



# USS RADFORD

## Newsletter

2025 Pre Reunion Edition



### Long Ago I Was A Sailor

Long ago I was a Sailor. I sailed the Ocean blue.  
I knew the bars in Singapore. The coastline of Peru.

I knew well the sting of salt spray, The taste of Spanish wine,  
The beauty of the Orient. Yes, all these things were mine.

But I wear a different hat now, Jeans & T-shirts too.  
My sailing days were long ago. With that life I am through.

But somewhere deep inside of me. The sailor lives there still.  
He longs to go to sea again, But knows he never will.

My love, my life, is here at home, And I will leave here never.  
Though mind and body stay ashore. My heart's at sea forever.



# USS RADFORD COORDINATING COUNCIL



**Larry  
Dean**  
President



**Steve  
Weigel**  
Chaplain



**Dave  
Baker**  
Website  
Coordinator



**Kim  
Parsons**  
Finance,  
Reunion, and  
Administrative  
Coordinator



**Jim  
Moffatt**  
Fifties  
Coordinator



**Mike  
Nave**  
Newsletter  
Coordinator



**Larry  
Davis**  
Sixties  
Coordinator



**Larry Dean**  
**Steve Weigel**  
**Kim Parsons**  
**Mike Nave**  
**Larry Davis**  
**Dave Baker**  
**Jim Moffatt**

**email address**  
lwdbuhs65@aol.com  
pweigel17062@gmail.com  
ussradford@gmail.com  
manave@earthlink.net  
lmdavis9@gmail.com  
bakerd1942@gmail.com  
j.moffatt@sbcglobal.net

**cell phone number**  
304-439-0001  
717-307-6287  
304-377-4625  
760-521-1311  
321-501-5260  
773-519-1440  
281-414-0684





This year's reunion will be held September 16 to 20 in Nashville, TN, and it will be at the La Quinta Inn and Suites, Nashville Airport 531 Donelson Pike.

Our rate is \$109.00 per night and you can make reservations through August 15 2025. To make your reservation, call the central reservation desk at 800-753-3757 or call the hotel at 615-885-3100 and give them either our Group code 091525USS

or inform them you are with the USS Radford Reunion Group. Our rate is good from Sep 15 through Sep 21. Virtually all airlines service the Nashville airport. The hotel provides free parking and airport shuttle service. It also serves a full hot breakfast every day.

Our hotel, which unfortunately does not have a restaurant, has given rise to some dining ideas that we hope you find appealing. Essentially, we have arranged the possibility for you to enjoy dinner every night in the hospitality suite.

Tuesday night, we kick off the reunion with our traditional Pizza and Wings Party in the Hospitality Suite. We will also have our Raffle that night.



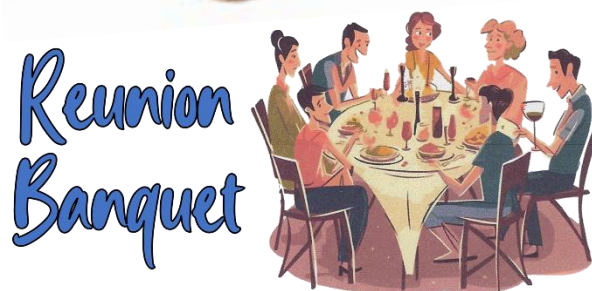
On Wednesday night, we are planning our first Hospitality Suite Dine-in. We each decide the type of food we want to eat, order for pick-up or delivery, and settle in for a nice relaxing meal together in the Hospitality Suite. (Note: Restaurant information flyers are available on pages 5 & 6 to help you find the meals you like).



On Thursday night, similar to our traditional Pizza and Wings Party night, our Association is picking up the tab for a Hospitality Suite Sub Sandwich Party where we enjoy a meal and relax together.



Friday night, we have our reunion banquet in the Hospitality Suite



As for our tours, on Wednesday, we take a cruise on an authentic riverboat. The General Jackson Showboat Lunch Cruise offers an enchanting experience that combines music, entertainment, and delectable Southern fare. This three-hour excursion not only allows guests to enjoy the sights of Nashville and the Cumberland River but also includes the Taste of a Tennessee country variety show.



On Thursday, we are scheduled to take an open-air hayride throughout the Nashville area. This tour covers the top sights in Nashville on a unique tractor tour of the city's highlights. Settle into the bench seats inside the red barn-themed trailer and explore the city at a leisurely pace so you have plenty of time to take in the landmarks and snap photos. Learn about Nashville's history and enjoy a stop at Marathon Village to take in the shops and museum.



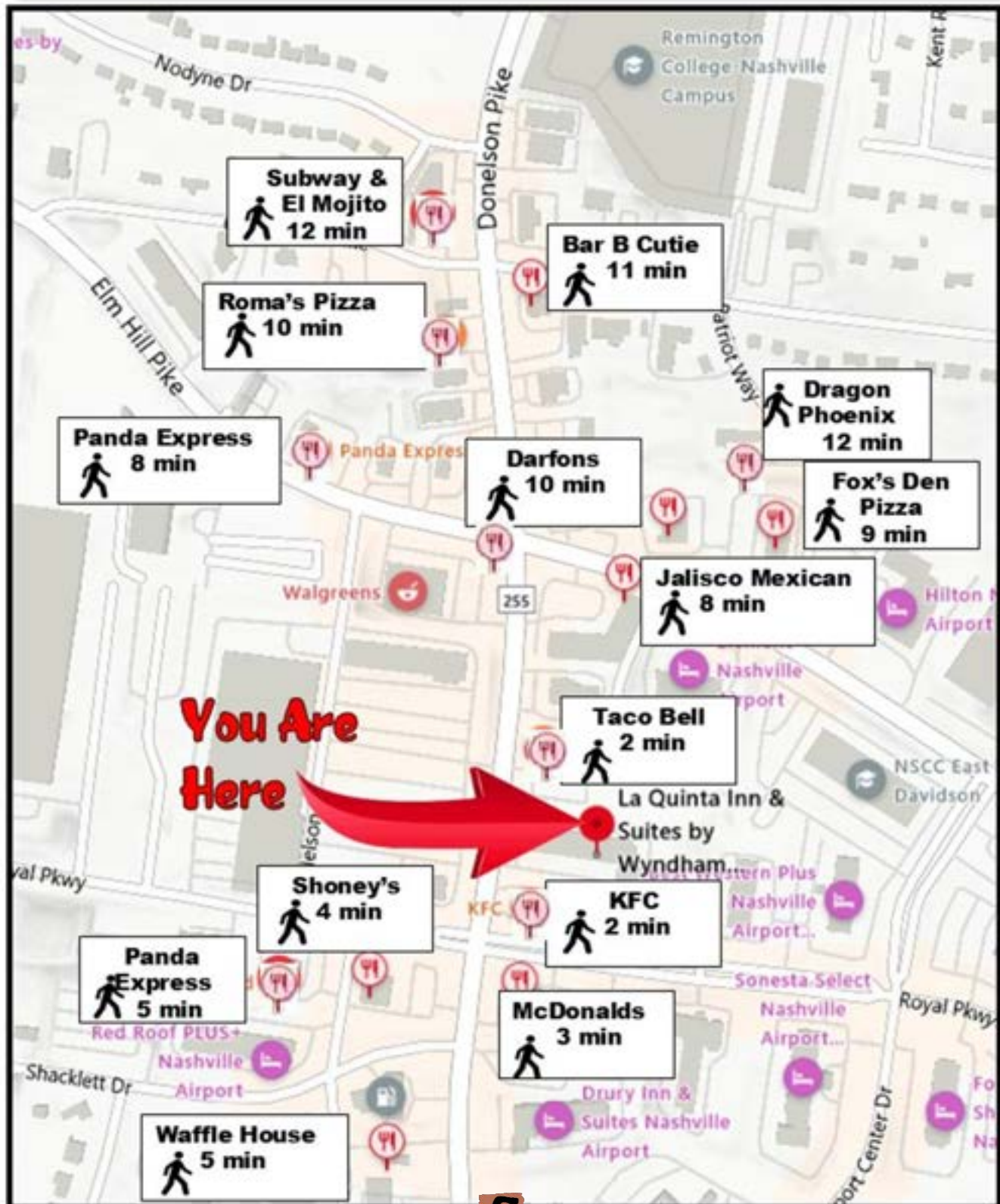
Of course, we wrap up our reunion this year as usual with some great Karaoke songs in our hospitality suite. As you can see, we will be focusing on activities in our hospitality suite the entire reunion, hoping that you will find it a comforting option to the alternative of filling time with other activities.

However, if you prefer to get out on your own, our schedule this year leaves ample time for you to explore Music City. The distance to the center of downtown from our hotel is just 7 miles. If you want to devote more time in and around Nashville, check out some of Nashville's highlights at:

<https://www.visitmusiccity.com/nashville-trip-ideas/10-things-do-nashville>



# WALKING MAP FOR RESTAURANTS CLOSE TO LA QUINTA INN



# RESTAURANTS TO CONSIDER FOR YOUR HOSPITALITY SUITE DINE-IN!



Food Type	Restaurant	Phone
American	Longhorn Steakhouse	615-361-0457
	Old Hickory Grill Steakhouse	615-885-2200
	Saltgrass Steakhouse	629-278-5713
Seafood	Krustacean Seafood	615-730-5152
	Uncle Bud's Catfish, Chicken & Such	615-678-8080
Mexican	El Mojito Mexican Restaurant	615-760-5686
	Agave's Mexican Restaurant	615-750-2065
	La Parilla Fresh Mexican Grill	615-645-5832
	Jalisco	615-885-8788
Barbeque	Bar B Cutie	615-872-0207
	Mission BBQ	615-933-5225
Italian	Fox's Den Pizza	615-231-0080
	Olive Garden	615-238-0531
	Salento Italian	615-621-2120
Oriental	Panda House	615-366-8885
	New China Restaurant	615-707-3926
	Kobe Asian Restaurant	615-360-8313



**PLEASE CALL OR VISIT THE  
RESTAURANT'S WEBSITE  
TO VIEW THEIR MENU  
SELECTIONS AND  
DELIVERY OPTIONS**





# REUNION REGISTRATION FORM

Name(s) for badges: \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (h) \_\_\_\_\_ (c) \_\_\_\_\_

Current City/State: \_\_\_\_\_

Day	Time	Tour/Event	Cost per Person	# People	Amount Paid
<b>TUESDAY</b>	1800	Pizza Party and Raffle (no cost to participants)		_____	_____
<b>WEDNESDAY</b>	1000	Group Photo at our hotel (pay photographer)			
	1200	Luncheon Cruise & Show on General Jackson Showboat Shuttle departs hotel at 1100	\$75	_____	_____
	1800	Hospitality Suite Dine-in			
<b>THURSDAY</b>	1000 & 1300	Nashville Guided Hayride Tractor Sightseeing Tour (30 max/tour) Shuttles depart hotel at 0915 & 1215	\$32	_____	_____
	1800	Hospitality Suite Sub Sandwich Party (no cost to participants)		_____	_____
<b>FRIDAY</b>	1000	Business Meeting			
	1700	Cocktail Hour - open bar			
	1730	Raffle and Auction			
	1800	Dinner Banquet and DJ	\$25	_____	_____

Total Payment \_\_\_\_\_

If you decide to go to the reunion, please send to:

Kim Parsons - 482 Windyville Road - Spencer, WV 25276

Note: If possible, please let us know your reunion plans by June 30



## Do You Know Why Sailors Have 13 Buttons On Their Trousers?

The 13-button trousers worn by US Navy sailors stand out due to their thoroughly documented history. Though mainly practical, these trousers are also thought to carry symbolic importance, according to different interpretations. An old sailor's tale is that the buttons represent

the 13 original colonies. Here's the real story: In the early 1800s, the iconic trousers' front flap (crotch area) or "broadfall" had 15 buttons before it was modified 90 years later to have just seven, allowing the manufacturer to reduce the flap size and amount of material.



Reportedly years later, the broadfall was enlarged for various reasons including many sailors complaining that the section was too small, partly due to weight gain from dietary changes and the discomfort it caused to their "equipment." So the Navy listened and added the extra material and six additional buttons. Now, sailors have 13 buttons on their trousers.

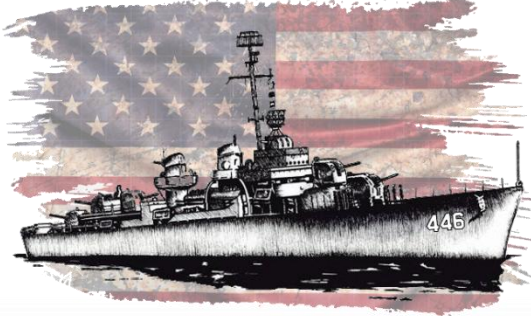
These 13-button bell-bottom pants, nicknamed "Cracker Jacks," were designed for practicality. Zippers weren't commonplace at the time, so the buttons kept the crotch area in place.

There are also some additional theories regarding the 13-button pants, with some suggesting the flared bottoms were simply implemented to give US Navy sailors a unique appearance. Outside of that, Sailors today still regard the 13 Button Cracker Jacks to be their uniform.

Tip: Many sailors have their trousers tailored to remove all the buttons and replace them with Velcro strips to grant easier access to their "gear". They then resew the buttons to the outside flap, with uniform inspectors being none-the-wiser.



## A RADFORD Connection With Today's Navy Destroyer Fleet



Today's Navy is reliant on its versatile Destroyer fleet. Destroyers, from their onset in 1907, have been the mainstay of naval warfare, contributing to Air and Submarine defense, Shore bombardment, and Surface Ship engagements.

Since their beginning, destroyers have been assigned to a class that is characterized by its design. The first class of destroyers built in the US Navy was named the **Bainbridge** class and these destroyers were distinguished by their high forecastle and four widely-spaced stacks.

The destroyer fleet underwent many design changes over the course of the next 35 years, when a new class was developed for WWII in the early 1940's. That design class was called the **Fletcher** class, of which the USS RADFORD is one of 175 class ships. Variations of **Fletcher** class destroyers came on the scene during WWII, but for the most part, they remained as the core of our Destroyer Fleet until the mid-1950's when the first of the **Forest Sherman** class destroyers were built. These new destroyers were purpose focused, mainly on Anti-Submarine Warfare, due to the high incidence of damage incurred during WWII.

However, as the 1970's drew near, the Navy realized that its aging fleet would have to undergo another change to accommodate new emerging technology and electronic demands. 1975 saw the first of 31 **Spruance** class destroyers placed into service. Many of the **Spruance** class remained in service until the early to mid-2000's.

This is where the RADFORD connection comes into play. Our former Operations Officer, ADM George Wagner was instrumental in shaping the future of our Navy's Destroyer fleet. Here, in ADM Wagner's own words, is the amazing story behind our current class of destroyers – the **Arleigh Burke** class:

***"Very interesting to see the evolution of destroyers over the years. Also brought back memories of involvement in several of the classes as they evolved. Biggest success was the Arleigh Burke class. I had put Spruance lead ship of the new class into commission as the XO. Next tour was in NAVSEA in the office that oversaw all surface combatant ships (new construction and in service). At the time, Navy decided they needed a guided missile destroyer and the DDG program started at the conceptual phase. The decision was to redesign the Spruance class***

***and put Terrier mounts on the ship. Having served on Spruance, I felt that the hull was way too big, lots of empty spaces, twisted too much and a new hull would be a better choice. So, I went to the Admiral I worked for (Adm Walters) and said I recommend that we start a new ship design suited to the weapon system and more compact and seaworthy than the Spruances. He countered, saying that a totally new design would cost a lot more. I replied that a new design would probably be about 100' shorter and the amount of money saved on steel for the first hull would probably pay for the design. He bought it and the new design was started. The Burkes wound up only 60' shorter than the Sprus, but they're a lot better looking!"***

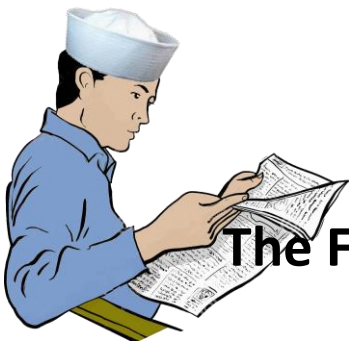


***The Arleigh Burke, DDG 51***

Thank you, ADM Wagner, for your contribution to the Destroyer Fleet operating in our Navy today.

**IF YOU WANT TO GET A FULL ACCOUNT  
OF OUR NAVY'S DESTROYER HISTORY,  
PLEASE VISIT THE FOLLOWING  
WEBSITE:  
[HTTPS://DESTROYERHISTORY.ORG/](https://destroyerhistory.org/)**





## An Astounding Article from a Prior Radford Newsletter

# The Final Word on the Loss of Leonard Schumocher

By Frank X. O'Doherty SM3 42-45

**Note:** This article, originally titled **The First Man to Die**, was published in the May/June 1994 edition of the Radford Newsletter where **Vane Scott** inserted a short introduction. In it, he wrote:



**To set the scene, RADFORD was anchored in Humbolt Bay, or better known as Hollandia, New Guinea. There is a break in the action and we are given "liberty" so we can get off the ship for a while and stretch our legs.**

**We were taken ashore in the motor whaleboat, more than one load because there were quite a few of us. At the end of the day, we were to report back to the makeshift deck and catch the whaleboat back to the ship. I was on that first boat. After unloading us, the whale boat went back to the beach to pick up the second and final load.**

**Frank O'Doherty and a number of other men were to be picked up on the second and final trip of the day. And now, Frank takes over the rest of the story . . .**

Late afternoon of July 22, 1944, while returning to the ship from liberty in Hollandia, New Guinea, our whale boat took on too much water and began to sink. There were probably 15 or 20 RADFORD crew members in the boat. I was in the aft section and was diving in the water when I heard a rather frantic scream. "I can't swim." When I surfaced, I looked around and saw two men struggling with one another. I recognized the two as members of the engineering gang, one was Leonard Schumocher and the other was, I believe, a fireman or boiler tender. (Memory is fuzzy, but I remember he was a big man).

I saw that Leonard was the one in trouble and the other chap was struggling, without success, to calm Leonard. They were both in trouble! I had, in earlier years, taken Life Saving instruction and felt that the two men had to be separated. I pulled both under water which forced Leonard to let go from the other man. As we surfaced, I had Leonard under some control in that I had him turned on his back with a hair hold.

I told the other man that I had Leonard so he, who was not a good swimmer, paddled away. He tried but was not able to control Leonard and both would probably have gone down. Later, I saw this man aboard ship and he stated, in effect the he was grateful that I came to help because he might have drowned also.

I had trouble keeping Leonard stable and found one of the thwarts (seats) from the boat floating nearby and had Leonard hold onto it while I tried to get out of my boondockers and clothes. There were some souvenirs jammed in my dungaree pockets that I couldn't get out. The damned web belt locked up and the laces on those army boots knotted. The only thing I managed to discard was my shirt, the hat was lost when I dove in.

Leonard panicked again and let go of the floating thwart and I had to get him in a "cross-chest" carry. He seemed calm for a bit so I started to tow him toward an area where I thought I saw more boats heading toward us. I was tiring with the cross-chest carry and switched to a hair hold. Leonard was no longer struggling. I don't recall how much time was consumed while towing Leonard. After some time my stroking arm tired and those damned boondockers slowed me down.

I stopped to rest for a moment then switched bands for the hair hold to use the other arm for the swim stroke. I lost my grip on Leonard's hair and he slipped away and down. I dove for Leonard but the last thing I remember was seeing him slowly descend out of my reach. The next memory was being on the RADFORD's deck and heading toward Gun Four. Thate is no recollection a boat getting me to the RADFORD or how I got there.

The full impact of that event didn't register until I was sitting with my buddy, Bill McGowen, behind No Four Gun Mount. I heard a call over the PA system.

"Schumocher, report to the Quarterdeck". A Liberty Party check was made and he was missing. After a very disturbing fifteen minutes or so, I reported to the Officer of the Deck that I believed Leonard had drowned. The next day or so I had to testify in the Wardroom before some of the officers, including Commander Griggs, of y knowledge of the event.

I was transferred off the ship later at Hollandia, along with several other shipmates. I reported back to the United States and went home (Baltimore, MD) on a 30 day leave. It was early October, 1944. Several days after I was home there was a telegram sent to me from Leonard's mother. She had been told by Commander Griggs that I was the last one with her son and Griggs had given her information from my travel orders.

Apparently the Red Cross or someone else had helped her trace me to my folks. (Ed Note, the telegram read, *"Have been informed that you made every effort to save the life of my son, Leonard J. Schumocher F2/C who was lost at sea. Would like to talk to you. Please telephone Hemlock 4778 reverse charges, anytime this evening Oct 18<sup>th</sup> (1944). Sincerely, His Mother, Mrs. Arnold Schumocher."*)

I called Mrs. Schumocher and told her that I would be returning to Mare Island via Chicago and would leave a day early to visit with her.



Unfortunately I was hit with a severe fever and my dad had the Navy pack me up and pack me off to the hospital in Annapolis, located on the USN Academy "campus."

My mother notified Mrs. Schumocher of my circumstances. About a week after I was hospitalized and still there, Mrs. Schumocher, without notice to me from my Sainted Mother, visited my bedside. Needless to say, this was an extremely awkward moment.

How would you like to stare into the eyes of a mother and say that you lost her only son? Mrs. Schumocher heard the whole story, as related above and was most kind and understanding. She was a lovely person.

During the summer of 1949, my wife and I visited with the Schumochers in Chicago and we spent the night. Leonard's father would not accept the fact of his son's death. He firmly believed, against all evidence, that his son would somehow show up. The conversation with Leonard's dad is even now too painful a memory for me to dwell on.

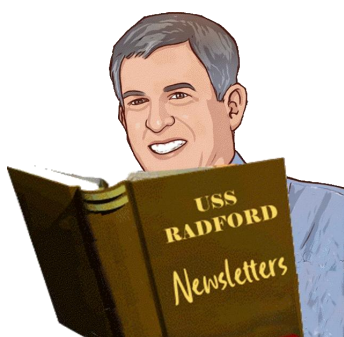
Vane, dear friend, the foregoing is a factual narrative. I have deliberately refrained from putting in any speculation or interpretation relative to the cause of the tragedy. As late as 1949, no notice to the family that his remains had been found was ever received.

Vane Scott added at the end of the article this Ed Note:

*He is still resting on the bottom in Humbolt Bay, Hollandia, New Guinea, and he will now be remembered by us all, thanks to the man who didn't forget him, Francis X. O'Doherty.*

*This article and other Radford info can be found at:*

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/Radford446>



**EDITOR'S NOTE:**

**If you have any interesting stories about our ship, its history, or the personnel who served please send them to Mike Nave by email ([manave@earthlink.net](mailto:manave@earthlink.net)) or snail mail (7327 Black Swan Place, Carlsbad, CA 92011). Our readership truly enjoys hearing all about RADFORD.**



**John Ladendorf 68-69 BT3**

*New contact information*

4912 Arevalo Court

St. Louis, MI 63128

317-707-7215 (cell)

[jnladendorf68@gmail.com](mailto:jnladendorf68@gmail.com)

**Verna Dixon 68-69 BT3**

(widow of **Marty Dixon 64-66 ADJ2**)

*New contact information*

15417 York Place Apt A

Fort Johnson, La 71459

**Mike Casey 61-63 RM3**

*New phone information:*

720-830-8577

**Richard Mora 65-69 RD3**

*New contact information:*

13327 Pierce Road

Saratoga, CA 95070

Cell 408-828-4382

[rich.mora99@gmail.com](mailto:rich.mora99@gmail.com)

**Steve Quetti 67-69 EM3**

*New contact information:*

43 Pomeroy Avenue #2

Pittsfield, MA 01201-6303

**Richard Tomaszewski 60-63 RM2**

*New contact information:*

533 W. Alton Street

Nashville, IL 62263

618-559-2544

**Albion "Al" Stiles 65-69 SNGM**

*New contact information*

6824 Serrano Avenue

Hesperia, CA 92345

760-220-1126

[a.r.stiles@hotmail.com](mailto:a.r.stiles@hotmail.com)

**George Dimoff 65-66 MR3**

*New address information:*

Freeland, WA 98249

206-779-9955

[george@whidbey.com](mailto:george@whidbey.com)

**Keith Simek 65-67 SN**

*New contact information:*

Belleair Health Care Center

c/o Keith Simek - Room 204A / Unit 4

1150 Ponce De Leon Blvd.

Clearwater, FL 33756

**Thomas Nickles 67-69 LTjg**

*New address information:*

327 Ohenry Avenue

Davidson, NC 28036

**David Wiles 62-64 RM3**

*New phone information:*

270-943-4946

**Benjamin Heinrich 67-66 BT3**

*New contact information:*

6323 W. Tillen Road #W

Boston, NY 14025

Home 716-941-5197

Cell 716-912-0083

[dhheinrich@aol.com](mailto:dhheinrich@aol.com)

**David Mrotz 63-64 Ens**

*New contact information:*

220 Bittersweet Lane

Mankato, MN 56001

507-304-5937

[mrotz@prairie.lakes.com](mailto:mrotz@prairie.lakes.com)

**Henry Lumbra 68-69 RMC**

*New contact information*

101 Tierra Circle

Ormond Beach, FL 32174

[hlumbra@aol.com](mailto:hlumbra@aol.com)

**James Brotherton 68-69 LTjg**

*New contact information*

5108 Scottish Thistle Drive

Austin, TX 78739

[jdbrotherton18@gmail.com](mailto:jdbrotherton18@gmail.com)



# DONATIONS

## February 2025

**William Beastron** 52-55 GM2

**Robert Lombardi** 65-66 DCFN

**Robert Fasbender** 65-67 RD3

**Fran Robak**

(in memory of **Henry Robak** 54-58 EM3)

## April 2025

**Louise Farel**

(in memory of **Jack Brereton** 43-45 LT)

**Billy Bachor** 63-66 BT2

**Donald Lewis** 62-64 BT3

**Jim Moffatt** 54-56 LTjg (donation to be used for 2025 Reunion Expenses)

**Dorothy Moffatt** (donation to be used for 2025 Reunion Expenses)

## March 2025

**Cordell "Cody" Ching** 62-66 ET2

**Mike Martin** 66-68 LTjg

**Robert Cannon** 66-68 BT3

## May 2025

**Larry Foley** 60-64 BT2

Donations can be mailed to:  
USS Radford Association  
482 Windyville Road  
Spencer, WV 25276  
Tax Exempt EIN 34-1901062

# THANK YOU



On Wed, Mar 12, 2025, 9:54 AM Nathaniel Hague (son of **John F. Hague** 63-67 MM2) wrote:

Thank YOU, Kimberly. It's great to see such a great preservation of this life and times of this ship and it's crew. I appreciate all the work you and your team have put into generating this website.

Sincerely,  
Nate Hague



Mark Radford (son of **Harry J. Radford** MM3 56-59), has just created a **USS Radford YouTube channel**. He is converting old video tapes from our museum into digital format. The first three VHS tapes have been converted and uploaded to the new channel.

The YouTube channel link is:

<https://www.youtube.com/@RADFORD446>

More videos will be added as time permits.

(Like & Subscribe to be notified when new videos are posted)

Thank you Mark for taking the time to create such a wonderful **youtube** channel and for converting the old video tapes.



**Kenneth Bickel** 67-68 STGJ

Passed away on July 5 2022



**David Aga** 65-68 STG2

Passed away on December 22 2017



**John Hague** 63-67 MM2

Passed away on December 31 2022



16

USS Radford Association  
482 Windyville Road  
Spencer, WV 25276

