

Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn  
Tinian, Marianas Islands  
28 July 1944

# FIREBALL!

VOLUME 31, No. 2  
Spring 2022



**The official newsletter of the USS Ozbourn (DD 846) Association**

Dedicated to perpetuating the memory of a gallant Marine and the history of a fine ship

Visit our website at [www.ozbourn.org](http://www.ozbourn.org)



## FROM THE BRIDGE

### **Greetings to All Shipmates, Families and Friends**

I of course come to you wishing you all to be safe and continue in good health during this new year.

The purpose of our association is to continue the legacy of a great man, Pvt. Joseph Ozbourn and the great ship bearing his name, our ship, the USS Ozbourn DD846. We of course wish to continue the great friendships that we have formed over the years. The

association and our reunions are open to all shipmates and families.

Clearly, the fiscal health and success of any organization such as our association, is very dependent on the timely paying of annual dues. Those shipmates wishing to attend our reunions are also obligated to submit payment for registration fees as well as any activity listed on the Reunion Registration Form. The registration fee covers our Hospitality Room and any other expenditures related to the reunions. We of course strive to keep costs as low as possible to allow everyone a chance to attend.

Our elected officers, the reunion committee and many others spend countless hours to ensure the success of every reunion. As we have already begun planning for our 2023 Reunion to be held in the Eastern part of the country, please plan on coming and have a great time. Keep you eye on future editions of the "Fireball" for 2023 Reunion Updates and remember to register prior to the listed cut-off date.

I wish to thank all of the Officers and the entire membership for the great support of our Association.

Guy Posey, President  
USS Ozbourn Association

## **2021 REUNION BANQUET, COLORADO SPRINGS, COLORADO**



## 2023 Biennial Reunion

*Jeff Parker, Editor*

Now that the 2021 Reunion held in Colorado Springs, Colorado, is now in the history books, the entire membership wishes to thank the 2021 Reunion Committee, **Harold McKeehan, Mike Ward** and **Guy Posey** for all of their very hard work. This of course includes their lovely wives, **Sallae Posey, Linda McKeehan** and **Bonni Ward**, for all of their assistance and patience in the great deal of work required to plan and see any reunion to a successful conclusion. We would also like to thank all of the members in attendance that jump in and help during each of our reunions. The 2021 Reunion was truly one of the great ones and we as an Association are very grateful.

As we are still over a year away, one of the last things on your mind is the 2023 Reunion to be held in the Eastern part of our great nation.

However, its never to early to discuss our next reunion. During the 2021 Business Meeting, a request went out for volunteers to accept the responsibility of planning and organizing the 2023 Reunion. After doing a great job on the 2015, 2017, 2019 & 2021 Reunions, **Guy Posey, President, Harold "Mac" McKeehan, V.P., Mike Ward, Treasurer**, along with **Ed Woodbury**, have once again stepped up to the plate and will be commencing the planning stages for our 2023 Reunion in the near future.

Our Reunion Committee is already busy at work seeking out various locations for a location of our next reunion. Although no specific location has been decided on, several locations have been discussed, that include Savannah, Georgia, Mobile, Alabama and Atlanta, Georgia. Each of these locations provide a number of sites that would be interesting to the membership. Clearly, there are other locations being sought.

As you can tell, it takes a number of individuals both listed above as well as others to ensure that our reunions are successful. Please watch for additional reunion news in future editions of the "Fireball".

## HELP NEEDED

*Submitted by Jeff Parker, MM3, (70-74)*

As "your" Editor of our "Fireball" Newsletters, over these past several years, I am very dependent on articles, photographs, and stories of interest that I am able to publish for the benefit of all members. We have been the benefactor of several of our shipmates that routinely submit items that they believe would be of interest to all members. I believe there are a number of you that have either stories, photos, etc. that would truly be of interest to the Association Members.

Please do not hesitate to email me with anything you would like to share with our shipmates. **Email: Ljparker1@cox.net**

## Association Officers

### President

**Guy Posey (69-71)**  
419 S. Appleway Lane  
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**Email: gtp68483@gmail.com**

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**Jeff Parker (70-74)**  
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**Email: Ljparker1@cox.net**

### Past Presidents

Years served aboard OZ/Assoc. President  
**Robert Whitten Jr. (50-52) (93-99)**  
Cupertino, CA  
**W.D. Minter (52-55) (99-03)**  
Texarkana, TX  
**Rudy Boff (52-55) (03-07)**  
Pittsburgh, PA

## Publication Deadline

If you have a letter, story or photo you would like to share with other Ozbourn shipmates, the deadline for submitting contributions for the **Summer 2022** issue is **May 15th**. Articles may be re-written for purposes of editorial style. Due to limitations, some materials may be used in a future **Fireball** edition.



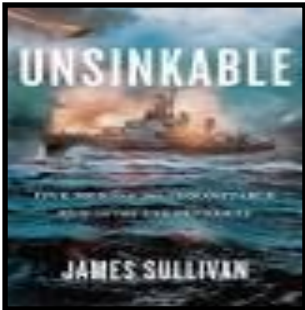
## MAIL CALL

The following letters and emails were received by your Association Officers during the last quarter.

### DUSTING OFF GRANDFATHER'S OLD PHOTOS



We have recently heard from a young man named Steve Scott who made a special effort to reach out to our Association. As he was scanning several of his Grandfather's old pictures, believed to have been taken in San Diego, Steve came across this photo depicting the Ozbourn outboard of several other destroyers moored up next to the Destroyer Tender, USS Dixie, AD14. Although his Grandfather was not related to the Ozbourn, Steve felt compelled to reach out to us and we are very grateful.



### "UNSINKABLE"

*Submitted by Reed Jones, Ltjg. (65-67)*

As all of our members already know, that time to time, we are notified by a fellow shipmate regarding various publications that would be of interest to all hands. The latest, "Unsinkable", describes the WWII Destroyer USS Plunkett DD431, written by James Sullivan, is one of those must reads by all destroyer men.



### NATIONAL ARCHIVES and RECORDS ADMINISTRATION

*Submitted by Gene Stagner, Ltjg. (66-69) & Reed Jones, Ltjg. (65-67)*

We are pleased to hear from Gene Stagner and Reed Jones regarding the availability of Deck Logs related to the Ozbourn from the NARA. Gene has done extensive research related to deck logs from his period of service aboard the "OZ". Anyone interested in researching these deck logs can merely Google **Catalog.Archives.Gov** Once you reach the site, type in "**Ozbourn Deck Logs**".



## WELCOME ABOARD

JOHN BRUCE, EN2, (69-71)



## TAPS FOR SHIPMATES

**"SAILORS ONCE, SHIPMATES FOREVER"**

MELTON HARGROVE, CSSN, (51-53)

*"May fair winds and calm seas be with you always"*

## **OPERATION FORMATION STAR**

*Submitted by John Crowley, FTG2, (62-65)*



**Operation Formation Star** was the code name for the emergency re-deployment of U.S. Seventh Fleet warships to the Sea of Japan off the eastern coast of North Korea following that country's seizure of the USS Pueblo AGER 2, in international waters on 23 January 1968,

The surge deployment was the largest buildup of U.S. naval forces around the Korean Peninsula since the end of the Korean War, but Operation Formation Star placed considerable strain on the Seventh Fleet's support for the Vietnam War during the Tet Offensive, particularly its aircraft carrier operations at Yankee Station in the Gulf of Tonkin.

Operation Formation Star was executed in conjunction with Operation Combat Fox, a surge deployment of additional land-based combat aircraft squadrons of the U.S. Fifth Air Force in the Far East. Additionally, the Pueblo Crisis saw a limited presidential authorized call up of U.S. based units of the National Reserve, Air Force Reserve, and Air National Guard to active duty, for the first such call up since the Berlin Crisis in 1961.

Although a wide range of military options were considered, the Johnson Administration, elected to resolve the Pueblo Crisis diplomatically, with Operation Formation Star helping to provide a "measured show of force" during the Pueblo Crisis.

While the inter-agency Korea Working Group in Washington, D.C., met to consider military options, Seventh Fleet planners were likewise considering contingency operations. One proposed option was a cutting out operation wherein a destroyer would enter Wonsan Harbor, board and re-take the docked Pueblo, and tow the ship out to open water, with a second destroyer providing support. Pacific Fleet commander Admiral John J. Hyland Jr. initially directed the Seventh Fleet to divert the USS Higbee to Wonsan and "prepare to engage in operations that may include towing Pueblo and/or retrieval of Pueblo crew/provide air cover as appropriate." The Higbee was eventually recalled and the boarding operation was not initially undertaken.

After his ship joined Task Force 71 on 24 January 1968, **Commander John G Denham** volunteered

**USS Osborn** for this mission, citing the ship's success in supporting Operation Sea Dragon off the coast of South Vietnam, Admiral Epes approved Denham's request, and the Osborn's crew began drilling in preparation for the mission. The plan called for a 10-man boarding party to retake the moored Pueblo in Wonsan Harbor and then lash that ship to the Osborn which would back out and exit the harbor. While confident, Commander Denham noted: "I didn't know what this would cost us, but I couldn't see us getting out of there free."

During part of this time, Osborn operated with the surface action group providing cover for the spy ship Banner off the coast of North Korea, with the other destroyer being the Higbee. Had this later boarding option been executed, it was likely that Higbee would have provided support to Osborn in Wonsan Harbor while the guided missile heavy cruiser Canberra provided long range naval gunfire support by bombarding the harbor as well as offering anti-aircraft missile defense against North Korea aircraft.

Although the Osborn was on alert for the next 30 days after joining Task Force 71, the boarding-rescue mission was never executed and the Osborn released from duty with Task Force 71 on 4 March 1968.

*(Editors Note: We are grateful to John as a long time contributor to the "Fireball.")*



**MEMORIAL SERVICE**  
**USS OZBOURN 2021 REUNION BANQUET**  
**CELEBRATING THE LIVES OF 13 FORMER SHIPMATES**

*Submitted by Richard Johnson, RD2, (61-64)*

Today, we are celebrating the lives of 13 shipmates who have passed away since our last reunion in 2019. Let us pay our respects to these patriots and former shipmates.

Father, we thank you for the privilege of being together at this reunion. As the generations of former shipmates continue to depart our presence, let us together today to reflect on the fond memories of the shipmates who are unable to be with us.. Strengthen the bonds of our relationships as we face the future, but forever keeping strong ties to the past.

<b>Richard T, LaFond</b>	<b>SN</b>	<b>1946-1948</b>
<b>Clarence G. Murphy</b>	<b>SN</b>	<b>1946-1948</b>
<b>Robert C. Whitten</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>1950-1952</b>
<b>Billy J. Wyatt</b>	<b>FT2</b>	<b>1950-1953</b>
<b>Ralph O. Foster</b>	<b>BT2</b>	<b>1951-1954</b>
<b>Wesley O. Cressey</b>	<b>BT1</b>	<b>1958-1962</b>
<b>Philip A. Smith</b>	<b>Lt.Jg</b>	<b>1965-1967</b>
<b>Norm Seidel</b>	<b>Lt.Jg</b>	<b>1966-1968</b>
<b>Vernon Bussard</b>	<b>CDR</b>	<b>1968-1970</b>
<b>Ronald H. Muir</b>	<b>BT3</b>	<b>1970-1973</b>
<b>David Sedlacek</b>	<b>MM3</b>	<b>1970-1973</b>
<b>Mark Beaulieu</b>	<b>MM2</b>	<b>1972-1974</b>
<b>Doug Flowers</b>	<b>FN</b>	<b>1972-1974</b>

The careers of these former shipmates span the entire life of the Ozbourn. As such, we may not have known each of them individually. I remember hearing a quote that has stayed with me all of these years which can be applied to these sailors. "I knew them not, yet I knew them all."

"May fair winds and calm seas be with you always."

## **MISSING WARRIOR TABLE**

*Submitted by Richard Johnson, RD2, (61-64)*

This table is reserved to honor the missing comrades in arms. The Honor Table is set for POWs, MIAs and those who were KIA. The table is also here to pay our respects for the former shipmates who were unable to be with us tonight.

The table is round to show our everlasting concern for America's fallen Warriors.

The table cloth is white symbolizing the purity of their motives when answering the call to duty.

The single rose, displayed in a vase, reminds us of the life of each of the loved ones and to the friends of these Americans, who kept the faith while still waiting for answers.

The vase is tied with a red ribbon, symbol of our continued determination to account for our missing.

A slice of lemon on the bread plate is to remind us of the bitter fate of those captured and missing in a foreign land.

A pinch of salt symbolizes the tears endured by those missing and their families who seek answers.

The Bible represents the strength gained through faith to sustain those lost from our country, founded as One Nation Under God.

The glass is inverted to symbolize their inability to share this evening's toast.

The chair is empty. They are missing.

Let us now raise our glasses in a toast to honor America's POWs/MIAs/KIA, and to the success of our efforts to account for all of them.



*(Editors Note: I wish to acknowledge Richard's hard work and passion for this extremely emotional subject. Richard introduced the Missing Warrior Table during the 2017 Reunion, (attached photograph), held in Virginia Beach, Virginia, and has continued with recognizing these brothers and sisters in arms ever since.)*

## USS OZBOURN SHIP'S STORE

***Open 24 Hours, 7 Days a Week — Rudy Boff, Proprietor***

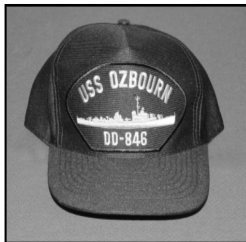


Photos and additional ordering information can be found on the Ozbourn website at [www.ozbourn.org](http://www.ozbourn.org) under the heading Ship's Store. Orders may be placed with:  
Rudy Boff — 1036 Connor Road  
Pittsburgh, PA  
15234-1033  
Tel: (412) 833-0572

### SPECIAL ORDER ITEMS

The following items are special order only. Contact Rudy Boff at Ship's Store address at left.

Micro-fiber jacket, fleece lined-water repellent \$95  
Jerzees Super Sweatshirt, White or Navy Blue \$40  
Golf shirts, White or Navy Blue \$35  
All items have ship's name and hull number embroidered in gold letters. "Add \$5.00 for size 2XL"



**CAP** cotton twill Navy blue, brilliant gold letters & Destroyer silhouette. 1 size fits all. Item #C01, \$14 ea. Embroidery on back: Korea, #C01K \$16 ea. Vietnam, #C01V \$16 ea.



**T-shirt** short sleeve, White or Navy Blue with embroidered logo left side. \$25 ea. Item #T02  
← Long sleeve. \$35 ea.

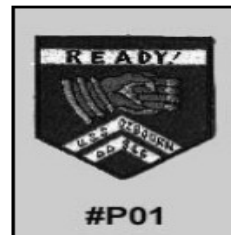


### AUBURN COACH'S JACKET

Navy Blue with fleece lining, six matching metal snaps, profile of the ship in silver thread and lettering in gold. \$45 ea. Item #J01



← Logo detail



**PATCH** fabric, \$6 ea. Item #P01

### SHIPPING AND HANDLING

<u>COST OF ITEM</u>	<u>COST OF POSTAGE</u>
\$0.01 – 15.00	\$3.00
15.00 – 25.00	4.00
25.01 – 35.00	5.00
35.01 – 45.00	7.00
45.01 – 55.00	8.00
55.01 – 65.00	10.00
65.01 or more	11.00

All shipmates, family and friends are encouraged to get their Ship's Store orders in early for delivery in time for the 2022 Holiday Season.

**SUPPORT YOUR SHIPS STORE TODAY!**



Jeffrey Parker  
1036 Calle Venezia  
San Clemente, CA 92672



Pvt. Joseph W. Ozbourn  
USMC  
Congressional Medal of Honor

## FIREBALL! The official newsletter of the USS Ozbourn Association

### DUES ALERT!

Are you overdue on your annual dues? Only dues paying members receive the **Fireball** newsletter. Look at your mailing label on your most recent newsletter and find a number such as 21 or 22. This number indicates the last year you were current with Association dues: 21 means 2021, 22 means 2022, etc. If you wish, you may pay for multiple years.

Membership dues are **\$15.00** annually and are due in January of each year. Please make checks payable to the **USS OZBOURN ASSOCIATION** and forward them to **Mike Ward**, Association Treasurer, at 3836 County Road W40, Decorah, Iowa 52101.

Your Association officers ask you to.....

### DO THE DUES TODAY!

**We're on the Web at [www.ozbourn.org](http://www.ozbourn.org)**

The following information can be found on the Association's website: Mission Statement, a list of Ozbourn shipmates, historical photos, Ship's Store and how to Join the Association.

### USS OZBOURN COMMANDING OFFICERS

The USS Ozbourn has had 18 different commanding officers during its 29 year history. Do you remember which skippers you served under? If you have an interesting story about any of the Ozbourn's commanding officers to share please forward your experience for possible inclusion in a future issue of the **Fireball**.

CDR B.A. Smith	March 1946-October 1947
CDR N.E. Blaisdell	October 1947-March 1949
CDR R.E. Freeman	March 1949-September 1950
CDR C.O. Akers	September 1950-April 1951
CDR W.B. Fargo	April 1951-April 1954
CDR H.T. Scott Jr.	April 1954-November 1955
CDR A.J. Toulon Jr.	November 1955-Sept. 1957
CDR C.A. Kuhl	September 1957-July 1959
CDR W.W. Turner	July 1959-March 1961
LCDR D.V. Gorman	March 1961-December 1961
CDR W.W. Lancaster	December 1961-October 1963
CDR D.W. Berger	October 1963-July 1964
CDR M.D. Nelson Jr.	July 1964-April 1966
CDR J.G. Denham	April 1966-September 1968
CDR R.L. Stewart	September 1968-June 1970
CDR E.W. Numbers	June 1970-December 1971
CDR K.L. Costilow	December 1971-March 1974
CDR F.J. Furtado	March 1974-May 1975

