

**CAPTAIN SWAN,**

special guests

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**FRIENDS AND LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ALL!**

**FIRST LET ME SAY WHAT AN HONOR IT IS TO BE HERE. TO HAVE PARTICIPATED IN YESTERDAY'S MEMORIAL SERVICE AND THEN YOU FURTHER HONOR ME AND THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS ASSOCIATION BY PRESENTING US WITH THIS 30TH ANNIVERSARY BANNER. WE ARE GRATEFULLY APPRECIATIVE OF NOT JUST THIS BUT OF ALL THE WAYS YOU HAVE ALL COME TO BE SPECIAL TO US! FROM REPRESENTATION AT EACH OF OUR REUNIONS THE LAST 5 YEARS TO YOUR HOSTING OUR VISIT HERE THIS YEAR.**

**IF YOU WILL PERMIT ME, I WOULD LIKE TO TAKE A MOMENT TO SPEAK ABOUT THE CREW MEMBERS OF THE HMAS MELBOURNE AND THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS THAT FATEFUL MORNING 30 YEARS AGO AND WHAT HAS TRANSPIRED SINCE.**

**A CORRESPONDENT ON SPECIAL ASSIGNMENT FOR THE NEW YORK TIMES, A MR. ROBERT TRUMBULL WROTE, "MEMBERS OF THE MELBOURNE JUMPED ABOARD THE DESTROYER FROM THE FLIGHT DECK TO HELP RESCUE AMERICAN SAILORS." HE REPORTED, "THE STERN SECTION OF THE DESTROYER, WHICH REMAINED AFLOAT, WAS SECURED ALONGSIDE MELBOURNE'S STARBOARD SIDE WITHIN THREE MINUTES." MR. TRUMBULL'S ARTICLE WENT ON TO PRAISE THE**

**CONDUCT OF THE CREW OF THE MELBOURNE IN THE MOMENTS AFTER THE IMPACT BY QUOTING CAPTAIN STEVENSON'S BELIEF THAT BECAUSE OF THE SPEED OF RESPONSE MANY LIVES WERE SAVED.**

**THE MELBOURNE'S EXECUTIVE OFFICER COMMANDER ERROL STEVENS PRAISED THE EVANS CREW. "THEY WERE COOL, THERE WAS NO PANIC THERE." HE SAID "THERE WERE NO RECRIMINATIONS BY THE AMERICAN BOYS EITHER. A LOT SHOOK ME BY THE HAND WHEN THEY WERE LEAVING THE MELBOURNE AND SAID THEY WERE SORRY WE HAD TO MEET UNDER THESE CIRCUMSTANCES."**

**NOW THAT I QUOTED THIS CORRESPONDENT ON HOW THE CREWS OF THESE TWO GALLANT SHIPS REACTED THAT NIGHT, LET ME MAKE A LITTLE OBSERVATION. THE AUSTRALIAN SAILORS WERE RESPONSIVE, QUICK, AND ENDANGERED THEMSELVES AT TIMES TO HELP OTHERS. THE AMERICAN BOYS WERE COOL--- NO PANIC, CASTING NO BLAME. PROFESSIONAL! FROM WHERE DOES SUCH PROFESSIONALISM COME? IT COMES FROM LEADERS!**

**CAPTAIN STEVENSON WAS KNOWN<sup>N</sup> BY HIS CREW TO BE A SOFT SPOKEN MAN, WELL ORIENTED TO LIFE OUTSIDE SERVICE CIRCLES AND RESPECTED AMONG ENLISTED MEN. HE WAS SAID TO BE "MORE DEMOCRATIC". CAPTAIN STEVENSON WAS ALSO A "TIN CAN SAILOR". HE WAS SERVING ABOARD THE BRITISH DESTROYER "NESTOR" WHEN IT WAS SUNK WHILE ON CONVOY DUTY NEAR MALTA IN WORLD WAR II. IT MAY WELL HAVE BEEN THAT EXPERIENCE AND THE KNOWLEDGE OF HOW QUICKLY A DESTROYER CAN GO DOWN THAT MADE HIM SO RESPONSIVE TO HAVE THE STERN OF THE EVANS TIED UP ALONGSIDE WITHIN THREE MINUTES. A FEAT HAILED BY HIS AUSTRALIAN NAVAL**

COLLEAGUES AS "INCREDIBLE SEAMANSHIP", AND OFFICERS OF THE EVANS DESCRIBED THE MELBOURNE'S PERFORMANCE AS "MAGNIFICENT." MRS. STEVENSON TOLD CORRESPONDENT TRUMBULL, "HE NEVER LOSES HIS COOL." SHE DESCRIBED HOW, WHEN THE NESTOR WENT DOWN, HER HUSBAND HAD A CHOICE OF SAVING HIS GOLF CLUBS OR A PRIZED PICTURE OF HIS SHIP. SHE SAID, HE ALWAYS THINKS OF THE RIGHT THING TO DO AT THE RIGHT TIME." HE LET THE GOLF CLUBS GO AND KEPT THE PICTURE." NOW I DON'T KNOW ABOUT THE REST OF YOU, BUT I WOULDN'T BELIEVE THAT WOULD TAKE A WHOLE LOT <sup>BE A DIFFICULT</sup> ~~OF THINKING~~ <sup>DECISION</sup> OF THINKING. I MEAN, PICTURE THIS....."OCEAN"....."KAPOK LIFE JACKET"..... "PICTURE -12OZ'S ..... "GOLF CLUBS , WEIGHT 55LBS WITH FILL ABLE BAG." YES....., I THINK IN THIS CASE HE PROBABLY DID MAKE THE CORRECT CHOICE!

THE EVANS HAD A LEADER TOO! THERE IS NOT A WHOLE LOT I CAN TELL YOU ABOUT CAPTAIN McLEMORE. I DO KNOW THIS. HE STILL BLAMES HIMSELF! HE STILL FEELS RESPONSIBLE! BUT THE CAPTAIN HAD A REPUTATION FOR TRAINING, TRAINING AND MORE TRAINING. HE WAS KNOWN TO DO THINGS THE RIGHT WAY. HIS EXECUTIVE OFFICER CAPTAIN McMICHAEL SAID OF HIM, "ALBERT WAS A SENSITIVE, RESPONSIBLE OFFICER, AND THE NAVY WAS HIS LIFE. HE TOOK WHAT HAPPENED PERSONALLY." BUT I TELL YOU THIS, IN ALL OF THE CONVERSATIONS WE'VE HAD WITHIN THE U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS ASSOCIATION, WITH SHIPMATES FROM THE 40'S, 50'S, 60'S, AND YES, EVEN WITH THE SURVIVORS OF THAT FATEFUL MORNING, AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF THOSE LOST, THERE HAS NEVER BEEN, TO MY KNOWLEDGE, ANY BLAME OR RECRIMINATION CAST UPON CAPTAIN McLEMORE. YES, WE ALL RECOGNIZE THAT HE

**WAS RESPONSIBLE, BUT HE WAS RESPONSIBLE IN THE POLITICAL SENSE, IN THAT THE RESPONSIBILITY CAME WITH THE JOB. RESPONSIBLE? YES..... BUT THERE IS A BIG DIFFERENCE BETWEEN RESPONSIBILITY AND BLAME.**

**SO WHAT TWO THINGS DID THESE GALLANT SHIPS HAVE IN COMMON?  
PROFESSIONALISM! AND LEADERSHIP!**

**WHAT HAS THAT LED TO TODAY? WE HAVE TODAY, THREE DECADES OF SAILORS, FROM TWO FRIENDLY NATIONS, SEPARATED BY THOUSANDS OF MILES OF OCEAN, WHO RECOGNIZE NOT ONLY LEADERSHIP AND PROFESSIONALISM, BUT WHO ARE SENSITIVE TO NATIONAL PRIDE, PATRIOTISM AND THE FRAILTY OF HUMAN LIFE.**

**ARTHUR DONNELLY PERHAPS, SAID IT BEST IN THE CIRCULAR CREST HE DESIGNED THAT YOU ALL SAW ON THE MEMORIAL SERVICE PROGRAM. CIRCULAR REPRESENTING THE WORLD, THIS GLOBE WE ALL RESIDE ON, THE LIGHT OF THE MOON REFLECTING ON THE OCEAN WAVES, A WHITE HAT FLOATING ON THE SEA AND HANDS CLASPED IN EFFORT OF RESCUE. ON TOP OF THE CIRCLE IS "U.S.S. FRANK E. EVANS" AND ARCHING BELOW IS "HMAS MELBOURNE", BUT THE MOST IMPORTANT PART OF THE PLAQUE THAT WAS PRESENTED TO OUR ASSOCIATION IS THE BANNER BELOW THE CIRCULAR CREST. IT SAYS SIMPLY..... "FRIENDSHIP"**

**LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE ARE INDEED BLESSED! WE'VE EXPERIENCED LEADERSHIP, AND WE'VE EXPERIENCED PROFESSIONALISM, AND WE ALL RESIDE TOGETHER, THOUGH OCEANS APART, IN "FRIENDSHIP."**

**THANK YOU!**