

Torii Typhoon

Volume 15, Issue 2

July 2016

Official Newsletter of ASA Okinawa



President's Message

We have less than three months before our get-together in Buffalo. It seems like it was only a few months ago that we were together in Kissimmee. I hope all of you had as much fun as I did and I am looking forward for another fun reunion in

September. We are all going to be treated to having Dottie Turner with us this year. It has been several years since she has joined us. She has done so much for our association in the past, and we will be honored to thank her in person. Stay

safe this summer and I'll see you in a few months. I hope we will have some new members with us this year. It seems we have fewer attendees each year.

Dave Merritt

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From the Vice President

I was thinking about what I needed to do next as my to do list was at zero and I was getting bored so at around 1300 hours I set my GPS for 300 Pearl St. Buffalo, NY and away I went. As you all know using a GPS is an art, so I headed my way and it wanted to go its way so we compromised about half way there. I found that driving in Buffalo is challenging as there are one way streets and you drive on the same street as the metro, so you have to look out for them also. I found the hotel but I had already gone past so I had to go around the block. That was an adventure. Luck would have it I found a parking spot right in front of the hotel. As I walked in I thought maybe I was in the wrong place as this hotel is really nice. THANKS, Premier, for a great find. I got a short guided tour of the place and I think this is one of the classier hotels we have been to. I was shown a room and it was huge and bright with a TV and refrigerator and coffee maker with Star Bucks coffee. They have two res-

taurants. One is a Bar and Grill and the other is E.B. Greens Steakhouse, which I didn't get to see as they were not open at that time of day. There will be a new Star Bucks in the hotel by the time we get there. I asked about restaurants nearby. Across the street are three places and a ice cream shop within easy walking distance. Also a new Greek restaurant is to open by the time we arrive. There is also Canal Side which is a facsimile of the Erie Canal from years ago. There are also restaurants and shoppes and The Servicemens park which we will be going to as part our tours. You can take the Metro to Canal Side. For the members driving to Buffalo, use this address for the hotel 300 Pearl Street, Buffalo, NY. I was also told valet parking would be \$20 a day added to your room. I think Larry had said \$25 so maybe figure \$25 and if it is less great. There is a parking lot directly across from the hotel which is

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**ASA OKINAWA
2016 REUNION**

BUFFALO, NY

SEPT. 14-18

HYATT HOTEL

VP's MESSAGE CONTINUED

(Continued from page 1)

an easy walk. I myself will be using the valet parking. If you're driving and plan on maybe touring once you're out of downtown, it's much easier to navigate. So I'm hoping everyone reading this will tell all there OKI buddies to get their registrations in and come and meet old friends and make some new ones. I see by our attendees list to date has a 1949-52 and 1968 vet so you can see it makes no difference when you where there, you are welcome to attend. So set Sept 14-18 aside and come to Buffalo to meet the greatest reunion group you'll find anywhere. Go to www.hyattregencybuffalo.com for more information.

Dan Carr VP

**Treasurer's Report
ASA Okinawa Association
May 31, 2016**

**Beginning Check Book Balance January, 2016--
\$3641.92**

Income

Income from Dues	\$290.00
Income from Newsletter	\$45.00
Donation from Dorothy Turner.....	\$500.00
Other Income	\$00.64
Total Income	\$835.64

Disbursements

March Issue of Torii Typhoon	\$119.60
Total Disbursements	\$119.60

Ending Check Book Balance January 31, 2016...\$4357.96

Total Membership is as follows:

- 10 Life Time Members
- 12 Life Time Deceased Members Wives
- 94 Paid members for 2016
- 44 for 2017
- 12 for 2018
- 7 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

**NEWSLETTER EXPENDITURES
July 2016 \$840.36**

The July issue is mailed to all active members.

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



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.

Robert Colbert

(1962-65) SP5
PO Box 2410
Goldenrod, FL 32733-2410

Ira Brogin (1966-67)

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610-664-2538
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Louisville, KY 40207-1229
502-423-9561

T. J. Stovcsik
516 Longvue Dr
Lower Burrell, PA 15068-5822
724-335-4439

The following names have been submitted as potential new members for the Association; however, no other information about them could be provided. If anyone knows these men, please contact Premier Reunion Services at our address on page two with their contact information.

Francis Clapper

Barry Boyce

Chuck Malloy



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.

Danny Garner

(1966-68) 2nd Lt.
Date of death not reported

Eddie Johnson

(1954-57) Spec 3
Died April 7, 2016

J. Lawrence Huber

(1955-57) SP3 Co D
Died January 31, 2016

NCU 37 SOBE CAMP, OKINAWA 1956

BY NEAL P. GILLEN

Continued from 03/16 issue

Studying For Second Class

The individual on our watch section who influenced the newly minted CT3s to continue their advancement was CT1 William "Ski" Szezepaniak. His radio position was directly in front of mine. He took a personal interest in me along with the other members of our section. During the inactive periods of a watch he would attempt to motivate us.

"Bring study materials with you. Make the most of this time, you certainly won't read them in the barracks, the village, or the club."

He would constantly urge me to behave. "Don't screw up your life like I did. Stay away from booze – it will only mess you up and ruin your opportunities in life." He would never let anyone accompany him on his rounds of the watering holes in the

neighboring villages. If you ran into him he welcomed you, bought you a drink and with it came a lecture about staying on the straight and narrow path of life. He constantly urged us to study for the CT2 exam and he helped prepare us for the test. We in turn urged him to go for Chief, but he was discouraged given the results of his previous attempts and the limited number of billets. Charles Popikas made it his mission to spur on "Ski." He finally began to study after Hollenbach and Reese made Chief. He stopped drinking for a spell and spent a considerable amount of time in his room and the small library adjacent to the recreation room reading study materials. The day before the examination he was fully prepared, but sometime early in the evening his determination gave way to temptation. He was last seen heading for the bus stop outside the main gate. "Ski" did not show the next day and ac-

cording to Popikas, who carefully reviewed the selection lists over the years, "Ski's" name never appeared. His failure to take the CPO test was a disappointment to all of us as it certainly was to him. He refused to talk about it except to say that he hoped we learned from his inadequacies. Paradoxically, "Ski" set a good example for each of us through his own bad example. Though he gave up on himself, he never gave up on any of us. We all passed the CT2 examination.

Army Chow

The food at Sobe Camp was reasonably good and plentiful. Besides breakfast, lunch, and dinner an additional breakfast was served between 11 P.M. and 12:30 A.M. for those beginning the Mid watch or coming

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off of the Eve watch. Chile, burgers, and fries were also available at Tsu Shin Tai in the unlikely event one were to miss a meal. For some of us a four-meal day became a routine while on watch and many unnecessary pounds were added. The star of the Mess Hall appeared nightly at the evening breakfast in the form of Arnold "Arnie" Smith of Brooklyn. "Arnie" worked the grill, even though he was not part of the Mess Staff. He was a Clerk who worked in the Administration Building. Mess Sergeant Larry Mulligan was "Arnie's" enabler allowing him to work night-after-night to satisfy his addiction to food. As a result of his extra curricula dedication to eating he developed a tremendous weight problem. Captain Forest Clark, the Company Commander, happened to visit the Mess Hall one evening and discovered his prized Clerk serving ham and eggs. Shortly thereafter, "Arnie" was frequently observed jogging up and down the hill and

seen coming to and from the infirmary where he underwent regular medical monitoring. In the end, his unrelenting appetite seemed to win out. Three years later, after a fraternity party at New York University, I stopped in a White Tower restaurant on West 4th Street in Manhattan for coffee and a cheeseburger. I sat down on a stool and put my hand to my forehead to ease my advancing headache. "Whata ya want tonight sailor?" Startled, I looked up and standing behind the counter was none other than "Arnie" Smith beaming with a bright smile and wearing a greasy apron and another fifty or more pounds on his ample body. "Arnie" had found his niche in life thanks to his Army training.

To be continued in later issues.

THE LOVER'S MELANCHOLY

By Bradley Overholt, Submitted by William Overholt

The Lover's Melancholy; a broken record of a somber tune
A minor chord echoing heavily upon the heart
Weeping openly, a widow mourns alone in her room
A life of a soldier lost before another could start.

Gripping the triangular flag, she screams the mourning song
Tears splatter the floor like blood dripping down a blade
The black clad family has left her to the journey; long
Accepting the fact that he is dead from the path she forbade.

The echo of the 21 guns thunders in her head
She places her hand to her mid, knowing she's alone
A torrent of grief strikes anew as she mourns the dead
A ghost of herself, she wanders her home.

Her footsteps fall softly, wandering without aim
Pictures of their life together mockingly smile
Where once laid happiness, now sorrow in a frame
His bloodline lost, as she never received his child.

"This can't be real," absently flows from the inside out
For the world to hear, her first words today
Her mind and reality; combatants start another bout
She looks to the door and starts to pray.

"Gods above and below, hear my plea
Don't leave me alone in my misery
Please send my love back to me.
End this nightmare! This cannot be!"

She thinks back to the funeral, silent she stayed
An empty coffin, representing her hollow heart
As the priests spoke and the family prayed
She begged for the church doors to part.

Inside she reached out to the gods she knew
Wanting a miracle, to see him standing at the arch
But nothing happened, the wind only blew
As she envisioned his final heavenly march.

Releasing herself from the memory, she shakes her head
She looks at a picture hanging on the wall
Standing there; still, the world slowly goes red
She turns away, and yells down the hall

"What did I do to deserve this torment?!"
Was I not a good wife?
You took away my best friend, gone in a moment!
How dare you end my beautiful life!!!"

Blindly she runs to the kitchen, out of sheer instinct
Rage consumes her, plates shatter on the floor
Nothing is safe as shards litter the ground and fill the sink
Blood starts to form in her palms and around her feet; more.

The sounds of shattered glass briefly sate her rage
As she crunches over broken plates and dreams
She looks at a picture, their wedding stage
And picks it up off the wall and screams

No words come out, just a roar, a release
She lifts the picture high above her head
As she starts to slam it down, her arms cease
Looking at the photo, she walks, defeated to her bed

She lies in her room, next to the photo of the wedding
Staring up at the ceiling, her mind starts reeling
"What if I offer my soul to stop his mortal coil from shedding?
What can I do to see him again to stop this feeling?"

"Take my house, take my life, take whatever you can!
You've taken everything from me: I've got naught in return!
Let me see him, let me hug him, let me kiss my man!
Please I'm begging the powers that be, don't let me burn.."

She looks around her room, hoping for a sign
A beam of light, maybe brimstone and fire?
A night sky where the galaxies align?
But nothing changes and the silence does not retire.

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The photo staring back, smiles so pure
There has to be something she can do
Something, ANYTHING! There's a possibility, she's sure
She goes to the computer, searching for a clue.

After weeks of tireless begging and searching
Nothing she can offer can bring him back
People offered support and advice to help the hurting
But that wasn't what she wanted, she knew that fact

"He's not coming back," she finally sighed
Defeated: from the chair to the floor she slid
Weeping tears once more, she was empty inside
"Why did he have to die? I wish it was me that did..."

She turned off all the lights, and shut off her phone
The windows were drawn, shadows consumed
Leaving her bed only to eat and drink alone
She slept in a ball, licking her wounds

Knocks at the door were refused
Or her only reply was "GO AWAY!"
For weeks she was only a recluse,
Shunning people and the light of day.

She lovingly eyed her sleeping medication
With a bottle of wine in her lap
She wanted to take that morbid combination
As she reached for the meds, there was a tap.

Her wedding ring, almost forgotten, had hit the frame
Of their picture together, with smiles so bright
Falling to the floor, she felt inside a flame
And caught the memory, and hugged it tight

Slowly walking to the switch to turn on the lamp
Her eyes never left his, deeply she stared
Even when the light came on, her stare, so damp
Hadn't faltered from his, until her reflection had flared.

Puffy eyes, and sunken in cheeks, she looked like death
To the mirror she turned, and smiled somehow
"You left me, you died, and I wanted no more breath
But you'd want me to be strong. And look at me now..."

I'm broken, I'm hollow, I'm the ghost of what we were,"
Speaking to a memory of her love lost
"A soldier's widow, where have I heard *that* before?"
But he knew the risks, he knew the cost.

"You fought for us all, and I know you fought for me
And I almost repaid you by becoming a casualty
To my own depression, your death, and the powers that be
But that's not who you loved, this isn't me!"

His stomach rumbled, her appetite returned
Her legs moved swiftly, her fire burned
For mac and cheese (his favorite) she yearned
She brought out the box, soon the water churned

"You may not be here, but your love never fades
I lost my reality, broke our plates, and tried to trade
I offered my soul to undo what death had made
I surrendered to darkness, I wanted the blade."

"And in my moment of weakness, you stayed my hand
For in your memory I never removed my wedding band
You saved me from my personal quicksand
It may be chance, or something your spirit planned"

"But no more will I mourn your loss, but I will remember
I shall live my life to the fullest, from January to December
I will be true to myself and others, not a pretender."
She said this out loud, hoping it would help mend her.

With energy renewed, and her trials completed
She cleaned herself up, the Widow undefeated
Alone she may be, but by herself she'll be treated
She goes to the door, the first time since the seasons repeated

A warm spring breeze flows through her hair
And for a second, she thought she saw him there
Waving and smiling, he mouthed, "I love you. Good-bye for now."
The vision was broken, when she heard a tiny "meow."

From behind this vision walked a little stray kitten
A little ball of life; in an instant the Widow was smitten
She picked him up, and brushed his soft fur
She smiled at his mews, and melted at his purr.

"I guess I won't be alone after all
I have you, and family and friends, on which I can call,
And one day, maybe, I'll love again,
But I know that his death won't be my end."

She looked down to the kitten, smiled and sighed,
"Come with me, little Soldier, I'll be by your side."
She carried him in, and played for a while
Before falling asleep, finally wearing a smile.

READING BETWEEN THE LINES: Soldier Reviews Words, Phrases Through Cold War

Taken from *Citrus County Chronicle* By Correspondent C.J. Risak

A junior in high school, Jeff Deason knew what he was going to do. He just didn't know where it would take him.

"I knew my junior year of high school I was going into the Army," the current Hernando resident said. "I had no idea

what I was interested in, I was just going into the Army."

The year was 1957, and America was embroiled in the Cold War, which it would wage against the Soviet Union for a half-century. Deason, who grew up in Dallas, would play a role in a significant part of that war.

He didn't know it when he joined the Army. In fact, he wasn't sure what role

he would play at all.

"I joined in 1957, I was 17, and I had to get my parent's permission to join," he said. "I was in ROTC (Reserve Officers Training Corps) in high school. It seemed like all my part-time jobs were working around Army people, getting to know them, and I thought that's where I'm going to go."

After graduating from high school,
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Deason "fiddled around until October and then I joined." He was sent to Fort Chaffee, Arkansas, for boot camp, then discovered his testing qualified him for work in the intelligence-gathering field. That started with learning to work with codes.



"I had scored really high (in working with signal intelligence), that's why I went to Fort Devens, Massachusetts, to learn basic Morse Code," he said. "That was something new to me."

Indeed, 20th century code-breaking was in a constant state of development in the 1950s, using methods leftover from World War II as a starting point. Deason's work would be in the gathering of messages that might be coded transmissions.

He was now part of the U.S. Army Security Agency (ASA), which operated under the auspices of the National Security Agency (NSA).

"We were looking for certain words and phrases," he explained. "The equipment was easy (to learn), but the other stuff — we had a really thick book. Some of it was fairly easy to remember, some of it you'd say, 'Wait a minute, I have to look this up.' That's what took a while.

"You kind of know what you're looking for. It was my job to collect it, let somebody else figure out what was said. But sometimes I had a pretty good idea what it said."

After training at Fort Devens, Massachusetts, "where I found out what snow was," his first overseas assignment would come in 1958, when he was sent to Korea for a year.

There weren't an abundance of places where he could apply his craft. In 1959, he was reassigned to California, where he would remain until 1962. Now an E5 (sergeant), Deason had extended his service and "applied for advance schooling in the same job. I went to that school for six months, it was intense training, in Fort Meade, Maryland, in 1962."

His next overseas assignment would come later that year, when he was sent to Okinawa for 18 months. He was there when the most memorable moment in his military career occurred — and it had nothing to do with his work.

He had drawn the night shift, but there weren't many transmissions at that hour, so as a diversion he was listening to an

AM radio. That's when he heard the news: The date in Okinawa was Nov. 23, 1963, and President John F. Kennedy had just been assassinated, while visiting Deason's hometown of Dallas.

"That's the thing that stands out more than anything, the Kennedy assassination," Deason said. "Listening to it live on an AM radio, in Okinawa. I just said, 'This is not right.' I'm not an emotional person or anything, but I just said, 'This is not right.'"

Deason was hardly considered a serious-type of person by his fellow soldiers, so when he tried to tell them what had happened they weren't ready to accept it. "I was like the class clown, always have been, and they were saying, 'Hey Jeff, quit kiddin'. That's not even funny."

"And I said it's not funny, it's true, it happened. At first they didn't believe me, but I guess then they could see I was serious."

The distance separating Okinawa and the Chinese coast was about 500 miles, about twice that to the Soviet Union. With the Cold War near its peak in 1963 and the American president murdered, tensions immediately escalated.

"I thought, what's going to happen now?" Deason said. "Everybody was on pretty high alert."

In 1964, he found himself back in California before reporting to Fort Walters, in Texas, after his father passed away and he was granted a compassionate reassignment. He was there as part of the 330th Radio Research Company "when we got alerted to Vietnam. It was in August 1966.

"I didn't have to go, they gave us a choice when our unit was alerted. But I thought, I'd rather go with the people I knew than go back and go with people I did not know. I felt good about that."

He was stationed in Pleiku, a large American base near the middle of South Vietnam. His work was the same: Listening to communications while trying to pick up key phrases and words. There were no computers to work with; anything that might potentially be important was typed and sent to analysts for review.

Almost all of the intercepts, Deason said, were useless. Still, once read it had to be destroyed, whether it was useful or not. He drew that duty as well, one of those tasked with burning the messages. "We had mounds and mounds of classified trash," he said. "They let me burn it."

He served in Vietnam for "one year, four days and 30 minutes. I was ready to go home.

"We never had a direct attack on us. The back-side of the hill we were on was attacked several times. We had to

get out on the perimeter, and once we got established there -- we were with the Third Brigade of the 25th Infantry Regiment — and they gave us a certain part of the perimeter, that was ours.

"We had to build the bunkers and set up guards at night, and we were carrying M-14s."

Deason left Vietnam in August 1967 and was assigned to Fort Devens in Massachusetts, "back where I started from." He had been promoted to staff sergeant (E6) while in Vietnam, and at Fort Devens he served as an instructor. From there he went to Herzo Base near Nuremberg, Germany.

Deason had developed a hearing problem, so he became an analyst, which he remained in some capacity for his final decade in the service. After spending two years at Herzo and two more in Augsburg, near Munich, he spent the remainder of his time "pushing a desk" at the NSA headquarters in Fort Meade.

"I was an analyst," he explained. "Information was sent to me, then I would decide whether or not to forward it. By then it was like second nature (to me), why is this group talking to this group.

"They were consolidating, but we had different stations, the NSA did, in Ethiopia, in England, in Turkey, in Shemya, Alaska, in Korea — it all comes back to the NSA."

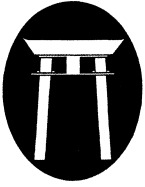
Again, little of it actually amounted to much of anything, Deason said. "Some of it didn't get forwarded, some of it did. Some of it was time-sensitive, if you had less than 10 minutes to get it forwarded, it had to be very quick. I only saw that one time, and I can't even remember what it was.

"There were so many routine messages — we need to follow this up, but we've got eight hours -- there were so many of those."

After four years at Fort Meade, Deason had put in his 20 years in the service, and he decided it was enough. He had already purchased an old church in east Texas, planning to renovate it for his family to live in — which they did. He would be a father to 10 children, a couple of them adopted and one a foster son, and they did live at that church.

He worked at several jobs, including raising rabbits and keeping bees, before deciding to become a nurse. He got his bachelor's degree in nursing from the University of Texas at Tyler, then worked as a nurse before retiring in 2001. He moved to Hernando in 2005.

Submitted to Torii Typhoon by Herb Powell



ASA OKINAWA ASSOCIATION
Duane Sands
4331 Pine View Dr NE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52402-1712



For those of you who are members of the ASA Okinawa Association, please look at your address label from your last issue of the newsletter and **note your membership expiration date** and send in your dues before the expiration date. Renewals are the lifeblood of our membership, so please be aware of your expiration date and renew accordingly.

To anyone who is not association members, please consider joining. Dues are only **\$10.00 a year**. Any former soldier who served in the 111th Sig Svc Company 327th Comm Recon Co, the 8603rd AAU, 3rd ASA Field Station, ASA Field Station Sobe, Army Field Station Okinawa, or any of the other units that fell under the Torii Station designation between 1945 and 1985 are cordially invited to become members.

Now, why should you join the Association? First, we were all elite soldiers that served without much recognition because of the nature of our work. We are part of a brotherhood and an organization that needs to be remembered. The Association is the vehicle to carry on the memory and tradition of the Signal Intelligence organizations that served on Okinawa. In order to do this, the help of every former member is needed. Membership gives you that opportunity! You will be able to participate in the management of the Association by attending the business meetings and voting on the matters brought up by the membership. The most important thing is comradeship that you will find by becoming a member and attending our reunions. This is something you will not find anywhere else, in any other walk of life. So often we hear the excuse, "Well, I won't know anyone." So what? It would be great to find that old friend that you ran around with, but an hour after you arrive, you'll feel like you've belonged there all your life. Ask anyone who has attended a reunion, they'll tell you the same thing. Give it a try: it'll only cost you ten bucks and it may possibly be the best \$10.00 you ever spent. Come on, we need you as a member!

Membership will also allow you to attend the business meeting, to bring business before the assembly, and to vote on issues brought up at the meeting. Among the recurring issues will be election of officers and selecting reunion sites. Every voice and vote is important and we'd like to have yours.

Our excellent newsletter, The Torii Typhoon is also available to be mailed by USPS for an additional **\$5 per year**. That is a bargain for three issues. If you are comfortable on the computer and able to subscribe to the ASA Okinawa Emailers list, you can receive the newsletter by email and save the \$5.00. (Information on subscribing is on the reunion web site at www.mlrsinc.com/asaokinawa)

The Association needs your support, please join and be a party of keeping the memory of ASA Okinawa alive.

-----DETACH HERE-----

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

Last Name: _____ First Name: _____ MI: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ St: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ e-mail: _____

Dues are \$10.00 per year. One year membership expires on 12/31/2017—(two years on 12/31/2018)

I wish to join the ASA Okinawa for: one year @\$10.00 _____ two years: @ \$20.00 _____

I prefer a paper copy of the Torii Typhoon. In addition to my dues I have:

Enclosed \$5.00 for the 03/2017, 07/2017 and 11/2017 issues _____

Enclosed \$5.00 for the 03/2018, 07/2018 and 11/2018 issues _____

Make checks payable to: **ASA Okinawa Association**

Mail checks to: **Duane Sands, 4331 Pine View Dr NE, Cedar Rapids, IA 52402-1712**