



Fall 2016



Greetings from the Sterett Association

As the air turns chilly and the leaves show off their beautiful rainbow of colors, we hope this newsletter finds you and yours well.

This newsletter contains a few items we hope will be of interest to our Sterett family.

Reunion Hotel

The hotel that will be hosting the 2017 Sterett Reunion in Nashville has undergone some changes. Earlier this summer, the Holiday Inn was sold to an investment group and re-branded.

The 2017 Sterett Reunion hotel is now known as the **Hilton Nashville Airport Hotel**. We have been assured the contract we signed with the Holiday Inn will be honored in all respects. We do not yet have a code or special web link for reunion reservations.

The web site for the hotel can be found here:

<http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/tennessee/nashville-airport-hotel-BNAARHH/index.html>

To make reservations, call

615-883-9770; ask for group reservations/sales then tell them USS Sterett.

Spanish Gate History

Many of us walked past it while in Subic Bay but have you ever wondered about the history of the Spanish Gate?



The Spanish Gate, located at the corner of Dewey Avenue and Samson Road in Olongapo City, Zambales, Philippines, was built in 1885 when the Spanish Navy authorized the construction of the Arsenal de Olongapo, after King Alfonso II of Spain issued a royal decree declaring Subic Bay as a naval port in 1884.

The gate served as the West Gate of the arsenal and faced the Spanish-era settlement of Olongapo. A high wall of locally quarried stone connected it to the south gate that faced the waterfront.[1]

In addition to being used as the main entrance and exit to the naval station, the gate was also used as a jail during both the Spanish and the American occupation.

On November 26, 2013, the Spanish Gate was declared a historical landmark by the National Historical Commission of the Philippines (NHCP). The NHCP affixed on the wall of the gate a marker which reads "Himpilang Pandagat ng Look ng Subic" ("Naval Station of Subic Bay").

DDG 104

Here's a recent picture of the San Diego skyline, posted on the DDG 104 Facebook page.

Looking in the background, it's interesting to note the DDG 104 is in close proximity to the USS Midway, where the CG 31 spent much time.



Congratulations to Sterett's new Chief Petty Officers.



Lifetime Membership

The following shipmates and friends of Sterett have joined the elite list of Sterett Association Life Members. We thank them for their generosity and support.

Joe Anders

John King

Mike Smith

Randy Norton

Lien Phan (in memory of her sister Tu Phan)

Dennis Dean

Charles A. (Doc) Bond

Andy Cucchiara

Tom Jacobsmeyer

Larry Motz

Eugene Bailey

George Cline

Clay Flowers

James Gross

Debbie Sterett

A Lifetime Members web page will be maintained at: http://www.sterett.net/life_members.html

To become a Lifetime Member (or to update your regular dues), visit <http://www.sterett.net/paypal.htm>

Select a quantity of 10 for Lifetime payment if Lifetime is not a listed option.

Florida Veteran's Service Award

The Governor's Veterans Service Award was established as a way of recognizing both active and former members of the United States Armed Forces.

Governor Scott presents the medals while traveling around the state, visiting VA regional centers, hospitals, clinics and nursing homes.



In separate ceremonies, shipmates **Lindsey Burdek**, **Joe Gaughan** and **Darryl Stewart** received their awards from Governor Scott.

Florida Mini Reunion

If you reside within easy commuting distance to Jacksonville, Florida, come on out for a Sterett reunion dry run in January.

Shipmate **Joe Gaughan** has called for a muster of Sterett shipmates on January 14, 2017 at Dave & Busters in Jacksonville, Fl. at 1800.

This will be the second get together. The first one, on October 8th, had to contend with hurricane Matthew but several Sterett vets showed up despite the heavy sea state. The January muster is sure to have calmer seas. I plan to drive over and check it out. 6 hours is an easy commute for a Sterett gathering!

Navy Ratings

For those unaware of the latest major change today's Navy has experienced, here's a synopsis:

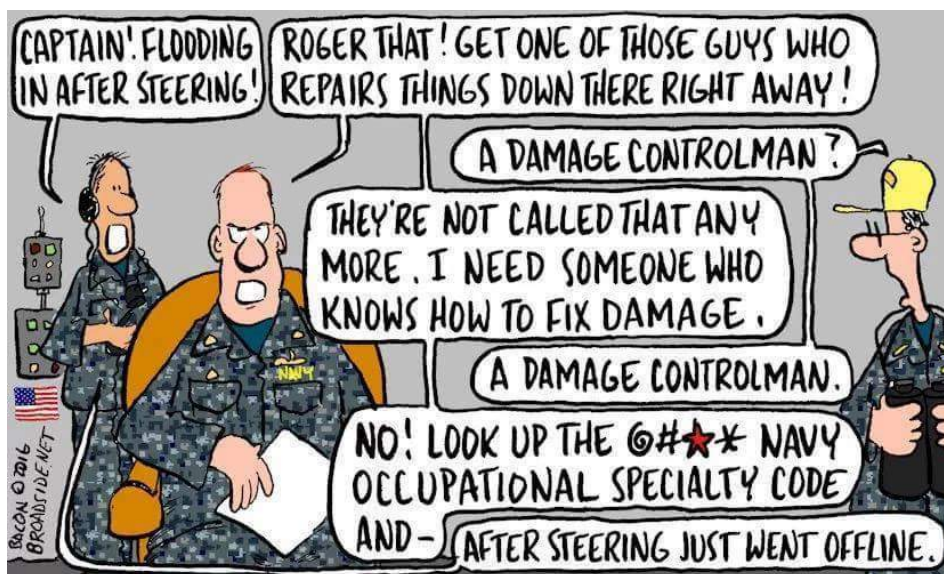
The Navy deep-sixed all of its 91 enlisted ratings titles Thursday, marking the beginning of an overhaul of the rigid career structure that has existed since the Continental Navy in a radical shift sure to reverberate through the fleet and the veterans community beyond.

Sailors will no longer be identified by their job title, say, Fire Controlman 1st Class Joe Sailor, effective immediately. Instead, that would be Petty Officer 1st Class Joe Sailor.

Officials say the controversial move will improve sailors' lives and ease their transition into the civilian workforce by broadening their skills in this tectonic shift in Navy's personnel system to redraw the traditional lines between enlisted job specialties — a massive shake-up that is only beginning. Within the next three to four years, earlier if possible, the service plans to allow sailors to retrain in related skills, expanding their worth to the Navy while reaping broader assignment opportunities as well as increased advancement changes and greater access to special pays and bonuses that come with the most critical skills.

"We're going to immediately do away with rating titles and address each other by just our rank as the other services do," said Chief of Naval Personnel Vice Adm. Robert Burke in a Sept. 19 interview. "We recognize that's going to be a large cultural change, it's not going to happen overnight, but the direction is to start exercising that now."

I will refrain from personal comment and just leave it with this possible future scenario:



The following was posted on Facebook by **Steve Schmedding**

“Lived my entire life with the exception of my US Naval service in Eastern Washington. I had roommates in college that grew up 5 miles down the road from here. I never knew this road existed in my home county.”



Back to Sea

Our ship's store custodian, Roberty (Duffy) Groener, recently returned to sea in the form of a cruise which was a great experience.

Duffy and his wife Sandy, after sweating out the possibility of dealing with Hurricane Matthew, met up with his long ago Sterett shipmate, Dale Griffey and his wife Helene, for a cruise aboard the Royal Caribbean Oasis of the Sea.

This would be Duffy's first at sea excursion since his tour aboard DLG 31.

One evening, the Groeners and Griffey's were seated at a dinner table with a family from Scotland.

Stuart was a retired Scottish weapons specialist (SWAT) police officer. Their 14 year old son Jared was bored and not at all enamored by the dinner table conversation by these older folks.

At some point, the conversation turned to the subject of Duffy and Dale getting together after 46 years, having been shipmates on Sterett during the Vietnam conflict. Hearing this, Jared perked up and seemed very interested in hearing what these two Vietnam war veterans had to say. Before long, Jared had pulled up pictures and history of the DLG 31 on his I-Phone. He became infatuated and asked a lot of questions about their experience. Like any good sailors, Duffy and Dale had a few sea stories to relate. Jared was all ears.

The last night of the cruise, Duffy ran into Jared's mom. She went on about the great impression they had made on her son and that he had been telling others about the two Vietnam "war heroes" he had met. She also indicated Jared planned to use this experience for a project at school.

This encounter turned out to be a unique aspect of what was an overall terrific cruise for Duffy and Dale.

To cap off this experience, Duffy, after returning home, purchased and sent a Sterett Challenge Coin to Jared as a surprise, hoping he would cherish it and make it part of his school project.



Duffy Groener and Dale Griffey

What's your story? It's always good to hear about Sterett shipmates' experiences.

Handy References

Larry Motz sent us these useful links:

Order service records online: www.archives.gov/veterans/

Replacement medals: www.archives.gov/veterans/replace-medals.html

Military Research: www.archives.gov/research/military/veterans/online.html

This link may prove useful if searching for ancestor's records:
<https://familysearch.org/search/collection/1202535>

Thanks to **Frank Ludwig** for providing this impressive shot of a Arleigh Burke destroyer departing Seal Beach.



Sterett Passings

The following Sterett shipmates have crossed the bar:

Dave Hellmer Jr.

CG 31

GMM2

84-88



Paul Griffin

CG 31

QM1

81-84



If notification of a member's passing is received in a timely manner, the Association will arrange for flowers and/or a Sterett representative at the services. However, we generally do not receive notice prior to the services.

USS Sterett Association 2017 Reunion Information

The 2017 USS Sterett Reunion is about 7 months out.

Start making plans to attend. Your shipmates will be there talking about you.

When: 23-25 June 2017 (Thursday 22 June for early arrivals)

Where: Nashville, TN



**Hilton Nashville Airport Hotel
2200 Elm Hill Pike
Nashville, Tennessee 37214**



General Hotel Information: <http://www3.hilton.com/en/hotels/tennessee/nashville-airport-hotel-BNAARHH/index.html>

Rooms (single/double) will be available for a rate of \$135 (+ tax and fees).

These rates will be available three days either side of the reunion dates of 22-25 June, 2017.

Rooms must be booked by May 23, 2017 to guarantee this discounted rate.

The group reservations phone number is 615-883-9770. Option 1 . Specify USS Sterett.

Check-in time is 3:00 pm. Check out time is 12:00 pm

Menu

The following will be offered for our Saturday evening reunion banquet. Entrée choices must be indicated on the reunion registration forms.

Chicken:

Marinated and Seared Chicken Breast topped with a white wine veloute

Baked Salmon:

Oven Poached Fresh Atlantic Salmon topped with a Lemon-Ginger beurre Blanc or Sweet Chili glaze

NY Strip:

Portion Flamed Grilled NY Strip Served with Garlic/Herb Butter

Vegetarian Dinner:

Chef's choice vegetarian meal

Above entrees served with:

Mixed Field Greens, Tomatoes, Sliced Cucumbers, Shredded Carrots with Assorted Dressings Chef's choice Starch

Chef's choice Vegetable

Saturday Tour

The Saturday Afternoon Group Tour will be to the **Jack Daniel's Distillery** in Lynchburg, TN.



Our group tour will depart by bus at approximately 11:00 from the Holiday Inn for a drive to Lynchburg, TN and the Jack Daniels Distillery.

We are offering both the traditional tour and a tasting tour.

Fees:

The Association will provide bus transportation.

The traditional, non tasting tour is free.

The fee for the tasting tour is \$16.00. The Association will offset the fee by \$4.00. Cost to each participant will be \$12.00.

Tour fees will be paid as part of the reunion registration process.

Jack Daniel's Distillery is an outdoors walking tour. Those with mobility issues should consider other activities for Saturday afternoon.

Saturday Afternoon Tour Lunch

The Association will arrange to order and pick up sandwiches from Subway for the ride to the Jack Daniel/s Distillery.

All sandwiches will be 6" on Italian bread with American cheese and will include a cookie and a bottle of water.

Mayonnaise, Mustard and Ketchup will be available.

Each lunch will cost \$7.00 and must be prepaid as part of the registration process.

Lunch Options:

Lunch 1: Black Forest Ham

Lunch 2: Turkey breast

Lunch 3: Cold Cut Combo

Lunch 4: Roast Beef

Lunch 5: Italian BMT

Sorry, no substitutions.

Lunch orders must be received no later than Thursday, 22 June, 2017.

Reunion Registration

Registration forms are now available for the 2017 Sterett Reunion in Nashville.

Go to <http://www.sterett.net/reunions/> for reunion information and follow the link provided to register. You will find both on line and mail in forms.

If you register for the reunion and pay using PayPal, double check your total before submitting. Do not make adjustments/changes from the summary page. Go to "Continue Shopping" and make changes in each line item.

If you are using the mail in registration forms, be sure to use the new address for Don Hageman, our treasurer, which was effective 01 July:

Don Hageman
198 Golanvyi Trail

Vonore, TN 37885

Nashville Area Attractions

Nashville, known as the Country Music Capital of the World, is a major destination offering lots of interesting attractions and places of interest.

For general information check out: <http://www.visitmusiccity.com/>

Here are some places you might consider visiting or spending time at:

Grand Ole Opry <http://www.opry.com/>

Ryman Auditorium <http://ryman.com/>

Water park for children and families <https://www.nashvilleshores.com/>

Huge shopping mall next to the grand Ole Opry House and Opryland hotel
<http://www.simon.com/mall/opry-mills/stores> (Free shuttle to and from provided by the Holiday Inn)

Museum in downtown – The Frist Center <http://fristcenter.org/>
(Shuttle to downtown provided by the hotel for only \$10 per ride)

Country Music Hall of Fame <http://countrymusichalloffame.org/>

Home of President Andrew Jackson – The Hermitage <http://thehermitage.com>

“World famous” Tootsie’s Orchid Lounge <http://www.tootsies.net/>

The Bluebird Café <http://bluebirdcafe.com/>

Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) <http://www.tpac.org/>

Concert hall and home to the Nashville Symphony the Schermerhorn
<https://www.nashvillesymphony.org/about/Schermerhorn-Symphony-Center>

Lane Motor Museum <http://www.lanemotormuseum.org/>

The Corvette Museum and factory (about 45 minutes away) <http://www.corvettemuseum.org/>

Fort Campbell Army Base – Home to 101st Airborne Screaming Eagles
<http://www.campbell.army.mil/Pages/Default.aspx>

Fort Knox – Home to the nation’s gold repository and about an hour away
<http://www.knox.army.mil/>

Local winery owned by country music singer Kix Brooks – Arrington Vineyards (about 30 minutes)<http://www.arringtonvineyards.com/>

Belle Meade Mansion – Southern plantation home and home to the thoroughbreds that started steeplechase racing in America <http://bellemeadeplantation.com/>

U.S. Space and Rocket Center Huntsville, AL – about two hours away <http://rocketcenter.com/>

Ascend Amphitheater in downtown on the river banks, entertainment most nights.

The Gulch – new and vibrant area on the edge of the downtown area filled with music venues and restaurants

Nashville is a great location. Don't miss the opportunity to mingle with your Sterett shipmates at the 2017 reunion. Plan now.

The Sterett Association welcomes any and all input from its members and supporters. Please don't hesitate to submit comments or other items of interest for inclusion in our web site or our newsletters, including pictures. We want to hear from you.

For the Sterett Association:

Steve Hayes

Forever:

OSCM (SW) USN (Ret.)