



# THE BRIGHT PENNY

October—December 2016

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

## A Great Time in the Windy City!

### Director's Update



Our 2016 reunion was very successful, and those who attended had a great time! All events, and the Chicago Museum of Science and Industry tour, were big hits. Thank you to all who attended, and those who helped organize the reunion!

Many of the attendees began arriving at the Crowne Plaza Chicago-Northbrook on Tuesday September 20<sup>th</sup>. By Thursday afternoon, most attendees had arrived, and the fun began. The "Bull Session" was our first event Thursday night, and Ed Codispoti helped kickoff the event with another chapter of the Tales of Berkeley's early days.

Friday night's "Welcome Reception" provided an ideal atmosphere for attendees to meet and become better acquainted. A delicious variety of appetizers were available, and a good time was had by all. In an effort to reduce interruptions during the after dinner entertainment at the Banquet, some of the raffle prizes were given out during the reception.

Our Saturday morning "Business Meeting" addressed a couple of important issues confronting the association. We discussed our problems with the current web site software, and some of the possible solutions. A conference call aimed

at formulating a plan for replacing the current software will be held in the near future. One of the requirements for the new software will be allowing the use of credit cards for Ship's Store purchases.

Another issue addressed at the Business Meeting was the choice of reunion host cities, and how these choices influence attendance at our reunions. The suggestion was made, and accepted, to allow the nomination of a wild card city to be added to the host city ballot for the next reunion. We have experienced lower attendance in some sectors, and felt that a wild card addition might help resolve this issue. Long Beach was added as the wild card city for the 2018 reunion, and voting will begin in December.

We now turn our attention to the 2018 reunion which will be held in either Portland, Seattle, or Long Beach.

Voting for the next reunion host city will begin in early December, and will run through the end of February 2017. To aid us in the preliminary planning for the 2018 reunion, a brief survey is included in this edition of the newsletter.

Please take a few minutes to fill out the survey, and either submit it to the address listed at the bottom or fill out the survey at the web site. Please submit your survey ASAP since we would like to use this information for preliminary planning purposes.

### Carriers On Lake Michigan?

As the United States prepared for World War II in 1941, Cdr. Whitehead of the 9<sup>th</sup> ND and NAS Glenview suggested that the Navy consider purchasing some Great Lake Steamers and converting them into carriers. The Navy was building a force of new aircraft carriers, and would need to train their pilots on carriers. It was likely neither coast would offer the security necessary to use fleet carriers in this role if any were available.

Nothing happened until after Pearl Harbor. This time the idea was approved by the CNO in early 1942. The first steamer, the Seeandbee was purchased for \$765,000, converted, and commissioned as the USS Wolverine IX64 later in 1942. Quickly, another steamer went through the same process; the US Sable IX81 (ex Greater Buffalo) was operable in May 1943.

Each of the new aircraft carriers had flight decks about 550 ft. long, similar to the escort carriers under construction. They were unique however in that they were coal powered and had paddle wheels. They had rudimentary aircraft handling facilities: no catapults, no elevators, no hangars; but 8 sets of arresting gear.

Operations on Lake Michigan began each day from Navy Pier in Chicago, and regularly caused traffic jams along Lake Shore Drive. Pilots took off from Glenview, found the carriers, and began their takeoff and

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Al Meier

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and landing quals. Eight of each was required. Over the course of their careers, the Sable and Wolverine qualified almost 20,000 pilots hosting 160,000 landings. Of the four sable CO's, two made Flag.

Pilots were instructed to fly with their cockpits open, facilitating escape if they ditched. LTjg George Bush qualified aboard the Sable, noting it was the coldest he had ever been flying during the winter over Lake Michigan. Some 150 – 300 aircraft were lost, but many are being recovered and restored.

The carriers were certainly a worthwhile investment. They eliminated the need to do carrier quals in the Atlantic/Pacific - German U-Boat activity was high throughout 1943. That in itself freed up carriers.

Operationally, the Sable and Wolverine were challenging. With heavy smoke from coal, and a maximum speed of 18 knots, limiting flight operations.

The carriers were supported by facilities on Navy Pier. A 3,000' facility which housed one of the largest Navy training facilities in the country. Navy Pier could handle 12,000 sailors at one time, and much of the new technical training needed. 60,000 sailors went through the pier.

My dad was a Division Officer for aircraft maintenance for the carriers at the pier from 1942-1944 until he departed for Hawaii and then Guam.

The carriers were the first of what became the Cornbelt Fleet. After the Sable and Wolverine were disposed of, the Navy stationed some 10 small ships and craft throughout the Great Lakes. They maintained them until 1970.

Article by :  
Capt. William K. Fogerty, USN  
(ret)

**Jon Chetwynd Obituary**

Jon F. Chetwynd of Schaghticoke, NY died Saturday September 10, 2016, after a short courageous battle with cancer. Jon was born February 13, 1945 in Gloversville, NY. He served in the U.S. Navy from 1963 through 1967, and was aboard the USS Berkeley from 1965 to 1967. Jon was an FTG2.

Jon met his wife Linda in 1969, and they were married in 1971. They were married for 45 wonderful years. Jon is survived by his wife Linda, son Jon D., and daughter Lisa. Our condolences go out to Jon's family and friends, he will be dearly missed.

**Reunion Memory Books**

Memory books for the Chicago reunion are currently in the making, and will hopefully be delivered to attendees in January 2017. Those who attended the reunion will automatically receive a memory book, and there is no need to contact the Association or Classic Imaging. However, if your address has changed or you are not sure we have your correct address, please submit an update through the web site.

If you haven't received your memory book by mid-February, please notify the Association.

**Berkeley History  
October 2016**

50 Year Ago, 1966

Test Phase, CNO Project D/S 368

40 Years Ago, 1976

01 – 31 Inport, San Diego

30 Years Ago, 1986

01 – 05 Underway

05 – 09 Inport, Subic Bay,  
Republic of the  
Philippines

09 – 12 Underway

12 – 14 Inport, Chinhae, Republic  
of South Korea

15 – 20 ASWEX

20 Inport, Chinhae

20 – 24 Underway

24 – 25 Inport, Subic

25 – 26 NGFS, Tabones, R.P.

26 – 31 Inport, Subic

20 Years Ago, 1996

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



Long time no communicate! It always seems that right after a reunion I get renewed interest in one of our lovely ladies to tell us a bit about herself. We are so fortunate in this Association that the spouses of the former shipmates are revered. Didn't we have a fantastic Ladies Tea?!?!?

Well before I introduce this edition's Berkeley Beauty, I'd just like to recap this wonderful reunion. I was overwhelmed by the reception I received when I first arrived at the Crowne Plaza Northbrook. Gerry was the first to greet me with a big ol' bear hug. Once in our fave spot, the bar, it was good to see all the faces of my Berkeley family. We enjoyed a wonderful dinner that evening and we were then ready to get the USS Berkeley Association Reunion 2016 started.

I'll be posting all my photos on the USS Berkeley Beauties Face Book page shortly. There will be photos from the Thursday night bull session, the welcoming reception Friday night (featuring the great dance moves of Lee Peters), the wonderful presentation by William Fogarty (Bill) at the Saturday morning business meeting, the trip to the Chicago Museum of Science & Industry (fun pics of our Store keeper Gerry Hansen), the Berkeley Beauties Tea and of course the banquet dinner on Saturday evening.

For a few of us there was the added fun event of attending the final Chicago Cubs 2016 season home game against my fave NLB team, the St. Louis Cardinals. I even got to personally meet and shake hands with Ryan Dempster, former Chicago Cubs starting pitcher! Cards lost, but we now know what the Cubs went on to do!

So now, drum roll please (only because it's been a long time since our last Berkeley Beauty commentary), let me introduce Frances Ramos, wife of Armando R., QM2, OPS Div, from Dayton, NV.



My name is Frances Ramos married to Armando Ramos QM2 who served on the USS Berkeley from 1963-1968. I was born and raised in Orange County. Attended Santa Ana High School, and Graduated in 1965. After high school I went to Santa Ana College. After 2 years of college I decided to become a cosmetologist, so I attended Baltimore Beauty College. While at Baltimore, a girlfriend of mine told me she was making a party for one of her friends that had just gotten out of the Navy and wanted me to meet him. So I went! I was introduced to Armando in 1968. It was "Love at first Sight!" He was so kind and Respectful that swept me off my feet!

Well, we had a short engagement. The following February

of 1969 we had a huge Catholic Wedding! We stayed in Santa Ana for 11 years then moved up to Meadow Vista, CA, 15 miles north of Auburn. We both worked for Hewlett Packard in Roseville, CA for 25 yrs, and both retired from there and didn't want to stay in California. So we moved up to Dayton, Nevada where we are now.

We have 5 Children, 7 grand kids and 1 great grandson that is 7. I love to sew, crochet and knit. My fingers are always going! We are very involved with the Catholic Church always helping people in need! We are caregivers for my 84 yr old sister that lives with us she keeps us Shopping!! She loves to shop everyday!!

He is my Strength, my Companion and my Life! I know I made a great decision when I met him! I would marry him again!!

Thank you Frances for your delightful story! OK ladies you see what kinda info I'd like from you for future newsletters . . . look out! You may be next !

Till next time!