

PT 658–NEWS FROM THE CREW

A publication from Save the PT Boat, Inc. PO Box 13422 Portland, OR 97213 503-286-3083 www.savetheptboatinc.com Winter 2024

President's Message As we conclude our 32nd year, I am reminded of the amazing efforts of so many talented individuals and wonderful donors who make PT 658 a reality.

Our dedicated group of 25+ volunteer crew invest thousands of hours annually to restore, maintain and operate this amazing example of WW II history. Our crew includes a carpenters, engineers, mechanics, IT specialists, electricians, a nurse, and our skipper Jesse Haas, whose day job is as a tug captain on the Willamette and Columbia Rivers. And let's not forget our retired large animal veterinarian Dave Mackay!

With the generosity of our wonderful donors, this year we were able to bring the boat to an even greater historically accurate status. These important projects are described in the following pages—and we thank everyone for their investment in these efforts! Special thanks to Quest for Truth Foundation & The Peter Marsh Foundation who gave very generous donations (see page 3) and to The Samuel S. Johnson Foundation for supporting our mission of historic preservation, education and honoring our Veterans.

We are honored to continue the work begun by the original 13 PT Veterans to preserve PT 658 as a living tribute to all PT Boaters serving in WW II.

Bill Weaver

Honoring PT Boat Veteran Stan Sessler during 2024 Rose Festival's Fleet Week!

We were honored to greet US Navy, US Coast Guard and



Canadian ships as they arrived for Portland's Rose Festival Fleet Week in June. And we were especially honored to have PT 156 Veteran Stan Sessler and his son Greg on board. Stan recently celebrated his 100th birthday. Guests aboard PT 658 rendered honors to the fleet as ships traveled on the Willamette River to the downtown Portland seawall.



Visiting ships included Her Majesty's Canadian Ship Yellowknife (HMCS-706) (left), a Kingstonclass Coastal Defence Vessel homeported in Esquimalt British Columbia.



The USS
Montgomery
(LCS-8) (left) an independenceclass littoral
combat ship, is a fast, agile,
mission-focused

platform designed to operate in near-shore environments against 21st-century coastal threats.

Riding on PT 658 during the 2024 Rose Festival brought back many of Stan's memories aboard PT 156 during WW II. Son Greg shared the following with us:



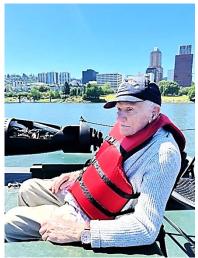
"When the US entered WW II, young men enlisted as soon as they could; in my dad's case being underaged at 17. With his previous boating experience, his assignment as a quartermaster to PT Boat 156 in the South Pacific was inevitable. After V-J Day, a return to the States and redeployment to a newly built destroyer, the USS Fechteler, during its outfitting and shakedown cruises was his next naval experience. But falling in love and getting married to my mother interrupted that plan. After leaving the Navy and getting his college degree in animal husbandry, a long career in farming followed. Photo left: Quartermaster, 2nd Class Stan Sessler after enlisting in US Navy. Photo below: Stan's crew.

During the 2024 Rose Festival aboard PT 658, Dad took a front row



seat and shouted the "Wind Them Up" signal for the crew to start the 3 massive Packard engines. My dad is hard of hearing but sitting next to the open engine hatch, the sound of the engines brought a smile to his face. The ride was fantastic, and my dad was amazed as many fellow passengers stopped by to say a few words to him and get their picture taken."







Photos are of PT Boat Veteran Stan Sessler and his son Greg Sessler, June 6,

2024, aboard PT 658 during Portland's Rose Festival Fleet Week. *Photo above left*, Greg (standing) while Stan shouted "*Wind Them Up*" for the crew to start the engines. *Middle photo* is of Stan enjoying his ride on PT 658 along the Willamette River in downtown Portland. *Photo above right* shows Stan signing the map of his first WWII assignment–Tulagi in the Solomons.

Thank you to Quest for Truth Foundation! Our work to preserve PT 658 would not be possible without the generosity of The Quest for Truth Foundation. We extend our deepest gratitude to the Officers and Directors for their recent and very significant investment in our mission to preserve history, educate future generations, serve the community and honor Veterans. We also continue to remember and honor Brad Henke, long-time President of Quest for Truth Foundation, for his belief in our mission from the early days of our organization, and for his unwavering support for the efforts of our 13 founding PT Boat Veterans to preserve PT 658. On behalf of every member of our crew, and the thousands of people we impact each year, THANK YOU!

Thanks to our good friend Pete Marsh!

We are so grateful to Pete for his many generous contributions to PT 658! Pete's most recent donation was a 1934 Ford, 5-Window Coupe! This fully restored classic vehicle was in excellent condition, and its sale generated significant revenues to support the restoration of PT 658. *Photo left* is of Pete with this magnificent treasure.







Jack's Corner Page 4



Remembering our Friend, Master Chief Jack H. Duncan, PT Boater & PT 658 Docent Jack Duncan, American Hero and WW II PT Boater, went on his last patrol on November 3, 2024. Jack lived the richness of a full life over his 99 years, and participated in events that truly changed the world over the course of the last century.

Master Chief Jack Duncan, Ret. Jack Duncan (1985 photo left) was a PT 658 Docent along with his wife Marlene. Jack enlisted in 1942 as soon as he turned 17 after graduating from

from high school at age 16. He retired at age 60 as Pacific Fleet Subject Matter Expert in Counter-Terrorism while on his 5th recall to active duty in 1985. Jack served on PT 103 and other boats of PT Squadron 5 during the Solomon Islands and New Guinea Campaigns of 1943 to 1945. Returning

stateside, he completed Underwater Demolition Training in Florida and was sent to Manila where he served as a Navy policeman after the war ended. He served on active duty and in the Reserve for 43 years during World War II, the Korean War, Vietnam and the early years of the War on Terror. After retiring he coached Navy, college and high school rifle teams for another 13 years, wearing a Navy uniform for a total of 56 years.

Jack will be remembered as a true patriot, a devoted husband and father, and as our crew describes him--one of a kind. While Jack had a long and distinguished

Naval career, our crew knew him best as a friend, mentor, encourager, role model and cheer leader for our organization. He was an educator at heart and taught us so much about life aboard a PT Boat as a young enlistee who was passionate about serving our country in WW II during one of its darkest hours. We always looked forward to his email snippets, and to his annual visits to PT 658 with his wife Marlene, when we would learn about his Navy experiences, views on the world and so many other life topics. He delivered his wisdom with wit and in a way that made us eager for more.



Above: Jack with Save the PT Boat, Inc. President Maurie Hooper.

Those of us who were privileged to know Jack are unanimous in describing him as a truly amazing guy—an inspiration to all of us—and we will miss his support and encouragement. As his son Jeff wrote, "Dad was in awe of the Veterans and volunteers who painstakingly restored and continue to preserve and steward the only fully operational WW II PT boat still in existence." These photos of his visits to PT 658 remind us of the richness of our times with Jack. We will miss him dearly. We salute our good friend Jack, one of the greatest of the Greatest Generation!



Jack with Rose Festival Officials and USN Officers



At the helm of PT 658

Installation of Authentic PT Boat IFF System Underway Page 5

PT Boats were lost during the war to friendly fire, and the IFF (<u>Identification</u>: <u>Friend or Foe</u>) Electronics Suite was introduced in late 1944 to prevent these incidents. Over the past 25 years, our crew has continuously searched for additional original equipment that would have been installed on PT 658, especially IFF System parts including Radio, Radar, Navigation and Signaling Equipment.

PT 658's IFF system is mostly complete, but the last missing pieces of this have now been located and will be arriving soon for installation on the boat. Two interesting stories are behind finding these parts. First is the IFF Transponder Power Receptacle and Self Destructor Plug and Clip. Our friend Konrad Werzner who volunteers for battleship USS Texas (BB-35), is restoring that ship's Radio Room and Radar Control. He recently contacted our crew about some parts listed for sale on Facebook Marketplace in Beaverton OR by Matt Nordseth, a hazelnut orchard farmer. Konrad connected Jerry Gilmartin with Matt, and their visit resulted in locating enough of these rare IFF parts to supply all our needs plus many extras that we are able to provide to several other museums. A win for multiple museums!

The next part of the story is the most exciting. Since 1995 we have been trying to locate the largest and extremely rare piece of the original IFF Equipment—the BN Interrogator Responsor—manufactured by Farnsworth Electronics in 1944. The BN is the piece of gear that sends a signal query to nearby Transponders on other vessels or aircraft to *Identify* them as either *Friend* or *Foe* (IFF). Our friends at PT Boats, Inc. Museum in Fall River, MA generously agreed to donate the BN unit to us. Packing and shipping this rare and delicate piece of PT Boat electronic history created some concerns. So PT Boats Inc. volunteer Andy Small decided it was best to get an airline ticket for the 150-pound BN Unit, and to sit next to it on the delivery flight to Portland on November 10! Andy has gone above and beyond the call of duty for our benefit! Many thanks to Charlie Jones and Andy Small of PT Boats Inc., and to Jerry Gilmartin for making this happen.

Before the end of this year PT 658 will finally have a completely accurate 1944 IFF System suite of equipment installed!

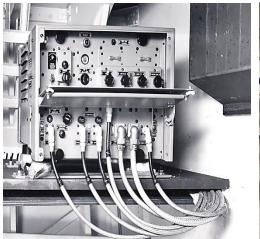




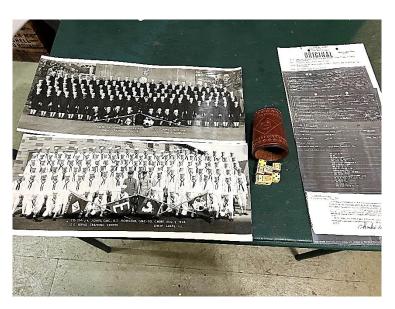


Photo above left: PT Boat BN Unit as installed in 1945. Photo above center: Installed IFF Parts on PT 658 include the Power Receptacle (lower right), Coax Cable, Antenna Plugs, Power and Data Plugs and Self Destructor Plug. Photo above right: IFF Transponder Power Connectors and Self Destructor Clips.

New in the Museum Page 6

The Museum has been gifted several exceptional acquisitions, all from "splinters", who are sons/daughters of PT Boaters! We are grateful to receive the items below from Anita Brengle, daughter of John Allen Jones, PT 149 MM 1/C (photos immediate below); a model and painting from the family of Ensign Frank L. Anderson, Skipper of PT 230 (photo at bottom left); and, items from the family of LT JG Carl F. Gould, Skipper of PT 185 (photo at bottom right).









We have also received a number of items (books, patches and photos) from Ruth and John Stewart and Doug Jacques, including the Silver Star given to their father William W. Stewart, Squadron Commander of RON 20 among other commands. In *photo next page*, Cmdr. Selman S. Bowling presents the Silver Star Medal to Lt. William W. Stewart, 31, USNR Skipper of PT 131 for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action in rescuing a Royal Australian Air Force Flight Officer pilot Ray Graetz 35 miles east of Aitape, New Guinea.

New in the Museum Page 7



Cataloging the Collection of Information about PT Boats and PT 658: We are currently undertaking a significant effort to organize the massive amounts of information in our possession related to PT 658 and other PT boats into a single computerized repository. This extensive collection of data includes technical/training data on all parts of the boat (which aids the crew in maintaining the boat), historic pictures and information on most PT Boats and their crews, detailed history of PT 658 including photos of the boat's restoration since it was acquired, photos of guests taking tours of the boat and museum and on rides on the Columbia and Willamette Rivers, numerous videos and much more information. Detailed information related to artifacts on display in the Museum is also included.

The collection now includes over 72,000 files stored on a server and accessible on multiple workstations for visitors and the crew. When visitors tour the Museum, they can access the data and view the extensive records. We have been able to salvage some water damaged documents by scanning and digitally enhancing the files. With metadata organization, we can locate information quickly for visitors.

Dry Bilge System: Water that collects and remains stagnant in the bilge (lowest part of the hull of a boat) invites algae growth leading to wood rot. Standard bilge pumps cannot remove all of the standing water, and when the pump ceases operation, some water still remains in the bilge.

To address this, we designed and installed a new bilge pump system on PT 658 which utilizes a wet/dry vacuum and pump to automatically pull the remaining water out of the bilge after the main pumps remove the majority of the water. The system consists of a central vacuum unit mounted just aft of the engine compartment. The vacuum is connected to three collection units with offloading pumps located in each. The system has a timer that turns the unit on every three hours to suction any water accumulating into the collection units. Water collected is automatically pumped overboard. Operating this automatic system allows the bilge to remain dry because the system is constantly picking up any water accumulating from small leaks.

After the new system was installed and the bilge was dry, rotted frame members were replaced and painted in the forward crew/galley area. *Photos below* show before and after areas of the bilge.

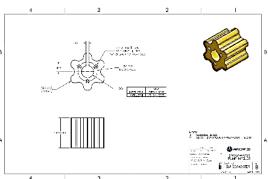






Packard 5M-2500 Seawater Pump Repairs: The Packard 5M-2500 marine engines that power PT 658 are cooled by sea water, which is forced through a heat exchanger by motion of the boat while underway and pumped by a seawater pump to cool the exhaust manifolds. The pump impeller consists of hard rubber molded over a bronze hub. Failure of the seawater pump can cause burn risk to the crew along with catastrophic engine damage due to overheating and steam escaping from the cooling system. We contacted the pump manufacturer, Sherwood Brass Works, but unfortunately no replacement impellers were available due to the age of the pumps.





Replacing the impellers (*photo left*: damaged pump impeller) required reverse engineering and manufacturing new impellers. Because earlier model pumps were solid bronze, we selected solid bronze impellers since bronze is easily machined and provides good wearability and corrosion resistance needed in a marine environment. The process began by digitally scanning a good impeller and its pump housing. Using the SolidWorks software program, the fit and clearance between the impeller and its housing were evaluated. Since the sea water pump is a positive

displacement pump, a close fit between the impeller and pump housing is needed within a few thousandths of an inch. Once final dimensions were determined, SolidWorks was used to produce a digital file needed for Computer Numerical Control (CNC) machining. A 2D drawing was developed to identify critical dimensions, tolerances, fits. material, etc. The scanning and CAD work was completed by Digital Scan 3D in Portland, OR.

Left: Sea Water Pump Impeller 2D Drawing.



New prototype impellers for one pump were machined by Holzer Machine Works in Milwaukie, OR for evaluation. (Note: each pump requires 4 impellers.)

Left: Replacement Bronze seawater pump impellers.



To verify that the pumps worked properly, volunteers designed and built a flow test fixture to bench test the pumps to verify operating parameters, 90 GPM. Testing demonstrated that the pumps operated properly and met specified capacity by measuring the pump discharge flowrate. This refurbished seawater pump was then installed on the starboard engine and has been operating properly since.

Left: Sea water pump installed on the Flow test fixture.

Soon we will manufacture impellers for three more pumps (12 impellers total), to refit the other two engines plus a spare pump.

With so much of the crew's attention and effort given in the past year to repairing the hull, we want to give you a snapshot of some of the boat's interior spaces within the hull. In this issue, we are featuring the chart room, galley, crew sleeping quarters and officer's quarters. Board Secretary Fred Juras provides a walkthrough of spaces where PT Boaters (12-14 member crews) sometimes lived in small, cramped spaces, while defending our freedom during WW II. Crews in the Mediterranean and Pacific theaters usually lived in shore bases.



Tucked directly under the main deck's Chart House (which includes the helm, steering wheel and navigation equipment), crews would step down into the Chart Room to access charts, maps and navigational equipment.

Photo left: Helm with view into Chart Room. Photo below left: Radar unit. Photo right: TCS13 Radio Transmitter & Receiver.





Stepping down the ladder from the Chart Room, the crew would enter the galley (*photo below left*) located at the bottom of the boat's interior. The galley is furnished with original PT Boat equipment, and authentically replicates an original PT galley where crews would eat their meals (*photo below right*, is of an actual PT Boat galley and crew).





Moving toward the bow of the boat from the galley are the crews quarters where PT crews could sleep and store their gear.

Photos right show bunks on bottom and top and cubby holes to store gear and clothes. Every square inch was used to provide space for the basic needs of the crew.





Located directly behind

the galley is the Officer's quarters where a head, desk, ammunition storage locker and 3 sleeping areas were provided for 2-3 officers including the Skipper and XO (Executive Officer). (*Photos below* are of Officer's quarters.)







The foul weather jacket (*in photo above*) is from William H. "Bill" Skaggs who joined the Navy V-7 Reserve program following Pearl Harbor and attended Midshipman School at Northwestern University. He was on active duty in RON 8 in the Philippines and was skipper of PT 143 in the Southern Philippines, Sulu Archipelago and N. Borneo until the end of the war.

Last year, James Hallstrom, a SeaScout and mechanical engineering student at Washington State University, was fulfilling his Eagle Scout Badge by beginning the process of replacing parts of 2

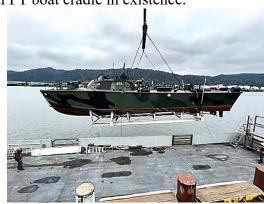


of the 1945 deteriorated wooden bunks on our steel cradle as a senior project. James had to return to school before the project was completed. In December 2023, PT 658 volunteers Ian Harding, Don Cameron, Tom Cates, Jack Coulter and others began work to replace the remaining 10 bunks and overhaul the cradle.

The cradle, originally built in 1945 by Higgins Industries in New Orleans, LA is used to lift the boat out of the water, and is the only known original PT boat cradle in existence.

Cradles are specialized

steel and wood structures designed to support PT boats during transit. Cradles were crucial for moving PT boats from manufacturing facilities to their operational theaters, often involving transport on larger cargo ships. Cradles often made a round trip, returning empty to PT boat factories, ready to load another new PT boat. Other cradles remained in theater to transport PT boats from one deployment to another, to send them to and from local repair facilities, or to support them while being repaired on-site at their deployment locations. The method for



placing PT 658 onto the cradle involves using a crane (with a capacity of 150 tons) and steel cables. The crane lowers the cradle into the water, submerging it about 10 feet deep. The PT boat is carefully guided into place, floating above the cradle. The cradle is then raised until it contacts the boat's hull, and the boat and cradle are lifted into the air and placed onto the barge. *Photo above left: Deteriorated 1945-era wood bunk. Photo above right: PT 658 hoisted on cradle.*

The first step was to make full-size templates of the existing bunks to transfer the exact shape of each bunk onto new lumber. Bunks have complex three-dimensional shapes—each is gently curved from the boat's centerline keel to the gunwale along the edge and tapered from the bow to





the stern. To carve each bunk's custom bow-to-stern taper, the templates were used to mark the bunks. An adjustable circular saw jig created by Don Cameron was then used to make slanted kerf cuts into the wood. Each bunk's final tapered shape was created by following the kerfs with hand chisels, power planers, and belt sanders. Far left: Ian Harding cutting kerfs. Near left: Ian Harding and Don Cameron.

To create a secure fit and eliminate pressure points that could damage the PT hull, custom-built wooden bunks were bolted to the steel backbone. High-density rubber mats were secured to the bunks to protect the hull during transport in heavy seas.



Rubber mats were attached to the treated wood using stainless steel screws.

Several bunks required cutouts to create space for sensors, water intakes, or propeller shafts that extend below the boat's hull. Brass name tags, stamped with each bunk's position on the cradle, were fabricated and recesses for protecting each tag were routed into each bunk using a router jig created by Don Cameron.



Tags were sealed using a watertight resin.



Over 350 volunteer hours were used to complete the project, including researching and making templates, kerf cutting, chiseling, power planing, sanding and painting.

Left: Completely Restored Cradle.

In addition to hosting interested groups including the Antique and Classic Boat Society, the Corvette Club and the Jaguar Club, we provided trips to the following groups:

First Responders: On August 15, we sponsored a ride to the Vancouver waterfront for Vancouver Fire and Police Dept. Officers (*photo below left*). Also on board was Vancouver Mayor Ann McEnery Ogle and her husband Terry Ogle (with PT 658 Board President Bill Weaver, *photo below right*).







American Cancer Society: One of the most rewarding ways we give back to the community is by supporting charities in their fundraising activities. *Photo right: the Tacheny Family, Nick, Jeff & Matthew*, winners of the July 8, 2024 ride on PT 658 during the recent American Cancer Society Auction.

Not only were we able to support the ACS in raising important funds for their mission, but the ride gave us an opportunity to educate guests about the role of PT Boats in WW II.



Memorial Ride: The family of Rev. Jerry Keesee joined us for a memorial ride on July 8, 2024 to honor our longtime volunteer Chaplain Jerry Keesee. The Honor Guard played taps and presented the American flag to Rev. Keesee's family.



THANK YOU! We deeply appreciate the support of our mission provided by our friends between November 15, 2023-November 15, 2024!

Anonymous

Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum – LCI 713 Peter F. Anderson, memory of my dad Lloyd F.

Anderson, LT Commander, PT 230

Richard E. Anderson

Richard R.C. Ayer Charitable Fund, in honor of Mr. & Mrs. Richard R.C. Ayer

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Edward L. Barnes, memory Jennings J. Barnes, USN, WW II

Cheryl Croft Bennett, memory of T/Sgt. Eddie L. Croft, OSS, SCPO US Navy Seal (Ret) Tyrone S. Woods

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Wally & Eileen Boerger

Douglas Bomarito

Gregory Bossons

Thelma Bourbonnais, memory of Jim Bourbonnais, PT247-238 RON 20

Joan Breed, memory of Dr. Robert T. Breed, LT USNR, RON 23

Thomas & Anita Brengle, memory of Anita's father John Allen Jones, MM 1/C PT 149, RON 8

Cherie & John Briggs, in honor of Bob Alton's contributions to saving the PT Boat

Joseph & Kathleen Burger

Weldon T. Burton

James Burwell

Sharley Bryce, memory of Marc Janes, Commander of PT in Leyte Gulf-1944-45, and honor of Marc Janes Jr., Commander of Swift Boat in Vietnam

John Cameron

Eugene H. Carbaugh

Wing M. Choy

Tudor F. Davis, in honor and memory of All PT Sailors and Submariners

Doug Decker, former EN2 USN

Pete & Sue Dieckerhoff, memory of Dr. Al Skinner, Jr., Skipper PT 595, Commanding Officer PT 591, RON 40

Capt. Don Duncan

Jack & Marlene Duncan

Bill & Ellen Farr, memory of Chuck Kellogg

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Jay & Barbara Hamachek, memory of Russell E. Hamachek, Commanding Officer of RON 39

Tod R. Hamachek, memory of Russell E. Hamachek, Commanding Officer of RON 39

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Erik R. Hauge, memory of LTJG Olaf F. Hauge, Skipper PT 547, RON 20 Philippines, PT 511, RON 35, D-Day

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John L. Krier, memory of Roscoe S. Krier, LT CDR

Scott C. Kuesel, memory of my father Arthur "Buck" R. Kuesel, LTJG, PT 505 RON 34 and PT 188 RON 8

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USS Oakland CL-95

Lucas Larimore

Kathy Larson, memory of Eugene Eaton

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Arthur Andrew Lopez, JD & Dee Degner on behalf of my father Joe G. Lopez, PT 129, RON 7 & 8

Dave & Kay Mackay Peter & Barbara Marsh Peter R. Marsh Foundation

Brooks Martin, memory of Bob Bealer, Navy Pilot, PBY seaplane

Mike Martin, memory of father who served in WW II

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Portland Yacht Club member donations during PT 658's visit to the Club

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Richard B. Soloman & Alyce Flitcraft, in appreciation of PT 658 Captain Jesse Haas

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Dr. David & Susan Wisdom, memory of Chuck Kellogg Ronald B. Wolflick

Dan Yates, honor of Vice Admiral John D. Bulkeley, Medal of Honor Recipient

Pam Young, honor of Ron Taylor's birthday Rick Zenn

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Amphibious Forces Memorial Museum – LCI 713

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Oregon BottleDrop Giving Program

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Services—tug boat services for haul-out, fueling **CDI Sales, Ed Calhoun--**High speed balancing for

super charger parts

Huser Fire Fighting Equipment - fire extinguisher inspection, servicing

Barry Haythornthwaite – for manufacturing new riveting tooling to support hull repairs

Alison Mazon, A. Mazon & Associates, Accredited Marine Surveyor

A-Dec Industries, Paul Sturges—assembly, precision drilling, machining of parts

Vigor Industrial LLC– for providing moorage, crane and other significant services to PT 658

Donations of PT Boat and PT Boater Artifacts and Memorabilia:

Peter Anderson, Ensign Frank L. Anderson, Skipper PT 230 (father)

Anita Brendle, John Allen Jones, MM1/C PT 149, RON 8 (father)

Rick Gould, Kim Gould, Alice Gould Hanscam, LTJG Carl F. Gould Jr., Exec Officer PT 178, Skipper PT 185 (father)

John Stewart, LT William W. Stewart, Squadron Commander RON 20 (father)

We have made every attempt to compile an accurate list and appreciate learning of omissions or corrections. Please email updates to: pt.barb.1@gmail.com, or send to: Save the PT Boat, Inc., PO Box 13422, Portland, OR 97213