

THE MAGOFFIN MESSENGER

The Newsletter of USS Magoffin (APA-199)

Veteran's Association

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*The Magoffin Messenger is a quarterly publication for and by the members of the USS Magoffin Veteran's Association. This newsletter as well as a wealth of other USS Magoffin information and history may be found at:
www.ussmagoffin.org*

President's Message

It looks like the great weather we have enjoyed this summer is getting close to coming to an end. Winter is fast approaching, and I would like to remind everyone to try to be prepared for whatever mother nature might send your way. Keep an eye on friends and relatives, and check on them if bad weather hits.

Kay and I have enjoyed a good summer, and are looking forward to the changing of the seasons. We are looking to maybe down-sizing a little, we will wait to see what might happen in that respect.

I want to thank everyone that sent us a note or called, concerning the reunion in Norfolk. It was our privilege and pleasure to host. By all accounts everyone had a good time. We are looking forward to seeing everyone in Nashville, Tennessee.

We are working on putting a USS Magoffin plaque in the ship's store, and hope it will be well received. Ray Furlow has been working diligently on keeping the store up and running, and he tells me that sales are down a little, so I encourage everyone to shop and support the store.

I want to thank Joe Beninato for his continued work as the Association's Treasurer. Thank you Mike for everything. A huge thank you goes out to Emmon Rogers for taking on the duties as Newsletter editor. Thanks again Terry for maintaining an excellent Website. And to Tom Haglage: I appreciate your work as Secretary and for accepting the task of hosting the next reunion in Nashville.

A reminder, that the annual dues for the association are now \$20.00, and checks should be made payable to "The USS Magoffin Association".

I received a letter from Canada's Korea Veterans Association back in September, asking our Association if we would join other Associations and groups in petitioning the Canadian Postal Service to commission a Canadian Korean War commemorative stamp for the 60th Anniversary.

(continued in next column)

President's Message (continued)

Mr. Back sent me a list of letters already received and it is a very impressive list to say the least. Before I compose the letter joining their effort, I wanted to give anyone a chance to make their opposition, or endorsement known. I will wait until December to compose the letter, either supported the effort or telling them we choose not to make an endorsement.

Rick Rakar wanted to attend the reunion this year, but was scheduled to undergo Chemo-Therapy at the same time we were in Norfolk. He called me several times before, with excitement in his voice, and numerous times after, telling me he wished he could have made it. Rick found several of his shipmates through our association, and talked to them on the phone or via E-Mail. He assisted Tommy Lopez in getting in touch with us, and asked me if I could write a letter for Tommy to help with his VA benefits. Rick called me to thank me for writing the letter and we talked for about 45 minutes, reliving old times in Boat Group. Rick's fight ended just a few days later, and Tom Lopez called me to inform me that he had passed. That was Rick, up to the end, he was worried about someone else, and trying to help. I personally want his family to know, that our thoughts are with them, and that they can call on me anytime.

If anyone has news or issues, please contact me. If I don't know the answer, I will make sure I find someone that does.

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Vice President's Message



Shipmates who have read "Why I Joined the Navy" on the Magoffin website know that my biological father, Paul Monroe Mannon, AAM2, perished in a Japanese prisoner of war camp in 1944.

I never really knew him as I was less than two years old when he died on February 22, 1944. I didn't really know about my father until the early 1950's when my mother and step-father thought I was old enough to know about him.

My entire life I have been a part of my mother's family, but have never known anyone from my father's family. When I was young I never thought to ask about my father or his family. As I have gotten older and the time has passed, as has my mother and step-father, I realize those questions will forever be unanswered.

Over the last few years I have had the good fortune to read about my father on some websites and in a book titled "Black Cat Raiders of WW2".

Like many of you, I was able to put his record of naval service into the websites at the World War II Memorial and the US Navy Memorial at Washington, D.C. I was pleased to find that as a deceased prisoner of war that he had also been listed in both memorials by the navy department.

My entire later life I had always thought that my father had perished at New Rabaul; his remains were somewhere there and lost to the ages.

Late last year I was checking ancestry.com, a website I had used in the past for information about my father. Suddenly something popped up that I had never seen before in any of my searches. It showed that my father was buried at the Golden Gate National Cemetery, in San Bruno, California.

The records show that he was interred there on February 14th, 1951.

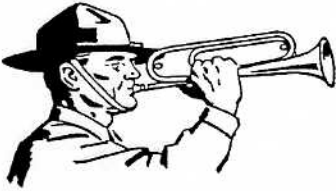
This last weekend Doris and I, along with my best friend of over fifty years, Jim Bates, flew to San Francisco to visit my father's grave site at Golden Gate National Cemetery.

It was, as you would imagine, a day of strong emotions for all three of us. On this beautiful day, in this most honored place, I was able to bring closure to a big portion of my own life history.

I shared my private thoughts with my father after all these long years. But there are a couple of things I said that I need to share with you, my shipmates. I thanked him and all who served during World War II. I told him because of all of you, we are still a great nation because of your sacrifices.

And lastly, I wanted him to know that I had grown to be a good person.

Mike Stein



TAPS

Merval Dusty Rhodes, 1937 - 2009

Dusty was born on November 6, 1937 and passed away on Saturday, May 16, 2009. He was living in Florence, Montana. He was graduated from Florence-Carlton High School in 1957, and in 1958 he joined the U.S. Navy.

He served on the USS Magoffin in the OC Division after completing basic training and one year of Electronics School at Treasure Island. He also completed Navy SEAL training. His service in the Navy was extended for a year because of the Cuban Missile Crisis, and he left the U.S. Navy as a Petty Officer Second Class, specializing in electronics. Upon honorable discharge in June 1962, he went to work on the Minuteman Missile Program for Boeing Aircraft.

He is survived by his wife, Dorothy. A Memorial Service was held on May 26 at the Whitesitt Funeral Home in Stevensville, Montana with his family officiating. The American Legion Post 94 and National Guard presented Military Honors.

Richard T. Rakar, 1947 - 2009

Rick passed away in Rancho Cordova, California on October 4, 2009. He was preceded in death by his wife, Marilyn in 2005, his parents Louis and Rose Rakar, his sister Judy Takcas, a niece Jackie Rakar and nephew Bobby Rakar. He is survived by his son Richard Taylor Rakar; brothers Jack and Lilly Rakar, Gene and Marilyn Rakar, James and Georgianna Rakar and Judy Rakar Cox; several nieces, nephews and cousins: and special lifelong friend Joe.

He was a native of Joliet, Illinois and resided in Rancho Cordova. He served for four years in the U.S. Navy serving two tours of duty in Vietnam aboard the USS Magoffin. He worked for many years as an industrial painter.

The family wishes to extend special thanks to Hospice and to Richard's shipmates. At his request, no services were held.

The above information is from the death notice published in the Sacramento Bee on October 8, 2009. Please see Bucky Earven's comments regarding Rick in the President's Letter on Page 1 of this newsletter.

New USS Magoffin APA-199 Plaque



If you attended the reunion in Norfolk in May, you probably saw the new Magoffin plaque. It's great!

The plaque is a cast gold colored medallion mounted on a wooden backing. The brass plate can be customized, for example: with your name, rank, division and dates on-board.

The cost of each plaque is \$35.00, which includes the shipping cost. The plaques are made-to-order and will be shipped directly to you by the manufacturer.

The above photo is a scanned black & white photo. Please check the Ship's Store website at ussmagoffin.org later this month for a full color photo of the plaque.

To order:
Call Jim "Bucky" Earven at 540-337-0290 to arrange for payment and shipment of the plaque with a custom plate.

