

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



[DD 27 \(1910-19\)](#)



[DD 407 \(1939-1945\)](#)



[DLG 31 \(1967-75\)](#)



[DDG 104 \(Commissioned 2008\)](#)

Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays



Greetings from the Sterett Association

Our celebration of the Holidays this year will be tinged with sadness as we have lost one of our beloved Shipmates OSCM Steve Hayes. Steve passed away Wednesday, 16 December 2020 and will be truly missed. A longtime president of our Association, services were pending at press time. We will have a special newsletter in January highlighting his life and career.



Featured this month we have communications from the CO of DDG-104, CDR Andrew Koy, DDG-104's XO, LCDR Aaron Jefferson, a very special Christmas memories from shipmate John King (former Association President and Vice President and member of the DLG-31 crew from 1968-1971) and a welcome to our new Association Chaplain.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Happy Holidays STERETT Family,



Since taking over the helm, by far this has been the toughest newsletter input to write. It is truly been a bittersweet time for me. ***Bitter*** because we recently lost two awesome Shipmates in Lloyd De Vinney (29 November) and Immediate Past President Steve Hayes (16 December). When I last spoke with Steve Hayes, he mentioned that he was extremely disappointed to miss out on the memorial service for one of his closest friends (Lloyd) due to a medical procedure. Who would it guessed that 16 December would be Steve's last day on this earth? I am grateful to have worked with Steve as his Vice-President since 2015 and to have met Lloyd De Vinney along the way. Two great Americans, Shipmates, and human beings.

This time of the year for me has always been ***sweet*** for various reasons – not only because of my faith and opportunity to be close to family, but because it allows me to wish everyone a Merry Christmas and a prosperous New Year – the spirit of the Holidays. Please be safe and enjoy your time with family and friends as it may be your last. And let us remember those that cannot be home because of their service to our nation. A special bit of gratitude goes to all our Shipmates on the mighty warship USS STERETT (DDG 104) who have been standing the watch since April!!! And lastly, I would like to welcome aboard to her new XO CDR Christopher Descovich and CMC Alfredo "Al" Alonso. Bravo Zulu to outgoing XO LCDR Aaron Jefferson and CMC Lonnie Bussell for a job well done!!! And lastly, a warm welcome to our new Association Chaplain Glenn Jackson.

I am anxious and ready to see our Shipmates from DDG-104 home safe and reunited with their families. And see my STERETT family in San Antonio while meeting many, many Shipmates along the way. From my family to yours, Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!!

Chuck and Gerlie Bond



THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER

Greetings from the Indian Ocean! The Dauntless Crew continues our 2020 deployment with the NIMITZ Strike Group conducting operations off the Horn of Africa, the Arabian Peninsula, and India. We have conducted high end training with the navies of India, Japan, and Australia at MALABAR 2020 in November. This provided us an opportunity to do air defense exercises, submarine hunting, and some cross deck helo operations. Though we were not able to pull in and properly cap off an exercise with some beers in port, we did do a steam past where our Sailors were able to give a "hat tip" to our shipmates on the other ships.



With news that we were steaming home, we darted south to "Cross the Line" off the coast of Sumatra. Happy to report that we cleansed north of 230 dirty slimy wogs of their land-lubbersness. King Neptune is quite happy that we were able to once again return from this glorious ceremony with a more-salty crew. Our Chiefs Mess is keeping heritage and tradition alive and well.



Happy to report that CMC Alonso and CDR Descovich have reported aboard as the Command Master Chief and Executive Officer. CMC Bussell and LCDR Jefferson have done a phenomenal job, but we can't do these jobs forever. We are thankful for their service and leadership and look forward to the energy and direction from our two new members of the "Triad!"



CMC Bussell, XO LCDR Jefferson, CO CDR Koy, new XO CDR Descovich and new CMC Alonso

And finally, as the ready strike group, we have been ordered on station for a few more weeks. Though we have processed the news of our extension, we are doing what Sailors do, and take care of each other at sea. As a Navy family, we will spend our holidays together, talk about our loved ones back home, and share a common experience that calls on us to "dig deep" and continue a historic level of service. With over 265 days this year underway, and on month 8 of what could very well be the longest deployment in decades, this crew is phenomenally tough. The "Homeward bound" Pennant has been ordered! If there is any doubt into the tenacity, commitment, and endurance of our millennial sea warriors, I am here to tell you that our Navy is in good hands. We are combat ready, the preferred destroyer for action, and sustaining ourselves at sea. We know that it will be our time to rest and repair will come; but until that day, we are keeping the screws turning. This crew continues the legacy that the previous STERETT Sailors have set; just know that we will remain, Forever Dauntless!

LCDR Aaron Jefferson, XO USS Sterett DDG-104

When I consider the past 6 months sailing with the Dauntless Crew as XO onboard USS STERETT (DDG 104), two words come to mind: Resilience and Camaraderie. Resilience has been at the forefront of senior leadership's decision making and a common topic on the deckplates. The ability to endure, to fight through adversity, has been tested in each of our Sailors. The Navy is more aware of the importance of mental health than it ever has been. We've attacked the enemies known as anxiety and fatigue with the same ferocity that we would attack an inbound assailant. Watching this crew come together to support one another has been nothing short of amazing.



CDR Koy and LCDR Jackson.

We have multiple organizations onboard that have tirelessly worked to provide resources and support to any Sailor facing a personal challenge. Our Command Resilience Team meets monthly to discuss topics that are important to the crew and then relay positive talking points to their Shipmates about completing the deployment. Our Suicide Prevention Committee has coordinated with our families ashore to make Christmas cards, post pictures sent from family members on Site TV, and hang flyers with motivation and encouragement throughout the ship. Our Medical team checks on Sailors' mental health constantly, going beyond just repairing routine cuts and scrapes. They also helped facilitate visits from the NIMITZ Deployment Resiliency Counselor in addition to certified Psychology providers for one-on-one counseling sessions. We have 2 very active Lay leaders, who work with our embarked DESRON 9 Chaplain to provide religious services and holiday celebrations that help our Sailors experience some their home traditions.

The combination of tight living quarters, a high operational drumbeat, and a shifting return date could easily have placed Sailors at odds with one another. After all, how often have we seen tensions rise after Hour 3 of a family road trip? For the Dauntless Crew, though, the effect has been the opposite. We have built camaraderie with one another out of sheer will power. With 224 days underway on this deployment and only 8 day in-port, Sailors onboard STERETT have found new and creative ways to bring joy to daily tasks and something to look forward to each day. One division, CA (Sonar Technicians), has a daily workout on the Missile Deck. Another, EA (Machinist's Mates) hosts a daily video game challenge. In fact, the routine 'Call of Duty' video game tournaments on the Messdecks have become the stuff of legend and just in case you think today's youth are all consumed by electronics, monthly spades tournaments are as lively as ever. The gym remains a constant hub where Sailors push each other to reach new personal records and continue reaching their weight loss, or weight gain, goals.

From the outside looking in, one might assume that a crew that has spent over 300 days of the past 365 away from their families would be downtrodden and discouraged, but they would be wrong. All of our Sailors, including myself, have faced days that seemed more challenging than the rest; days that tested our patience, our commitment, and sometimes our strength. Our Sailors to respond to those moments with action. They communicate with their Shipmates, they share their burdens, and they find ways to make fun of the moment (and sometimes each other). It is a true testament to the will and spirit of each Sailor that makes this Navy the most capable fighting force to ever exist. As I prepare to hand the XO baton to CDR Christopher Descovich, I am humbled by the opportunity I have had to serve alongside this crew. They proudly carry the legacy of STERETT crews that have gone before them with each successive day that they execute the mission. Across 4 fleets, 3 geographic commands, and (so far) 75,000 miles, they have proven to be and remain, the Dauntless Crew.

2020 CHIEF SELECTS ON THE 104



Chief Petty Officer Selects

OSC (Sel) Randal
LSC (Sel) Campos
CSC (Sel) Hwang
MMC (Sel) Ramero
FCAC (Sel) Sweeney
DCC (Sel) Sandoval

CPO Season Leader

OSCS Osterberg

Christmas on Sterett by LTJG John E. King (DLG 31, 1968-1971)

When Burton asked me to pen a few lines about Christmas on STERETT I had to consult with various resource to jog my memory. I was commissioned 20 December 1968 and reported to STERETT in Yokosuka in early January 1969, missing my first opportunity for Christmas aboard.

I do remember presenting my orders to the OOD and asking him if the CO was a good guy. He laughed loud and long and then that was when I first heard the name of Capt. Claude Tyler.

The fall of 1969, I attended Engineer Officer School in San Diego, graduating on 19 December 1969 and returned to Yokosuka to this vision, which I located in the Oriental Odyssey Cruisebook. If I'm not mistaken I'm there on the Quarterdeck! I had a pen pal as I returned aboard, meeting a cute schoolteacher on a blind date in San Diego.



*“CHRISTMAS IN
YOKOSUKA 1969”*



Christmas 1970 STERETT was in Long Beach for her first overhaul. I remember the conversion to distillate fuel and a trip to Bremerton with one BTCS McGuire that is a good sea story for another day. This was the highlight of Christmas 1970:

(U) The first two months of the overhaul were highlighted by two Christmas parties of all STERETT Dependent Children. The parties were held on 19 December 1970 on board STERETT in Long Beach and at the First and Second Class Petty Officer's Club in San Diego.

Source - Command History 1970

Thanks to a RIF, I mustered out of the United States Navy 20 November 1971, so I missed the 1971 Christmas. Things worked out pretty well with my San Diego pen pal - we married 25 March 1972 and celebrated our 48th anniversary this year.

There is always time for a sea story. Chief Mac and I flew to Bremerton for distillate training and upon arrival I announced that I would procure the rental car while Mac fetched our bags. I returned and announced that Mac should get the car and I would wait for the bags. Without missing a beat, Mac exclaimed: "What's the matter Mr. Babyface, too young to rent a car?" Roger that Chief!!!





Welcome aboard to our new Association Chaplain!!!



Deacon Glenn and Vangie Jackson

By a unanimous approval, the Board of Directors has approved the appointment of a USS STERETT Association Chaplain to help us track members on the Binnacle List and to stay in touch with Departed Shipmates' families.

Deacon Glenn Jackson (CG 31, 81-83) has attended many reunions and has been gracious enough to provide a prayer at several events in the past; therefore, we have appointed Glenn and he has graciously accepted the position. Glenn and his family currently reside in the Lone Star State – Texas. Welcome aboard Brother!

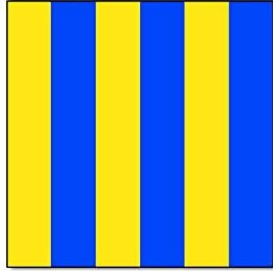
Binnacle List

Binnacle is defined as the stand or housing for the ship's compass located on the bridge. The term binnacle list, in lieu of sick list, originated years ago when ship's Hospital Corpsmen used to place a list of the sick on the binnacle each morning to inform the captain about the crew's health. Please keep the following Shipmates and family members in your thoughts and prayers for a speedy recovery:

Frank Ames (CG 31, 84-88)
Burton Dietz (DLG 31, 70-72)
Eric Groetz (CG 31, 87-89)
Wayne McBrian (DLG 31, 68-71)
Ray Miem (CG 31, 88-91)
Greg Neshime (DLG 31, 66-68)
Richard Seghers (CG 31, 87-91)

Bob Cowart (DLG 31, 70-72)
Richard Genet (CG 31, 86-88)
Jacque "JQ" Hutchins (DD 407, 39-41)
Jessica Morera (DDG 104, 2019-2020)
Duane L. Maupin, Jr. (DLG 31, 67-70)
Ted Ondrak (DLG 31, 70-72)
Bill Stafford (CG 31, 90-92)

If anyone is missing off the list, please contact Chaplain Jackson at glennjackson27@gmail.com



Next USS STERETT Association Reunion

San Antonio, Texas, 16 -19 September 2021

Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk
217 North St. Mary's Street, San Antonio, TX 78205

- The room rate for then reunion will be \$135.00 (plus taxes and fees) per night.
- To make reservations, please call (210) 224-2500 and mention the "USS Sterett" or the group code "RTT."
- Reservations made after August 23, 2021, will be provided on a space available basis at the Hotel's current selling price.
- A Full American breakfast buffet for the price of \$14.00 per person (tax and gratuity not included) is available (normally \$22.00).
- Overnight self-service parking is available for \$18.00 per night (normally \$27.00).
- As long as the Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk has availability, they will honor the room rate three days before and three days after the reunion dates of 16-18 September (19 September the departure date for most).

**Start planning now to join your Sterett shipmates in San Antonio
If you are not there, sea stories about you will be told.**

Plan of the Day

Thursday, 16 September 2021 – early arrival date (discover San Antonio and Texas)

Friday 17, September 2021 – arrival date, golf, audit & Board of Directors meeting

Saturday, 18 September 2021 – General meeting and banquet

Sunday, 19 September 2021 – Memorial ceremony and departure

Please visit <http://www.sterett.net/reunion-2021/> for further information