

USS MASSEY DD-778 ASSOCIATION

NEWSLETTER

Volume I Issue 18

November 2008

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Massey Website: www.ussmassey.org

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I'm having a busy schedule due to medical reasons and I'm not sure I will be able to submit a message in time for the newsletter. I have asked Phil Smith to send a few of my thoughts for inclusion in the November newsletter.

I am thrilled to have been elected president at the last business meeting. Hopefully, all my medical problems will be behind me very soon. I expect to be fully able to take the helm by the new year.

I am sincerely grateful to all the members who contacted or visited me during my recent illness; and I thank you for your concerns, prayers and support for my recovery.

I thank you, also, for your trust and support in promoting my selection as your president.

Tom Potoskie
President

Past President's Message

I extend many thanks to Gordon and Teri Risk for hosting the wonderful and memorable reunion in Traverse City, MI. The program was outstanding, scenery breathtaking, and all encountered were most hospitable. I would likely have never visited northern Michigan if not for this reunion, and that would have been most unfortunate.

It was a pleasure to have served as your president for the past four years; and I feel it was an honor, not a duty, to have done so. It was a job made very easy by our board of directors, their spouses, and so many others who have contributed to the well-being of the association.

I have to give special thanks to **Dick and Vicki Pearsall** for our website and **Tom and Mary Lou Potoskie** for their ready assistance in all matters. Most of all, I wish to **THANK YOU, OUR LOYAL MEMBERS**, who make our association the truly great organization it is.

Again, it was a pleasure; and I stand ready to assist the association in any way I can.

Phil Smith
Past President

SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK

On behalf of the Massey Association membership, I wish to extend our thanks and BZ (Bravo Zulu-well done) to Gordon and Teri Risk, our 2008 reunion hosts, for the great time we had in Traverse City, MI. For those who could not attend, you missed a good one.

The association's 2009 membership dues (\$10 per year) are again payable starting in January, 2009. For your money, you get three newsletters a year, plus an updated roster list. You may attend and vote at the annual business meeting, and hold office in the association. Your dues help defray the cost of the above publications and mailing costs for all association correspondence.

Presently, 43% of our members pay dues and support the association costs of the remaining 57%. In order to keep our ever-increasing mailing costs at a reasonable level, the executive committee, in session at Traverse City, MI, agreed to limit newsletters to **non-dues paying** members to one edition per year--the May issue. This will cut our expenses, without raising the annual dues, and still keep them informed of association news and upcoming reunions.

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Bernard Barilla, Vice President
Don Heenan, Treasurer
E. Gerald Goodson, Secretary
Gordon A. Risk, Historian
Paul Pavone, Master at Arms
Wilson Walters, Procurement & Supply
Philip Smith, Past President

I will insert a reminder slip with this newsletter if your dues are in arrears. If you have not paid dues in the past, now is the time to catch up and really participate in your organization.

Something new!! In order to get more people involved in administering the association and to “spread the workload,” I have asked Sue Radziwon, wife of Bob, to take over maintaining the association databases and recording the dues. Sue had been wishing to become more involved with the association and readily agreed. She has an extensive background in databases in her daily work and is a natural fit. In the future, all dues will be mailed to her. She will mail out membership cards and roster lists.

I shall continue to produce the newsletters and handle correspondence for the association.

At the reunion, Ag asked for donations of yarn for our local Citizens for Citizens chapter. Yarn is needed for our “Hands-at-Home Knitters” to knit children’s hats and lap robes for cancer patients.

Ag says thanks so much to those generous and caring people who have donated money or shipped or are shipping yarn.

Want to help? Send your leftover yarn to: 491 Fairway Drive, Somerset, MA 02726-4008

MASSEY PEOPLE ROCK!

E. Gerald Goodson
Secretary/Editor

VETERANS' CORNER

2009 COLA for Retired Pay

Each year, military retirement pay is adjusted to meet the increased cost of living. This cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) varies from year to year based on the previous year’s Consumer Price Index (CPI).

2009 update: The 2009 military retired pay cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) will be 5.8%.

This increase, which goes into effect on December 1, 2008, also applies to SBP annuities, Social Security checks, and VA disability and survivor benefits. Retirees will see the increase in their January, 2009 checks.

NOTE: This annual cost-of-living-adjustment is **NOT** in any way related to the annual military pay raise for active duty and reserve service members. In fact, this year's COLA increase is larger than the 2009 military pay raise of 3.9%.

All retirees who retired before January 1, 2008 will receive the **5.8 percent** cost-of-living-adjustment.

Reprinted from Military.com/benefits

TRICARE Blog Keeps Members in the Loop

The deputy director of TRICARE Management Activity is using a weekly blog to communicate with beneficiaries and other readers. Army Maj. Gen. Elder Granger's blog may be found on the TRICARE Website—click on the link that says "Read MG Granger's Blog" on the right-hand side of the front page. In past blogs, Granger has discussed issues such as autism, the shingles vaccine, and the importance of children's health. To receive e-alerts when a new Granger blog goes up, visit www.TRICARE.mil and click on the TRICARE e-mail updates envelope.

To learn more about TRICARE, visit www.military.com/benefits/tricare.

Reprinted from Military.com/benefits

Manhattan Club: "Oasis"

Deep in the heart of the Big Apple's Manhattan is the Soldiers, Sailors, Marines, Coast Guard and Airmen's Club. For those in the military and veterans alike, along with their families, it offers room rates unheard of in New York City. Located in the Murray Hills section of the borough at 283 Lexington Avenue, it rents beds for \$25 to \$60 per night. (Editors note: we called to verify rates and info to be correct. The original article said they rented rooms, but they rent beds. If traveling alone, expect to have a roommate. Traveling with family gets you the entire room.) The club's five floors contain 21 rooms. If you have plans to visit the city,

be sure to contact this private club. Proof of current or prior military service (DD Form 214) is required. For more information, call 1-800-678-8443 or visit www.ssmclub.org.

Reprinted from VFW Magazine, Nov. 2007

MASSEY HISTORY

Gordon Risk, Historian

(The following was submitted by **William B. Wilmer, LTJG, 51-54**).

... I loved the story about Don Carten, FTSN and his watches.

I went aboard Massey as an Ensign in July, 1951, the day she returned to Norfolk from Korea. There were three of us new ensigns, one from US Naval Academy, one from Yale, and me—Duke. The captain loudly announced in the wardroom that we three had the duty for two days and all officers were given liberty. So started my career.

After a few months, I became Navigator, ASW Officer, and Electronics Officer (all at the same time). Once, during this period, we were abruptly ordered to sea one Saturday morning to relieve another destroyer that had collided with a carrier while refueling—relatively minor damage. Anyway, we scurried up the crew and were going down the channel, about at the NOB (Naval Operations Base) piers, when we came upon a tug & tow going the same way we were, but sort of hogging the channel. At the same time, USS IOWA appeared at the bend in Thimble Shoal Channel. Our captain had the con. I was Navigator. He started to pass the tug & tow on his port side.

About then, IOWA accelerated (puff of black smoke) and turned into the channel. Now since there was no room for us all there, the captain, to his credit, gave all ahead flank and we charged past the tug and tow, swerved to starboard, then back to port to swing around IOWA, whose signal light was saying nasty words—I could read light at that time. As we skimmed down IOWA's port side, I know I could have thrown the pencil I had in my hand onto her main deck.

A year or so later, while doing ASW exercises—I was Operations Officer (LTJG) and Electronics Officer and a qualified underway OOD (Officer of the Deck). We were doing night attacks-lights out-with another destroyer on a submarine. This was a pattern attack. Anyway, the other DD disappeared from the radar monitor. The captain, who was on the bridge, had our lights turned on and there--right in front of us--was the destroyer. All back full, hard port rudder, and we missed each other by one coat of paint. Another job well done by the captain.

We all have our stories. In my three years onboard, we were the only ship in the division who did not have a major casualty. Robert K. Huntington (Bouncing Bobby K) was rammed by a coal collier, Zellars (Zippering Zee) lost a corpsman in a man overboard drill when the whaleboat bow davit line allowed the whaleboat to dive into the water, and the other DD had an ensign killed during refueling.

We were lucky—I'd like to say good. Best to all, Bill Wilmer, CDR, USNR (ret.)

Massey History on Line

For those members who have internet access, you may want to try this site if you have not already done so: www.destroyersonline.com/usndd/. Scroll down the left side of the page to A.M. Sumner Class and click. Scroll down to #66 to see info on MASSEY pictures, history and crew members. You can also add your information to the crews' list by filling out a simple online form and submitting it. Have fun!

IN MEMORIAM

Since the last newsletter, we have learned of the following deaths:

Stephen D. Schumejda, ETSN, 65-66, June, 21, 2005

Earmin Midkiff, Plankowner, 44-46, June 10, 2007

Ralph B. McDevitt, TM2, 44-46, October 20, 2007

Eli Mazut, 52-

Marshall F. Stout, Plankowner, 44-46

Frank Zucco, MMC, 65-67, June 2, 2008

Dr. Thaddeus C. Jones, Plankowner, ETM1, 44-46, July 16, 2008

Philip B. Arms, LTJG, 62-64, August, 2008

John W. Coskie, SN1/c, 46-47, August 9, 2008

and their significant others who have entered into eternal rest, in our thoughts and prayers.

THE BINNACLE LIST

Since the last newsletter, we have learned of the following shipmates, wives and significant others who are ill:

Tom Potoskie, SK2, 63-66 is recovering from brain surgery. Tom is the newly elected president of the association. To wish him well or to cheer him up send cards to: 663 Pond Creek Road, White Haven, PA 18661 (507) 636-1507

Bob Kupfer, FN 1/c, 49-51 was diagnosed with bladder cancer in June 2007 and surgery was performed in February, 2008. In June, 2008 he was diagnosed with kidney cancer and had surgery pending.

To wish him well or to cheer him up, send cards to: PO Box 194, Littlefield, AZ 86432-0194.

John L. Campbell, Jr., EN3, 53-54, who has generously supplied reunion attendees with MASSEY inscribed pens and key chains, is not feeling very well and is undergoing dialysis treatments.

To wish him well or to cheer him up, send cards to: 330 Baywood Dr., Baiting Hollow, NY 11933-1453, (631) 369-4614.

If you know of a shipmate or a spouse who is ill, please notify me so that the association may send a card. It is important to keep in touch.

ANNUAL DUES

We are accepting 2009 dues, which are payable starting in January, 2009. Your \$10 gets you a new membership card and a current roster.

Make your check payable to: **USS Massey Association** and mail it to:

Sue Radziwon

538 70th St.

Darien, IL 60561-4052

Your association card and current roster will be mailed to you shortly after receipt.

Your dues cover the cost of newsletters and roster lists. As you know, postage keeps increasing and our dues have not. At present, to mail 500 copies of this newsletter costs \$290 just in postage. If you are not presently a dues-paying member, please consider becoming one. Remember, when you pay your dues you receive an updated membership roster.

A special "thank you" goes out to those shipmates who included an additional contribution to help defray newsletter publishing costs with their dues.

MAIL CALL

From: **Tom Potoskie, SK2, 63-66**

... The doctor's visit and report on the operation were favorable. The whole team is leaning toward treatment as a precautionary measure. He still classifies the tumor as low grade and mentioned gens of the tumor were made up mostly of safe gens that require NO treatment. One or two percent were gens of tumors requiring some kind of treatment. I remain positive that they will find the right combination and solution. My feelings have not changed from the beginning. I am not worrying about the tumor. I never did. The doctors found it, they removed it, and they will treat it.

I can't think of one person that I would want to trade places with. My little problem is like a pimple compared to other people's troubles. I am most thankful for all the support good people like the Massey Association, former co-workers, family and friends have given me. I had a lot of people praying for my recovery and it worked. Our Florida trip most likely will be later than we would prefer; however, we are still optimistic that we can get there for a few months.

I wish you all the best of health in the future, and that you get to continue the things in your lives that you enjoy.

From: Joanne Gawlik, daughter of **John R. Gawlik, ME3, 52-54**, would love to hear from anyone who knew her dad or has photos of him. You may reach her at: 8119 Champions Circle Apt. 307, Champions Gate, FL 33896, or cardinalangels6758@cfl.rr.com.

From: Kathy Witbeck Cagle, niece of **Charles E. Witbeck, Plankowner, 1944-**

I am looking for anyone who can tell me a little about my uncle, Charles E. Witbeck, during his time on this ship. Any information is helpful.

Dekace53@yahoo.com.

From: Mark Mazut, son of **Eli A. Mazut, Jr., GM, early 1950's**

My father, Eli A. Mazut, Jr. served on the Massey in the early 1950's during its European and Carribean tours. Sadly he passed away over twenty years ago. Just curious if you have any listings of members who served during his time and may have known him. He was a Gunner's Mate. Thanks.

Mark.mazut@uproar.us.com.

From Patricia Kirk-Bowling, daughter of **Frank G. Bowling, 48-52**

My father, Frank G. Kirk, was on the Massey in '48-'52. He is looking for an ole' shipmate Jack L. Goss. Do you have any information on Jack. We would like to contact him. Email info to pkbcad@verizon.net, or mail info to Patricia Kirk-Bowling, pkbcad, 20008 Kirkwood Shop Rd., White Hall, MD 21030, (410) 357-0248

NEW MEMBERS

Give us a hand in finding more shipmates. The more we find, the more old friendships may be renewed and the more memories relived. You may send their names to me, Jerry Goodson; and I will mail them a copy of the latest newsletter, which includes information on how to become a member of the organization.

Ship's Store

Procurement and Supply Officer Butch Walters has some MASSEY items on-hand and can order others in your size and colors of choice (in most cases).

To order or for more information contact: **Wilson (Butch) Walters, 906 Vine St., New Eagle, PA, 15067, 724-258-9223, wcmwalters2000@yakoo.com**.

2008 Reunion

The 2008 reunion hosted by Gordon and Teri Risk was a great success. Our stay at the Holiday Inn West-Bay was very enjoyable and accommodations

more, but we survived with our MASSEY shirts and jackets to protect us.

Sunday, September 28, 2008

The activities began with our registration, followed by a get-acquainted gathering in the hospitality suite. Reunion and tour information packets were available in the hospitality suite. Dinner at various local establishments was on our own.

Monday September 29, 2008

We met for breakfast in the hospitality suite so as to be fully energized for our trip to Mackinac Island. We departed the hotel at 0800 and arrived back at 1830.

Transportation--**bus, ferry boat, and horse-drawn carriage tours** with guides, were part of the tour.

Some 47 of us enjoyed the guest privileges of the Grand Hotel public spaces, with the world's longest veranda, and the Grand Luncheon Buffet in the dining room.

Back at our hotel, we spread out to various restaurants for excellent dinners.

Tuesday, September 30, 2008

After a leisurely breakfast in our private hospitality suite, we boarded our buses and visited the Sleeping Bear Dunes National Park and the last existing Life Saving Station. Both were very picturesque and interesting to visit.

Afterwards, we had lunch at the Bluebird Restaurant in Leland and explored Fishtown Harbor. Fishtown has only three other equals in charm and history in all North America.

Wednesday, October 1, 2008

Today, we stayed in Traverse City. Our annual business meeting was held at 1000. The memorial service was held, at 1500, at the Merchant Marine Academy.

At 1600, we split into two groups to tour The Great Lakes Maritime Academy and the SS Michigan

training ship. Our banquet reception was at 1730, followed by the banquet at 1900.

Reunion attendees: Bernie and Mary Jane Barilla; John and Lynne Bertram; Jack and June Butler; Marv and Phyllis Christensen; John and Judy Curtis; Juan de la Cruz; Duane and Karen Edwards; Richard Eggert; Al Figaszewski; Don Foley; Bill and Dolly Frizzle; Jerry and Aggie Goodson; Bill Gregory and Chris Frye; Bob and Priscilla Grigas; Gene and Phyllis Hanna; Buddy Hatchell; Don and Rachel Heenan; Harry and Illene Jellick; Andy Kubishen; Jim and Loretta Leber; Lance and Judy Massey; Gerald and Marjorie McCloskey; Jim and Marlene McKee; Tom and Carole Norman; Elmer Oberlander, first-time attendee, Bill and Irene O'Byrne; Jessie and Sandy Ortiz, first-time attendees, Jerry and Lee Owens; Tom and Nancy Parker; Paul and Kathy Pavone; Bob and Ruth Prentiss; Bob and Sue Radziwon; Gordon and Teri Risk; Bob Rogers; Phil Rush; Amba and Mary Ellen Sargent; Jerry and Betsy Sherbondy; Phil and Maryann Smith; Phillip K. and Dallas Smith; Gordon and Marilyn Speer; Kerrah Stone; Ted and Kay Streiter; Bill and Audrey Thieke; Tom and Kathy Truesdale; Jim Volkman; Fred and Pat Voss, first-time attendees; Butch and Joan Walters; Charlie and Jean Weaver; Jack Zagaros and Pat Loyd; Caroline Zucco and sons.

Annual Business Meeting

The annual business meeting was held at the Holiday Inn West-Bay, Traverse City, Michigan on October 1, 2008 at 1000. With a quorum of officers present, the meeting was called to order by President Phil Smith. Phil led us in the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and in prayer.

Old Business

The last business meeting was held in 2006. The reading of the minutes of that meeting was waived, and the minutes were filed. There was no 2007 business meeting, as a quorum of officers was not present on the reunion cruise.

New Business

Treasurer Don Heenan gave the financial report of income and expenses. The Treasury had a balance

of \$8,870.68 on September 30, 2008. The report was accepted and filed.

Procurement and Supply Officer, Wilson Walters reported that sales of MASSEY gear at the reunion totaled \$1,110. He also informed all that supply was pretty well exhausted; but items could still be ordered by contacting him at (724) 258-9223 or wcwalters2000@yahoo.com.

The president read into the record a letter from Tom Potoskie, host of the 2007 reunion, summarizing that

reunion, as no business meeting was held.

Letters of thanks from Bernie and Mary Jane Barilla and from Carolyn Zucco were read.

The following slate of officers was placed in nomination for the bi-annual election of Association Officers:

President—Tom Potoskie
Vice President—Bernie Barilla
Secretary/Editor—Jerry Goodson
Treasurer—Don Heenan
Historian—Gordon Risk
Master-at-Arms—Paul Pavone
Procurement & Supply—Wilson Walters

All were unanimously elected by voice vote. All will also serve as the Executive Committee, as will Phil Smith as Past President.

A proposal from the floor to present a plaque to Tom Potoskie in recognition of his service to the association was made and approved by voice vote. Judy Massey volunteered to produce and forward the plaque.

Juan de la Cruz gave a presentation on the proposal of San Antonio, TX as the site of the 2009 reunion. After discussion, the site was approved. Juan will be our host.

Proposals were solicited from the floor for sites for the 2010 reunion. Two were proposed: Hot Springs, Arkansas, and Charleston, South Carolina. After discussion, a vote was taken and Charleston, SC was selected. Tom and Carole Norman volunteered to host this reunion.

There being no further business, the meeting was adjourned.

2009 Reunion

The 2009 reunion will be held in San Antonio, TX and hosted by Juan de la Cruz, September 13-16, 2009. He has already begun negotiations for hotel rooms and activities. More information will be printed in the next newsletter.

If you live in the San Antonio area and would like to volunteer to help Juan with this reunion, you may contact him at PO Box 81044, Corpus Christi, TX 78468-1044, (361)993-9620. I'm sure he will appreciate any assistance you may give him.

2010 Reunion

The 2010 reunion will be held in Charleston, South Carolina and hosted by Tom and Carole Norman.

If you live in the Charleston area and would like to volunteer to help with this reunion, you may contact Tom and Carole at 539A Allens Mill Rd, Yorktown, VA 23692-2239, (757) 877-9035. I'm sure they will appreciate your assistance.

Just for Fun

I'M ONE OF THE 55. ARE YOU?

If you can read this, you have a strange mind too. Can you read this? Only 55 people out of 100 can.

I don't believe that I could actually understand what I was reading. The phonemical power of the human mind, according to a research at Cambridge University, it doesn't matter in what order the letters in a word are, the only important thing is that the first and last letter be in the right place. The rest can be a total mess and you can still read it without a problem. This is because the human mind does not read every letter by itself, but the word as a whole. Azanmig huh? Yeah and I always tghuhot spelling was important!

IF YOU CAN READ THIS SHARE IT WITH OTHERS.

