



June 1, 2002

Bill Zinzow

#107

11th WILEY REUNION SEPTEMBER 27 – OCT. 1 2002, RADISON RESORT PARKWAY

WE NOW HAVE 32 CONFIRMED
RESERVATIONS

LET ME REMIND YOU THAT TO QUALIFY FOR A CHANCE FOR A FREE ROOM FOR 3 NIGHTS, I MUST HAVE YOUR CONFIRMED RESERVATION BY JULY 1, 2002 - TIME IS RUNNING OUT SO PLEASE SEND IN YOUR RESERVATION AS SOON AS YOU KNOW YOU ARE COMING ALONG WITH A \$65.00 REUNION DEPOSIT MADE OUT TO *USS HENRY A. WILEY REUNION* AND A SECOND CHECK FOR \$89.00 MADE OUT TO THE *RADISON PARKWAY* FOR YOUR ONE NIGHT ROOM RESERVATION. SHOULD YOU HAVE ANY QUESTIONS, PLEASE CALL OR WRITE. The numbers are not overwhelming and we do hope that more of you have intentions of attending.

We have an excellent program for you and you will enjoy the facility. Bring your family and guests. Most of you who have signed up do plan to go visit Cape Kennedy on Sunday the 29th along with the Dinner show at The Arabian Nights performance. This is being worked out so that the physical demand is not too difficult. We do require a minimum of 40 people in order to employ the bus for transportation.

FROM THE MAIL BAG:

Have had some interesting news this past month from a number of sources. Please remember that we do have a Wiley Website for those of you who have Internet access. Again, let me remind you that this along with recent Newsletters are posted. Our Website is <http://home.tampabay.rr.com/usswiley/>.

Those of you who do not have computers or access to Adobe on the internet, this Newsletter will continue to be mailed to you.

I regret to advise that we had the following deaths reported to me:

CLAUDE BISH, Jamestown, NY, EM2/C died on May 1, 2002 (Heart). He and Pat had attended a number of our reunions and we really enjoyed them. They were good friends of **George** and **Marilyn Senn**.

W. C. LINTON, F2C of Mitchell, Louisiana died on May 2, 2002. We had never located him, however his son **Steve Linton** found the Wiley on the Website and wrote me "We know he started his tour when the ship was in San Diego, and served until the end of the war." **Steve** is adding the Wiley Website to his family documents relating to his family. He asks that if anyone remembers him, he would like to document anything offered. If any of you remember **W. C.**, drop me a note and I will be pleased to pass it on to his son via E-Mail.

John Buckley, died in 1968, was heard from via his nephew **Mark Buckley**. **Mark** also stumbled on us via the Website and contacted

a number of you seeking information about his favorite uncle for the benefit of a paper that his daughter was writing about WW II. **Ed Kanner** responded to nephew **Mark** as did **Harvey Jacobs** including sending him pictures of **John** that **Harvey** had. **Harvey** also sent an E-Mail "Am sending a picture of John that **Irwin Savitt** took of **John** standing with a Jewish girl who had escaped from Germany with her family to Shanghai. **Irwin** had fallen head over heels in love with her and even had permission to bring her (Ingr) and her surrogate parents on board the Wiley for the day and dinner."

Connected to all of this, **Edwin Kanner** wrote a long E-mail to **Mark Buckley** which contained in part "I do remember John Buckley, since I was the Lieutenant (JG) responsible for the quad 40 Guns on the stern of the USS Wiley. --- I enlisted in 1943 after graduating from City College in NY at the age of 21, went through midshipman school and asked to be assigned to a destroyer. I was assigned to the Henry A. Wiley DD749. I believe I was the first officer assigned to the ship and was given a storeroom at the Brooklyn Navy Yard to start putting together supplies for the Wiley, which was just being built in the Brooklyn Navy Yard."

(Editor's Comment - The ship was actually built on Staten Island by Bethlehem Steel and moved to the Brooklyn Navy yard for outfitting and commissioning). Con't - **Edwin's** comments. "All my service was on the Wiley, including when she went from DD749 to DM29; went through many changes of personnel and 3 captains, and was still on the ship when we decommissioned her in San Francisco in 1946. I believe I do remember **John Buckley** and our quad 40's were very important, especially in shooting down several of the Japanese Kamikaze planes, which attacked us. The quad 40's were very important in keeping us from getting hit and our ship did receive a Presidential Commendation. As I recall, John was a very good person and was one of the very important members of the gun crew and I'm sorry I didn't know him better. His family should be very proud of him ---- Incidentally, I'm 80 years old, and still running 2 manufacturing companies and commute

between Southern California and Providence, Rhode Island every month.

Jim and **Rosemary Mitchell** acknowledge the Newsletter and their enjoyment of hearing about our shipmates. They referred to the 'outstanding' performance of **Andy Seman**, our professional yodeler who dressed in his Swiss outfit really out did himself in 1999. Those in attendance will never forget it. They also asked about the book referred to entitled "The Battle of Okinawa" by George Feifer (currently available in soft cover). It is really a must that shows historical interest in Okinawa and it is truly a history book of major proportion for anyone who was there. I personally had no perception of what we were dealing with, the depth of the battle and the victims of so many self-defenseless people.

Elton Benton writes that he is now 86, deaf, half blind and now suspected of possible becoming an Alzheimer's case -- slowly approaching. He walks a mile every day and continues to do housekeeping chores without difficulty. "Whatever develops from this, I have already had a good life and won't complain. Have a BLAST at Kissimmee.

The **Schoolmasters, Dick** and **Anna May** - who have attended every one of our reunions report that **Dick** is very sick and doubts that they will make Kissimmee. **Dick** has had four months of chemo, followed by bronchitis and pneumonia. Then he had a nose bleed that would not stop, packed his nose for two weeks and lost 15 lbs. Unless a miracle happens Kissimmee is in doubt -- we know if they can, they will be there. **Norval Caples** expresses his thanks and love for all of our crew and family. **Bill Horner, Norval** served together on gun mount 44 with **Homer Elliott** and the three of them had a 'mini mount 44 reunion' in NC some years ago.

Received a nice complimentary letter from **Norval Caples** who said "I was lazily watching the History Channel, half asleep, suddenly startled awake, for there was Bill Zinzow whose name was emblazoned on the screen in big block letters whose voice was narrating the action involving the Henry A. Wiley right there on my TV set -- Just as

though I was there -- now -- instead of 50 some years ago. It was an exciting awakening I can tell you !! A good narrating job you did too -- Just think, millions of viewers and it was just like deja-vu all over again to me, there in front of my TV set, I just wanted to shout out -- "Hey I know this guy -- I was there, am there !!!" **Norval** was watching the 12 series of **Color of War** that I had referred you to some months ago. It is a great series and the Wiley portion is portrayed in the 4th hour of the series toward the end of the hour. The whole series continues to be repeated. A Florida State Graduate produced it and much of the history is taken from their Archives that are being established there. We will have a representative of the History Department at our reunion and will be our feature for the first night of the Kissimmee reunion. The portion of "Color of War" **Norval** refers to was taken from my diary which is now in Tallahassee. I have to confess, all the verbal dubbing on the tapes were done by professional !!!!

Ed Harrison writes: "Just got back from Fleet Week in NY. Everyday was a fantastic experience. We bunked aboard the Edison DD-946 as a crew member and had three meals a day on the Eldron FFG-55. The Captain and XO and crew treated us great and invited us to sail to Norfolk with them and the invitation is open anytime in the future. We went aboard nearly every Navy Ship for special tours during the week and saw secrets on the research ship that are being worked on. The reason I was into this was I was an aide to a LTJG when he was in service but became a civilian contractor to many of the future developments. His daughter is now doing the same thing in research. He is very unassuming. You just can't say enough good things about the Navy and Marines. Was on board the Iwo Jima, very new, only eight months old and had a special tour by an officer who worked his way up through the ranks. Just like our Captain who is very special." Thanks **Ed**. I know you have spent a lot of your time in NY working on the ship's in Memorial there and deserve the special treatment you received.

Grace Shaner reports that **Ben** is facing more surgery and he continues to have health problems as so many of us do. Speaking of health, during the Ashville reunion, **Joe Cush** made a pronouncement that all of us should take advantage of the Veteran's Administration benefits. I know some of you do, however, I suspect that many of you do not. My experience has been absolutely outstanding. I didn't get my card until about a year ago. To get your card, all that is required is that you visit a VA facility and apply -- you must have a copy of your discharge and your Social Security number. Fill out the forms given to you there and you will be given a photo ID VA card. Ask and make an appointment with a VA primary physician nearest your home (they have satellite branches). Once you have your first appointment with the primary physician, you are established. In my case, the physician requested a VA audiology examination (which took 7 months to get). I have been wearing hearing aids for over 20 years -- had my audiology test which was as complete and comprehensive an exam as I have ever had. I was immediately fitted for hearing aids based on my type and degree of hearing loss. A month later, the aids arrived at the VA facility, they were fitted and fully explained. A few weeks following the receipt of the aids, we had an 1 ½ hour 'lecture' on dealing with deafness which included wives. The aids that I received were far superior than anything I have had in the past and the best part of it is that they were furnished at no cost to me. Batteries are also furnished free of charge. Once you have your VA card, you are also entitled to your primary physicians prescribed drugs from a VA pharmacy at a cost of \$7.00 for a months supply. This is a major benefit that we are all entitled to and should take advantage of if you are not doing so. It does require patience, but it is a good system and certainly has worked for me.

Doug Fleming, Harvey Jacobs and **Tom Giannetti** attended the Okinawa Survivors Reunion held in Everett, Washington. **Doug** writes as follows:

"Tom and Minnie Giannetti, Harvey and Barb Jacobs and I represented the Wiley at the Kamikaze Survivors Reunion in Everett, WA., May 20-23. I had to leave early so Jake and Tom may have impressions to add. The hallway in the hotel was lined with memorabilia and pictures of ships hit by suiciders in the Philippines and at Okinawa. There was a large banquet room where, each day, men from various carriers, battleships, cruisers, destroyer types and other vessels unloaded their stories, often packed with emotion. It was amazing how many versions of the same incidents there can be. Everyone sees it differently..

It was a good thing that Jake was there because when we were interviewed he gave the topside view whereas all I could talk about was pips on the radar and conversations on the TBS. We have no idea what will become of these interviews.

It was interesting to talk to men from the other picket ships. The DMs were represented by a few men from the Aaron Ward, Lindsey, Bauer and the Wiley. There were others from the Van Valkenburgh, Daly, Cowell, Ammen, Callaghan, Butler and many others on picket or patrol stations with us or close to us... Jim Phillips from the Luce and his wife were there. He tells a highly emotional story, as you know, and remains forever grateful to us for fishing him out of the water and to Doc Simmons for sewing him up. A fellow from the Indianapolis (hit early on at Okinawa) then transferred with the flag to the New Mexico (hit later on at Okinawa) sat at our table. He and men from the Tennessee were interested in our chart of the HHour firing line at Iwo Jima on which their ships and ours appeared.

Altogether this reunion served the purpose of a lot of old fellows getting things off their chests. That was good but I'm not so sure about actively seeking publicity at this late date. Most of it is in the history books if you look. My final comment, Bill and Lynn, is that I never really appreciated before how lucky we Wileys have been to have you as instigators and organizers of our get-togethers and how lucky we all are to have belonged to such a fine ship with such capable shipmates.

Best always,

Doug Fleming

P.S. I'd guess that about 500, including families, attended the Everett reunion.

Subsequent to **Doug's** visit, he was invited to attend a get together of 'locals' who visited Bill Sholin's home (the organizer of the Okinawa Survivor's Reunion) for a meeting with the Press Corp. **Doug** advises that CBS News of Seattle/Tocoma had a condensation of about 10 minutes shown on their local TV station on May 27th relating to these interviews. I suspect that many of you viewed the May 27th (Memorial Day) 2 hour special on NBC dealing specifically with the Pacific phase of the war.

Talked to **Harvey Jacobs** about his impressions of the Survivor's Reunion. He said it should be call a "Gathering", not a reunion because people did not have to know each other prior to the gathering. His opinions coincided with **Dougs** with the emphasis on publicity. **Havey** said he always had a sense of 'guilty conscious', until this reunion, that we returned 'unscathed'. Asked the question as to where and when we were hit, his answer was always, 'we weren't'. He has concluded that we were '**GOOD**', thanks to our good training and Captains. His sense of 'guilty' has left his mind and he is prouder than ever of the Wiley.

In a recent interview General Norman Schwartzkopf was asked if he didn't think there was room for forgiveness toward the people who have harbored and abetted the terrorists who perpetrated the 9/11 attacks on America. His answer was a classic Schwartzkoph. "I believe that forgiving them is God's function. Our job is simply to arrange the meeting"

The Naval Academy's publication "Naval History" will feature **Bill Tucker's** "*The Saga of the USS Henry A. Wiley*". **Bill** compiled his historical review from documents he obtained from our historian **John Daley, Captain Bjarnason's Memiors, The Ship's War Diary, Action Reports** and the **A-A Action Reports**.

The **August** issue will include the condensation of this document as edited by the magazines staff and will be included in the August issue. I will of course include it in a future Newsletter and will be placing it on our Website as soon as it is made available to me in its final form. Should you care to subscribe to this magazine now call 410-224-3378.