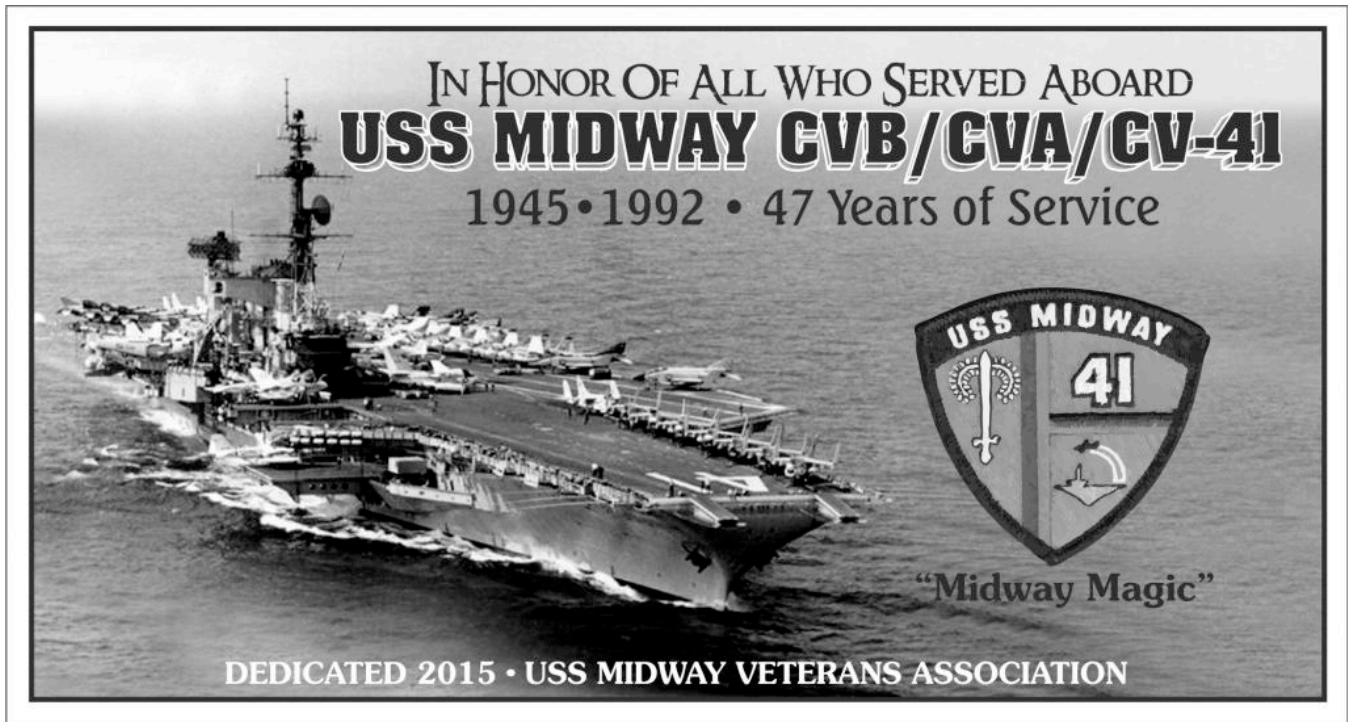




Station Ship News



DING DING . . . DING DING . . . SHIP'S CREW ARRIVING . . . ABOVE AND BELOW DECKS
IN THE AIR, AT SEA AND IN PORT . . . DING DING . . . DING DING



Replica of USS Midway Plaque That Hangs on “The Wall” at the U.S. Navy Memorial in Washington, D.C.

2020 Reunion Announcement!

Following back-to-back reunions in San Diego spanning a period of almost four years, the MVA is headed east for its next reunion in **Norfolk, Virginia**. We've selected the **Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel** as our “homeport.” The Waterside is reasonably priced, offering us a core room rate of \$119 per night (not including tax), a reunion-friendly environment, and a location close to many Navy/military attractions in the area. The full range of dates for the reunion will be **September 9–12, 2020**, with Wednesday the 9th set aside for early registration. **September 10th–12th, Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, will be the dates on which tours and activities will be held.** Tours and activities are TBD, but some of the tours we're looking at include: ♦ **the MacArthur Memorial and 11 Gallery Museum** ♦ **the Hampton Roads area, home to military bases from all branches of the military, including the Norfolk**

Naval Base, the world's largest naval facility ♦ **Admiral's Row, the Naval Air Station, and the piers** ♦ **Nauticus, a 120,000 square-foot science and technology center housing the Battleship USS Wisconsin Museum** ♦ **the Newport News Shipyard, birthplace the USS Midway. She was built there!** ♦ **We are also looking into the possibility of a regional VA rep giving a presentation/QA on the latest VA programs and benefits.**

We look forward to hosting a memorable reunion for the many Midway veterans and families who live east of the Mississippi River, many of whom are “out of range” of San Diego and the USS Midway Museum, where we most frequently gather for our reunions. These veterans are dedicated and proud of their service aboard Midway, and we are honored to invite them to attend our 2020 reunion along with their families and guests. And you don't have to be an MVA member to attend our reunions, just a Midway veteran. We welcome all who

served aboard the “Magic” during her 47 years of service to our country. Her magic, never extinguished, inspires us to this day.

So, Midway veterans, the MVA is headed your way! We come offering a great reunion for all. As a courtesy, we have extended an invitation to Franklin D. Roosevelt and Coral Sea veterans to join us at this reunion, if they so choose. This invite is just a courtesy, not be viewed as a rerun of last May’s 3 Sisters Reunion.

We will soon be providing you with information on how to book your hotel room and how to register for the 2020 reunion in Norfolk, VA.

Retrospective: Looking back on the 3 Sisters Reunion.

All the blood, sweat and tears that went into making the May 2019 Midway-Class 3 Sisters Reunion a historic and iconic event paid off. For it’s solidly in the books as one the most memorable and original navy reunions of all time, one for the ages, recognized and supported in letters from the Secretary of the Navy Richard V. Spencer and from RADM Bette Bolivar, Commander of the Southwest Naval Region.

Oscar Granger, president of the USS Midway Veterans Association, host of the 3 Sisters Reunion, put it this way: “There may be another Midway-Class ‘3 Sisters’ reunion someday, but it will be hard to top this one.”

Operation Frequent Wind: Escape From Vietnam

By Mark Nojiri, AT1, IM-3, 74-76; 78-81

During Thanksgiving of 1974, as a member of the USS Midway’s crew, I visited Hong Kong (then a British Crown Colony), and met a woman who had just retired from embassy duty in Saigon, South Vietnam.



When she found out I was in the US Navy, she told me that my ship would probably hear more about the Vietnam War, as “Charlie” was building up a big offensive just north of the city of Da Nang. After we parted ways, I forgot our conversation.

Around mid-April of 1975, the Midway was making a port visit for a few days in Subic Bay,

Philippines, and I went off the ship for three days, then returned for work. The day I returned to the ship, I told one of my buddies, “I am going to church on Sunday” This was April 18th. He said, “No you are not, we are going to Vietnam!” A few minutes later, the commanding officer, Captain Lawrence C. Chambers, announced that we were going to Vietnam to possibly be involved in an evacuation of South Vietnam. Some of the guys in my shop were told they would be going ashore and remain behind to support aircraft from the ship that were remaining behind, while others would be staying with the ship.

Those of us who did remain on the ship were told to evacuate our berthing area to make room for refugees. Several of us went to our berthing area to collect our bed sheets and pack important objects from our lockers, as we were being moved for the refugees. We went to another sleeping area, then we all decided that we would rather sleep in the shop.

On about April 20th, we were all told that, as we were in a war zone, we were now eligible for postage-free mail service for all personal mail. All we had to do was to write “Free” where the stamp is supposed to go. One day, I went up to the flight deck and saw a bunch of Air Force helicopters, maybe about ten of them. They were the United States Air Force Rescue and Recovery squadron, two squadrons. According to one of the crewmembers, whom I befriended, said that one squadron would fly in about 1,000 feet, while the other one would fly in at tree-level. The helicopters included CH-46 and H-53 Air Force helicopters. One afternoon, on a small cabinet on one of the helicopters, I saw a bunch of bullets for their machine guns and tapped my finger on the tip. It was sharp! The crewmember told me that the machine gun would shoot out about 6,000 rounds a minute. Considering how sharp the bullet was, I definitely did not want one of those bullets to hit me! Now, normally, each helicopter carried a crew of about six members, two waist gunners, one tail gunner, one specialist, the pilot, and the co-pilot. However, for this mission, only five members would be on these flights. The helicopters could carry a maximum safe capacity of 44 passengers, counting the flight crew.

On or about the 17th of April, we were told that the nation of Cambodia had been taken over by this group called the Khmer Rouge. At the end of this story, you will hear about that.

For the next few days, whenever I had a chance, I would leave my shop and go to the flight deck to pick up on any available rumors I could get. Also, in my shop, which was right below the flight deck and just about the

front-end of the landing area of the ship, some of the guys who had been to Vietnam, would gather around and tell some of their stories. I found out that, out of maybe about twenty of us, having



never been to Vietnam, I was in the minority. I saw such baseball caps as “Tonkin Gulf Yacht Club” and “Tom from Nam.” Each day, I wrote a letter home to my parents. As for what we did in my shop, which was an aviation electronics shop, other than work on equipment that we had received before this operation, there was not much work, as our normal aircraft were not being worked on at this time and we had not received any equipment from the Air Force aircraft.

I found out, through rumors, that there were approximately 45 ships assigned to this operation and most of the crewmembers who were Vietnam War veterans were not very happy about being here and wanted nothing to do with it. From what I understood, the USS Midway, and the USS Hancock were supposed to handle any refugees and the USS Coral Sea and the USS Enterprise would provide us with any air cover, if we would be subject to any attack from the air.

We sat there, mostly circling around, waiting, for about eight days. Then, on or about April 29th, Captain Chambers announced something to the effect of, “You men of the United States Air Force are about to embark on a very dangerous mission. May God help you all,” or words to that effect. From my shop, we could hear the helicopters taking off and, soon, virtual silence. A while later, one of the guys from my shop, and I went up to the O-11 level, the topmost observation level of the ship, and looked around. We saw one huey land, and out stepped a man in a business suit. According to the guy, it was now former Vice President Kei. Soon after we left the O-11 level, that level was closed to all spectators. I heard a rumor that, soon after, an Air Force MP, with a loaded rifle, stood guard and that some junior officer demanded access to the level, and the MP pointed the barrel of the rifle and said, “No Way!” Or

words to that effect.

In Saigon, over the radio station,



there was a “supposed-to-be” secret code for all embassy officials and other affected officials, which was “White Christmas.” The announcer said, “Well, I guess we will not have a white Christmas this year!” I was told this by a US embassy official as we transited to the Gulf of Thailand a few days later. As it turned out, it was not much of a secret code. Everybody knew it.

A few hours later, the Air Force helicopters began to return. It was amazing. We watched helicopters loaded way passed their safe limit. Refugees had crammed onto the helicopters like crazy, easily filling each helicopter past its safe limit. Many of these refugees carried weapons with them. One small joke, on one trip, as the helicopter landed in Saigon, the tail gunner forgot to set the safety on his machine gun. As he stood a few feet away, he happened to turn around and remember it. Then a refugee grabbed the handle of the machine gun and pushed the trigger. The crewmember could almost feel the bullets ripping his body apart! Surprisingly, he felt nothing. When the helicopter returned to the ship, dropping off all the refugees, one of the waist gunners told me, “Next time, make sure to set your safety BEFORE leaving the helicopter!” The commanding officer of this Air Force squadron ordered his crews to fly three missions into Saigon and land at various locations. As the Viet Cong started heavily firing at all aircraft, after the third round, he told the crews that, if they wanted to

continue, they were on their own.

On the ship, we saw all sorts of refugees on the flight deck as they made



their way to a temporary customs section. My supervisor was placed in charge of one section. He told me

later that he hated the Vietnamese, but as he went through all their belongings, it got too rough on him and he had to go off to a corner and have a good cry. These people were carrying everything they could put in one or two suitcases, to start a new life, wherever.

Our forward mess decks were set up for meals the refugees and, of course, my berthing space was made available for them. Some crewmembers had to teach the refugees how to take a "Navy shower." Some of them joked about it to me. The overflow of refugees slept under combat aircraft for the night. What was going on was, while we processed these people as quickly as we could, then our own helicopters, from the ship, flew them to other ships for transportation to Guam, for those who had to stay overnight, that was why our berthing space was made available.

That night, in which a couple of us made it to the O-10 level, we watched, off in the distance, as "Charlie" had arrived at an ammo dump, just north of Saigon, and were blowing up all the munitions. For some reason, and we heard about it later, somehow we were both able to recognize it as just that, and not fireworks. Being in an all-male society, where one is not supposed to cry, I did cry a little.

Now, throughout the night, we were able to see lights all over the place, as ships maneuvered to avoid colliding with each other. The next day, April 30th, became very interesting, as I watched as hueys and CH-47 helicopters buzzed around the ship, like so many mad hornets, looking for a landing spot. Now, a huey is supposed to have a maximum safe capacity for twelve passengers. We saw them landing with in excess of thirty passengers. We watched as the CH-47s landed, and sometimes as many as one hundred refugees came out. Then came the big story.



Amidst all this confusion, here comes a Cessna O-1 Birddog, piloted by South Vietnamese Air Force Major Bung-Lyon (we learned later). He aimed right for the flight deck and, one of the flight deck crew who hap-

pened to see one of the guys from my shop happened to be standing outside one of our watertight doors, pushed him inside the space, as he had no idea what the small plane was doing! The pilot attempted to drop a note onto the flight deck but it fell off into the water below. Over the radio we heard the air boss tell him, "Just go ahead and land in the ocean. We will be glad to pick you up!" We found out that his radio receiver worked, but his transmitter did not. Finally, he dropped a third note and it fell on the flight deck. A crewmember grabbed it and took it inside.



Memorable Moment: Major Bung-Lyon's Cessna O-1 Birddog comes in on a wing and a prayer and lands safely on Midway's flight deck, his wife and five children onboard.

Suddenly we heard, "This is an emergency, clear the flight deck!"

Helicopters continued to land, despite all efforts to stop them. Finally, two hueys and one CH-47 landed, and the order was given by Capt. Chambers to push them over the side. What was going on, if the flight deck crew could get the rotor blade to stop, they would move it somewhere on the flight deck. If not, it was pushed over the side.

The pilot, it was learned from the note, had loaded his wife and five kids in the two-seat Cessna, and that was why he did not want to land in the ocean! They could have easily all drowned.

Finally, the flight deck was clear for him to land, and, in my shop, we watched it on TV. When he stopped, everybody in the shop cheered . . .

(To be continued in the Winter 2019 edition of this newsletter.)

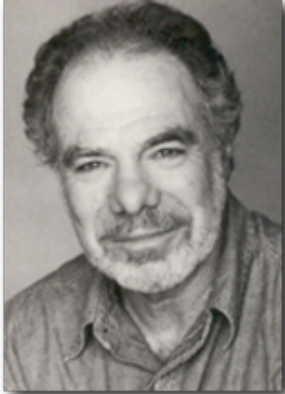
Photos in this story used with permission of Ltjg Fred Lydic (72-75)



Love at First Sight

By Rick Setlowe, 1957-59, Ltjg, Ops, C.I.C. Air Controller

I fell in love at first sight twice in my life. The first time was in December, 1957, when the USS Midway sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge for the first time into San Francisco Bay.



My job on the Special Sea Detail whenever we entered or left port was on the bridge, manning a set of phones as the Navigator's liaison to the radar navigation team in a dark compartment several decks below in C.I.C.

I first reported aboard Midway in the shipyard in Bremerton, Washington, just

after she had been reconstructed, recommissioned, and launched with a new angled flight deck and steam catapults that made her the most advanced warship in the fleet.

The Midway worked out the kinks on shakedown cruises through foggy Puget Sound, the Straits of Juan de Fuca, and along the northwest coast. Then we sailed to our new homeport in Alameda.

Outside the Golden Gate an experienced ship's pilot boarded to steer us through the treacherous Bay currents and traffic, and there was really nothing for me to do except enjoy the view. Approached from the sea, I didn't really see San Francisco at first. The green headlands of the peninsula were to the south and the hills of Marin to the north with the orange span of the bridge between. Then we sailed under that span.

San Francisco Bay and the city breathtakingly unfolded before me. It was a fog-free, crisp, bright sunlit morning, and ahead to the east the sun had just cleared the Sierras, illuminating the City. Pacific Palisades, Russian Hill, and Nob Hill rose up like a display of cakes, the buildings perched like pastel sugar lumps.

To my left, the north, the verdant hills of Marin rolled away, and gritty oil tankers wallowed outbound from Richmond. Sailboats with white billowing sheets to the wind crisscrossed the Bay on their own free tacks.

By the time we passed Telegraph Hill with its ivory spire of Coit Tower thrusting to heaven and Midway wheeled south under the Oakland bridge to our new homeport in Alameda, I was hopelessly in love.

That spring we worked along the West Coast—San Diego, Long Beach, and back to Bremerton and Seattle, shaking down the ship and training air groups for our first WestPac deployment. Pearl Harbor, Tokyo Bay, Subic Bay, Hong Kong and Kowloon, Manila, The Straits of Taiwan, the South China Sea—but nothing stirred me like that first sight of San Francisco.

A few months later, I stood on the dock as Midway pulled away for its next WestPac deployment. My service was completed, and I had been discharged that day rather than fly me back from halfway around the world. I watched Midway disappear under the Golden Gate. Then I loaded everything into my car and headed home to New York, a newly minted civilian.

There's a pop ballad by Tony Bennett about leaving your heart in San Francisco --

"I've been terribly alone and forgotten in Manhattan..."

*My love waits there in San Francisco
Above the blue and windy sea."*

I loaded everything back into my car, and drove back across country—with no job prospect, just a few acquaintances, nothing but this strange, romantic compulsion. And there...

"High on a hill... where little cable cars

Climb halfway to the stars!"

... I fell in love at first sight for the second time in my life.

Beverly and I moved into an apartment—believe it, with a Bay view for only \$125 a month in 1963. And in an extraordinary coincidence, it was just below that ivory tower on Telegraph Hill. And from it I watched Midway sail in and out of San Francisco.

Copyrighted by Rick Setlowe 2019



President's Report



It seems like we just complete the work from one reunion and we're starting the planning for the next one. It's the business of running a Veterans Reunion group and it's a non-stop exercise in "customer satisfaction." It's our job and I think we do it quite

well. We had help from our sister ships to plan the 3-Sisters Reunion and it made a difference in the overall work we had to do. Well, now we're back to planning just for the Midway Veterans Association (MVA) for the 2020 reunion and back to the "same old group" that's been doing this planning for the past 15 years. And that gets me to the subject of this message!

The MVA Board today, consists of members from the 1950s and 1960s cruise years. Marty FitzGerald and Jim Hayter joined the ship in the late 1950s; I (Oscar) came aboard in 1962 and Dave Payson came aboard in 1963. We'd like to "refresh" the Board with some members from the ship's later years – the 1970s and 1980s – to ensure that the MVA will continue to be an active group for years to come. If you have an interest in getting more involved with the group and with the USS Midway Museum leadership team, think about tossing your hat in the ring for a Board position before or when we get to the 2020 reunion in Norfolk next September. It's not really a lot of work, but it's a boatload of "customer satisfaction" when you get to the reunion and see your friends enjoying the fruits of your labor putting the reunion plans together.

The only qualification needed for getting on the MVA Board is the desire to help your fellow veteran friends get together once a year, or thereabouts, for the enjoyment and camaraderie of a ship's reunion. There are probably thousands of reunion groups in the country, but there's only one MVA for the approximately 225,000 sailors who walked the decks of the USS Midway between 1945 and 1992. We'd like to bring together all of the reunion groups that are representative of the blackshoe and airdale navy that sailed on the Midway – and that might be the "driver" for getting YOU onto the MVA Board.

No certifications and no extraordinary qualifications are needed to serve in this capacity – just the desire to work with your shipmates to keep the MVA alive and fully

functional.

Think about it, my friends. I've thoroughly enjoyed my years at the helm, and, like any good sailor, I know when it's time to turn the helm over to the next "watch." So, yes, we're looking for changes ahead in our leadership team. First off, by the end of 2020 we'll need a new Secretary and Treasurer. After a decade of doing "double-duty," Dave Payson has decided it's time to step down from those positions. If you're interested in either position, contact me by phone at 425-831-6891 or email orgranger@gmail.com.

In the words of the Admiral,

Onward and Upward!

Oscar Granger, President USS Midway Veterans Association

VP-Reunions' Report

LATE BREAKING NEWS (11/18/19)—the MVA Board has just selected the reunion-friendly *Sheraton Norfolk Waterside Hotel* as Reunion Central for NF20; search this name on the internet to check it out. This recently renovated property is in the middle of Norfolk's revitalized downtown district so it's close to popular activities, shopping, and dining choices. Here's some more good news, the reunion room rate will be \$119 per night, a significant drop from more pricey San Diego. (Unfortunately, you won't be able to see the USS Midway from your hotel room window. But the US Navy has some other options for your viewing pleasure based in Hampton Roads.) Stand by for a hotel reservation link to be publicized in an upcoming e-blast.



In the reunion business, my far from part-time activity, it seems like you wrap-up one successful reunion, our recently concluded, Three Sisters event in San Diego, and then turn to planning the next MVA reunion, now scheduled for Sept. 9-12, 2020, in Norfolk, VA, with tours and activities to take place Sept. 10, 11, 12). Since we still have a lot of planning work to do for NF20, consider this your "save the date" notice for the reunion. Will this one be different from the last—you betcha. We will be back to one ship, so the big numbers you saw at SD19 will be much smaller this go around, and no Midway Museum to visit (but we will offer a substitute). Also, this will be the

first true East Coast reunion for MVA since 2012, so I have no idea how many Midway vets and their friends will be coming.

We will be using Armed Forces Reunions, Inc. (AFRI) again as our reunion planning company for NF20; good news, for Norfolk is their homeport, so they have lots of good events and tours to offer. Also, since Naval Station Norfolk is the largest Navy base in the world, we have lots of seagoing things to choose from.

Now that the hotel has been set, we will turn to filling the grid for events and activities for the reunion, and then you can see what is planned and begin signing up. With the busy holiday season approaching, I do not anticipate announcing the Registration Form until the first quarter of 2020. As always, contact me (703-264-0542 or mva41vpr@comcast.net) if you have questions. While I will not have final details for a while, I will give you whatever I have.

This is my regular call for MVA members to join in the fun (and work) involved with presenting a first-class reunion for Midway veterans. With our long lead times, sometimes it seems like things are moving slowly, but rest assured, September 2020 will be here before you know it. All the planning work pays off when you see a roomful of vets and their friends and families remembering the good days from long ago. No special skills are required to help plan reunions, and I promise plenty of OJT. Use my contact information above to throw your hat in the ring, and then hold on.

Jim Hayter, VP-Reunions, USS Midway Veterans Association

Secretary-Treasurer's Report

With the very successful 3 Sisters Reunion in the books and the location, hotel and dates set for the 2020 reunion, the important groundwork for our next reunion has been laid. The reunion will be in Norfolk, Virginia, where we'll be close to the Newport News Shipyard, Midway's birthplace, as well as a host of other attractions, such as the Battleship Wisconsin, the General McArthur Memorial Museum, the Oceania Naval Air Station, and the Military Aviation Museum.

Most importantly, though, we'll be bringing the legacy of the USS Midway "home" to the many dedicated



Midway veterans who live in the East, South and Heartland of this country – veterans and their families and friends who haven't been in position to participate in the several past reunions we've held in San Diego.

My MVA Board Positions Opening Up

It's not new news that the two MVA Board positions I've held since 2009 – Treasurer and Secretary – will both be open following the 2020 reunion, if they haven't been filled by then. I've decided it's time to step down and give other MVA members a chance to carry out the duties of these positions. Not an easy decision for me, but I feel it's the right one.

I would like to encourage other MVA members to consider taking on one of these two Board positions I'm vacating. In the ten-plus years I've served as MVA's Secretary and Treasurer, I can honestly say that the work has been tremendously challenging, fulfilling and rewarding, absolutely the best work I could do following my retirement in 2012. It gave me real purpose, with a special connection back to my Navy days, when I was a young sailor for 4 years, 6 months and 3 days (but who's counting).

I reached the decision to step down from these two Board positions based on three factors: ♦ advancing age (75), ♦ family considerations (my wife and I are day-caring our 3-year-old granddaughter, ♦ and our desire to do more traveling. Though I'm stepping down from these offices, I plan to remain in the MVA as a proud lifetime member.

If you're interested in filling either of these Board positions, let MVA President Oscar Granger know. If you qualify, you'll become a member of MVA's Executive Board and be an important part of the team that assists with reunion planning and all the other duties that go with either job. (See President Oscar Granger's report on page 6 for more information.)

For a description of the duties and responsibilities of MVA's Secretary and Treasurer positions, see the bylaws section on our website. (Go to <http://ussmidway.net>/click on sidelink "Bylaws," then go to Article 5 under Articles of Confederation, "General Functions of the Executive Board," page 3.)

MVA Dues Collection

Now an important notice on payment of this year's and next year's MVA dues. For those of you who haven't paid your 2019 dues yet, please do so ASAP. Not only do we need your dues to keep our organization afloat,

but it's unfair to those members who do pay. If you're not sure if you've paid for 2019, call or email me and I'll let you know. (Find my contact info in the "Masthead" on page 12; also see 2020 dues notice this newsletter.)

Dave Payson, Sec.-Treas., USS Midway Veterans Association

VP-Administration's Report



We had a great Three Sisters Reunion and I'm pretty sure everyone had a great time.

I'm working on a few items at this time to improve our bylaws and hoping to help fix a problem that is developing for our future. I'll explain this at

a later date. In addition, I'm helping Dave distribute printed copies of the newsletter and laminating and mailing out membership cards to members who have paid their 2019 dues.

I've also been reaching out to Midway sailors who for whatever reason haven't heard of the MVA and attempting to get them interested in learning more about who we are and what we do. I inform them about the newsletter and our reunions and all that good stuff. That's all I have this month, so I'll see you in the funny papers.

I'm very happy in my new position as an MVA Board member/officer. During my active duty days on Midway, I was committed to performing any duty for the betterment of the ship; the same is true for the MVA.

Marty FitzGerald, VP-Admin., USS Midway Veterans Association

New Men

The following USS Midway Veterans have joined the proud ranks of the USS Midway Veterans Association since our last newsletter. **Welcome aboard, Men, for our own special brand of Midway Magic!**

Brian Briggs (73-74) - Redford, MI

Tim Murphree (76-78) - Apple Valley, CA

Karl Blomquist (71-75) - Houston, TX

Terry Norman (89-91) - Macclenny, FL

Arthur Burton (52-53) - Louisville, KY

Richard Garness (57-59) - Meca, AZ

Stephen Udell (70) - Valrico, FL

William Carter, Jr. (54-55) - Bessemer, AL

Larry Burger (60-61) - Tucson, AZ

Michael Ryan (87-89) - Antioch, IL

Mike Darling (71-72) - Killen, AL

Michael R. Jones (72-73) - Peotone, Ill

Operation Frostbite II

By Dave Payson, RDSN, 1963-64

In mid-July of this year, some two and a half months after we held the 3 Sisters reunion in San Diego, my wife and I, along with several thousand other tourists, including a contingency of about 50 Midway Museum members, many of them Midway veterans, and a few MVA members, headed north to Alaska from Seattle, Washington, on the Holland liner *Eurodam*.

The mission of our Midway group on *Eurodam* was to participate in Operation Frostbite II, as the museum dubbed it, and to help the Midway Museum celebrate its 15th anniversary of very successful operation in San Diego.

Nine years ago, in 2010, my wife and I attended a similar Midway Museum-hosted cruise to Alaska. That one was on the Royal Caribbean liner *Rhapsody of the Seas*, and we were part of the group to helping the Museum celebrate its fifth anniversary in San Diego.

Excuse my stern look in this picture, but my lovely wife, Mina Jo, had a big enough smile



for both of us. That one, also out of Seattle, was called – you guessed it – Operation Frostbite I. So when it comes to Operation Frostbite cruises to Alaska, my wife and I are iceberg solid, with maybe a tinge of climate-change melting around the edges.

These "Frostbite" cruises bore little resemblance to my real-life experience as a sailor aboard Midway in the early sixties. In those days, we all had our jobs to do and the ship had a specific mission. Apparently, on a civilian cruise ship, the one and only mission is to have fun. And there was plenty of fun to be had on this cruise

– everything from eating and more eating to attending shows in the ship’s theater to seeing the sights in the Alaskan cities/towns we visited to watching a glacier melt at Glacier Bay. On a cruise liner, the fun only ends when the cruise does and reality sets in.

When the Midway group gathered for activities during this cruise, Mac, never one to shy away from a mic, was the obvious ringleader. There’s little doubt that it was Mac who came up with the idea of having the museum’s leadership team show up in bathrobes at our final group gathering. It was no “Animal House,” as the bathrobes called to mind, but it was plenty of fun!

Mac leads the “toga party” that took place at the closing reception prior to our arrival in Victoria B.C.



In conclusion, Operation Frostbite II was another winning idea for the Midway Museum, and my wife and I were glad that we had a chance to be part of the Midway group. The ports we visited – Juneau, Sitka, Ketchikan, Glacier Bay and Victoria – were “rustically fun,” the weather was decent (maybe too warm), the people were friendly, and the bears kept their distance.

Will there be another Operation Frostbite cruise in the future to commemorate, say, the 20th anniversary of the Midway Museum? If so, my wife and I hope to be on it. It’s the next best thing to shipping over!

MVA Internal Audit Report

The Internal Audit was held on June 29, 2019, at Marty FitzGerald’s home in Maple Valley, Washington. Marty’s wife, Mary, provided snacks for the group, for which we thanked her heartily. The audit team consisted of Marty FitzGerald, Ken Radek, Secretary-Treasurer Dave Payson and Mina Jo Payson, financial advisor. The committee found MVA’s books and records in good order with no suggestions on ways to improve our bookkeeping. Marion “Mick” Hersey also volunteered to be on the audit committee but wasn’t able to make it, due to a scheduling conflict.

Editors Note:

Below are extracts from a letter that was sent to the representatives of the three carrier associations that attended the 3 Sisters Reunion last May. The letter, sent by the President of the Fisher House Foundation, thanks the 3-Sisters veterans for the 160,500 Wyndham Rewards points they donated to the Foundation. Jim Hayter’s article on page 10 of this newsletter describes the Fisher House Foundation program in some detail.

Fisher House Thanks 3 Sisters for Donation

Thank you for making it possible for Fisher House Foundation to honor and serve our nation’s heroes—we simply could not continue our mission of supporting military and veterans’ families without your generosity. We appreciate your gift of 160,500 Wyndham Rewards points. These 160,500 Wyndham Rewards points were earned at the Wyndham San Diego Bayside hotel during the 3 Sisters Reunion of the USS Midway, the USS Franklin D. Roosevelt, and the USS Coral Sea, from 7 May, 2019 through 9 May, 2019.



Thanks to your generosity, Fisher House is there to provide “a home away from home,” where families are supported in their time of need. To read more stories of families who found refuge at Fisher House free of charge, please visit www.fisherhouse.org.

Sincerely,

David A. Coker
President

Editors Note:

MVA lifetime member Martin McCormick makes a convincing case in this letter that the Midway crew of the last cruise of the straight deck Midway deserves more recognition for their accomplishments. Sounds like a good idea. Let’s shout them out at the Norfolk reunion. Thanks for the outstanding letter, Marty.

Letter to the Editor

Dave, one thought I had as time passes is that the crew members of the last cruise of the “straight deck” USS Midway should be considered for distinction and/or recognition at one of our reunions. We operated

in the post-Korean conflict era to bring the ship around the world prior to her being decommissioned for retrofit with her first canted deck. That world cruise (1954-55) included the first real venture of the ship into harms way when it operated as the flagship for Task Force 77 in defense of the evacuation of the islands Quemoy and Matsu as the civilian and military population fled communist Chinese forces. Also, we plowed through Hurricane Alice only days after leaving Mayport for Cape Town South Africa. I would add that this was during the days when there were no do-overs for pilots trying to land in heavy seas, with no air-to-air refuelings or a canted deck to protect pilots and deck crews from potential disaster.

I have no idea how many crewmembers are around from that time, but we ended an era for the ship that is well documented in the ship's history. More pertinent details can be detailed to highlight the experience of that crew and its tour of duty if there is interest.

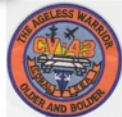
Just a thought from an 84-year-old Midway sailor.

Marty McCormick

AE-3, VF12, CAG1, USS Midway

Official Souvenir DVD a Hit!

Midway Class - 2019 3 SISTERS REUNION



Over 200 Midway-Class veterans purchased a 3 Sisters reunion DVD, and by all accounts they are well satisfied with the product, agreeing that the video did an excellent job in capturing the essence of the historical reunion. Through a combination of video, still images and sound, it recreated the magic of the reunion, is the consensus. You can still order a copy of this DVD by sending me your name, postal address, phone number, and email address, along with a check for \$25 to cover labor and shipping, and I'll mail you a copy. Contact me at minandave@charter.net, phone # 509-946-0810. MVA has 20 of these DVDs in stock, limit one per person, please. Copies can also be purchased directly from the videographer: Jay Billups, Creative Media/719-645-7308/jbCreativeMedia.com.

2020 Dues Due By End of January 2020!

(Note: If you are an MVA lifetime member, this notice doesn't apply to you)

◆ **MVA Members:** Thanks to all of you who paid your 2019 dues. But here we go again! In accordance with our Bylaws, your 2020 dues are due to me by the end of January 2020. Payment will help us pay the bills for the upcoming Norfolk reunion. **So, please, get annual dues to me ASAP, and I'll send you a brand new membership card, good for another year.** (Good news: annual dues have been reduced to \$20/yr; lifetime membership has been lowered to \$100)

◆ **Follow the link below to pay by credit card:**
<http://ussmidway.net/paypal.html> (PayPal, VISA, MasterCard, American Express, Discover).

◆ **OR pay your dues by check.**

Make check payable to **MVA** and mail to Dave Payson @ 410 Cottonwood Dr., Richland, WA 99352.

Have a question about your annual dues? Contact Dave Payson at the email/ phone # below and he'll answer it.

Need help with your dues? Let us know, and we can work something out. Your continued membership is worth far more than your \$20 to us.

And You Thought It Was Just A Reunion— Fisher House Foundation/Hotels for Heroes

By Jim Hayter, MVA VP-Reunions

Of course MVA reunions are planned with the idea of having USS Midway shipmates gather to share old memories and renew acquaintances from days gone by. But for our past four reunions in San Diego, we have also been serving a higher purpose. As part of our hotel contract with the Wyndham San Diego Bayside hotel, the Association earns Wyndham Rewards points for all charges that go to our Master Bill. The good news here is there is no extra charge for these points. They are earned from events (i.e., the Welcome Reception) and services MVA gets from the hotel (i.e., the twice daily maintenance of our Hospitality Suite). Now that we have all these points, what should we do with them? There is no reasonable way to share these no-cost points with our members and we cannot save them because they expire in 18 months. What better use of our Wyndham Rewards points than to share them with deserving veterans and their families. That's why we are proud to work with Hotels for Heroes, a Fisher House Foundation program that provides free hotel rooms for family members staying with a military service member, veteran, or family member who's getting medical care. While this article focuses on MVA, kudos to AFRI, our reunion planning company, for helping us in this charitable act.

Many reunion planners keep all the rewards points themselves and turn them into free hotel nights for their own use; AFRI supports our donation effort. Another big thanks is owed to the Franklin D. Roosevelt and Coral Sea associations who agreed to our use of the jointly earned 2019 points accumulated at the Midway-Class Reunion.

So, what is Fisher House? Fisher House Foundation is best known for a network of comfort homes where military and veterans' families can stay at no cost while a loved one is receiving treatment. These homes are located at major military and VA medical centers nationwide and in Europe, close to the medical center or hospital it serves. Here are some interesting statistics about the Fisher House Foundation (www.fisherhouse.org):

- 86 Houses
- 368,000 Families served since 1990
- \$451 million in cost savings to families since 1990
- 9 million days of lodging provided

This is great, but where does Hotels for Heroes (HFH) fit in? The HFH program provides hotel rooms for the families of wounded, injured, and ill military service members who are undergoing treatment at authorized medical centers when a Fisher House is not available. Rooms are made possible through the donation of rewards points by the hotel's rewards members. HFH is a branch of the Fisher House Foundation, so it is just another way to serve qualifying veterans and their families in a time of need – and our MVA is a part of this, through our Wyndham Rewards points donations in 2013 (56,100 points), 2015 (132,600), 2017 (70,000), and 2019 (160,500) for a total of—drum roll— 419,200 points to HFH from MVA!!

Who can use FHF/HFH?

1. Servicemen and women with military authorization, veterans and their families may be given a free hotel room while receiving medical care, if they are not eligible for government-funded reimbursement.
2. Qualifying servicemen and women, veterans and their families may be given a free hotel room to enable their family or close friends to visit them while they are being treated at the medical center, if they are not eligible for government-funded reimbursement.

While this article focuses on MVA support of HFH, you can individually donate (money, hotel rewards points, airline miles, or your time) to support this good cause. Here are the hotel rewards programs that allow you to donate points to Fisher House/Hotels for Heroes: Wyndham, Marriott, Best Western, Hilton, Airbnb, and Choice. Here are some HFH statistics:

- Over 21,000 lodging nights provided
- \$3,950,000+ in cost savings to families
- 6,700 families served

Ending on a personal note, I was at the Washington, DC VA Medical Center last week. After parking my car, I walked past a Fisher House that was less than 100 yards from the main entrance. I felt good knowing how we support this veteran-friendly initiative and I thought to myself, "These guys put their money where it counts in helping vets needing assistance."



John Cantor, 102, MVA Member for Life



Riley D. Mixson, Commanding Officer, USS Midway (85-87)

**The Masthead
USS Midway
Veterans Association**

A quarterly newsletter for USN and USMC Veterans who served aboard the USS Midway, and who are friends eternal.

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**Help US Find and Sign Up As Many Midway
Veterans As You Can!**

Pay MVA Dues By Credit Card –
(\$20, \$25, \$100 levels)

Follow this link:

<http://ussmidway.net/paypal.html>

Share this application with your Midway shipmates who are not MVA members. To use, type requested information in fields. Save file to your computer with different file name. Reattach completed file and email to me at the email address on form below. Or print, complete and mail form with your check to postal address below.

USS MIDWAY VETERANS ASSOCIATION Application for Membership

I wish to join the USS MIDWAY VETERANS ASSOCIATION, which is open to all Navy and Marine Corps veterans, regardless of department or air wing affiliation, who served on Midway at any time she was in commission. I hereby submit the following information:

Full Name: _____ Date _____

Spouse/Partner Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip Code: _____

Phone Number Home: _____

Email: _____

Actual years served aboard: _____ to _____

Rank/Rate/Division while aboard (e.g., RM3/CR Div.): _____

Rank/Rate when Discharged/Retired (e.g., RMC): _____

Years served in military _____ to _____

How Did You Hear About Our Reunion Association? _____

Complete this form, either online or manually, selecting one of the three dues amounts:

- ♦ [\\$20.00/yr for veteran + spouse/partner](#)
- ♦ [\\$25.00/yr for veteran and family](#)
- ♦ [\\$100.00 for Lifetime Membership including family \(one-time payment\)](#)

Follow link below to charge by credit card (**PayPal, Discover, VISA, MasterCard**); when site opens follow the easy instructions.

ussmidway.net/paypal.html

OR pay by check. Make check payable to Midway Veterans Association and mail completed form and check to address below. Whether you pay by credit card or by check, you'll receive your membership package within 14 days, including MVA's last two newsletters and other MVA/USS Midway information. You'll also receive a wallet-size personalized MVA membership card a week or so after you receive the membership package.

USS Midway Veterans Association

**410 Cottonwood Dr.
Richland, WA 99352**

The USS Midway Museum supports the USS Midway Veterans Association in preserving the legacy of every Midway sailor, regardless of department or air wing affiliation.

(NOTE: The USS Midway Veterans Association is a 501(c)(19) nonprofit organization; contributions (aka, dues) are tax-deductible as provided by law. MVA donates 20 percent of its annual contributions to the USS Midway Museum's Education Scholarship Fund and Midway Preservation Endowment.)

Contact: David Payson, MVA Secretary-Treasurer, at minandave@charter.net;
Telephone (509) 946-0810

We Live The Adventure