

U.S.S. PIEDMONT



AD17

President Emeriti

John Geraghty
Ken Werth

President

Robert "Willie" Williams
1829 Kathleen Ct
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
Phone 757-479-2733
e-mail griswold5@verizon.net

Vice President

Joe Pietrosanti
123 Seminary Ave.
Binghamton NY. 13905
Phone 607-723-0428
email NONE

Secretary/Treasurer

Kent Thomas
7800 W.158th St.
Overland Park, KS 66223
Phone: 913-381-8934
e-mail kthomas82@kc.rr.com

Directors

Warren Hopkins
David Engelbert
Ron Orszag
Jack Chesnick

PIEDMONT NEWSLETTER November 2016

No thanks to Hurricane Matthew the annual reunion of USS Piedmont shipmates and guests became a two-day gathering instead of four. About 40 attended the abbreviated reunion in Savannah Ga.

With the hurricane bearing down on the east coast most of us "abandoned ship " by Friday although a few people had to wait until later to get airline flights or get the all clear to head south.

The reunion began with the registration Wednesday, Oct. 5 at the Best Western Plus hotel in Port Wentworth , in north Savannah. Acting President Robert (Willie) Williams and his wife, Aslaug welcomed attendees with name tags and gift bags in our hospitality room.

Williams announced that Bill Kastens had resigned the Presidency because of health issues. Bill suffered a broken pelvis after falling at his home. At last report he was in a rehabilitation facility in Topeka, Ks. his home town.

We got reacquainted with one another over drinks and snacks, then enjoyed a delicious buffet dinner, catered in our hospitality room.

Instead of three scheduled tours our one only bus tour was conducted Thursday, an interesting ride through historic and beautiful Savannah. The city was founded in 1733 and is divided into 22 public squares, with many monuments on display.

Following the Thursday morning tour, we were treated to another outstanding buffet lunch at the Old Country Thyme restaurant.

Due to the weather our business meeting was moved up a day with Williams calling the meeting to order at 2 p.m. Williams said there would be no Friday or

Saturday dinners or tours and that individuals refunds would be forthcoming after catering and transportation refunds are received.

Kent Thomas gave the annual treasurer's report showing a temporary balance of \$1,256.61 pending receipt of additional expenses. He said many on Piedmont roster have not stayed current on dues payment, and that he would be more aggressive in sending out dues notices, in order to keep our organization financially sound. The treasurer's report was approved by voice vote.

Next came the election of officers. Williams who has been vice president was elected president, Joe Pietrosanti was elected vice president and Thomas reelected secretary-treasurer. Board members are appointed by the president.

After considerable discussion on our next reunion site the group favored San Diego for 2017, and a joint reunion with the Dixie and Prairie for 2018 in Denver Co. As for the joint reunion, Williams reminded that we had discussed such a possibility for many years and with our reunion attendance dropping so much this year and last, the time seems right to try a joint reunion.

Following dinner Thursday evening the annual ceremony honoring newly deceased members was conducted by Jack Chesnick and Joe Pietrosanti.

Those remembered were:

Ken Gifford, TR 1946-47

Thomas Smyth, EM2 1958-62

Ken Werth, 1946-47

Cecil Whitmer, SF Plank owner

Russ Thalman, QM Plank owner

Frank Gaeta , Baker, 1947-50

Ed Friesen, SK1, 1946-49

Harold Benfer MR, 1952-54

Darrell Weeks, SK, 1950-54

Robert Minick, QM, Plank owner

George Farini, Coxswain, Plank owner

Loran Lashbrook, RM, 1946-48

John Bartholomeo, EM1, Plank owner

William Strum, CS, 1951

The annual raffle concluded the evening, and as usual, attendees were generous in their support. In addition to financing hospitality food and drink, they contributed a net profit of \$405 to the Piedmont treasury.

Some Piedmonters left for home Thursday and most others departed Friday. In effect, the 2016 reunion was history. Bring on San Diego.

In closing I would like to say to all members that as your elected officers we accept the responsibilities of our office and thank you for putting your confidence in us and will do our very best, but we cannot do it alone. For us to be successful we must all do our part. How you ask? Pay your dues, not just the years you attend reunions but every year. Attend the reunions (we understand that it is not always possible) and lastly get involved. These events just don't happen by themselves.

Expect our next newsletter in April 2017 when we will give you updates and information on Hotel and tours.

Until then Fair Winds and Following Seas

Robert (Willie) Williams

Joe Pietrosanti

Kent Thomas