


BALCH/PORTERFIELD REUNION ASSOCIATION

February 2017

Greetings Shipmates, Wives and Families:

Before getting into the “meat” of the newsletter, we have some very sad news to share. Sam Thomas, who was a founding member of this “outfit” as he called it, passed away on January 27, 2017. To say he will be missed would be profound understatement. Even as Sam got older and less able to actively participate in reunions, his influence was there. We would let him know what we were planning and get his opinion. He called us on a regular basis. Whenever I saw his name come up on Caller-ID, I would smile. He always started with, “This is ooollldd Sam!” I will sorely miss those calls. Please keep his wife June, daughter Randa and the rest of his family in your thoughts and prayers.

The reunion last September in San Diego was a success. The Four Points hotel was beautiful and the tours were very nice. We had a good turnout and think everyone had a good time. We started out on a bit of a rocky note when Ruth Hamilton got sick. She had to go to the ER the night before the reunion started. Then she was admitted the next night. We are happy to say she bounced back for the rest of the week. She is our rock!!! It took several of us to do the things she does single handedly! We all have a newfound appreciation for Ruth.

Among the attendees were Balch shipmate Warren Seward and his two daughters and sons-in-law. Warren was the “night owl” of the reunion and always had a game of “Farkle” going.

On Wednesday, we (Jim & Pat) skipped the tour and drove up into the Laguna Mountains to Julian, CA. When we lived in San Diego in the 1960’s, we visited Julian often. It was a gold mining town during the Gold Rush and is now orchard country. It is famous for apple pies. We had lunch in a nice little restaurant and then went across the street to one of the local bakeries and got several pies to take back and share. Don & Pat Godfrey went out and bought ice cream. We all had a feast that night! There was even enough left over for the next night.

Our next reunion will be in Jacksonville, FL and will be hosted by John & Desiree Bryan. We’re sure it will be an excellent reunion. We attended a reunion in October 2016 for another ship in Jacksonville at this hotel. We had a wonderful time and I’m sure this year’s reunion will be just as good. John & Desiree attended our banquet, which was fun, and Desiree won one of our silent auction items.

The reunion will be September 10-18, 2017.

DoubleTree by Hilton Riverfront

1201 Riverplace Blvd

Jacksonville, FL 32207

800-222-8733 (Mention Balch-Porterfield Reunion)

Room rate: \$109.00 for single or double, which is good for three days before and three days after.

This includes a discounted breakfast coupon for \$12.50 per person, complimentary self-parking

The reservation cutoff date is Friday, August 11, 2017.



U.S.S. BALCH DD363



U.S.S. PORTERFIELD DD682

We received word of the passing of Gene Beckstrom, our chaplain. He had attended the reunion in September and we all really enjoyed spending time with him. Earl Harper and Bob Huffman, who had attended reunions, also passed away. David Lesh, who hosted the Buffalo, NY reunion with his wife Marie, passed away last year as well. We will miss them all.

If you are in contact with a shipmate who is not on the roster, please send us the name and address so we can add him and send newsletters. We know there are many Porterfield, and maybe even a few Balch shipmates out there.

If you know of a shipmate who is ill or who has passed away, please let us know.

**** IMPORTANT ****

If your address or email address has changed, please be sure to send us the change as soon as possible. Each time we send out newsletters, we get several mail and email returns. Some of the mail returns have new addresses, but many don't. Postage is a large expense for the association, so returns are costly. If there is no forwarding address, we have to remove that person from our mailing list. If an email gets returned, we then have to add that person to the list of people to receive paper copies, increasing postage costs.

Fair winds and smooth sailing,
Jim & Pat Siler

Reunion Recap

On Sunday, folks started arriving, and catching up with what everyone had been doing during the past year.

On Monday, the Board of Director's met and in the evening we had a welcome pizza party.

On Tuesday, there was a narrated city tour and luncheon. We went to Coronado and passed the historic Hotel del Coronado, went through Balboa Park, the Gaslamp District, and to the Seaport Village for a bit of shopping. Then we went to Shelter Island for lunch. The view from the restaurant is spectacular. We finished the tour at Point Loma at the Cabrillo Monument.

On Wednesday, we toured the USS Midway, the memorial to TAFFY 3, a heroic Destroyer unit that engaged and turned back a far superior Japanese fleet at the battle of Samar. The Porterfield was part of Admiral Halsey's 3rd Fleet in support of the Battle of Leyte Gulf. Our WW-II sailors, as well as others, enjoyed seeing that memorial to the heroic sailors and ships of that battle. This was followed by a two hour narrated harbor excursion, passing by five military installations. During the tour, everyone enjoyed a box lunch. Before the final mooring of the cruise, the ship passed by the bow of the Midway, for another special photo opportunity.

On Thursday, we toured La Jolla, Mount Soledad, Stephen Birch Aquarium, and had lunch at Tom Ham's Lighthouse restaurant. Our memorial service was held at the Veteran's Memorial, at the top of Mount Soledad; it is 900 feet above sea level, with a 360 degree panoramic view of San Diego. We had time to explore the memorial and have some photo ops. We then proceeded through La Jolla, by the scenic Cove and the coastline, and made our way to the Stephen Birch Aquarium, one of the finest salt water aquariums on the west coast. We had an hour to enjoy the exhibits and scenic views from the back terrace of the aquarium, overlooking the La Jolla Riviera.

On Friday, we had our business meeting and raffle. In the evening, we had a cocktail hour and banquet.

On Saturday, we had a farewell breakfast.

We look forward to seeing one another in Jacksonville, Florida in September.

Reunion Attendees

Gene Beckstrom
Edward & Jennie Bennett
Edwin Bennett & Glenda Weber
Hank Biddles
John & Desiree Bryan
Michael & Donna Cotoia (Warren Seward's daughter
and son-in-law)
Pete & Vivien Dutton
Diane Essig
Carolyn Fitch (Diane Essig's sister)
Pat Funnell (Tom & Ruth's daughter)
Don & Pat Godfrey
Richard & Frances Gomez
Peyton Grimm
Tom & Ruth Hamilton
Van & Lynda Hardesty

Don Johnson
Earl & Doris Katan
Ronald & Charlotte Lattin
Michael Longtin & Cheryl
John & Kathy Loudon
Mike Pompano
Tony & Gail Pomponio
Charlie Purcell
Warren Seward
Jim & Pat Siler
Paul & Carol Thunstrom
Paul & Carol Travers (Warren Seward's daughter & son-
in-law)
Richard & Sharon Virlee
Larry & Janice Wieland

Additions to the Roster

No additions at this time.

Additions to the Memorial List

Robert Allard, Porterfield, WT2, 43-46
Died September 13, 2016

Michael Ary, Porterfield, RD3, 68-69
Date of death not known

Henry M. Beard, Jr., Porterfield, RD3, 61-66
Died February 13, 2016

Gene Beckstrom, Porterfield, WT2, 43-45
Died November 17, 2016

Rodger M. "Buff" Buffington, Porterfield, RM3, 60s
Died July 27, 2015

John "Jack" Corcoran, Porterfield, BM3, 59-63
Died November, 2016

Charles L. Gifford, Porterfield, RM3, 64-66
Date of death not known

Earl Harper, Porterfield, BTC, 50-53
Died September 30, 2016

Robert E. Huffman, Porterfield RM2, 52-56
Died June 18, 2016

Ray Leith, Porterfield, BT1, 51-54
Died October 23, 2014

David Lesh, Porterfield, MM2, 66-69
Died August 24, 2016

Sam Thomas, Balch & Porterfield, MM1, 42-43, 43-45
Died January 27, 2017

Spouses who have passed away

Mary Caetano, widow of Joe Caetano, Porterfield, SM2, 43-45

Change of Address, Phone and/or Email Address

Sandy Harper
momcat005@msn.com

Marie Lesh
814-323-0138
Email: mtlesh@icloud.com

Don & Pat Godfrey, Porterfield, LTJG, 58-60
765 W 26th Street, Unit 407
San Pedro, CA 90731
Phone & email address unchanged.

**Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association
Expense Report
2016**

<u>Item</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Balance 10/31/15			\$ 12,741.00
 <u>Income - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap & Decal sales		\$ 165.00	
Donations		<u>\$ 608.00</u>	
Total non-reunion related income		\$ 773.00	
Balance			\$ 13,514.00
 <u>Expenses - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap expenses	\$ 330.00		
Tin Can Sailors	\$ 200.00		
Newsletter - printing & postage	<u>\$ 656.00</u>		
Total non-reunion related expenses	\$ 1,186.00		
Balance			\$ 12,328.00
 <u>Reunion Income</u>			
Registrations & Kitty		\$ 1,480.00	
Raffle		\$ 135.00	
50/50		\$ 65.00	
Monday Buffet		\$ 1,376.00	
Tours - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday		\$ 9,660.00	
Friday Banquet		<u>\$ 2,068.00</u>	
Total reunion income		\$ 14,784.00	
Balance			\$ 27,112.00
 <u>Reunion Expenses</u>			
Monday night banquet	\$ 1,245.00		
Tours - Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday	\$ 8,970.00		
Friday night banquet	\$ 1,572.00		
Quarterdeck - food & beverages	\$ 742.00		
Refunds	<u>\$ 1,560.00</u>		
Total reunion expenses	\$ 14,089.00		
Bank balance 10/31/16			\$ 13,023.00

Tin Can Sailors Membership Application Form

Please mail your registration form to: Tin Can Sailors, P.O. Box 100, Somerset, MA 02726
Questions? Call us at (800) 223-5535 or contact us via e-mail at: tcs@destroyers.org

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Telephone: (____) ____ - _____ Highest Navy Rank or Rate: _____

Email: _____

List up to four ships you served on and the years you served aboard each:

USS _____ Hull #: _____ From: _____ to _____

USS _____ Hull #: _____ From: _____ to _____

USS _____ Hull #: _____ From: _____ to _____

USS _____ Hull #: _____ From: _____ to _____

Membership: \$30 \$35 \$50 \$100

Currently on Active Duty first year free - after that \$10 per year

Lifetime Membership: Call (800) 223-5535 for information

Please Select Payment Type: Check Money Order Credit Card

If paying by credit card, please provide the following information:

Card #: _____ - _____ - _____ - _____ Exp: ____ / ____ Security Code: _____

Billing Address (if different from above):

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Recruited by: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Contact Information

Jim Siler, Secretary
Pat Siler
835 Claybanks Drive
Callaway, VA 24067-4524

Email Jim: jwsilerbtc@gmail.com
Email Pat: silerpugs@yahoo.com

Phone/Fax: 540-483-5727

Tom Hamilton, Treasurer

Email: twrahamil2000@hotmail.com
Phone: (home) 260-632-4019
(cell) 260-415-3555

Website (<http://www.balch-porterfield.org>)

Pat Siler is the webmaster. If there is anyone with experience and would be interested in working with the photo gallery on the website, please contact Pat.

Newsletters are posted on the website. Email notifications are sent out when a new one is posted. The crew roster page is being updated and we hope to have it online soon.

Facebook

We're on Facebook. Type USS Porterfield in the search box and click to get to the page. Then look for "ask to be added" at the right. We'll add you and then you can start having fun. You're welcome to post photos, which everyone loves to see. And there's some useful information regarding dealing with the VA in getting disability for Agent Orange and Asbestos exposure. Family members are also welcome to join the group.

Baseball Caps

We have baseball caps for sale. The price is \$12.00, which includes shipping. Please indicate which ship you were on. We have solid cloth and mesh back caps available. Please indicate which you prefer. To purchase, send a check payable to **Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association** to James W. Siler, Jr. at the address above. Caps are available at reunions as well.

Patches and Decals

We have two patches and a decal for sale. The first patch, with the Pacific Ocean globe with Pride of the Pacific on it, was issued during the Korean Conflict (price \$4.00) and the second patch, with a seahorse and trident came out in the 60s (price \$5.00). The decal is the same design as the 60s patch, with the seahorse and trident (price \$3.00). Please note the increase in price for the 60s patch and decal. We've had to order new at an increased price. To purchase, send a check payable to **Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association** to Jim Siler at the address above. Patches and decals are available at reunions as well.