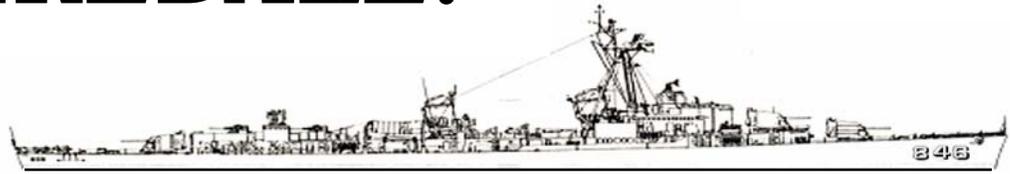




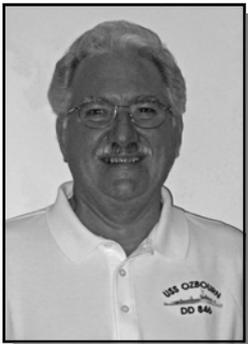
FIREBALL!



Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn
Tinian, Marianas Islands
28 July 1944

The official newsletter of the USS Ozbourn (DD 846) Association
Dedicated to perpetuating the memory of a gallant Marine and the history of a fine ship
Visit our website at www.ozbourn.org

FROM THE BRIDGE



I will be sharing some of my feelings with you regarding several items that appear in my "From the Bridge" column. Let me start by thanking Paul Logan and the Ozbourn Plaque

Committee for their work on making arrangements to have a permanent plaque, honoring the USS Ozbourn, installed at the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. The USS Ozbourn Association sincerely thanks plaque committee members Paul Logan, Richard Satchell, Guy Posey and Don Sacco for their time and effort that went into the success of this project.

You will find an article on this page providing you with the latest details of this very important project.

Since the last edition of the *Fireball*, the USS Ozbourn Association has lost a special shipmate who was instrumental in its organization as well as several other active members. They will be truly missed by all of us who had the privilege of knowing them and enjoying their company at the many reunions we shared.

The family of one of these men asked the Association for help in honoring their father with a military funeral. They had to have his DD-214 (Report of Separation) Form. His children couldn't locate the important form nor did they have any knowledge of his serial or service number. Several Association members were able to point them in the right direction and his family proudly celebrated his life by showing his love for the US Navy.

Do you have all of your ducks lined up in a row? My family knows what type of service I would like to have. Not only did I talk about it with them, I have seen to some of the arrangements myself. My instructions are written down and placed in a steel security box with all of our important family papers including my DD-214 Form. Make sure that you have all of the documents that are needed. Check out everything in advance and save your family any additional grief.

How many times have you heard the phrase "freedom is not free"? Truer words were never spoken. Right now, our country is involved in a conflict that is being fought by the courageous men and women in our country's military services. They are fighting to preserve our freedoms and our way of life. One of those freedoms is the right to vote.

"This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."
Elmer Davis, American news commentator.

I have a hard time understanding how this privilege is taken so lightly when it influences every area of our lives. Members of the military are making countless sacrifices and putting their lives on the line. Show them how much we appreciate them and our country.

I would like to close with a quote from Elmer Davis, an American news commentator (1890-1958). "This will remain the land of the free only so long as it is the home of the brave."
Rudy Boff, President

OZBOURN COMMEMORATIVE PLAQUE READIED FOR DEDICATION

The commemorative plaque of the USS Ozbourn has been installed at the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, Texas. The plaque is located in the Memorial Courtyard.

A formal memorial service for the unveiling of the plaque will take place on Veterans Day 2006. Anyone planning to attend the memorial service should contact Association President Rudy Boff at (412) 833-0572. The 20" x 20" plaque was installed at a donation cost of \$2,500, which was made from an Association fund.

The replica of the Ozbourn is as close to the commissioning



Memorial Courtyard, Admiral Nimitz Museum

condition as possible. The ship still has her dark blue WWII colors and small bow numbers. A professional photographer has taken photos of the plaque which will be available at the next reunion.

(See photo of plaque on back page)



TAPS FOR SHIPMATES

*Rest easy, sleep well my brothers.
Know the line has held, your job is done.
Rest easy, sleep well.
Others have taken up where you fell, the line has held.
Peace, peace, and farewell.*

The four shipmates listed below served aboard the Ozbourn during the early 1950s, some of them at the same time.

Charles, O. Akers
September 2, 2006
Captain — 50-52

John S. Blonsick
July 27, 2006
Ensign — (50-51)

Norman Laux
August 13, 2006
Ensign — (52-55)

Jack M. King
September 1, 2006
RD2 — (51-54)



Capt. Charles O. Akers

Our former skipper, Capt. Charles O'Neal Akers, went to his final harbor on September 2, 2006. To all who had the privilege of knowing him, he was the model of what a Navy commanding officer should be. He was always cool and competent under fire. He was a gentleman in any social setting. Foremost, however, he was both an outstanding leader and superb seaman.

Capt. Akers was born in 1915 in Nashville, Tenn. After a year of pre-med at Vanderbilt University, he unexpectedly secured an appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy, taking the place of a midshipman who had been reassigned after getting married. Midshipman Akers entered the Academy in 1934, graduating in 1938.

His first assignment as an ensign was aboard the USS Tennessee (BB 43). In 1940, he was detached to the USS Ramsay as the chief engineer. The Ramsay was a four-piper destroyer that had been converted to a mine layer. The Ramsay was present during the attack on Pearl Harbor by the Japanese. While serving aboard the Ramsay, Akers qualified as executive officer and was then assigned to the USS Laws (DD 558). He later qualified as a commanding officer and assumed command of the USS Hobby (DD 610) in 1945 where he served until the end of WWII. While aboard the Hobby, Akers earned the nickname "Lucky Charlie" because, despite attacks by numerous kamikazes off Okinawa, his ship was never hit.

His second ship command was aboard the Ozbourn, where in Korean waters, the Oz was hit by shore fire. The only personnel casualties were some minor cuts from shrapnel.

Other assignments included professor of engineering at the Naval Academy, working at the Bureau of Personnel, XO aboard the USS Los Angeles (CA 135), commander of a destroyer division, CO of the USS Manatee (AO 58) and commander of DESRON 13.

By Robert C. Whitten (50-52) — Past President, USS Ozbourn Association



Ens. John S. Blonsick

John S. "Jack" Blonsick was born on August 11, 1928 in Braddock, PA. Blonsick died July 27, 2006 at his home in Palm Coast, FL. Captain Jack, as he was called by his friends, joined the Marines at the age of 17. He saw service during WWII as a TBM Avenger radioman/bombardier.

After the war, Blonsick attended the University of Mississippi on Navy and football scholarships, studying mechanical engineering and business management. Upon graduation, he was commissioned a line officer in the U.S. Navy.

Blonsick served aboard the Ozbourn between 1950-51. While aboard the Oz, he saw combat against North Korean and Chinese forces during the Korean War. War-time action included engaging the enemy off Wonsan, Pusan, Inchon, and Hungnam. He helped with the evacuation of

U.S. forces through enemy mine fields off Chosin. Completing Navy flight training, he was awarded his wings of gold as a Naval aviator, flying A-1 Skyraiders off the USS Midway (CV-41).

John Blonsick retired as a captain from Eastern Airlines after 30 years of service.

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W.D. Minter (52-55)
Texarkana, TX

**We're on the Web
at
www.ozbourn.org**

Shipmate Jack M. King, 73, died on September 1, 2006 at Effingham, IL.

He served in the U.S. Navy between 1951-54. While aboard the Ozbourn, King was a radarman, leaving the ship as a second class petty officer.

He was employed by the Illinois State Police from June 15, 1958, until his retirement on June 30, 1984. He was a member of VFW Post 7676 of Altamont, IL.

WELCOME ABOARD

Reverend K. Michael Lambeth Trenton, New Jersey

A hearty welcome aboard to Reverend Lambeth. The Oz-bourn Association hopes that you will become an active member and get involved in Association affairs.

PUBLICATION DEADLINE

If you have a letter, story or photo you would like to share with other Ozbourn shipmates, the deadline for submitting contributions for the fall issue is **Friday, December 15**. Articles may be rewritten for purposes of editorial style. Due to space limitations, some materials may be used in a future *Fireball* edition.

MAIL CALL

The following letter was received from Dan Edwards, 69-71.

I really enjoyed the summer edition of the *Fireball*. The history from the mid-60s was very interesting. I have a couple of corrections on your list of CO's.

CDR R. L. Stewart, September 1968-June 1970 (Call sign: "Chrome Dome Sierra")

CDR E. W. Numbers, June 1970-December 1971 (Nickname: "Digits")

Thanks for the corrections Dan.



60TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE USS OZBOURN (DD 846)

This is the final article in a series of three articles regarding the history of the U.S.S. Ozbourn. The spring 2006 issue covered the chronological history between 1944 and 1955 while the summer issue covered the years between 1956-1964. This issue of the *Fireball* will report on the last decade of the "Oz" from 1965 to her decommissioning in December 1975. The photographs that appear in this issue of the *Fireball* may have been taken any time between 1944 and 1975.

1965

Greeted by an enthusiastic crowd of relatives and friends, the Ozbourn returned to Long Beach on 16 December 1964 for a well deserved and much needed period in port for rest and maintenance. On 10 May 1965 the Oz entered dry-dock at Todd Shipyard in San Pedro for two days of repair to her hull prior to local operations of the Southern California coast.

The months of June and July were spent conducting ASW exercises, a COMPTUEX, including training in advanced gunnery, Anti-PT, and AA warfare. A TAV from 24 July to 8 August followed by four days of advanced division ASW training completed preparation for deployment to the Western Pacific on 20 August.

The transit was made in company with DESDIV 92, the USS Navasota (AO 106) and the USS Kennebec (AO 36). The Oz detached from the Task Group to make a 44-hour sustained 27.5-knot run to Yokosuka, Japan to deliver a critical patient with a ruptured appendix to the naval hospital on 4 September. After two days of voyage repairs, refueling and refurbishing, Ozbourn

and the USS Mansfield steamed south to rendezvous with the USS Midway and Task Group 77.6. Ozbourn screened and performed rescue destroyer duties for the task group in the Gulf of Tonkin until 11 October when Task Group 77.6 arrived in Subic Bay for rest and repairs.

After six days in port, Task Group 77.6 proceeded to the South China Sea to operate "in county" and provide air strike and naval gunfire support in III and IV Corps areas of South Vietnam. On 22 October the Ozbourn received an emergency call for supporting naval gunfire from the Coastal Surveillance Center at Vung Tai. Running at darken ship and high speeds near shoal water, the ship delivered 160 rounds of five-inch explosives on a known enemy Viet Cong concentration leading to the destruction of four loaded trucks. On 29 October, having completed routine "call fire" support missions, the Oz again in response to urgent requests for naval gunfire, supported the emergency evacuation of friendly forces under attack by the Viet Cong force in company strength. Nearly 400 rounds of destructive five-inch fire were delivered on enemy positions.

On 3 November, U.S. Special Forces Infiltration Teams being overrun by Viet Cong forces were supported in still another emergency call answered by the Oz. The ship delivered nearly four tons of high explosives in close support and covering fires, permitting helos evacuation of the team. Eight Oz crewmembers were recommended for decorations for these actions.

On 6 November the Ozbourn was ordered to proceed to Hong Kong to assume duties as SOPA (ADMIN) Hong Kong for a period of two weeks. On 21 November, the

Continued on page 4



Fore and aft! — The two photos above were probably taken during the ship builder's trials or right after commissioning. C. 1946-47.

HISTORY OF THE USS OZBOURN (DD846)

Continued from page 3

Ozbourn departed Hong Kong for Subic Bay and further task group operations with the USS Kitty Hawk both "in country" and in the Gulf of Tonkin. The ship spent Christmas at sea, but was able to celebrate the coming of the New Year in Yokosuka, Japan. Following the upkeep period in Yokosuka, the Ozbourn commenced the trip home to Long Beach stopping briefly in Subic Bay, Guam and Pearl Harbor en route to Long Beach.

1966

Between 7 February and 15 April 1966, the Ozbourn spent time in the Long Beach Naval Shipyard for upkeep and in restricted availability. On 30 April Commander John G. Denham relieved Commander Marvin D. Nelson as the ship's commanding officer.

May and June were spent in preparation for deployment to the Western Pacific and on 25 June, the ship, along with other ships from DESDIV 92, steamed for their new homeport in Yokosuka, Japan.

DESDIV 92 arrived in Yokosuka on 15 July. On 2 August, after upkeep and logistics support, Ozbourn and Hollister participated in a minor ASW exercise off the coast of Japan until 12 August. During this exercise, three days were spent in Osaka, Japan as a port visit.

On 13 August the Oz and Hollister departed Yokosuka for duty off Vietnam for NGFS duty with Task Unit 70.8.9. From Buckner Bay on 16 August, the ship proceeded independently to Subic Bay. En route, evasive maneuvers were taken to pass between two typhoons.

Oz arrived on 18 August for special logistics support and was underway later the same day. The ship proceeded to II Corps for NGFS duty in Task Unit 70.8.9 on 19 August. While en route to I Corps, the ship received flash orders to relieve the USS Buck in Southern I Corps. At 0400 on 20 August the rendezvous was effected and the relief was accomplished by motor whaleboat.

On 20-22 August the ship provided NGFS for airborne spotters in Southern I Corps. On 21 August, the Ozbourn responded to a request for immediate NGFS near Cap Mia about 60 mile south of Da Nang. After 30 minutes of gun fire and satisfactory completion of the mission, the ship was credited with 16 enemy killed, 24 structures destroyed, 110 damaged and supplies and stores destroyed.

On 22 August, I Corps NGLA requested heavy destructive fire on a Viet Cong controlled unfriendly village. The I Corps Air Spotter provided the following damage assessment for target 177, "cannot give you any more damage assessment not knowing what was here when you started. There is nothing left now. If I was passing overhead and did not know who did the shooting, I would say a B-52 hit it."

On 24 August the Ozbourn proceeded to III Corps area for NGFS with the Amphibious Task Group 76.5 in Operation Deckhouse III. Ozbourn supported U.S. Marines ashore near Cape Jacques, Vietnam from 24-29 August. As unit of Task Group 76.5, the Ozbourn was commended for excellence as a NGF unit by COMUSMACV, COMSEVENTHFLT and COMPHIBREADYGRU.



On 30 August, the ship was assigned as a NGFS unit in Task Unit 70.8.9 with III Corp NGLO at Vung Tau and the Rung Sa Special Zone in the River de Saigon. On 31 August and 3 September the III Corps spotter credited the Ozbourn with 11 Viet Cong killed. One secondary explosion occurred when three enemy logistic installations were destroyed.

Splish splash — The Ozbourn often took target practice, as shown in the photo above, as a means of staying sharp when it came time to fire her guns at "live" targets.

On 31 August the Oz received an emergency call for NGFS for U.S. advisors to suppress an enemy machine gun firing on a friendly position a few miles south of Vung Tau. At the time the ship was already providing support elsewhere. Despite monsoon weather with limited visibility, the Ozbourn responded at maximum speed, crossing Lagi Bay. While dodging the shoals and shallows of the bay, the enemy tracer fire was sighted between breaks in the weather. Open fire was ordered at maximum gun range, firing directly into the tracer positions. The spotter's first call for corrections was, "great-more of the same." Within 20 minutes, the VC attack had been broken. Three VC were killed and two wounded were captured. Illumination was provided to assist local friendly forces for the fleeing enemy.

During a night mission on 12 September, the Ozbourn was credited with 13 enemy killed. The ship departed Vietnam on 13 September and spent 16-20 September in Singapore. After a brief dip below the equator, the Oz proceeded to Subic Bay for a short stay before returning to the line.

On 30 September, the Ozbourn responded to a different call for emergency assistance, this time to provide medical aid at sea. Proceeding at 25 knots from Subic Bay, the ship rendezvoused with a merchant tug boat towing a disabled merchant tanker. In a monsoon storm, the Oz transferred the ship's doctor, Dr. John Glick, to tend an ailing merchant seaman. The patient was eventually transferred to the USS Currituck (AV 7) by the Ozbourn's motor whaleboat for further treatment ashore.

The Ozbourn reported for duty to TU 70.8.9 and was assigned to III Corps on 1 October. The ship was directed to support the Rung Sat Special Zone. The ship's orders were to patrol the River de Saigon near Vung Tau day and night and in any weather in order to be available for immediate GFS. On many occasions, it was necessary to position the ship between enemy held positions in order to reach deep, high priority targets. On 6 October the ship was uniquely utilized by ground forces to establish NGF barrage to cut off escaping VC personnel and sampans.

On 7 October, along with the USS Hollister, the Oz was called to assist a unit of friendly forces that the enemy had pinned down. The report states, "Unit 7 was pinned down and the CO was wounded. The senior advisor and unit XO took command and the Ozbourn's call for fire let Unit 7 get away without any heavy casualties. The senior advisor will write up a recognition for the Ozbourn." A letter of appreciation was received from U.S. MACV Sub-Detachment PHUOC TUY Sector Advisory Team 89, dated 10 October 1966 via COMCRUDESGRU Seventh Fleet, COMDESRON 9 and COMDESDIV 92.

Continued on page 5

USS OZBOURN SHIP'S STORE

Open 24 Hours — Rudy Boff, Proprietor



CAP, Cotton twill Navy blue with brilliant gold letters & destroyer silhouette. One size fits all.

Item # C01, \$14 ea.

Embroidery on back:

Korea — Item # C01K, \$15 ea.

Vietnam — Item # C01V, \$15 ea.

PATCH, fabric

Original design, Item # P01

Revised design, Item # P02

\$6 ea.



MUG, coffee 11 oz.

Embossed with Ozbourn patch & destroyer silhouette.

Item # M01, \$8 ea., 2 for \$12,
6 for \$30

FRAME, license plate

Item # F01, \$5 ea.



The following items are special order only. Contact Rudy Boff at Ship's Store address below.

Micro-fiber Jacket, fleece lined-water repellent \$90

Twill Jacket, fully lined with full front zip \$80

Windbreaker, mesh lined and full front zip \$60

Jerzees Super Sweatshirt, assorted colors \$40

T-shirts, both long and short sleeve \$35 and \$20

Golf shirts \$30

All items have ship's name and hull number embroidered in gold letters.

Photos and additional ordering information can be found on the Ozbourn Web site at www.ozbourn.org under the heading Ship's Store. Orders may be placed with:

Rudy Boff — 1036 Connor Road

Pittsburgh, PA 15234-1033

Tel: (412) 833-0572 — email: boffrud@juno.com

Gedunk Call Answer

In the summer 2006 issue of the *Fireball*, the Gedunk Call question was, "what famous Navy saying would one use when saying good bye to someone, perhaps at their retirement ceremony or when you know you won't be seeing them for a while?" No one was able to provide the correct response so here is the answer. That famous Navy saying is, "I wish you fair seas and following winds."

Gedunk Call!

This issue's Gedunk Call is, what invaluable book was issued to each sailor in boot camp? Submit your responses to Rick Johnson, 5899 North Bronco Lane, Prescott Valley, AZ 86314 or e-mail to johnsonsimivalley@yahoo.com.

Continued from page 4

1966 continued

On 14 October, while proceeding to a replenishment location at sea, the Ozbourn was asked to provide medical assistance to the USS Mt. Katmai (AE 14). Lt. John Glick, the ship's doctor, was transferred by motor whaleboat to assist in the emergency treatment of an ailing sailor.

To the rescue —

The Ozbourn's motor whale boat was often pressed into service for search and rescue and humanitarian missions.



At the end of October, the Ozbourn headed toward Yokosuka for upkeep, however, another emergency call was to be answered. A special mission requiring the Oz to operate as a surveillance unit in the Sea of Japan was filled during the period 24-31 October.

Between 3-13 November the Ozbourn's CO was assigned as Commander Task Group 130.2, the Western Pacific task group for manned space-craft recovery. The Ozbourn and the Hollister participated at sea, on-station as recovery vessels for Gemini 12. During December, the Oz was assigned duty as a station ship outside Hong Kong for 13 days. The ship arrived at home in Yokosuka in time for Christmas.

1967

During January and February 1967 the Ozbourn was assigned as an escort to the USS Enterprise in Task Group 77.8. In March, the ship was again assigned as a NGFS unit in the II Corps. During the period 20-23 March, the ship was credited with killing 29 enemy combatants and destroying 127 emplacements. On 24 March, in response to an emergency call, the Ozbourn stopped a surprise attack on a U.S. petroleum depot near An Tho.

On 25 March, the Oz was reassigned to support the Amphibious Ready Group at the DMZ as a unit in Operation Beacon Hill One. In a thick fog in the early morning light, the Ozbourn was hit by two rounds of enemy gunfire, destroying the fire control radar room and igniting two ASW missiles in the missile magazine. Although hit and on fire and still under enemy gunfire, the Ozbourn responded with effective counter battery fire and silenced the enemy gun before departing for repairs. Upon completion of repairs in Subic Bay, the Oz was ordered to carrier operations with the USS Enterprise in Task Group 77.8 until 18 April. Afterward, the ship proceeded to Yokosuka for upkeep.

Upon completion of general upkeep in early May, the Ozbourn proceeded to Bangkok, Thailand for a port visit. Additionally, the Oz was assigned OCE for a combined USN-Royal Thai Navy ASW exercise. On 21 May the ship reported for duty as a NGFS unit in II Corps. Between 23-25 May at the DMZ, the ship was assigned as a unit of the Amphibious Ready Group (TG 76.4). The Ozbourn was fired upon and engaged in three separate actions with enemy shore guns. On each occasion, hidden guns on Cap Lay opened fire on U.S. units in the amphibious objective area and Ozbourn's

Continued on page 6

THE USS OZBOURN HISTORY CONTINUED

1967 continued

rapid counter battery fire silenced the enemy guns and precluded further damage.

June, July and August were spent primarily in restricted availability at Yokosuka. On 26 August, the Oz joined Task Group 77.1 in Operation Sea Dragon and fired over 20 missions. On 29-30 August in company with the USS Birkley, the Ozbourn was fired on by enemy guns near Cape Falaise. Again on 1 September, the OZ and the USS St. Paul were fired on by numerous enemy guns near Cape Falaise. Over 600 rounds of enemy shells were reported splashing around the two ships. Between 13 September and 26 October, the Oz was assigned as "shotgun" destroyer on South SAR station. Ozbourn returned to Yokosuka for a brief upkeep period. The ship returned to Sea Dragon Operation between 23 November and 4 December. The Oz and the USS Robinson were taken under fire on 25 November while engaged in operations. On 26 November, the Oz was credited with sinking three waterborne logistics craft and beaching a fourth.

On 4 December, the ship was taken under fire by enemy guns and took a direct hit aft that disabled the after gun mount. Two men were killed and three injured, one seriously. While evading the enemy gunfire, over 100 splashes were recorded near the Ozbourn. The battle damage was quickly repaired but it was necessary to proceed to Subic Bay for repairs.

1968

In January 1968, the Ozbourn was diverted to the Sea of Japan as a unlit in Operation Formation Star and remained on station in a fully ready combat status until 4 March.

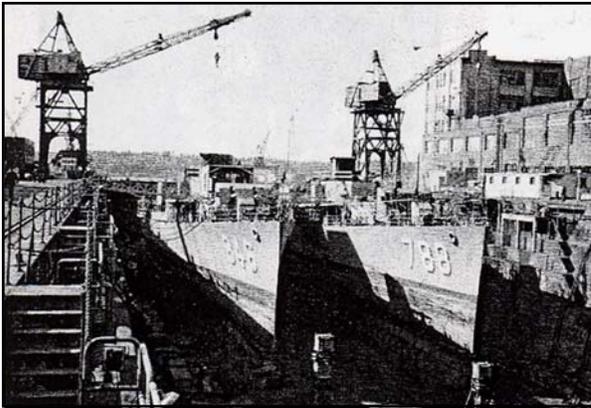
From 17-26 March the Oz was again on operation Sea Dragon and participated in more than 30 gun firing missions against enemy positions. During this operating period the ship was used as a special spotting ship. On 26 March, the Oz was assigned to the DMZ for NGFS and then proceeded to carrier operations with the USS Kitty Hawk and the USS Bon Homme Richard until the end of the month.

Ozbourn again reported for duty for Sea Dragon operations on 28 May for special spotting duty. During this period, the ship fired 18 missions against enemy positions. On 29 May, Ozbourn and the USS Buchanan were taken under fire near Nui Dat. More than 75 rounds were reported splashing around the ships. During a firing mission on 3 June, the USS H. B. Wilson received hostile fire from enemy guns ashore. This action and two missions following were spotted with special equipment from the Oz.

70.8.9 through 12 June and then proceeded for a five day visit to Hong Kong for rest and recreation followed by five days upkeep in Kaohsiung, Formosa.

During the Ozbourn's home-ported tour in WESTPAC, the ship steamed 123,219 nautical miles and spent 241 days in the Vietnam area and 402 days at sea. The ship was taken under fire or engaged in direct counter battery with the enemy on 10 occasions and was hit twice during the engagements.

The Ozbourn fired 11,996 rounds during 72 days in Task Unit 70.8.9 (NGFS) and 4,781 rounds during 37 days to Task Group 77.1 (Sea Dragon Operations). This is a total of 16,777 rounds fired. Gun damage assessments confirmed 88 enemy killed in action, six wounded in action, with an additional 33 estimated KIA/WIA but not officially confirmed. The Oz destroyed 379 structures and damaged another 422.



Side-by-side — The Ozbourn and the Hollister (DD 788) sit side by side in dry dock in Bremerton, Washington during a FRAM conversion in the early 1960s. The two ships used their new fire power during the Vietnam War.

In September, Commander R. L. Stewart relieved Commander J. G. Denham as commanding officer. On 3 December, the Oz entered Long Beach Naval Shipyard for a four-month overhaul.

1969

The Ozbourn emerged from its overhaul on 29 March 1969 a week ahead of schedule. The Oz acknowledged a job well done by having a short cruise for shipyard workers and their families.

The Navy Unit Commendation was presented to the Ozbourn and the other ships of DESRON 9 by Rear Admiral Mason Freeman, COMCRUDES, Pacific. The Ozbourn was awarded the Navy Unit Commendation by the Secretary of the Navy for exceptionally meritorious service during the period 15 June 1966 to 6 September 1968 in the conduct of sustained combat operation against enemy aggressor forces in Southeast Asia.

On 25 April, the ship reported to Commander Fleet Training Group, U.S. Pacific Fleet for six weeks of refresher training following the shipyard overhaul and prior to an upcoming WESTPAC deployment. After refresher training, the Oz, with four midshipmen aboard, participated in the Portland Rose Festival. She then participated in the fleet exercise "Beagle Baron" from 8-15 July. During the intense period of training, the ship fired two torpedoes, one deck launched and the other launched by ASROC. The Oz then returned to Long Beach for two weeks to complete her midshipmen training, before participating in the Seattle Sea Fair from 28 July to 2 August.

The Ozbourn departed Long Beach with other units of DESDIV 92 on 26 September for a six month deployment to the Western Pacific. After stopping for repairs and supplies in Yokosuka, the Oz arrived at Da Nang on 24 October for NGFS duties. For the next 30 days she operated off the coast of I Corps providing gunfire support. During this period, the ship refueled 10 times, re-armed nine times, and replenished three times. She fired a total of 6,569 rounds of five-inch ammunition.

The remainder of the deployment was spent engaged in various evolutions, such as ASW operations off Okinawa, radar picket station in the Sea of Japan, plane guard duty on Yankee Station, and in-port periods in Sesebo, Japan and Bangkok, Thailand.

Continued on page 7

THE USS OZBOURN HISTORY CONTINUED

Continued from page 6

1970

On 17 March, 1970, the Ozbourn left Yokosuka for Long Beach, arriving on 1 April. The ship began a two month yard overhaul and tender availability with the USS Isle Royale (AD 29). On 13 May, Rear Admiral Robert E. Saizer, COMCRUDES Flotilla 3, presented the DESRON 9 Battle Efficiency plaque to the ship's CO, CDR Stewart. This was the second consecutive Battle Efficiency Award won by the Ozbourn, giving her the distinction of having held the honor since 1967. CDR Stewart then presented personal awards earned during the deployment, including the Vietnam Service Medal and the Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal.

On 19 June, a large group of first and third class midshipmen embarked on the Oz for a six week training cruise, PACMIDTRA 6-70. On 20 June, Commander Stewart was relieved by Commander E. W. Numbers. The midshipmen cruise took the ship through operations in the Southern California Operations Area to San Francisco, Everett, Washington, and then to the Mid-Pacific Operations Area and Pearl Harbor. The midshipmen left on 5 August.

Most of August and the first half of September were spent at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard getting the ship in material condition prior to a FIRST Fleet exercise, ROPEVAL 4-70. The entire month of October was spent in port at Long Beach preparing for the November deployment to WESTPAC. The ship left on 13 November for a six month deployment to WESTPAC.

The ship participated in the ASW exercise ASWEX 66-70 from 10-15 December and conducted NGFS exercise from 18-21 December. Christmas was spent in Kaohsiung before meeting with the USS Hancock (CVA 19) on Yankee Station for New Years.

1971

The first half of January was spent on Yankee Station followed by a week of liberty in Hong Kong and another week of upkeep in Subic Bay. On 1 February, the ship was underway for Da Nang and NGFS off the coast of Vietnam. The last week in February was devoted to plane guard duty on Yankee Station and to patrolling the North SAR. The ship's primary duties included investigating unidentified surface ships and standing by to render assistance to downed aircraft in the Gulf of Tonkin.

March was spent in port at Subic Bay for upkeep and maintenance, plane guard duty on Yankee Station. On 1 April, the Ozbourn left Yankee Station for the last time and headed back to Vietnam for a second tour of NGFS. The three week tour began in the Third Military Region and ended at the DMZ. After a brief stop at Subic Bay, the ship headed home on 25 April with the USS De Haven (DD 727). The ships arrived in Long Beach on 13 May.

During its deployment, the ship steamed more than 41,000 nautical miles, and conducted 44 underway replenishments. She received 2,653,279 gallons of fuel oil. The ship fired approximately 3,850 rounds of five-inch ammunition. Five of the six months of the deployment were spent in the Vietnam combat zone. Eighty percent of the time was spent at sea, 15% was spent in port at Subic Bay for maintenance and repairs. Only five percent was spent on liberty in two ports. Of the final 100 days of the ship's deployment, 92 days were spent at sea.

On 15 June, DESDIV 92, of which the Oz was a member, was decommissioned. At this time, the Ozbourn was transferred to DESRON 19 with its home port in Long Beach. On 17 June, 25 midshipmen reported aboard for a six week training cruise, PACMIDTRA 71 along with 11 other First Fleet ships. The first week of the cruise was spent in the Southern California Op Area. The task group headed for San Francisco and Puget Sound ports. The ship was hosted by the City of Tacoma, Washington, for four days. The next stop was Pearl Harbor, finally arriving back in Long Beach on 4 August.

Between 20 September 1971 and 18 January 1972, the Ozbourn spent four months in overhaul at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard. On 23 December, CDR Numbers was relieved as CO by CDR Kenneth L. Costilow.

1972

On 1 February, 1972, the Ozbourn reported to COMFLTTRAGRU, U.S. PACFLT for six weeks of refresher training. The ship returned to Long Beach on 15 March prior to a WESTPAC cruise.

The Oz departed for WESTPAC on 10 April on short notice a month ahead of schedule to augment U.S. Naval forces in the Gulf of Tonkin. The ship left with the USS Eversole (DD 798) and the USS Midway (CVA 41).

After a brief period of upkeep in Subic Bay on 24-25 April, the ship departed to a position off the coast of Vietnam. On 30 April, the Oz entered the combat zone, providing support for Midway air strikes. On May 1, the Oz joined the USS Chicago (CG 11) on station in the Gulf of Tonkin.

The Oz left the Gulf of Tonkin on 19 May to assume combat duties off the coast of South Vietnam for NGFS. This support continued near the Mekong River and the DMZ.

After a brief stay in Sasebo, Japan, the Oz became a support ship for the USS Hancock (CVA 19) and remained with the carrier for the remainder of June and into July.

On 23 July, the Oz escorted the Hancock back to the Gulf of Tonkin. The Ozbourn's duties included surveillance of merchant shipping in North Vietnamese waters and interdiction of supplies to North Vietnamese forces.

On 10 August, the Oz joined the USS Long Beach (CGN 9) as a mutual support ship. Three days later, the Ozbourn joined the USS America (CVA 66) in the southern part of the Gulf of Tonkin. On 23 August, the Oz left for a week of replenishment and liberty in Kaohsiung, Formosa.

On 4 September, the Ozbourn reentered the Gulf of Tonkin as part of a task unit of destroyers that conducted a series of nighttime NGFS missions on the North Vietnamese military complexes, supply depots, and logistics trans-shipment points.

The Ozbourn conducted several other missions against the enemy in the area of Vietnam until its departure for Long Beach on 23 October. The 1972 WESTPAC deployment was the last for the USS Ozbourn (DD 846).

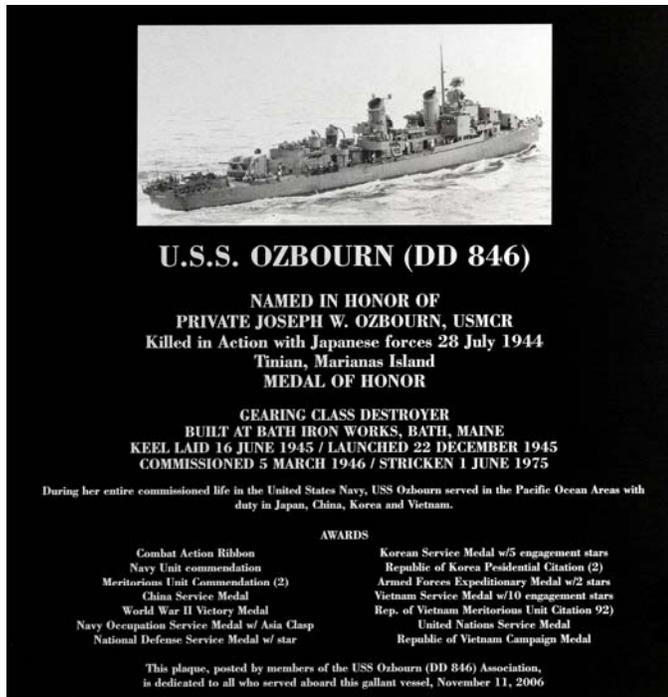
1973-75

The Ozbourn continued her career on the West Coast until she was decommissioned in June of 1975. The Oz was sold for scrap in December 1975 to General Metals, Tacoma, WA for \$157,227. It was a very ungracious ending for a lady who so gallantly and courageously served her country for more than 29 years.

Richard N. Johnson, USN Ret.
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Great Lakes Naval Memorial & Museum, Muskegon, Michigan —
 The state of Michigan has a tradition of lowering the US flag to half-staff every time a member of the armed services from the state is killed in combat.



**FIREBALL! The official
 newsletter of the
 USS Ozbourn Association**



SHIPMATES IN SEATTLE!

The 20" x 20" commemorative plaque of the USS Ozbourn (shown above) will be dedicated on Veterans' Day 2006 in the Memorial Courtyard at the Admiral Nimitz Museum in Fredericksburg, TX. Photos of the plaque will be available at the next reunion scheduled for September 12-16, 2007 in Seattle, Washington.

- **8th Biennial Reunion, September 12-16, 2007**
- **Marriott Hotel, Seattle, Washington**
- **Meet with friends and shipmates!**
- **Share memories with old friends**
- **Mark your calendars today!**
- **Let's all have fun!**