

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE
U.S.S. WEST VIRGINIA REUNION ASSOC.

Editor: Robert "Geezil" Kronberger

*Transferred to the
Supreme Commander-in-Chief
Of The Universe*

Our Departed Shipmates

James G. Brown	Norman Olson
Edward J. Fruechtl	Gene Holmes
Robert Lippencott	John Kostopoulos
Paul S. Norton	Lane Clendenin
E. W. Hankey	Joe Dixon
"Ace" W. G. Barton	George C. Duncan
John Kent	Jack P. Shoase
Adam Pallisin	John D. Wiley
William G. Cross	G. T. Le Blanc

*"Eternal rest grant unto them and let perpetual light
shine upon them and may they rest in peace"*

Support The U.S.S West Virginia Museum

921 Emerson Avenue, Parkersburg, WV

All donations of USS West Virginia memorabilia welcomed

Scuttlebutt Soundings

ETA at Norfolk, Virginia is set for September 25-29, 1996. It is expected that the muster list will be large and we will welcome the opportunity to see many of our East Coast Shipmates that have been unable to travel west in the past. We look forward to the new "Sea Stories" that are bound to surface when and wherever two or more old shipmates get together.

This year we will try to change the program a little by having a reception on Friday evening consisting of a wine and cheese happy hour followed by live entertainment. After the entertainment we will provide music for enjoyment and dancing for the young at heart. Of course our adjacent hospitality room will be open with other refreshments available. Shipmate Earl Selover says that the entertainment will cause new young blood flow through our old and tired veins. Saturday evening following the banquet we will present some more quality and and enjoyable entertainment.

1997 PLANNED USS WEST VIRGINIA REUNION

I know that the "Mountaineers" are wondering how come we voted to have the 25th Reunion in Seattle, WA., only to find that the site had been changed to Portland Oregon. Our problem was that we could not find a suitable hotel available during our preferred time frame. The rates offered us for other time periods were what we considered to be beyond our means. The room rates offered were \$100+ per night, our banquet costs were quoted as



(Continued Next Page)

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Robert S. Kronberger, PO Box 442, Big Bear City, CA 92314-0442

(Scuttlebutt Soundings Continued)

\$30.00 to \$35.00 plus 15 % gratuity and 11% tax. We were not able to get a commitment on transportation to and from the airports or for secure vehicle parking. We would have had to pay extra for our meeting and hospitality rooms. Time and budget constraints made it mandatory that we seek a more reunion friendly location. Our search was completed and we settled upon Portland Oregon and the Monarch Hotel. They offered us complimentary transportation to and from the airport, room rates at \$65.00 per day single or double, a private hospitality room poolside and lower/reasonable food services. In our hospitality room we are allowed BYOB privileges, we are allowed to bring in our own dry snacks. The hotel will provide ice and will freshen the room at no charge. Parking for the group staying in the hotel is free. In addition to all of this, Portland is a great liberty port with something for everyone. We are sincerely sorry that we were forced to make this move and we hope that this will not inconvenience any one.

As long as we are on the subject of reunion sites and planning it would be wise to give serious thought to the items that we mentioned in the preceding paragraph before we offer a city for future reunions. We want to go where the crew will have a great time, but it must be a place that is reunion friendly, cost effective and easy to get to. It would be well to remember that many hotels require a guarantee for the services they offer. Because we have a limited budget and cash flow, sometimes we find it difficult to come up with the funds required by premium resorts for their services

Bob K



Out of Our Past

From the February 7, 1931 Issue of the "Mountaineer":

Gold Basketballs: Unbeknownst to the basketball team a number of the men on board made up a purse and purchased gold basketballs for members of our winning team. The sum obtained only permitted the purchase of six gold basketballs and Goodloe, Creed, Clayton, Dill, Waggener and Madison were presented these neat tokens.

Goodloe, for the recipients, thanks the members of the ship's company for their handsome gift and the spirit behind it and guarantees at least as good a year in basketball next season. (Editors Note:) (Who could ever forget Roscoe Creed, Rabbi Madison, Ted "Iron Head" Dill, Claude Goodloe, O.D. Clayton and Waggener. Those Shipmates, along with others such as Ray Brown, "Chippie" Woods, Mike Kotsmith, "Frenchie" Le Blanc, ETAL brought the "Iron Man" to the West Virginia.

From our 1st Reunion, 10 December 1955"

06/2302Z DEC WS

DK A153

BVD A563

BVP A644

BEP A727L

BFL 166

MM RWDKC

DE RBFLC 116

M 061832Z ZFFL

FM ALUSNA LONDON

TO COMMANDER NAVAL BASE LOS ANGELES

BT

FOR MR R S KRONBERGER 16422 SOUTH VERMONT AVE GARDENA

CALIF X ON THE OCCASION OF THE USS WEST VIRGINIA REUNION FOUR EX-MOUNTAINEERS SEND FROM LONDON THEIR WARMEST GOOD WISHES AND REGRETS THAT 6000 MILES PREVENT THEIR BEING YOU X SIGNED HAROLD R STARK ADMIRAL USN RETIRED, PLANKOWNER X

HAROLD E OVERESCH VICE ADMIRAL USN RETIRED, PLANKOWNER X

CHARLES H LYMAN REAR ADMIRAL USN, 1926-30 AND 1937-38 X

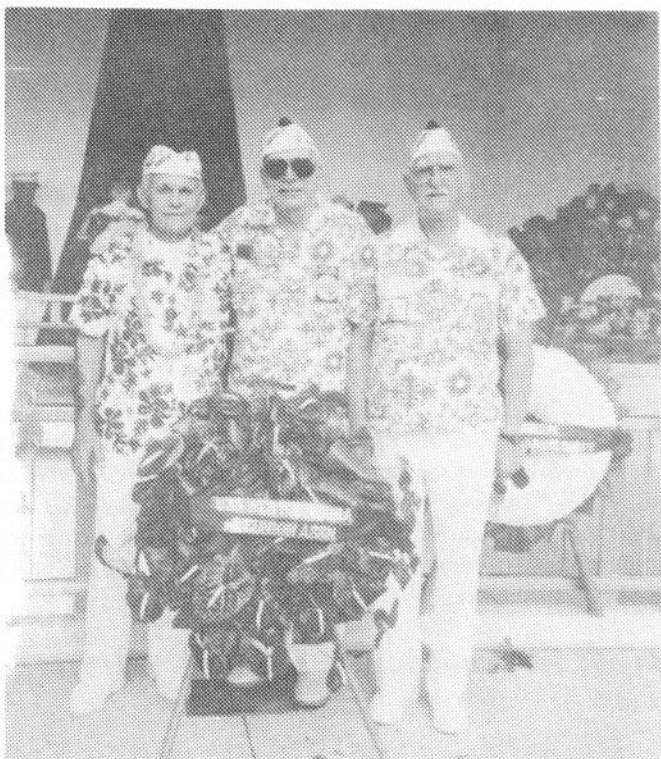
WILLIAM J SCHLACKS COMMANDER USN, 1938-39

BT

CFN 16422 0000 1926-30 1937-38 1938-39

06/1832Z DEC RBFLC

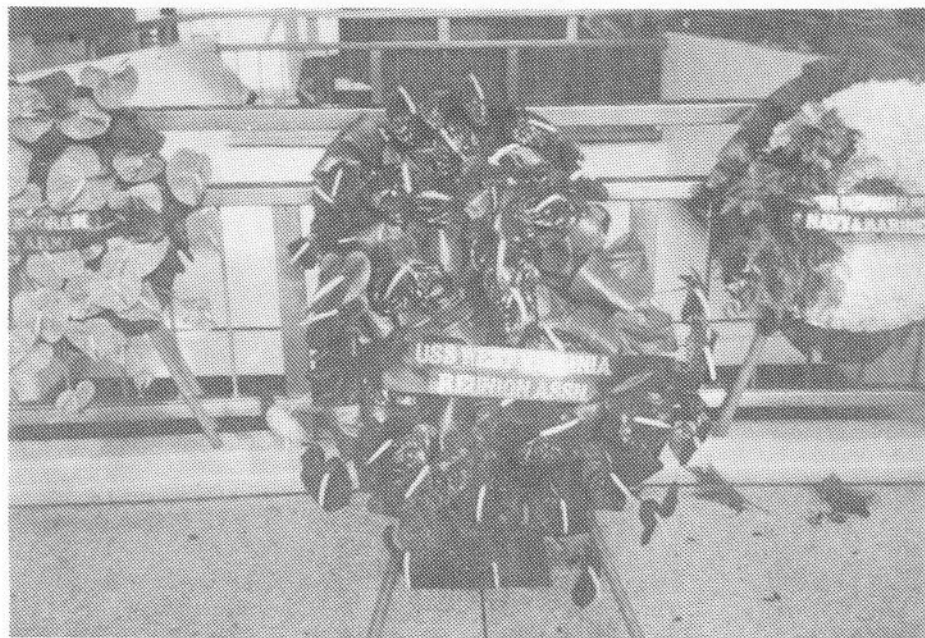
The Reconstruction Crew brought honor to the ship by devastating the Imperial Japanese Fleet, destroying shore facilities, supporting amphibious landings and sailing it into Tokyo Bay as revenge for Pearl Harbor.



Mountaineers Remember Pearl Harbor

*December 7th, 1945 Shipmates Dick Fiske,
Keith Hill and Mickey Micheovich
place the Wee Vee Reunion Assn. Wreath
in the Remembrance Garden, Pearl Harbor.*

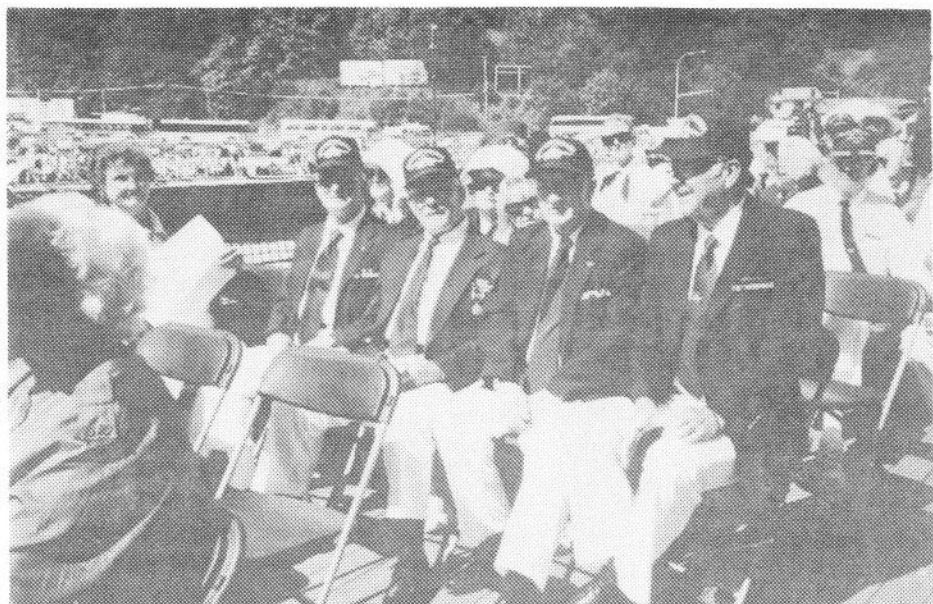
*Lower right : Wray Bray, Bob Kronberger
and Preston Pradia remember Pearl Harbor
in Victorville, CA Dec. 7th, 1995*



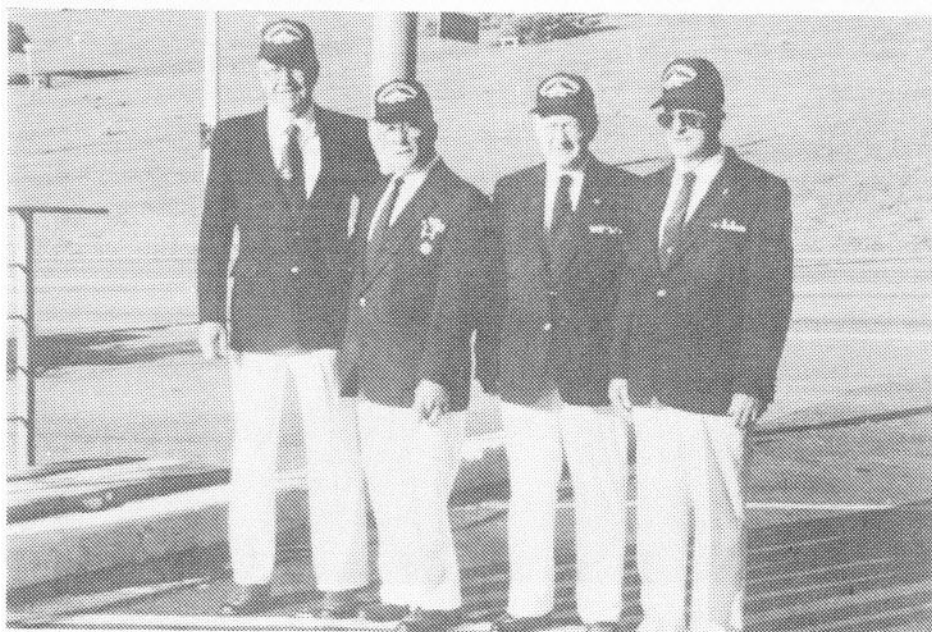
Three large floral wreaths were presented to the USS Wheatland by the Bernhardt Association. The wreaths were presented to the ship's crew by the Bernhardt Association.



Three men are shown in the photo. The man in the center is holding a framed certificate that reads 'WARTIME HONOR BY THE PLANET'. The man on the left is also wearing a white shirt and glasses. The man on the right is wearing a white shirt. In the background, there is an American flag and a framed picture of a ship. A table with various items is visible on the right side of the frame.



**"MOUNTINEERS" From the 11th Division,
Ken Powell, Bill Roseboom, Herb Spencer
and Joe Saragusa attended the 50th anniversary
commemering the signing of the Peace
Treaty aboard "Missouri" , Sept. 2nd, 1995**



Support and Visit

The

Navy Memorial at Washington, DC

*Sad Saga of Storerroom A-111 Dec. 7, 1941; or Sailors Marked 16
Days on Calendar*

In early December, 1995 I was contacted by a reporter for the "Honolulu Advertiser" Eric Gregory, seeking information concerning the three West Virginia Firemen of A Division who were reported as trapped below the third deck on the day of the attack by the Imperial Japanese Forces on the 7th of December 1941. I had remembered the incident, but I had thought that they were trapped in a pump room. I put him in touch with several several shipmates who I knew could give him more reliable information than I could offer. Mr Gregory contacted several Wee Vee Sailors and then put together an excellent account of the fate of Ronald Endicott, Clifford Olds and Louis "Buddy" Costin. I wish that I had enough space available in the "Mountaineer" to print the article published in the "Advertiser" and several other newspapers around the country. I will attempt to place the basic information here and will place the entire article in our "Memory Log". The following are excerpts from Mr. Gregory's report: "At first, everyone thought it was a piece of loose rigging slapping against the wrecked hull of the USS West Virginia". "But they realized the grim truth the next morning in the quiet dawn. Someone was still alive, trapped deep in the forward hull of the sunken battleship."

"When the salvage crews raised the West Virginia six months later, they found the bodies of three men huddled in an airtight storeroom: Ronald Endicott, 18; Clifford Olds, 20; and Louis "Buddy" Costin, 21. But the most haunting discovery was the calendar. Sixteen days had been crossed off in red pencil. The young sailors had marked their time, not knowing what had happened to their ship or that their country was at war."

"For 54 years, their story has been told in hushed tones among the West Virginia Survivors. It has become a symbol of courage and perseverance for these aging men. Few people knew the whole truth. The Navy never told the families how long their loved ones had survived. And for those brothers and sisters who eventually found out, the truth was so devastating they kept it a secret. Even from their own parents."

"After months of picking bodies from the West Virginia, sailors removed the

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(Sad Saga Continued)

remains of three men from storeroom A-111 (fresh water pump room), clad in their blues and jerseys. They were carried away in heavy canvas bags drawn tight at the top"

"The clues left in the dry storeroom hinted at a horrifying demise. Flash light batteries littered the floor. The manhole to a supply of fresh water had been opened. Emergency rations had been eaten. And the calendar. A foot high, 14 inches long. A red "X" scratched through the dates from Dec. 7 through Dec. 23."

"The calendar, sent to the Chief of Naval Personnel in Washington, DC after it was found, is now lost"

" Ronald Endicott and Buddy Costin are buried at the National Cemetery of the Pacific at Punchbowl Crater in Honolulu. Cliff Olds' body was returned to his hometown and buried in the city cemetery. All their headstones say they died Dec. 7, 1941."

"Trachta's Raiders"

And the

"Fresh Water Navy Of The North"

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U.S.S. West Virginia (BB-48)

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For their 1998 Reunion

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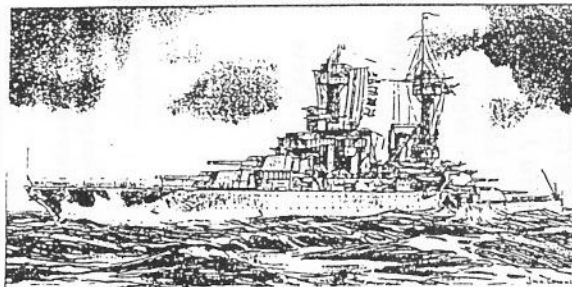
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1996 REUNION
September 25th-29th, 1996



U.S.S. WEST VIRGINIA (BB-48)
REUNION ASSOCIATION

C/O Robert S. Kronberger
Post Office Box 442
Big Bear City, CA, 922314-0442



Visit the USS West Virginia Museum
921 Emerson Avenue
Parkersburg, W. Va 26104

For Shipmate:

Next Liberty Port: Norfolk, VA
Sept. 25-29, 1996