



### Association Officers

President

**Charles Casello**

Vice-President

**Bill Hunter**

Secretary/Treasurer

**Norm Jennewein**

### **President's Message**

Here we are again with the New Year coming upon us in 2006. I just can't believe our 2005 Reunion is over. However, I believe everyone had a great time and really enjoyed themselves very much.

Jimmy and Peggy Modis worked very hard to make our Reunion a full success, and I wish to thank both of them for doing a wonderful job trying to please everyone. Without a doubt it was an excellent time

Our next Reunion will be held in Montana in 2006, with Carl Bell as chairman. I am sure he will do a great job.

Bill Reddell has offered to host the 2007 reunion in Washington, D.C. I am sure he will do a great job also.

E. W. Reichenbach will host the 2008 reunion in the state of Washington.

*(Continued – Back Page)*

# **U.S.S. Suwannee CVE 27 Newsletter**

**Nov. / Dec. 2005**

### **Editor's Note**

It was so good to visit with so many shipmates at our 2005 reunion. Jim Modis and his family did a fantastic job and there were many wonderful occasions to be remembered.

Bill "Rigger" Riggs and I had to laugh as we talked about the fact that we live less than two miles apart and yet we had traveled almost 900 miles each to visit with each other. We spent much more time together at the reunion that we had while at home.

It is so good to see so many second and third generations coming. I know it thrills the hearts of a bunch of us old salts. Even some members who were not there had to be at home smiling at the thought of their loved ones, who honored their service and memory by attending this year's event. I know that those of us who were there to see and enjoy all of the wonderful fellowship really appreciated it.

We still enjoy the letters, e-mails and phone calls of encouragement concerning the newsletter. Some readers have also sent in articles. We need more of those. It doesn't have to be about a hair-raising war-time experience, just about you and/or your family. It is a newsletter for all of us and we must all contribute. Contact me at 210-561-7668 or at [bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net).

Your shipmates might cherish a picture or something of that sort that you have long stowed away. Try us and see. We hope you enjoy what we have to offer this time. - Bill Reddell

### **Deadline for Membership Dues is Approaching**

Please remember that membership dues are due before January 1. It is critical that everyone pay their dues, and that they be paid on time. We are doing everything we can to maintain the association as an active part of the lives of crew members. Being financially solvent is critical to that process. Mail your check as soon as possible to keep our association moving forward. Since Norm Jennewein will be out of commission for a while, please send your dues to Charles Casello at his address on the back page.

### **New Suwannee Website**

We have a new website that pays tribute to the ship's company and air groups of the Suwannee. It is located at <http://www.usssuwannee.org>. It contains information about the history of the ship, photos from the war and from this year's reunion and links to other Internet sites that contain information about the Suwannee. As with the newsletter, we will be counting on crew members and their families for material. If you have photos, video, stories, or information about other websites that mention the Suwannee, please let us know and we will include them. Send information via the "Contact" button located on each page of the website.

## Reunion Memories - 2005



E.W. Reichenbach greets Jean and Matt Frkovic during registration for the reunion.



This bell, mounted on a plaque containing the names of those lost in battle, is rung during the memorial service.



Seated: E.W. Reichenbach and George Savatgy. Standing: Jack Good, Bud McAfee, Kathy Highfield, Dolze Touchet, Bill Reddell and John Dowell.



John Eilts, daughter Joan Bost and James Frohnapfel visit in the hospitality room.



Mr. and Mrs Bill Hunter with Mr. and Mrs. Charles Casello in the hospitality room.



Edgar Lafayette and Carl Bell visit in the hospitality room.



## I remember . . .

I went aboard the Suwannee about September 20, 1944, and was in a repair party aft on the quarterdeck, port side. I was assigned to the headphones for use in that area. As you know, the first suicide plane came down directly in front of the rear elevator shaft on the quarterdeck, which was about 25 feet from our repair party

The impact of the Zero split the 3/4" steel quarterdeck over the mess hall. The quarter stopped it from going any deeper into the ship. As I had on the ear phones, I had heard the repair station on topside say that the plane was making a run on us. The gunners had knocked off a wing and part of the tail fins. "He's pulling up . . . now coming down amidship," then Kaboom!

As I recall, we had ten men in the repair party. I was blown against the bulkhead, then turned and ran aft down the passageway. I forgot the headphone set, and as I hit the end of the 25-foot cord I was "bull dogged" to the deck. As I got to my knees the thought ran through my mind that I was blocking the passageway. Not so, as three men flattened me again. I got up and followed them and we ran aft and down to the ship's store area.

As the smoke and heat cleared, I returned to my station and retrieved the phone set. Needless to say, I did not fasten the phone set around my neck. I reported in as there was myself, Ralph Brandt, a man named Moore and another named Johnston left in my repair party. Some who had been blown overboard returned to the ship later.

As we started cleanup, a man was lying on his back behind a cut-off valve, with no signs of injury. As the suicide plane's motor was directly in front of him, I assumed that he was killed by concussion. I was later told that he was a professional wrestler who had been assigned aboard the ship. I was looking at the motor and turned aside to see a part of the pilot's skull, with an ear still attached, laying on the deck. I called to Vincent Polaski to come and look. He did so, and proceeded to lose his breakfast. A doctor then came into the area, collected the remains, put them in a jar of formaldehyde and took them away. Upon checking the wreckage, it was the consensus of the inspectors that the bomb had been placed behind the motor.

I was then assigned to the officer's mess to help with the wounded. In "Moment of Impact" there is a photo of this area. The man in the photo who has the bandage around his head had had his jaw torn loose on the right side.

I helped put 26 men over the side that night. It was a very bad day and night. I was working on the quarterdeck the next day, October 26, when we took the second suicide plane, which hit the forward hanger.

I was fortunate to work with men like George Weaver, Hickock, Weise, Tisdale (?) and Ted Deubler, all of whom came aboard when the ship was commissioned. Also, being in refrigeration, I met a lot of the pilots. I used to kid them about having to come to a lowly 3<sup>rd</sup>-Class for ice. When I would go to the ready room to check on their air conditioner they would invite me in for a cool one. These are the kinds of things I would rather remember about my tour on the Suwannee. I served aboard her from September 1944 to June 1946.

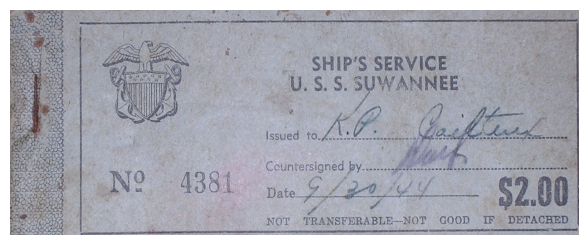
-- Dale Brown

## Another Suwannee Memory

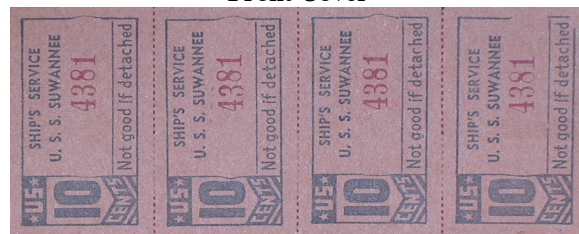
Kenneth Cailteux showed up at the reunion in St. Joseph with something that many crew members will probably remember. It is a "Ship's Service" booklet, which contained tickets that were used to purchase merchandise at the ship's store.

The booklet pictured here was issued to Mr. Cailteux on Sept. 20, 1944. When the ship was hit by kamikazes in October, Cailteux was badly burned, was taken off the ship for treatment, and spent about two years in the hospital.

After he was taken off the Suwannee, his locker was cleaned out and all of the items removed were eventually placed in a wooden box and shipped to him. This booklet was in the pocket of a coat that was in the box. Mr. and Mrs. Cailteux used the very sturdy wooden box for years as a toy chest. He kept the booklet as a reminder of life aboard the *Suwannee*.



Front Cover



Tickets

## President's Message (from Front Page)

I am very pleased with so many of the members of our great association taking so much interest in volunteering to chair the reunions each year.

Keep up the good work! I hope to see everyone (and more of the those that could not make it this year) at next year's reunion in Mountana, God willing.

May everyone have a very happy Christmas and a blessed and holy New Year.

**Pres. C. P. Casello**  
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**Office DEPOT**  
*Taking Care of Business*

We want to thank Office Depot for their agreement to provide printing services for the *Suwannee* newsletter at a greatly discounted price.

Next time you are looking for office products of any type, be sure to visit Office Depot, and give them a word of thanks for their support of our organization.

## Shipmates

### Roy Reukauf

Mrs. Betty Reukauf would like to know of any shipmates who were on the Suwannee during the campaign in North Africa. She is working on getting the Purple Heart for her husband Roy, and could use your help. Roy suffers from Alzheimer's, and cannot provide all of the information Betty needs to submit. If you have any information that might be useful, please call her at 716-662-4635.

The address is:

15 Hillside Dr  
Orchard Park, NY 14127

### Norm Jennewein

Norm just underwent back surgery, and will be out of commission for three or four months. He would probably really appreciate a note from any shipmates who would like to check up on him.

Norm's address is:

4664 Telstar Drive  
St. Louis, MO 63128

**U.S.S. Suwannee CVE 27 &  
Attached Air Groups Assn.**  
c/o Bill Reddell  
12101 Mission Trace  
San Antonio, TX 78230