



# USS Lafayette Association

## Inaugural Business Meeting

June 3, 2005

Tunica, Mississippi

Frank Phipps, Master of Ceremony

### Opening

**Patrick Hannifin, Captain USS Lafayette, VADM USN (retired)** -They asked Jim and me to open this meeting. Let me say a few words first, because I got here first. It's been a great reunion; it's incredible that we got so many people here in such a short time. And I want to thank the guy that put it together. Bill Fraser with his website, he didn't do it by himself, I think his wife put it together. They were a lot of other that had a big part in this and you've done a fantastic job. The opportunity for me and I'm sure for Jim, to get together again and see a lot of old shipmates, some young shipmates and some very old shipmates like George Henson, Charlie Woodstock and one or two others that I won't mention. But it's been a fine time and I've enjoyed seeing all of you. Jim and I both plan to survive until at least the next one. Thank you.

**James Strong, Captain USS Lafayette** – I think that Pat missed one of the honorees, and that is the ladies, they are absolutely beautiful. I was intrigued by the fact that the blue and the gold crew didn't see that much, about a day every 3 months, and yet there is a lot of affection shown here today, in spite of the fact we could be from either crew and meet some wonderful people here. On a little more serious note, all of you should be very proud of the part that you played in the ballistic missile program and being the very, very crucial part of what brought the Soviet Union down. There isn't any other part of the armed forces that did as much. Colin Power gave a talk one time and said essentially the same thing. Young people these days don't really have an understanding of all that you do. I do pay a very special tribute to the wives and families that put up with all these guys for so long, under very difficult circumstances, you are the real heroes. Thanks to the wives, these guys clean up pretty good.

**Invocation –Ed Cagney**, We thank you for the heritage and liberty we enjoy as Americans and for the privilege of having served in the Submarine Service to protect that liberty. We pray Thy blessing and wisdom for our country's leaders and those chosen to lead our organization. May they seek your guidance as they serve our nation and us. At this time we remember those of our shipmates who are sick, troubled, and bereaved. Place your healing hand on their bodies and mind, we pray. We pray for our shipmates on Eternal Patrol. Bless them and their loved ones, now and through all eternity. May we feel your presence in this meeting. Make us patient with our shipmates, wise in our deliberations, and bless us during this time together. We offer these prayers in your name. Amen!

#### Pledge to Flag

#### Moment of Silence for those on Eternal Patrol

**Introduction of Special Guests**, Officers, Blue Plank Owners, Gold Plank Owners, Decommissioning Crew, Wives and friends

### Committee Reports

**Financial Report – Herb Murphy**, I appreciate the opportunity to do this. I'll give you a quick run down of what I have so far. I came in with 3 payments to make for Banquet, Rock'n'Soul and Graceland, from payments made for advanced deposits, donations and dues totaling \$5405. I paid out \$12 for checks, \$287.50 for the Rock'n'Soul tour, \$4320.00 for the convention center for banquet, \$82.35 soda pop, \$32.60 more soda pop and \$495.00 for the Graceland tour. As of right now I have \$736.00 in the checkbook, \$485.50 in cash and then pick up some more from the 50/50 and then some from the auction. I will have to wait until the dust settles and it looks like we will have \$1300 to \$1400 to start off the USS Lafayette Association. I think that is a pretty good way to start, because when Bill Fraser started this up we had zilch, I didn't even have enough to open a checking account until Captain Groth for the banquet.

**Frank Phipps** – One thing that Herb did not mention, David Roth's book have sold out and he made 50 copies and he graciously spent \$20.00 on it, and he is donating all of it. He probably spent that much apiece on it and he tells me that he has \$1000 that Herb doesn't know about yet. Thank you for helping.

### Business

**Amount of Association Dues**, a survey was put out by Bill Fraser with \$10.00 a year suggested. We will have mailing cost and we will be sending out a news letter. Motion was mad for \$10.00 a year, seconded and motion carried.

**Association By-Laws**, Bill Fraser put together some By-Laws which you have all had an opportunity to look at, I did read them all the way through. I don't have any problem with them; they have worked and are plagiarized. I want to recommend that we accept these By-Laws as they are allowing the duly elected President will have the sole authority to implement them as he sees fit to fit the character of this organization and we vote on them at the next meeting. Motion made and seconded, motion carried.



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**Location and Date of next Reunion,** I asked Roy Guthrie to put together and collect votes on the next location. He has tabulated them. Receiving 1 vote were Lake Tahoe, Seattle, Myrtle Beach, St Mary's, Nashville, Reno, Kansas City, Las Vegas, Boston, 2 votes for New Orleans. Tied for second with 6 votes apiece were Austin, TX and New London, CT. The top vote getter was Charleston 13. The President is instructed to look at Charleston, SC to see if it can accommodate our next reunion. A motion was made and seconded to have the reunion every 2 years and motion carried. After a great deal of discussion on the location, a motion was made and seconded to have the elected officers decide on the next reunion location.

**Election of Officers,** Billy Knight and Herb Wise tied for Association President and will meet offline to decide who will be President and who will be Vice-President. Ernie Lester was voted in as Association Secretary. David Roth was voted in as Association Treasurer. Billy Knight and Herb Wise reported that Billy Knight will be the President and Herb Wise will be Vice President.

**Other Business,** This is really from the bottom of my heart and I'm sure that's also from a lot of you. Captain Strong and Captain Hannifin both said that Bill Fraser deserves a thank you. This is one humongous achievement that we are all here.

**Bill Fraser,** I told Frank before the meeting that I didn't want to come up here, but now I feel compelled to come up here. First, I want to say thank you to Jane. She has put up with me through this, she is still with me and she is still smiling. Then I want to thank Herb Murphy who has been there every step of the way with me, providing moral support and taking care of the money. Thank you, Herb. I want to thank at the head table, two of the finest gentlemen that I've ever had the pleasure to meet, Admiral Hannifin and Captain Strong. The two of you together commissioned our submarine, the two of you together commissioned our inaugural reunion. Thank you so much, for being here. All of you have talked to me this week and you know that I don't talk too much, so just want to thank each and every one of you. All the wives and friends have jumped in to put together the name tags, folded the brochures and done other tasks. All the shipmates have all pitched in to make this a success. Stubb Crawford collected and had to use several trips to get everything up here for the auction. Dave Roth, what you did with the book, and the memories they brought back, opening the floodgates. That's going to be the most significant memory going forward, and the money that you raised for the Association, thank you, thank you.

**Frank Phipps,** There are 66 shipmates attending, including 3 officers and there are 47 wives, friends and children that have also attended this reunion. Thank you all for attending.

## Closing Ceremony

**Closing – John Groth, Navigator USS Lafayette, Captain USN (retired) -** I would like to share with you a couple of experiences that I've had since leaving the Navy. While we were at sea together on Lafayette during the Cold War I believe we all wondered if we were really making a difference and doing the right thing by being there. Whether the Cold War was real, whether Russia was a threat to our wives, children, families and our personal freedom, or were we wasting our efforts. I had an opportunity after I retired to visit Russia behind the Iron Curtain. It was a shocking, eye opening experience. It drove home to me that not only was what we were doing right it was absolutely necessary. The regime that controlled Russia was a very real threat. I was behind the Iron Curtain for ten days; I've been frightened many times in my life but the fear I experienced there was very real and very different. The suppression and control of the people, natives and visitors, was complete and constant. This trip made me understand just how necessary our patrols were. Our days on Lafayette, with their plethora of challenges, made a difference. Our personal sacrifices, the extremely long hours, short pay and enforced absences guaranteed our freedoms. Four years after this first trip I returned again to Russia. The Iron Curtain was down now, and I was able to take Joan, my wife, with me. Conditions had changed dramatically. The people were no longer oppressed and afraid to speak with Americans. On this trip I got first hand knowledge of how much of a challenge we presented to the Soviet Navy. A member of our delegation had been a submarine officer in the Soviet Navy. My background was well known to all of the Russians. This individual deliberately spilled a drink in my lap. He was immediately escorted from the group and the leader of their group apologized for that individual's conduct. The Russians fully understood how much difference we made. Shortly after the visit to Russia I went to sea with my son-in-law on the Henry Jackson, an Ohio class boomer. It was like going home. The folks in the Nav Center, the torpedo room, the crew's mess, the missile control center, and the wardroom acted just like us. The same sense of humor, dedication to professional knowledge and conduct, and overall attitude reminded me again of what we were able to accomplish. This reunion has been another good experience. Seeing the not so old faces, sharing experiences and laughs and finding out that after Lafayette we continued to make a difference has been very gratifying. Thanks again to our original Commanding Officers who set the tone for our ship; a tone that carried us through difficult times with humor and optimism and allowed us to make a significant contribution to our families and our country. Shipmates, ladies and gentleman thank you.

**Benediction – Herb Wise,** Dear God, our Heavenly Father; we approach you again at the end of this meeting. We are grateful for the privilege we have of meeting as veterans of the Submarine Service. Bless us as we go our separate ways and give us traveling mercies as we return to our homes and loved ones. Amen!

**Master of Ceremony - Frank Phipps, Co-Chaplains - Ed Cagney & Herb Wise, Treasurer - Herb Murphy, Secretary - Billy Knight**