

# U.S.S. SUWANNEE CVE 27 NEWSLETTER SPRING 2007



## Association Officers

President  
**Charles Casello**

Vice-President  
**Bill Hunter**

Secretary/Treasurer  
**Norm Jennewein**

## **President's Message**

Hi, shipmates. It's getting a little warmer here and I hope you all got through the winter okay. I was just talking with our Chaplain, Bob Eustace, and he told me he has had surgery for cancer in his bladder. He is home now trying to recover, and is doing all right.

Now it's time to look forward to our next reunion and hope we have a great turnout.

Things have been very quiet here. It is great having heard from different people about what is going on about the great *USS Suwannee*. Ed Reichenbach called me, and, sadly, said he cannot host the reunion next year due to health problems. He will not be able to attend this year's reunion, but hopes to attend the next one.

In closing, the 2008 Reunion will be held in Cape Cod Massachusetts, hosted by Bob McCarter. See you in Washington, D.C.

**Charles Casello,  
President**

## **Editor's Note**

As Charlie Casello noted in his President's Message, this year's reunion is scheduled for the Washington, D.C. area. We are working with a reunion planning organization, which will get the best hotel, tour and banquet rates for us and coordinate activities. It should be set up so that everyone will need to write only one check for registration.

The reunion coordinator will send out registration materials soon. Be on the lookout for an envelope from Military Reunion Planners.

Friday reunion activities will include a bus tour of many national monuments, as well as Arlington National Cemetery. We will make stops at the World War II Memorial and the U.S. Navy Memorial. The visit to the Navy Memorial will include a wreath-laying ceremony and a viewing of the movie, "At Sea." The wreath-laying ceremony will include the reading of the names of those members who have passed away since last year's reunion. If you know of a sailor who has passed on since last year, please give me a call at 210-561-7668 and let me know. The traditional memorial service, with the reading of the names of those lost during the war, will take place on Friday night.

On Saturday the hotel shuttle service will provide transportation to the Smithsonian Air and Space Museum, as well as to local shopping areas. A photographer will be available for family portraits on Saturday afternoon, followed by the banquet, raffle and dancing that evening.

We really hope that as many crewmen as possible make it to this year's reunion. Most of us have not seen either the World War II Memorial or the U.S. Navy Memorial. This will be a great opportunity to do so, as well as to visit Arlington and other sites in our nation's capital.

See you in Washington, D.C.!

-- Bill Reddell

## **Raffle Items Needed**



As you remember from previous reunions, the raffle is a big part of the festivities following the banquet on Saturday night. If you have craftwork or other donations to make as raffle prizes, please contact Bill Reddell and let him know that we can count on you this year. Pictured at left is a sweatshirt with "USS Suwannee CVE 27" embroidered on it in red, white and blue. This item was donated and raffled off last year. Contact Bill about your donation right away.

# Photos from Last Year's Reunion in Montana



Don Michie reads the names of crewmen who died aboard the Suwannee.



A group of wives take time to pose for a photo during the Saturday shopping trip.



Tom O'Connell, Terry Ann Walters, Cactus Walters and Alfred Magallon enjoy a moment together before the banquet starts.



Reunion Host Carl "Bill" Bell and his family take a moment together in front of the hotel fountain.



Marianne McDonald, Casimer Plonczynski, Sheila Fischer and Pat Reinhart on tour bus.



Betty Hall, Wanda Powell, Bill Powell and James Hall await the start of the banquet.



A local honor guard presents the colors at the beginning of the Friday evening memorial service.



Marianne McDonald, Lloyd Higgins and Norm Jennewein visit in the hospitality suite.



Paul Swenson, Dottie Swenson, Flora Belle Stephenson and Milton Hemingway visit near the hotel fountain.





- *Taps* -

Jack Morris  
August 31, 2006

Kenneth Merritt  
November 23, 2006

Dale Floyd Mabry  
January 6, 2007

Billy Griffin  
April 19, 2007



## Opinions Needed

We have located a couple of *Suwannee*-related items for sale on the internet, and wanted to find out if any ship's crew or air group members might have already purchased them, and could offer an opinion about them. It might help others make an informed decision about buying them.

The first is a *Suwannee* Cruise Book on CD, available from <http://www.navyboy63.com>. The other is an art print representing the *Suwannee* from the Ian Hall eBay store.

If you have purchased either of these items and want to offer an opinion about them to your shipmates, please send a note to Bill Reddell at 12101 Mission Trace, San Antonio, TX 78230, or at [bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net). We will include any responses in the next newsletter.

## !!!S.O.S.!!!

If you served aboard the *USS Suwannee*, we need your help. We cannot make this newsletter the kind of valuable tool it needs to be in telling the story of the ship without your assistance. Please take the time to write down some of your experiences during your service and send them to Bill Reddell. The history of the *Suwannee* is **your** history. **Please don't let it go untold.**

## *Suwannee* DVD

If there are any *Suwannee* crewmen or Air Group members who have not received a copy of "Moment of Impact," please let us know. The DVD tells a part of the story of October 25-26, 1944, during the Battle for Leyte Gulf. One free copy is being provided to each sailor, airman or surviving family. Those receiving a DVD are free to make copies for friends and family.

Contact:

Bill Reddell  
12101 Mission Trace  
San Antonio, TX 78230

(210) 561-7668  
[bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bill.reddell@sbcglobal.net)

## Suwannee Son Works to Memorialize WWII Veterans

We heard recently from Richard Slattery, son of Martin G. Slattery, who served aboard the *Suwannee*. Richard works as a photographer for the New York *Daily News*, and volunteers as an aerial photographer for the American Airpower Museum at Republic Airport in Farmingdale, NY. Richard has developed a passion for the contributions his father's generation made during the war and for the planes that they flew. The museum has restored a B-25, a P-47D, a Corsair, a TBM Avenger, a C-47, a P-40, a Navy PBY and others, all of which are in flying condition.

Richard, who lives in Syosset, New York, is going to try to attend this year's reunion.



Slattery took this photo of a P-47D from the navigator's front position in a B-25 during an air show over Jones Beach, Long Island, NY. The P-47D was made in New York during WWII.

## Researcher Lauds Suwannee Efforts at Okinawa

Fredio Samples, who is conducting research on the fighting in Okinawa during World War II, contacted Bill Reddell recently concerning the role the Suwannee played in that battle. His email follows:

Dear Bill,

It was a pleasure to have talked to you today by phone. I certainly appreciate how you fellows handled things during WWII. You served your country well and came home as the victor. You fellows were the greatest.

This is why I want to spread the word and give credit where credit is due. The USS Suwannee and its air group worked to help keep the Kamikaze airfields neutralized on the two southern Okinawan Islands known as the Sakishima Group of islands. The islands of Ishigaki and Miyako Jima were repeatedly bombed and strafed throughout the battle for Okinawa.

It was reported by all air groups that the Japanese AA was intense and very accurate on these islands; even more accurate than the AA on Okinawa. I will continue to look for those men who were in Air group 40. If you come across any of their names, please advise. I would like to include them into my research and take this information with me when I visit the islands this year.

Please send me your next newsletter and a copy of the DVD, the one you mentioned that was of your group.

Fredio Samples  
Snohomish, Washington

If you served with Air Group 40, or know someone who did, please contact Bill Reddell. He will provide you with address and phone information for Mr. Samples.

***U.S.S. Suwannee* topics and related Internet links appear below:**

### **History**

<http://www.history.navy.mil/danfs/s20/suwannee.htm>

### **Memorials**

[http://www.lonesailor.org/nl\\_tribute\\_expanded.php?search=yes&fileaddr=NBD94410255](http://www.lonesailor.org/nl_tribute_expanded.php?search=yes&fileaddr=NBD94410255)

### **Photos**

<http://www.navsource.org/archives/03/027.htm>

### **Crewmen**

<http://www.state.sd.us/military/vetaffairs/sdwwiimemorial/SubPages/profiles/Display.asp?P=808>

Send your email address to [bill.Reddell@sbcglobal.net](mailto:bill.Reddell@sbcglobal.net) and get each newsletter two or three days sooner.