

THE FOXBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY

JANUARY 2016 47th Year Issue #4

THE WORST DISASTER IN U.S. NAVY HISTORY - SINKING OF THE USS INDIANAPOLIS DURING WORLD WAR II



The U.S. Navy heavy cruiser USS INDIANAPOLIS (CA-35) underway in 1939. Her sinking in the Pacific in 1945, as World War II approached its end, led to the greatest naval disaster in U.S. history. (Source: Wikipedia and the National Archives and Records Administration; U.S. Navy photo)

The Foxborough Historical Society at its January meeting will feature popular lecturer **Dr. Gary Hylander** discussing the tragic sinking of the Navy cruiser, USS INDIANAPOLIS, which led to the greatest single loss of life at sea in the history of the U.S. Navy.

At 12:14 am, in July 1945, after delivering parts for the first atomic bomb to the United States air base at Tinian, the INDIANAPOLIS was torpedoed by the Imperial Japanese Navy, sinking in twelve minutes. Of the 1,196 crewmen aboard, approximately 300 went down with the ship. The remaining 900 men faced exposure, dehydration, saltwater poisoning, and shark attacks while floating with few lifeboats and almost no food or water. Since this was a secret

mission, the Navy learned of the sinking when survivors were spotted four days later. Only 317 survived.

The ship's captain, Charles Butler McVay III, survived and was court-martialled and convicted of "hazarding his ship by failing to zigzag" despite overwhelming evidence that the Navy itself had placed the ship in harm's way, despite testimony from the Japanese submarine commander that zigzagging would have made no difference, and despite that fact that, although over 350 U.S. Navy ships were lost in combat in World War II, McVay was the only captain to be court-martialled. Materials declassified years later add to the evidence that McVay was a scapegoat for the mistakes of others.

In October of 2000, following years of effort by the survivors and their supporters, legislation was passed in Washington and signed by President Clinton expressing the sense of Congress, among other things, that Captain McVay's record should now reflect that he is exonerated for the loss of the USS INDIANAPOLIS and for the death of her crew members who were lost.

In July of 2001 the Navy Department announced that Captain McVay's record had been amended to exonerate him for the loss of the INDIANAPOLIS and the lives of those who perished as a result of her sinking. The survivors are thankful that after so many years, the good name of their captain has been cleared, and the dead have been honored.

The Foxborough historical society will meet Tuesday evening, Jan. 26 at 7:30 pm at the Boyden Library in Foxborough center, first floor meeting room. Use the Baker Street entrance.

Parking is available at the library, on nearby streets and around the Common.

Do not park in the Aubuchon lot. Admission is free and everyone is welcome. Those interested in joining the Foxborough Historical Society should ask for an application form at the meeting. The annual fee is \$8 for individuals, \$10 for families.

For further information, call Patrick Lyons at 508-543-3728

Welcome to new member **Jocelyn L. Tripp**

Ralph Guimond is recovering from surgery

Memorial Hall is open every Wednesday evening, 7 pm to 9 pm
and on the second Saturday of each month from 9 am to noon

THE FOXBOROUGH HISTORICAL SOCIETY SCHOLARSHIP

This \$1,500 scholarship is awarded as a result of a memorial endowment by long-time member Evelyn Thomas to the Foxborough Historical Society. Evelyn Thomas was a life-long resident of Foxborough and graduated in the FHS Class of 1929. After graduation from Brown University she worked as a statistician with the Foxboro Company until her retirement in 1977.

As a former member of the Foxborough Historical Society, her interest in history was far reaching. Not only locally as a scout leader and member of the Foxboro Monday Club, but also in many areas of New England. In particular, she and her husband, Edward, were enthusiasts of covered bridges and their restoration. This scholarship is open to all residents of Foxborough who are graduating seniors and continuing their education with a particular focus in either history, political science, law or government. Selection will be based on student participation in school organizations, academic achievement and/or social service.

The scholarship will be paid directly to the recipient by the treasurer of the Foxborough Historical Society after completion of the first semester and upon the receipt of an official transcript.

50 YEARS AGO IN FOXBOROUGH

[extracted from Foxboro Reporter newspapers archived at Memorial Hall]

January 1966

To name new school in honor of Charles Taylor.

Junk cars to be removed free of charge.

New Years Eve dance at Foxboro Company cafeteria.

Ecumenical Service held at Lakeview Ballroom followed by breakfast at Foxboro Cafeteria.

Town Recreation Director proposed by Survey Group.

Foxborough Youth Center answers “Nothing to do”.

L.P.N.’s awarded diplomas at the State Hospital

First look at proposed Foxborough Public Library.

Sears shopping center planned on O’Donnell.s farm.

Foxborough High School 1962

Hockomock League Football Champions



A cropped picture appeared in the Sun Chronicle on Tuesday, January 12, 2016 (This photo from 1963 Yearbook)

#12 is Ray Lyons, a Foxborough Historical Society Member

Our Score		Opponents' Score
8	E. Bridgewater	0
28	at Hull	26
34	at Canton	0
18	at Marshfield	18
14	at Franklin	0
28	King Philip	6
15	Westwood	8
12	Easton	14
25	at Mansfield	0

Websites for Foxborough History & Historical Society
foxboroughhistoricalsociety.org
Facebook.com/foxborohistory
Twitter.com/foxboroughhistory

Foxborough Historical Society Officers & Board Members 2015 - 2016

President: Joan Stafford 543-6292 Vice President: Raymond Toomey 543-4388
Clerk: Ann Childs 543-2245 Treasurer: Mary Anne Baker 543-8945
Board Members: Past President Charles Clifford, Ralph Guimond
Margaret Boldrighini, Janet Haynes, Lauren Bitar
Program: Patrick Lyons 543-3728 Membership: Emelie Bonin 543-6160
Newsletter: Paul Godin 543-7945 Social Media: Lauren Bitar 847-1857

PLEASE NOTE CHANGE OF MEETING DATE
FOR FEBRUARY 17, 2016 MEETING

Our next meeting will be **Wednesday, February 17, 2016, 2:30 pm** at
The **Foxborough Senior Center, 75 Central St**
The Foxborough Historical Society meeting will be a joint presentation
with the Foxborough Senior Center
Subject: **Michael Tougias** will speak on his book
(and upcoming Disney movie) **“The Finest Hours”**
If you plan to attend this program, call 508-543-1252 (Senior Center)
so that they will know you are coming.

The Officers and Board Members of the Foxborough Historical Society want to thank the members who have renewed their membership and supported the Society throughout the years. We welcome our new members.

In addition to this newsletter you will find the current list of paid up members.

Foxborough Historical Society Membership for 2015-2016

Christian	Arcaro	Diane	Finnegan	Peter J	McDonough
Jack	Authalet	Francis	Finnegan	Marie	Meisner
Marge	Authalet	Brenda	Glover	Ron	Meisner
Mary Anne	Baker	Jonathan	Glover	Frank N	Morrissey
Lauren	Bitar	Carolyn	Godin	Cheryl	Morse
Margaret	Boldrighini	Paul	Godin	Kenneth	Morse
Emelie	Bonin	Ruth E.	Goold	Glenn H	Mott
Richard L	Bonin	Ralph	Guimond	Sheila	Mott
Jeanne	Bonneau	Bruce	Hainsworth	Tenny	Nevins-Fleming
Earle	Brown	Pat	Hainsworth	Paul	O'Sullivan
Sandy	Brown	Morgan	Halton	Susan	O'Sullivan
Diane	Bryant	Sara	Halton	Joanne B	Pratt
Kenneth	Bryant	Heather	Harding	Anthony	Ranaldi
Diane	Cahill	Steve	Harding	Deborah	Ranaldi
Francis	Cahill	Janet F	Haynes	Janet	Roxborough
Marlene	Carr	Carolyn N	Hirsch	Joseph	Roxborough
Ann	Childs	Ernest G	Hirsch	Diane	Saunders
Charles A	Clifford	Kristin	Hovey	A. Lee	Scott
Joan	Clifford	Will	Hovey	Cynthia	Scott
Ginny	Coppola	Edna	Hunt	Michael R	Smith
Donald	Cosgrove	Ralph	Hunt	Patricia	Smith
Stephanie	Crimmins	Penny	Ingram	Roger	Smith
David	Crimmins	Charles	Kastrenos	Rosemary	Smith
Marie	Crimmins	Wendy Lou	Kastrenos	Sarah "Sally"	Souza
Albert	Daniels	Julius	Kiff	Joan E	Stafford
Doris	Daniels	Noreen	Kiff	Nancy B	Sullivan
James	Darlington	Maureen	Kraus	Bonnie	Tebbetts III
Elizabeth	Davison	Tom	Kraus	Charles	Tebbetts III
Ellen	Dean	Robert	Lanpher	Raymond	Toomey
Paul	Dean	Roberta	Leonardi	Suzanne	Toomey
Barbara	DiPietro	Annette	Liljegren	Jocelynn L	Tripp
John	DiPietro	Warren	Liljegren	Mary	Waltuck
Catherine	Doucette	George W	Lillyman	Morey	Waltuck
Robert	Doucette	Linda	Lyons	Peg	Weisker
David	Downs	Patrick	Lyons	Deb	Wendell
Kenneth	Elovitz	Raymond	Lyons	Mary	Whelan
Patricia	Elovitz	Regina	Lyons	George	Yelle
Cynthia	Ferguson	Terry	Lyons	Janet	Yelle
Ed	Ferguson	Linda	McCoy		