



JUNE 2019 - MEMBER UPDATE - VOL. 2

## USS INDIANAPOLIS CA-35 LEGACY ORGANIZATION

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### Ahoy and Welcome!

We are pleased to share the 2nd edition of our newsletter with everyone. Since our last writing, the USS Indianapolis Survivors Organization has entrusted us with the upcoming 74th Anniversary Reunion, July 18-21, 2019 - and we have been very busy planning. This year's reunion promises to be a memorable event. Seven of the remaining 12 Survivors are planning to attend, as are many family members of the ship's crew & rescue crew. We hope you are planning to join us.

**The posted registration deadline of June 14th is TOMORROW, so please register right away!**

We are also pleased to share that our membership is up 69% from the time of last year's reunion, and we expect it to grow even more. Membership applications are available via the website. We've also made it possible to give the gift of membership to family members and friends also interested in keeping the Indianapolis legacy alive. Visit the website for additional details. General membership is \$25 per person, and for this inaugural year Founding memberships are still available for \$100 per person.

Visit [www.ussindianapolis.com](http://www.ussindianapolis.com) to get reliable, timely information about the USS Indianapolis CA-35, the Legacy Organization & upcoming events.

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

### 2019 Survivors' Reunion

The 74th USS Indianapolis Survivors reunion is quickly approaching, and we're excited to share that we have a fantastic line-up of events. Here are some of the highlights:

- **Guest Speakers:** Desmond Doss, Jr. (son of the Hacksaw Ridge war hero), USS Indianapolis Survivor Edgar Harrell, Blair Atcheson (Underwater Archaeologist involved in the discovery of Indianapolis), Rear Admiral Samuel Cox (Director of the Naval History and Heritage Command), and many more!

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# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## 2019 Survivors' Reunion

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- **Special Access Tour** of the USS Indianapolis CA-35 Museum with historians and museum docents.
- **Merchandise Pre Order** - Items will be available starting this week! Visit the website for details.
- **Saturday Morning Memorial Service** - A reminder that the Memorial Service has been moved to Saturday morning, July 21, at 9AM. This will allow many more survivors and family members to attend the service, as well as enjoy time together afterwards to reflect upon loved ones who have passed.
- **Legacy Organization Annual Meeting** - Saturday afternoon, all members and prospective members are encouraged to attend. The organization is open to family members of Survivors, Lost-at-Sea crew, Rescue & Recovery, Former Crew, Namesake Crew, as well as friends, volunteers, educators and historians. We are all part of the Indy Legacy, dedicated to preserving the story. Join us!

**Make sure to check the website for additional information on the speakers, as well as schedule updates, and activities throughout the reunion week.**

## Preserving the Legacy & Heritage

**USS Indianapolis Featured in National History Day Projects** Each year the National Historical Society sponsors a history contest for high school students based on a selected national theme. The 2019 theme, Triumph and Tragedy, sparked an interest in Kentucky students Sam and Autumn Leigers. To gain firsthand knowledge these siblings attended the 2018 USS Indianapolis Survivors' Reunion. Autumn created a display titled "USS Indianapolis: The Final Mission." Autumn told the story of Indianapolis with photos, documents, letters and artifacts. Sam created a ten-minute video documentary titled "Remembering the USS Indianapolis". After winning their local contests, both were eligible to enter the Kentucky State National History Day Contest. From over 30 exhibits entered, Autumn won third place. For his efforts Sam won first place in the documentary category and was awarded the Outstanding Military or Veteran's Affairs History Award sponsored by the Frankfort (KY) Elks Lodge. Surprised to learn that this award came with \$200, Sam wrote a letter to the Elk Lodge asking that the money be sent to the USS Indianapolis Legacy Organization. Sam's video can be viewed at <https://youtu.be/99cXbc3kCww>

**Flags Flown for Indy Crew** The USS Indianapolis CA-35 Legacy Organization is honored to have raised flags over the USS Indianapolis CA-35 Monument in honor of Lost at Sea crewmembers: Eugene William Rudomanski, RT2 and Leonard S. Griffiths, S2. Eugene's flag was delivered to his sister Wanda Petty in Duvall, WA, by Legacy President Jason Witty and Honorary Survivor Kim Roller. Leonard's flag was delivered to his grandson, Randy Griffiths. Flags were flown by Michael William Emery, nephew of LAS William Friend Emery, S1 and an Honorary Survivor and by Michael Hussey, Honorary Survivor. Also a flag was flown for survivor Richard Stephens, S2, who passed away in April. Mr. Stephens' memorial flag was delivered to his daughter, Charline Summers in Chelsea, AL. Richard's flag was delivered by Marilyn Henry, Honorary Survivor and daughter-in-law of Lt. Commander Earl Henry, lost at sea. Requests for a flag to be flown in honor of a member of the final sailing crew of USS Indianapolis CA-35, send a request to [admin@ussindianapolis.com](mailto:admin@ussindianapolis.com)

## In Memoriam

Jack Barnes, Honorary Survivor and member of the USS Indianapolis Legacy Organization, passed away on Dec. 28 in Amarillo, TX at the age of 68.

Jack was a leader in establishing Honor Flight programs throughout Texas, which enables veterans to travel to Washington, D.C. to visit memorials to wars in which they fought. Jack, a veteran himself, served in the U.S. Navy and retired with the rank of chief petty officer. For the past few years, Jack had been an integral part of the effort to obtain a Congressional Gold Medal for the crew of USS Indianapolis. His goal was achieved this past December, shortly before he passed away. Jack was a close friend of USS Indianapolis survivor Cleatus Lebow, and will be missed by us all.



**JACK BARNES**



**GARY McVAY**

Gary Richard McVay, son of Survivor Richard McVay, passed away April 20, 2019, in Miami, Florida from an acute illness.

He was instrumental in forming the USS Indianapolis Legacy Organization by developing the bylaws, filing all federal and state forms for the organization, and was chair of the Finance Committee until his passing. Always happy to support the USS Indianapolis survivors, Gary attended CPAC this past spring with Survivor Edgar Harrell, and led the fundraising effort to help finance this year's reunion. Gary has friends from every stage of his life who feel blessed to have known him and feel deep sorrow for his loss. All will miss him greatly.

## We Need Your Help!

Sadly, when Gary passed away unexpectedly, the role of reunion fundraiser was left void for a short while. This impacted our efforts a great deal, and we need your help to continue his labor of love.

Click this link & donate: <https://bit.ly/2KFhbpE> or visit the USS Indianapolis Website for more details.

With only 12 Survivors left, we don't have very many more years with them. These reunions help them remember and heal. That goes for the Lost at Sea families, too. 100% of all donations will go toward offsetting the costs associated with the reunion, and are tax deductible.

You can also help out by selecting the USS Indianapolis CA-35 Organization as your choice for the Amazon.com Smile program, at no additional cost to you. The AmazonSmile Foundation will donate .5% of the purchase price from your eligible AmazonSmile purchases to USS Indianapolis CA-35 Legacy Organization. As one of the most widely used websites in the world, we are excited to see Amazon offering this charitable option. Be a part of the movement: shop and spread the word! On behalf of the legacy of the USS Indianapolis, we thank you!

Thank you for any amount you can give.



*Gun crewmen on USS Indianapolis - July, 1942  
(Credit: Naval History & Heritage Command)*

◆ **Elected officers at the July 2018 Survivors' Reunion;**

Chairperson: Jason Witty (Honorary Survivor & grandson of Eugene Morgan, Survivor)

Vice Chairperson: Ray Wilson (nephew-in-law of William G Stier, LAS)

Treasurer: Bonnie Buckett (daughter of Victor Buckett, Survivor)

Secretary: Jane Gwinn Goodall (Honorary Survivor & daughter of "Chuck" Gwinn, Rescue Pilot)

Member at Large: Sara Vladic (historian, filmmaker, and Honorary Survivor)

Member at Large: Kim Roller (presenter and Honorary Survivor)

◆ **Created committees to help support the vision of the Legacy Organization.**

Bylaws: Chairperson Bonnie Buckett

Digital Content: Chairperson Sara Vladic

Education: Chairperson Marilyn Henry

Flag: Chairperson Michael Hussey

Fundraising/Accounting: Chairperson Ken McNamara

Membership: Chairpersons Earl Henry (& Marilyn Henry)

Merchandise: Chairperson Dianna Colvin

Reunion: Chairperson Kim Roller

The nonprofit Legacy Organization was established in 2018, and has been endorsed by the USS Indianapolis Survivors Organization to promote and perpetuate the memory of all who served USS Indianapolis CA-35. We are committed to telling their story, and ensuring that their Legacy will not be forgotten.