

Torii Typhoon

Volume 15, Issue 1

March 2016

Official Newsletter of ASA Okinawa



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**ASA OKINAWA
2016 REUNION**

BUFFALO, NY

SEPT. 14-18

HYATT HOTEL



President's Message

Our Buffalo reunion is only six months away. Where has the time gone? Last month I read in the news that the waterfall at Niagara Falls was going to be cut off for repair work. I certainly hope it won't happen while we are there. That was one of the reasons I voted to have the reunion in Buffalo as I have never been there. I'm

sure that Brenda and Larry will have other tours of interest for all of us. Besides, the most important reason for our reunions is to see our friends and comrades. The Western Washington region has been having a mild winter up to this writing. It looks like most of you have been having deplorable winter weather. I hope all of you are

surviving the cold. Looking forward to seeing all in Buffalo. I hope that we may see some new members attending this year. Wishing you good health. God Bless America.

Dave Merritt

From the Vice President

I've discovered that recruiting new members is not an easy task. I have sent this e-mail (ASA Okinawa?) to 925 e-mail addresses gotten from "Vet Friends" and "Together We Served" and received 73 replies. Of those 25 were confirmed ASA Okinawa. I then sent them the website

(www.mlrsinc.com/asaokinawa)

and asked them to check it out and let me know what they thought. I had one reply that thought that it was a good deal but because of health reasons he didn't travel any more. And a couple said they would look into it. I had one definite yes I will be in Buffalo. I didn't recognize the name when I sent the e-mail and it was our good friend Jack Sanborn, so if all goes according to plan Jack and I will be in Buffalo. I'm hoping to get more replies as time goes

by. For all ASA/Inscorn Okinawa vets it's time to plan your trip to Buffalo—Sept. 14-18, 2016. For anyone who is reading this who hasn't attended one of our reunions, you don't know what you're missing. I suggest you try one—you just might like it. If you think none of your old friends will be there, come anyway as you will meet some that where there before you and after you and you won't meet a better group than the ASA Okinawa Assoc. reunion group. And to make everyone feel better I think all the snow will have melted by Sept. So LET'S ALL GO TO BUFFALO.

Dan Carr, VP

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WWW.MLRSINC.COM/ASAOKINAWA

"Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To"

Treasurer's Report ASA Okinawa Association January 31, 2016

Beginning Check Book Balance October, 2015--
\$3652.22

Income
 Income from Dues\$120.00
 Income from Newsletter\$35.00
 Income from Caps.....\$19.15
 Other Income\$00.45
Total Income\$174.60

Disbursements
 November Issue of Torii Typhoon\$178.75
 Other Disbursements\$6.15
Total Disbursements\$184.90

Ending Check Book Balance January 31, 2016...\$3641.92

Total Membership is as follows:

- 10 Life Time Members
- 12 Life Time Deceased Members Wives
- 80 Paid members for 2016
- 33 for 2017
- 12 for 2018
- 6 for 2019

If anyone would like a detailed list of Incomes and Disbursements email me at sandysands66@msn.com and I will email it to you.

Duane R. Sands, Treasurer

REMEMBERING GEORGE HUCK

Some of you may remember that George Huck was somewhat famous. A member of George's immediate family passed away and George was granted an emergency leave. The day he was supposed to return from leave and several days after that George didn't report back from leave. And consequently he was carried as AWOL. For an ASA man and his high security clearance, to be AWOL was a big deal. The bottom line is he reported to Oakland Army Base at the appointed date/time for transportation back to Okinawa but instead of flying him back, he was put on a ship that made a tour of the Pacific before reaching Okinawa. But no one in the command knew he was on his way, sailing on the ocean, thus the AWOL charge. When he got back the whole thing was straightened out favorably and of course the AWOL charge was dropped. And George finished his tour without further incident.

Larry Eckard

US ARMY SIGNAL INTELLIGENCE OKINAWA HISTORY BOOK

The ASA Okinawa Association is trying to create a US Army Signal Intelligence Okinawa history book. Thanks to the input and help of many people we have a good understanding of the “organizational” structure from the American invasion in April 1945 through the station’s closure in 1985. The unit underwent many name changes and was quartered in a couple different locations, but everyone is cordially invited to participate. This also applies to subordinate units – I know there was the 104th COMSEC Det on Sukrian and there may be others that I am not aware of.

The next step is to get personal anecdotes and stories from people assigned there throughout the 40 year tenure of the station. What we are looking for is your personal bio from the time you entered the Army until you left the military – emphasizing the years you spent at Torii Station. Although there were some not-so-good things happened to some people, to the largest extent possible we’d like to keep things on the positive side, focusing on the friends

you made, the work you did – and we are not just talking about operations people – we want MP’s, Personnel/Finance Specialists, Cooks, Clerks, Motor Pool, Armors, anyone assigned to the station, Officer, NCO and enlisted. Certainly we want accompanying photos of you, hopefully at least one in uniform from the “olden days” and a current one of you (now that you are elderly and sophisticated).

We would also like to have information about unit awards and honors (not individual awards, they go in your bio) earned throughout the years. Please send any information –and documentation, we cannot publish an item as factual based solely on recollection; we can credit to you with caveat “as remembered by XXXXXXXX”. Please keep in mind this is rank/MOS immaterial, we want to hear from you.

We ask that you e-mail your information to two people for consolidation (and if necessary editing). Send your bio and stories, suggestion, comments, etc to Tom Sevits at: tom.judy@wcnet.org and larry@mlrsinc.com.

larry@mlrsinc.com.

You know the 2016 reunion is coming up in Buffalo Sept 14-18 at the downtown Hyatt Hotel. A couple of attractions you don’t want to miss will be Niagara Falls, Maid of the Mist and the Anchor Bar – home of the now famous Buffalo Wings. Full information will be forthcoming in the registration packets, probably in May. Don’t miss it.

Any of you that use Facebook or other social media help spread the word, we need some of the young soldiers from the 70’s and 80’s to start attending to keep the association viable – a lot of people have worked too hard to make the association what it is today to let it fade away.

Larry Eckard

NCU 37 SOBE CAMP, OKINAWA 1956

BY NEAL P. GILLEN

Continued from 11/15 issue

Making Third Class

Soon we were awash in CT3’s as every seaman passed the test. A significant celebration was held at Tsu Shin Tai and spilled over into the villages of Kadena Circle and New Koza. About that time, the Army abolished its World War II era Technical Sergeant rank and adopted the Specialist ranking system. This immediately posed a problem since the Specialists were no longer considered to be NCOs. There were immediate morale and protocol problems. For weeks after the change the Specialists were banned from the NCO Clubs on the island. Business dried up overnight. The Army saved face and quickly recouped its loss of business by designating the NCO Clubs as Rocker Clubs as the Specialist ranks of SP4 and above wore rockers or curved stripes above the Specialist insignia. It was also embarrassing for us teenagers, who had just made CT3, to learn that we technically outranked men who had served their country in World War II and Korea. It really caused problems the following year when those who made CT2 were allocated private rooms.

One of those unforgettable individuals was Master Technical Sergeant Hogan, a functional alcoholic, who sat at the same seat near the end of the bar in Tsu Shin Tai every afternoon and evening when he was not analyzing traffic in the Operations Building. Though amiable with a ready smile, he was not much for conversation as he was always immersed in a book, if not a drink. When the demands of his bladder required him to visit the head, he would turn his book upside down and place it on the bar. At that moment, either a soldier sitting nearby or the Okinawan bartender would turn the pages either forward or backward some ten or so pages. Hogan would return to his stool, take a sip of his drink, and then turn the book over and continue reading. Everyone would watch with anticipation for his reaction, but there never was any. He continued reading never realizing the difference, and if he did, he never let on.



Welcome Mat

The following members have been located since the last newsletter. Welcome to the Association. We hope to see you at the next reunion and hear from you about your memories of your time spent in Okinawa.

Dan Simpson (1967-71)
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Taps

The Typhoon learned of the following deaths since the last newsletter was published. The deaths are not necessarily recent, but they were just learned of. The entire membership extends our deepest sympathy to the widows, families and friends of the deceased.

George Huck
(1958-60)
Died March 3, 2016

Edwin Jacox
Died January 22, 2015

Col Charles Alston
(1956-58)
Died September 16, 2015

John Conley
(1956-58) Sgt E-5
Died January 13, 2016

Frank Lenahan
(1952-54) Sgt.
Died October 31, 2015



MAIL CALL

Editor's Note: We sent out an email asking for you to tell us about your first day at Torii Station. A big thank you to the men below who responded to our request.

This is a story from 1955. Some of us on a day off decided to go horseback riding. None of us had ever been on a horse before. We found a place that rented riding horses (old retired Calvary horses and they had minds of their own). They saddled horses for us and we took off. At one point, I felt my saddle slipping to the side. I jumped off intending to push it back up. I did not know that cinches needed to be tightened after the horse let his breath out. They did that so the saddle would not be so tight, thereby more comfortable for the horse. I worked at getting the saddle back up and the horse turned his head around and bit my head really hard. I ended up on my fanny and the other guys were laughing so much they could hardly stay mounted. Funny for everyone except me! Anyway, the horse felt sorry for me and let his breath out so I could slip the saddle back up. That was my one and only horseback experience. I bet the other guys reading this will remember it well.

Gary Yokes
1954-1956

My arrival on Okinawa was my first time overseas, following a few days at Tokyo Arsenal waiting for assignment.

My first memory was after being assigned to a barracks and getting a bunk and locker. Since it was June, the temperature was about 90 degrees, however it was during a real gully-washer of a rain storm and the humidity was somewhat north of 100%. Some other guys that arrived with me and were completely unaccustomed to the temperature and humidity spent the evening in the EM

PASSPORTS NOW NEEDED TO ENTER CANADA

For those of you who are not aware, in 2009 it became a law that all U.S. visitors to Canada must present a valid passport before entering the country. Since the most spectacular views of Niagara Falls are from the Canadian side, it would be a good idea to obtain a passport before attending the 2016 reunion in Buffalo. Because everyone in the reunion group will probably not have a passport, we will not offer a tour to the Canadian side. However, those who have a passport might want to go on their own before, during or after the reunion. A tour on the Maid of the Mist (which only operates now from the American side) will be offered if you choose that to go on the Niagara Falls tour, so you can view the falls from that perspective.

To obtain a passport you must apply early. Start several months before you will need the passport. (It's not too early to apply now for the 2016 reunion.) You can go on line to find out how to apply for a passport. It is also possible to obtain a Passport Card for travel between the US and Canada. <https://travel.state.gov/content/passports/en/passports/information/card.html>

As stated earlier, the Maid of the Mist no longer operates from the Canadian side of the Falls. You must board it from Prospect Point in the Niagara Reservation State Park. The American launch of the Maid of the Mist concludes with a self-guided climb along the Crow's Nest staircase—flush to the Falls, and so close to it that, on sunny days with a light wind, the mist from the base of the Falls envelopes the staircase to create one of the most amazing sights you will ever see: a circular rainbow!

So, get your passports ready, and we'll see you in Buffalo!

club at the other end of my barracks. Later, I heard some commotion outside and upon checking found one of the guys who came from the EM club fell down and the first part of his body to touch sidewalk was the tip of his chin. He was as drunk as a skunk, which probably was pretty good for what just happened to him, soaked in rain and mud, he had blood gushing from a cut as wide as his chin and right down to the bone. Some of his buddies were commenting on the awesome cut that showed white bone. Being sober, I grabbed a towel and pushed the gash closed and stopped the bleeding. I have no idea who the guy was, or what happened to him right afterward. I went to the latrine and cleaned the blood and mud off and headed back to my bunk. This was my introduction to the "Rock".

Bob Forney – June 1954 – June 1956

Russell M. Poole RA15566752 mos 058.2 Morse Interceptor. June 1957 thru August 1958 3rd USASA Field Station Sobe Camp. August 1958 thru September 1959 176th USASA Company, Linkou, Taiwan. Sobe was my first and only tour in the army. Gene Wills, "Red" Phillips, "Knobs" Ramsay and Freddie Shelton were all new buddies. Freddie and I bought a 1942 Harley Davidson and 1930's something Chevrolet. Great bunch of guys. Remember the Christmas menu from 1957 U.S. Army, Ryukyu Islands APO 331. (*Editor's Note: We'll print the menu in the November issue.*)

Jim and Fred Norrbom's Army Career

My aunt was in charge of the Minneapolis Draft Office in 1956 and she knew that my brother Fred and I were going to graduate from High School in June, so she sent a Master Sgt. over to our house to try and recruit us. He talked about joining the Army and then said there was this outfit call Army Security Agency, that it was top secret and he didn't know much about it. He said that he could

sign us up for it and we would go there together after boot camp for schooling but that we were responsible for finishing the school or else we would find ourselves in the infantry. We signed up and on Friday July 13th, 1956 and along with a bunch of other guys said our oath in front of the Federal Bldg. In Minneapolis. We then preceded to walk to the train station and took the afternoon train to Ft. Smith Arkansas. Did 8 weeks of basic training in summer heat in Ft. Chaffee, AK. Came home for 2 weeks, then had our travel orders to report to Ft. Devens, Massachusetts to go to school on something we both knew nothing about. About Oct. 7th, 1956 we reported in at Ft. Devens. Fred and I both became 058 ditty boppers. We knew now that we learned Morse Code, but we still had no idea of what we were going to do with that knowledge. I had a chance for Embassy Duty, so filled out more paper work and had more pictures taken. We were told that if after graduation we shipped out with the rest of the group, we would not be going on Embassy duty. We did ship out after graduation with the rest of the class. We went by train from Massachusetts to California to Oakland Army Terminal. After about a week there, we flew out of Travis Air Force Base and flew to Hawaii, then Wake Island, and finally to Tokyo. We received our assignments to proceed to Okinawa and Torii Station. Once we got there Fred and I decided to split up and go to work on different Tricks. Well, we finally found out what we would be doing with our education we had just received at Ft. Devens. We just saw each other coming and going for the next 2 years or so and on June of 1959 we were sent home for discharge together. I did just short of 3 years in the Army and made SP5 and got discharged 6 months before turning 21. Fred made SP5 and got discharged also. Fred passed away on 09/12/1997.

PREVIEW OF BUFFALO, NY FOR 2016 REUNION

ABOUT THE CITY OF BUFFALO

Located on Lake Erie, Buffalo is New York State's second largest city and is known as *The Queen City*, *The Nickel City* and *The City of Good Neighbors*. The Buffalo-Niagara metropolitan area has a population of 1.2 million.

Truly an architectural museum, Buffalo is home to master works from many world-renowned architects including Frank Lloyd Wright, Eero Saarinen, E. B. Green, as well as many others. Buffalo also boasts the largest intact system of parks

and parkways designed by Frederick Law Olmstead.

The city's name did not come from the same-named animal, but from its location at the origin of the Niagara River. Some claim the name comes from the French "beau fleuve" (beautiful river). Others cite the fact that Buffalo Creek was so-named long before the naming of the city, and they suggest that the city's name more likely honors the Seneca Indian after whom this small waterway was named.

ATTRACTIONS

Niagara Falls Tour:

Certainly the highlight of any trip to Buffalo, the Niagara Falls tour includes all the most famous American side attractions—the **Whirlpool Overlook**, **Bridal Veil Falls**, **Horseshoe Falls**, **Goat Island**, **Three Sisters Islands**, **Cave of the Winds**, the **Niagara Falls Observation Tower** and a ride on the famous **Maid of the Mist** boat.

Buffalo and Erie County Naval &

(Continued on page 6)

(Continued from page 5)

Military Park:

This is the largest inland naval park of its kind in the United States. Here you can climb on board the most famous ship there, the USS THE SULLIVANS. The ship was named after the five Sullivan brothers who lost their lives while serving aboard USS JUNEAU (CL-52) when the ship was torpedoed during the fight for Guadalcanal in 1942. THE SULLIVANS is a national historic landmark with a combat record including the Mariannas, Philippines, and Korea. Also on display is the submarine USS CROAKER, built in 1944. Shore displays at the Serviceman's Park include a military museum, tanks, aircraft and a Patrol Torpedo Boat.

Tour of the City of Buffalo:

Tour highlights include the Waterfront, the art deco City Hall whose 28th floor observatory offers spectacular views of the city and surrounding area, Millionaires Row of Houses featuring the renowned works of architecture by Frank Lloyd Wright, Forest Lawn Cemetery, and the Anchor Bar—birthplace of the Buffalo Chicken Wings. See where President McKinley was assassinated and where President Theodore Roosevelt was sworn in as President. This tour is usually included as part of the visit to the Naval Park.

Buffalo Zoological Gardens:

This 3rd oldest zoo in the U.S. is dedicated to the preservation of wild species from around the world. More than 1,000 animals are housed here, including potoroo, a marsupial from Australia, the lesser galago, a small bushbaby from Africa, grizzly, Kodiak and polar bears, red pandas, reindeer, tamarins, Indian rhinos, meerkats, as well as an array of reptiles and birds.

Buffalo & Erie County Botanical Gardens:

These gardens are the product of landscaping architect Frederick Law Olmsted who designed New York's Central park, and glass-house architects Lord & Burnham, and botanist and plant-explorer John F. Cowell. The gardens include indoor and outdoor gardens including a 67-ft glass dome housing tropical palms plus flower and light shows. Wander

through different ecosystems including the Florida Everglades and the cloud forests of Panama. The desert house showcases species from the American and African deserts, while the centerpiece of the Fern House and Ancient Rainforest is a 30-foot waterfall surrounded by banana trees. Also the medicinal plant house gives visitors a better understanding of how they are used in traditional, herbal and modern medicines.

Buffalo & Niagara Heritage Village:

Here you will travel back in time to a life that moved at a slower pace. The quaint 19th century village, situated on a beautiful 35-acre site, lets you see how the people lived in those days. Costumed interpreters graciously welcome you to the village. Visit homes, a one-room school house, a blacksmith shop and much more.

Old Fort Niagara:

The fort, which sits on the head of the Niagara River, shares a history with the French, the British and the Americans. The oldest structure on the grounds dates back to 1726, and visitors can explore almost every inch of it—like the bunkers and the French castle. Special events are planned during summer months (during your reunion time) and include cannon and musket firing demonstrations, reenactments, and guided tours. Watch artisans at work and learn about life on the Niagara Frontier during the 18th and 19th centuries.

River Cruise:

The *Grand Lady* offers a variety of cruising options—an afternoon lunch and sightseeing cruise and an evening happy hour and dinner cruise. There's something for everyone to enjoy. Sit back and relax on the aft deck veranda while enjoy the beautiful scenery as you cruise down the Niagara River.

ASA OKINAWA 2016 REUNION SURVEY

In order to insure that we provide the kind of reunion that you want, please take a few minutes to fill out this survey and return it to Premier Reunion Services by **April 15, 2016** at this address:

**Premier Reunion Services
PO Box 11438
Hickory, NC 28603**

**Or Fax:
828-256-6559**

Reunion format:

Do you want entertainment after the Saturday night banquet?
Yes _____ No _____

Please check any of the activities you would like to see on the reunion agenda.

- _____ **Niagara Falls**
- _____ **Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park**
- _____ **Buffalo City Tour**
- _____ **Buffalo Zoological Gardens**
- _____ **Buffalo & Erie Botanical Gardens**
- _____ **Buffalo & Niagara Heritage Village**
- _____ **Old Fort Niagara**
- _____ **River Cruise (Lunch _____ Dinner _____)**

