

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

# FIREBALL!

VOLUME 34, No. 4  
FALL 2024



**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

## FROM THE BRIDGE

### Greetings to All Shipmates, Families and Friends



Our 2025 Reunion Plans are finalized.

As you are all aware, as a result of the 2023 Reunion being cancelled, it has been some-time since we have been able to get together and have a reunion. Hopefully, this will be a great time,

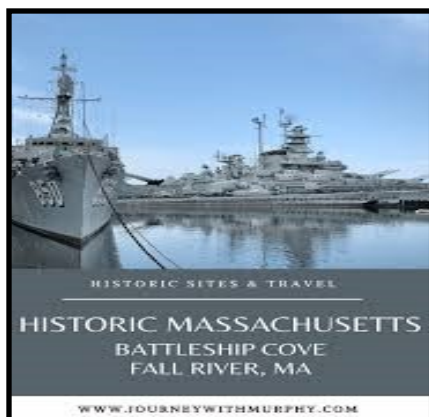
Please mark the dates, listed below on your calendars. Watch for additional information in future editions of the "Fireball".

I am also currently working to place some of our Historical Items in the National Vietnam War Museum located in Weatherford, Texas. I will continue to provide you with updates.

Thank you all for supporting our great Association.

Guy Posey, President,  
USS Ozbourn Association

## 2025 USS OZBOURN DD846 REUNION WARWICK, RHODE ISLAND SEPTEMBER 10-13, 2025



**BATTLESHIP COVE**



**CROWN PLAZA HOTEL**



**USS KENNEDY DD850**

## 2025 Reunion Committee

*Jeff Parker, Editor*

As noted in the 2024 Spring Edition of the "Fireball", Association President Guy Posey's Letter From the Bridge spoke of the low number of registrations that necessitated the cancellation of our 2023 Reunion. Therefore, the USS Ozbourn DD846 Association would be joining the Tin Can Sailors Association Reunion to be held in New Orleans, September 8 -12, 2024.

However, as discussions with the Tin Can Sailors Association continued, it has become clear that retaining our own USS Ozbourn Association Reunions, separate from the Tin Can Sailors Association, would be the best course of action for our Association at this time.

Therefore, our 2025 Reunion Committee, **Guy Posey, President, Harold McKeehan, Vice President, and Mike Ward, Treasurer**, once again working tirelessly in researching venues throughout the Eastern portion of our great country that would be both fiscally responsible as well as of great interest to all Shipmates, Friends and Families.

Once again, the Reunion Committee has found a fantastic venue, **Warwick, Rhode Island**, with which to hold our 2025 Reunion.

As the exhaustive planning stage continues, excursions, busses, meals, etc. the Committee has identified the Crown Plaza Hotel Warwick, located at 801 Greenwich Avenue, Warwick, Rhode Island. (401) 732-6000, as our host hotel for the reunion. The Committee has established a nightly rate of 149.00 that includes breakfast each morning, a hospitality room as well as complimentary airport transportation, from the Warwick Airport.

Plans regarding "possible excursions" include a tour of the Naval War College, USS Massachusetts BB-59, Battleship Cove, Submarine USS Lionfish and a 1 1/2 hour boat tour of 10 light houses. Clearly, plans at this stage are fluid.

**PLEASE REVIEW FUTURE EDITIONS OF THE "FIREBALL" FOR 2025 REUNION UPDATES AND REGISTRATION FORMS.**



**GUY POSEY**

**"MAC" MCKEEHAN**

**MIKE WARD**

## Association Officers

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### 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 **Winter 2025** issue is **November 15th, 2024**. Articles may be rewritten for purposes of editorial style. Due to limitations, some materials may be used in a future **Fireball** edition.

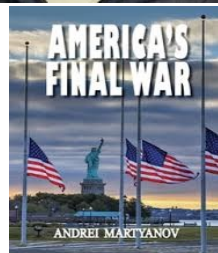
## MAIL CALL



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

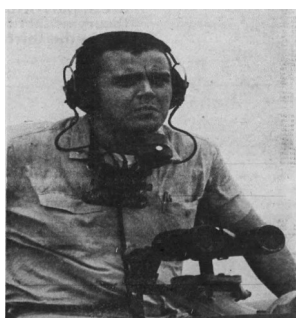
### ANOTHER GREAT READ RECOMMENDATION FROM REED

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



We have once again been the benefactors of one of Reed Jones recommended reads. Reed's recommendations have always been of great interest to all of our Association Members. This time Reed wanted to recommend Americas Final War, written by Andrei Martynovs. The author points out the complex series of events related to the conflict in Ukraine and the involvement of the United States.

### SHIPMATE EXPLAINS HIS SERVICE ON THE "OZ" TO HIS GRANDCHILDREN



As a result of his photograph along with an article appearing in the 2023 Summer Edition of the "Fireball" Newsletter, Shipmate **Ken Carter, Ltjg, (67-69)**, reached out to the Association requesting information regarding the source of the article, especially his photograph.

Upon viewing Ken's photograph and the accompanying article, his Grandchildren became very interested in his service aboard the "OZ".

It is always great to hear that other generations continue to show interest in our past.

*(Editors Note: Although I was unable to provide Ken with a better quality photograph, I informed him that long time "Fireball" contributor, Shipmate John Crowley, FTG2, (62-65), had submitted the information for inclusion in the "Fireball". Additionally, I recommended that Ken view the PDF File of the 2023 Summer "Fireball" on the Association website as the quality of any photographs are traditionally of greater quality.)*

### "A VERY SMALL WORLD"

*Jeff Parker, Editor*

As I have reported on several prior occasions, my Wife Lisa and I have had the great privilege to travel the globe both on land and sea. During our travels you tend to meet and converse with fellow guests. It always seems that careers, kids, grandchildren and military service become a common theme. What is always surprising is to meet someone with a mutual story. Recently, on a cruise of the British Isles onboard the cruise ship Celebrity Silhouette out of Rotterdam, a couple of fellow guests, **Mike & Donna McGriff**, along with their lovely daughter, joined us at a table in one of the lounges.

Before long, we all struck up a conversation, Where are you from? The number of children, grandchildren, etc. We of course discovered that Mike was a retired USMC Warrant Officer and we began exchanging our sure to be varying military experiences. Yes, varying to a degree. I soon found out that prior to joining the USMC, Mike had served in the U.S. Navy for 4-years. He attended Basic Training at the Naval Training Center San Diego in 1970. We soon discovered that we were in Boot Camp at the same time although separate companies. Now to the very small world, I of course reported aboard the "OZ" following Basic Training and Mike went off for A-School to become a Quarter Master. After several assignments, Mike, now a Quarter Master 2nd Class, reported on board the "OZ" that had moved from Long Beach to Swan Island in Portland, Oregon. Once again although we did not know one another, we served on the "OZ" together.

After serving in the U.S. Navy for 4-years, Mike joined the USMC, attended the Marine Corps Recruit Depot, San Diego, and retired after 22 years. What a great surprise.





## OUR GREAT SHIP IN THE NEWS

*Jeff Parker, Editor*

As I have printed this article in the past, (2016 Fall Edition), I believe it is great to recognize publications such as **SEA CLASSICS**, that I truly enjoy each month. Sea Classics tackles many of the historical events involving navies from around the globe as well as current events that I believe our Shipmates will find both enlightening as well as interesting.



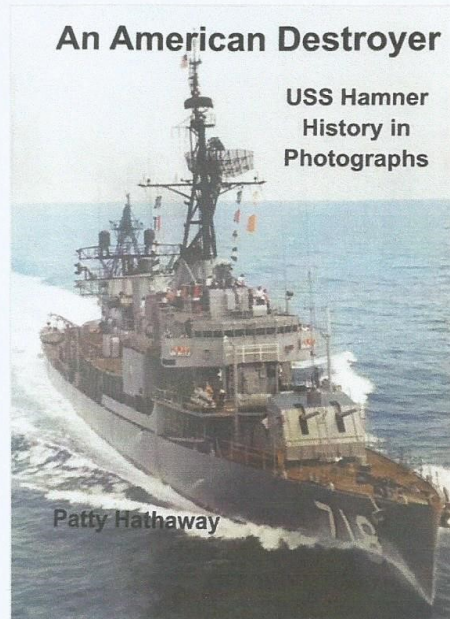
USS Ozbourne (DD-846) steaming for a rendezvous during May 1963 with USS Kitty Hawk (CV-62). On 3 June 1963, President Kennedy, standing on the deck of Kitty Hawk, will observe Ozbourne fire a missile from her ASROC launcher. From the lack of sailors in the picture standing on Ozbourne's main deck, below ASROC launcher, we know it is not mealtime. Entrance to the Mess Deck was from a hatch on the port side of the ship located inside the superstructure just to the rear of the breakwater. The exit from the mess hall was from a similar hatch on the starboard side. One went down the hatch to the steam line, got one's food, went into the Mess to eat, and then exited through the scullery, where your tray was washed. The Mess Deck could only seat 40 crewmembers so it was eat and leave so your buddy to could eat. Those going on watch got in the front of the line, those not having watch next in line, and those coming off watch at the rear of the line.



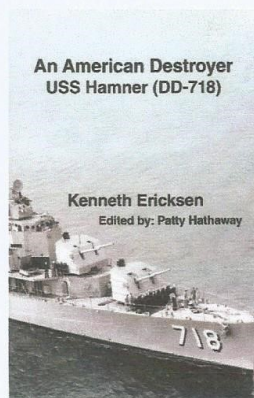
## **An American Destroyer: USS Hamner History in Photographs**

The sequel to "An American Destroyer: USS Hamner (DD-718)", by Patty Hathaway, presents the history of the Hamner and her crew with photographs and documents from shipmates and their families. With over 400 photographs, the reader is taken back to 1945 when Hamner began her life on the sea. The history unfolds from the shipmates' perspective, with graphic details words could not quite describe. The photographs show the shipmates from their training to life onboard, with a few well-earned times of liberty in exotic places. The photographs and copies of documents shared by our veterans and their families prove that a picture is worth a thousand words -- and in this book, that's 400 times a thousand! In the author's own words:

*"The response to the requests for information and additional photos for this book was at times overwhelming. Photos, names, dates, stories, and encouragement were received almost daily. This book would not be possible without the association and its dedicated members and friends. I truly hope that everyone enjoys this book as much as I enjoyed everything I learned while creating it!"*



## **An American Destroyer: USS Hamner (DD-718)**



Written by Kenneth Ericksen (ET3, 1953-56), this book tells the story of the ship and her crew from the launch of the Hamner in 1946 until her decommissioning in 1979. Ken gathered the information about the family of the Hamner's namesake, photos from fellow shipmates, deck logs and cruise books, interviews of other shipmates and started writing the history of the Hamner in order to keep her memory alive. All nineteen cruises, equator crossings and training exercises can be found in Ken's story. After the Vietnam war, reservist training on the Columbia River occupies the crew and their ship in the later chapters. **An American Destroyer** shows the life aboard a destroyer through the eyes of a sailor. In Ken's own words:

*"All that being said, this is the story of an American destroyer, USS Hamner (DD-718), and her service in major wars and as a training vessel during peacetime. It's also the story of the men who served aboard and knew her well. I dedicate this book to those brave sailors."*

NOTE: All profits from the sale of these books go to the USS Hamner DD-718 Association Inc to enable them to continue their mission of preserving the memories of the Hamner and her crew.

*(Editors Note: Although the above listed publication is not that of the USS Ozbourn DD846, I have found over the years both on You Tube and in print that any information regarding Destroyer Sailors is important.)*



## USS OZBOURN DD846 REUNIONS

### DO I GO, OR DO I STAY HOME?



After learning that Warwick, Rhode Island, had been selected as the location for the 2025 Reunion for the USS OzboURN DD-846 Association, Secretary **Ken Keene, EN2, (70-74)**, wrote the following testimonial.

"At the 2001 Reunion in that area, we toured a couple of mansions in Newport, Wow, the Kennedy Library, the USS Constitution and Museum, and the USS Cassin Young DD-793, in Boston Harbor. Battleship Cove is a must. The USS Kennedy DD850, is nearly identical to the "OZ" Post FRAM. The Young is much like the "OZ" was pre FRAM."

*(Editors Note: Clearly, we are no longer young. It is also very clear, that, as Ken stated, how great of a time was had by all in attendance at the 2001 Reunion. I for one believe that the topic of this note, "Do I Go, or Do I Stay Home", speaks volumes. Don't miss out. Watch for updates in future editions of the "Fireball" Newsletters. The following photographs are just a small example of the great times had by all at a number of past*



USS OZBOURN DD846  
2013 Reunion, San Diego, CA



Honors being rendered to Pete & Cathy Cormack and Wayne & Betsy Olsen (Captains USN Ret.) boarding the USS Wayne E Meyer DDG-108





Since the closure of our Ship Store, **MILITARYBEST.COM**, has become a trusted source that can be counted on to provide products related to the Ozbourn such as ball caps, shirts, jackets and a number of items that would be of interest to all shipmates and their families.



Al Walker, daughter Allison McReddie, "Mac" & Linda McKeehan and Mike & Bonni Ward have a laugh cruising San Diego



John Montoya, RD2, (64-67) and Dave Varisco, RD2, (66-70)



Al Walker and Mike Ward prepare to cast the Memorial Wreath into San Diego Bay

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 23 or 24. This number indicates the last year you were current with Association dues: 23 means 2023, 24 means 2024, 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        |

