

# FIREBALL!



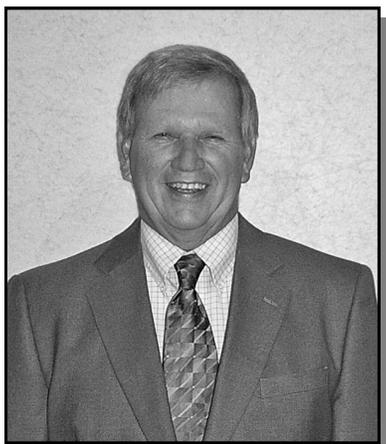
Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn  
Tinian, Marianas Islands  
28 July 1944



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](http://www.ozbourn.org)

## FROM THE BRIDGE

GREETING TO ALL:



In most of my articles **From the Bridge**, I have shared some experiences that have provided me with great times in my life. I sincerely hope that my reports in this column have been enjoyed by those who read them. Once again I want to share an experience that occurred in my life.

One Saturday afternoon, I was relaxing on the sofa enjoying the TV series *Everybody Loves Raymond*. Two of my grandsons, Jonathon age 9 and Shayne age 6, came in the room with a small American flag that they had planted in a small plastic bottle filled with sand. The proud twosome said, "Hey Papa, look at our American flag! Isn't it pretty?"

I said that it is was a beautiful flag and that they should always be proud of it and defend it. I thought about what I had just said to my grandsons for a few minutes and was happy to know that the schools are still teaching the children what the flag stands for. It was also reassuring to know that America's students are learning how and why our fallen heroes have defended the flag over the years.



Not everybody has forgotten the men and women in the US military. However, there are some people around the world who want to destroy our flag and what it stands for. I hope and pray that our beautiful American flag holds on for many more years to come.

**All gave some.  
Some gave all.**

Please fly our flag with honor and pride and remember those who gave their all for our country. Thanks to all my shipmates for serving and their families for giving their support. Hug a veteran and the current service members. God Bless America

**Guy Posey, President, USS Ozbourn Association**

P.S. Notice the Cross in the flag picture.

## GET INVOLVED IN YOUR USS OZBOURN ASSOCIATION

It's never too early to give some serious consideration to becoming an officer of the USS Ozbourn Association. Four positions are opening within the next 12 months and will be voted upon during the 2011 biennial reunion.

The four positions opening up for change starting after next year's reunion include:

- Treasurer, which is currently held by Warren Zschach; and
- Corresponding Secretary and Editor of the Fireball, which is currently held by Rick Johnson.

Any shipmate interested in assuming any of the four above listed positions should contact USS Ozbourn Association President Guy Posey at:

419 S. Appleway Lane  
Glencoe, OK 74032  
Tel: 405 747 0686  
E-mail: [ppapaguy@aol.com](mailto:ppapaguy@aol.com)

- President, which is currently held by Guy Posey
- Vice President, which is currently held by Rudy Boff

### REMINDER SEND US YOUR E-MAIL ADDRESS

USS Ozbourn Association Recording Secretary Ken Keene (71-74) changed his e-mail address to [kkeene@windstream.net](mailto:kkeene@windstream.net). His old e-mail address is no longer valid.

"I have received several requests for a list of member e-mail addresses," said Keene. "Many of the e-mail addresses are not current."

USS Ozbourn Association members who wish to be included on the official e-mail list should send their correct e-mail address to Keene's e-mail address listed above.

Participating members also need to give Keene permission to include their e-mail address on a master list. He also advises any member participating in the e-mail address program to place USS Ozbourn in the subject line so as not to appear as spam.

Once the list is completed, Keene will send the list to everyone who participated in the program.

## MISSION: MINE HAIPHONG HARBOR, NORTH VIETNAM

By Ken Keene EN2 (71-74)

On 8 May 1972 the plan of the day (POD) on the Ozbourn indicated we would be going to general quarters at 0900. Earlier that morning, I had noticed that we were close to land on the port side. Being a snipe, I had no idea that we were at the entrance to one of North Vietnam's most important seaports, Haiphong Harbor.

About 0845 I made my way up the starboard main deck near the electrician's shop because my general quarters station was located forward of the emergency diesel generator room, two decks below. As I was waiting for general quarters to sound, I was looking at the guided-missile cruiser USS Chicago which was off our starboard bow. About 0855, I saw one of the missile launchers on the Chicago rotate, load and fire a missile. Only seconds later general quarters sounded and I immediately headed below decks to my station not realizing that only seconds before that, three rounds from a shore gun emplacement had hit the water only feet from the port side of the Oz. One forward, one amidships and one aft.

Once inside the forward emergency

diesel room, I sat back and relaxed because I had no idea what was going on topside. Then I heard the boiler safeties lift in the forward fire room which was on the other side of the bulkhead from the forward diesel. I thought, somebody was in trouble because lifting the safeties wastes a tremendous amount of valuable fresh boiler water. However, I heard later that the BT who lifted safeties that morning got a free pass because of the situation that was taking place.

**The USS Ozbourn was stationed between the USS Chicago and the mouth of Haiphong Harbor. Three rounds from a North Vietnamese shore gun emplacement just missed the Ozbourn on the port side only seconds after the USS Chicago fired its SAM missiles at incoming MiG jets.**

It turned out that places from the USS Coral Sea were on the way to drop mines in Haiphong Harbor. At least one of the missiles that the USS Chicago fired that morning brought down a MiG interceptor and put enough fear in the other MiGs that they turned back. It was reported on the bridge that all Coral Sea planes dropped their mines and no U.S. aircraft were hit during the operation that morning.

It would be interesting to hear a different perspective of the story from someone who was on the bridge that morning who could see what was really happening. I didn't have a very good view from the forward emergency diesel room several decks below the bridge.

Ken Keene is the USS Ozbourn Association's Recording Secretary. Keene was an Engineman Second Class and served aboard the Oz between 1971-74. He sent a copy of the article *Mission: Mine Haiphong!* by **Reader's Digest** writer David Reed. The six-page article appeared in the February 1973 issue of **Reader's Digest**. A kicker headline reads, "The exclusive inside story behind President Nixon's most dramatic and risky decision."



### Hi Guys:

I received this e-mail and accepted (the gift) on behalf of the USS Ozbourn (DD 846) Association. This is a very generous offer and I am sure we all will enjoy looking it over at the next reunion (September 2011).

### Hello!

I believe I have "The Book of Navy Songs" that belonged to a former captain of the USS Ozbourn. His last name, Akers, is scrawled inside the front cover along with 2nd Co. His first initials and last name, C.O. Akers, are stenciled in the back along with several signatures. Attached to the last page is an introductory letter from the United States Naval Academy in Annapolis, addressed to the graduates of the class of 1938. The book was purchased on eBay. My husband served in the Navy and I was looking for interesting items for the silent auction at his ship's reunion. When I found the name and letter, I thought it would be interesting to see if I could find out about who had once owned it.

Thanks, Stacy Braman

## Officers of the Association

### President

**Guy Posey (69-71)**  
419 S. Appleway Lane  
Glencoe, OK 74032  
Tel: 405 747 0686  
Email: ppapaguy@aol.com

### Vice President

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Tel: 412 833 0572  
E-mail: boffrudy@verizon.net

### Corresponding Secretary and Fireball Editor

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### Treasurer and Historian

**Warren Zschach (52-55)**  
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Petaluma, CA 94954-4393  
Tel: 707 762 0469  
Email: hwz@comcast.net

### Past Presidents

Years served aboard ship/Assoc. Pres.  
**Robert Whitten, Jr. (50-52)/(93-99)**  
Cupertino, CA  
**W.D. Minter (52-55)/(99-03)**  
Texarkana, TX  
**Rudy Boff (52-55)/(03-07)**  
Pittsburgh, PA

Dear Shipmates:

More than 300 copies of *Sailor, Write Your Mother* are in the hands of laughing readers. Frank Spittle (48-51) wrote of the humorous experiences in his 28-page Ozbourn memoir.

Here's how to get your own copy available from Ocean Breeze Productions: P.O. Box 3421, Laguna Hills, CA 92654. \$16.95 plus \$3 postage and handling. CA residents add \$1.40 per book for state sales tax.

## PHOTO GALLERY

A series of photos provided by Ozbourn shipmates. Photos may not be dated or shipmates may not be identified.

WHO'S OUT OF UNIFORM? I see whites, blues and dungarees. So who's out of uniform?



USS Ozbourn at Bath Iron Works, Bath, ME 1945.



PRE-LAUNCH COMMUNICATION CREW (Ca. 1945) — Note the left sleeve/right sleeve rates (far left and third from left at top). Also note the dark, probably dark blue, Dixie Cup hat, third from left at top. Judging from the hair styles, Brylcreem or Pomade must have been popular in those days.

AGAIN, WHAT'S WITH THE DIFFERENT UNIFORMS?

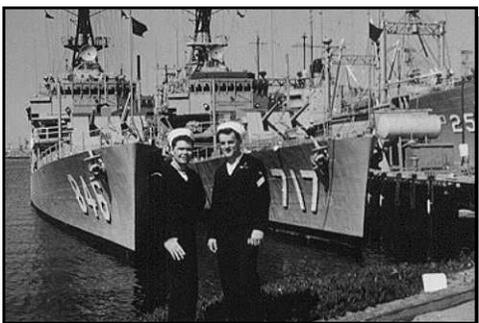


GEDUNK TIME — I remember when you could buy two Cokes for a dime!



USS OZBOURN UNDER WAY — Photo taken in the early 1950s, probably during the Korean War. Note the side number is much larger than what you see in the Bath Iron Works photo, upper right on this page.

WHICH WAY DO WE GO? — Shipmates stop to find out which arrow to follow. I hope they didn't go into the building behind the signs!



TWO SHIPMATES, TWO DDs — The USS Ozbourn DD 846 and the USS Chandler DD 717, act as backdrop for the two unidentified shipmates. The USS Frontier AD 25 sits at the pier far right.



THIS IS WHAT SUNLIGHT LOOKS LIKE — Radar crew steps out of the darkness of CIC to get some vitamin D.

# WHATEVER HAPPENED TO MY RATING?

Three new shipmates joined the USS Ozbourn Association in the last several months (see page 6). I called one of them on the phone, Donald Chip Rombough, OS3 (71-74), to confirm his rate/rating and years served aboard the Ozbourn.

What was interesting about the two of us was I was a Radarman who served aboard the Ozbourn between 1961-64 Rombough served between 71-74; we both had the same rating, RD/OS, and the same amount of time aboard the Ozbourn, roughly two and one-half years — only 10 years apart.

I began to think of how ratings have changed over the years including my old rating of Radarman (RD) which changed into Operations Specialist (OS). Now I believe the OS rating has been folded into the Quartermaster (QM) rating.

Over the years, many U.S. Navy ratings have either been disestablished, changed designations, or have been folded into other ratings. Some of the ratings, such as Pigeon Trainer have flown the coop (I just had to say it). These changes have occurred as the Navy's needs for personnel have changed, as existing technologies have evolved and new technologies have emerged.

Many of the changes have taken place in the aviation, administrative and construction ratings. The ratings listed in the box below are typically assigned to surface combat ships such as destroyers, frigates, and the new littoral system ships.

Currently, the Navy is considering merging the Hull Technician (HT), Damage Controlman (DC) and Machinery Repairman (MR) ratings into a new Repair Technician (RT) rating. Damage Controlman merged with Hull Technician in the past then reestablished as a separate rating altogether.

Here is another example of the changes the Navy is making in its ratings system. In September (2010), I attended the reunion of the USS Frank E. Evans DD 754 in San Diego. One of the tours was aboard the USS Kidd DDG 100. Being a former CIC watch stander, I wanted to tour CIC. Well was I in for a surprise. CIC is no longer behind the bridge but several decks down and farther aft. This design component was established to minimize the potential of the bridge and CIC being taken out with a single rocket-round.

The modern CIC is close to three times larger than the one I worked in aboard the Ozbourn. There are far more sophisticated electronics equipment, computers, etc., requiring many more ratings and officers aboard a modern-day destroyer working in CIC today than in my days as a Radarman.

Because of the vastly improved technology over the last 50 years, the Navy is considering a large rating merger consisting of Fire Controlman (FT), Electronics Technician (ET), Gunner's Mate (GM) and Sonar Technician (SO-surface). The Gunner's Mate rating is more involved with electronics associated with the automated naval gun systems used aboard today's ships. Each of the four ratings mentioned above have more in common today than they did aboard the Ozbourn in the early 1960s.

The move that combined the Interior Communications Electrician (IC) with the Electrician's Mate (EM) may be cancelled and the IC rating disestablished. There may other ratings into which some in the IC rating may be combined into including ET and other ratings.

This is only a small sampling of how the Navy is changing, modifying and disestablishing the old rating system.

<u>RATING</u>	<u>DATE OF CHANGE</u>	<u>CHANGES</u>
Boiler Tender (BT)	1 October 1996	Merged with Machinist Mate (MM)
Cryptologic Technician (Ops) (CTO)	1 March 2006	Merged with Info. Systems Tech (IT)
Data Systems Technician (DS)	1 October 1998	Merged into either ET or FT
Disbursing Clerk (DK)	1 October 2005	Merged with Personnel Specialist (PS)
Electronic Warfare Technician (EW)	1 October 2003	Merged with Cryptologic Tech. (CT)
Mess Management Specialist (MS)	15 January 2004	Changed to Culinary Specialist (CS)
Ocean Systems Technician (OT)	1 October 2005	Merged with Sonar Technician (ST)
Postal Clerk (PC)	1 January 2010	Merged with Logistics Specialist (LS)
Personnelman (PN)	1 October 2005	Changed to Personnel Specialist (PS)
Signalman (SM)	4 November 2003	Rating Disestablished
Storekeeper (SK)	1 October 2009	Changed to Logistics Specialist (LS)
Torpedoman's Mate (TM)	1 October 2007	Merged with Gunner's Mate (GM)



The following letter was received from a shipmate wishing to share some of his experiences with other members of the USS Ozbourn Association.

Hi Rick:

I was the commanding officer of the USS Ozbourn between April 1966-September 1968. Since I retired, I became an author, publisher and special features correspondent with Pacific Maritime Press. *The Assistant*, a 269-page sea story, is about life after retirement from the Navy and earning a living in the U.S. maritime industry. The book is a real mystery story with some exciting facts, people and action. This book sells for \$7.50 plus mailing. There are other books available as well: *DD 891*, \$12.50, *Captain*, \$7.00. For more information about these books and others, call (925)938-1143 or e-mail: jdenhamone@astound.net or Jdenham@Pacmar.com

## GEDUNK CALL QUESTION FOR FALL 2010

**Editor's note:** When the Ozbourn pulled into Pearl Harbor, HI on 13 June 1962 (my first WestPac cruise), we were one of the first ships to render honors to port for the newly dedicated USS Arizona Memorial (May 30, 1962). This interesting bit of historical information about the Ozbourn is used as a time frame for the **Gedunk Call** question for fall 2010.

When I went ashore on my first liberty in Honolulu, I encountered the H.A.S.P. So the **Gedunk Call** question for fall 2010 is:

**What does H.A.S.P. mean and what did the H.A.S.P. do for a living?**

If you think you know the answer to this issue's **Gedunk Call** questions, please mail your response to:

Rick Johnson  
5899 North Bronco Lane  
Prescott Valley, AZ 86314

Or e-mail to: johnsonsimivalley@yahoo.com

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## GEDUNK CALL ANSWER FOR SUMMER 2010

The **Gedunk Call** question for the summer 2010 *Fireball* was, "How many different commanding officers skipped the USS Ozbourn during its 29-year history?" As an additional question, "Do you remember which CO or COs you served under?" You don't have to name each commanding officer in your response, just the number of COs.

As part of the **Gedunk Call** question for summer 2010 was: If you have an interesting story about any of the Ozbourn's commanding officers to share with your shipmates, please forward your experience for inclusion in the *Fireball*.

The correct answer to the summer 2010 **Gedunk Call** question came from **Tom Perkins, FC1/c (50-53)**. Shipmate **Perkins** also provided information regarding the commanding officers he served under while aboard the Ozbourn. (The photo at left was taken while in Sasebo, Japan in early January 1951.)



**Gedunk Call**, summer 2010. There were 18 Ozbourn commanding officers. I served aboard the Ozbourn under three very competent commanding officers.

### CDR Ross E. Freeman (USNA 1935)

In mid-winter of 1950, Ozbourn was undergoing overhaul at Mare Island Navy Yard. One day I found myself on the quarterdeck with seabag and orders checking in for duty. As the Petty Officer of the Watch was logging me in, "Attention on Deck" was called as the captain entered the quarterdeck area. Seeing me standing there, he walked over, stuck out his hand and said, "My name is Freeman, what's yours." He went on to ask about my experiences and where I had been stationed as we chatted for a few moments. Needless to say, I was somewhat nonplussed as this had never happened to me before. Later on, while standing helm watches and being around the gun director deck, I gained the opinion that he was a very competent CO.

### CDR Charles O. Akers (USNA 1938)

Charlie Akers was probably the best ship handler that I ever saw. One thing that I recall was his unique way of mooring to a buoy. Rather than put a messenger in the whale boat so

the crew could haul the chain to the shackle on the buoy, he would maneuver the bow of the ship so that the bull nose was directly over the buoy and just drop the chain down to the deck apes waiting below. I saw him do this on more than one occasion when the weather conditions were just right. Later on after the reunion association was formed, Charley would be in attendance and regale us about his experiences while serving 30 years in the Navy. As I recall he attended all of the reunions up to the grand old age of 88.

### CDR William B. Fargo (USNA 1939)

We in the lower ranks referred to him as "Wells," behind his back of course. The ship became known as the Wells Fargo Express. This was not meant to be of a derogatory nature rather it was because he was a hard charger and all true destroyermen like to have a skipper who is willing to go in harms way. Fargo was very knowledgeable about the intricacies of naval ordnance. He would frequently show up unannounced while we were conducting gunnery checks, ask questions and even insist on looking through the boresight telescopes while we were conducting battery alignment. Enroute from Sasebo to Korea, horizon checks for the 3"/50 cal. guns had been scheduled, two of which were adjacent to the bridge. It quickly became apparent that the wind and sea were too high for us to gain any useful data and we were ready to call it quits when Fargo appeared. He inquired about how the checks were going and when informed that we were securing because of sea conditions he said, "When I was on the battleship Washington, we used to look for days like this, now let's get it done." At that very moment, a gunners mate striker, who had been looking green about the gills, ran to the urinal between the flagbags and noisily upchucked his breakfast. Suddenly, the captain turned and fled to the pilothouse. Way to go gunner, you came through for us!

## WELCOME ABOARD



Welcome aboard to the below listed new shipmates. The USS Ozbourn Association officers and members hope that you will become involved in the biennial reunions which are held on odd-numbered years. There are several opportunities in which shipmates can serve in a leadership role as an association officer.

**Phillip DiMaggio**

HM1 — (69-72)

**Ross Reed**

STG2 — (64-66)

**Donald Chip Rombough**

OS3 — (71-74)

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## **We're on the Web at [www.ozbourn.org](http://www.ozbourn.org)**

The following information can be found on the USS Ozbourn's Association's Web site:

- **Mission statement of the Association**
- **Complete history of the Ozbourn**
- **Current and past newsletters — The Fireball**
- **List of Ozbourn shipmates**
- **Historical photographs**
- **Ship's store for ordering Ozbourn memorabilia**
- **How to join the USS Ozbourn Association**
- **Special links to other associated Web sites**

## TAPS FOR SHIPMATES

**Courage  
Bravery  
Loyalty  
Patriotism  
Sacrifice**



**Fred R. Conwell**

EM — 48-52

July 13, 2010

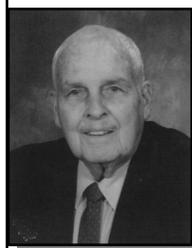
Fred was an original member of the USS Ozbourn Reunion Association and served as historian from 1992 until 2005. In civilian life, Fred was an engineering geologist and worked on various projects such as the Oroville Dam and the Stanford Linear Accelerator.

**William K. McCormick**

DC2 — 1953

August 30, 2010

William K. McCormick, age 79, passed away on August 30, 2010 in Mt. Olive, Alabama. He is survived by two sons, three grandchildren and one great-grandchild. He was laid to rest in Gardendale, Alabama. He loved to tell his family many stories of the Ozbourn and the time he was aboard the ship during the Korean War.



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## USS OZBOURN (DD 846) ASSOCIATION MEMBERSHIP FORM

This form is intended as a reminder for payment of dues and to update your personal information in our data base.

Association dues are \$10 per year and the membership period runs from 1 January through 31 December each year. Your dues' status is indicated by a two digit number or letter combination on the mailing label found on the outside cover of the *Fireball* newsletter. For example: "10" indicates a regular member is paid-up through 2010, "11" means a regular member is paid-up through 2011, and so on. The letter "n" indicates a new member with membership in process. The letter "c" indicates a complimentary copy or honorary member. Please complete this form when renewing your annual dues.

**NAME:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ADDRESS:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**TELEPHONE NUMBER:** \_\_\_\_\_

**E-MAIL** \_\_\_\_\_

**YEARS SERVED ON THE SHIP (i.e. 50-51)** \_\_\_\_\_

**HIGHEST RANK/RATE HELD** \_\_\_\_\_

**AMOUNT PAID — \$** \_\_\_\_\_

**Make checks payable to the USS Ozbourn Association**

**Complete this form and mail it along with annual dues payment to:**

**Warren Zschach  
1311 Ponderosa Drive  
Petaluma, CA 94954-0469**

# USS OZBOURN SHIP'S STORE

Open 24 Hours, 7 Days a Week — Rudy Boff, Proprietor



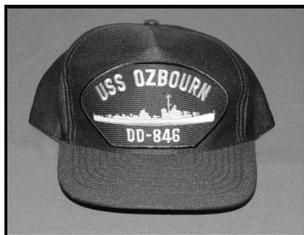
Photos and additional ordering information can be found on the Ozboourn Web site at [www.ozboourn.org](http://www.ozboourn.org) under the heading Ship's Store.

Orders may be placed with:

Rudy Boff — 1036 Connor Road  
Pittsburgh, PA  
15234-1033

Tel: (412) 833-0572

New email: [boffrudy@verizon.net](mailto:boffrudy@verizon.net)



**CAP** cotton twill Navy blue, brilliant gold letters & destroyer silhouette. 1 size fits all.

Item # C01, \$14 ea.

Embroidery on back:

Korea, #C01K \$15 ea.

Vietnam, #C01V \$15 ea.



**Windbreaker** mesh lined with full front zipper. Navy blue jacket with ship profile in silver thread and lettering in gold thread. \$60 ea.

Item# J01



Logo detail



**PATCH** fabric, \$6 ea.

Original design, Item #P01

Revised design, Item #P02



**Can holder** made of foam. Navy blue body with white base. USS Ozboourn logo in white. \$3.00 ea. or two for \$5.00. Item# K01



**FRAME**, license plate Item# F01 \$5 ea.

## SPECIAL ORDER ITEMS

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

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

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

Jerzees Super Sweatshirt, assorted colors \$40

Golf shirts \$30

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



**T-shirt** short sleeve Navy & white with embroidered logo left side. \$20 ea. Item# T01

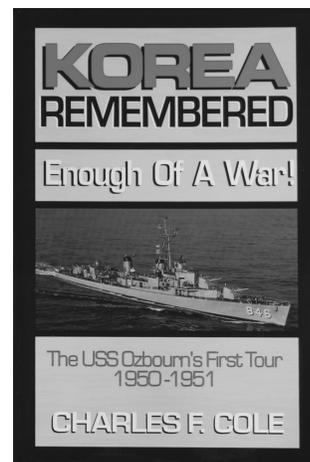
Long sleeve \$35 ea. Item# T02



Logo detail

The book *Korea Remembered: Enough of a War!*, the *USS Ozboourn's First Tour, 1950-1951*, is a first-hand account by shipmate Charles F. Cole, as the war "sandwiched between WW II and the War in Vietnam."

Cole's historic account was first published in 1995, just in time for the dedication of the Korean War Memorial, which is near the Vietnam Wall in Washington, D.C.



**"Korea Remembered: Enough of a War!,  
The USS Ozboourn's First Tour, 1950-1951**

By Charles F. Cole

**\$15.00 plus \$3.00 for shipping & handling**

## SHIPPING AND HANDLING

<u>COST OF ITEM</u>	<u>COST OF POSTAGE</u>
\$0.01-15.00	\$3.00
15.01-25.00	4.00
25.01-35.00	5.00
35.01-45.00	7.00
45.01-55.00	8.00
55.01-65.00	10.00
65.01 or more	11.00

**Richard N. Johnson, USN Ret.**  
**5899 North Bronco Lane**  
**Prescott Valley, AZ 86314-5892**



**NORTH BREAKWATER LIGHTHOUSE, LUDINGTON, MI.**

This historic lighthouse was designed to look like a ship at sea. The first lighthouse was built in 1871. The current lighthouse was started in 1924 and was fully automated in 1972. It is rated as Michigan's number one favorite lighthouse. The SS Badger, a car/passenger ferry, slips past this historic lighthouse twice a day on its way to and from Manitowoc, WI. A strong wind from the south blows the American flag straight as a board.

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

**DUES ALERT!**

Are you overdue on your dues? Only dues-paying members receive the *Fireball* newsletter. Look at the mailing label on your most recent newsletter and find a number such as 10, 11 or 12. This number indicates the last year you were current with Association dues: 10 means 2010, 11 means 2011, etc. Your Association officers ask you to...

**DO THE DUES TODAY!**

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**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 winter 2011 issue is **Monday, December 13**. Articles may be rewritten for purposes of editorial style. Due to space limitations, some materials may be used in a future *Fireball* edition.