

9/20/10

Shipmates,

Our reunion in Reno was well attended, we had a really good time. We missed those of you who were not able to make the trip. We understand.

Monday : Sept. 6<sup>th</sup>

We opened our meeting in silent prayer for our loved ones and shipmates no longer with us. With coffee and rolls, we started discussions. I offered information on restaurants, shows and tours. So you will know, tours are paid by the individual. Next, everyone wanted to schedule another reunion, selecting Branson, Mo., for 2011.

Question, what do we know about VC81. Since I call them periodically, I can tell you, we have two TBM pilots left. Ken Wavell & John Marek. Ken is in his 90's with his wife Cecille in a home, okay, but problems. John Marek is blind, and is with his son. His wife, Clementine passed away a few months ago. Three Fighter Pilots left. Dean Tate – Bob Greenwalt – and John Grey. All doing quite well. Dean's wife Polly, vascular problems, but fairly well. Bob and Jeanne well. Dr. Gray's wife passed away near 2007. We owe much to these brave men for what they did for our country and the defense of our ship. Air Crewmen – three left. Leo Pyatt – John Donovan – and Merle Nause. They paid their dues as gunners aboard TBMS flying many missions, with close calls.

HERO'S ALL.

We talked about the books – “One Lucky Ship” and “Soul Survivor”, 2 copies displayed. Bruce and Andrea are doing interviews on different networks. Through them, we are known. Natoma Bay has been read about in several countries where ‘Soul Survivor’ has been printed. My opinion expressed, at our age, we may not see the book, however, I do think Bruce will press on to a publishing date. In the countless hours of research by Bruce and

Andrea, they found all missing persons & families. Bruce found we were missing a 9<sup>th</sup> Star, for Saipan, he made it known to the Naval Dept., and got it confirmed. Bruce and Andrea were on primetime news in Japan as a result. I was interviewed for 1 hour which was also aired. The Linenger's were flown to Japan, to ChiChi Jima, to lay a wreath on James Houston's crash site. Much has been accomplished.

Next: In 2009 I received a beautiful plaque from Ray Tisser, with this note:

“Dear Al, the enclosed gift is from all your shipmates. We want you to enjoy it now and we will present it to you “officially” when we meet in Reno, 2010. Signed, Ray – Ben – Mike – Leo – Lloyd – Ivar – Paulette – John & Steve. Your loving shipmates”.

The presentation was made, and I am humbled, Thank you, Al

Another happening: Leo said he could no longer be the treasurer, & please nominate someone else. Arthur Imthurn said Vernon Keepers would be the man, a retired CPA. We asked him, and he said ‘yes’. Thank you Vernon. Our acct. has been transferred. If you wish to send a check of \$20 for dues, make it to Vernon Keepers, Natoma Bay Assoc. addressed to:

Vernon Keepers  
P.O. Box 1296  
Boise City, Ok. 73933

Conclusion of meeting.

Lloyd McCann ran film made by John DeWitt and photos of past , reunions, Thanks Lloyd for your thoughtfulness.

Mike and Presilla Murrietta canceled. Mike fell, breaking two ribs and got a hook through the hand while deep sea fishing. We give him 5 days in the brig on bread and water. Better luck next time Mike.

Leo Pyatt and Steve = problems

Merle and Jeanne Nause = okay, but could not travel.

We missed Dr. John Gray.

Would have been nice to see Elizabeth Berry and Emma.  
Also, Carolyn and Dave, court duties, and school duties, make it difficult to travel.

Tuesday & Wednesday

On your own, trips were made to Lake Tahoe, Carson City & Virginia City. The brave ones drove to the old Ghost Town of Bodie, a big strike, long years ago.

Wednesday Evening 7pm

Our banquet dinner and our last night on shore.  
We dined in the awesome Silver Legacy at the Sedona Restaurant.  
A very joyful evening. All good things come to an end, so.....

**ANCHORS AWAY MY BOYS**

FINAL

To: Leo Pyatt from all of us.....

Leo, you're a man of honor and integrity.

We thank you for your leadership as president and later as Treasurer. You've always been there. We admire you as a person and for your service to our country. God brought you through 36 missions in a TBM without harm.

WILL SEE YOU IN BRANSON,

God bless,

Al