

# USS FRANK E. EVANS DD 754

## WWII KOREA VIETNAM



## FOOTLOCKER TALK NEWSLETTER NUMBER 82 — Third QUARTER 2021

Shipmates, Family and Friends,

A lot has happened since our last newsletter. The Wisconsin "Lost 74" memorial stone was dedicated on Memorial Day at The Highground Veterans Memorial Park and Museum, Neillsville, Wisconsin. All state memorial stones have been dedicated.

June 3<sup>rd</sup> ceremonies were held at Long Beach, CA, Fairfax, VA., Independence, MO., Gurnee, IL. and Ulverstone, Tasmania. Each ceremony was well attended, almost 200 people. Hats off to Jeff Covert, Pete Peters, Joe Mulitsch, Terry Vejr and lastly a Bravo Zulu to Gary Smith for organizing and incurring the cost for the ceremony in Tasmania. We were surprised to learn that the Tin Can Sailors organized a memorial ceremony on 3 June 2021 in the Texas State Capital for RD3 Con Westly Warnock look forward to 2022 and think about where we should add locations.

Our reunion is just around the corner in San Antonio, Texas. October 27-30. You still have time, get your registration to Donna.

We look forward to seeing you in San Antonio.

*Steve Kraus*  
Association President

*Terry Vejr*  
Association VP

IN MEMORIAM

TURN AGAIN TO LIFE - by Mary Lee Hall

If I should die and leave you here a while, be not like others sore undone, who keep long vigils by the silent dust, and weep. For my sake - turn again to life and smile, nerving thy heart and trembling hand to do something to comfort other hearts than thine. Complete those dear unfinished tasks of mine and I, perchance may therein comfort you.

SHIPMATES

NAME	CITY/STATE	DECEASED
Bill Kuykendall	Lawton, OK	Apr. 21, 2021
Robert L. Tyron	Milwaukee, WI	May 10, 2020
Clyde L. Chandler	Point Blank, TX	July 7, 2020
Ralph A. Jolliff	Popular Grove, IL	Feb. 27, 2021
Roger T. Kosel	Mt Shasta, CA	July 4, 2021
Robert Gruber	Atascadero, CA	March 12, 2021
Bill Gaines	Dillsboro, IN	July 10, 2021

RELATIVES OF THE LOST

NAME	CITY/STATE	DECEASED
Dorothy Sage-Benck	Bloomfield, NE	May 22, 2021
Cannessa Davis	Vallejo, CA	April 14, 2021

MEMBER RELATIVES

NAME	CITY/STATE	DECEASED
Bill Peters	Munith, MI	May 15, 2021
Betty Scott	Upland, CA	July 8, 2021

NEW MEMBERS

NAME	CITY & RELATIONSHIP
Christen Lindsey	VISTA CA, FRIEND OF DONNA KRAUS
Holiday Geiger	Carlsbad, CA Friend of Donna Kraus

## POPEYE THE SAILOR MAN REALLY EXISTED

His real name was Frank "Rocky" Fiegel. He was born in 1868 in Poland and, as a child, immigrated to the United States with his parents, who settled down in a small town in Illinois. As a young man, Rocky went to sea. After a 20-year career as a sailor in the Merchant Marines, Fiegel retired. He was later hired by Wiebusch's Tavern in the city of Chester, Illinois as a 'Bouncer' to maintain order in the rowdy bar.



Rocky quickly developed a reputation for always being involved in fighting... and usually winning. As a result, he had a deformed eye ("Pop-eye"). He also always smoked his pipe, so he spoke out of one side of his mouth. In

his spare time as a Bouncer, Rocky would entertain the customers by regaling them with exciting stories of adventures he claimed to have had over his career as a sailor crossing the Seven Seas.

The creator of Popeye, Elzie Segar, grew in Chester and, as a young man, met Rocky at the tavern and would sit for hours listening to the old sailor's amazing sea stories. Years later, Segar became a cartoonist and developed a comic strip called Thimble Theater. He honored Fiegel by asking if he could model his new comic strip character; "Popeye The Sailor Man", after him. Naturally Fiegel was flattered and agreed.

Segar claimed that other characters in the strip were also based on real people. The character "Olive Oly" was loosely based on Dor Paskel, owner of a small grocery store in Chester. She apparently looked much like the "Olive Oly" character in the comics. He claimed she even dressed much the same way.

Through the years, Segar kept in touch with Rocky and always helped him with money; giving him a small percentage of what he earned from his Popeye illustrations.

Who didn't love the cartoons?

We watched them religiously, So Funny, so moral... each story had a good ending.



## YOKOSUKA JAPAN

BY FRANK JABLONSKI

If you ask any sailor who visited Yokosuka what it is they remember the most, it will be Honcho. Japanese cities are divided into many areas called "chos," and Honcho was the "number one" or main downtown area. The main gate of the Navy Base opened out into Honcho, and this is where the action was. In the 1960s, the streets were lined with many dozens of bars, cabarets and night clubs of just about every description that catered to servicemen. Steve Kraus reports he left his bottle of Seagram's 7 in the California bar there in 1968, not knowing he would be transferred from the Sterett DLG 31 to the Reeves DLG 24. Mixed in with



*Yokosuka*

these were restaurants, hotels, local shops, pachinko parlors and souvenir stores. As far as sailor towns go it was pretty respectable. Unlike many other places we visited, in Yoko we were safe to indulge in our pleasures with no danger greater than being separated from a few dollars. Yoko was fun!

Each bar had a character of its own, though they all looked pretty much alike. Some played rock'n'roll, others featured country and western, and some had big band and jazz music. Most had dance floors, and all had a bevy of attractive hostesses. All served beer, cocktails and wine, but the liquor and wine were mostly Japanese, and, to be polite, not very palatable. Kirin and Asahi beers were the mainstay. It was the job of the hostesses to make the conversation lively and keep the drinks flowing. In Japan the job of hostess was an acceptable, if not fully respectable, profession. It was part of the "Floating Society" that included bar tenders, artists, musicians and other entertainers, with geisha at the top, the ultimate entertainer. Hostess was the bottom rung of the ladder, available for more private forms of entertainment. But their main job was to keep the sailors happy and spending money.

## USS KIDD UPDATE

By Rich Alverdes

### Commander Parina Somnhot Executive Officer, USS KIDD (DDG 100)



“Commander Parina Somnhot was born in Fairfax, Virginia. She studied Print Journalism and International Relations at Boston University, where she received her commission through the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps in 2005.

Commander Somnhot completed her Division Officer tours in USS WASP (LHD 1), where she was assigned to engineering and combat systems departments and USS MOMSEN (DDG 92), where she served as Fire Control Officer. As a Department Head, Commander Somnhot completed tours as Operations Officer in USS WAYNE E. MEYER (DDG 108) and USS HUÉ CITY (CG 66).

Following her Department Head tours, she commanded USS TY-PHOON (PC 5) while forward deployed to Manama, Bahrain. She has deployed to every fleet area of operation, supporting Joint Task Force Lebanon and Operations ENDURING FREEDOM, IRAQI FREEDOM and INHERENT RESOLVE. Ashore Commander Somnhot earned a Master of Science in Mechanical Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

Most recently she served as the Operations Officer on the staff of Commander, Naval Surface Group Western Pacific in Yokosuka, Japan. Commander Somnhot’s awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal, and various unit, service, and campaign awards.” As many of you are aware, the chain of command follows a set path. As the Executive Officer of the USS Kidd, she will become the 12th “Captain” or Command Officer of the Kidd sometime in early 2022 which will place her in the ranks in history of being only the second female Commander of the USS Kidd.

## VA PLANS EXPANSION OF BENEFITS FOR DISABILITY CLAIMS FOR CONDITIONS RELATED TO AGENT ORANGE EXPOSURE

The Department of Veterans Affairs announced today a major decision related to presumptive conditions associated with Agent Orange. The VA will begin implementing provisions of the William M. Thornberry National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2021 (Public Law 116-283), adding three conditions to the list of those presumptively associated with exposure to herbicide agents, more commonly known as Agent Orange. Those conditions are bladder cancer, hypothyroidism and Parkinsonism.

"Many of our Nation's Veterans have waited a long time for these benefits," said VA Secretary Denis McDonough. "The VA will not make them wait any longer. This is absolutely the right thing to do for Veterans and their families."

The VA will apply the provisions of court orders related to *Nehmer vs. U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs*, which may result in an earlier date for entitlement to benefits for Veterans who served in the Republic of Vietnam during the Vietnam War. Vietnam War era Veterans and their survivors, who previously filed and were denied benefits for one of these three new presumptive conditions, will have their cases automatically reviewed without the need to refile a claim. The VA will send letters to impacted Veterans and survivors.

### HERE ARE THE LIST OF CONDITIONS:

Chronic B-Cell Leukemia	Hodgkin's Disease
Multiple Myeloma	Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
Prostate Cancer	Respiratory Cancers
Soft Tissue Sarcomas	AL Amyloidosis
Chloracne	Diabetes Mellitus Type 2
Ischemic Heart Disease	Parkinson's Disease
Early-onset Peripheral Neuropathy	Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
Bladder Cancer (new 2021)	Hypothyroidism (new 2021)
Parkinsonism (new 2021)	

YOU EARNED YOUR BENEFITS, APPLY TODAY AT YOUR LOCAL VA OFFICE.

# WISCONSIN STATE LOST 74 MEMORIAL DEDICATION

By Terry Vejr

On Memorial Day 31 May 2021 a Lost 74 dedication ceremony was held at The Highground Veterans Memorial Park & Museum, Neillsville, Wisconsin in honor of: YN3 James Richard Cmeyla, SA Michael Anthony Orilkowski and RD3 Jon Wayne Thomas.

In attendance were Joe and Cindy Cmeyla, Jack Cmeyla, shipmate Joe Brusca, his wife Sue, survivors Mike Schertz and Terry Vejr. In addition, there were approximately 75-100 people in attendance.

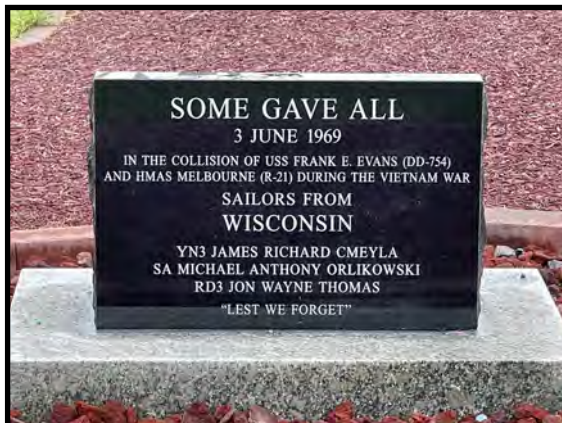
YN3 James Cmeyla's brothers Joe and Jack unveiled the memorial stone. Mike Schertz and Terry Vejr read the 74 names.

A special thank you to Chris Pettis (Executive Director), Bonnie Pettis (Events Coordinator) and their staff for all their hard work in making this an outstanding dedication ceremony.

The Highground Veterans Memorial Park is open 24/7/365 days a year.



Jack Cmeyla, Terry Vejr, Joe Cmeyla, & Mike Schertz (S)



## DEDICATION 3 JUNE 2021 ULVERSTONE, TASMANIA

By James Lyall

What a wonderful memorial was held at the Shropshire Park, Ulverstone Tasmania on the 3rd June 2021

The memorial was organized and funded by Gary Smith, ex sailor onboard that fateful morning, Gary has had constant memories from that day, both good and bad. He decided that by doing this he would have some relief from some of the bad memories.

The day was enhanced by the attendance of 12 ex Melbourne sailors, RADM Michael van Balan AO RAN (MC), V Andrew Wright CSC, OAM HADC, The Honorable Guy Barnett MP, Minister for Veterans Affairs, Captain Matthew Ort, USN Naval Attaché, Commander Tobias Reid, US Coast Guard Attaché.

I had the honor to give a speech on behalf of the Survivors, on completion of the speech I presented Gary Smith with the Declaration of Appreciation from the Association.

Gary is a very humble man and he accepted the Declaration and accolades of his achievements with true compassion and dignity. BZ Gary, well done and God Bless



Left to right: Mark Tishler, Unknown, Gary Smith, Ian Swain, Ted Sands, Hank Koopman, Chris Spalding, Chris Mirchell, Pat Richardson, Jim Lyall. Graham Deacon. Ken Beaton.



*They shall grow not old,  
As we that are left grow old.  
Age shall not weary them,  
Nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun,  
and in the morning,  
We will remember them.*

*Lest We Forget*





### 3 June 2021 Long Beach Memorial

By Al Collins

Those in Attendance at this years Long Beach Memorial were; Gregg Bouffard, Butterball Conely, Nancy Collins, Rich Alverdes, Cheryl Wyse, and Susie Rice helped setting podium, flags, banners, programs, etc. in place. Jack Sheehan brought sodas and donuts donated by Winchell's as many gathered to reacquaint. Invocation by Chaplain Al, Dean Wyse led the Pledge of Allegiance with the Hawthorne HS ROTC Color guards led by Chief Ron Gray. Pete Peters began the program. Mary Lee womaned the bells and Nancy Collins womaned the balloons as Steve Whitton read the Lost 74 names with Pete. MSgt Dan Plaster and Ken Sithan played TAPS. Long Beach Fire Boats were coordinated by Scott Dixon. Wreath set by Butterball. Rich read 'The Turn' and Eric Lee recited the 'Ode.' Tim Wendler nourished our resolve status for the Lost 74. Across the crowd we saw familiar ship-mates and family of the Lost 74; Mary Greg, Floyd Samms, Lisa & Ronan Watt, Fred Kerr, Rich Fichtelman, Terry Tousant, Lisa LeBrun, Susie Macayan, Valarie Timmerman, Anthony Ruff, Jeri Taylor and family, Brown family, to mention a few. Benediction by Al Collins.



Above: Mary and Eric Lee, right: Nancy release balloons. below left: Nancy Collins, Greg Bouffard, Cheryl Wyse, Dean Wyse, Pete Peters, Al Collins and Rich Alverdes. Below right: Tim Wendler and Pete Peters

### 3 JUNE 2021 MEMORIAL CEREMONY WASHINGTON / VIRGINIA

BY STEVE KRAUS

Some would say that having a memorial ceremony in a BBQ Restaurant might not be appropriate to honor the "Lost 74." Au Contraire!

The Mission BBQ Restaurant on Lee Jackson Memorial Highway in Fairfax, Virginia was the perfect location for the 3 June 2021 Ceremony. The Restaurant which is known to stop all service at noon each day to play honor to our greatest heroes; the police, firefighters and our military could not have been more hospitable. Terry Vejr, Ann Armstrong and Carol Coulter (Twin Sister to Earl Preston) made all the arrangements and all the prep work. Mission BBQ made the entire restaurant open to the Association. Our ceremony took almost an hour then the restaurant opened to the public. Following the ceremony several attendees went out to visit Earl Preston's Memorial.



## THE MEANING OF THE FOLDING OF THE AMERICAN FLAG

Here is how to understand the folding of the US flag. Have you ever noticed that the honor guard pays meticulous attention to correctly folding the United States of America Flag 13 times? You probably thought it was to symbolize the original 13 colonies, but we learn something new every day!

1st fold is a symbol of life. 2nd fold is a symbol of the belief in eternal life. 3rd fold honors and remembrance of the Veterans departing the ranks who gave a portion of their lives for the defense of the country. 4th fold

represents the weaker nature, for as American citizens trusting in God, it is to Him we turn in times of peace as well as in time of war for His divine guidance. 5th fold is a tribute to the country, for in the words of Stephen Decatur, 'Our Country, in dealing with other countries, may she always be right; but it is still our



country, right or wrong. 6th fold is for where people's hearts lie. It is with their heart that they pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America. 7th fold is a tribute to its Armed Forces, for it is through the Armed Forces that they protect their country and their flag against all her enemies. 8th fold is a tribute to the one who entered into the valley of the shadow of death, that we might see the light of day. 9th fold is a tribute to womanhood. 10th fold is a tribute to the father. 11th fold represents the lower portion of the seal of King David and King Solomon. 12th fold represents an emblem of eternity and glorifies, in the Christians eyes, God the Father, the Son and Holy Spirit. 13th fold, or when the flag is completely folded, the stars are uppermost reminding them of their Nations motto, 'In God We Trust.' After the flag is completely folded and tucked in, it takes on the appearance of a cocked hat, ever reminding us of the Soldiers who served under General George Washington and Captain John Paul Jones.

There are some traditions and ways of doing things that have deep meaning. In the future, you'll see flags folded and now you will know why. Please share this with the children you love and all others who love what is referred to as the symbol of ' Liberty and Freedom.'



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& UPDATED  
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USSFEE.ORG**

**OUR NEXT  
REUNION IS IN  
SAN ANTONIO  
TEXAS, OCT.  
27—30, 2021**

