

USS STERETT ASSOCIATION



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



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



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

[CG 31 \(1975-94\)](#)



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

Spring Has Sprung



Greetings from the USS STERETT Association

Spring has come once again and for the first time in a year, we can all start getting about and back to the daily task of living once more. Let's hope we can keep making progress in putting COVID 19 behind us! Lots in this issue, but first a tribute to our departed Shipmate OSCM Steve Hayes from someone who knew him well LTJG John King.

Farewell Shipmate and Friend

We have all attended a funeral in our lives and that act gives us an opportunity to examine our own lives as well as the life of the one we have lost. Most have readings and sentiments given by those who knew the person well. Some know them better than others. Some are great speakers who can eulogize and give us great insights. The best eulogists speak from their hearts and leave a lasting impression in our minds.

Most typically these words are delivered in a house of worship, or a funeral home, with all the friends and family sitting together and adsorbing the words as a silent community linked by association and covered by a common roof.

COVID-19 has robbed us of this simple act of respect and togetherness. But, digital connections and tiny screens allow us to share this uncommon roof over our heads, to give us a feeling of connection and shared sorrow, none the less.



Service for Steve Hayes 12/30/20

On December 30, 2020 we shared that roof, common and uncommon, with a few dozen people who knew and loved Steve Hayes.

Most were assembled in a funeral home chapel in Mississippi and others scattered around the internet on Zoom connections. Nonetheless, we all witnessed the love and respect that was given to a man who was first a great father, grandfather, father-in-law and mentor. For that time we had a common roof over our heads.

A roof of a strong father who was a role model for three daughters and sons-in-laws. A strong father figure who was Mr. Steve to his daughter's classmates and teammates. The love and respect was palpable even over the tiny screen that many of us were sitting before.



Steve with his daughters at a Christmas past

Some of us knew Steve through our shared Navy time. Some knew him through his ongoing love for his Navy in the USS STERETT Association. We knew him to be a larger-than-life figure of a Navy sailor with a still-identifiable Bronx accent. A kid who had joined the Navy at an early age and found a long career culminating in becoming a Master Chief.

Master Chief, E-9, the top of the senior enlisted. A leader and a developer of his future Navy. Yes, every Ensign and every Seaman Apprentice owes a great debt to the Chief who gently, or perhaps not too gently, encourages them to become a better Sailor. A better steward of the legacy that is the United States Navy.



2013 Branson Missouri Reunion

He continued that stewardship after his retirement in the USS STERETT Association. While he served on many ships, he had two tours on STERETT and like many who served on her, he developed a deep love for her even after she was decommissioned. This led him to the Association and gave him the opportunity to lead once again in her name.

He served multiple terms as the Association President and approached the task with every bit of the vim and vigor that he applied to the aforementioned Seaman Apprentice and Ensign. The Association grew stronger and more expansive under his watch. He connected back to previous USS STERETTs - now there are four. Greatest Heroes of the World War II, the DD 407 STERETT were on his speed dial. He invited these heroes into the organization along with their families and they attended reunions as honored guests. At the end of each reunion the lost sailors of DD 407 were named and a ship's bell was rung at the mention of their name.

Later in his terms he presided over this memorial service and he read a poem that sailors the world over revere. It seems fitting these words that he spoke not that long ago should be ascribed to him.



USS STERETT Association Memorial Service
June 26, 2017, in Nashville, Tennessee

Alfred Lord Tennyson

Crossing The Bar

***Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,***

***But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.***

***Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;***

***For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.***

Steve, you have crossed the bar, but your memory will be with us and your beloved STERETT forever. Rest In Peace Shipmate.

FROM OUR PRESIDENT

Greetings STERETT Family, April is almost gone! Where did January, February and March go? Time has sure flown by quickly...and before you know it, September will be here! Our Association remains strong at 318 members! Thank you for those that continue to support the Association by promptly and faithfully paying their annual dues. I have sent out reminders via email at the beginning, half-way point and days before the end of the month to ensure everyone has the opportunity to pay their dues and stay onboard. Many have chosen to pay their lifetime dues, which is an option for everyone. For those that do not have email, I have personally called them. I am hoping this process will retain more in the Association so our membership continues to grow. Did you know that since JAX, we have signed up 196 Shipmates (139 new members and 57 that have re-joined)? That's significant when you consider that when we started this deployment (in JAX) we were at 171 members. Unfortunately this year, we have lost 11 Shipmates - ten to non-payment of dues and the other was CDR Thomas "Tom" Harper who served as DLG-31's XO during the valiant 1972 deployment. Rest in peace XO, we have the watch Sir!

We are so happy to have our DDG-104 Shipmates home. To our 104 Shipmates, hope your well-earned post-deployment leave/time-off has allowed you to enjoy time with your families and friends. BZ to CDR Andrew Koy for a job well done! Welcome aboard to CDR Shaun Dennis – we are honored to have you in command of the fourth ship named after Lt. Andrew Sterett! And thank you Vice-President Burton Dietz (YN3, 70-72) for making the trip out west to attend the Change of Command Ceremony last month with our Association Member and Shipmate Eugene "Gene" Bailey (LCDR DLG 31, 70-72).

Great news - our Vice-President Burton Dietz has been removed from the binnacle list (yay!), but many still remain (listed on page 9), so please continue keep them in your thoughts and prayers. Our DD-407 Shipmate Jacque "JQ" L. Hutchins (GM3c, 39-41) turned 100 years old last month, and we recently heard of another DD-407 Shipmate still around – J.C. Lewis (S2c, '45) - who according to his son J.C. was aboard for the kamikaze attack 76 years ago. We reached out to J.C. to bring him alongside as well and he accepted. His son recently posted on Facebook that he will be celebrating his 94th birthday June 1st. Happy Birthday Shipmates!!! In case you were not aware, we have created an official Association page on a new social media site called MeWe. Everything that gets posted on Facebook can be found on MeWe as well. My hope is that we can reach as many Shipmates and family members using these two sites.

I have heard there are a number of you who have concerns about travelling to Texas for the reunion and many have expressed on social media that they will not be attending due to fears of being exposed to the COVID-19 virus. I want to ensure you know that we have been listening and we will make sure that everyone's safety is our #1 priority, especially being that the most of us are "Old Salts," some would argue saltier than others LOL (laughing out loud)! Anyhow, as of today we still have 97 attendees registered (about half of the total attendees in JAX which was just under 200). Our contract states that we have until the second week of May to decide to change course or continue full speed ahead without incurring a loss to the Association. My vision is to discuss our tasking with the Board of Directors over the next several weeks and make a final determination as soon as possible. If we were to postpone, location change (San Antonio) and timeframe (September) will remain the same. Just in case you were wondering, we have looked into hotel availability in October 2022 when it's a little cooler, but prices will go up considerably; therefore, should we postpone, September 2022 looks the best. **To be clear, at the moment we are staying on course and speed towards San Antonio in 2021.** Carpe diem, chuck bond

THE CAPTAIN'S CORNER



CDR Andrew Koy, CO DDG-104, LCDR Aaron Jefferson, XO DDG104

The following was received from CDR Koy, as he bid farewell to the DDG 104:

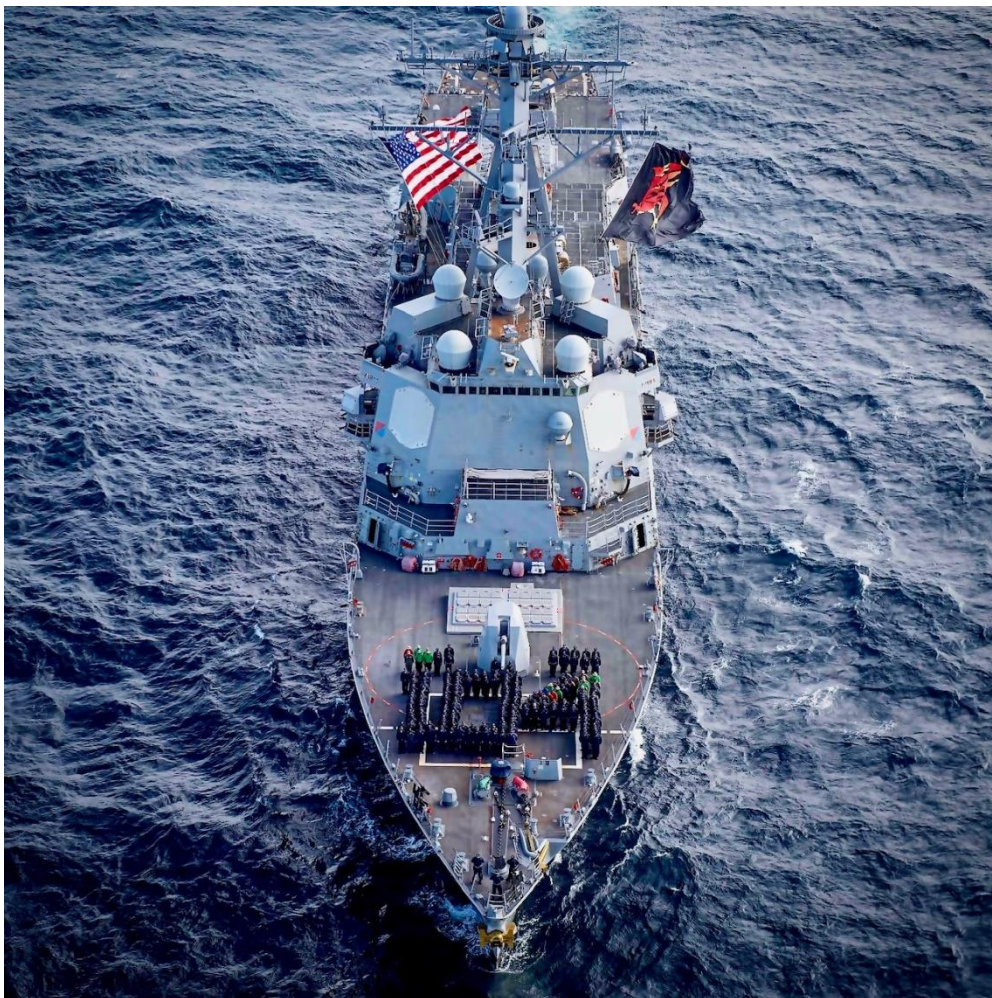
CO's Corner:

It feels surreal to be writing this final note while STERETT is moored fast to the pier. Though the first quarter of 2021 was spent underway, the "Fightin' Fourth" has finally returned home to San Diego. It was definitely a "top 5 Navy day" when we steamed into San Diego harbor on February 26th. Our Homeward Bound pennant was so long, we had to tie it off to the lifelines of the aft missile deck. With tugs spraying a welcome home salute ahead of us, and our battle flags waving high, three of our fellow warships rendered salutes as we steamed through our home port waters once again. The STERETT families and friends were waiting to greet us, a mere 326 days after we had said our farewells. This "COVID Cruise" of a deployment is one we will always remember, and hopefully will not have to repeat.



This Spring is bringing a new change to our ship and crew, as she prepares to head into the yards for some more upkeep. Our ship is right where it needs to be, getting some rest and repair, and a recharge of the crew. Over 70 new faces were ready to join the ranks of the Dauntless Crew when we moored; We said our goodbyes to many shipmates, some with over 6 years of service aboard "the 104."

Reflecting on my time "in the seat," I am humbled and honored to have had the opportunity to lead this fine group of Sailors through the challenges that came our way. In my 3 years aboard, I feel fortunate to have walked under the hull, watched our ship get put back together, witnessed the crew master the training phases, and deploy for months on end. With only 2 port visits of 8 days moored to a pier, this crew became tight-knit and connected. Not only did they accomplish the challenges of this deployment, they impressed our Fleet Commander, and I'm proud to add another Battle 'E' to our heritage p-way. I'll say it in my change of command address, but our Navy is in fine hands. These Sailors are phenomenally tough. They are a tight crew, and I have no doubt of whatever is thrown their way, they will handle it.



To CDR Shaun Dennis, welcome aboard, Sir! I'm excited to turn over with you and watch you take command. This is a storied ship, with a history and heritage that has served our nation well. I am proud of the work the STERETT Association has done to support and connect with this crew, and look forward to cheering you on, alas, from afar. Remain, Forever Dauntless

USS STERETT Association 2021 Reunion

Where: San Antonio, TX

When: 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 IS \$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).
- Reunion fee is \$80 per person.

To register to attend the reunion, please visit: www.sterett.net/reunion-2021/reunion-registration/

Start planning now to join your Sterett shipmates in San Antonio. If you're 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 (**election of officers, voting on next reunion site and updating the Bylaws**) and banquet with dancing

Sunday, 19 September 2021 – Memorial ceremony and departure

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)	Bob Cowart (DLG 31, 70-72)
Eric Groetz (CG 31, 87-89)	Jim Hampton (DLG 31, 68-70)
Jacque "JQ" Hutchins (DD 407, 39-41)	Wayne McBrian (DLG 31, 68-71)
Ray Miem (CG 31, 88-91)	Jessica Morera (DDG 104, 2019-2020)
Greg Neshime (DLG 31, 66-68)	Ted Ondrak (DLG 31, 70-72)
Richard Seghers (CG 31, 87-91)	Bill Stafford (CG 31, 90-92)

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

