

# USS MASSEY DD-778 ASSOCIATION

## NEWSLETTER

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Volume I Issue 13

November 2006

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Massey Website: [www.ussmassey.org](http://www.ussmassey.org)

### **PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE**

The 17th reunion at Branson was a great affair thanks to you, THE ATTENDEES. Branson Hospitality gave us a good schedule, but you made the reunion by assisting other members when required, helping with the hospitality room, and with adjusting to the few glitches that inevitably occur. These are the things that changed it from a good reunion to a great one. Thanks to all.

I feel very privileged to have been elected to serve another term as your president. You may be assured I will serve the association to the best of my ability.

Wilson (Butch) Walters was appointed by me to serve as our permanent Procurement & Supply Officer, much the same as Red King did. As P&S Officer, he will take control of, sell, order, store and otherwise be in charge of our ship's store inventory. Should you desire to make a purchase, or contact him, his address is 906 Vine St., New Eagle, PA 15607, Tel 724-258-9223, e-mail [wcwalters2000@yahoo.com](mailto:wcwalters2000@yahoo.com). If you have items you would like to see carried at the ship's store let him know. I'm sure your ideas will be appreciated.

Remember, the next reunion is the cruise and that it is open to family and friends. This is your chance to show them a great vacation at a very reasonable price. Please give it your consideration. You may contact Tom Potoskie for further information. Also, details may be found in this newsletter.

Phil Smith  
President

### **SECRETARY'S NOTEBOOK**

Thanks to all who notify us of changes in their e-mail addresses. This is an important part of our communications network. With correct addresses, it is so much easier to notify members when we learn of others who are ill or have passed away. Also, it assists us in tracking down members who may move and forget to notify us of the change in their address.

Thanks, also, to those who sent information on members and their significant others who were ill or had passed away. We send the appropriate card from the association and try to notify other association members so they may also send cards.

I want to thank Jim Donohue for all his work in tracking down shipmates. He has found a number whose whereabouts were unknown. They have been added to our roster lists.

If you know of individuals who are not presently on our rolls, please let me know their names and addresses so I may send them a copy of the newsletter. We want to identify as many shipmates as possible. Some may not wish to participate in our activities, but they deserve to be offered the chance.

The next newsletter will be published in mid-February, 2007.

On behalf of all the association officers, Aggie and I wish you the best for the upcoming holidays. May your families be healthy, your fires warm, and your friends many.

Jerry Goodson  
Secretary/Editor

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Bernard Barilla, Vice President  
Don Heenan, Treasurer  
E. Gerald Goodson, Secretary  
Gordon A. Risk, Historian  
Francis Zucco, Master at Arms  
Wilson Walters, Procurement & Supply  
John Bertram, Past President

## **VETERANS' CORNER**

### **VA to Seek DNA of all Veterans**

Researchers are mapping the human genome for the day when physicians will use a patient's genetic profile as preventive medicine. To that end, the Department of Veteran's Affairs plans to create a genetic database from potentially millions of VA patients. The VA plans to collect the first 100,000 samples in October, 2007 and foresees a database as large as the number of veterans who are willing to contribute samples of their DNA. VA also plans to write rules regarding handling a person's genetic profile while using it in research.

"The Veterans Report" May 2, 2006, a Military.com publication

Shipmates, Veterans and Military Retirees:

The new VA booklet "Federal Benefits for Veterans and their Dependents" may be downloaded from the following sites:

<http://home.earthlink.net/%7E6929297/fedben.pdf>  
or  
[http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current\\_benefits.asp#pdf](http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current_benefits.asp#pdf)  
or  
[http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current\\_benefits.asp](http://www1.va.gov/opa/vadocs/current_benefits.asp)

Submitted by Russell Spangler from e-mail by  
YNCS Don Harribine, USN(ret)

### **MASSEY HISTORY**

Gordon Risk, Historian

Per my promise at the Branson Reunion, my report for the MASSEY display and history follows:

There is positive change at Charleston as the LAFHEY association is having second thoughts as to dressing out their old ship back into battle readiness. There just isn't any old ship equipment that can be had for the emptied voids of the superstructure. Below decks is a different story with most engineering equipment original and cleaned up. The new item for the hanger is a DASH. The superstructure compartments are being air conditioned with an eye to dehumidifying before displays are brought onboard. Displays may also be

our contact at the museum every few months to keep us on top of things. I can see a future reunion in Charleston with a great interest for us on the LAFHEY.

Our president, Phil Smith, has the MASSEY stern plate.

As far as history goes, alot can be found on our website. I will try to scan all the flat items that I hold to be able to consolidate them on a floppy/CD. For those of you who have a cruise book and access to a scanner, please scan to a floppy/CD and send me a copy. This will work well for any old photos and documents, too.

#### IN MEMORIAM

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

**Thomas F. Niedbala**, CO, 72, December 10, 1984  
**Irve "Chuck" LeMoyne**, Ens. 61-62, retired Rear Admiral (SEALS), January 4, 1997  
**Felix Englander**, CO, 57-58, 2003  
**Thomas J. Stockard**, YN2, 57-58, November, 2004  
**Robert Emswiller**, FN 1/C, January 7, 2005  
**John A. Mattison**, XO, 58-59, February 22, 2006  
**Charles Crouse**, MM3, 64-66, May 28, 2006

Let us keep our shipmates, their spouses, families 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 who are ill:

**Gerald Corcoran**, SN, 44-46, 865 Mankato Ave., Winona, MN 55987

**Hubie Dunnagan**, EM3, 50-52, 30290 Hunt Club Rd., Carrsville, VA 23315

**Sydney Andrews**, WT3, 44-46, plankowner, 2500 North 10th St., Independence, KS 67301-1836

They could use some cheering up; send a card.

If you know of a shipmate or a spouse who is ill, please notify me so that the association may send a

#### ANNUAL DUES

If you have not sent your 2006 dues, please do so. Your \$10 gets you a new membership card and a current roster. Your 2007 dues are due starting January, 2007.

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

E. Gerald Goodson  
491 Fairway Drive  
Somerset, MA 02726-4008

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

Your dues cover the costs of newsletters and roster lists.

#### MAIL CALL

From **Thomas Whitmer, 67, MMFN**

To my fellow shipmates,

I went aboard MASSEY in early February, 1967. I was 20 years old and I had just graduated from Machinist Mate "A" school at Great Lakes, NTC.

She was pierside at the destroyer piers in Newport, RI. This was my first sea duty assignment. I was immediately assigned to the after engine room crew.

Some of the "Baker 4" personnel I remember are; Ens. Styka, Engineering Officer; MMC Elrod; MM1 Madison; MM2 Tate; MM2 Conover; MM2 Blackstone; MM3 Viola; MM3 Sveen; MM3 Finley; MMFN Roening; MMFN Foley; MMFA Knudson. I know there are others I can't recall.

I remained aboard until we returned from a Med. cruise in late September, 1967. At that time I was transferred to the School Command, Bainbridge, MD NTC.

The months I spent aboard MASSEY were a toughening experience for me. First, I realized that my work space was one where sailors were sent to work "extra duty" as punishment for rule infractions; yet, this was my normal routine for the 60-70 hours

Second, since I was designated for nuclear power school, it made me a ready target for those who could cite me as "lifer material" and endlessly reminded me of how much "shorter" they were than I.

On the other hand, we visited some outstanding liberty ports. This allowed me to experience locations and cultures (of which) most others my age had no idea; Cuba, Jamaica, Gibraltar, Crete, France, Italy, Majorca, Spain and Sicily.

Also, I witnessed history and international politics from a front-row seat. Of course, I'm referring to the USS LIBERTY incident in which MASSEY participated in June 1967.

To say that I was a changed person when I departed MASSEY is an understatement! It wasn't all good or all bad, just a life experience I've carried with me all these years! I would not change it.

Remember ? "Fortune favors the bold"-LCDR Sherman Owens, XO.

Cordially,  
Tom Whitmer

From **Ordale Thronson, Fireman, 44-46**

I served on MASSEY from June 1944 till May 1946- and was in No. 1 boiler room. I was on the 20mm gun by the No. 2 stack. Would like to be there (Branson) but not able to travel, I am 83 years old...have a good reunion.

#### **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.

#### **2006 REUNION WRAP-UP**

The 2006 reunion, hosted by Phil Smith, was held at the Branson Windmill Inn in Branson, MO, September 24-28, 2006.

We had 113 members and family attend. The first time attendees were: Bob and Ruth Arnold, FN 1/C, 46-47; Joe and Phyl Redden, plankowner, WT3, 44-

Chunyo, SK3, 64-66; new members: Donald Foley; Duane and Karen Edwards; Amba and Mary Ellen Sargent.

The other attendees were: James Volkman; Phil Rush; Jerry and Betsy Sherbondy; Gordon and Teri Risk; Dick and Vicki Pearsall; Brian Forrester; Bob and Priscilla Grigas; Jim and Loretta Leber; Paul and Kathy Pavone; Phil and Mary Ann Smith; Tom and Mary Lou Potoskie and sister Gale Rossi; Butch and Joan Walters; Bill Gregory and Christina Frye; Jerry and Aggie Goodson; Frank and Mary Giovenco; Al and Bonnie Figaszewski; Ed and Terry Holderness; Bob and Debbie Wagner; George and June Dienes; Skip and Mary Schnetzer; Harpo and Maryanne Marks; Bernie and Mary Jane Barilla; Bob and Gladys Gallagher; Don and Rachel Heenan; Joe and Terri Milligan; Bob and Doris Rogers; Bill and Audrey Thieke; Pat and Joan O'Brien; Tom and Nancy Parker; Joe Broussard and Alice Cycyk; Andy Kubishen; Russ and Patti Spangler; Ned and Mary Filler; Jack and June Butler; "Pappy" and Ruth Prentiss; John and Lynne Bertram; Jack Zagaros and sister-in-law, Elaine Otterdahl; John and June Gross; Al and Dorothy Stelmaszek; Art and Ginger Hamilton; Dob Doll and Gwen Hanlin; Buddy Hatchell; Skip and Phyllis Christensen; George and Rose Patton; Gerry and Marjorie McCloskey; John and Judy Curtis; Gene and Glenda Card; Charles and Norma Jaget; Tom and Carole Norman; D'Wayne and Elaine De Ziel; Bill Frizzle; Mick McDevitt and Joan Kelch; Frank and Carolyn Zucco; Juan de la Cruz and Loretta Zarate; John Day.

A wonderful time was had by all. Branson is a great place to visit. The cordiality and respect for veterans and the armed forces is unbelievable.

We had a welcome reception at the hotel the first night and a continental breakfast every morning.

Monday morning, we loaded buses and attended the Lowe Family of Utah Show followed by lunch at McFarlains Restuarant (a local favorite) with brief shopping at the Imax Entertainment Complex. Monday night we again boarded buses to attend the Mel Tillis Show.

Tuesday morning found us climbing aboard buses to visit Branson's Veteran's Memorial Museum followed by a sightseeing tour of old town Branson and surrounding area. Lunch was on our own and

there was shopping for the ladies in old Branson. At 2 pm it was back on the buses for transport to the Showboat Branson Belle's pier where we held our Memorial Service. After the service, it was onto the Branson Belle for a dinner cruise and show.

On Wednesday morning, we held our annual business meeting at the hotel. The rest of the day was free until 5:30 pm at which time the group photo(s) were taken. It proved to be quite a challenge to get everyone into position, still, and smiling, all at the same time. Our banquet followed with a dance party with a live band.

### **BUSINESS MEETING**

Our meeting opened with the Pledge of Allegiance to the Flag and a prayer, both led by President Phil Smith.

A departure was made from the usual order of business for Brian Forrester of Cruise Holidays to make a presentation of the 2007 Reunion Cruise details. A question-and-answer-period followed.

#### **Old Business:**

Treasurer Don Heenan gave his report, which was accepted and filed.

Secretary Jerry Goodson read the minutes of the last meeting, which were accepted and filed.

Historian Gordon Risk will report updates via this newsletter.

Website Coordinator Dick Pearsall gave a report on the new website. He covered the expenses incurred and explained the features of the site.

#### **New Business:**

Gordon Risk presented a proposal to host the 2008 reunion in Traverse City, MI, a resort town on the shores of Lake Michigan. The proposal was accepted by voice vote. More complete details will follow as they become available.

Phil Smith explained the need for a permanent Supply and Procurement Officer and asked for a volunteer. Wilson (Butch) Walters volunteered his services.

The Executive Committee placed in nomination the following slate of candidates for association officers to serve the next two years:

President-Phil Smith  
Vice President- Bernie Barilla  
Treasurer- Don Heenan  
Secretary-Jerry Goodson

Nominations were solicited from the floor. There being none, a vote was taken; and the above were re-elected.

Bob Doll and Gwen Hanlin were given special recognition for their musical services throughout the years at the reunions.

Clarence Broussard gave an update on the Gulf Coast region after Hurricane Katrina.

A proposal to donate \$200 to the Branson War Memorial Museum was made and approved.

A proposal to donate \$400 to the Tin Can Sailor Association to assist in the maintenance of the historic fleet was made and approved.

The meeting adjourned.

### **2007 Reunion**

Tom Potoskie, SK3, 1963-66 is the chairman for the 2007 reunion, which will be a **CRUISE** reunion and reports the following:

**USS Massey DD 778 Cruise Reunion**  
November 4 thru 11, 2007

### **SPECIAL NOTE: NO PASSPORTS REQUIRED**

**According to Carnival Cruise Lines, passports are not required until January 1, 2008. You will need an official, state issued birth certificate (raised seal) and a photo government identification card (driver's license).**

First, I must make comment about the Branson reunion. Most of the folks I talked to had high praise for the great time they had at Branson. The full schedule and the additional entertainment was not only a reunion, but a great vacation all rolled into

one. Phil Smith did a fine job organizing this event, again adding variety to the list of past reunions.

The 2007 cruise reunion (Nov. 4-11) will be a change of venue, too. Imagine, nightly onboard entertainment and activities for 7 days of carefree celebration without the hassle of finding a place to eat, fighting traffic, parking, and just having everything that make reunions special located in one large, moving "hotel," where the only thing that changes is the scenery. You will also have the opportunity to visit Nassau in the Bahamas, St. Thomas/St. John, and St. Maarten in the Caribbean. One of the reasons for a reunion's success is the camaraderie and the quality time spent with shipmates, friends and family. Yes, they are invited, too. A hospitality room will be available daily for great get-togethers and sharing of memories. It is very important that we start planning early for the cruise. Cruise brochures will not be mass mailed. If you plan on attending, you will need to contact Brian Forrester of Cruise Holidays, at **800-998-1228**, cell phone **480-332-7294** or [brian@cruiseholidaysaz.com](mailto:brian@cruiseholidaysaz.com); or Tom Potoskie, **570-636-1507** or [twpotoski@nni.com](mailto:twpotoski@nni.com). The information will be mailed to you upon request.

Early registration will enable the Massey folks to be seated in the same area of the dining room; and if you want certain members or guests to be seated at your table, you may prearrange that with Brian. There will be a banquet every night, so you can enjoy your table mates every night. Booking early will also give you the opportunity for a better selection of cabin location.

More detailed information will appear in the May 2007 newsletter, including directions to parking facilities at the Port of Miami and pre- and post-hotel parking accommodations.

I want to leave you with these brief, important facts:

- The cost for an interior cabin is from \$699 per person, which includes all taxes, gov't fees, port fees and GRATUITIES (oceanview and balcony cabins are available at additional cost).
- Sailing is at the end of hurricane season.

- Fully refundable deposit until 8-1-07.
- Alcoholic beverages, gambling, and shopping extra.

I am looking forward to seeing my Massey shipmates and all their guests on the cruise. I also want to thank Bob Rogers for the kindness he extended to Phil Smith and me at Branson.

Tom Potoskie SK3, 1963-1966

### **NAVY EXPEDITIONARY MEDAL**

The following was received from Wilson C. Walters, FT2, 59-61:

"The USS Massey and the members of the crew who were aboard on 28 July 1961 through 07 August 1961 are eligible for the Navy Expeditionary Medal. This was for operations in the Windward Passage off Cuba. The medal may be obtained by writing to the:  
Navy Liaison Office  
Room 3475  
9700 Page Blvd.  
St. Louis, MO 63132-5100

The old form 180 is no longer used to obtain military medals. The letter should contain all pertinent information. If writing, use your serial number and dates you were aboard the Massey. You may request that corrections be made to your DD-214 (they may do that for you).

Another medal that may not show on the 1960's shipmates' records would be the National Defense Service Medal. To be eligible, your service dates have to fall between January 1, 1961 and August 14, 1974. You may apply for these medals and any others you may be missing in the same letter.

Going along with that, I found the carrier ESSEX, her escorts DDs BACHE DD470, EATON DD510, BEALE DD471 and CONY DD508 were all awarded the Navy Expeditionary Medal for operations off Cuba during the Bay of Pigs. (Other ships were also awarded the medal.) I wrote to the official Navy website and questioned why the MASSEY wasn't included in the award. They stated they had no record of MASSEY being there. I obtained the deck logs of MASSEY for April 1961.

The official logs show us being in Mayport for the whole month of April. I emailed them back stating the logs were a complete fabrication. A Sarah English stated I had to take the matter of the logs up with the NARA. Each communication with the deck log people lead to the same dead end.

I then decided to contact the CIA, since this was a CIA operation. I requested the deck logs under the Freedom of Information Act. I was told that such records reside in operational files that are exempt from the Freedom of Information Act. They defined it this way ". . .files of the Directorate of Operations which document the conduct of foreign intelligence or counterintelligence operations of intelligence or security liaison arrangements or information exchanges with foreign governments or their intelligence or security services. . ."

Therefore, the Navy has no record (officially) of the operation in which MASSEY was involved and the CIA won't admit it.

Too bad we are all in the dark.

APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP or

(PLEASE COMPLETE ALL INFORMATION EACH YEAR)

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Spc  
(FIRST, MIDDLE INITIAL, LAST)

Mailing Address \_\_\_\_\_  
STREET OR PO BOX

Phone \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ Bus. \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_

Years On Board \_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_ Rank/Rate \_\_\_\_  
(SUCH AS 58-62) (SUCH AS 58-62)

Make checks payable to: USS Massey Association