

## BALCH/PORTERFIELD REUNION ASSOCIATION



February 2015

Greetings Shipmates:

The 2014 reunion, which ran from Sunday, Sept. 7th to Saturday, Sept. 16th in Buffalo, NY, was a fun packed week. To start with, Marie and I kept working on the hotel guest planner to give the group their special hotel club room. The room had a full bar, pool table, plus another large room. It was set up perfectly for a group of our size. The other two Navy reunion groups were envious. Comments from the group was that the reunion group never had a Quarterdeck Room as perfect as this. We thought that the group was going through a lot of booze; however, Marie and I were informed by the older salts that what was consumed was nothing compared to the "old days." Monday night was the first event of the week with a buffet dinner for the fifty-four (54) attendees followed by the entertainment. "Nels Ross In-Jest" was a comical juggler who threw everything in the air from swords to bean-bag chairs, while telling funny stories. That night was also a celebration of Sam Thomas' birthday. We really surprised him.

On Tuesday the tours began. The group was bussed to Lockport, NY for a ride on the old Erie Canal. We were taken on a barge-like boat through two locks and along several miles of a part of the original canal getting an interesting history lesson along the way. Afterwards, we had a wonderful buffet lunch dock-side, in a restored building. Everyone commented on the great meal. The group then boarded the busses again for the ride to Niagara Falls. It was a little chilly and overcast, but the group had a great time. We all wore the ponchos that were provided for good reason. The Maid-of-the-Mist got in pretty close to the bottom of the falls. After the allotted time for the gift shop, we headed back to the hotel.

Wednesday started off with a bus ride to Aurora, NY to visit a store that only sold items made in the U.S.A. Of course, the name of the place was "Made in the U.S.A. Store. The manager boarded the bus, before going in, to give a short talk on the store and its history. From there we traveled a few miles to Viddlers 5&10 Cent Store. The place had everything from soup to nuts. One of their specialties was products that you would have seen years ago in a regular 5&10. After lunch, we traveled to North Tonawanda, NY for a tour of the Herschell Carousel Factory Museum. This company was famous for many years for building and crafting carousels. They still have craftsmen who can build or restore the animals that are apart of old rides. Their museum has animals that date back over 100 years. At the conclusion of the tour we had the opportunity to ride a very old carousel. Everyone really enjoyed this! There was a smile on every face.

Thursday had the most people (65) for the visit to the Buffalo Naval Museum. We had the opportunity to tour the U.S.S. Little Rock (a guided missile light cruiser), the U.S.S. Croaker (a WWII submarine) and the U.S.S. Sullivans (DD537). Even though it was not 100% like the Porterfield, it brought back a lot of memories for all the sailors. The memorial service was conducted on the



U.S.S. BALCH DD363



U.S.S. PORTERFIELD DD682

fantail of the Little Rock in a gusty cold wind. That was followed by a buffet lunch. Afterward we traveled to the Wilcox museum, which is the place that Theodore Roosevelt was sworn in following the assignation of President McKinley. It was an interesting place to visit.

Before we knew it - it was Friday. The morning was taken up with the business meeting and raffle, which was then followed up with a very nice buffet lunch in the Quarterdeck Room. At 5:00 (or 1700) the bar opened prior to the evening sit-down dinner. As usual, the hotel did a great job with the food and food service for the entire week. Friday night was no exception. Following dinner, we were entertained for almost an hour and a half with an Elvis impersonator by the name of Drew Polsun. He put on a great show with the white jump suit and all!! Drew also had quite a resemblance to Elvis. He stayed around after the show for anyone who wanted to get pictures and talk.

Saturday morning concluded the week with a final buffet breakfast in the Quarterdeck Room. Until next year.

David & Marie Lesh

Many thanks to David and Marie for the wonderful reunion. We enjoyed ourselves thoroughly. Now we move on to the 2015 reunion, which will be held in Denver, CO. The reunion will be hosted by Richard Gomez, with assistance from his daughter Vivian Gomez Noe.

At this point, we have information on the hotel, which is below. The room rate includes breakfast every day. The next newsletter will have sign-up sheets and tour information.

Hotel:	Holiday Inn Denver East - Stapleton
Address:	3333 Quebec Street Denver, CO 80207
Local Phone:	303-329-2873 (do not call this number for reservations)
Phone Reservations:	855-914-1373
Reunion Code:	NR7
Room Rate:	\$109 + tax (includes breakfast every day)
Online Reservations:	<a href="http://ichotelsgroup.com/redirect?path=rates&amp;brandCode=HI&amp;regionCode=1&amp;localeCode=en&amp;GPC=NR7&amp;hotelCode=DENST&amp;_PMID=99801505">http://ichotelsgroup.com/redirect?path=rates&amp;brandCode=HI&amp;regionCode=1&amp;localeCode=en&amp;GPC=NR7&amp;hotelCode=DENST&amp;_PMID=99801505</a>

You may call to make reservations now. The online link is two lines long. When typing it into your browser, type it all with no spaces. A clickable link is on the ship's Facebook Group page as well. The room rate is good for three days before and three days after the reunion. The hotel is located at the old Stapleton Airport and there is shuttle service from the new airport. The next newsletter will have tour information and sign-up sheets.

We received an email from Joan Osborne, the daughter of Robert Gewinner. She asked us to remove him from our newsletter distribution list as he has Alzheimers. Please keep him and his family in your thoughts and prayers.

Sam Thomas had a fall a few weeks ago. He was pretty sore for about a week but is feeling much better.

John and Kathy Loudon have made their move to Arizona. I'm sure they are glad to escape the Nebraska winter.

We hope all of you in the northeast are surviving this harsh winter as well as possible. We are happy to be in Virginia and no longer in Massachusetts. Watching Jim Cantore of the Weather Channel reporting from Plymouth, MA, our former hometown, has been interesting. Our family and friends there are doing OK.

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. If you know of anyone who has passed away, we'd like to hear about him as well. A lot of guys have told us they were out and about wearing their ship's baseball cap and were approached by someone who also served aboard. So if you have a cap, be sure to wear it! If you don't have one and would like to order one, information is on the last page of this newsletter. They are also available at reunions.

If you're on Facebook, please join the USS Porterfield group page. It's a place where you can keep up with your shipmates. Lots of photos posted there. Family members are also welcome. Just type USS Porterfield in the search box and click on "ask to be added" when you get to the page. There is also a lot of useful information on the page about Asbestos and Agent Orange exposure and filing claims with the VA. Several guys have been successful and are willing to help others negotiate the red tape. If you're not on Facebook and would like to be, go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com) and sign up. It's easy and free.

**\*\* 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. When we get returns, we have to resend the newsletter to your new address, which adds to the postage costs. 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

## Balch Porterfield Reunion Association

### Expense Report

Fiscal Year Ending October 31, 2014

<u>Item</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>INCOME</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Balance October 31, 2013			\$ 10,307.00
<u>Income - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap & Decal sales		\$ 462.00	
Donations		\$ 116.00	
Total non-reunion related income		\$ 578.00	
Balance			\$ 10,885.00
<u>Expenses - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap expenses	\$ 404.00		
Newsletter - printing & postage	\$ 747.00		
Total non-reunion related expenses	\$ 1,151.00		
Balance			\$ 9,734.00
<u>Reunion Income</u>			
Registrations		\$ 335.00	
Kitty		\$ 1,505.00	
Raffle		\$ 260.00	
50/50		\$ 105.00	
Activities		\$ 16,895.00	
Total reunion income		\$ 19,100.00	
Balance			\$ 28,834.00
<u>Reunion Expenses</u>			
Monday night banquet	\$ 1,729.00		
Friday night banquet	\$ 2,113.00		
Monday entertainment	\$ 800.00		
Friday entertainment	\$ 1,113.00		
Tuesday activities	\$ 4,293.00		
Wednesday activities	\$ 1,722.00		
Thursday activities	\$ 3,684.00		
Quarterdeck food & beverage	\$ 1,009.00		
Total reunion expenses	\$ 16,463.00		
Bank balance October 31, 2014			\$ 12,371.00

## Additions to the Roster

Robert G. Allard, wife Helyn  
Porterfield, WT2, 43-46  
501 Richland Ave.  
Urbana, IA 52345  
H: 319-443-3333  
C: 319-551-7773  
[allard501@gmail.com](mailto:allard501@gmail.com)

John F. Bartosiewicz  
Porterfield, SFP3, 68-70  
8042 Mobile Ave.  
Burbank, IL 60459-1858  
708-599-3638  
[jbarto@searshc.com](mailto:jbarto@searshc.com)

Erle E. Breece, Wife Agnes  
Porterfield, Carpenters Mate 2, 43-46  
146 Princeton  
Pueblo, CO 81005  
[ambreece@yahoo.com](mailto:ambreece@yahoo.com)

James Keeling  
Porterfield, BT2, 60-64  
Address, etc. to come

Mike Waterman, Wife Alice  
Porterfield, FT3, 54-55  
207 Wales Dr.  
Pottsboro, TX 75076  
[mikewaterman@bayless-hall.com](mailto:mikewaterman@bayless-hall.com)

## Address Changes

Joe Ausmus  
Porterfield, FN 65-67  
1541 Red Hill Circle  
Speedwell, TN 37830  
432-869-8861  
[jausmus@communicom.com](mailto:jausmus@communicom.com)

Alton Hightower  
Porterfield, MM3, 66  
No longer has email

James Kennedy  
Porterfield, GM3  
[jjkennedy1944@yahoo.com](mailto:jjkennedy1944@yahoo.com)

John W. Louden, Wife Kathy  
Porterfield, RM2, 60-64  
18803 N Ginger Drive  
Sun City West, AZ 86375  
John: 402-660-4678  
Kathy: 403-960-1541  
[jklouden@hotmail.com](mailto:jklouden@hotmail.com)

## Additions to the Memorial List

Richard "Dick" Briggs  
Porterfield, WT2, 43-45

Rosemarie Corcoran  
Wife of Jack Corcoran  
Porterfield, BM3, 59-63

Hugh Futrell  
Balch, 42-43

Robert Sury  
Porterfield, Mid-1950s  
From Ben Gurule

Harold A. Moody  
Porterfield, RDC, 56

Frank Paxton  
Porterfield, MM2, 65

## Contact Information

Jim and Pat Siler  
835 Claybanks Drive  
Callaway, VA 24067-4524  
Phone/Fax: 540-483-5727

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

Tom Hamilton, Treasurer  
Phone: (home) 260-632-4019  
(cell) 260-415-3555

Email: twrahamil2000@hotmail.com

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

The Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association website was created by Jeff Shaffer and maintained by him for many years. We owe him a debt of gratitude for all his hard work. Pat Siler is now the webmaster.

If there is anyone with experience working with photo galleries on websites, contact Pat. She would send the "gallery" pages for the new site and the photo files to that person and give the person a password for the website so he/she could upload files. The photo section needs a complete overhaul.

This newsletter and all newsletters will be available on the website.

## Facebook

We're on Facebook. Type USS Porterfield in the search box and click to get to the page. Then look for "Join Group" 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** payable to James W. Siler, Jr. at the address above.

## Patches

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.