



FINAL MISSION

It was a dark night in the Pacific when Captain Hashimoto of I-58, a Japanese Imperial Submarine looked through his periscope and saw a large American ship right in his sights. Captain Hashimoto launched a wave of six high powered torpedoes toward the ship. It was the beginning of one of the U.S. Navy's most tragic losses.

If you saw the movie "Jaws," you heard Captain Quint explain very calmly to Roy Scheider and Richard Dreyfuss, his fellow shark hunters, that he had been aboard the USS Indianapolis. The Indianapolis had been on a secret mission to deliver nuclear fissionable material to the island of Tinian, so that the "Little Boy" atomic bomb could be assembled, which would later be dropped on Hiroshima on August 6, 1945, totally destroying that Japanese city, and hastening the end of WWII.

After delivering the nuclear bomb parts, the USS Indianapolis was sailing from Guam to the Leyte Gulf for training exercises. The Captain of the Indianapolis, Captain Charles McVay, had requested an escort for his ship, but escort ships were not provided. Further, although the Navy knew through its top secret program "Ultra," where

Japanese radio messages were intercepted and decoded, that the Japanese had submarines operating directly in the path of the Indianapolis, including the Japanese submarine I-58. The Indianapolis was never given this crucial information.

The Indianapolis had been zigzagging during



the daytime for its protection, however, as was the practice at the time, when it became dark and cloudless that night, so it was pitch black, the officer on the deck ordered the zigzagging to stop and proceeded on a straight line.

Just after midnight on July 30, 1945, two of the Japanese torpedoes slammed into the USS Indianapolis. The bow was nearly torn off and the second torpedo exploded with horrendous force amidship. The ship nevertheless kept moving and water flooded into the ship.

There were 1195 sailors and marines on board the ship; 900 of those men went into the water, many injured or burned, the water

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covered with thick diesel fuel and aviation gasoline.

Some had life jackets, some did not. There were some life boats, but most men were simply trying to float or swim in the water.

Captain McVay was thrown into the water and eventually found a small life boat. The ship sank in only 12 minutes. Many men went down with the ship, and by the next morning, the survivors were starting to float in groups and would tie nets and other flotsam together to try to stay together. The oil slick covered miles, and the groups all started floating apart.

That first morning, the sharks came cruising. Most people think they were white-tipped Pacific sharks, some of the most dangerous in the water. The sharks would attack the groups, and the men would try to fight the sharks off as best they could. As Captain Quint in "Jaws" said: "Sometimes the sharks would leave you alone and go away, sometimes they wouldn't." Many men were injured or killed by the sharks. Most men had no rations or fresh water, many men became hallucinatory and drank salt water and died from drinking the salty ocean water. Many men drowned or became so delusional that their shipmates had to try and help them from hurting

themselves or others. Four nights and five days the men were in the ocean.

The naval commands on both ends of their journey did not know that the USS Indianapolis was missing. There were many messages and hints that there was a problem, but no one followed up. Before the ship sank, some brave sailors sent out SOS signals, and it is unclear who, if anyone, received the signals, or if the signals were received and nothing was done about it.

On August 2, a patrol aircraft spotted a huge oil slick in the Pacific. They flew down lower for a closer look, and saw lots of men floating in the water. They radioed back what they had seen and their commanders could not believe what they were hearing. Another PBV appeared on the scene and contrary to orders, landed in the ocean and helped many men board inside and on the wings to get them out of the water.

Now that it was known that the Indianapolis was sunk, ships arrived on the scene and started taking the men out of the ocean, and by August 3rd all of the men possible to be rescued were on those rescue ships.

Later in December, 1945, the Navy court martialled Captain McVay claiming that he was

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negligent in not zigzagging his ship, and he was found guilty in the proceeding. Many of his men disagreed with the finding, and for years fought to have their skipper's name cleared.

A teenager from Florida doing a school project about the USS Indianapolis took up the cause and fought the Navy all the way to Congress. The Japanese Skipper Hashimoto testified that it wouldn't have mattered whether McVay was zigzagging or not, he still would have sunk the Indianapolis. And remember, although they knew, no one told McVay the Japanese subs were there.

After many years and hearings, the Senate and the House finally passed a Resolution in October of 2000 exonerating Captain McVay and correcting his service record. Captain McVay had committed suicide in 1968.

Of the 1195 sailors and marines on the ship, and of the 900 that went into the water, only 316 survived.

The Indianapolis tragedy was one of America's worst single losses of men and ships. All of us should remember to thank our Sailors, Marines, Soldiers, and Airmen for the job they do and the risk they take to protect all of us. God Bless the USS Indianapolis and its men.

M. Steelman

Friends in Motion

Anniversaries being celebrated include: **Murrel** and **Kathy Hollis** (55 years) of Bushnell, **Bob** and **Sara Hudson** (70 years) of Bushnell, and **Dwight** and **Kay Morrow** (57 years) of Macomb. Happy anniversary to all!



Birthday celebrations include: **J. Doyle Lutz** (98) of Good Hope, **Marshall (Goose) Buchen**, **Doris Ferris** (81), **Ken Vancil** (83), and **Tina Havens** (56), all of Bushnell. Happy Birthday to all!



UPCOMING COMMUNITY EVENTS

Sep. 1 & Oct. 5 - VFW breakfast, 7 to 10 am.

Dec 7 - Free blood pressure, pulse/oxygen, cholesterol and blood sugar checks at F&M Main Bank, 9 to 10 am.

September 13th & 14th



Something for Everyone

BAKED FISH FILLET CRUNCH

Dan Cortelyou

- 2 lbs. fish fillets (blue fish, cod, haddock)
- 3 cups water
- 3/4 c. lemon juice
- 1-1/2 c. corn flake crumbs
- 1 tsp. paprika
- 1-3/4 tsp. seasoned salt
- 1/3 cup mayonnaise
- 4 tsp. prepared mustard
- 1 Tbsp. lemon juice
- 1 tsp. seasoned salt

Combine water and 3/4 cup lemon juice; pour over fish in shallow baking dish and refrigerate for 30 minutes. Combine crumbs, paprika, 1-3/4 tsp. seasoned salt. Combine mayonnaise,



mustard, remaining lemon juice and seasoned salt. Pat dry fish fillets with paper towels.

Dip in mustard mixture and roll in crumb mixture. Place on a well-greased bake and serve platter (15" x 10" x 1/2"). Bake at 400 degrees for 12 to 15 minutes or until fish flakes easily when tested with a fork. 6 servings.

CHICKEN NOODLE CASSEROLE

Kathy Lynn

- 2 cups cooked, shredded chicken
- 4 cups egg noodles, cooked and drained (approximately 2 cups uncooked)
- 1/2 cup sour cream
- 1 cup milk
- 3 cups cheddar cheese, grated
- 2 Tbsp. butter
- 1 Tbsp. all purpose flour
- 1 small onion, finely chopped
- 1 garlic clove, minced
- 1/2 tsp. red pepper flakes
- Salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Grease a 9x13 inch baking dish. In a large, tall-sided saucepan, melt the butter over medium heat. Add the onion, sauté until near translucent. Stirring frequently, add garlic and red pepper



flakes. Cook for two minutes more. Stir in the flour and cook until the flour is absorbed. Slowly add the milk and 2 cups of cheese. Reserve 1 cup of cheese for topping. Once the cheese is melted, add salt and pepper to taste. Combine chicken, sour cream and noodles into cheese mixture. Stir until the noodles are coated with mixture. Pour into prepared dish. Top with remaining cheese. Bake for 30 minutes, or until cheese is melted and sauce is bubbling. Cool slightly before serving.

SWEET POTATO CASSEROLE WITH PECAN STREUSEL

Rachel Hyde

- 6 baked sweet potatoes, peeled, cooled and mashed
- 1 cup sugar
- 2 eggs
- 1/3 cup milk
- 1 tsp. vanilla extract
- 1 cup packed brown sugar
- 1 cup chopped pecans
- 1/3 cup flour
- 2/3 cup melted butter



Preheat oven to 350 degrees. Butter a 2 quart baking dish. Combine potatoes, white sugar, 1/3 cup of the melted butter, milk and vanilla. Place mixture in the baking dish. In a separate bowl, combine brown sugar, pecans, flour and remaining 1/2 cup melted butter. Sprinkle over top and bake for 35 minutes.