



# Leaky Weeks Almanac

**USS John W Weeks  
Association**

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Dear Weeks Shipmates and Friends

This year got off to a rough start for our Association. Our shipmate and Association Treasurer Jim Harkins was diagnosed with cancer and is currently undergoing radiation treatments and will shortly start chemotherapy. Jim has contributed a great deal in making our Association successful. His work as our treasurer has been outstanding and I cannot thank him enough for his support and hard work on our reunions. Jim is giving up his office as treasurer until he gets better. Bruce Neidemire will be taking over his duties as treasurer. I want to thank Bruce for stepping forward on such short notice.

Then in January, Tom and Karen Wilson called to let us know that Tom was diagnosed with stage one multiple myeloma and is currently undergoing treatment. Like Jim, Tom has contributed much of his time making our Association successful. As Vice-President, he has always been a good sounding board when it came to making important decisions for the Association.

On January 10<sup>th</sup>, Hal Gross the founder of our Association passed away after a short illness. We as members owe Hal and Ellie Gross a great deal for the work that they did over the years. Jack Joyce summed up what Hal did for all of us and I decided to include his letter on his "Memories of Hal" in this issue of the newsletter.

In December, I was diagnosed with prostate cancer and currently undergoing treatment and if things go as planned, I should be finished with treatment in late April. I will keep everyone posted.

To make things even worst we are currently going through one of the worst recessions that I can remember. Last year the recession had started to take hold and several of our shipmates were concerned with the cost of future reunions since many had started to tighten their belts as they saw their retirement income shrink. Because of these events and after talking to our Officers, with great regret I am postponing the reunion to 2010. I hope that everyone understands, and that it was a very difficult decision for me to make. I am currently looking at ways to reduce cost and to get more people involved in putting together and running the reunion. If you have suggestions how we can reduce cost, please contact me or any of the committee members that are listed on the back page. Incidentally, I am finding the northeast as an expensive place to hold a reunion.

I want to thank all of you who came to our 22<sup>nd</sup> reunion in Charleston. We had some tensed moments with the food that the hotel served at our dinner events and breakfast; however, I want to thank everyone with being understanding. From the comments that I received from our members attending last year's reunion, the majority had a good time. So again, I would like to thank our members who were able to attend for making it a success. There were many new faces and I hope that these members attend our next reunion in 2010. I would like to thank Karen Wilson for volunteering to write an article on the reunion that appears in this issue.

At our business meeting, Tom Wilson completed his term as Vice President and volunteered to be the Association's Historian. Jim Fariello was elected to a 4-year term as Vice President. Jim's biography can be found on page 2.

In the meantime, if there are concerns or if you just have questions, feel free to contact me or other members of our committee. I will keep you informed of the business of the association by means of the newsletters and our website.

Smooth Sailing,  
Len Budzynski



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If you would like your newsletter sent by e-mail please let me know. The cost to print and mail a newsletter is on the average about \$1.35 per copy.

If you like to continue getting it in the mail, please make sure that I have your correct home address! If you move please let me know!



## Jim Fariello our New Vice President



James Fariello served on the USS John W. Weeks from 1962 to 1966. Jim was born in Washington DC on May 1, 1944. Jim's father was in the US Navy and stationed at the Pentagon with the medical department. Jim's mother was secretary to General Nathan Twining during the war until his birth. After Jim was born his mother returned to Colorado with him and his father was stationed as the ships medical personnel on the USS Mayrant DD402. Jim was the oldest child of four and the family was stationed all over the world until Jim's father retired from the US Navy in 1961. The family moved back to Colorado in 1961. Jim graduated from Grand Junction High School in 1962 and joined the US Navy. After 4 years in the Navy, most of the time on the USS John W. Weeks, he graduated from Mesa College in Grand Junction.

After graduation from college he met his wife Carol and married her. Jim has been married 40 years to Carol and they have two children, a son and daughter. They also have six grand children. Jim is retired from Law Enforcement and was a Chief of Police. At this time Jim is involved in several organizations and travels and is working on his "bucket list".

## Just Passing Time – By Gale Watson 1965-1968

It seems like every ship in the Navy had some sort of band on-board. A blending of different musicians from all walks of life with different musical skills. Well, the Weeks was no different. During the North Atlantic cruise in 1965 and the Red Sea Cruise of 1967, I was privileged to be a member of the Weeks band. I had started playing guitar when I was 14, and found that music had come pretty easy with having parents that sang and played out.

Finding instruments wasn't too hard on the Weeks, as someone would bring their own on board or you could find one in the stores locker. Needless to say, it wasn't long before musicians would gather together in the berthing areas or on the fantail for what would be a notable jam session. Someone would start a song and others would just join in. It was a good way to spend the long hours at sea and enjoy a little leisure from the hectic schedule of everyday ships life. After a time together some of us musician got to be a pretty good group and started a little combo. We started getting a song list of tunes that we would perform together. The things that stand out mostly is, this was a big Beatle Era and we did a lot of Beatle tunes. We also did a lot of country songs, rock, and popular music. As time went on we got to have a pretty good sound with some good vocal harmonies.

I am a little rusty with names but I remember some of the group, Bill Mack on guitar, Bruce Mayo on drums, Tony Quinn on guitar, Davis a signalman on trumpet, and myself on bass. We had other shipmates join in but can't remember all the names. We had a small PA from the ship and some of us had amps for our instruments. While in the Red Sea we would have a fantail gathering of the ships crew for a cook out and we would entertain the crew while this was going on. It was a good time for all and we did have some great times playing. I believe there are some photos in the Red Sea Cruise Book. I remember playing at some party on shore for one of our ports of call, but can't remember what port or what the party was for. I do know it had some dignitaries from different countries and officers of our ship.

Maybe some of my fellow shipmates would like to tell me what they could remember of this time frame. It was a good time and as always a great comradely of Weeks personal family gathering.

After the Navy I went on and played in different bands and was on the road with some Nashville entertainers. I later started my own band and played around the Northern Kentucky and Cincinnati area. I had a record out on Fraternity label and it got a lot of airplay in 1985. It got a recommended play from Billboard Magazine and sold enough to pay for itself. I am now retired from the road but have a recording studio in my home and do demos and discs for local musicians.

I think a good idea for the ships newsletter is if everyone could just write a few stories of the times they remember on the ship. I have shared one of my many memories with you and would love to hear some of yours.



Gale F. Watson RD3



## The Charleston Reunion: A Shipmate wife's view By Karen Wilson

### Wednesday

We arrived at the twenty second USS John W. Weeks shipmates' reunion in Charleston, S.C. after all on-time airline flights and the hotel shuttle waiting for us – an auspicious start! Warm and welcoming hugs from Bea Budzynski, Rita Harkins, and Kate Johnson greeted us at the reunion check-in table along with reunion tickets, information and “freebe” calendars and luggage handle holders.

The hotel offered a free Wednesday night cocktail hour at 5 pm complete with delicious hors d'oeuvres. At 6 pm we proceeded to the Weeks welcoming sandwich buffet and met Charlie Hall, Jr. and his wife Jacqueline. Charlie Hall is the new Media and Public Relations Manager at Patriots Point. (It is ironic that his background is more army, as a paratrooper.) He presented a colorful personal talk as well as a great update on the changes and improvements at Patriots Point since our last reunion visit in 1992 – a nice introduction for those of us choosing the excursion the following day.

Many of us chose to stay and talk in the hospitality room long after our speaker left. We heard that several people had enjoyed the boat cruise of Charleston Harbor and a tour of Fort Sumter earlier in the day. It was so nice to catch up on what's been happening with everyone since our last times together.

### Thursday

Thursday morning was blustery and rainy thanks to the effects from hurricane Kyle. After a continental breakfast in the hospitality room we boarded the bus to Patriots point. We were free to explore the destroyer Laffey (a Sumner class similar to the John W. Weeks), the submarine USS Clamagore, and the aircraft carrier USS Yorktown until 12:35 pm when we “dined” on metal mess trays in the chiefs' mess on board the Yorktown. (Eating on those metal trays brought back memories for many shipmates.) Hubby Tom's favorite part of the visit was being on the Laffey, comparing it to the Weeks, and seeing the Congressional Medal of Honor Museum on the Yorktown. I found the Yorktown's service women's exhibit interesting. After lunch we did some more exhibit exploring and went to the gift shop – a great find for those of us who like to collect Navy hat pins.

After returning to the hotel we enjoyed spending time in the hospitality room snacking, talking to each other, looking at memorabilia, and buying Weeks t-shirts, hats and tickets for the raffle items.

Our next adventure was deciding on where to eat supper. There were so many good restaurants to choose from. Our group of about nine chose SNOB (Slightly North of Broad Street), yummy Southern coastal food.

### Friday

Friday was still a bit rainy as we boarded the bus for our downtown tour of Charleston. We learned the history of Charleston as we passed by the quaint buildings before being let off near the famous market. We grabbed lunch and explored the wide array of items the market had to offer. I especially liked watching the making of the local special sweet grass woven baskets. Some of us boarded the bus back to the hotel, others enjoyed extending their exploring, including a music festival later that night.

Back at the hotel, while hubby attended a business meeting I enjoyed some poolside time with other “Weeksters” – how relaxing! For supper a group of us chose to go to a nearby shopping plaza to eat at Fatz, a chain restaurant.

### Saturday

Saturday morning was our full breakfast annual business meeting. Four people were lucky to win the cost of one free night off their hotel bill as door prizes. Among the business of the morning was the election of a new VP – congratulations to Jim Fariello-- and discussing where to go for next year's reunion. Some locations suggested for consideration were: Pigeon Falls, TN, Newport, RI, and Albany, NY.

Hubby Tom and I chose the Magnolia Plantation tour. We had a guided tour of the mansion and the main gardens. I must admit it wasn't what I expected – more like walking woodland trails. I can just imagine how gorgeous it must be in March and April when the azaleas, camellias, and magnolias are in full bloom. A movie told a more detailed history of the development of the plantation and gave a feel for the gardens in all the seasons. We couldn't leave without a look at the animals and a peek in the gift store.

This year's banquet dinner started with a poolside cocktail hour with cheese and cracker nibbles. Our meal followed indoors. A DJ provided dinner music and we heard some thoughts from former Captain Gene Fitzgerald and former Executive Officer Henry Boschen. They agreed the feeling of camaraderie aboard the Weeks was truly something special. This year's raffle of a USS John W. Weeks painting was won by Don Haack and the Rita Harkins hand-made baby blanket was won by Ila Pinyan. This year we decided to have two winners share the pot of the 50/50 raffle.

### Sunday

Once again we said sad goodbyes until next year's 23<sup>rd</sup> reunion in....?  
Hope to see you there!





## Memories of Hal – By Jack Joyce



The past few days Hal and his passing have been on my mind. I have gone back some 21 years ago when I first heard of Hal, and the "Leaky Weeks" reunions.

Sometime in 1987 I found a notice in one of the Veterans magazines that announced the reunion of the Weeks and gave Hal's phone number. At that time he was living in Yonkers, NY about a hour or so drive from me in New Jersey. I called Hal to tell him I had served on the Weeks, he asked if I was a plank owner, I said yes, but a recommissioning one. I reported aboard the Weeks Oct. 7th 1950 fresh out of Boot Camp to put it back in commission, it had only been mothballed about five months. Hal said at the time it was only for WW II members but at the 87 reunion he was going to ask the members to open it up to all who had served aboard her. He asked would I be interested, I said yes. He then asked if I knew of any of the crew that lived in my area, again I replied yes. I then called the Mayfield brothers, Joe and John and asked them about it they seemed to be in favor, I called a few in NY, Fred Brueger being one and he at the time was moving to Florida. I told him I would get in touch at a later date to see if he was interested.

We met that year 1988 in Downingtown, PA and I got reacquainted with shipmates that I haven't seen, at that time, in over 40 years. Ed Rimmelle, the late Harold Wetzel, Bill Flemming, and others who served after I had left. It was so great to see them all again. A lot of us had changed, but the one thing that never changes is your voice, and we had a great 3 days going over old times aboard the ship.

We attended the next 3 or 4 reunions, and we found out that Hal was going to be relocated to the Sunshine State. We planned a get together with him. I called Jim and Jeanne Lunderville, they were at that time living in Pawtucket, RI. Joe and Fran Mayfield, John and Annette Mayfield, and my wife Marie and I. I believe Hal and Ellie stayed with them a few days with John Mayfield. We had a great time and I still have the picture taken after the dinner at John Mayfield's house of all of us, minus John who took the picture. It is on my entertainment center which has a lot of Naval Memorabilia.

John took on the job of relocating a lot of shipmates in his business; he had many phone books and did an admirable job of locating. Hal asked John and I to serve on the committee, although our jobs were very minimal as Hal seemed to have the situation well in hand.

So many things have changed; all of us have relocated. The Lunderville's to SC, John and Annette to South Jersey. Joe and Fran also to the shore area of Jersey, and Marie and I to Florida. Since that time Joe has passed away, and I think of him so often. I met Joe in Boot Camp, and we found out we grew up about 6 miles apart, Joe in Irvington, and I in Elizabeth, both in NJ. Aboard the ship Joe and I were very close, and then some time later brother John had come aboard. The ones of us that have survived have managed to keep in touch with one another. This was all due to Hal Gross who located so many of our shipmates. He was also able to contact a long lost shipmate of mine, Whitney Hebert, who made the Navy a career and settled in California; we still keep in touch via e-mail and Whit has made a few reunions, but as of late his wife, Shirley, hasn't been feeling that good, and they both have been unable to attend.

I credit all this to Hal and Ellie, they did a magnificent job of bringing together so many old shipmates that can sit in the hospitality room and spin many a yarn about our days aboard the Weeks.

Hal will be sorely missed, but I am sure he is up above looking after things. Just some reflections of mine covering the past 22 years.



Hal and Ellie Downingtown 1988



Baton Rouge 1993



ADM Vern Clark and Hal 1996



## Charleston 2008 Reunion – USS Yorktown



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- Tell colleagues, family and friends about upcoming reunions and events.
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- Reconnect with old shipmates
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- And much, much more!



Login and reconnect today at [www.navylog.org](http://www.navylog.org)!



# Leaky Weeks Almanac



Weeks Ladies on the USS Yorktown



Lunch aboard the USS Yorktown



Korean War Crew



Tom and Karen Wilson



Sixty Crew



Tom Wilson, Len Budzynski, Bill Weddle



Jim Harkins, Bob Miller, Bill Weddle



Breakfast Meeting - Forties Crew



## New Members

Nolan Deden	E-5	52 - 53	Gary Seyler	MM3	60 - 63
Rdell Froemke	SH3	53 - 57	John Malesko	YN3	61 - 63
Tom Lawless	SO3	56 - 59	Richard Russell	EM2	61 - 64
Jack Howell	SO3	57 - 59	Russell Web	E-3	66 - 67
George Carleton	EN2	58 - 61	George Baker	SN	68 - 71
John Cassidy	FT2	59 - 61	Allen Bennett	SA	68 - 68
Richard Schneeman	MM3	60 - 63			

*If you know of any of our shipmates or family members that are sick, in the hospital, or deceased; please contact Bob Miller or Len Budzynski.*



## Sick Call

**Hiram Carr** – Hiram is recovering from surgery and is currently feeling much better. He served on the Weeks from 1953 and 1956 as a Sonarman. Over the years, he was our official photographer at many of our reunions. Hiram's telephone number for anyone who would like to give him a call is (806) 337-5411. If you want to send him a note, his address is 1300 South Jackson St. Apt 411 Amarillo, TX 79101-4142

**Jim Harkins** – In December, Jim was diagnosed with cancer; he finished with radiation and has started chemotherapy. I talked to Jim last week, his spirits are high and he wants to continue his job as treasurer. Jim's telephone number for anyone who would like to give him a call is (813) 907-5904. If you want to send him a note, his address is: 18921 Fairwood Court Tampa, FL 33647.

**Tom Wilson** – In January Tom was diagnosed with stage one multiple myeloma, he is currently undergoing treatment. I talk to Tom a short time ago and he appears to be doing well, his spirits are high and he wants to continue helping out. Tom's telephone number for anyone who would like to give him a call is (603) 352-8531. If you want to send him a note, his address is 15 Sawyer RD Keene, NH 03431.

**Bill Sloan** - I received a call that Bill slipped on ice during a recent ice storm and broke his leg in three places. He is convalescing at home. Please give Bill a call at (301) 490-4542. If you want to send a note, his address is 8366 Gatewood Dr, Jessup, MD 20794.

## Taps

**Clarence "Jim" Amdal** – I received an email that Jim passed away on January 11, 2008. He served in the Navy at the age of 17 in WWII, on the Weeks as a seaman 1<sup>st</sup> Class. After he was discharged, he went to UCLA for Electrical Engineering. Jim worked as an Electrical Engineer for 50 years. He attended many of our reunions over the last 23 years; his shipmates will miss him. His daughter, Geraldine Swalm, survives him and if you would like to send her a card or note, the address is 5667 Avenue Juan Bautista Riverside, CA 92509.

**David Barineau** – I received a note from Ron DePass that David passed away September 29, 2008. After high school, he joined the Navy and served on the Weeks during WWII as a BM2. He worked for the US Forest Service for many years and designed most of the campgrounds up in the Tahoe Basin. David leaves behind his wife Alberta. If you would like to send her a card or note, the address is 4280 Patterson Dr Unit 29; Diamond Springs, CA 95619-9412.

**Jim Blacketter** – We received a note Jim passed away in 2007. Jim served on the Weeks 1950 and 1954. His wife, Mary, survives him and if you would like to send her a card or note, the address is P.O. Box # 87, Salem, MO 65560.

**Harold "Hal" Gross** – Harold "Hal" A. Gross, 85, died Jan. 10, 2009, at Abbiejean Russell Care Center in Port St. Lucie. He was born in the Bronx, N.Y., and lived in Fort Pierce for the past 16 years, coming from Yonkers. He was a Navy veteran, serving in World War II and the Korean War. Before retirement, he was plant manager for A&P Bakery in the Bronx. He was the founding member and past president of The John W. Weeks Association and organized the ship's reunion for 19 years. Surviving him is his wife of 63 years, Eleanor Gross. If you would like to send her a card or note, the address is 14220 Isla Flores Ave., FT. Pierce, FL 34951.

**Jeffrey Hansen** –

**Wesley Monroe** – I received a letter from Wesley's wife Violet informing me that he passed on June 27, 2008, after a long illness. He joined the Navy and served on the Weeks during WWII as a BM2. Wesley leaves behind his wife Alberta. If you would like to send Violet a card or note, the address is 12905 NE 36<sup>th</sup> St; Vancouver, WA 98682.

**Alfred S Smith** – I received an email from Betty Smith that her husband Alfred passed away November 26, 2008. He served on the Weeks 1950 through 1952 as a BM2. Betty and Alfred attended our reunion in Williamsburg. If you would like to send Betty a card or note, the address is 122 Benson Rd; West Gardiner Me 04345.



USS John W Weeks  
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We're on the Web!  
[www.ussjwweeks701.org](http://www.ussjwweeks701.org)

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