

Marie Tragedy: Raytheon-related Shipwreck Recognized as a Cold War Event

Santa Barbara, CA, December 30, 2010 — The 1960 *Marie* Tragedy is recognized as a Cold War event by the Cold War Museum. Frances Gary Powers Jr., President of the Cold War Museum in Washington D.C. and son of famous U2 spy plane pilot Cpt. F. Gary Powers, recognized the *Marie* shipwreck tragedy by including it on the Cold War Museum's timeline of 1960 events. The recognition came with no fanfare and includes little but an on-line website link and a personal email from Mr. Powers. (See: <http://www.coldwar.org/articles/60s/index.asp>)

The *Marie* Tragedy's inclusion on the Cold War timeline was based on both what is known and remains a mystery of the Raytheon-related shipwreck. Special consideration was given to the science that Dr. Niel Freeborn Beardsley (lost on the vessel *Marie*) influenced as a father of modern day infrared technology in service to America's national security interests. "Dr. Beardsley in 1946 went to join Wright-Patterson's Air Force Base... the foundation for today's Infrared industry 1946-1959," Cold War Museum Newsletter, November 2010. This was preceded by Dr. Beardsley's long career in teaching physics at Georgia Tech, Northwestern, and the University of Chicago as well as running the optic's shop for the Manhattan Project.

The Cold War Museum recognition ensures the *Marie* Tragedy a place in history beyond Santa Barbara's local maritime lore.

The Cold War recognition is a crowning capstone to the initiative that went into surfacing, compiling, and commemorating the event this year at its 50th anniversary. Many family and friends gathered for the 50th anniversary of the *Marie* Tragedy this year to remember and honor the seven men lost under rather mysterious circumstances Tuesday, June 7, 1960. The first-ever *Marie* Commemoration, held in Santa Barbara, CA, June 4 - 21, 2010, included public and private events to honor the seven men who left Santa Barbara Harbor at sunrise aboard the vessel *Marie* on a secret mission to test cutting-edge infrared equipment underwater for a Raytheon-related project and never returned. The commemoration and its multi-media exhibit were co-hosted by the Santa Barbara Maritime Museum and spearheaded by Ms. Newton-Terres, Project Management Professional (PMP) and daughter of Jim Terres, one of the engineers lost at sea. "The story behind the story included a community of people who connected," tells Teresa of the many who contributed their time, money, and capabilities to ensure an honorable *Marie* Commemoration Event.

The DOD program that the *Marie* team served still remains a mystery. "It was a black project then, and it's a black project still," an authority at Wright Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, said of the 1960 project. However, details continue to be un-classified and surface. And families are hopeful that they will eventually gain a sense of what their loved ones gave the ultimate sacrifice too... serving national security interests.

The Santa Barbara community, a significant hub for Cold War technology research and development, was rocked by the *Marie* tragedy, June 1960, 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 surface the mystery of the *Marie*.

The *Marie* tragedy was also 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 a friend, Laura Funkhouser, sent me 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 of the *Marie* initiative that 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 archival research brings to light a story buried for fifty years in recently declassified documents scattered throughout National and Military archives across the U.S. She also sought to breathe life into the details by interviewing family, friends, colleagues, and others who have a first-person knowledge, all in an attempt to remember and honor of the *Marie*, its men, and its mission. 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."

For more information please visit www.MarieEvent.com