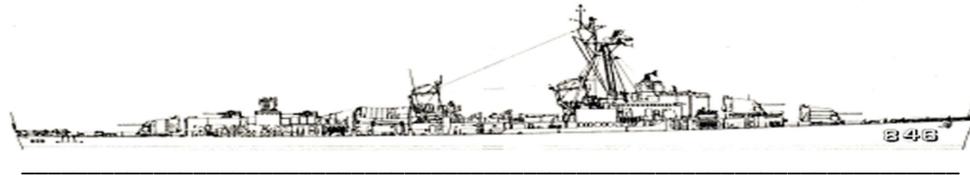




Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn  
Tinian, Marianas Islands  
28 July 1944

# FIREBALL!

VOLUME 27, No. 3  
Summer 2018



**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

### Greetings to All Shipmates, Families and Friends

I hope this newsletter finds each one of you and your dear family members in good health.

As the years go by, we lose a few more shipmates, but we also have gained a few new ones as well. Clearly, most of us are no longer young and it is a sad duty to report the passing of so many of our friends in each newsletter.

I believe that it is more important than ever to attempt to stay in contact with as many of our shipmates as possible. One way of course is to attend our reunions, held every two years throughout the Country. Our 2019 Reunion will be held somewhere in the Western Region, 2021 will be in the Central Region and 2023 will be in the Eastern Region of our great United States. We of course vary the regions as to not be a financial or other burden on our shipmates living throughout the Country.

I hope that all of our shipmates and families are looking forward to our 2019 Reunion. I know the committee is working hard and I am certain we will have another great reunion. Please watch for reunion updates in the upcoming "Fireball" Newsletters. I wish to thank all of you who attend and make every reunion successful.

As your President, Sallae and I wish you and your families good health over this Summer and always.

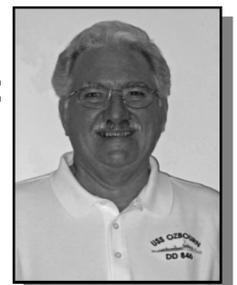
Lets all pray for America, our active and past military veterans and our law enforcement and first responders.

Guy Posey, President  
USS OZBOURN Association

## USS OZBOURN DD846 SHIPS STORE

### RUDY BOFF SAYS, DON'T MISS THE NEW ITEM in the SHIPS STORE

"OZ" Polyester Flag, measuring 3-ft X 5-ft with 2-metal grommets, dyed with beautiful colors, printed on one side, visible through the fabric, double stitched around all edges with 4-rows of stitching on the flying edge. \$40.00 Each, plus S&H.



## 2019 Biennial Reunion

*Jeff Parker, Editor*

Now that the holidays and the 2017 Reunion is now in the history books, the 2019 Reunion Committee has already gone to work. The committee, headed up by **Association Vice President Mark Beaulieu**, have become very active in their pursuit of another great venue for which to host our 2019 Reunion to be held somewhere in the Western part of the Country. We are blessed to have **Mark, Mike Ward** and **Harold "Mac" McKeehan**, who have once again stepped up to the plate. In addition, **Guy Posey, President**, will also be involved in the planning process.

At the current time, Mark has reported that the Pacific Northwest as well as several other locations are being considered.

## Photos of Past Reunions

If you have never attended one of our great reunions, the following photographs depict just a few of the many shipmates and family members in attendance over the years. Clearly, many attend every reunion and we are sure you would not be disappointed.



## Association Officers

### President

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

### Vice President

**Mark Beaulieu (72-74)**  
8710 Hollow Banks Lane  
Houston, TX 77095  
Tel: 281-856-8964  
Email: mark.a.beaulieu@outlook.com

### Corresponding Secretary and Fireball Editor

**Jeff Parker (70-74)**  
1036 Calle Venezia  
San Clemente, CA 92672  
Tel: 949-388-3067  
Email: Ljparker1@cox.net

### Recording Secretary

**Kenneth E. Keene (71-74)**  
255 Farmwood Drive  
Statesville, NC 28625-8570  
Tel: 704-380-2052  
Email: kkeene51@twc.com

### Treasurer and Historian

**Philip M. Roberts (68-72)**  
2608 Bentwood Drive  
Palestine, TX 75803  
Tel: 903-723-3818  
Email: swabby54@hotmail.com

### Past Presidents

Years served aboard OZ/Assoc. President

**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

## 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 2018** issue is **August 15th**. Articles may be re-written for purposes of editorial style. Due to limitations, some materials may be used in a future **Fireball** edition.



## MAIL CALL

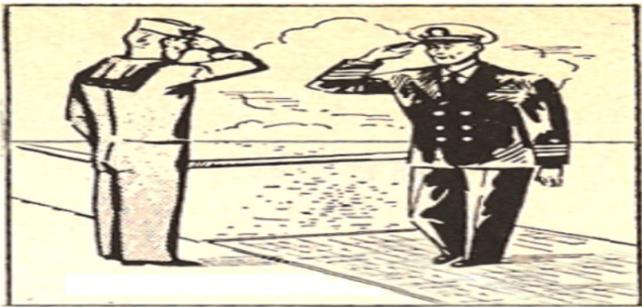
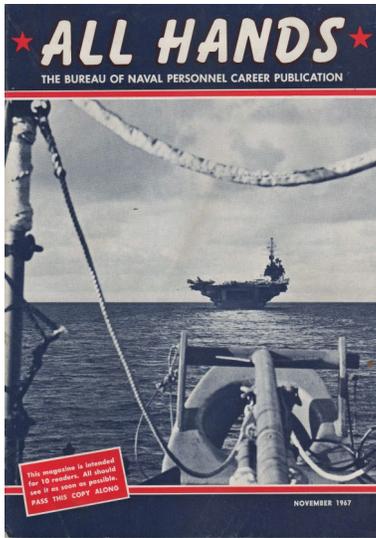
The following letters and emails were received by your Association Officers during the last quarter.

### NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT and AIR SUPPORT

Submitted by Jerry McKee, YN2, (66-69)

Longtime "Fireball" contributor and Association Member Jerry McKee has once again forwarded an article from a 1967 issue of "All Hands" magazine related to Naval Gunfire Support and Air Support during enemy action off of the coast of Vietnam.

The article includes operations involving the USS Ozbourn DD846, with the attached photograph, although blurred, of the "OZ" during a firing mission. *(Editors Note: Please watch for the full article in future editions of the "Fireball Newsletter. The Editor wishes to thank Jerry McKee for all of his contributions to the "Fireball", over several years.)*



## WELCOME ABOARD

The Association wishes to Welcome Aboard the following shipmates as our newest members.

**DANIEL BROCK, MM3, (70-73)**

**CLIVE GRAHAM, Ltjg, (71-73)**

**GABRIEL MIRANDA, SN, (48-50)**

**BILLY "MIKE" NEWKHAM, ETR3, (68)**

The entire membership welcomes you aboard and we all hope to see you at future reunions of the USS Ozbourn DD846, held biannually. The 2019 Reunion will be held in the Western Region of the Country.



## TAPS FOR SHIPMATES

**"SAILORS ONCE, SHIPMATES FOREVER"**

**NORMAN SCHWENDLER, RM3, (63-64)**

**LEROY DAVIS, SN2c, (47-48)**

**MAX TREW, DC3, (49-53)**

**WERNER C. COHRS, ETM3, (46)**

**ELWIN PENTLAND, ET3, (61-63)**

**FRED D. CUMMINGS, SK2, (58-61)**

**EUVHON REEVES, MM2, (53-56)**

**ANDREW WOODS, E3, (72-73)**

**OLEN WILBORN SR. RM, (53-54)**

*"May fair winds and calm seas be with you always"*



## **Ozbourn in Action-Operation Linebacker '72**

*Researched and Authored by Association Vice President Mark Beaulieu, MM2, (72-74)*

### **Operation Linebacker**

Operation Linebacker was the codename of an Air Force and Navy Task Force 77 combined air and sea interdiction campaign against the Democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam from 10 May to 23 October 1972. Its purpose was to halt or slow the transportation of supplies and materials for the Easter Offensive, an invasion of the Republic of (South) Vietnam by forces of the People's Army of Vietnam (PAVN), the NVA, and National Liberation Front that had been launched on 30 March. *Linebacker* was the first continuous bombing effort conducted against North Vietnam since the end of *Operation Rolling Thunder* in November 1968.

Key elements of the operation included interdiction and interruption of the flow of supplies and munitions to the North's field operations of the Easter Offensive and the destruction or degradation of the North's extensive anti-aircraft capability. Its four stated objectives were:

1. Isolate North Vietnam from its outside sources of supply by destroying railroad bridges and rolling stock in and around Hanoi;
2. The targeting of primary storage areas and marshalling yards;
3. Destroy storage and transshipment points;
4. To eliminate or render ineffective the North's air defense system

Although best known by the public for the bombing component of the campaign, the mining of inlets and harbors during *Operation Pocket Money*, a sub-set of *Linebacker*, prevented 85% of munitions supplied by China and the USSR from reaching Haiphong. Surface ship raids along the North's coastline contributed to the destruction of supplies.

Now largely forgotten, the story of 7th Fleet hit & run surface strikes conducted by destroyers and cruisers, close to the shores of North Vietnam proved surprisingly successful. These strikes were conducted by cruiser-destroyer hunting groups consisting of three to five destroyers frequently backed by a gun cruiser. The raids were conducted at night by the group darting in at full speed, slowing to five-ten knots while turning parallel to the coast, and then firing on the pre-determined target. The group would then sped away from the shore to regroup after the last ship in line completed her run and re-form for the next run. The group would repeat this tactic four or five times during the night. The group would then spend the next day refueling and re-arming for the coming night's ops.

The surface strikes worked and the *Ozbourn* proudly played an important role in the operation, conducting some 209 firing missions over the course of 37 days. Fifty-nine of the firing missions targeted SAM sites, AA batteries, Coastal Defense emplacements; in other words, against targets which had the ability to, and often did, return fire.

### **The Events that Led to Linebacker**

On October 31, 1968, just five days before the election that brought Nixon into office, President Johnson ordered the complete cessation of "all air, naval, and artillery bombardment of North Vietnam" based on recent favorable developments in the Paris Peace Talks. In compliance with his orders, the U.S. Air Force and U.S. Navy ceased operations above the 17th Parallel on November 1, 1968, bringing to its conclusion Operation Rolling Thunder and halting raids on North Vietnam. This lull in bombing was to last nearly 42 months which the North utilized to their best advantage.

Despite Johnson's overly optimistic opinion to the contrary, it soon became apparent that the talks in Paris were being used as propaganda theater and negotiations dragged on unproductively for several years. This delaying tactic favored the North and was most frequently employed by them as the U.S. continued to withdraw troops. *(Continued on Page-5).*

## The Events that Led up to Linebacker, (Cont.)

This frustrated President Nixon and Henry Kissinger greatly, yet despite the glacially slow progress, the U.S. continued its policy of *Vietnamization* by supplying vast amounts of materials to the ARVN and turning all combat operations over to them. U.S. troop levels soon fell below 60,000 by mid-year, the lowest since 1964.

### On the Home Front

The impact of the Pentagon Papers release in July 1971 continued to sow discontent, erode faith in the government and eat away at confidence in the war's leadership. Support for the war continued to falter and fewer than 45% of the population supported the war by the beginning of 1972. In the 1968 Presidential race, Nixon ran against Hubert Humphrey on a promise to restore law and order to the streets and to end the war in Vietnam with honor. Nixon was now under tremendous pressure to make good on those promises as the 1972 Presidential race began. Troop drawdown continued on pace and combat troop presence fell from 133,000 men in arms in January 1972 to just 27,000 by Thanksgiving of that year. On March 10, 1972, the U.S. 101st Airborne Division was withdrawn from Vietnam just weeks ahead of the coming invasion by the North.

### The North Makes Ready to Go

The democratic Republic of (North) Vietnam had proven to be politically patient, militarily resilient, and relentless in their pursuit of a unified Vietnam under the rule of the Communist North. The North took advantage of the extended bombing halt to rebuild the rail and road infrastructure, replenish stocks, expand their air defensive network and most of all, prepare for the "final" offensive. The North was well acquainted with disparity of combat effectiveness and leadership between U.S. troops and their often ineffective and unreliable ARVN counterparts. Deeming the timing to be right, in January of 1972, the North began massing troops and equipment along the three planned jump-off points for the Easter Offensive; the DMZ, the Cambodian Border and the Laotian Border.

**Table 1**

OPERATION CODE NAME/ EVENT	START- END	NOTES
North Vietnam launches the Easter Offensive	Mar. 30-Oct. 23 '72	Offensive failed at the cost of 60,00 NVA, PAVN, and NFL lives.
Freedom Train	Apr.1-May 9 '72	Operation Freedom Train, the initial US response to the Easter Offensive, lacked the desired punch to repel the attack and soon morphed to become the more expansive and aggressive Operation Linebacker.
Operation Pocket Money	May 9 '72- Jan 23 '72	The initial mining of Haiphong Harbor occurred on May 9th to choke off 85% of NV imports of arms, munitions and fuel. Ozbourn participated as part of the surface forces and came under heavy hostile fire from coastal defense guns around Hanoi.
Linebacker I	May 9 '72-Oct 23 '72	Concluded as part of the peace negotiations.
Awards: <i>Bronze Star w/Combat "V"</i> <i>For Captain Costilow, ship and crew</i> <i>Receive the Meritorious Unit Citation</i>	Apr 1 '72-Oct 1 '72	Awarded for valor under, an Ozbourn tradition proven over year after year and crew after crew.
Linebacker II (OZ in Long Beach)	Dec 18-29 '72	Peace negotiations stall once again. Nixon forces the issue by resuming bombings once again. Negotiations resume, and terms are finalized.

**Table 1 (Cont.)**

OPERATION CODE NAME/ EVENT	START- END	NOTES
The Paris Peace Accords, officially known As the Agreement on Ending the War and Restoring Peace in Vietnam concludes.	Jan 27 '73	America's active participation in combat concludes but material and financial support continue.
Saigon Falls, South Vietnam surrenders and Ceases to exist as an independent nation.	Apr 30 '75	The reunified country changed its name to Socialist Republic of Vietnam in 1976.

**The Easter Offensive of 1972 and the Early U.S. response**

**The Initial Response: Operation Pocket Money and Freedom Train**

The Easter Offensive was an attempt by the North to deliver a 'coup de grace' (fatal blow) to the Republic of South Vietnam and claim a final victory over the South by reunifying the country under the North's control. The offensive was designed to achieve three major outcomes: defeat the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) in the field, spur a popular uprising amongst the people of the South, and to hasten the withdrawal of remaining U.S. armed forces. Sensing the timing was right, on 30 March 1972, the North sent an attacking force of 14 infantry divisions of NVA and 26 separate regiments of Peoples Army of Vietnam and National Liberation Front, totaling a coordinated force of 120,000 troops and approximately 1,00 tanks. With insufficient U.S. ground forces available to counter the invasion, the U.S. quickly decided to employ air and sea assets to disrupt communications, cut-off the flow of materials and prevent re-enforcements gaining the field. Area commanders immediately launched Operation Freedom Train, the forerunner of Linebacker. On April 1st, and on April 10th, 1972, Nixon ordered the full-scale resumption of bombing of the North. U.S. aircraft and naval warships resumed combat operations against North Vietnam almost immediately. Navy surface ships contributed mightily to the defense of South Vietnam during the early days of the Easter Offensive. Each day, between 15 and 20 U.S. ships provided Naval Gun-fire Support for the beleaguered ARVN forces in the northern most Military Region MR1.

*(Editors Note: As a result of the length of Mark's article, as Editor, I have been required to publish this outstanding article in two separate editions of the "Fireball". The remaining portion of Mark's article will be published in the 2018 Fall Edition of the "Fireball" due out in September 2018).*

**AWARDS & DECORATIONS, "LINEBACKER"**



As a result of the USS Ozbourn DD846 participation in the Linebacker Combat Operations against the enemy, the Commanding Officer, Commander Kenneth Costilow was Meritoriously awarded the Bronze Star with Combat V. All other Crewmembers of the "OZ" were awarded the Combat Action Ribbon.



# USS OZBOURN SHIP'S STORE

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

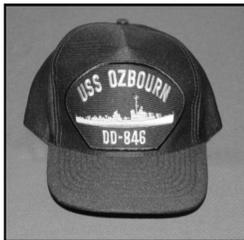


Photos and additional ordering information can be found on the Ozbourn website at [www.ozbourn.org](http://www.ozbourn.org) under the heading Ship's Store. Orders may be placed with:  
 Rudy Boff — 1036 Connor Road  
 Pittsburgh, PA  
 15234-1033  
 Tel: (412) 833-0572

### 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 \$95
  - Jerzees Super Sweatshirt, White or Navy Blue \$40
  - Golf shirts, White or Navy Blue \$35
- All items have ship's name and hull number embroidered in gold letters. "Add \$5.00 for size 2XL"



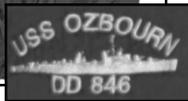
**CAP** cotton twill Navy blue, brilliant gold letters & Destroyer silhouette. 1 size fits all. Item #C01, \$14 ea. Embroidery on back: Korea, #C01K \$16 ea. Vietnam, #C01V \$16 ea.



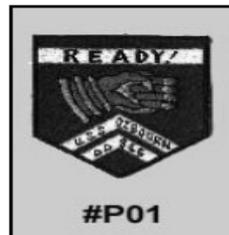
**T-shirt** short sleeve, White or Navy Blue with embroidered logo left side. \$25 ea. Item #T02  
 ← Long sleeve. \$35 ea.



**AUBURN COACH'S JACKET**  
 Navy Blue with fleece lining, six matching metal snaps, profile of the ship in silver thread and lettering in gold. \$45 ea. Item #J01



← Logo detail



**PATCH** fabric, \$6 ea. Item #P01

**NEW ITEM: "OZ" POLYESTER FLAG** Measuring 3-ft X 5-ft with 2-metal grommets, dyed with beautiful bold colors, printed on one side visible through the fabric, double stitched around all edges with 4-rows of stitching on the flying edge. \$40.00 each, plus S&H. **FLAG** →



<b>SHIPPING AND HANDLING</b>	
<u>COST OF ITEM</u>	<u>COST OF POSTAGE</u>
\$0.01 – 15.00	\$3.00
15.00 – 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

Jeffrey Parker  
1036 Calle Venezia  
San Clemente, CA 92672



Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn  
USMC  
Congressional Medal of Honor

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

### DUES ALERT!

Are you overdue on your annual dues? Only dues paying members receive the *Fireball* newsletter. Look at your mailing label on your most recent newsletter and find a number such as 17 or 18. This number indicates the last year you were current with Association dues: 16 means 2016, 17 means 2017, etc. If you wish, you may pay for multiple years.

Membership dues are **\$15.00** annually and are due in January of each year. Please make checks payable to the **USS OZBOURN Association** and forward them to Philip Roberts, Association Treasurer, at 2608 Bentwood Drive, Palestine, TX 75803.

Your Association officers ask you to.....

### DO THE DUES TODAY!

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

The following information can be found on the Association's website: Mission Statement, a list of Ozbourn shipmates, historical photos, Ship's Store and how to Join the Association.

### USS OZBOURN COMMANDING OFFICERS

The USS Ozbourn has had 18 different commanding officers during its 29 year history. Do you remember which skippers you served under? If you have an interesting story about any of the Ozbourn's commanding officers to share please forward your experience for possible inclusion in a future issue of the *Fireball*.

CDR B.A. Smith	March 1946-October 1947
CDR N.E. Blaisdell	October 1947-March 1949
CDR R.E. Freeman	March 1949-September 1950
CDR C.O. Akers	September 1950-April 1951
CDR W.B. Fargo	April 1951-April 1954
CDR H.T. Scott Jr.	April 1954-November 1955
CDR A.J. Toulon Jr.	November 1955-Sept. 1957
CDR C.A. Kuhl	September 1957-July 1959
CDR W.W. Turner	July 1959-March 1961
LCDR D.V. Gorman	March 1961-December 1961
CDR W.W. Lancaster	December 1961-October 1963
CDR D.W. Berger	October 1963-July 1964
CDR N.D. Nelson Jr.	July 1964-April 1966
CDR J.G. Denham	April 1966-September 1968
CDR R.L. Stewart	September 1968-June 1970
CDR E.W. Numbers	June 1970-December 1971
CDR K.L. Costilow	December 1971-March 1974
CDR F.J. Furtado	March 1974-May 1975

