



Leaky Weeks Almanac

USS John W Weeks
Association

Volume 2, Issue 3
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Hal Gross, President Emeritus

Dear Weeks Shipmates and Friends

First, I would like to take this opportunity to wish everyone a merry Christmas and a happy and prosperous New Year.

I want to thank all of you who came to our nineteenth reunion in San Antonio, Texas and made it a great success. From the feedback I received, everybody had a great time. After Katrina hit, I thought that this would be a repeat of 1999, when Hal Gross had to cancel the reunion at the last minute due to a hurricane hitting Myrtle Beach. The shortage and high price of gasoline, in addition the Pontchartrain Expressway (Interstate 10) was "full of water" and the "Twin Spans" over the east end of Lake Pontchartrain were "totally destroyed" making it difficult for those traveling to San Antonio by car. However, our Shipmates came through; we had 85 people attend. There were three last minute cancellations due to an illness of a member or spouse. Once again, thanks for your support.

We had the honor of having Captain Jean Fitzgerald, and his wife Carol, join us at this year's reunion. Captain Jean Fitzgerald was the Commanding Officer of the Weeks from 1963 – 1965. At the business meeting, Jim Fariello presented to the Captain a ship's plaque. The plaque was donated from Jim's private collection of Weeks memorabilia.

At this year's business meeting, we took a survey to select a reunion site for 2006. Both Nashville and Valley Forge tied for first place; however, for second place, Valley Forge came in far ahead of all the other suggested sites. Also, I was surprised to see a strong write-in vote for San Diego. This may be an option for a future reunion. Therefore, I am happy to report that we will be going to Valley Forge, Pennsylvania in 2006. It seems that Valley Forge is becoming a popular site for ship reunions, especially with the Battleship New Jersey being nearby. I had to delay the reunion by a week because of demand. I will put out information on the website next month. The March newsletter will have all of the details and forms.

A lot was accomplished at this year's meeting of Association Officers, for example, final draft of the Association By-Laws was completed after many revisions. The plan is for copies to be mailed out to all members later in the year and take a vote on the document at our next meeting in the fall. In addition, Tom Wilson took on the assignment, looking into a Weeks commemorative plaque that would be on permanent display within the U.S. Navy Memorial that would be dedicated to the ship and the men that served on her. Because of the funding needed, this would be a two to three year project. Tom will present all of the details at our next meeting and put the proposal up for a vote by the membership.

Members voted to keep the yearly donations at twenty-five dollars a year. It should be noted that monies collected through donations are used for the purposes of furthering the work of the Association. A financial report for will appear in the next newsletter.

Donations for 2006 should be sent to our Treasurer, Jim Harkins. Our policy is the same as always, if you cannot afford to donate, please let Jim know so that we can continue to send you the newsletter. Jim's address is on the back page.

I want to give special thanks to Hiram Carr, for taking photographs of all functions. In addition, I want to thank all of you that sent me pictures of the reunion. It's impossible to get all of them into the newsletter; however, I will do my best to get them on our website.

Finally, I want to thank Karen Wilson for once again documenting the reunion functions and writing an article for this issue.

In the meantime, if there are concerns or if you just have questions; feel free to contact me or other members of our committee. I'll keep you informed of the business of the association by means of the newsletters and our website.

Smooth Sailing,
Len Budzynski



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**Reunion 2006
Valley Forge,
Pennsylvania
October 4
through Octo-
ber 8.**

**We will be stay-
ing at the Hilton
Valley Forge.
Registration
forms and tour
information will
go out in the
March 2006
newsletter.**

The Last Two Weeks Sailors Step Off Of The Ship

Wayne Falch EM2 sent the following article to me. Wayne served aboard the Week 1967 - 1970.

An Engineman named Frank Ronsini from New York and I were the last two people to step off the Weeks, at the Sub Base in Groton, Connecticut as she was towed out for target practice and sunk. She was decommissioned on a Friday, so Frank and I were assigned to stay aboard until Monday morning when the tugs came to tow her out. We walked down the brow and then pulled it off the ship from the pier. At the time, I recall thinking about all the men and hours of hard work that must have gone into her over the years. She did not look much like a US Navy ship by then, as she had been stripped for parts to the extent that she was several feet higher in the water than I had ever seen a Sumner Class Tin Can. It was sad, even to two young men who had a thousand other things we thought were more important. Frank and I stood on the pier without talking and watched her slowly move out to her grave.

Note: The USS John W Weeks was sunk in November 1970, position 37-10.9 N, 73-45.6 W.



Believe to the last photo of the Weeks 1970.

San Antonio Reunion by Karen Wilson



I'm just reflecting about this year's reunion in San Antonio, TX, as I put our photos in the album. It was my first taste of Texas hospitality and fun, but not my husband, Tom's. We both found something new to enjoy among all the sightseeing and activity choices available.

Our first event on Wednesday night was dinner at the oldest Mexican restaurant on the Riverwalk, Casa Rio. We had a great view of the river and were treated to a strolling guitar musical selection

as we tasted some typical Mexican food. After dinner we boarded the riverboats (or river barges) at the back of the restaurant and wound around the Riverwalk, lit up for nighttime, with the river boat pilot's commentary about the history and interesting sights we were passing. Having never been in Texas before, I was expecting flat riverbanks and wide open spaces. Actually most of the Riverwalk is down one level from the street, and you wind along a canal with beautiful landscaping and views into historic buildings and of people strolling along the walkway, sitting in restaurants, shopping.

On Thursday morning we started the "Super Sightseeing Tour of San Antonio" with a stop at San Jose Mission. After an introductory movie our guide, Janice Barton, accompanied us on a walking tour of the mission, again complete with historic perspective. It was a peek back to a different lifestyle and time. We boarded our bus to revisit the Riverwalk in daytime on the river barges. Lunch was on our own and a group of us found ourselves in the Victorian style Menger Hotel. We thoroughly enjoyed the buffet in the lovely dining room. After looking in some of the hotel shops we crossed the street to visit the Alamo. (Tom and I didn't sign up for the Saturday tour but chose to see the Alamo on our own.) In mid afternoon we boarded the bus for some drive-by sightseeing on the way back to the hotel to spend time in the Weeks reunion hospitality room and then get ready for our nighttime activity, the ranch barbeque.

The Diamond W Ranch was rustic, hokey fun. We took turns firing a gun at a target, viewed the longhorn cattle, saw cowboy memorabilia, and feasted on Texas barbeque: smoked turkey, sausage, and beef brisket with beans, and cornbread. The cowboy show, complete with humorous skits, a "gun duel" with shipmates Jim Harkins and Hiram Carr, singing, and a performance by a trained longhorn steer (his horns measured an impressive 9 feet from tip to tip), was a hoot!

Friday morning we headed for Fredericksburg in the Texas hill country: nice scenery and a most quaint town. We had a brief ceremony together honoring our departed shipmates and then we were on our own to explore the Admiral Nimitz museum of the WWII Pacific. This included outdoor garden areas with memorial plaques and an indoor museum of memorabilia.



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"Hubby" went with friends to enjoy in detail the exhibits of historical background with highpoints of the WWII in the Pacific and highlights of Admiral Nimitz's role. I chose to shop with friends after a brief museum look.

Fredericksburg was settled by Germans and retains that cultural flavor. The shops are delightful with crafts, home goods, quilts, clothing and food, all a bit out of the ordinary. We lunched on delicious real German food in Der Lindenbaum Restaurant in an old limestone building with lace curtains. Both Tom and I agreed we would have liked to spend a couple of days in this colorful town. There were so many more things we wanted to explore: Oktoberfest was starting the following day, there was another exhibit area of weapons, historical buildings ... so much to see.

Friday evening supper was on our own and a group of about 10 of us took the hotel shuttle to dine at Luciano's Italian Restaurant in the nearby North Star Mall. Although located inside the Mall it was like dining outside in an Italian piazza complete with water fountain. After a delicious meal we returned to the hotel to once again enjoy spending time with everyone in the Weeks reunion hospitality room to talk, look at pictures, buy tickets for the raffles, purchase Weeks logo hats and jackets, etc.

Saturday morning started with the annual John W. Weeks Association business meeting and brunch. We reviewed the year's activities and reports, talked about choices of places to go next year, and had raffles for some prizes. Capt. Jean Fitzgerald received a plaque that had once been presented to him. It was found and returned to him by Jim Fariello.

Some of the group left for an Alamo tour after the meeting. While Tom and some other guys took care of further business, I joined several of the women for a relaxing afternoon in the hotel courtyard by the pool and hot tub.

Saturday evening was our dinner dance at the hotel. This year Marlene Richardson, a guest of Hayes Kennedy, told us the story of the German settlers in Texas. It was particularly appropriate since many of us had gone to Fredericksburg the day before. We had some added excitement with prize raffles, we took photos to remember our good times together, then, all too soon, it was time to say goodbye till next year....



Sea Story - Tale Of The Missing Watermelons

I remember a time when the Weeks was tied outboard of us and they had a all hand working party loading stores and I had one of my deck apes get in line for watermelons and we ended up with two of them in the Henley Bos'n locker. Your supply officer had them counted, our skipper had a search done on the Henley, and they never did find them watermelons....they sure tasted good. I was a BMI when on the Henley.

Richard Le Blanc, Pres.
USS Henley DD-762 Assoc
Retired 1962 as BMC

BOW WAKE™
Ship's Caps, Shirts & Accessories

The hats and jackets that were on sale at this year's reunion were purchased from **BOW WAKE**. You can purchase Weeks gear directly by going to their website (www.bowwake.com) or by phone (1-877-432-4826). To get the discount give them the promotional code DD701. In January you will be able to access their website from ours.

More Reunion Pictures



Capt. Jean Fitzgerald receiving Weeks plaque



Marlene Richardson



Marie Rimmele, Earl Thomas & John Harkins



Cedrick Warren, Len Budzynski & Cruiser Sailor



Cruiser Sailors welcoming Weeks to San Antonio



Jim Howdysell, Earl Thomas, Jim Harkins and Jerry Wester



Nimitz museum - Ceremony honoring our departed shipmates



Jim Amdal



Nimitz museum - Ceremony



San Antonio Business Meeting



Joanne Thomas & Vincent Dematteo



Len, Hayes Kennedy & Bruce Campbell



USS John W Weeks patches for sale. \$2.00 per patch
Contact Jim Harkins





New Members

William F. Sisk	POI	44 - 45	Ward J. Mack	RD3	62 - 63
John A Hill Jr	MM2C	44 - 45	Warren Hemple	E3	62 - 64
Lonnie Joe Jones	ME2	53 - 54	Paul E. "Pete" Webster	MidSn 3/C	63
Wayne Hutson	SN	53 - 54	William Rands	LTJG	65 - 67
Thomas Merritt	SN	54 - 58	Jack E Fissel	ENS	66 - 68
Ronald Zonnak	SN	55 - 58	Richard J Wichern		66 - 69
Tom Sarka	GM3	56 - 57	Wayne Falch	EM2	67 - 69
Daryl A. Ewles	QMSN	56 - 57	Richard J. Koscielski	RDSN	68 - 69
Ray Collett	BT3	57 - 60	William D. Harding	YNSN	68 - 70
William C. Cooper, Jr.	SN	58 - 59	James H. Armstrong Jr	ENS	69 - 70

If you know of any of our shipmates or family members that are sick, in the hospital, or deceased; please contact Jerry Brown or Len Budzynski.

Sick Call

Harriet Goodmuth had back surgery in October and I am happy to report that she is doing well.

Bob Godley was in the hospital in December to for angioplasty. Bob, was back to see his doctor later this month was informed by his doctor that the procedure was successful.

Bea Budzynski had arthroscopic surgery on her knee on December 28th and is doing well.

Taps

John A Hill, Jr – The daughter of John Hill, Jr called Bob Godley to tell him that her father passed away on November 9, 2005. John was a WWII veteran and served aboard the Weeks 1944 -1945. He served as a MM2C.

Bill Mallory – The following is from Jody Mallory, daughter of Bill Mallory who was on the ship during WWII. My Dad passed away on Nov. 1, 1989, but my Mother and I have been wondering if there were any crewmates alive who remember my Dad.

Alvin Mandell LCDR – Alvin, 84, a well-known resident of Newton for 50 years, died January 24, 2004. He spent 46 years as an engineer in the electronics, missile systems and aerospace industries, many of those years at Raytheon Co. where he helped designed the Patriot Missile.

Alvin maintained lifelong ties to the Navy and local and national naval activities and associations. He was a WWII Combat veteran, retired Lt. Commander, US Naval Reserve.

Gerald R. McKenzie – We were notified that Gerald R. McKenzie passed away. No date of his death was given. His daughter said that Gerald served aboard the Weeks from 66 thru 67.

Robert Donald Zelasky – The family of Robert Donald Zelasky notified us that he passed away. No date of death was given. Robert served aboard the Weeks from 52 thru 56. He was a Boiler Tender.



**USS John W Weeks
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We're on the Web!

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