



T H E

BRIGHT PENNY

July—August 2020

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

Portland, Maine Reunion Postponed to October 2021!!!

Director's Update



A planning committee conference call was held in early July to discuss whether to move forward with the October 2020 reunion, or postpone it until 2021. The vote favored postponing our upcoming reunion to **October 14 – 17, 2021** at the Merry Manor Inn in Portland, Maine. The hotel will provide us with the same room rates (\$119 + taxes/night) and other generous provisions we had under the current contract. While we are all disappointed in having to wait another year to see our former shipmates, we believe that it will be a safer world and we will see more people comfortable with attending the reunion events.

Pretty much all planning for the 2021 reunion is completed. We also have some additional time to consider any additions or modifications we would like to make to enhance the experience for our attendees. In the future, our reunions will now be held in the odd numbered years.

Our ship's Store has a JULY SALE in process, and this would be a good time to stock up on some Berkeley merchandise! The sale ends July 31st, so visit the store before it's too late. Recent newsletters have provided information on topics such as the Blue Water Navy Vietnam Veterans Act and getting on base for commissary access, etc. In this edition of the newsletter, we are including articles regarding assistance in dealing with mesothelioma diagnosis and possible compensation, also how to obtain help

in attaining the Aid and Attendance pension and finding the appropriate care service. Sokolove Law provided a briefing on mesothelioma at our 2010 reunion in Denver, and information regarding their assistance can be found in the "Mesothelioma" article.

Transitions for Veterans has provided assistance to a few of our Berkeley shipmates in obtaining assistance for in-home care/assisted living, and their contact information is in the "American Veterans Benefits" article. I hope this information helps some of our shipmates that may be dealing with related issues.

Mesothelioma

Sokolove Law provided a presentation on mesothelioma at our 2010 reunion in Denver, and they have followed up over the years to see if they can be of assistance to Berkeley sailors. The USS Berkeley Association does not endorse law firms or their attorneys and is simply providing a point of contact should you have questions pertaining to your possible exposure to asbestos.

Following is a note we recently received that may be of interest to our members or their families.

"Sokolove Law continues to help families dealing with a mesothelioma diagnosis during these difficult times. We can easily arrange a video chat to quickly find out if families are eligible for mesothelioma compensation – and because the asbestos trusts are not closed – we can still file claims online helping some clients begin receiving money within ninety days of talking to us.

Filing an asbestos claim does not impact your VA benefits. As a veteran, you may still seek assistance of the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs. In addition to filing a mesothelioma lawsuit against the product manufacturer responsible for asbestos exposure, [veterans who develop mesothelioma](#) are able to seek disability compensation and health care coverage through the VA, for their service related exposure."

If you know someone who could benefit from this information, you can contact Sokolove Law at (800) 416-5503.

American Veterans Benefits

Our mission is to provide a free service to individual veterans and their families, to help them attain the Aid and Attendance pension and find the appropriate care service. We work closely with case managers, discharge planners, social workers, in-home care professionals, local placement agencies and Veterans Service Officers to help their clients find the right care plan.

We understand that not knowing who to talk to and how to obtain your rightfully deserved benefits can be extremely frustrating, and we are here to streamline the process and help you understand. Our consultations and service are free to you! If you have any questions, you can contact us at (800) 916-6984 toll free, (808) 517-0931, life4al@yahoo.com, or matt.squazza@gmail.com.

We provide services all over California and will meet with you at your home or wherever you'd like to

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discuss what we might be able to do for you. Although American Veterans Benefits is in California, we can help people in other states.

Aid and Attendance Benefit:

Wartime veterans and their surviving spouses, 65 years and older, may be entitled to a tax-free benefit called Aid and Attendance provided by the Department of Veteran Affairs. The benefit is designed to provide financial aid to help offset the cost of long-term care for those who need assistance with the daily activities of living.

Greyhound

This month, the movie Greyhound will be released on Apple TV Plus. Tom Hanks plays the part of the commanding officer of a U.S. Navy destroyer charged with protecting a convoy of Allied ships from a wolf-pack of German U-boats as they transit the Atlantic Ocean. He has to take desperate measures to defend from German U-boats when the

convoy enters what's known as the "Black Pit," the area in which air cover is out of reach.

During the Battle of the Atlantic, between 1939 and 1945, 3,500 Allied merchant ships and 175 Allied warships were sunk, and 72,200 Allied naval and merchant seamen were killed. The Germans lost 783 U-boats and approximately 30,000 sailors.

Hanks, who stars as United States Navy Commander Ernest Krause, adapted the screenplay from C.S. Forester's 1955 novel "The Good Shepherd. Though fictional, the Forester book is deeply researched and noted for its accurate depiction of naval warfare.

For most of its 90 minutes, "Greyhound" is a dangerous game of cat and mouse as the Greyhound pursues and evades the Nazis. And throughout, you're peppered with naval terminology and nautical commands like "left full rudder to 032" which attempts to more closely paint a picture of combat between the U. S. destroyer and the German U-boats.

Many of us are more familiar with the war in the Pacific, with movies such as "Midway" and "Tora Tora Tora". It is always exciting to see movies about the surface Navy which we can relate to. Tom Hanks is one of my favorite current actors, and his movies "Saving Private Ryan" and "Captain Phillips" were exciting films.

In making this movie, Hanks and his team frequented the WWII Fletcher-class USS Kidd which is the main attraction of the USS Kidd Veterans Museum in Louisiana. Most of the movie was filmed aboard the Kidd. The original USS Kidd (DD-661) was commissioned in 1943, and named for Rear Adm. Isaac C. Kidd, who was killed in action aboard the USS Arizona (BB-39) during the attack on Pearl Harbor. Kidd was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the attack. In 2007, the latest version of the USS Kidd (DDG-100) was commissioned.

Tom Hanks lived near the Alameda Naval Air Station in California during the Vietnam War years, and

had a familiarity with all things Navy. He attended school with many children of Navy sailors, went to movies and did things with kids who lived in Navy housing. His father was also in the Navy, so Navy culture was part of his DNA. This movie should be a good one to watch!

**Berkeley History
July 2020**

50 Year Ago, 1970

- 01 – 12 NGFS RVN, attached to CTU 70.8.9
- 12 – 15 Enroute Bangkok
- 15 – 19 Visit Bangkok
- 20 – 23 Enroute Subic
- 23 – 26 Upkeep, Subic
- 27 – 31 Departed Subic, Enroute CONUS

40 Years Ago, 1980

- 01 – 06 Inport NAVSTA San Diego, CA
- 07 – 08 Inport NAVSTA San Diego, CA – Fast Cruise
- 09 – 10 U/W SOCIAL Opareas
- 10 Inport WPNSTA Seal Beach, CA
- 10 – 11 U/W SOCIAL Opareas
- 12 – 13 Inport NAVSTA San Diego, CA
- 14 U/W SOCIAL Opareas
- 15 – 16 U/W SOCIAL Opareas – NGFS Spotter Services, San Clemente
- 17 – 18 U/W SOCIAL Opareas
- 19 – 20 Inport NAVSTA San Diego, CA
- 21 – 25 U/W SOCIAL Opareas
- 26 – 31 Inport NAVSTA San Diego, CA

30 Years Ago, 1990

- 01 – 02 Inport San Diego
- 03 Underway SOCIAL: Midshipmen Training
- 04 – 08 Inport San Diego
- 09 – 10 Underway SOCIAL: Midshipmen Training
- 11 – 12 Inport San Diego
- 13 – 23 Underway SOCIAL: Law Enforcement Operations
- 23 Inport San Diego
- 24 – 27 Underway SOCIAL: All Comers at Sea Training
- 28 – 31 Inport San Diego: Upkeep Period

20 Years Ago, 2000

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