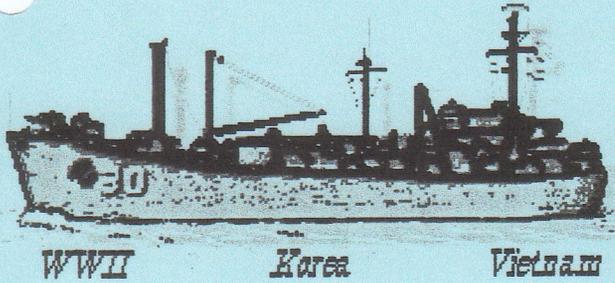


U.S.S. Askari Association

U.S.S. Askari Web Site
<http://arl30.vze.com>

December 2003 Issue



Association Officers

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A Message from President Ed Toth

Hi you Ex-men of the sea:

By the time you read this message, our bountiful Thanksgiving Day will have come and gone, and everyone will be busy preparing for Christmas, Hanukkah, and other winter celebrations. Hopefully your Thanksgiving was full of love of family and friends, good food, and most of all, good fellowship. That is what this organization is all about – “good fellowship!”

Year 2004 will also be upon us. Let us resolve to make this coming year even better. With year 2003 ending up after our reunion with four new members (Max Hoover, Ken Kirkland, Norm Neulieb, and Bob Pettit), and our vice president (Lee Daley) taking on the job of “seaman recruiter,” we are looking at a good coming year.

If I could be granted an Askari wish, it would be that the entire membership could get together during the holiday season for a wonderful time of fellowship. I realize my dream is not possible since we live in such diverse locations, so I must settle for sending my wish for a wonderful holiday season to you one and all and my blessing to each member and his family.

Membership List

It's nice to be able to keep in touch with former shipmates and talk about our experiences on the Askari. We are sharing a copy of our membership

list with each member to help you reconnect with former shipmates and make new friends. If a correction or addition is needed for your entry on the listing, please send an email message (mfdavis33@insightbb.com), telephone (812-331-1641), or write (Merrill Davis, 3405 Ashwood Drive, Bloomington, IN 47401) so we can correct the listing. Also keep us informed of changes of address (including email address) and any other changes so we can keep the membership updated.

Richard Valenta remembers...

[Richard was an Engineering Officer aboard the U.S.S. Askari from October 1952-August 1954.]

Our late Captain H. T. Hall, as we all probably remember, liked to “run and play.” But he had a place in his heart for others too. I remember when he found that a number of PhibPac sailors were living on a barracks ship there in Yokouska, so he took it upon himself to have them transferred (temporary additional duty) to the Askari, so they would be with other PhibPac sailors, get paid, have good food and medical care, etc. It all worked out fine, except for one individual who “heard voices,” and was promptly transferred to a medical facility by Dr. Les Holve.

I remember that particular incident, because I asked the good doctor why he had the lad transferred, and was told “When a person ‘hears voices,’ you never know what the voices may tell him to do!”

Entry in Website Guestbook

Sometimes we forget the important role the Askari and other ARLs have played. In 1999, Constance S. Richardson, daughter of Millard Carter, wrote the following in the website guestbook:

My father, who is now deceased, served aboard the USS Kearny during WWII when I was very young. He would never share stories with us at any age but spoke of the undying camaraderie among them on board. This presentation [the website] provides an invaluable cultural link to the past personal and civic history for all servicemen and their families. The victory was attained thru team effort which required every position served. The prayers of gratefulness and celebration still echo in Heaven today from all of us. When we're incapacitated, a physician walks in and hope arises, and so it was with the ARL as it rounded the bend and the crippled ship's hope and thankfulness arose. God Bless You.

Another Guestbook Entry

In November 2002, Randy Clouse made the following entry in the website guestbook. (His email address at that time was rummnncoke@yahoo.com).

I served aboard the Askari from its arrival at Mare Island in 1965 until my discharge while in Vung Tau in June 1967. I feel privileged to have supported the fine men of the riverboats while serving as a storekeeper 2nd class. I truly enjoyed my time and thought we were doing the right thing at the time.

I'll never forget the middle of the night typhoon somewhere between Subic Bay and Vietnam. Ensign Dockendorf(?) was one gutsy son of a bitch that night. The paint locker, loaded with hundreds of 5 gallon paint cans broke loose and pails were slamming back and forth inside. I was scared to death to go in there to help but it had to be done. Numerous pails broke open and we were knee deep in some kind of chemicals that I know not what they were. I think some were that stuff they used in the electric transformers on power poles. The smell was like that anyway. It was so bad that night that one of the 12" thick welding platforms in the center

of the shop broke loose and was sliding around too. Pretty damn scary.

Wish I could remember more of you guys I served with. Too many years and too much life lived has deteriorated my memories. Anyway, regards to all and feel free to contact me anytime. Randy Clouse, former storekeeper 2c, 1963 - 1967. p.s.: I forgive you Chief, you had your problems.

Send Your Remembrances to Us

It is so enjoyable to hear stories from our fellow shipmates. As we read someone's remembrance, it often triggers a memory of our own about a similar incident, a person we served with, life on the Askari, etc. Please let us share your memories with the Askari membership. You can mail, email, or phone items to Secretary Merrill Davis.

Thanks for remembering dues

People sometimes think us World War II, Korea, and Vietnam veterans are becoming old and forgetful, but I can say lots of you remember well based on the number of dues payments I've received. For those of you who may have set aside the last newsletter and forgotten where you put it, I'm including another dues payment form.

Thanks,
Al Wolfe, Treasurer

July 2003-June 2004 Dues Payment

Name: _____

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

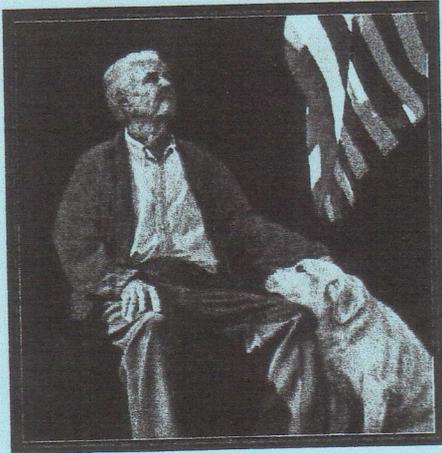
Dues: \$15.00

Send to: Al Wolfe
148 5th St.
LaSalle, IL 61301

Proud to be Veterans

I served in the Navy during Korea, and my brother (Ken Davis) served in the Army during the Vietnam War and was involved in the Tet Offensive. He recently sent me an email which read, "Hi Merrill -- With Veteran's Day just around the corner, this seemed like an appropriate message to forward to fellow veterans (even if you were Navy)." ☺ [This article is available on various websites – the Author is unknown]

It is the VETERAN...



It is the VETERAN, not the reporter,
who has given us freedom of the press.

It is the VETERAN, not the poet,
Who has given us freedom of speech.

It is the VETERAN, not the campus organizer,
who has given us freedom to assemble.

It is the VETERAN, not the lawyer,
who has given us the right to a fair trial.

It is the VETERAN, not the politician,
who has given us the right to vote.

It is the VETERAN,



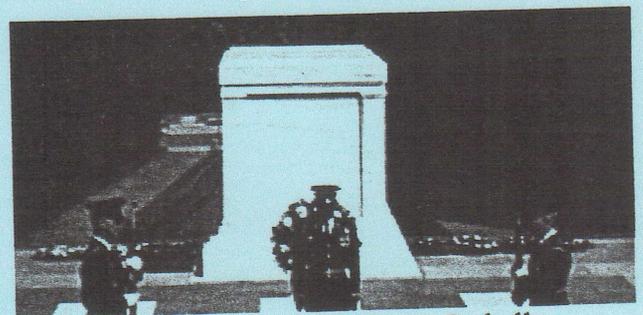
who salutes the flag,
who serves under the flag,



Eternal rest grant them O Lord,
And let perpetual light shine upon them.

Hurricane Isabelle closes Washington, D.C. except...

On the ABC evening news, it was reported that,



because of dangers from Hurricane Isabelle approaching Washington, D.C., the military members assigned the duty of guarding the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier were given permission to suspend the assignment.

They refused. "No way, Sir!"

Soaked to the skin, marching in the pelting rain of a tropical storm, they said that guarding the Tomb was not just an assignment; it was the highest honor that can be afforded to a serviceperson.

The Tomb has been patrolled continuously, 24/7,
since 1930.