mowry (75-77), Jack Mozley (56-57), Ronald Naylor, Joseph Nevitt (76-77), Steve Nielson (68-71), Ron Oltman, Don Palinski (69-72), Roger Perkins ( 52-55), James Pinkerton, James Pitts (69-70), Cameron Plum, Wayne Pressey (52-53), Harry Puck (69-70), Buford Pursley (60-61), Joseph Rauch (57-62), Robert Renton (58-61), Mario Roberti, T William Sabel (49-50), Robert Sauve, Albert Schutz, James Servedio (57-59), Wayne Severance (76-77), Richard Shaneyfelt (54-56), Harry Sizemore, Joseph Sloan (76-77), Walter Smith 72-75), William Sohn (64-66), Jerry Streeter (76-77), Ralph Stroh, George Stroup (57-60), Russ Taylor, Robert Terhune (64-67), John Tucci (49-52), Thomy Tuttl, James Van Duyne (50-52), Karl Weber, Bob Wicker (70-74), Richard Wiseman, Goerge Woods (62-64), Jack Young, Richard Zimmerman (60-64), and Stephen Gross (70-73).

As I've said in previous newsletters when reunions are held in September and October there will only be one newsletter in those years so until this time next year have a good year. I hope to see you all in Placerville, California this coming September.

Your Shipmate,



Phil

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