

SCUTTLEBUTT

JULY 2010



Our highlighted shipmate this addition is Chuck Dryden. He is pictured to the left in his golf cart with his dog Brutus.

He currently lives on the fourth fairway of the Alamo Country Club in Alamo, TX.

Chuck was part of our VC10 Squadron.

He was born 12/6/26 in Kalispel, Montana and about age one his family moved to

California. He grew up and attended school in Fullerton, CA. He joined the Navy in Nov 1943 with parents permission but couldn't start training until after his 17th birthday. In Jan 44 he began training at San Diego and from there went to Nattc Memphis, TN for radio school, then Jacksonville and Ft Lauderdale, FL for gunnery school after which he was assigned to VC10.



Chuck sent the picture to the left and the following e-mail to me.

I'm the one on the left, Chuck Dryden (ARM3), Ens Lonnie Mckeel, center and Pepe Morgan (MM3). I "enjoyed" numerous dowsings from Pepe from his turret directly above my radio position in the TBM due to his air sickness, but thats all part of war.

This picture was taken shortly before deployment on the USS Fanshaw Bay in 1945 of the reformed VC10 squadron.

Continued on the 2nd page.

The squadron was transported from NAS North Island by two other carriers to Guam where we boarded the Fannie Bee and headed north west to Adak and then into Ominata, Japan for occupation as the war had ended.

Since I was regular Navy and had over a year yet to serve, I recycled to BP4y2 Privates and ended my service in October 1947 at NAS Correy Field, near Pensacola in charge of the station base radio only to be recalled in Sept 1950 because of my training in 4Y2's. In July 1950 I had decided it would be fun to fly again so volunteered as a weekend warrior at NAS Alamos. But never attended a drill when I got the wire I'd been activated with VP772, the only Navy squadron still flying the 4Y2. Pres Truman had decided to give that aircraft to the French still fighting the Viet Minh in Indo China. Since we were not at war the "gift" had to be covert. Our first assignment was to Island hop five unmarked planes across the Pacific in civilian clothes with no personal identification to Saigon. All across the pond we got questions everywhere about who we were and where we were going. We'd been warned not to talk about the missions purpose or destination. After that episode the squadron spent 8 months in Japan and Korea at Pusan flying coast patrols and night parachute drops.

(Thank you Chuck for the pictures and the compliment on the Scuttlebutt.)

Letter from Cesare A. Ciantra:

Oct 25, 1944 In the Sea, I drifted onto a group of men who were hanging on a section of a flight deck plank that was blow into the sea. There were 16 men on board, I made it 17. One of the men was an officer Lt. V. Bell. I held onto the plank al day long and all night. Early on the 26th I drifted away and into a group of men that were holding onto a life raft. There was one sailor who was laying on top of the raft. Also one of the men was the C.P.O., who I knew for a short period of time. I was in E Division and was assigned to him for M.P. Duty. On this day the sailor on the top of the raft passed away. His personal things and dog tag were given to the C.P.O. The sailor was buried at sea, all are prayers were with him, then and for ever.

After reading the March 2010 Scuttlebutt that Sailor was Leonard G. Martin-SC 1/c.

(After getting this letter I cried. I found Cesare's phone number and called him. We had a long conversation and it became a little emotional for me. I guess you never know what will trigger your memory. My Scuttlebutt article did that for Cesare. Thank you so much for this story about yourself and my uncle. God Bless- Marlene)

A perfect quote.

"A hug is the perfect gift, one size fits everybody, and nobody minds if you exchange it."

Presidents Corner

Hello Gambier Bay Family!

Our Reunion Committee is busy finalizing our 2010 reunion, which will be held in St Louis, Missouri (see inside for more details), October 21-24, 2010. If you would like to volunteer to assist our reunion committee, please contact Marlene Hughes. There is enormous amount of behind the scenes work done by the committee and any assistance you can offer would be greatly appreciated. We will again have a raffle at our Banquet and this year we have decided to have a silent auction during the reception hour before our banquet. As you know, ticket sales at the raffle help tremendously with the Association finances and your support is greatly appreciated. If you would like to donate items for the raffle or silent auction you can send them to me or Marlene or you can bring them along with you to the reunion.

This year we are proud to announce the Gunners Motorcycle Club/St Louis, Missouri Chapter will assist us with our memorial service as we honor and remember those who served on the USS Gambier Bay. The Gunners Motorcycle Club is an organization founded by active Law Enforcement Officers who are dedicated to the support of our fallen heroes. It will truly be a memorable experience. Additionally, we have some great excursions planned for us all to enjoy and to see what St. Louis has to offer. At our Board meeting we will unveil our new Association website- ussgambierbay.org. I encourage all of you to attend so we can get your feedback, suggestions, and comments. If you have photos, articles, recognitions or awards you would like to submit to the website, please bring them with you to the reunion. Our website designer, John Larsen from Great Site Design, will give a presentation and he will be available to answer questions. With the launching of our website we have decided to offer you the option of having your Scuttlebutt newsletter emailed directly to you. This feature will allow the Association to not only "go green" but to also be more cost-effective with our finances. If you would like to receive your Scuttlebutt newsletter via e-mail, please send your request to Marlene at mahhome@cox.net (that way she will have your current email address). **We will begin this feature with the edition after our October 2010 reunion.**

Once again, I would like to thank everyone for their continued support and encouragement to not only me but to the entire Board. We are here to serve you and should you have any questions, comments, or suggestions, please do not hesitate to contact me or one of the other Board members.

I look forward to seeing you all in St Louis!

Paula (LaRocco) Grond

pk_grond@yahoo.com

IN MEMORY

DONALD J TOPCZEWSKI



Donald J. Topczewski of Bolder, Co died April 10, 2010 at the hospice Care Center in Louisville. He was 86.

Donald was born on February 2, 1924 in Milwaukee, Wisconsin to Leon and Philomena (Zdroikowski) Topczewski. During World II, Donald served in the United States Navy aboard the USS Gambier Bay, an aircraft carrier that sunk during action in Leyte Gulf. He was a Machinist Mate 1/c in Div M.

Following the war, Donald married Lucy Kalinowski on September 28, 1946 in Milwaukee. Donald was an active member of the Catholic Church and was a 4th Degree member of the Knights of Columbus. He worked for IBM as a toolmaker and retired from there with an engineering position.

Don will be missed by all who knew and loved him. He was a loving and faithful husband and the best dad, grandpa, and great-grandpa.

Donald enjoyed working with wood in his workshop. As a craftsman he made many pieces of furniture for family members, friends, and the church. He also made toys for children in the family which have come to be prized possessions.

Preceding Donald in death were his parents, two sons: Thomas and Timothy Topczewski and two brothers: Edmund and Robert Topczewski. He is survived by his wife Lucy; his son Andrew and wife Linda Topczewski of Kalamazoo, MI; three daughters: Mary Sarah Burrowes of Thailand, Terri Bradshaw and her husband John of Longmont, and Rita Rusnock and her husband Kevin of Broomfield, 9 grandchildren: Donald, Lara, Bryan, Joel, Miike, Farren, Kim, Dan, and Jacob; twelve great grandchildren; and a brother Leonard Topczewski of Milwaukee, WI.

Mass of Christian Burial was held on Tuesday, April 13th at 10:00a.m. at St John the Baptist Catholic Church. Burial followed at Foothills Gardens of Memory.

Memorials may be given to St John Baptist Catholic Church Building Fund, 323 Collyer Street, Longmont, CO 80501.

You may share your thoughts, memories and condolences with the family at www.howemortuary.com.

Remembering Shipmates & Spouses:

Camille B. Terry

Camillia B. Terry, 93, passed away peacefully on Tuesday June 1, 2010 at the Venturan nursing facility in Ventura, CA.



Camillia was born in San Gabriel, CA on July 15, 1916 to Louis and Beatrice Capdeville and was one of nine children. She attended Oxnard High School and worked at the lemon packing plant in Port Hueneme. She met her husband, William Franklin Hines (K-Division) on a blind date and they later married in Yuma, AZ. Frank was in the Navy and they were stationed at Tacoma, Long Beach, Coronado and Hawaii. In 1956 they returned to Port Hueneme with their three daughters where she was a homemaker. She was married 38 years until the death of Frank in 1976. She married Paul Terry in 1988. They loved to travel and their travels took them to Japan, Ireland, the Panama Canal and Mexico.

She was a member of various organizations that included the Retired Officers Wives Club, American Legion and the Elks. She enjoyed cooking and entered the Ventura County Fair on numerous occasions winning blue ribbons for her baking and canning.

She was an avid Dodger fan and enjoyed gardening.

Camilla is survived by her sister, Amber Noonan of Oxnard, her daughters, Pat Wornack of Oxnard, Sue Lomax of Tennessee and Francine Vournazos of Port Hueneme; grandchildren, Kristine Gallegos, Tricia Tomlin, April Westbrook and Daniel Vournazos; great grandchildren TJ and Isabella Gallegos, Autumn and Winter Tomlin and Matthew Westbrook.

A graveside service of remembrance was held at 11 a.m. on Friday, June 11th at Conejo Mountain Memorial Park.

(Thank you Francine for your phone call and telling me about your Mom. She always sent a donation to the Association)

William F Bounds, Sr.

This e-mail was sent to me by William's daughter Mary Jo about his passing.

Dear Marlene,

It is with regret and deep sadness I inform you of the passing of our dear father, William F. Bounds, Sr. Pop passed away in his sleep in the early morning of Friday, May 7, after several years of declining health. His peaceful passing was indeed scripted by Almighty God. He is sadly missed.

The reunion in September '05 in D.C. was the only one he was ever able to attend. His son Bill, my husband Gerald, and I went with him. Oh, how glad we are that we did. He had a heart attack in December the same year and shortly thereafter became a part of the most wonderful extension of our own family at a local retirement inn, where he remained until his passing. All his Gambier Bay pictures and metals surrounded him in his room. His funeral most fittingly included military honors. The recessional from the church was the Navy hymn.

Thank you once again for your continued efforts to keep the memory and spirit of the U.S.S. Gambier Bay men alive and well.

Mary Jo Ellis

(thank you Mary Jo for sending this e-mail- William served on the ship as Aviation Radioman 3/c)