



Liberty News

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE USS LIBERTY

Volume 58 | April, 2016

Board of Directors

Ernie Gallo

President
ernie7900@aol.com

Stan White

Vice President
mcpowwhite@yahoo.com

Glenn Oliphant

Vice President
oliphg@comcast.net

Bryce Lockwood

Vice President and Treasurer
brycelockwood@sbcglobal.net

Jack Beattie

Vice President and Secretary
jbeattie2009@gmail.com

Moe Shafer

Director of Finance
moe.shafer@harbingernational.com



Letter from the Editor

Our best to all that share the memory of the attack on the Liberty. Another year has passed and another year is ahead - one that appears to be much activity toward recognition of the attack and the attack's cover up. I was surprised to see the AIPAC request to send them our memory of their Six Day War. And as I collected and read what was answered by all of you, I couldn't help but feel that Israel will be surprised also. I just hope and pray that our government and the government of Israel and AIPAC will recognize your e-mails and statements.

We have our Reunion next year, and I hope we all can be there. Moe and others are working to ensure that we will have a good reunion, and I truly believe we will. I plan to attend the Grave-side Service in Arlington as well as the Reunion.

Thanks to all that support the LVA and to all who give of their time and effort in letting everybody know what happened on June 8, 1967.

-Wayne

SUBMIT INFORMATION TO:

Wayne Kelley, Sr., Editor
9400 Reams Road
North Chesterfield, VA 23236
waynekelleysr@yahoo.com

Letter from the President

My first bit of news is the plan for the USS Liberty Veterans Association 2017 reunion. Voting indicated a desire to have the reunion at Virginia Beach, however, because of a yearly sports event during the June 8th time frame, all hotels will be committed. Therefore, your Board of Directors agreed to compromise and we are planning the reunion at Norfolk, Virginia, water side. A committee made up of Moe Shafer, Lt. Cmdr. James Smith, USN (Ret.) aka Smitty, and Wayne Kelley have started in earnest. The dates of the reunion are June 8, 2017 (Thursday) until June 11, 2017 (Sunday). For those who can make it, I am planning a memorial service at Arlington National Cemetery on June 8th at noon. Following the service, you will have plenty of time to commute to Norfolk and check in at the hotel. As plans firm up, we will advise at a later date.

The June 8th, 2016 memorial service at Arlington Cemetery will take place at noon. Unless you have an Arlington Cemetery auto pass, please plan on arriving early in order to obtain bus transportation to section 34. We will meet as we did last year at the Welcome Center. FYI: On April 27th, Terry Halbardier's daughter, Kim Hines will place his ashes at Arlington Cemetery with full military honors.

For your information regarding new USS Liberty books: Merlin Miller has authored a book entitled, "Eagles Are Gathering" and available for purchase at American Free Press or Amazon.com. There are two more books that will be published next year from authors Phillip Nelson and Professor Joan Mellen. Last but by no means least, our own Phil Tourney is writing a new book "Rock Star" and will be published later this year.

If you have not obtained a documentary DVD entitled, "Justice for the Liberty", please do so as I guarantee you will not be disappointed. While there are many survivors interviewed, Doctor Kiepfer and Terry Halbardier are featured. The LVA and Break of Dawn Productions have partnered on this production. It is a great movie.

The VFW convention will be held at the Charlotte Convention Center at Charlotte, NC from July 23 to July 27, 2016 and the LVA will have a booth. If you can make it, come say hello and acquire lots of good information and handouts.

We need to thank a few people for greatly helping us: Ron Kukal, Phil Tourney, Steve Sutherland, Steve Newton, Herman Bender, Ted Arens, Don Pageler, Doctor Kamansky, Patricia Gallo, Mickey & Joanne LeMay, and Moe & Donna Shafer. Your efforts are deeply appreciated.

In closing, I want to reiterate how important the USS Liberty crew and our story are to the future of our country. We are a microsum to a terrible choice LJB made in 1967 to deceive the American public protecting our relationship with Israel. The public is beginning to learn the truth. We are making a difference and we must continue. We have a manifest calling.

Ernie

LIBERTY VETERAN'S ASSOCIATION 50th Anniversary Reunion

WHEN: June 8th - 10th, 2017

WHERE: Norfolk, Virginia
Sheraton Waterside



We look forward to seeing you there!

Statement of Purpose

IN JUNE 1967 jet aircraft and motor torpedo boats of the Defense Forces of the State of Israel brutally assaulted the American naval intelligence-gathering ship, *USS Liberty*, while in international waters off the coast of the Sinai Peninsula in the Mediterranean Sea. The attack was preceded by more than six hours of intense low-level surveillance by Israeli photo reconnaissance aircraft, which buzzed the ship as low as 200 feet directly overhead. The carefully orchestrated assault that followed was initiated by high performance jet aircraft. This was followed by slower and more maneuverable jets carrying napalm, and was finally turned over to lethal torpedo boats, which blasted a forty-foot hole in the ship's side. The attack lasted more than two hours, deliberately killing 34 Americans and wounding at least 171 others. Over 821 rocket, cannon and machine gun holes were inflicted. When the *Liberty* stubbornly remained afloat despite her damage, Israeli forces machine-gunned her life rafts, firefighters, stretcher bearers, and sent troops carrying helicopters to finish the job, no survivors were to be taken.



At this point, with Sixth Fleet rescue aircraft supposedly en route, the government of Israel apologized and the identity of the assailants became known.

Details of the attack were hushed up in both countries. Israel claimed that her forces mistook the *Liberty* for an Egyptian ship, and our government quietly accepted that excuse despite evidence to the contrary. No ship in our history has ever received such damage and casualties by accident. Then our government downplayed the intensity of the surveillance and the severity of the attack, and imposed a news blackout on the crew to keep the story under control. The official version is that the *Liberty* was reconnoitered only three times and only from a great distance. The American people were told that the air attack lasted only five minutes and that it was followed by a single torpedo and an immediate apology and offer of assistance. Nothing could be further from the truth. In June 1982, fifteen years after the assault, crewmembers reunited for the first time in Washington, D.C. It was a tearful, joyful reunion in which the men not only released their pent up emotions and decided that the **USS Liberty Veterans Association** would be formed with the firm goals of finding all crew members, holding reunions, proper recognition of Captain and crew (in particular those who lost their lives), obtaining a Congressional investigation into the attack, and...

TO BRING THE TRUE STORY OF THE ATTACK ON THE U.S.S. LIBERTY AND HER

Washington Report on Middle East Affairs

This article appeared in the January / February 2016 "Washington Report on Middle East Affairs" on page 52.

Cheers,
Ernie



An altar on display at San Rafael, California's Day of the Dead observance honors the 34 servicemen on the USS Liberty killed by Israeli military forces.

USS Liberty Servicemen Honored in Day of the Dead Observance

The 34 U.S. servicemen who were killed in the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the USS Liberty were honored by 14 Friends of Palestine at the 27th annual Day of the Dead observance in the Albert J. Boro Community Center in San Rafael, Califor-

nia. The Nov. 7 event featured memorial altars honoring deceased loved ones and victims of current or historic tragedies.

Thirty-four miniature handmade boats with each service member's name and a small American flag adorned the altar, along with a chain, anchor and nautical life vest. A backdrop in front of a large American flag included photos, names and biographies of the slain men, along with details of their heroic efforts to save shipmates during the attack.

Attendees lingered before the poignant display to read about the innocent victims of the unprovoked attack on the Navy intelligence ship by Israeli military forces without warning in international waters.

The circumstances of the attack have never been the subject of a congressional investigation, despite the filing of a Report of War Crimes by the USS Liberty Veterans Association with the secretary of the Army. For more information visit <www.gtr5.com>. —Elaine Pasquini

Waging Peace

Conservative Thinkers Denounce War Hawks, Endorse Restraint

Since 9/11, conservative foreign policy has been closely associated with aggression and unilateral military action. The likes of William Kristol and Sen. John McCain (R-AZ) receive regular airtime on American news networks and use their prominence to argue for a more assertive U.S. foreign policy.

In the midst of this neocon onslaught, it's easy to forget that many conservatives bitterly disagree with the war hawks. On Nov. 4, a group of conservative thinkers gathered at a Washington,

Justice for the Liberty DVD

As reported at our Manistee reunion, the Premier of the DVD, "Justice for the Liberty" by Break of Dawn Productions occurred. This documentary makes the points we want all America to know. Doc Kiepfer, Terry Halbardier, and many others are featured and their interviews are blended together to attain those aforementioned points. In order to make the movie possible, the LVA and others provided funds. The LVA is an equal partner in the endeavor. The funds we provided were in the form of a loan – as the movie sells, the LVA is paid back into our Treasury. Once the loan is paid off, the profits are then divided fifty fifty between the LVA and Break of Dawn Productions. Our ship stores will sell the movie for \$25.00 and, if you believe in me – you know that you will not be sorry for purchasing it. It is the best one so far. I am also pleading with you to make a purchase in order for the movie to become a success. If any of you can help in any way with the distribution of the movie, it would be deeply appreciated. Once you view the movie, tell you family and friends about it. Get this movie – it is great!

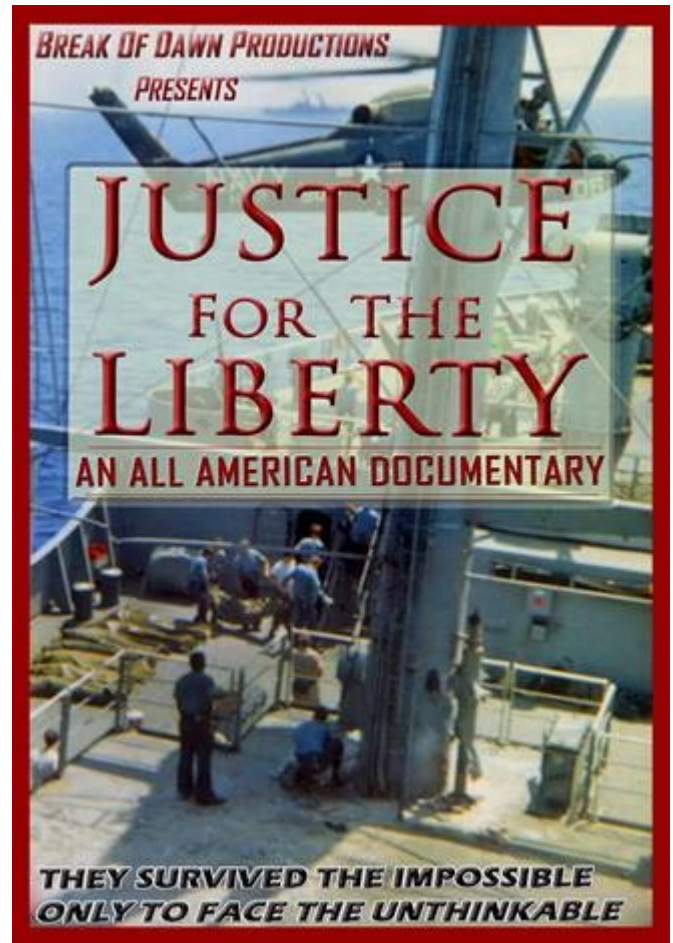
Thanks, Ernie

Break of Dawn Productions proudly presents Justice for the Liberty: An ALL American Documentary, which presents the little known human interest side of the most explosive military & political controversy of the last half century, as told by those who survived it.

Israel's 1967 summer of love surprise attack on the US Navy's top spy ship killed 34 Sailors, wounded another 171, & quickly became the stuff of controversy, forgotten legends full of top medals awarded in secret, silenced support from the highest levels of governmental, military, & clandestine organizations, along with wide ranging conspiracy theories supported by fringe elements pushing their own agendas by way of the Liberty's ordeal. Taught at the US Naval Academy as a prime example of true American grit, and encased in the US Naval & NSA/Cryptologic Museums, it remains the only attack on a Navy ship NOT investigated by Congress and further consigned to the dustbins of yesteryear with every passing year, despite being the most highly decorated US Navy ship for a single event in all of American history.

Now, for the first time ever, Justice strips away the political to get personal with the heroes of that day and their distinguished supporters, letting them tell their side of an amazing story of survival against ALL odds, betrayal at the highest levels, and nearly five decades of being ignored by their country, all without interruption by conflicting viewpoints or outside narration. Focusing less on who attacked them & why to spotlight who abandoned them & how that betrayal affected them after 40+ YEARS in the wilderness of national apathy & conspiratorial subterfuge, we highlight the intensely personal side so often forgotten in the wake of larger military & political narratives, along with a compelling reason why this story is more important now than ever before.

Using declassified documents, never before seen photos & home video, along with exclusive interviews to get at the heart of what a co-founder of the US Air Force Academy calls a 'deep dark stain on the honor of the Navy', Justice for the Liberty aims to let those with the wounds bear witness to the fallen, testifying once and for all on the permanent record for a future hopefully brave enough to honestly confront our past and our increasingly forgetful present.



Letter from the President

During the month of March, our USS Liberty billboard ran in New Haven, CT thanks to Friends of the Liberty and supporters around the country.

We're pleased to see that the New Haven Register has written a valuable article about the billboard and the USS Liberty attack, getting this information out to many more people!

We also have a Liberty board up in New Bedford, MA, and another has just gone up in Pennsylvania between the cities of Harrisburg and York on the Veterans of Foreign Wars Memorial Highway (83).

Thank you for your support for this important project! Those wishing to donate to help us continue this work can do so here:

<https://goo.gl/1YyGYT>

Best wishes,

The If Americans Knew team



E-mail Version of Newsletter

Signup to receive your copy of Liberty News in FULL COLOR via e-mail instead of regular mail. This gives you a better copy of the newsletter AND helps us minimize our overhead.

Signup today at:
<http://goo.gl/mzbwrE>



Negative Response to Liberty Billboard

West Haven I-95 billboard on USS Liberty is anti-Israel, critics charge

By James Walker, New Haven Register

Posted: 03/25/16, 9:19 PM EDT | Original Article Link: <http://goo.gl/mduvvy>

WEST HAVEN >> A billboard on Interstate 95 is sparking outrage from a local lawyer and criticism from the Anti-Defamation League for what they say is its anti-Israel message.

But the veterans organization and its supporters that sponsored the billboard say it depicts one of the most controversial mysteries in U.S. Navy history and they are still demanding answers.

The message on the billboard, in capital letters, reads: "Help the USS Liberty Survivors." Underneath, in smaller letters, also all capped, the message continues: "Attacked by Israel." The red, white and blue colors of the American flag are faded and serve as the background of the large sign. The billboard depicts a ship on one side and a wounded sailor on the other. The bottom of the billboard lists the website <http://honorlibertyvets.org/>.

What is driving the controversy is an incident that occurred on June 8, 1967, during the Six Day War. Israeli warplanes and torpedo boats attacked the USS Liberty, an American intelligence-gathering ship, while it was on a surveillance mission in international waters off the shores of El Arish in the Sinai Peninsula. Thirty-four Americans died, 171 were injured and the ship sustained heavy damage. Israel claimed it mistook the Liberty for an enemy vessel.

On June 8, 2007, the National Security Agency finalized the review of all materials relative to the attack. Investigations by the United States and Israel determined that though a horrifying tragedy, the attack was an accident and a case of mistaken identity.

But many veterans, including retired Adm. Thomas Moorer, a former Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman, and Capt. Ward Boston, a former Navy attorney who helped lead the military investigation, believe the attack was deliberate, according to the USS Liberty website. Boston signed an affidavit stating former President Lyndon Johnson and his Defense Secretary Robert McNamara ordered that the inquiry conclude the incident was an accident. Moorer calls it "one of the classic all-American cover-ups."

So, the controversy continues.

Max Buxbaum, an attorney who lives and works in New York but grew up in New Haven and has a home in East Haven, says he did a double-take as he drove up I-95 Wednesday evening and spotted the billboard.

The sign is located between exits 40 and 41 on the southbound side of the highway but is only visible to motorists from the northbound side.

"Inoffensive to southbound drivers but highly offensive to northbound drivers," Buxbaum said.

In an email, Buxbaum said he was shocked when he saw the billboard.

"It's one of those conspiracy theories that are kept alive by the same sort of people who say that Jews are responsible for everything from Pearl Harbor to 9/11," he wrote. "Considering that my father's entire family was wiped out in the Holocaust, it was particularly troubling to me on a personal level."

He believes Alison Weir, founder of "If Americans Knew," is one of the people behind it. Weir is a journalist who says her website "analyzes media coverage of Israel-Palestine" and "provides information on topics that are substantially misrepresented or unreported in the US media."

Weir acknowledges her allegiance to the veterans group and said "there really is no doubt about it whatsoever" that the attack on the Liberty was deliberate.

CONTINUE READING ONLINE AT: <http://goo.gl/mduvvy>

Letter to Editor re. USS Liberty's Bell

Good Morning Mr. Kelley—

I just received my latest copy of the Newsletter and it reminded me that I needed to send an update on the status of the USS Liberty's ship's bell.

The short story is the bell is alive and well here at Liberty High School. The bell has an honored place here in the Liberty NJROTC spaces. Our cadets shine the bell at least once a week and they consider it an honor to be assigned that task. It is also the object of lessons in Naval History. I do a series of presentations to my classes each year, using material from Mr. Jim Ennes and of course, the bell itself to present the story to my cadets. You can be assured that the cadets will remember the USS Liberty for a very long time.

As an added note, we also use the bell in all of our formal ceremonies. Pass in Reviews, Formal Inspections and Change of Command ceremonies just to name a few. We are also required by Liberty High School to produce and present the Annual Veteran's Day Assembly. The bell is placed in the middle of the gym floor each year and the student body is reminded of its importance and relevance. At the end of each presentation the bell is rung and taps is played to honor the men of the USS Liberty.

So even in our little corner of this great country the USS Liberty and its story live on. It is my hope that the ship's company can take some small satisfaction that the story continues through the USS Liberty's Ship's Bell.

v/s

ADC Al Torstenson USN (ret)
Naval Science Instructor
Liberty High School
Renton, Washington

The Veteran Project with Don Pageler

I attended the luncheon at Corona Del Mar High School Thursday. There video project can be viewed on YouTube at: https://youtu.be/dUujPIvr_04

The interviews are a result of belonging to the Freedom Committee of Orange County. You are all invited to join. We meet the 2nd Wednesday of the month at the Costa Mesa Community Center. More about the committee at this link: <http://fc-oc.org/>

- Don Pageler

A Report from James Beardsley

USS Liberty Gravesite Arlington National Cemetery

Visit November 12th and 13th 2015

Every time I am in Washington D.C. I visit the Liberty site. I have done it many times for many years. The first time was so long ago I can't remember the date but a ceremony was sponsored by a group called "No Other Love." There were never many crew members there at one time. Richard Curtis from "Washington Report On Middle East affairs" always attended as did Gene Bird from the Council for National Interest an organization that I was a charter member. There was always a representative from the Navy and I think Admiral Thomas Moorer attended at least once.

My wife went into the visitor center to get our handicapped driving pass. As usual the people in the center had never heard of the USS Liberty. She got the location of Captain McGonagle's gravesite but they couldn't find out anything about the Liberty. She told them I knew the way. I did. I drove right to the site. We looked for about an hour but couldn't find the Captain's location and gave up for the day.

It was very eerie that day, hard to explain, maybe it was because I knew I wouldn't be making many more trips in my lifetime or maybe it was just the sad November look.

Pardon me being in the picture, I wanted to make sure my grandchildren knew I remembered the Liberty.

November 14th

My wife and I returned to the Liberty site after attending the military funeral for my son-in-law. Thanks to Ernie Gallo who called me and gave instructions to find the Captain's site we found it. Thanks Ernie and others who sent me an email. The captain's site is at the 11 o'clock position from the Liberty stone and way up on the hill very near a small tree. It's hard to find.

Nowhere in any place nor anytime will you find anything about the Israelis attacking the Liberty.

In fact it was not just the USS Liberty that was attacked but the liberty of all American citizens. At that moment we were all crew members of the Liberty.

I was sad when I visited the site and as I write this am profoundly sad. June 8, 1967, is a day that will live in infamy. It is the day that a foreign country was firmly in control of the United States. On that day the USS Liberty and crew were sacrificed and betrayed by the government they so nobly served.

*Respectfully submitted this 12th
day of December 2015,
James Beardsley*



The USS Liberty Carillon

Some years ago, the LVA gave the Norfolk Navy Chapel a carillon which is a device that produces bell like sounds which are amplified and the sound is heard external to a church. The songs that are played could be the Westminster chimes to announce the hour or religious songs such as the Navy Hymn. Which now brings me to the following story and announcement. Please come!!!

Dear USS Liberty Veterans/Mr. President/Ernie

A couple of years ago, I believe it was when you had a gathering in the Norfolk area, and came to Naval Station Norfolk, then Public Affairs Officer asked us (at the Chapel) if we still had the Carillon. Our response was "what carillon?" We then learned that the USS Liberty association had donated a Carillon years ago - and some folks still do remember it. Unfortunately, it no longer exists. However, since that inquiry, it became my ambition to replace the Carillon. Last fiscal year we were blessed with an unexpected "pot" of money, and one of the things we purchased was an electronic carillon. But as you know, nothing happens easily in the military, and it is only today that we are HOPING everything goes to planning and the Carillon will finally be installed.

Which brings me to the reason for my email. We wish to name the Carillon "The USS Liberty Carillon" in honor of the original one you gave to the Chapel years ago, and in memory of those who have served aboard her. We will be planning a formal dedication of the Carillon in the near future (it will be before I PCS in August!), and I would like to know if there might be someone available from the USS Liberty association who could represent everyone at such a dedication. We don't have any dates, but would ask you to offer us 2-3 suggestions which we could use as a starting point.

Very respectfully,
LCDR Diana Lantz, CHC, USN

New Email:

Ernie

We have set the carillon dedication for Monday, 16 May at 1400 - at the moment. The internal workings still have to be set up but that's the date at the moment. The Carillon concert has been set for Friday, 9 June, 2017 at 1917. That's a start time to play on the Centenary celebrations of Naval Station Norfolk 1917-2017.

Blessings,

Dianna,
Chaplin Diana Lantz
Naval Station Norfolk, Virginia

Obama and Netanyahu invited to USS Liberty Service

CORONADO, Calif. - Jan. 12, 2016 - PRLog

The President of the USS Liberty Veterans Association, Ernest A. Gallo, sent a letter dated January 10, 2016 to President Barack Obama requesting that he invite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to attend a Memorial Service at Arlington National Cemetery at noon on June 8, 2016 commemorating the June 8, 1967 Israeli attack on the USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) in which 32 Americans were killed and 171 were wounded.

The letter addressed to President Obama reads in part as follows:

In 1943 the Germans discovered mass graves of some 22,000 Polish nationals in the Katyn Forest of Russia near the border with Poland. Although Stalin claimed that the victims had been murdered by the Nazis in 1941, President Roosevelt and Prime Minister Churchill knew that the Russians were responsible. In 1990, fifty years after the massacre, Mikhail Gorbachev acknowledged and condemned the perpetration of the killings by the Soviet Secret Police (NKVD), as well as the subsequent cover-up by the Soviet government.

On June 8, 1967, Israeli air and naval forces attacked USS LIBERTY (AGTR-5) killing 32 Americans and wounding 171 others. While the Israeli and U.S. governments reported that the attack was "the result of an error," indisputable evidence exists to prove that the attack was intentional and that both governments have been engaged in a cover up now for almost 50 years.

The most tragic part of this cover up has been the tremendous harm that has been done to the survivors and families of the dead and surviving crew members. No monetary compensation can heal the pain and suffering we have endured. The Congressional Medal of Honor unceremoniously bestowed upon the Commanding Officer in the Navy Yard, along with the 2 Navy Crosses, 12 Silver Stars, 20 Bronze Stars, 9 Navy Commendation Medals, 208 Purple Heart Medals, and 294 Combat Action Ribbons awarded to the crew are meaningless to most of us survivors who were told we could not discuss the war crime we suffered lest we face court martial or imprisonment. Considering the intensity and duration of the air and sea attacks that left the Liberty drenched in blood with a forty square foot hole in her hull and smoking from napalm that incinerated anything and anyone topside, it's a miracle that any of us survived.

In April of 2010, President Vladimir Putin invited his Polish counterpart, Prime Minister Donald Tusk, to attend a Katyn Memorial Service commemorating the 1940 massacre. On behalf of the Liberty Veterans Association, I am writing to request that you invite Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu to attend a Memorial Service in Arlington National Cemetery at noon on June 8, 2016 commemorating the 1967 attack. We believe the time for confessing, forgiving, and healing is long overdue.

A Flashback by Gerald Yankow

Strange to see a plan of the day from July of 1966. I was quick toured off Liberty because my dream sheet at the bureau said "Instructor Duty and no othe choices."

That was May of 1966 and I was elated. Went to Instructor School in Norfolk then off to Skaggs Island California to become an instructor in the navy reserve program. What a wonderful tour of duty for a career petty officer.

I had reenlisted when I was on Cyprus and had every intention of making the navy my career.

Loved my job...and Chief Don Dunlap and I started creating SOT (Simulated Operational Training) programs that we introduced into the curriculum at Skaggs. Very interesting and well thought out that had our monthly recruits trying to figure out what was happening.

To make a long story short, my wife hated the military and I was forced out to assuage her feelings.

Ronnie Campbell was taken from RR1 to assume my spot that was vacated early. My leaving the ship left a void that needed to be filled.

The rest is history.



Loss of our 501C3 - by Ernie Gallo

I am writing this article for historical reasons, that is, for future LVA board of directors who must be aware that previous boards must pass on all necessary information or the same situation can develop again. I have heard this is not the only time this happened.

Sometime after the death of our shipmate George Golden, we lost our 501c3 IRS tax free certification and we never knew it happened. The IRS sent documents to Mr. Golden's residence and the information was never passed on. It has been years that we did not have it.

Thanks to Ron Kukal, who recently wanted to raise funds to permit Terry Halbardier's daughter Kim Hines enough money to take Terry's ashes to Arlington Cemetery. Since Terry was awarded a Silver Star, Ron contacted the Silver Star Families. The founder and CEO is Steve Newton who knew nothing about the USS Liberty. He immediately went to work and acquired donations for Kim, but, he was not through. Steve wanted to help the LVA doing what he does best, raising donations. He discovered the LVA was not certified tax exempt and alerted us. He indicated that there is a web site that reports on groups who claim they are 501c3 certified and we did not. At first, we were reluctant to believe him because we had a letter from our CPA indicating we were OK. Steve did not let up on us eventually causing Donna Shafer to call the IRS to find out we DID NOT have it. Thanks to Donna & Moe that went through the tedious steps, acquiring documentation from California (our initial incounter), paying a fine, filling out IRS forms. As of Feb. 25, 2016, the LVA obtained our 501c3 certification and we are good to go again. Well done Shafers!!!!

A Special Thank You

**USS Liberty
Thank You**

**Steve Sutherland
SiteWhirks**

The USS Liberty Veterans Association Board of Directors wish to indicate our deep appreciation for your dedication, hard work, and tenacity in support of our web site usslibertydocumentcenter@ncia.net

Presented by: The LVA Board of Directors, 2015

Letter from William J. Berka

Ernie,

First I'd like to wish the USS Liberty Veteran's Org., a Very Happy New Year. When I was working at Cross Sound Ferry out of New London, CT, I met someone who was on the Liberty and we started talking. I gave him my address and phone number. The person I talked to was from New England. And I've been receiving the The Liberty News ever since. I thank you.

Ernie, I was an MM3 in the Engineering Room on the USS Elokomin AO-55. We were en-route to your position but an AO is slow. That day we had GQ passed as this is "no drill". I put 3 ½ years on the Elokomin and never heard GQ passed that way. Then we were passed by two MTB's off our port side. We knew there were two Destroyers heading for you. We finally caught up to you in Valletta, Malta. I couldn't believe what I saw. They told us "no pictures and we know where you live so OP-SEC the word to stay out of Levinworth."

There was a crew member by the name of Jackson from Pittsburg, PA. He car pooled with me on weekends. He was wounded. There was a Seaman who died in one of the Twin 50 gun mounts. He was Married with two daughters. A nice guy, quiet. What pissed me off and anyone you talked to is the fact they kept it covered up for so long.

I look forward to going to the mailbox and seeing that Gray Newsletter looking back at me. I save all copies. They're priceless. My home phone number is 508-457-4220. I seen what you guys went through and K salute you. Stay in touch Ernie. You guys put out the best association news letter I've seen to date! It's very well organized and very informative too. Happy New Year Ernie and give the crew my best.

William J. Berka

Email address: wjberka@comcast.net

A Letter from a USS Saratoga Crew Member

My name is Greg Marsh and I was on the USS Saratoga while you were under attack on June 8, 1967. I am still in contact with many other sailors who were also in the radio shack aboard the Sara while you were under attack.

We have a website: www.usssaratogacrdiv.com

You can see from this website by the dates of our enlistment how many of us were aboard when you were attacked. I am not sure if you can access our directory without being members but I am also sure our webmaster John Lipscomb would grant you access if you desire. I would especially like to talk to the radioman that was on the voice circuit requesting assistance. Let me know if you are interested in contacting any of our group from the Saratoga.

Thank you,
Greg Marsh

Honoring of Terry Halbardier

From Don Marsh on January 19th, 2016:

ALL OF YOU CAN BE EXTREMELY PROUD OF THE CEREMONY TO HONOR TERRY HALBARDIER YESTERDAY. WE HAD QUITE A FEW OF OUR CLASSMATES THAT MADE SOME VERY LONG TRIPS TO BE HERE. JOE LEE MCMANUS WAS OUTSTANDING IN HELPING ME DO THE PRESENTATIONS THANKS FOR YOUR PATRIOTISM AND YOUR FRIENDSHIP.

<http://sanangelolive.com/news/san-angelo/2015-06-09/late-uss-liberty-veteran-san-angelo-honored-monday>

NSA Data Declassified

Massive amounts of info declassified and available on NSA website including transcripts of their intercept.

https://www.nsa.gov/public_info/declass/uss_liberty/

Submitted by:
Dick Carlson
USN (Ret)

Remembering CTC Melvin Smith

Melvin Douglas Smith, the firstborn child of Carl and Agnes Smith, was raised in Alamance, North Carolina, a small village near Burlington. Doug, along with his three sisters and one brother, always loved the beauty of water, and he grew up swimming and fishing. After leaving E. M. Holt High School at eighteen, he followed that love of water to the Navy, which he joined in April 1956.

When he finished boot camp, Doug entered Navy communications school, and then returned home on leave to marry Judy Lyon, whom he had dated since she was 16. The couple moved to Puerto Rico in 1959, and their first two sons, Douglas and Mark, were born there at Rodriguez Army Hospital.

The family later moved to Pensacola, Florida, where Doug served as a teacher in the Naval Communications Training Center. (In October of 1967, Smith Hall, a dormitory there, was dedicated in his memory.) He achieved his chief's rank, eight years after entering the service, and also took up golf with a passion. According to Judy, Doug had always been a reader, and now he devoured "book after book after book on golf." He was soon shooting regularly in the 80's.

In May of 1966 Doug received an assignment to sea duty, and he boarded the USS LIBERTY on May 31, 1966. The family had moved back to North Carolina, and another son, Tim, was born there. The LIBERTY docked on February 28, 1967, and Doug rushed home to see his youngest son for the first time.

On June 8, 1967, CTC Smith was killed while serving the USS Liberty. The USS Liberty, an United States Navy technical research ship, was attacked by Israeli Air Force jet fighter aircraft and Israeli Navy motor torpedo boats during the Six-Day War.

CTC Smith's death on the LIBERTY continues to shiver through the lives of those who loved him. His oldest son, Douglas, recently wrote a poem for his father, "Epitaph at Sea with Constellation Above." In the poem, his father disappears, line by line, from the world:

*Mariner, descend, and the sea conceal
bird and sky and the drowned father below,
who shall not sing, who shall not rise, but dwells
among the abandoned gods, a body
unfolding dark, restless and fathoms deep.*

In October of 1967, enlisted barracks (Building 1082) on board Corry Station, Pensacola FL was dedicated in CTC Melvin Smith's honor.



Letter from Edward A. Jajko

To the USS Liberty Community:

This is a much-belated letter. Liberty crew members and friends will recall, I hope, that during much of my tenure as curator of the Middle East Collection of the Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace, of Stanford University, I sought to preserve the documentary record of the attack on the USS Liberty and its aftermath. Thanks to my position, I was able to invite crew members and others who held important papers and materials relating to the Liberty to place them in the Hoover Institution Archives, where they would be preserved and made available to scholarly researchers.

Liberty crewmembers responded generously, starting with Jim Ennes, who placed all his papers relating to Assault on the Liberty in the Hoover Institution Archives. Other crew members also placed their papers, and their trust, in the Hoover. They were Ron Kukal and Don Pageler. Then, through Jim's good offices, the family of Captain William McGonagle gave the Hoover his papers as well. After I left the Institution, the papers of Ward Boston were added.

These collections have already been used, by Dr. John Borne, for his book on the Liberty, while Ron Kukal's movies made on the ship were used by filmmakers.

One collection I acquired because I believed it could be of great importance was that of Judge A. Jay Cristal (Please keep reading, guys!). When I learned of Judge Cristal's Ph.D. dissertation on the Liberty, I bought a copy for the Hoover Institution Library. Skimming through it, I came across the pages in which he cited his sources, which included open and classified Israeli and U.S. military and government reports. Without seeking necessary permission, I immediately solicited Judge Cristal's papers, and he responded eagerly and positively. His papers finally arrived in 2014, long after my retirement. The 111 boxes of papers and other materials are open to researchers. The Cristal Collection is potentially of great importance.

When I retired at end August 2002, I was greatly concerned about continuation of my collection efforts, especially on the Liberty. I was happy that Linda Bernard, who became Acting Archivist, and Brad Bauer, reference archivist, not only expressed interest in what I had been doing but promised to keep at it. I continued to serve as an informal liaison outside the Hoover, referring inquiries to the right people.

Since that time, Brad Bauer left the Hoover for a senior archival position in Washington, D.C. The Hoover made an intensive national search for a new chief archivist, with expanded responsibilities, and sometime ago, appointed Eric Wakin as Director of Library and Archives.

Quite a while back, a former colleague arranged a lunch with Eric and me, to discuss the Middle East Collection and archival matters. One thing I brought up was the USS Liberty collections. I am happy to report that Eric Wakin is interested in the Liberty, would like to see additions to existing collections, and of course would be happy to discuss the placement of new collections. I believe Liberty crew members, families, and friends can place full confidence in him.

Eric's contact information is:

Eric Wakin
Director of Library and Archives
Hoover Institution on War, Revolution and Peace
Stanford University
434 Galvez Mall
Stanford, California 94305
tel. 650-725-2250
wakin@stanford.edu

Of course, I will be happy to serve as a go-between, and you have my contact information below.

From what I was told years ago by those who were in a position to know, USS Liberty crewmembers still hold invaluable collections of documents and materials relating to the attack and its aftermath. Forty-eight years is an awfully long time to hold on to increasingly fragile documents that can be taken care of better in an archives where the highest standards of safety, security, and archival practice are maintained. As I did in talks at two reunions, in e-mails and letters, and in personal conversations, I again urge all Liberty crewmembers and family who still have personal collections on the attack to contact Eric Wakin and discuss placement of those materials. As Wayne Kelley wrote in his Letter from the Editor in the August 2015 Liberty News, "The memory must not be forgotten!"

Edward A. Jajko
Middle East Curator emeritus
Hoover Institution
Stanford University
cell 408-691-2248
eajajko@gmail.com

Photo Submissions



Jack Beattie and Lois Lockwood at the National VFW Convention in Pittsburgh, PA



Don Pageler gave his Liberty presentation to 6 Costa Mesa middle school classes in November. Pictured above with 7th grade teacher, Ray Triggs.

The Passing of Tim Yost

Sad news:

Our shipmate Tim Yost, passed away November 27, 2015. Tim was a CT linguist and served aboard TAD only while we were deployed. Sadly, after many years of trying to locate Tim, I found only his obituary.

Obituary is available online at:

<http://www.newcomerdayton.com/obituary.aspx?obitid=111066>

Cheers,
Ernie

LVA Memorabilia Store - Order Form

READING MATERIALS

- Assault on the Liberty: The True Story of the Israeli Attack on an American Intelligence Ship** - By Survivor and LVS Historian, \$30.00
 Mr. James Ennes, Jr.,
 SEND ORDER TO: Jim Ennes, PO Box 789, Woodinville, WA 98072
- The Attack on the Liberty** - The Untold Story of Israel's Deadly 1967 Assault on a U.S. Spy Ship, By James Scott, son of crew . . . \$25.00
 member Lt. John Scott,
- What I Saw That Day: Israel's June 8th, 1967 Holocaust of US Servicemen Aboard the USS Liberty and its Aftermath** \$25.00
 By USS Liberty Survivor Phil Tourney and Mark Glenn

VIDEOS

- 25th Anniversary Memorial at Arlington National Cemetery** (DVD Video) \$15.00
- USS Liberty Survivors: Our Story** - Patrick King Documentary (DVD Video) \$25.00
- Loss of Liberty** - New Detailed Film of Attack and Cover-Up (DVD Video) \$25.00
- Dead in the Water** - Documentary: Find out how a nuclear war in the Middle East was averted at the last minute (DVD) \$20.00
- Justice for the Liberty** - An All American Documentary by Break of Dawn Productions \$25.00

LIBERTY WEAR

- Blue Multicolor Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) \$20.00
- White w/ Black Ship & 34 Lost Shipmates Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) \$20.00
- Grey w/ Black Ship & 2 Lost Marines Tee Shirt** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) \$20.00
- Golf Shirt: White OR Navy OR Black (each with tan stitching)** - (M, L, XL, XXL, 3XL) \$30.00
- USS Liberty Color Jackets: Lined navy blue nylon fabric** - (M, XL, 2XL, 3XL) \$50.00
- USS Liberty Baseball Cap - Solid Fabric, Not Mesh with Plain Bill** \$20.00
- USS Liberty Unstructured Golf Hat - Navy or Tan** \$16.00

MEMORABILIA

- USS Liberty Bumper Sticker** \$ 2.00
- USS Liberty Key Chain** \$ 4.00
- USS Liberty Cigarette Lighter** - Zippo, Brushed Chrome, Ship Insignia on One Side and Silhouette on the Other \$25.00
- USS Liberty Lapel Pin** \$ 5.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch** - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 3 Inch \$ 6.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch** - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 5 Inch \$ 8.00
- USS Liberty Ship Patch** - Multicolored, 100% Embroidered, 10 Inch \$12.00

NAME: _____ **ADDRESS:** _____

CITY: _____ **STATE:** _____ **ZIP:** _____

PHONE: _____ **EMAIL:** _____

ITEM DESCRIPTION	SIZE	QUANTITY	PRICE EACH	TOTAL

PLEASE MAIL LVA STORE REQUESTS TO: Moe Shafer, PO Box 680275, Marietta, GA 30068
 MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO: USS LIBERTY VETERANS ASSOCIATION

*For a one year membership in the USS LIBERTY Veterans Association and Newsletter Subscription, send \$20 to Moe Shafer.
 Contributions are tax deductible! So please give and give generously!*

Liberty News is the official journal of the **USS LIBERTY Veterans Association** - a California nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation representing the **USS LIBERTY** Survivors and former Crew Members, their families, and other patriotic Americans.

The yearly subscription rate is **\$20.00 for an associate member (former and non-crew member)**. Due to our small size, however, we cannot survive solely on subscriptions. We are grateful to, and rely heavily upon our many members who voluntarily donate more generously with each passing year.

Make your tax-deductible check payable to:
LVA, C/O Moe Shafer, PO Box 680275, Marietta, GA 30068

Send articles and items of interest to:
Wayne Kelley, Sr., Liberty News, 9400 Reams Road, North Chesterfield, VA 23236

BOARD MEMBERS

Ernie Gallo - Ph: (386) 446-6855	Stan White - Ph: (815) 379-2066
Jack Beattie - Ph: (810) 794-2115	Glenn Oliphant - Ph: (651) 426-1954
Moe Shafer - Ph: (770) 363-3986	Bryce Lockwood - Ph: (417) 736-3089

www.USSLibertyVeterans.org | www.USSLiberty.com

LIBERTY NEWS
PO BOX 680275
Marietta, GA 30068

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED