



Spring 2016



Greetings from the Sterett Association

We have it on good authority, spring will arrive early this year:

Groundhog Day 2016

A crowd gathered at Gobbler's Knob early this morning, awaiting the emergence of the groundhog named Punxsutawney Phil. After a tap of a cane on Phil's tree-trunk cage, his door was opened, and the animal emerged.



He was held aloft to cheers and applause. Phil did not respond, other than to blink. Placed on top of the trunk, he attempted to flee before his actions were closely analyzed.

Interpreting Phil's behavior, the Groundhog Club emcee proclaimed, "There is no shadow to be cast! An early spring is my forecast!"

If you can't trust Punxsutawney Phil, who can you trust!

DDG 104

In early February, after several long months in the yards, Sterett went back to sea on her first underway since last summer. The crew enjoyed getting back out to sea, and while underway, conducted an anchor drop test, a countermeasure washdown, and took the time to celebrate Sterett's January and February babies with some delicious cake prepared in the Sterett galley! Here are a few snapshots of her eventful week.



Recent Milestones

This past week the following career milestones were achieved by Sterett crewmembers:

GSM 2 (SW) Jason T. Large was reenlisted by Ensign P. Rodriguez



SH 2 (SW) Onyeka Abadom was reenlisted by LTJG Le



LS 2 (SW) **Jasmin Santee** was awarded the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal by CDR **Cieslukowki**, Sterett CO



Congratulations to these Sterett Sailors

Spokane Trophy

The Spokane Trophy is likely the most prestigious award for a US Navy Pacific Fleet ship that few people know exist.

In 1907, the Spokane Chamber of Commerce, in conjunction with the city's United Spanish War Veterans wanted to honor Spokane sailors; its "Sons in the Navy," by offering a silver cup as an annual award to the U.S. Fleet for marksmanship. Donated by the city and citizens of Spokane, the Spokane Trophy would become the most sought after award in the U.S. Navy.

The award was established in 1908 by President Theodore Roosevelt to recognize naval war fighting proficiency.

The actual trophy, created from 400 ounces of silver, was created by veterans of the Spanish-American War and cost \$1,500.

It was designed to embody the spirit of Spokane and its pride in the navy.

Due to the level of prestige the trophy has gained from the ships who have won the award, the trophy was appraised in excess of \$4 million. The winning ships receive a plaque while the trophy itself is kept on display at the Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet headquarters building in San Diego.



The trophy was awarded annually from 1908 until 1941 when it was retired. In 1984, the Spokane Trophy was re-activated and has been presented each year since.

The honor is given to a combat ready ship considered the most proficient in the Pacific Fleet.

The Spokane Trophy was awarded to the USS Sterett (DDG 104) on December 13, 2013.

A belated congratulations and BZ to the crew of Sterett for winning this prestigious honor.

Thanks to shipmate **Steve Schmedding**, a CG 31 Sterett veteran (78-80) and a proud native son of Spokane for bringing this story to us.

Sterett Pride:

Sterett shipmates express their pride as a USS Sterett veteran in different ways. Here are a few that do it using 4 wheels:



Chuck Gooden



Tom Jacobsmeyer



Kevin Sullivan

Let us know how you show your Sterett pride.

Blast from the Past

Some may not realize Sterett was the first Pacific fleet ship to be equipped to operate the LAMPS helicopter. LAMPS (Light Airborne Multi Purpose System) extended the range of the ship's sensors and allowed detection of submarines at greater distances.



1977 Cruisebook

Just short of two years ago, we completed the project to get all of Sterett's cruise books posted on the web site.

Throughout the process, we asked if there were any other books out there. With no responses, we felt satisfied we had them all.

A few months ago, pictures from the previously unknown 1977 cruise book were posted on Facebook.

Following our request for a loaner, **Captain Chuck Farnham** (CO 10/75-02/78) was nice enough to provide his copy of the 1977 cruise book.

The book is currently in the capable hands of **Tom Jacobsmeyer** who is creating digital images of each page.

The 77 cruise book will be added to the others on the web site in the near future.

Many thanks to **Captain Farnham** for his trust in loaning the book.



Capt. Chuck Farnham

Florida Honors Veterans

Florida Governor Rick Scott created executive order number 14-88 "The Governor's Veterans Service Award" to honor Florida Veterans.



Florida Governor Rick Scott presenting the Governor's Veterans Service Award to **Rich Nolde** CWO3, 91-94

Also receiving the award that day was **Rick Greendonner** YN3 (68-71).

Rich and Rick met each other at the presentation ceremony – it pays to wear your Sterett ball cap.

For more information on this award go to: <http://floridavets.org/gvsa/>

Subic Bay

There's been lots in the news recently about the US Navy returning to Subic Bay. While no one expects Subic to return to the base it once was, these new agreements will certainly mean an increase in ships' visits.



Vice Adm. Joseph Aucoin, the commander of U.S. 7th Fleet, speaks to U.S. and Filipino service members during bilateral talks held aboard USS Blue Ridge (LCC 19), in Manila, Philippines. The bilateral talks between the U.S. and Philippine navies were held to enhance cooperation and strengthen relationships to best provide security and stability in the Indo-Asia Pacific.

Sterett Association Dues

A few weeks ago a reminder was distributed to those who's dues had expired at the end of 2015. Many thanks to those who caught up with their dues.

Dues Reunion connection:

There seems to be some confusion about the reunion connection with dues.

A few years ago, the reunion fee for a guest was reduced to \$60, while the member/shipmate fee remained at \$80. This reduction was not related to Association dues. Shortly thereafter, we decided to reinstate the policy of waiving dues for the calendar year following a reunion for those attending.

However, in order for that to occur, one's dues must be up to date in the year prior to the reunion.

Example for the 2017 reunion:

If you are current for 2016 and attend the reunion in 2017, your dues for 2018 are waived.

We encourage all our shipmates to support the Sterett Association by keeping their dues current. However, we do not restrict attendance at a reunion based on dues status.

Please take a moment to visit the Sterett web site and update your membership.

<http://www.sterett.net/join-association.html>

Lifetime Membership

We have implemented a **Lifetime Membership** program.

A single payment of **\$200** will designate you a Lifetime Member of the USS Sterett Association.

A panel is still working on the details of a method of recognition.

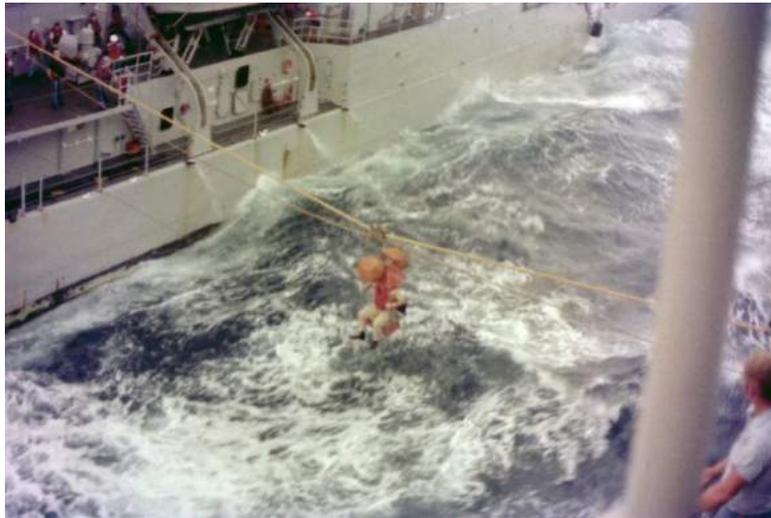
If you have recently made a dues payment to cover multiple years, your lifetime fee will be pro-rated.

We appreciate the support of the USS Sterett Association and look forward to recognizing our lifetime members.

Sterett Throwbacks

There are always interesting pictures or discussion about Sterett over the years on Facebook. I will try to feature some in the newsletters. When possible, individuals will be credited.

Thanks to **Leroy Garcia** for these.



Hi Line Transfer



Steel Beach Picnic

2017 Reunion



Our reunion coordinator, **Burton Dietz**, is working hard to nail down the hotel facilities for the 2017 reunion.

Working in tandem with the Nashville Visitors and Convention Bureau, Burton has a short list of locations that will suit our needs.

Don't wait. Start planning now to attend. Dates are 23-25 June, 2017 (Thursday, 22 June is early arrivals).

Capt. Richard Genet plans to attend and may entertain us with some banjo pluckin. What better place for that than Nashville.



Nashville is a major tourist destination with much to offer visitors. Here is a list of some places you might want to spend time at:

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

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

Great 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>

Museum in downtown – The Frist Center <http://fristcenter.org/>

Our AAA ball team – the Nashville Sounds <http://www.milb.com/index.jsp?sid=t556>

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

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

Some of the local music venues and honky-tonks

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

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

Museum for children and their families – Adventure Science Center <http://www.adventuresci.org/>

Great place to catch a play or concert – Tennessee Performing Arts Center (TPAC) <http://www.tpac.org/>

Wonderful 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/>

Jack Daniels Distillery – about 45 minutes away
<http://www.jackdaniels.com/verify-age?url=whiskey/jack-daniels-old-no-7>

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 an hour away <http://rocketcenter.com/>

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

Sterett Milestones

We are quickly approaching the anniversaries of two major events in the history of DLG/CG 31.

USS Sterett was commissioned on 8 April 1967.

The Battle of Dong Hoi was fought on 19 April 1972

Look for special newsletters marking these events.

Our thoughts for our shipmates and friends:

May there always be water under your boat,
May she always be seaworthy, ever afloat,
May the bilge pump be certain to work night and day,
May the compass and charts always show the safe way,
May you find gentle harbor as every day ends,
May you lower your anchor amidst peace and good friends

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