



# T H E B R I G H T P E N N Y

July - September 2015

A NEWSLETTER FOR MEMBERS OF THE USS BERKELEY (DDG-15) ASSOCIATION

## Summer is Here!

### Quarterly Update



Summer has arrived, and hopefully good weather will be enjoyed by all. It has been a prolonged heat wave for those of us in Norcal, please send us your water!

Preliminary planning for the 2016 reunion in Chicago is underway. We are targeting September 15 – 18 or September 22 – 25 as the reunion dates. There should be a posting of the hotel and dates selection at the web site in the late August time frame. More details will be provided in the October newsletter. We could still use recommendations for hotels in the Chicago area.

We are coming off two very successful reunions, and look to make next year's another enjoyable event. The events, which we will cover in more detail in upcoming newsletters, will begin Thursday afternoon. Many participants arrive a day or two early, and some tack on an extra day or two after the reunion. Our typical agreement with the hotel includes extra days at the reunion rates, and we will pass this information on as soon as possible.

We are in a bit of a lull right now with regard to new projects. We are always looking for recommendations to enhance our web site or add to the reunion experience, let us know if you have ideas. Prior projects provided ships logs, web-site viewing of nearly all cruise books, and history memorabilia in the Ship's Store.

### CWO3 William Vollmar U.S. Navy (Ret) (1955-1976)

I had been interested in the Navy from the time I was 12-years old and I read everything I could find about the Navy. Every year I would get a catalog from the Naval Academy and for one of my classes in high school I had to do a speech and I chose as my subject June Week. When I finished the teacher asked me if I had ever been there for June week. I replied that I had not but she had and she told me I covered it perfectly.

I did not intend to make it a career when I enlisted but when I got within a few months of the end of my enlistment my wife and I decided this was the life we wanted and I have never regretted it.

After completing boot camp in San Diego I attended FT 'A' school in Great Lakes. After completion of MK 63 Gun Fire Control System school I reported to the USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 for duty. While on the Sperry I attended MK 25 Radar School and served on the Sperry from 1956 to 1959. In 1959 I was transferred to the USS Ingraham DD 694 as an FT2 and was the senior Fire Controlman. Even though I only spent 5 months on the USS Ingraham, I attended MK 5 TDS School in Bainbridge, MD. before being transferred to the USS Bigelow DD 942. I was the senior Fire Controlman on the Bigelow as an FT2, although my time on the Bigelow was short; 3 months. I was then transferred to the Naval Ordnance Missile Test Facility, White Sands Missile Range (WSMR) for my first shore duty tour in 1960. While at WSMR I was promoted to FT1 and was assigned to an R&D project in support of the TALOS Weapon System. I worked with engineers from the Applied Physics Laboratory at Johns Hopkins University. The work was very interesting and I learned a lot. One of the engineers I

### In the Spotlight



**CWO3 William Vollmar**

worked with had been very involved in the development of the homing system for the TALOS missile. After almost 2 years at WSMR, I was transferred to the Guided Missile School in Dam Neck, VA for training in WDS MK 6, Computer MK 111 Mod 1, and TALOS Weapon System before being assigned to the pre-commissioning crew for the USS Chicago CG 11. I graduated first in my class for Computer MK 111 Mod 1 and graduated first in the TALOS Weapon System course with a final grade of 92.8. After completing my training at Dam Neck, I was transferred to the USS Columbus CG 12 for temporary duty before reporting to the USS Chicago CG 11 at the San Francisco Naval Shipyard. My duties on the Chicago were as the After TALOS Battery system technician. While on the Chicago I made two deployments to the WESTPAC in support of operations off the coast of North Vietnam. While on the Chicago I was promoted to FTC and appointed as a Warrant Officer.

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Al Meier

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After almost 3 years on the Chicago I attended the Naval Officer Candidate School Naval Base, Newport, RI. After completing my training I reported to Naval School Command Mare Island, Vallejo, CA for TARTAR Officer training before reporting to the USS Berkeley DDG 15 as the Fire Control Officer. While on the Berkeley I made two deployments to WESTPAC providing gun fire support and Search and Rescue operations off the coast of North Vietnam. During one deployment the Berkeley received a total of 1000 rounds of counter battery fire while expending over 5000 rounds. The Berkeley also sank over 150 barges. While on the Berkeley I was promoted to W2. After almost 2 years on the Berkeley I was transferred to Naval Schools Command, Mare Island, Vallejo, CA. as an instructor in officer training after attending Instructor training school in San Diego. I initially taught a portion of the TARTAR course and some sections of the common course. When the officer assigned to teach TALOS was transferred without a relief I was reassigned to teach all portions of the TALOS officer course as well as the common portions I had been teaching. In addition to the regular officer course I taught 3-day courses for PCO's and PXO's. There was usually a 2 week break between classes but sometimes there was a PCO or PXO class scheduled during that 2 week break.

After almost 2 years at the school command, I was transferred to the USS Long Beach CGN 9 at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard as the TALOS Technical Assistant. The Long Beach had volunteered to unofficially be part of a group of ships evaluating the Combat System organization where the Weapons and Operations Departments were combined to form the Combat System Department. While the Long Beach retained the Weapons and Operations Departments, a Combat System Test Team was created with the Warrant Officers from Weapons and Operations and key senior petty

officers from each of the systems that were part of the combat system. As the Senior Warrant Officer I was appointed as the leader of the Combat System Test Team. The team was responsible for conducting daily tests to determine the status of the combat system as well as assisting in the correction of any problems. While on the Long Beach deployments I made two deployments to WESTPAC while supporting operations off the coast of North Vietnam and served as the Ship Weapons Coordinator. Being a part of the Combat System team provided me the opportunity to learn a lot about other systems and equipment. While on the Long Beach I was promoted to W3. After 3 years on the Long Beach I was transferred to NWS Seal Beach, CA as the TALOS Production Officer.

While at NWS the TARTAR/TERRIER/STANDARD Production Officer was transferred without a relief so I assumed those duties also. I had approximately 70 civilian employees and 35 sailors that I was responsible for. About 3 months later the Missile Officer retired without a relief and I assumed those duties also I held all three positions for about 9 months and had a really good group of people who I worked with so things went well. I was also the alternate Special Weapons Officer and was assigned as the courier for several weapons transfers. I really enjoyed my time at NWS Seal Beach. NWS Seal Beach was to be my last duty station.

I participated in several phases of the Vietnam conflict; one tour as Aft TALOS Battery system chief on CG 11 assigned to PIRAZ. Two deployments as Fire Control Officer on DDG 15 assigned to North SAR, as part of Operation Sea Dragon, and on the gun line. I was the Gun Liaison Officer and supported call for fire missions and planned gun fire missions. Two deployments on CGN 9 as the Ships Weapons Coordinator while assigned to PIRAZ

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**Berkeley History  
July 2015**

**50 Year Ago, 1965**

Ship's Command History for July 1965 is missing from the files

**40 Years Ago, 1975**

- 01 – 04 Mobile Training Team Phase III
- 05 – 14 Upkeep, San Diego
- 15 – 17 Operational Propulsion Plant Examination
- 18 – 31 Upkeep, San Diego

**30 Years Ago, 1985**

- 01 – 05 PRAV (USS Cape Cod)
- 05 – 07 UPK San Diego
- 08 – 12 ISE SOCAL
- 13 – 28 UPK San Diego
- 29 ISE SOCAL
- 30 ONLOAD Seal Beach
- 31 ISE SOCAL

**20 Years Ago, 1995**

In service with the Hellenic Navy of Greece as the H.S. Themistokles

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Supporting air strikes over North Vietnam.

My fondest memories are of my time on the USS BERKELEY DDG 15. It was my first assignment after my appointment as a Warrant Officer and gave me the opportunity to experience many new things. I worked with a great gang of Fire Controlmen as well as with a great wardroom. The Berkeley was one of those commands that once you had been a part of it you were always considered a part of it. I have enjoyed several reunions and look forward to the next one. The attached photo is during UNREP and I was assigned as the Helm watch.



There are so many memories of my time in the Navy that it is hard to select just one but I think that the first time I took a ship alongside for an Underway Replenishment (UNREP) really stands out.

While on the Berkeley DDG 15 whoever was the OOD and JOOD at the time of an evolution completed the evolution. I had never been on watch when there was an UNREP but one day I was. I was the JOOD and had the conn but assumed that the OOD would take the conn when we were ready to take station for the UNREP. The CO said lets go and I looked around for the OOD but he was busy with something else. I told the CO I had never done this before and he said not to worry he would talk me through it. It went very well and after that I did it several more times. I had nightmares about taking the ship alongside and over

shooting and having to go around again. The CO liked to do everything smartly so we would do our approach at 20 knots and use double deceleration to slow to 15 knots and slide right into position. My first time things were going good until we changed speed to 15 knots. The engine room did not use double deceleration and we were going to overshoot. The CO had me go to all stop and we only overshot by a few feet and didn't have to go to all back full.

I received several awards during my time in the Navy but the Navy Commendation Medal was the most satisfying. The Navy Commendation with Combat V was awarded as a result of our gunfire support and resulted from the performance of our gunfire support team. Several members of the team were recognized for their contributions to the overall success during that deployment.

Navy Commendation Medal with Combat V--"For meritorious service while attached to and serving in USS BERKELEY (DDG-15) as Gunnery Liaison Officer from 21 July to 11 December 1968 during combat operations against the enemy. Warrant Officer VOLLMAR trained and coordinated the efforts of the gunnery team which won accolades for its accurate gunfire. It was largely through his professional experience and leadership that BERKELEY was able to prevent any major fire control problems and continue its assigned missions. His cool judgment on many occasions enabled the gunnery team to continue its mission even under adverse conditions. Warrant Officer VOLLMAR's inspirational leadership, professionalism, and devotion to duty reflected great credit upon himself and were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

Warrant Officer VOLLMAR is authorized to wear the Combat "V". Receiving the Navy Achievement Medal was also very satisfying. Navy Achievement Medal--"For outstanding achievement in the superior performance of his duties as After TALOS Battery Systems Chief Petty Officer in USS CHICAGO (CG 11), flagship of Commander Cruiser-Destroyer Group

SEVENTH Fleet, from 15 June to 13 November 1966. Chief Petty Officer VOLLMAR was responsible for the immediate readiness of this battery. He designed and directed an original system of continuous checks designed to expeditiously detect deficiencies as occurring and their correction. The battery, under his supervision, was ready for instant response at all times while on station. This state of readiness of a TALOS battery over a significant period of time was a direct tribute to his efforts. Through his skill, leadership and devotion to duty, Chief Petty Officer VOLLMAR contributed significantly and directly to the accomplishment of the ship's mission. His performance reflected great credit upon himself and was in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

The person who had the biggest impact on my career was Lt. Cdr. Seeba on the USS Chicago CG 11. He gave you responsibilities but he also gave you the authority needed to carry out those responsibilities. He was primarily responsible for my assignment as Fire Control Officer on the Berkeley. When I received my appointment to Warrant Officer my initial orders were to a destroyer tender and he called the detailer and convinced him that was a waste of my experience. He gave me two pieces of advice which I was to follow the remainder of my career; "do what you think is right and do your best without concerns for how it might affect your fitness report, and keep your own service record by keeping copies of everything."

I have many fond memories of my time in the Navy but two that come to mind right away are the following. We were off the coast of North Vietnam providing gun fire support with the use of an air spotter. Normally we would get one or two correction spots and then deliver the number of rounds on target as requested. On this occasion we got an add 200 yard range spot, we fired one round and got a drop 200 yard range spot, we fired one round and got an add 200 yard range spot. This was a little unusual for us so the CO asked the spotter what we were firing at and he replied that it was a single truck that kept going back and forward.

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The CO terminated the call for fire mission. There was one other thing that happened on one of the cruisers I served on. A Lt. Cdr. from the Weapons Department was assigned as the Officer in Charge on the fantail when entering or leaving port. He had indicated that it was alright for people to have a cup of coffee with them but if they sat the cup down he would throw it over the side. One day while entering port he had his cup of coffee with him. He was asked a question and had to remove his glove for some reason. In doing so he sat his coffee cup down and one of the petty officers assigned to the sea detail grabbed it and threw it over the side.

When I retired I initially worked as an electrician/electronics technician at a hydroelectric power plant in New Mexico for 4 years with the Department of the Interior. In 1980 I was employed by a government contractor and worked for several government contractors over the next 27 years until I retired. I really enjoyed my years working for a government contractor because it gave me a chance to provide support to the fleet and to keep up on the latest advancements in Naval Combat Systems. I am now retired and live in Las Cruces, NM. I am a member of the Naval Institute, Navy League, VFW, American Legion, and Military Officers Association of America. They keep me informed on what is going on with the Navy today and allows me the chance to interact with other people who have served in the military.

The Navy taught me don't be afraid to try new things. Give your best effort to everything you do and treat everyone with respect. There is no "I" in team and more can be accomplished with team work than by one person. Listen to what others have to say and give credit where credit is due. The most important thing is that the task gets done in the most efficient and timely way. When in a position of leadership put people in a position to be successful and not fail.

When I retired and entered the civilian workforce I was able to apply much of what I had learned while on

much of what I had learned while on active duty. It is amazing what people can do when given a chance and put in position to succeed.

My advice to those joining the Navy today would be don't be content with just doing your job. Don't be afraid to volunteer. Take advantage of every opportunity to learn new things. No one knows what the future holds and sometimes something you learn today will open new doors later on. Be proud to serve and when in a foreign country always remember you represent the United States of America.

### ACVA Update

This is our latest update for the effort to establish the USS Charles F. Adams (DDG-2) as a museum ship in Jacksonville, FL. The latest update is from a May 13, 2015 email.

Another milestone was reached on April 30<sup>th</sup> when Iguana Investments was selected by the Downtown Investment Authority to negotiate the sale and development of the Shipyards property. Iguana Investments is the master development firm owned by Shad Kahn, the owner of the Jacksonville Jaguars. JHNSA has begun coordinating with Iguana regarding a timeline for berthing the USS Charles F. Adams at the Shipyards.

In the meantime, they are continuing to build support and raise funds to bring the ship to Jacksonville. In May, the USS Adams Museum spoke at the DDG-17/DD-371 USS Conyngham reunion in Savannah, GA. They updated attendees on the status of the project, and during the event the USS Conyngham Association agreed to donate their USS Conyngham History Collection to the museum and presented them with a \$500 donation. In May, they also updated the Mayport Elementary Coastal Sciences Academy and the Southwest Citizens Planning Advisory Committee on the status of the museum effort.

As of mid-May, they have raised \$21,983 of their \$250,000 fundraising goal on:

[www.crowdrise.com/](http://www.crowdrise.com/)

**BRINGHOME THE ADAMS**. They need to raise at least \$250,000 to activate their line of credit with Synovus Bank. **The time to donate is now!** They ask you to please help them with some TIME, TALENT or TREASURE TODAY. Let's help them bring home the Adams!

### Veteran ID Cards

We may soon have veteran ID cards to verify our military service. Congress recently passed a bill approving the creation of the veterans' identification card. The bill has been passed on to President Obama who is expected to sign it.

Currently veterans need to provide their DD-214 form to verify their military status, and this is inconvenient. The ID card would be a much easier way to prove veteran status. The Veterans Affairs Department issues IDs to veterans who are enrolled in their health care program. Several states (Connecticut, Michigan, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Texas and Virginia) will issue ID cards to veterans which are accepted by restaurants and other retailers who offer military discounts.

This card has been supported by veterans' organizations including AMVETS, Concerned Veterans of America, and Vietnam Veterans of America. However, the VFW believes the ID cards will place a burden on the VA who will need to issue the cards to millions of veterans.

### Jerry Hudson Obituary

We just received word that Jerry R Hudson, BTC aboard the Berkeley from 1969 through 1971 passed away. Jerry enjoyed his years aboard the Berkeley. Jerry and his wife, Mary Jane attended a number of reunions over the years. Hopefully Mary Jane will continue to join us at future reunions!