

U.S.S. EMMONS

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USS EMMONS ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

November/December 2024

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2025 REUNION

Lynchburg, Virginia

September 25-28

Information Coming
in the Spring

Visit our website at
www.ussemmons.org
for updates

BATTLESHIP COVE, SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS HIGHLIGHT 2024 REUNION WEEKEND

Despite nearly 80 years having passed since the loss of the USS *Emmons*, reunion attendance continues strong, surpassing the past two years with 49 attending some or all of the weekend.

As always, the hospitality room was open throughout the weekend, allowing all the opportunity to catch up and to get to know some new family members.

Battleship Cove Visit

As the *Emmons* group gathered Friday morning at Battleship Cove, members were greeted by the Cove's Board of Directors VP, Rich ANGELINI. Rich, a long-time friend of the shipmates and the *Emmons* family, enthusiastically welcomed everyone and started the group on their tour with some background on the museum ships.

Following our visit to the WWII destroyer, USS *Joseph P. Kennedy, Jr* DD850, our traditional memorial service for the lost shipmates was held on the fantail of the battleship USS *Massachusetts*. The service was followed by lunch together and more time to explore the museum.

Back at the hotel, the afternoon program included a showing of Kurt REESE's video of our Okinawa diver friends' April memorial dive at the *Emmons* site honoring the lost shipmates. Rich returned to the hotel with us and addressed the group, staying through the evening while sharing his vast knowledge of naval and destroyer history (see story, page 2).

The "Wall of Honor" was also featured during the program with family members sharing memories and photos of their loved ones who served on the *Emmons*.

Taking In The Sights

After Saturday morning's business meeting, free time was used by some to visit one of Rhode Islands' many historic lighthouses, do some shopping and enjoy lunch.

Saturday evening's banquet program included an introduction of our Griffin/*Emmons* Memorial Scholarship recipients and readings of their essays.

The weekend came to a close with everyone sharing in Sunday morning's breakfast buffet.

EMMONS FAMILY'S 2025 REUNION TAKES US TO THE FOOTHILLS OF VIRGINIA'S BLUE RIDGE MOUNTAINS

The *Emmons* family will gather in historic Lynchburg, Virginia, September 25-28. The base of operations will be the Hilton Garden Inn Lynchburg, located in the scenic foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, one mile from Lynchburg Regional Airport.

A highlight of our time together will be a visit to the National D-Day Memorial (see story, page 3). Close by

are Thomas Jefferson's Poplar Forest retreat, the American Civil War Museum and the Appomattox Court House, site of General Robert E. Lee's surrender to General Ulysses S. Grant, ending the Civil War.

Information will be forthcoming in the spring so mark your calendar and keep an eye on our website's Reunions page for updates.

COMPETITIVE FIELD RESULTS IN FOUR SCHOLARSHIP AWARDS

With eight applications submitted for this, the 15th year of the Lt. John J. Griffin, Jr./USS *Emmons* Memorial Scholarship, our judges were tasked with scoring what proved to be a very competitive field of applicants.

Using the applicants' essays redacted to remove any reference that might identify the author, and a scoring rubric designed specifically for this year's essay prompt, the judges awarded two \$2500 and two \$500 honorable mention awards. Honorable mention scholarships were approved last year to address the recent increase in the number

of applications submitted.

The \$2500 awards went to Christopher CONNORS, great-grandson of Donald AYER, and Christopher HOFFMAN, grandson of Edwin HOFFMAN.

Chris CONNORS lives in York, Maine, and attends the College of Charleston, studying business and commercial real estate.

Chris HOFFMAN lives in Philadelphia where he attends the Sidney Kimmel Medical College of Thomas Jefferson University.

Our two \$500 honorable mention awards went to Emma GILLANDERS and Kathleen DEGREGORY. Emma

lives in Parkland, Florida, and attends the University of Tampa. She is the great-granddaughter of Walter BLAIR. Kathleen, great-granddaughter of Thaddeus TENEROWICZ, lives in Chesapeake, Virginia, and attends the University of Maryland.

Visit our website's [Scholarship page](#) to learn more and to read the essays.

REMEMBERING OUR VETERANS

The outpouring of support by those at the reunion provided much needed personal items for the local veterans home.

In his letter acknowledging the contribution, Raymond Houle, President of the Rhode Island Veterans Home Residents Council, closed his letter of thanks with the following: ***"The greatest gift of all is to be remembered, and you have certainly given that gift to us. Thank you for your kindness."***



Chris Connors



Chris Hoffman



Emma Gillanders



Katie DeGregory

ANGELINI SHARES HIS THOUGHTS ON THE EMMONS LEGACY

Rich ANGELINI is Battleship Cove's VP, a member of the Board of Directors and leader of the charge overseeing the maintenance and restoration of the destroyer USS *J.P. Kennedy, Jr.* DD-850. We were honored to have him join us for our Friday afternoon program.

Rich addressed the group, sharing his thoughts on the *Emmons'* legacy and that of her crew, as well as their final day of glory, April 6, 1945.

As a Benson-Gleaves class destroyer, he pointed out the *Emmons* was fast but because she was not big and strong, naval personnel felt a simultaneous attack by just two kamikaze planes would certainly sink her.

Instead, she fought off an attack by 50-75 aircraft before being hit in rapid succession by five kamikaze planes. And due in part to the crew's fighting spirit that splashed six Japanese planes and their damage control efforts, the *Emmons* did not succumb to her wounds and survived to live another day, only to be laid to rest the following day by the USS *Ellyson* to prevent the ship from drifting into enemy waters.

Rich shared his view that what helps in sustaining and honoring the memory of the ship and her crew is that everyone one of us who had a loved one that served on the *Emmons*, also served on the ship through our bloodline. For example,

if your father served, you served 50%, part of you was there; your grandfather, 25%; etc. "If you want to see that crew, look in the mirror." That's how we stay together and sustain the legacy.

Following his talk, Rich was presented with a check for \$3000 raised by the Association to help in his tireless work at Battleship Cove with the endless series of repair and restoration projects.

NOW AVAILABLE!!

The application for the 2025-26 Griffin/*Emmons* scholarship, offering awards totaling \$6000, is now available on our website at www.ussemmons.org.

IN MEMORIAM

Carol FLORY, widow of shipmate George FLORY, passed away November 9, 2023.

Prior to George's passing in 2021, he and Carol were regulars at the annual *Emmons* Reunions, often accompanied by George's son Mike and daughter Susan.

Carol lived in Sarasota, Florida. She was 88.

Dennis McDOWELL, son-in-law of shipmate Robert SCHULTZ, passed away August 15, 2024. He was 79.

Dennis and Robert's daughter, Donna, were regulars at the *USS Emmons* reunions following their attendance at the 2015 dedication of our *Emmons* memorial plaque at the U.S. Navy Memorial located in Washington, D.C.

NATIONAL D-DAY MEMORIAL HONORS THE 'BEDFORD BOYS' AND ALL WHO DIED AT NORMANDY

The 2025 reunion will include a visit to the National D-Day Memorial in Bedford, Virginia. Of all the cities and towns in the country, the Bedford community lost the largest number of servicemen per capita during the invasion of Normandy. For that reason, in 1996, Congress and President Bill Clinton passed legislation to place the Memorial there in the small Virginia town of Bedford.

Of the 32 Bedford County soldiers who fought that day, 20 did not return. The book titled "*The Bedford Boys*" shares their story who, as part of the first wave of the Normandy

invasion, spilled their blood on Omaha Beach. Learn more about the Bedford Boys at www.bbtcva.org.

Dedicated on June 6, 2001, by President George W. Bush, the D-Day Memorial was constructed to commemorate the sacrifice and valor of all allied troops who fought in one of the most pivotal battles of WWII.

The Memorial recreates the D-Day journey from planning to battle to victory, including emphasis of the U.S. Navy's role under Operation Neptune, the Naval component of the invasion. Visit their website at www.dday.org to learn more.

Notes....from the Reunion Log

Reunion attendees were treated to the premiere viewing of Kurt REESE's video featuring the April Memorial Dive honoring the memory of the lost shipmates. It's now available for everyone at our [Memorial Dives page](http://www.ussemmons.org) on our website at ussemmons.org. Heartfelt thanks to Kurt, Chuck and all who took part.



Susan Slocum's Cake

thanks go out to Carolyn AYER, Allison GUINAN, Ken HOFFMAN, Diane HOFFMAN, Mary Kay MIKUSKA, Spencer OTTO, Ann & Tom SHORT, Nancy & Rick SLIMMER and Susan SLOCUM.

And special thanks are warranted for Mike ESPOSITO. Despite having to cancel at the last minute, Mike went above and beyond by making the long drive to/from the reunion site Thursday to deliver on his promise to provide the necessary supply of adult beverages for the hospitality room.

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Annual reunion preparation is truly a family affair. In addition to all the work done by the Legacy Committee,

- *****
 We extend our sincere thank you to all who supported our efforts in 2024 through their membership dues. As of this printing, shipmates honored by their families' and friends' 2024 dues remittances, as well as honorary members, are as follows:

- Donald W. Ayer
 - Frank J. Basile
 - Walter D. Blair
 - George C. Border
 - Edwin J. Cornetta
 - Edward T. Culkin
 - Paul F. Dodd
 - John L. Donaldson
 - James A. Donnelly, Jr.
 - Ross T. Elliott, Jr.
 - Anthony S. Esposito
 - Stanley L. Fisher
 - George C. Flory
 - Eugene N. Foss, 2nd
 - Herbert K. Francis
 - Robert J. Glutting
 - Joseph A. Gocella
 - Edward E. Greenlaw
 - Douglas L. Gruber
 - Earl C. Hobart
 - Edwin L. Hoffman, Jr.
 - David Horwitz
 - Robert E. Hunter
 - Phillip A. Jacoby
 - Harold Jay
 - David Jensen
 - Armand J. Jolly
 - Charles L. Keller
 - James J. Korney
 - Edwin J. Krom
 - Arsene L. Lajeunesse
 - John S. Malloway
 - Thomas McConnell
 - William J. McConnell
 - Grover T. McMichael
 - Charles P. Melkunas
 - Thomas D. Orton, Jr.
 - Warren P. Otto
 - William R. Patton
 - Joseph P. Pomykala
 - Eugene L. Posey
 - Robert J. Schultz
 - George E. Serewa
 - John Sosenko
 - Warren G. Sparks
 - Thaddeus T. Tenerowicz
 - Homer D. Tittle
 - Edward N. Tostanoski
 - Clyne C. Veal
 - Robert C. Wagner
 - Donald L. Yecke
- *****

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USS Emmons (DD457-DMS22)

Visit our website at

www.ussemmons.org

**HERE'S THE LATEST
FROM THE
USS EMMONS
ASSOCIATION**



JOIN OUR FACEBOOK GROUP
USS EMMONS REUNION

**2025 USS *EMMONS*
FAMILY REUNION**

SEPTEMBER 25-28

(see story, page 1)



SINCEREST WISHES FOR A HAPPY, HEALTHFUL NEW YEAR!

