

# USS Midway--Scope Dope News

DING DING --- DING DING --- SCHOOLBOY'S OI DIVISION, CIC OFFICERS AND OTHERS ARRIVING



## 2009 Orlando Reunion

The reunion group planning committee, after the exchange of many e-mails and two conference calls, decided to go with the **Residence Inn Marriott** in Altamonte Springs, Orlando, Florida, as the site for the 2009 reunion. The reunion dates remain the same, **April 23-26**, with checkout the 26th. Clay Sponseller and Jim Hayter are co-hosting the reunion, with help from Bill Kruper and Joe Reiter. Ron McPhail, founder of our reunion group, also plans to attend. As soon as additional information becomes available we'll pass it on. By the next edition of *Scope Dope News* this fall, we'll have the reunion details together and include a signup sheet, including options and dollar amounts. We are also asking you to let Jim Hayter know if you plan to attend the reunion (see request on separate flier). Check out the Residence Inn at: <http://www.residenceinnaltamontesprings.com/>.

## 2008 Dues Report

Reunion group members have been paying their 2008 dues at a fairly good clip, but we're still at only about 75 percent of our 2007 level. So

we need to step up to the helm and top last year's total. A separate flier listing reunion group members who *have* paid their 2008 dues is included with this newsletter. If you're not on that list, please make sure you pay your dues soon. Our dues are what keeps our reunion group on a steady course and steaming full speed ahead. Without them we are dead in the water or maybe run into an iceberg. Make your check for \$10 payable to **Oscar Granger, Midway Reunion** and mail to him at 44434 S.E. 142nd Pl., North Bend, WA, 98045.

### *New Members Onboard*

**Gerald Burk - Orlando, FL**

**Don Taylor - Austin, TX**

**Allan Ryan - Chicago, IL**

**Henry Horton - Austin, TX**

*These men have joined our ranks since the last newsletter. Like us, they sailed the high seas on the Midway. Welcome aboard, Men!*

**Gerald, Don, Allan and Henry**, could you each send your email address, phone number, years on board, and spouse's name to Oscar Granger, the group's secretary/treasurer? Somehow we managed to sign you up without getting this information consistently from you all. (See "Masthead" on last page for Oscar's e-mail address and phone number.)



Shown above are shipmate **Harold Saltz's** photos taken when he was a photographer's mate in OI Division on the Midway in '48-'50. To say that Harold is "salty" is an understatement. Though he's never attended a reunion, Harold has been a member of our reunion group for several years. Seen here, clockwise, top-to-bottom, Pope

Pius XII in the Midway's hangar bay; Harold in front of the Eiffel Tower; the Midway cruising the English Channel with the Rock of Gibraltar in the background; and the Midway in her pre-angle deck days. Harold, who turns 80 this year, lives in Forest Hills, New York. Thanks for sharing these vintage pictures with us, Harold!

*Editor's note: The article below came my way from Scott McGaugh, Midway Museum Marketing Director. If you're in San Diego over the 4th this year, then you're in luck! This sounds like an all-around good deal for Midway Museum members. Imagine it! Watching a spectacular fireworks show over San Diego Bay from the flight deck of the Midway!*

## Declaration of Independence Aboard USS Midway July 4!

The only traveling copy of the Declaration of Independence—printed on July 4, 1776—will be exhibited aboard the USS Midway Museum the day and night of July 4! Members have an early-bird opportunity to purchase a limited number of tickets.

The USS Midway will host “A Celebration of America,” beginning at 6 p.m. on July 4, leading up to the Big Bay Fireworks. The Declaration will be featured, along with live entertainment by national celebrities (not yet announced), and an emotional salute to our 232nd birthday featuring 232 Iraq and Afghanistan veterans! (Lawn chairs, snacks and non-alcoholic beverages will be allowed.) Our exclusive radio partner, <http://www.magic925.com/>MAGIC 92.5, will be broadcasting live from the flight deck! 500 tickets are now available for purchase by members. <https://ussmidway.cygnum.com/store.jsp#ceShop>>CLICK HERE and use the promo code, MidwayMember in the lower left hand corner (until member tickets are sold out). The limit is 6 per transaction. If you receive a message of “this package not available,” that means the Membership allocation has been sold out.

Limited tickets for “A Celebration of America” go on sale to the public on June 12 at <http://www.midway.org/>www.midway.org.

The Museum will open early at 9 a.m. that day for this unique, once-in-a-lifetime opportunity! It's one of only 25 remaining original copies and is part of a 14-city national tour by

<http://www.declareyourself.com/>Declare Yourself, sponsored by

<http://www.mycricket.com/>Cricket

Wireless. The multi-media exhibit will feature national entertainment celebrities encouraging young people to register to vote. The original copy is owned by television producer Norman Lear.

It's a great opportunity to experience the birth of America on our nation's birthday, aboard our nation's West Coast symbol of strength, freedom and peace!

### Midway Memorabilia Report

Bill Kruper reports that he is close to getting the reunion group's Midway memorabilia program back in operation. He is in the process of ordering a supply of new style hats, both mens and ladies, also the usual patches, pins, etc. He will have a sheet made up for the next newsletter listing the items and prices. Until we can get our own Midway memorabilia supply going again through Bill, you can always order Midway memorabilia directly from the USS Midway Store site at <http://enssc.com/?store=502> (linked from the Midway Museum site).



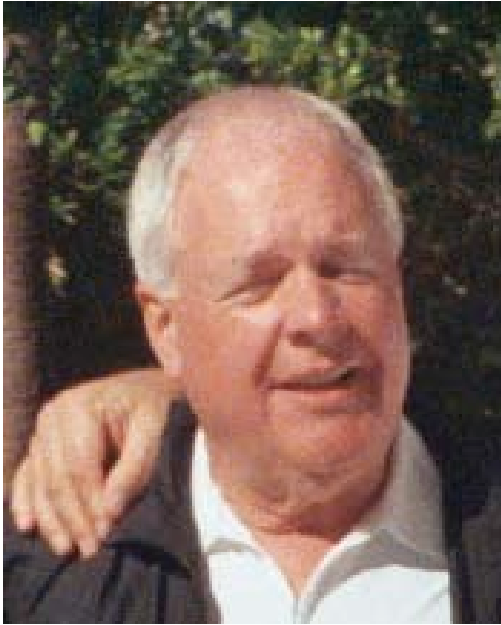
**Midway Factoid: More than 250,000 Americans served aboard America's longest-serving aircraft carrier.**



***Jim Hayter's Sea Story***  
***Man-ALMOST-Overboard!!!!!!!!!!!!!!***

It was a hot and steamy day on the Gulf of Mexico and a cold beer on the pool deck watching the nubile Yum Yum's frolic in the water made the day very tolerable—oops, wrong story! This one was on a seven-day cruise on the Celebrity Zenith; maybe more on this one later. The real sea story I want to recount happened 40 years earlier on a very hot and very steamy afternoon in the South China Sea on my second deployment to WESPAC aboard the USS Midway. About halfway through the 1200-1700 leg of our daily port and starboard watch sequence I decided it was time for a little break from the dark, but cool, CIC. There was a small catwalk just outside of Combat, on the **starboard** side if my memory serves me right, and it was nice to take a break from the radars going round and round and enjoy the nice breeze, watch our wake cut through the deep blue water, and /or enjoy (?) the roar of jet planes overhead during air ops. We were about ten days out of our last port call, so I was day-dreaming about how soon we would be getting to our next liberty port of Yokosuka. In my mind I was just about to get to the door of the OI Division watering hole, the Bar Di Jobe, when someone else joined me on the cat-

walk. Here I was in my dungarees and work shirt, and my new companion looked like a Marine Corps recruiting poster in his nicely pressed khaki shirt and blue pants. "Howdy," says I, to which poster boy responded "the Captain wants to see you." Holy Crap, thinks I, what could I possibly have done to merit a trip to see the skipper. While there were probably dozens of examples of things I hadn't done the Navy way that day, I couldn't remember anything I had stepped in recently, but my mind was racing thinking of excuse after excuse to CYA. I did have the presence of mind to tell the marine I should stop off at CIC and tell people where I was going"—no way, we need to get to the bridge right now"! He was real big and looked real serious, so I elected to follow his direction. Up the island we start, and then the 1MC sounds-off—MAN OVERBOARD, MAN OVERBOARD, ALL HANDS REPORT TO YOUR MUSTER STATIONS. I turn to report back to CIC, but my marine buddy points up, so again I elect to follow. He ushered me into the Navigation Bridge, where I was given a seat in the corner and told to stay put. Then the light bulb comes on above my head—my marine buddy was the Captain's orderly who had been sent-out to find a victim, and I was the missing man in today's drill. As it turned out, OI reported all hands accounted for, but we avoided having Lt. Harms called on the carpet for an improper report, because just as I was about to enter the Nav Bridge, one of our Bridge talkers was on his way down after being relieved and saw me "high and dry," so we had deniability when questioned. Needless to say, I was the butt of many jokes for the next few days, but at least I was not a real man overboard and yes, that catwalk remained one of my favorite places to take a break.



*Secretary/Treasurer Oscar "Oz" Granger*

**Editor's note:** *This account of the "first Midway" was sent in by Oscar Granger.*

I read some interesting information regarding the *Midway* history that I'm not sure everyone knows. My son, knowing my insatiable appetite for non-fiction reading from WWII, Korea, and Vietnam, gave me a book for Christmas, James D. Hornfischer's "The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors"! The story board chronicles the Battle of Samar, the central naval action in the Battle of Leyte Gulf on October 25, 1944, reputedly the greatest naval battle in the war and the actions that finally destroyed the Japanese navy.

In the story there is considerable history of all the US Navy ships comprising the battle groups that participated in that engagement. One of the ships involved was the *St. Lo*, an escort carrier -- CVE-63. You may or may not know that when the *St. Lo* was launched in 1943 in Vancouver, Washington, she was christened the USS *Midway*. It was just prior to the Battle of Leyte Gulf that the name *Midway* was wrested away from the escort carrier and presented to the new "super" carrier that was

being built in Newport News, Virginia. As stated in the book, the Battle of Midway was still fresh in the mind of the Secretary of the Navy, James Forrestal, and he wanted to commemorate the first strategic success against the Empire of Japan by naming the new 43,000-ton carrier being built with the name USS *Midway*.

The naming of ships was also discussed in the book and it was noted that it was considered bad luck for a ship to have its name changed after it was christened. Suffice it that the *St. Lo* and another CVE, the *Gambier Bay*, were sunk during that battle--the *St. Lo* as the result of Kamikazi attacks.

The *St. Lo* is commemorated in the small water-side park right next to where the *Midway* is now berthed in San Diego. Her history is "carved in stone" and hopefully all of the *Midway* veterans will take the time to walk around the fantail, across the boardwalk, and spend a few minutes reading the history of the *St. Lo* and the other ships memorialized there. Just little additional piece of history for the *Midway*.



**Unattributed quote:** "As far as I'm concerned, the *Midway* is still a CVA. I don't give a flying flip what they call her nowadays, dropping off the "A." She was an attack carrier when I was on her, and she'll always be an attack carrier. Even anchored to the pier now as a museum ship, she still looks meaner than a banshee in heat."



**Craig Harper’s Sea Story**  
**Just another day**

I woke up earlier than I normally would knowing we had an AWEX exercise staring that day. Ate more than I usual do at a meal. We went to general quarters about 7 hours into my watch. Luckily I was the ship’s air tracking supervisor at the time and my GQ billet was exactly the same position, kind of handy. The radar scope was a mess the whole time, more contacts than you can count for more than 8 hours. When it was over I was exhausted. I went down to the chow hall and stuffed myself. I was heading off to bed when I looked at my watch and realized that I had not seen the sun for over a day. I made my way to the starboard catwalk and opened the door only to realize it’s 2200 hours, pitch black, oh well. So I made my way back to my rack and crawled in for some much needed sleep. I was just dosing off when it occurred to me . . . I turned my little overhead light back on and looked at my watch again, it was the 7<sup>th</sup>, happy birthday Craig I said to myself, happy 19<sup>th</sup>. I turned the light back off and was gone.

**Just another day**

**“Hero Ships” TV Series**

For those of you lucky enough to have History Channel International on your cable or dish, this Memorial Day you had the opportunity to see the first three episodes of "**HERO SHIPS**," a 13-part series of one-hour programs featured in high definition with gripping interviews and an insider's look into the real stories told by the sailors who were there.

**Featured ships on the Memorial Day episode were:**

- USS ARIZONA**
- USS ENTERPRISE**
- LSTs**

The remaining 10 episodes featuring other great naval vessels: **Constitution, Yorktown, Laffey, Jeremiah O'Brien, Texas, New Jersey, Nautilus, New York, Hornet, and Samuel B. Roberts** will air throughout the following weeks.

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**HERO SHIPS:**

**USS New Jersey** – America’s most decorated surviving warship, the USS New Jersey has fought in more battles than any other fighting ship in U.S. naval history. From WWII, to Korea and Vietnam, Lebanon and Syria, the USS New Jersey was on the front lines, lending support in every major engagement. This episode of HERO SHIPS includes the emotionally stirring first reunion in three decades of two shipmates who served together on the USS New Jersey during Vietnam. **(June 29)**

**Editor’s Note:** There is a good chance that Hero Ship will air on the regular History Channel, which most of us carry, at some point in the future.





### **Bill Kruper's Sea Story**

#### *The Great Pea Coat Washdown.*

While on the 1963-64 WESPAC cruise we had one of the usual replenishment at sea events where we took on food. As we all remember there were always a few "volunteers" from our division to help load the never ending supply of boxed food that we took onboard. As usual, there was the inevitable pilfering and stashing of select items in or near the berthing compartments for consumption at some select future date. At this time I was an RD2 and didn't participate in this stash, but got involved when we sailed south to the Philippines where the weather was HOT, to say the least. One afternoon while relaxing in my bunk I was approached by a rather excited RDSN, I cannot recall his name, who was rather nervous and wanted me to come with him as he had something to show me. As we neared the pea coat locker on one end of the main berthing compartment I could smell what the trouble was. It seems that some well meaning individuals had stashed several cases of gallon-size cans of peaches beneath and behind all the hanging pea coats. Well, one can only imagine the pressure that built up in those cans with the rocking of the ship and the tropical heat. The cans exploded and sprayed the pea coats with peaches and sticky juice. The smell was beyond imaginable. Being the

senior PO available, I "took command" and we had a working party cleaning the compartment and hauling the pea coats into the head and rinsing them off in the showers. We had pea coats hanging all over the berthing compartments for several days while they dried. I still remember this particular RDSN asking me with a very worried look on his face if I was going to put anyone on report. I remember bursting out laughing and shaking my head "no" as I walked away from him. Ah, yes, the *Midway* did indeed hold some rather interesting times for us.

### **Upcoming Events/Requests**

- **Oscar Granger** is looking for what he calls "oblique" pictures of the *Midway* to use in the design of the official emblem he is doing for the '09 reunion. Oblique pictures of the *Midway* would be those of her not directly in profile, but those showing her cutting at angles. If you have pictures that fit this description, please send them to Oscar (see "Masthead" on last page for his contact information).
- **Jim Hayter**, co-host of the Orlando reunion along with Clay Sponseller, had this idea: in future newsletters leading up to the '09 reunion, feature "Things To Do in Orlando." Since it was Jim's idea, which is tantamount to volunteering, which we all learned never to do in the Navy, Jim is charged with tracking down and sending the editor worthy Orlando events for the newsletter.
- **CIC Officers Sea Story Contest.** This contest is coming soon to the *Scope Dope News*, if the editor can talk the officers into it. As envisioned, it will be a round-robin, no-holds-barred competition, with the winner of the best sea story by an officer chosen by the members. The question lingers: while we were partying it up in the bar districts around West-Pac, were the officers really playing chess in the wardroom? Stay tuned.

## "The Masthead"

### USS Midway OI Division Reunion Group

Published quarterly for and about former OI Division (and other) personnel, their times, and activities aboard the aircraft carrier USS *Midway*.

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