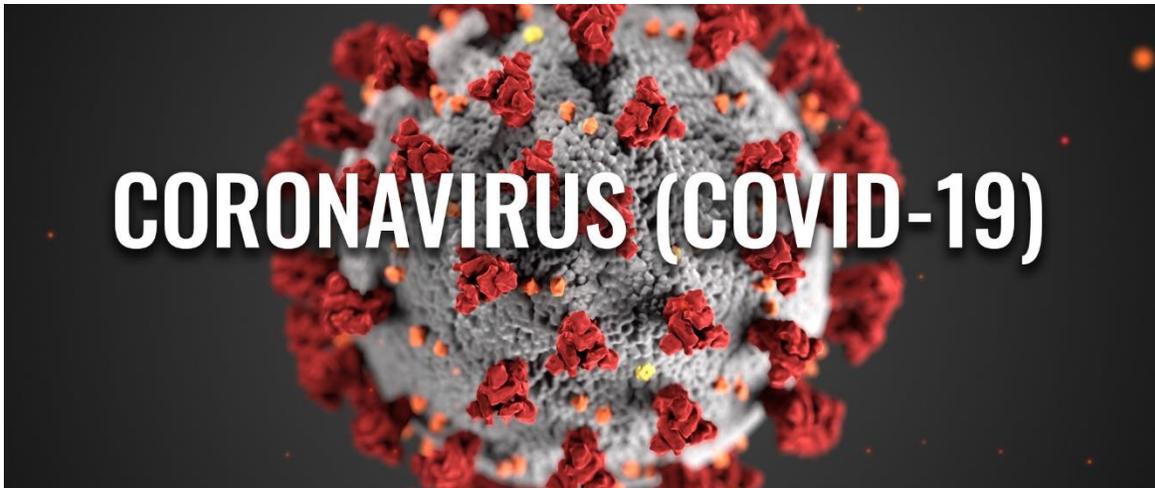


USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



Spring 2020



Greetings from the Sterett Association

In these most difficult and odd times, we hope this invisible enemy that has altered our way of life in so many ways has not threatened the health of any of our Sterett family or their loved ones. We will hang tough, follow the rules and get on with the American way of life.

To the doctors, nurses, technicians and all other health care workers:
Words do not seem adequate to express our appreciation for all you've done and are doing.



THANK YOU

*To Our Doctors, Nurses, First Responders,
and Public Safety Officers On The Front Lines*

We also want to acknowledge and thank the truck drivers who keep America supplied:



Association Membership

Most newsletters over the years have contained gentle or sometimes not so gentle reminders about the payment of dues.

We are happy to change the narrative and report the Sterett Association membership roles are now bursting at the seams.

As this newsletter goes to distribution, we have **235** Members In Good Standing (MIGS). Of the 235 members, **93** are Lifetime Members!

While the membership roles consist mostly of shipmates from the **DLG/CG 31** years, we are starting to see more interest from those serving or having served aboard the **DDG 104**. We are thrilled to welcome our newest shipmates to the Association.

We ask each of you to join our most active recruiter, **Chuck Bond**, in contacting a shipmate you may know to take a look at the Association and join our ranks.

Battle of Dong Hoi

As we do each spring, we celebrate one of Sterett's proudest moments:

On April 19, 1972, Sterett became the first ship to fire a Terrier surface to air missile in a hostile engagement.



USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



Memories of Mod Loc:

Back in late 1978 into January 1979, Sterett spent a lot of time cutting holes in the ocean, along with a couple of other ships.

From the Sterett Command Reports:

7 DEC	UNDERWAY FOR A POSITION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN IN THE GULF OF OMAN.
9 DEC	ARRIVE ON STATION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN. STANDING BY THE CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.
13 DEC	TOWING EXERCISE WITH THE USS WADDELL (DDG-24).
18-19 DEC	STERETT ADMINISTERED A COMMAND INSPECTION BY COMCRUDESGRU III.
24 DEC	CHRISTMAS EVE. NESTED WITH USS BRADLEY (FF-1041) AND USS WADDELL (DDG-24). FIRST ARABIAN SEA DAYS MOTORWHALE BOAT RACES CONDUCTED.
31 DEC	UNDERWAY AS BEFORE. ON STATION OFF THE COAST OF IRAN PREPARING FOR CONTINGENCY OPERATIONS.
1 JAN	CONTINUING ON STATION IN THE GULF OF OMAN
7 JAN	MOTOR WHALE BOAT REGATTA (WARDROOMS)
13 JAN	DEPART MODLOC ENROUTE SUBIC BAY
14 JAN	RELIEVED BY TG 75.3
20 JAN	ENTER MALACCA STRAITS
23 JAN	QUICKDRAW SURFACE GUNNERY EXERCISE
25 JAN	ARRIVE SUBIC BAY, RP

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



In early November while STERETT was enroute from Subic Bay to Karachi, Pakistan turmoil was brewing in the country of Iran. Demonstrations that began as half-hearted protests against the Shah of Iran escalated into ugly rioting on 5 November. Cinemas, liquor stores, and hotels all became targets of angry youths. As the month of November wore on, concern for welfare of Americans in Iran grew as the situation worsened and became unstable.

December found many Americans leaving the country of Iran voluntarily. Others who remained would be asked to leave later in the month. The insurrection in the country continued to mount and on December 7th, units of TG 75.1 were directed by the National Command Authority to proceed to the Gulf of Oman to await further orders.

The ships proceeded into the Arabian Sea and awaited further orders. The spirits of STERETT sailors sagged as scheduled port visits to Mombasa, Kenya; Perth, Australia, and Djakarta, Indonesia all fell by the wayside, yet all shared a deep sense of pride knowing that they were "on station" and ready to respond to any contingency. As the Christmas Holidays neared morale began to improve with the prospect of mail on Christmas Day.

As the weeks wore on all ships in company competed in weekend motor-whaleboat races, (sometimes the rules included sails), had kite flies, fantail cookouts, and numerous tournaments (chess, acey ducey, bridge, etc...) to keep themselves occupied. On board physical fitness programs were initiated and in the early evenings the "track" around the missile house forward took on the appearance of Hollywood freeway at 5:00 pm (22 laps around was a mile). Volleyball was played during cookouts on the flight deck.

On Christmas Eve USS BRADLEY and USS WADDELL moored alongside the USS STERETT for a Christmas Show that crewmen will not soon forget. Talent shows, skits, talking with friends on other ships, relaxing, were all topped off by a candlelight Ecumenical service aboard STERETT. The meaning of Christmas could not have been made any clearer to the men who served aboard STERETT that night.

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Check out this little ditty that was put together as a remembrance of Mod Loc:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/lcwk5zg548ona77/Will%20She%20Ever%20Return.mp3?dl=0&fbclid=IwAR0MHFY5zoeXpiMng8IU525o94UZQXYpC3ZjNdYp9Q92B4rwCZlkeiFqs-g>

DD 407

The Association is blessed to have shipmates from the WWII era Sterett with us.

Art Marrs, who resides in Wisconsin and has attended several fairly Sterett reunions has just celebrated his 99th birthday.



Steve Layton, 102, resides at the Palo Alto VA Medical Facility in Livermore, CA. Steve was onboard Sterett from 1939 until November 1942 when he was wounded during the Battle of Guadalcanal and awarded the Purple Heart.

With assistance from his daughter Fran and our store custodian, **Duffy Groener**, the Association recently had shirts embroidered with the DD 407 silhouette and names for both Steve and Art.

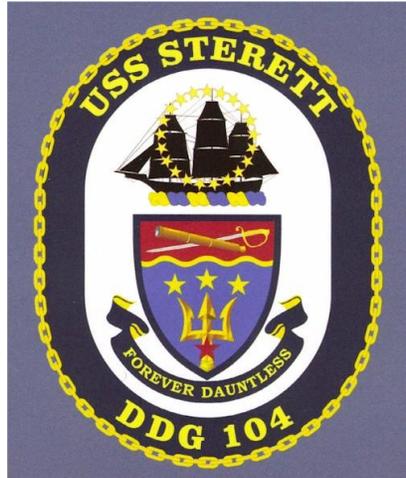


Chuck Bond visits with Steve Layton and presents him with his USS Sterett Association membership certificate

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



DDG 104



The Sterett has been extremely busy these past several months, spending the majority of January at sea with shakedown and training evolutions. The ship has also spent time in Port Hueneme for systems upgrades and Seal Beach for weapons loadout. The constant aboard Sterett is the drive for excellence.



The Captain's Corner

The following was received from CDR Koy, CO DDG 104:

Throughout her 12 years as a commissioned warship, **USS Sterett (DDG 104)** has maintained her status as one of the top destroyers on the water front. Her crew exemplifies what it means to be forged by the sea being



awarded the **Battle Effectiveness Award** in 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014, 2017, and 2018. Since 2008, over 300 sailors received their ESWS pin and 76 officers have received their SWO pin and counting on board USS Sterett. Earlier this year, **Captain Pamela Theorgood** presented S3 with Best in Class Award for their exceptional retail skills only seen in a handful of ships worldwide. There is never a year when USS Sterett is not giving the rest on the waterfront a run for their money.



Sterett crew members on top of Iron Mountain

After a hard day's work, the crew knows how to have fun. You can tune in on the Price is Right on March 30, 2020 to spot a couple of our sailors in one of their divisional outings. From time to time, the crew can be seen conquering Iron Mountain while getting some relaxing sunshine and fresh air. Just recently, the crew had a blast enjoying the hamburgers and hotdogs that the Chief's Mess cooked up at Seal Beach. There are reasons why it is a rare sight to see USS Sterett without her golden anchors.



LTJG Taylor George on the Price is Right



There's no doubt this is an impressive collection of Battle Effectiveness Awards the Sterett crews can be extremely proud of.

Most of us have been isolated at home during this pandemic. The crew of Sterett, no less subject to exposure, must continue with the mission. Procedures to limit the spread of COVID-19 have been put in place.



BZ

All of us who take pride in being part of the rich legacy of the ships named **Sterett** congratulate the **DDG 104** in its continued record of excellence. Its reputation as best on the waterfront is a tribute to the ship's leadership and crews over the past 12 years.

Congratulations and well done.

A couple of years ago, **DDG 104** shipmate put a video together which celebrates the rich legacy of all the Navy ships which have carried the name **Sterett**.

Check out this excellent video **Heritage** at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?feature=share&v=vpki0si3qzo&fbclid=IwAR2QrBjWOI3f61FdMWnFmuTmTP11eS5iwmSunBdkIjyBXe45Omb17TkDE&app=desktop>

A Look Back at Jacksonville

Last September, we were indeed fortunate to have Captain Genet's daughter Danielle Walker with us at the reunion in Jacksonville.

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



Danielle became our unofficial photographer and took well over 450 pictures, many which appeared in the previous newsletter.

If you would like to take another look, check out the her website at: daniellewalkerphotography.com

Click on: All Photographs

Click on: All My Photos

Find the Sterett Reunion 2019 Folder

Password: dauntless

Thanks again to Danielle for making Jacksonville memorable.

From the past

This nostalgic look back at his Sterett experience was submitted by Gary Montgomery, OS2, who served aboard Sterett 1970-1973.

My Last Cruise with Captain Hilton USS Sterett DLG 31

On my last cruise with Captain Hilton, I found myself face to face with him in the dim light of his cabin, because I caused his ship and a flotilla of ships to come to a virtual stop, dead in the water. An aircraft carrier, a cruiser, and the Sterett were in center station with four to six destroyers spread out in a circle around us. I



believe it was January 1972, and we were in the Western Pacific returning to the Gulf of Tonkin by way of the Philippines. This would be my second of three deployments as a crew member on the Sterett.

In 1970 as an 18 year old Operations Specialist Seaman, Captain Hilton's quiet shadow in CIC seemed large and ominous to me. Later, as a 19 year old OS3, I served the Captain as his driver for a few months in the summer and fall of 1971 just before we left the States. I knew the Captain as a quiet, hard to know what he was thinking kind of leader that kept me on my toes, but always treated me with courtesy and respect.

When not in CIC, one of my duties was to route classified documents among officers. After they were circulated and out-dated, I had to wad each page into a loose ball, place them in a 10-15 gallon paper bag, tape it shut, and carry the bags out to the burn barrel on the fantail.

On this particular day the skies were warm and clear; the wind was strong. We must have been cruising at about 20 knots. Guys were sitting and chatting or lying around sunbathing as I approached the burn barrel with four large bags, one under each arm and one in each hand. At times you could see the carrier or the cruiser off to one side and sometimes a destroyer aft of the Sterett on the horizon. I was able to secure two bags into the barrel when a stiff wind tore one out of my hand. It bounced off the edge of the barrel, cracked open, and floated off behind us in our wake.

I watched in agony as, blue, green, and yellow secret messages popped out of the bag and onto the ocean's surface like popcorn. I starred in shocked disbelief and looked over my shoulders in all directions. No one noticed. No one was paying attention to my "accident". For a brief moment I thought, just ignore it. I double checked to be sure no one noticed what happened. No one had.

Then, mental pictures of Russians scooping up the messages with long pikes shattered my brief sense of relief. On the other hand, the balls of paper would soak up water; the ink would run, and they would sink like toilet paper. No one would even know... but I couldn't do it! I went to a com phone, called the bridge, and explained the situation to the bridge officer. I was sure I would be humiliated, busted, and keel hauled into the next week.

I stood at the rail and watched in disbelief as engines slowed, the ship turned and started to bob 25-50 yards from the paper bag and its spilled contents. The sinking feeling in my gut grew worse when someone in a wetsuit dropped into the water and swam around scooping up dripping papers into a net. "Oh God, please don't let there be sharks." I thought to myself. To this day, I'd swear the other ships also slowed and bobbed on the horizon.

My heart jumped into my throat when I heard the bosun's whistle and the ship's intercom, "Petty Officer Montgomery report to the Captain's cabin." I didn't know whether to jump or hide. I don't remember the walk up the companion ways and along the decks, just standing in front of Captain Hilton's door forcing my arm muscles to make a knocking motion. "Enter." was all he said.

I stepped inside, stood at attention, and waited for my eyes to adjust to the dimmer light. Captain Hilton was sitting in an arm chair with open pages in his lap. Probably some documents I had given him earlier, I thought. Slowly he lifted his head. Time seemed to slow, and I could feel my heart beating in my chest. One man at that one moment had more control and power over my life than I would ever experience to this day!

"Montgomery, was that you?" was all he asked in a quiet voice.

"Yes Sir, Captain. It was me." I managed to say, believing I may have disappointed him.

A long...long pause...then, "Montgomery, do you know what most men would have done in these circumstances?"

"They...would... not...have said any...thing?...Sir?" I replied wondering if there was a right answer to the question.



“That’s right Montgomery. They would have done nothing.” ...another, agonizing pause as if he wanted something to sink into my clouded brain.... “That will be all, Montgomery,” he said to let me know we were finished.

“Yes Sir.” I could not get to the other side of his door fast enough, and I closed it softly behind me. I took a deep breath and walked away proud and relieved at the same time. It felt good to do the right thing. I don’t recall anyone else saying anything to me. I wasn’t humiliated or busted. Over the years, I’ve recounted this story among family, and it always brings a smile to my thoughts as I recall the feeling of jubilant relief after exiting Captain Hilton’s cabin. This year for the first time on February 28th, 2008, I told this story to an audience as I tried to motivate them to make the right decision for our organization. Then I read of his passing and wanted to honor him in retelling this story.

I will always remember Captain Hilton with great appreciation and respect. In his calm, unpatronizing way, Captain Hilton taught a young sailor barely 20 years old, that doing what’s right has its own rewards.

Gary Montgomery, OS2
 USS Sterett DLG 31
 March 1970 to June 1973

Thank you Gary for a wonderful story about a great CO and a terrific lesson on doing the right thing.

Those Oldies But Goodies

May 12, 1967 THE SALUTE Page 3

USS Sterett public relations program is hitting on all eight cylinders these days. Entertained recently aboard DLG-31 were 85 thrilled young Explorer Scouts from the Columbia Pacific Council of the Explorer Scouts of America, Portland, Oregon. As you can see, the Scouts missed nothing in the tour. The ship’s bridge and captain’s gig shared equal interest with her guns and underwater propulsion. Sterett’s proud officers and crew gave a 4.0 sell of the Navy’s newest and most modern guided missile frigate to reap a 4.0 response in Scout admiration. In another demonstration of community good will, the Sterett’s crack 18-man drill team as led by LT Mathew L. Wood, Jr., participated in Bremerton’s Loyalty Day Parade. Look for them again in the Armed Forces Day Parade, Saturday, May 20. Commissioned here Saturday, April 8, Sterett shipforce under the command of Captain E. A. Christofferson, Jr., comprises 22 officers and 373 enlisted men. Builders Trials satisfactorily completed, next on agenda for Sterett is next Monday’s Board of Inspection and Survey with an accompanying trip to sea to follow, Tuesday through Thursday, May 16-18.

On 15 August 1970, Sterett and the other ships of Destroyer Squadron 3 returned to San Diego following an extended deployment home ported in Yokosuka, Japan.

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



From the Sterett Command Reports:

A notable feature of DESRON THREE's entry into San Diego, was the display of the "Homeward Bound Pennant" on each of the six ships. This entry marked the end of an era for which the proud and uniquely Naval symbol of a long and arduous deployment would be flown from so many ships.

Sterett's homeward bound pennant measured 306 feet. In keeping with tradition, the Commanding Officer received the blue field of the pennant and each eligible officer and man on board received one foot. Captain Jack Hilton, the new Commanding Officer, presented Captain Claude L. Tyler, the departing Commanding Officer and several Sterett plank owners with their symbolic pennant segments.



RDC Kieran, LTJG Frederick, Senator Murphy, Capt. Hilton, Capt. Tyler, Commodore Carpenter, Lt. Bush

Sterett Passings

LCDR James "Robbie" Robinson 70-73



Eternal Father, strong to save,
Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
Who bidd'st the mighty ocean deep
Its own appointed limits keep;
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,



For those in peril on the sea!
O Christ! Whose voice the waters heard
And hushed their raging at Thy word,
Who walkedst on the foaming deep,
And calm amidst its rage didst sleep;
Oh, hear us when we cry to Thee,
For those in peril on the sea!

USS Sterett Association 2021 Reunion

Where: **San Antonio, TX**

When: **16 -19 September 2021**

The Location for the 2021 USS Sterett Reunion has been decided and a contract signed.

Thanks to the hard work by Reunion Coordinator **Ed Garcia**, along with **Don Hageman**, **Joe Gaughan**, "**JJ**" **James Jennings**, and "**Don**" **Donald Zimbelman**

Our anchor hotel will be the **Holiday Inn San Antonio Riverwalk**

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



Start planning now to join your Sterett shipmates in San Antonio

If you're not there, sea stories about you will be told.

Additional information, including hotel reservations, reunion fees, dinner entrees, etc. will be published when all is decided. Watch the Sterett web site and Facebook.

Get to know your Sterett Association Board

As most of you likely know, with a couple of exceptions, a new Sterett Association board of directors was elected during the reunion in Jacksonville.

In an effort to get to know them, the members were asked to provide some personal information about themselves.



President Chuck Bond:



TBD

Vice President: Burton Dietz



TBD

Secretary/ Treasurer Don Hageman:



Hello there, I am Don Hageman and I have been your Secretary/Treasurer for almost 11 years. I first took this office at the reunion in San Diego because no one else wanted to do it. I volunteered and we all know what we said about volunteering back when we when we were in the USN. I was on the USS Sterett DLG 31 from OCT 74 to JUN 75 and on the CG 31 from JUL 75 to OCT 76. I was a GMM1 when I departed. I have been happily married to Marybeth for almost 49 years and I live in beautiful East Tennessee on Tellico Lake near the town of Vonore. I worked on the 2021 San Antonio Reunion Committee and all I can say is, "On to San Antone SEPT 2021" Hope to see you there!!!!

Officer At Large Frank Ames:



Hi my name is Frank and I'm 55 and one of your officer at large! My wife is Jennifer and we live in Neosho Missouri! I'm working on membership committee to keep our association strong and able to keep moving through the waters! I reported aboard the CG31 in July 84 and left her in sept 88 as BT2 and it was one of the



greatest time of my life! I joined the Association right before reunion in Washington state and best decision ever cause I care for my shipmates and look forward to our next reunion in San Antonio in 2021

Officer At Large Joe Gaughan:



To my Sterett family, I have the honor today to serve you as a member of the Sterett Association Board of Directors and I thank you for this honor.

I had the pleasure of serving onboard the USS Sterett CG31 at two points in my career, May 1981 to December 1983, as a Sonar Tech Second Class, under the command of Captain George Sullivan and Commander Mike Mullins. I would again serve onboard three years later December 1986 to December 1989, as a Chief Sonar Tech, under the command of Captain Richard Genet and Commander Bill Barker. Both tours shaped my career in the Navy and my life after the Navy. Serving on this ship, the best ship ever, in the US Navy, because of the history, location and of course the GREATEST commanding officers, made it the best command I have ever served onboard.

As I said at the beginning, STERETT FAMILY is what this association is all about. Just liked when we served onboard, we had each other's backs. Today and everyday I see, as a member of this association, that we still stand the watch. We look out for all our Sterett Family, whether we served together or just served the ship of the same name.

USS Sterett gave me more than just a career. The ship gave me the opportunity to marry the love of my life, Lilian. We have been married for 37 years and I believe our Sterett Family has much to do with those 37 years.

I have told many of our shipmates that if you attend a reunion, it will not be your last. The reunions give us the opportunity to make up for years of lost time. But they are not just a reunion of old sailors rehashing old sea stories, they are about meeting new shipmates and creating new sea stories. The reunions are about seeing how your interactions have helped to shape someone else. One other thing these reunions have shown me, they are not just about the sailors who served but are just as important to our spouses and our adult children, as it gives them a chance to see old friends, make new ones and feel the sense of FAMILY that we feel.

I look forward to seeing each of you in San Antonio next year.

Dauntless Forever

Officer At Large Tom Updike:





“Shipmates! Proud to be a part of the Sterett team and serve as an Officer at Large. I was a CG-31 crewmember from 1986-1988. As an independent duty Journalist, I look back on that tour as my best career assignment – location, location, location...

Left the Philippines a married man with two children and continued in uniform all the way up to Master Chief Journalist. I retired at the 25-year mark and immediately transitioned into a Navy Civilian Service job. Today, I’m still serving the Navy as the Deputy Director of the Navy Advancement Center in Pensacola, FL.

For me, the reunions and association activities remind me how important the brotherhood is among Sailors who serve together. My wife, Nanette, and I look forward to Sterett reunions. We cherish the opportunity to meet crewmembers and their families from years before and after my time with the First Team.

Be of good cheer!
Tom sends.

Reunion Coordinator: Ed Garcia:



"Hi, my name is Edward Garcia and I am one of the 2021 reunion committee coordinators. I served on CG-31 from 1988 to 1991 and I arrived onboard as a SR and left the ship as an FC3. My wife's name is Mary Jean and we married in the Philippines and have been together for 30 years and we reside in San Antonio, Texas."

After the Sterett I stayed overseas and took orders to Japan and my family and I stayed overseas for 15 years where I served onboard as many ships as possible. In 2006 we came back to San Antonio where I finished my career at Lackland AFB in 2009.

I attended my first reunion in 2019 in Jacksonville. I had such a great time that I volunteered my home city to host the coming reunion in 2021.

Reconnecting with friends of old from my first ship and making new friends with previous Sterett crew members....it was an amazing experience. Our San Antonio team and I look forward to hosting you in our home city—Texas Style with Texas Hospitality.

See you there...

Ed and Jean Garcia