



FIREBALL!

USS OZBOURN DD 846 "the Happy Ship"

Vol. 9 No. 2 April, 2000

FROM THE BRIDGE

Fellow association members and shipmates:

Chairman Paul Hecht and the reunion location committee consisting of Paul Logan, Eldon Riley and Rudy Boff have found what I feel is an excellent site for the USS Ozbourn 2001 reunion. The Boston area has much to see and experience. If you are bitten by nostalgia there is the USS Constitution, the oldest ship in the fleet dating back to the 1790's. and the USS Cassin Young DD-793, which are located in the Charleston Navy Yard where the USS Ozbourn was commissioned over fifty years ago. I can't think of a better place to honor her memory. At Battleship Cove on the Fall River there is the USS Massachusetts BB-59 and the Joseph Kennedy DD-850 along with other WW II craft. The Kennedy is the only Gearing class destroyer in the Historic fleet so if you have an urge to walk the decks of a Gearing class destroyer again or would like to show your spouse how and where you lived during your navy years, this is your chance. Also, you shipmates who live in the eastern and mid-western states have a chance to attend a reunion within driving distance.

If you are interested in American history, this is where it all began. Boston Harbor, Bunker Hill and Lexington all have many interesting sights and stories about the American Revolution.

In addition, a short bus ride takes you to Newport, RI and the beautiful mansions built as summer homes by America's wealthiest at the turn of the twentieth century, or in Dorchester, MA you can visit the John F. Kennedy Memorial Library.

So mark your calendars and make plans now to join your shipmates at the 2001 reunion. If you have never attended an Ozbourn reunion, this is the one to start with. The reunion committee is working hard to make it a memorable one.

W.D.Minter, President

And the winner is MASSACHUSETTS

2001 REUNION LOCATION DECIDED

Paul Hecht, Chairman of the 2001 Reunion Location Committee, has announced that the 2001 reunion will be held in Seekonk, MA in October 2001.

The Seekonk location received a majority of the votes from committee members: Rudy Boff; Eldon Riley; and Paul Logan and WD Minter. Hecht asked "WD" to vote to prevent a tie of any location.

The reunion will be held at the Ramada Inn in Seekonk, MA which is 5 miles east of Providence, RI, 25 miles from Newport, RI and 55 miles from Boston, MA and conveniently located to the T.F. Green Airport in Providence, RI.

A proposed itinerary includes: the Newport RI, mansions; Battle ship Cove in Fall river which will include a visit to the Battleship USS Massachusetts, a submarine, PT boats and the USS Joseph Kennedy, a destroyer of the (Ozbourn) Gearing Class. Other tours will include a visit to the President John F. Kennedy Library in Dorchester, MA and a visit to the oldest US Navy ship in commission, the USS Constitution at the Charlestown Navy Yard where the Ozbourn was commissioned in 1946.

This reunion promises to be an exciting, historic and memorable experience which you will not want to miss. Start planning and more information will be forthcoming in future issues of the Fireball!



CHARLIE AND HIS OFFICERS

Front: Lt. Roth (Engineer), LtCdr Prince XO, Cdr. Charlie Akers, LtCdr Aakhus, Lt Rogers;
Middle: Ens Hightower, Ltjg Miller, Ens Farnum, Lt. Bowman, Ens. Whitten, Ltjg. Dickerhoff,
Top: Ens Lewis, Ens. Megers, Ens. Brodie, Lt. Bond.

NEW EDITOR

Tom Perkins, our soon to be new editor has been tooling up for the change of command.

Tom has obtained a new "Ozbourn" email address that will be put into effect by the July issue of the Fireball!. He has also researched printers in his area and received some very competitive prices to print the fireball!

Tom has his first article on page 3 of this edition and hopes to be more involved with the next edition. It takes time to get all the duties transferred and we are not rushing. We are looking for a very smooth transfer so you won't even notice it.

TAPS

It began in 1862 during the Civil War. When Union Army Captain Robert Ellicombe was with his men near Harrison's Landing in Virginia. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Captain Ellicombe heard the moan of a soldier who lay mortally wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Captain decided to risk his life and bring the stricken man back for medical attention.

Crawling on his stomach through the gunfire, the Captain reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward the encampment. When the Captain finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead. The Captain lit a lantern. Suddenly, he caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his own son. The boy had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. Without telling his father, he enlisted in the Confederate Army.

The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission of his superiors to give his son a full military burial despite his emend status. His request was partially granted.

The Captain had asked if he could have a group of

Army band members play a funeral dirge for the son at the funeral. That request was turned down since the soldier was a Confederate. Out of respect for the father, they did say they could give him only one musician. The Captain chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of his dead son's uniform. This wish was granted. This music was the haunting melody we now know as "TAPS" that is used at all military funerals.

These are the words to 'TAPS.'

"Day is done, gone the sun,
From the lakes, from the hills, from the sky.
All is well, safely rest,
God is nigh."

Thanks to Don Madam (49-51) for sending in this heart wrenching story that was received from the Sons of Union Veterans of the Civil War.

(Following is an article, developed by Tom Perkins, from information forwarded by Howard Hillson in his letter of 1/14/00)

Shipmate Howard Hillson (FP2, 1952-53) has provided some interesting information regarding his tour of duty in Ozbourn during the WestPac cruise in the fall and winter of 1953-54. During this seven month cruise the ships of Des.Div. 112 which included Hollister (DD788), Arnold J. Isbell (DD869), Frank Knox (DDR742) as well as the Ozbourn conducted extensive tactical exercises and patrols throughout the North China Sea and the waters around the Korean Peninsular. In addition to these operations the ships spent several weeks based in Kaohsiung, Formosa as training ships for the Chinese Nationalist Navy and also included patrol duty in the Formosa Straits.

Toward the end of the cruise the ships participated in the operation that repatriated some 14,000 former Chinese POW's from Inchon, Korea to Keelung, Formosa. The destroyers escorted a convoy of 15 LST's over the 800 mile voyage and then stood by until all the former prisoners were safely landed on Formosan soil.

Following this mission on January 24, 1954, the entire division proceeded to Kagoshima, Japan where goodwill tours were conducted for the townspeople as well as a much needed R&R period for the ships crews. This was the last stopover in the Far East for the hard steaming ships and they departed for home, with a stop at Pearl Harbor, arriving in San Diego on February 19, 1954.

For their performance during the cruise, the ships and their crews received numerous accolades in messages from several of the high level commands in the area. These include the Far East Army Commander, Commander Naval Forces Far East and Commander Seventh Fleet among others. Mr. Hillson also included a copy of a news letter signed by Wm. B. Fargo, Commanding Officer, dated 16 February, 1954 in which he outlines the function of the various components of the ships' Operations Department. The letter gives a general description of the operation of the Combat Information Center (CIC), the Signal and Navigation Bridges, Radio Room and even a plug for the Electronics Technicians. Part of the narrative refers to the "enormous complexity of the vital electronics equipment on board modern destroyers". Apparently, this letter was one of a series that outlined the function of each of the departments that made up

the organization of the ships company and was forwarded to the families of crew members. In later years this sort of information sheet became known as a "Familygram" and it is interesting to note that our old skipper Bill Fargo foresaw the need to keep his crew and their families informed and up to date regarding the operations of the ship.

Mr. Hillson reported aboard the Ozbourn on 23 December 1952 and was assigned to the shipfitter gang as a Pipefitter 2/c. He transferred off to the USS Prairie (AD15) on 1 Sept. 1954. Thank you Howard for a most informative letter.

Some thoughts we may consider in the light of nearly fifty years of hindsight. Formosa is now Taiwan and the ships of DESDIV 112 have long since gone to the scrap heap. The "enormous complexity" of modern destroyers that Captain Fargo spoke of in his newsletter has no doubt magnified many times over but the strife in the Far East areas in which these ships and crews served is far from over.

Be that as it may, one factor that has not changed is the spirit and dedication of the American Bluejacket. Haze Gray and underway!!!

TIN CAN SAILORS

WD Minter received a nice "thank you" letter from President Thomas J. Pelton of the Tin Can Sailors Association. Mr. Pelton was very appreciative of the Ozbourn Association's donation of \$300.00 to help preserve our historic Destroyer fleet.

ADDRESS CORRECTION

Don Schuppel (46-47) PM3 sent in an address correction for model ship builder Doug Huntzinger. He is at:

16601 Garfield Ave #94
Paramount, CA 90723

Doug is the gentleman that made the Ozbourn model received by Bob Whitten.

Thanks Don

MAIL BAG

Frank Spittle (49-51) PN2, with some communication to President WD Minter and the Fireball! managed to get Capt. Ousey's name on our web page deceased list. Somehow Capt. Ousey's name did not appear and Frank spotted this oversight.

Howard W. Hillson (52-54) FR2 wrote in for info on service medals. This info appeared in a previous edition of the Fireball! Howard missed the October reunion due to the death of his sister. Our condolences to Frank and his family.

Note from McClinton Jagers (47-47). He wrote in about his Formosa adventure on the Ozbourn. Sorry but time and space do not allow for every article to be printed.

Pat Patterson (50-51) email that Jim Clay (52-55) had done some searching of shipmates and uncovered three: Howard Taylor, Olen Wilborm, and Louis Wilburn. Thanks Jim.

Frank Cardoza (brother of deceased shipmate Bill Cardoza (46-48) SF1,) wrote in to thank us for the praises given to Bill in the January Fireball!! He said Bill would have been so proud as the Navy was his whole life. The Navy provided an Honor Guard at the cemetery which was a fitting close to a dedicated life.

Letter received from Bob Whitten from Admiral Thomas Fargo. The Admiral thanked Bob for the cards of congratulations on his promotion to Commander Pacific Fleet. He appreciated the thoughtfulness of his father's shipmates and looks forward to staying in touch with the Association

Don Sacco emailed in his new address in Germany: ranger2germany@surf1.de

Henry Burge (54-57) sent in the address of two new shipmates. Joe Criddle (53-56) SM3 and Loyd Burleson (54-57) QM3

Bill Jones (51-52) is working on his computer list of shipmate records as part of his new duties as Recording Secretary. He said he will be ready to print the mailing labels for this edition of the Fireball!

Heard from Barr Palmer(50-52). He is having some back problems and spent some time reviewing the last Fireball! on our web site. He feels WD Minter is a credit to our organization.

Joseph E. Blitch wrote in for his father, Elton L. Blitch, looking for any information on Lt. Charles C. Maderia, Supply Officer (52-54)

John Montoya (64-67) RD3 emailed looking for info on a couple of shipmates, Melvin Mitchell and Edward Sugrue. Fortunately we had address for both of them.

John Kougl emailed in a new email address; jhkougl@atnet.net

Jim Helland emailed in. Still getting over the shock of having 5 grandchildren born on the same day. Keeps him and wife busy during their spare time. They all weigh over 6 pounds. Jim has been one of the greatest supporters for having a reunion in the Boston area. Won't he be surprised?

"What a fantastic site" was the remark made by shipmate Michael D. Smith (66-68) when he discovered the Ozbourn's web page. He wanted to join our Association immediately. Our web site has been a great asset and credit to our Association (and web master WD Minter).

WD Minter, after canvassing the Association Officers as per the By-Laws, had a check sent to the Tin Can Sailors Association for \$300.00 to aid in the preservation of destroyers which are included in the historic fleet.

INACTIVE SHIPMATES

This publication of the *Fireball!* will be the last edition sent to "inactive members" until the next Reunion Edition. To receive all editions (4 per year) and keep up with all the latest Association news, new shipmates discovered, ships history and stories, shipmates articles and other interesting information you must be an **Active Member**. To be an "active member" only requires you to pay an annual dues of \$10.00 per year. See dues info in this edition. Get "on board" and sign up today!!

SEARCH COMMITTEE REPORT

New Shipmates discovered since our last report in Jan. 2000.

Name	City	Served	Rate
Burleson, Loyd	Hamilton, AL	54-57	QM3
Carey, Richard W BM3	Evansdale, IA	69-72	
Casey, Lyle	St. Paul, KS	57	
Criddle, Joseph	Houston, MS	53-56	SM3
Mineo, Salvatore A	Utica, NY	51-52	FC3
Robbins, George M	Austin, TX	57-59	BT2
Smith, Michael D	Troy, MO	65-68	TM3
Stadler, Ralph	Pataskala, OH	57-59	ET2
Stucker, Bruce	Great Falla, MY	57-59	SN
Weathersbee, Jimmy	Edisto Island, SC	57-58	SN
Vogel, Michael E	Fairfield, CA	71-72	SK3
Wilborn, Olen W.	McGee, MS		
Wilburn, Louis A.	Troy, AL		

FROM THE EDITOR

Your Editor and wife, Mary, took an overnight trip to the Ramada Inn, in Seekonk, MA (about 50 miles SW) on March 17 9 St. Patrick's Day). The purpose of our trip was to check out the evening's entertainment, get some RFP's (Request's For Proposals) signed up for the 2001 Reunion and get a better look at the Hotel's facilities.

We rented a mini-suite which is almost double the size of the regular rooms. (Regular rooms come in 2 twins, queen or king size bedrooms). The mini suite offered a desk, couch/ sleeper and coffee table. Nice size if you need or like the extra room.

We arrived after noon, ate lunch at their reasonable restaurant and got settled into our room. Later in the afternoon as Mary tried out the king size bed for napping comfort (she had a restless sleep the night before due to high winds) I decided to try out their indoor swimming pool.

They have a great pool (good size and 3-9 feet deep). March 17 can be very unpredictable in the New England area, particularly around Boston (Nothing like the more predictable , beautiful October weather). Last week we were basking in 70 degree sunny weather, March 17 we were in the 20's with a large chill factor. As I spent a half hour gliding back and forth , in the warm water, I looked out the large windowed walls, and as the snow came drifting down, robins (wearing their snow boots) were searching for worms in the

OZBOURN AWARDS & MEDALS

President Minter is researching the awards and medals received by the Ozbourn during her years in commission. The last skipper Frank Furtado suggested to contact the Commandant of the 13th Naval District WD has been checking with the Navy Department but running into problems. Anyone knowing of any awards , battle stars or medals earned by the Ozbourn please contact WD Minter or the Fireball!

"WD" wants to put the Ozbourn's records on our web site.

Incidentally if you haven't checked our web site lately. Address is on last page.

snow covered grass.

That evening we had a great St. Patrick's Day dinner (corned beef and cabbage) in the main ball room. After dinner we were entertained for 75 minutes by a great trio (2 singers and a piano player) called The Merry Makers They provided a great, family stye St. Patrick's Day Show, consisting of Irish songs, jokes and audience participation. This group enjoys a great reputation in this area and they lived up to it. They provide different types of shows for various audiences which includes a veterans type show. They will design a show to fit your needs.

Another impressive feature about the Ramada Inn is the Hospitality Suite called the Apollo Room. It is 25 X 40 feet, ample for our needs.

Next morning we enjoyed a FULL FREE breakfast in the Darling Restaurant offered by the Hotel to it's guests. Saturday morning was cold but sunny as we checked out (with price proposals in hand for the banquet, hotel, hospitality room and transportation) to investigate a local (ladies favorite) shopping mall. Then a leisurely trip home. A great experience and we learned a lot about the Ramada Inn and its facilities. After an overall review , for a reunion facility, I would rate it as **three stars plus**.

Location is ideal for touring Southern New England. Come early and stay late and make this a great New England vacation.



Left: Jack Clements BT3; Right: Richard Byerly BT1; Center: Your guess?? Picture taken at the Club Alliance (EMC) Yokosuka, Japan, 1957

LAS VEGAS REUNION-FINAL REPORT

Capt. Charlie Akers tendered his final report on the Las Vegas Reunion with a recommendation that all committee member receive a 50% pay raise. (If he can find someone that knows how to compute it) In addition Charlie sent a check, after all expenses were paid, to Treasurer Paul Hecht, for \$1285.00. (It appears that Charlie has a bit of Bob Whitten's talents for stretching the dollar)

After we look at the great reunion that Charlie organized and guided to success, including the earthquake, Charlie from all your shipmates , a grateful **Well Done!!!**

SEARCH COMMITTEE

The Search Committee, headed by Pat Patterson (50-51) is up and running and searching for crew members in 1957. Some cards have been returned and new shipmates are being discovered.

ANNUAL DUES -DUE JANUARY 1, 2000

Notice has been given plenty of press about our new dues procedure of paying on January 1 of each year. Some shipmates have already sent in their dues but Paul Hecht is looking for some stragglers on the list. Your mailing label on the *Fireball!* will tell you the last year you have paid . If there is not a "00" on your mailing label, **your dues are due.**

All "active member" shipmates on our records will receive the April Reunion Edition of the *Fireball!*. After that, if your dues are not paid before the July issue you will be dropped from the regular mailing list. Don't let it lapse. Send that check for \$10.00 today, **payable to USS Ozbourn Association to:**

Paul Hecht, Treasurer
P.O. Box 3534
Portsmouth, VA 23701-0534

erworked And Underpaid Or Blood, Sweat and Posits

Commander John C. Weatherwax, USN
CO USS McKean (DD 784)
DesDiv 112, 1950

Now there's tales been told, some new, some old
Of Task Force Seventy-Seven
Of carriers old and pilots bold
Who carved out their nitch in Heaven.

Now there's not much of the poet's touch
Done on the rest of the ships
Were the flat-tops alone when the flights were flown
And the Commies blown to bits?

Now please set me straight, the bird boys were great.
I bow with the greatest esteem
But along with the bow, I doff, sir right now
My hat - to the boys in the screen.

There're not as big or fancy of rig
As the best of the carrier force.
And they don't make big news with their non-flying
crews,
Like a pilot of jets does, of course.

But at each dawning day, in their own quiet way
They are there for task force abuse.
whatever the task Almeda may ask
There's a poor old destroyer to use.

Now a circular screen to the heavies may seem
Like a simple maneuver to do
'Til you change both the course and the axis of force
And ring up a change course or two.

Then it's - "Designate the guide on the opposite
side
Rotate a station clockwise"
"Execute!" "Posit!" "your head in the closet?"
"Execute!" "Shackle!" What cries!

"What was the last?" "They're coming too fast!"
"The airdales have gone the war won!"
"Life guard to night?" "A bird-dog? All right!"
Nine corpen break Speed Twenty One.

"A radio check," "Now clear the main deck!"
"A patient to transfer, you say?"
"Bombard the shore!" "Turn one zero four!"
"Replenishment schedule today!"

"The sonar is long. Your station is wrong!"
"There's a wind mill approaching astern."
"Your noon fuel report?" "A bogie to report!"
"Barbaric - Emergency Turn!"

"They've sighted a mine! But everything's fine
A small boy will see that it's sunk."
"A personnel transfer?" "Life guard for Rancher."
"No mine - it's only some junk!"

"Deliver this mail." "My God, what a flail!"
The headline just broke with a load!"
"And the fuel hose just parted! The fueling just started!"
"Oh no, the formation just slowed!"

"Formation 4-Victor! 4-Roger? 4-Fox?"
"What is it we're steaming in now?"
"On circle eleven? No! Must be it's seven!"
"Permission to pipe down chow?"

"Mike speed is five and expect to arrive
On station at six hundred item."
"Open the screen when the tankers are seen
And call me as soon as you sight 'em."

"Where's Gaymede riding? Almeda abiding?"
"Com Seven's aboard the Big Mo."
"Rig for rough weather! Come on, get together!"
"The galley's a mess down below!"

"The radar guards follow. "A posit for Swallow.
Her station is wrong on the screen."
"This course is for landing. Speed five, he's demanding."
"Stand by for Tare Baker Queen."

"The barometer's falling!" "That's Magnify calling!"
"Somebody's shooting the bull."
"A skunk in the scope?" "That's Airtight - you dope!"
"Engine room - stand by for full!"

"A message to relay." "The screen is a melee!"
"Our gadget just went on the blink!"
"There's ballast to pump, trash and garbage to dump,
And mines, lots of mines we can sink!"

"The bridge has lost steering!" "The weather's not
clearing."
"The menu says stew for tonight."
"Thise transfers are risky! My soul for a whisky!"
"Take plane guard for a flight."

"Affirm Victor mike. Launch an outgoing strike.
Intend to pass under your stern."
"Darken the ship." "Is that really a pip?"
"Turn One. Change my last to One Turn!"

"Control is now Red." "Has the crew all been fed?"
"There's black smoke from number one stack."
"Quick - look on that raid! But it's now in a fade."
"Belay that - it's now coming back."

"The radar is out!" "Are you sure there's no doubt?"
"A magnetron tube's what we need?"
"A man that is sick? We'll transfer him quick!"
"Notify boss Ganynead!"

The signal gang's sending, those groups never ending
"We're ordered to sink belly strikes."
The nightly course changes. "Watch closely to ranges!"
"Tell Viper we call, Nancy Hanks."

"Fireball sends weather. "Turn Nine - hell for leather."
"Who's the guide and what shall he bear?"
"A sound contact hot!" "No, its a fish that they've got."
In Combat, they're tearing their hair!

"Bear a hand down on deck! For the old man's a wreck
"Two-block the 'What the Hell' flag!"
"Make that report!" "When's the next time in port?"
"Speed up! What's causing the lag?"

"And that's only a start on the really tough part.
The DDs must play in the force.
I could tell much more, but I don't want to bore;
I'd be wasting my time, too - of course.

For the flat-top's a beaut - and the fly boys are cute
And together make readable news.
But they will have to admit - that it helps - just a bit
To have those Destroyer crews.

We're not real well known, by the folks back at home.
And we don't want to seem to be bitching.
But remember, my friend: To the dark, bitter end,
The Destroyers are in there and pitching!

And we're all here to say, in our own homely way,
Though we might not always enjoy her,
Our beaten up crowd is really quite proud
Of our bloody but unbowed Destroyer!

Thanks to Past President Bob Whitten (50-52)
for sending in this inspiring poem he received
from an officer who served under Cmdr.
Weatherwax in DesDiv 122 at the same time
Bob was aboard the Ozbourn.

