

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

FIREBALL!

VOLUME 35, No. 3
Summer 2025



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

Greetings to All Shipmates, Families and Friends

It is of course a great pleasure to once again address all Shipmates, Family Members and Friends. Hope all are doing well.

Our 2025 Reunion is fast approaching. Please make plans on attending. We have a great agenda planned that include our tours filled with our nations history. Our Host Hotel is a fantastic venue.

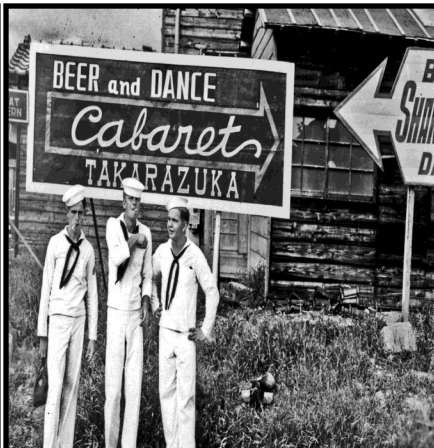
During the Business Meeting to be held during the reunion we will have a serious discussion regarding the status of our great Association. Please send your registrations in as soon as possible. Send all Registration Forms to; **Guy Posey, 419 S. Appleway, Glencoe, OK 74032.**

**I AM VERY PLEASED TO ANNOUNCE THAT OUR 2025 REUNION
“WILL NOT” BE CANCELLED. SEE YOU IN RHODE ISLAND.**

Guy Posey, President
USS Ozbourn Association

*******FINAL NEWSLETTER BEFORE REUNION*******

2025 REUNION, WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND SEPTEMBER 10-13, 2025



“SAILORS ONCE, SHIPMATES FOREVER”

2025 Biennial Reunion Update

Jeff Parker, Editor

Although it is difficult to believe, as time seems to speed by, it is once again to direct our attention on our upcoming 2025 Reunion being held this September in Warwick, Rhode Island.

After doing a great job on the 2015, 2017, 2019 & 2021 Reunions, **Guy Posey, President, Harold "Mac" McKeehan, V.P., Mike Ward, Treasurer,** have once again stepped up to the plate and are deep into the planning stages for our 2025 Reunion.

Our Reunion Committee has been very busy and working hard over these past few months as they sought out various locations that would be both fiscally prudent and of interest to those members able to attend.

Those members planning on attending the 2025 Reunion are requested to submit their Registration Forms and fees to Association President Guy Posey, 419 S. Appleway, Glencoe, Oklahoma 74032.

FLYING TO THE 2025 REUNION

The following information is to assist those flying to the 2025 Reunion.

The closest airport to Warwick, RI, is Rhode Island T.F. Green International Airport, (PVD), located a short distance from the Host Hotel, in Providence, Rhode Island

All members are reminded that the Crown Plaza Hotel Warwick, provides a complementary shuttle from PVD to the hotel.

2025 REUNION HOST HOTEL



The Crown Plaza Hotel, Warwick, Rhode Island, has been selected as the Host Hotel for our 2025 Reunion. The hotel is located at 801 Greenwich Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island, (401) 732-6000.

The Reunion Committee has obtained a room rate of \$149.00 + Tax, per night. For those wishing to stay prior to the reunion or after, the hotel will guarantee the

above rate three days prior and three days post reunion. The nightly rate includes Daily Breakfast, Complimentary Airport Shuttle, (PVD) and Free Parking. **Those wishing to make reservations must call the hotel directly at (401) 732-6000. Be sure that you inform the Reservations Operator that you will be attending the USS Oz-bourn Association Reunion.**

SEE PAGE-5 FOR REUNION REGISTRATION INFORMATION

Association Officers

President

Guy Posey (69-71)
419 S. Appleway Lane
Glencoe, OK 74032
Tel: 405-714-3168
Email: gtp68483@gmail.com

Vice President

Harold "Mac" McKeehan (70-72)
7360 Township Line Road
Waynesville, OH 45068
Tel: 513-897-2208
Email: cowboy1220@centurylink.net

Recording Secretary

Kenneth E. Keene (71-74)
504 Swaim Court
Salisbury, NC 28147-1352
Tel: 704-380-5756
Email: kkeene51@twc.com

Treasurer and Historian

Mike Ward (72-75)
3836 County Road W40
Decorah, Iowa 52101
Tel: 563-735-5585
Email: ward6770@gmail.com

Fireball Editor

Jeff Parker (70-74)
1036 Calle Venezia
San Clemente, CA 92672
Tel: 909-910-9644
Email: Ljparker1@cox.net

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 **Winter 2026** issue is **November 15, 2025**. Articles may be rewritten 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.

ADMIRAL TOM FARGO, USN (RET.)

The Association has heard from Admiral Tom Fargo, USN, (Ret.), the Son of Ex-USS OZBOURN DD-846 Commanding Officer W.B. Fargo, Commander, (51-54). Admiral Fargo wrote, that many years ago, maybe not that many, you invited me to speak at an Ozbourn Reunion. It was my privilege because it was clear that my father's view was that the Ozbourn and her crew made an indelible contribution to our Navy and our nation's security during the Korean War. His 3-years in command I believe was its longest tenure. I learned a tremendous amount from my father about our Navy, most of which was probably as a result of his command at sea. He loved his ship and its crew and it has made a lasting impact on us all.

With great respect and admiration,
Tom Fargo, Admiral USN (Ret.)

(Editors Note: The Association wishes to thank Admiral Fargo for his very generous donation of \$500.00)

SAILOR for LIFE SPRING-SUMMER NEWSLETTER

Submitted by Shipmate Alan Swinger

Sailor for Life is the Navy's magazine for veterans, retirees, and families. It updates the Navy community about changes to laws, policies and programs that affect them.

The Sailor for Life, Issue #2, 2025 Spring-Summer issue is now available. You can download the latest issue at : www.my.navyhr.navy.mil/media-Center/Publications/Sailor-for-Life/

"I STAND CORRECTED"

Jeff Parker, Editor

In the last newsletter, 2025 Spring Edition of the "Fireball", I placed a photograph depicting battle damage to the ASROC Magazine that was sustained on March 25, 1967.

The actual video referenced in the article, accurately depicts damage, injuries and the death of two shipmates KIA, that occurred on December 4, 1967. I can only hope that if my error has caused concern, I apologize and I will strive to be more accurate in the future.

2025 DONATION RECOMMENDATIONS

All members are reminded that any recommendations regarding donations of Association Funds to any organization must be presented in writing to any of the Elected Board Members at least 90-Days prior to the reunion's Business Meeting. Requests for the donating of funds should include information regarding the organization who would be on the receiving end of any Association Funds.

Hit Kills 2 on U.S. Ship

SAIGON (AP) — The U.S. Navy destroyer Ozbourn received a direct hit from a communist shore battery Monday while patrolling off the coast of North Vietnam. Two crewmen were killed and three were wounded, a Navy spokesman reported.

The shell penetrated the main deck and exploded in a compartment.

Last March 25 the Ozbourn was hit while operating just south of the Demilitarized Zone. The ship suffered minor damage in the earlier shelling, but no casualties.

2025 REUNION SCHEDULE and TOUR DESCRIPTIONS

“AS A RESULT OF SCHEDULING ISSUES WITH OUR VENDORS, PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUSLY PUBLISHED SCHEDULE OF EVENTS”

Wednesday, September 10, 2025

Reunion Check-in 3:00pm — 10:00pm, The Hospitality Room will be open for Reunion Check-in as well as meeting friends and enjoying a beverage and snacks. (Dinner on your own)

Thursday, September 11, 2025

Our motor coach will transport us to North Kingston, Rhode Island, where we will board a boat for the scenic tour of 10 lighthouses, and beautiful scenic shoreline. We will then enjoy dinner at the Quonset O Club. Dinner will include a choice of New England Baked Scrod, Breaded Chicken Cutlet with lemon sauce, garlic roasted potatoes, sauteed green beans, butter & rolls and a fudge brownie with ice cream.

We will then return to our hotel to enjoy snacks and beverages in the Hospitality Room.

Friday, September 12, 2025

Our Motor coach will transport us to Battle Ship Cove, Fall River, MA. You may tour the USS Kennedy, USS Massachusetts, PT-617, PT-796, with the Memorial Service and a Buffet Lunch on board.

Saturday, September 13, 2025

ASSOCIATION BUSINESS MEETING

The Business Meeting will be held at the Crown Plaza Hotel at **8:30am**.

CITY BUS TOUR & SHOPPING

Upon conclusion of the Business Meeting, our motor coach will transport us on a City Tour that will include time for shopping. (Lunch on your own).

Upon returning to our hotel, enjoy the Hospitality Room or a short nap before our Reunion Banquet.

Saturday, September 13, 2025

REUNION BANQUET

We will gather at the Crown Plaza Hotel for our Reunion Banquet and Entertainment, Cash Bar. (The Hospitality Room will be closed during the banquet)

(5:00pm, Social Hour, 6:00pm Dinner, followed by Entertainment)

Sunday, September 14, 2025

The Hospitality Room will close a **8:00am**. Farewell until 2027.

ALL TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE

USS OZBOURN REUNION ACTIVITY REGISTRATION FORM

Listed below are all Registration, Tour and Banquet costs for our 2025 Reunion of the USS Ozbourn DD846 Association. Please enter the number of persons who will be attending each event, meal choice and the total cost. Please return the form and your check payable to **USS OZBOURN ASSOCIATION** to **GUY POSEY, 419 S. APPLEWAY, GLENCOE, Oklahoma 74032**. Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payment must be received by mail **BEFORE** August 1, 2025. After that date, registrations will be accepted on a space available basis. We recommend that you make a copy of your registration form for your records.

<u>TOUR AND BANQUET CHOICES</u>	<u>Price Each</u>	<u>#Of People</u>	<u>Total Cost</u>
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THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 11, 2025

10 Lighthouse Tour with included

Dinner at Richards Pub	\$75.00	_____	_____
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FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 12, 2025

Battleship Cove, Tour, Memorial Service

Including Lunch	\$67.25	_____	_____
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SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025

City Tour Shopping	\$35.00	_____	_____
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(Lunch on your own)

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 13, 2025 REUNION BANQUET (Please select your Entrée below) Cash Bar

CHICKEN

Sauteed Chicken Breast Saltimbocca	\$45.00	_____	_____
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Prosciutto & Swiss cheese, -or-

Boneless Chicken Breast with and Apple	\$45.00	_____	_____
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Stuffing

FISH

Baked New England Scrod,	\$45.00	_____	_____
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lemon herb butter

BEEF

Petite Sirloin with Roasted Shallot	\$54.00	_____	_____
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Burgundy Demi Glaze

VEGETARIAN

Mushroom Ravioli	\$45.00	_____	_____
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All dinners served with seasonal vegetables, rolls, butter Coffee or Tea

Non refundable Registration Fee P/P	\$25.00	_____	_____
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Total Amount payable to USS OZBOURN ASSOCIATION	_____	_____
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First Name _____ Last Name _____ Nickname on Board _____

Years on board _____ Last Rate/Rank held on Ozbourn _____ If Ret, Last Rate/Rank _____

Spouse Name (If Attending) _____ Guest's Name _____

Street Address _____ Tel # _____ Email: _____

City, State, Zip _____

Are you staying at the Crown Plaza Hotel Yes _____ No _____ Arrival Date _____

YOU MUST MAKE YOUR RESERVATIONS BY CONTACTING THE CROWN PLAZA HOTEL, WARWICK at (401) 732-6000. Be sure to tell the operator you are attending the OZBOUN Reunion.



As many members will recall, several months ago, after serving in many capacities within the Association, not only as a past President but also as the latest Proprietor of the Ships Store, Rudy Boff has hung up his spurs and is now retired. The Ships Store is CLOSED.

Those shipmates, family members and friends interested in ordering products can locate the Military Best website at www.MilitaryBest.com.

HISTORY, USS OZBOURN DD-846

25 March 1967 Nuclear Incident

Submitted by Michael Krause, Lt. (67-68)

BACKGROUND:

The USS OZBOURN (DD-846) or the "OZ", as the crew referred to her, was a Fleet Rehabilitation and Modernization Version I (FRAM-I) Gearing Class DD with twin 5"/38 cal. mounts, one fore and another aft on the main deck. She also carried two Drone Anti-Submarine Helicopters (DASH); six MK 44 torpedo tubes; and an Anti-Submarine Rocket (ASROC) launcher with eight cells. Payloads for ASROC were either MK-44 acoustic homing torpedoes or Rocket Thrown Depth Charges (RTDC) armed with MK-44 nuclear warheads. The DASH could carry either a MK-44 torpedo or an MK-44 Depth Charge. The ASROC launcher cells were normally loaded with four RTDCs in the center four cells and the four MK 44 torpedoes in the outboard cells. The OZ was unique as she carried DASH drones called "Snoopy" fitted with TV cameras used as an observation platform for shore bombardment on Sea Dragon operations in North Viet Nam. The drone was tracked by the MK 37 RADAR so we knew the observer's location. The drone's gyro compass provided the Observer Target Line (OTL). When the OTL was combined with the known location of the drone, the MK-1A Gun Fire Control System (GFCS) was able to compute the Gun Target Line (GTL) to targets identified by Snoopy. It was effective but we lost several drones throughout the deployment due to enemy fire and crashes. We had even rigged drones to drop hand grenades from their weapons racks.

On the date of the incident, I was a Lieutenant USN serving as Weapons Officer aboard the OZ. The OZ was home-ported in Yokosuka, Japan in Destroyer Division 92 and was the Division Commander's flag ship. During our deployment the OZ participated in several counter battery incidents with North Vietnamese batteries and was hit twice - this incident and another on 4 December 1967 when two men were killed. My memory of the incident remains clear after 43 years. The following is drawn from my personal experiences and are accurate to the best of my recollection. I never saw an official report of the incident, and if there is one, perhaps these recollections can be confirmed as fact. There was a mention of the incident in *Stars & Stripes* when the 4 December engagement was reported as follows:

USS OZBOURN DD-846 "NUCLEAR INCIDENT"

(Continued from Page-6)

BACKGROUND:

"Last March 25 the Ozbourn was hit while operating just south of the Demilitarized Zone.

The ship suffered minor damage in the earlier shelling, but no casualties."

The blow-out hatch operated as designed, except for the fact that the hinge-pin also sheared. As a result, the hatch took off like a Frisbee; hit the deck on the port side 01 level near the ASROC launcher; bounced off the deck and wound up on the 03 level near the flag bag on the signal bridge. Had it hit someone, it would have been deadly.

By the time I entered the magazine, the fire was out. I am not sure if the MK 44 warhead's high explosive exploded or was simply ruptured or experienced a low grade detonation. When I entered the magazine I saw the weapons core with its stainless steel tritium gas bottle attached by a short piece of tubing lying on the deck. There was some high explosive from the warhead spread around the deck as well, some of which had obviously burned. The rocket motor of the RTDC in the lower cradle did not ignite, although I believe the RTDC suffered some shrapnel damage. The RTDC was still strapped securely in its cradle.

Later that day, several EOD types came aboard from one of the carriers and began dismantling the damaged weapons. We proceeded to Subic Bay, arriving Monday morning where the weapons were off-loaded and the Ships Repair Facility in Subic repaired some of the battle damage. I believe shortly after the incident, all nuclear warheads were removed from ASROC capable ships in the combat zone. We also heard that President Johnson and his advisors went to GQ in the White House and tracked the situation closely.

All the events described above occurred in a relatively short period of time. It is hard to imagine the unintended consequences, political and otherwise had the weapon detonated. The safety features built into the warhead obviously worked. It is a credit to the training and professionalism of the crew that the ship was not lost and I thank them that I am here today to relate my experience.

Michael S. Krause is a graduate of the US Naval Academy, Class of 1963. He served as First Lieutenant, Gunnery Officer and Terrier Missile Officer in USS MAHAN (DLG-11) from 1963 to 1966. He attended Destroyer School at Newport, RI in 1966 and served as Weapons Officer in USS OZBOURN (DD-846) 1967 -1968. He was a Project Officer at DEPCOMOPTEVFORPAC in 1968-1969 when he resigned and joined the reserves where he attained the rank of Commander.

(Editors Note: Although the following Nuclear Incident had been documented in past editions of the "Fireball", that information was derived from on-line Department of Defense Documents. Clearly, we now have an eyewitness account from Shipmate Michael Krause, Lt 67-68), the Weapons Officer on board the "OZ", when the incident occurred. We are very grateful to Michael for documenting the incident for the benefit of all Association Members. In the 2025 Spring Edition of the "Fireball", I had indicated that I would publish the document in separate editions, I believe publishing the entire article was prudent to assist all members in their ability to appreciate Michael's article.)

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 24 or 25. This number indicates the last year you were current with Association dues: 24 means 2024, 25 means 2025, 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 **Mike Ward**, Association Treasurer, at 3836 County Road W40, Decorah, Iowa 52101.

Your Association officers ask you to.....

DO YOUR 2026 DUES TODAY!

We're on the Web at 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.	Nov1955-September 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	September1968-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

