

Marie Tragedy - Raytheon-related Shipwreck 50th Anniversary

Santa Barbara, CA, November 1, 2010—The first-ever *Marie* Commemoration was launched June 4 - 21, 2010. The initiative included public and private events, to honor the seven men who left Santa Barbara Harbor at sunrise aboard the *Marie* vessel Tuesday, June 7, 1960 on a secret mission to test cutting-edge infrared equipment underwater for a Raytheon-related project and never returned.

The *Marie* Commemoration Event included: **Friday, June 4**, seventy families and close friends of the men lost at sea met for the first time at a private social. **Saturday, June 5**, over eighty gathered during the evening memorial ceremony and reception co-hosted by the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum. **Sunday, June 6**, forty people ventured across the Santa Barbara Channel early to a pre-determined destination in the waters off Santa Cruz Island for a sunrise wreath laying ceremony. Plans changed when “dolphins as far as the eye could see,” as one person described the pod of hundreds of dolphins that circled the boat a short distance from the destination. “Wow...these friends of the sea are trying to tell us something,” was heard echoing from those on deck of the Condor Express. The Captain was given the command, “stop the engine!” by Teresa Newton-Terres, and the ceremony commenced. After a prayer, a moment of silence, and to the playing of TAPS by Albert Terres (brother of Jim Terres)... a wreath of reeds and white roses (inserted into place by the families) was... tossed into the sea. **Monday, June 7 - Monday, June 21** the community was invited to a multi-media exhibit, *MARIE REMEMBERED: Seven Men Lost at Sea Expanding the Frontiers of Infrared*, displayed at the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum to honor the days Santa Barbara stood still in 1960.

The commemoration and exhibit were spearheaded by Teresa Newton-Terres, Project Management Professional (PMP) and daughter of Jim Terres, one of the engineers lost at sea. Newton-Terres’ extensive archival research brings to light a story buried for fifty years in recently declassified documents scattered throughout archives across the U.S. According to Newton-Terres, “This is a story that begs for acknowledgement and an honorable and honest telling of events for loved ones to come full circle to finally learn what happened on June 7, 1960.” And the heart warming part, “is the story behind the story where a community of people connected,” says Teresa of those who helped to ensure a successful 2010 Commemoration.

The Santa Barbara community, a significant hub for Cold War technology research and development, was rocked by the *Marie* tragedy as five of the men lost at sea were son’s of California’s West Coast and four were born and raised in Goleta and Santa Barbara. They all had engineering and/or military service careers and families deeply interwoven into the community. One of those lost at sea, Dr. Niel F. Beardsley, was a scientist and pioneer of the art and science of infrared technology who contributed to the Manhattan Project before being recruited by Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, in 1946. As is true of many Cold War era scientists, Dr. Beardsley would likely be well-known, if not for the secrecy his work demanded.

With the passage of time it is now possible to piece together context for the top secret infrared technology that was tested by the engineers lost at sea, its importance to national defense, and its legacy in many technologies in use. As the *Marie* project is an ongoing one, pieces of information continue to fall into place to gain the full story of the *Marie* mystery.

November 2010 the *Marie* Tragedy was recognized by the Cold War Museum as a worthy event to include in the Cold War Timeline because of the optical and infrared science and technology that Dr. Beardsley (lost on the *Marie*) influenced on behalf of America’s national security interests and as a father of modern day infrared. (See <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/60s/index.asp>) Additionally, the *Marie* tragedy was recognized as one of the one hundred most newsworthy stories of the 20th century in Santa Barbara News-Press’ HEADLINERS: A History of SB From the Pages of its newspapers 1855-1982.

“When my friend, Laura Funkhouser, sent me two news clippings in 2005 and 2006 that referenced the *Marie*, with questionable details and little beyond the story mysteries, I knew it was time to discover what happened because the men, their families, and the community deserve it,” said Newton-Terres. The *Marie* project grew from the Old Town Goleta Culture Project founded by Fermina Murray and Laura Funkhouser (1998) and launched in Funkhouser’s apartment where Newton-Terres’ father grew up.

Newton-Terres’ extensive research was conducted at the National and Military Archives in California, Maryland, Massachusetts, Ohio, Alabama and Washington D.C. She has also sought to breathe life into the details by interviewing family, friends, and colleagues who have a first-person knowledge, all in an attempt to surface the story and connect to remember and honor of the *Marie* and its men.

For more information please visit www.MarieEvent.com

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