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BRIGHT PENNY

October - December 2021

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

Our Founder, Jim Barrett, Has Passed

Director's Update



We are holding our 2021 USS Berkeley reunion this month at the Best Western Merry Manor Inn in Portland, Maine. The fall foliage should be beautiful! Our attendance looks good, especially considering the lingering effects of covid-19 which has been with us for too long.

At our reunion Business Meeting, cities from the South-Central sector will be nominated for our 2023 reunion host city. Online voting at our web site will begin November 1st and will end March 31, 2022. Each Berkeley crew member can vote once for their 1st and 2nd choices, and the city receiving the most points (2 pts. for 1st, and 1 pt. for 2nd) will be our 2023 reunion's host city. A review of the Portland reunion will be in the January 2022 Bright Penny newsletter, and hopefully we can include a few photos as well.

As we enter the last quarter of 2021, we will hopefully see an end to the forest fires ravaging California, and the hurricanes and storms inflicting heavy damage in Louisiana and other southern and eastern states. We can hope that covid-19 will soon come to an end, and our country can become a safer and happier place to live.

An article summarizing the Mission Act of 2018 is included in this issue. Many of you who are in the VA medical system may already be familiar with this VA legislation, but I was not. When scheduling a lug function

test this past August, the first available appointment was May 12, 2022 (9 months later). My VA advocate told me to call back and remind them that if the VA cannot schedule specialty care within 28 days per the Mission Act, they need to look to a community provider to provide that care. I hope the information will be of value to others attempting to schedule medical care through the VA.

As we look forward to 2022, it is time for members to renew their dues to help support our association. We appreciate your support!

The Year In Review - 1967

In 1967, USS Berkeley, as well as the rest of Destroyer Squadron 19, was assigned to Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla 3 from January 1 until June 30, and to Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla 7 for the remainder of the year. Commander William R. Smedberg IV was Commanding Officer until he was relieved on July 11, 1967 by Commander Thomas M. Ward Jr. For Berkeley, the year was essentially divided into three phases: preparation for deployment, deployment, and a final period of leave, upkeep, training, and equipment evaluation exercises.

The new year began with Berkeley busily preparing for the First Fleet exercise "Snatch Block" (January 5-13). This exercise was devoted primarily to training in search and rescue and ECM procedures, which proved to be of considerable value in working up for the forthcoming deployment.

Upon its conclusion, Berkeley received a three-week tender availability in Long Beach.

From February 6-17, Berkeley was underway for COMPUTEX 1-67 with COMDESRON 5 embarked. Again, the ship concentrated primarily on SAR training. During the exercise Berkeley fired her annual training Tartar missile shots at the Pacific Missile Range, and calibrated gyro, sonar, fire control, and radar systems at the Fleet Operational Readiness Accuracy Check Site located on San Clemente Island.

Following two more weeks of upkeep in Long Beach, Berkeley spent March 4-12 in port San Diego utilizing facilities for team training at various fleet schools. Then, with COMDESDIV 172 embarked, Berkeley participated in COMPUTEX 2-67 from March 13-16, emphasizing gunnery and anti-PT boat operations. Upon completion of this exercise, COMDESDIV 172 disembarked in San Diego, and COMDESDIV 23 came aboard to conduct Berkeley's Operational Readiness Inspection while enroute to Long Beach. After successful completion of the ORI, Berkeley moored at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard on March 17th, and entered a period of restricted availability and final preparation for the ship's Annual Administrative and Pre-Deployment Inspections. These were completed on March 27th, and the Berkeley was ready for deployment.

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Ship's History October

50 Years Ago, 1971

01 - 17 Inport Long Beach
18 - 31 TAV

40 Years Ago, 1981

01 - 20 Inport San Diego, Leave and upkeep
21 - 22 Underway, Local Ops
23 - 29 Inport San Diego, Upkeep
30 Underway, SOCAL pre-INSURV engineering trials
31 Inport San Diego

30 Years Ago, 1991

01 - 06 Inport San Diego
07 - 11 Underway, transit San Francisco
12 - 17 Inport San Francisco: Fleet Week
18 - 20 Inport Alameda
21 - 25 U/W transit San Diego: Mobile Training Team Phase III
26 - 31 Inport San Diego

20 Years Ago, 2001

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

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ment to the Western Pacific. However, as a final post-graduate exercise, from April 11-18, Berkeley participated in Fleetex 2-67 exercise "Blue Coral". The ship concentrated on further sharpening its techniques in shore bombardment, AAW, and anti-PT boat operations.

Following Blue Coral, the ship made final preparations for deployment to the Western Pacific; loading stores, transferring personnel, and in general ensuring everything was ready. On April 29th, Berkeley got underway for WESTPAC, and rendezvoused with the USS Constellation (CVA-64), USS Richard B. Anderson (DD 786), and USS Morton (DD 948) for the transit. After a day inport Pearl Harbor, the ship participated in Constellation's ORI from May 5-7, serving as an AAW picket ship. The ships returned to Pearl Harbor on May 7th, and were underway on May 9th for Yokosuka, Japan. During the passage, Berkeley served as an advanced AAW picket for the task unit in order to detect and provide early warning of possible Russian overflights.

After four days of refueling and resupplying at Yokosuka, the task unit transited to Subic Bay from May 21-24. On May 23rd, Dakota 205, an F-4 Phantom from the Constellation ditched in the coastal waters west of Subic Bay while under Berkeley's control. However, both aviators had ejected and were rescued by the Constellation.

On May 27th, the Constellation, Anderson, and Berkeley left Subic Bay enroute to Yankee Station in the Gulf of Tonkin. Berkeley acted as plane-guard for the Constellation for several days, and then was ordered to report to Operation Sea Dragon (TG 77.1) off the coast of North Vietnam.

Berkeley's first patrol in Operation Sea Dragon lasted until June 22nd.

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Jim Barrett Obit



Sadly, we were informed in late September of Jim Barrett's passing on September 19th. Jim was the founder of the USS Berkeley Association, and provided leadership through the early years of its existence. He continued to support the association through 2020. The following is a summary of his obituary.

James Lyall Barrett was born May 2, 1933 in San Pedro, CA. Following graduation in 1952, he was called to active duty as a reservist. He deployed that summer to Korea on the USS Badoeng Strait (CVE-116) as a Radarman Seaman. After completion of his obligated service in 1954, he chose to remain in the Navy and pursue a career, the same as his father had done during WW-I and WW-II.

In 1957 he met and married Edna Leone Christensen of Long Beach, and they were married for nearly 40 years until her passing in 1997.

Barrett's naval career found him assigned to many ships and stations during his years of service. In his first shore assignment in 1958 he was an electronics instructor at the Radarman A School at Treasure Island, San Francisco. It was during this tour that he was promoted to Chief Radarman. His next tour was with the Commander, Cruiser- Destroyer Force, Pacific Fleet, Destroyer Development Group where he was promoted to Senior Chief Radarman and shortly after commissioned as an officer with the rank of Ensign. As an officer he was deployed to Vietnam three times from 1965 to 1970. He retired in 1982 as a Commander with 32 years of naval service.

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The Year in Review

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As a member of TU 77.1.1, the ship was normally in company with either the USS Boston (CAG-1) or USS St. Paul (CA-73). Usually another destroyer was also assigned to the task unit. TU 77.1.1 ships patrolled the North Vietnamese coast between Hon Me and Hon Matt Islands, remaining outside enemy gun arcs except during firing missions. For the firing missions, the ship was at battle stations several times each day in order to attack water borne logistics craft reported by A-1 spotter aircraft conducting coastal reconnaissance. Other pre-planned targets, such as gun and radar sites, bridges, highway intersections, warehouses and ferries, were also attacked.

During daytime missions, the ships would remain inside enemy gun arcs at speeds of 10-15 knots while firing until counterbattery fire was detected or there were no more promising targets available. At night, harassment and interdiction missions would usually be conducted. During the night missions, the task unit ships would steam toward the beach at high speed, and turn to the firing course. The cruiser would usually fire on the primary targets, while Berkeley fired on secondary or suppression targets, and the 5"/38 caliber destroyer watched the coast for counterbattery. Throughout Sea Dragon the task unit replenished underway with a fleet oiler and ammunition ship every 3 days, and a refrigerator store ship every 2-3 weeks.

From June 15-20, Berkeley served in TU 77.1.2 under the command of COMDESDIV 162 embarked USS Sumner (DD 692). This task unit's operations were essentially the same as TU 77.1.1, except that no cruiser was assigned, so Berkeley was "Top

Gun".

On June 20th while in lifeguard station, Berkeley recovered CAPT Archer, CO of the USS Boston, when he fell in the water during a highline transfer between the St Paul and Boston. Two days later, Berkeley was detached from Sea Dragon operations, and arrived in Subic Bay on June 23rd for her first upkeep since deployment.

Following gunnery exercises and SAR team training on July 4-5 in the Subic Bay operating areas, Berkeley under the command of COMDESRON 5 embarked in USS Barney (DDG-6), transited to Da Nang Harbor for further SAR and anti-PT boat training. Upon completion of SAR training, Berkeley proceeded to her second Sea Dragon assignment.

On July 11th, while enroute TU 77.1.1, CDR T. M. Ward Jr. relieved CDR W. R. Smedberg IV as commanding officer. On July 22nd,, Berkeley was detached from TU 77.1.1 and rendezvoused with the USS Barney. COMDESRON 5 shifted his pennant to Berkeley, and the ship resumed duties as North SAR flagship. From July 22nd to August 11th, the ship remained on North SAR station.

Berkeley's mission was to monitor the daily air strikes over North Vietnam, and provide search and rescue services for any downed aircraft. In the ship's combat information center, air controllers maintained communications with and continuous radar track of all strike and rescue aircraft. If one of the planes was shot down, the ship received a radio distress signal from the pilot, and CIC immediately began plotting the plane's position. The ship would close the last known position of the plane at maximum speed, while directing fighter aircraft

to clear the enemy from the area.

Armoured rescue helicopters could then be vectored in for the pickup. While the ship only served three weeks in SAR station, nevertheless she participated in seven SAR incidents and directly assisted in the rescue of four pilots.

On August 11th, COMDESRON 5 and Berkeley were relieved of SAR duties by COMDESRON 9 and USS Pratt (DLG-13), and proceeded immediately to Hong Kong for R&R. From August 14-19 Berkeley was inport Hong Kong. All hands enjoyed a well earned rest, disturbed only by a typhoon warning on August 15th which interrupted liberty for twenty-four hours. On August 20th, Berkeley departed Hong Kong. On August 22nd, COMDESRON 5 shifted his pennant to the USS George K. MacKenzie (DD 836), where he remained until August 31st when he re-embarked the Berkeley. On September 4th, Berkeley was relieved by the USS Robison (DDG-12).

Berkeley then proceeded to Kaohsiung, Taiwan for a ten-day tender availability. COMDESRON 5 disembarked on September 5th during a brief stop at Subic Bay. From September 19-21, Berkeley transited to Keelung, Taiwan for a weekend of R&R, and on September 22 departed Keelung to join TU 70.8.9 for naval gunfire support in the I Corps area, South Vietnam. During the last week of September, Berkeley provided gunfire support primarily for the Third Marine Division. The ship's guns pounded Viet Cong infiltration routes, concentrations, and storage areas, and airborne spotters reported 26 Viet Cong emplacements destroyed and 49 damaged. At night, as directed by shorefire

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The Year In Review

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control parties, the ship fired harassment and interdiction missions designed to keep the enemy awake, prevent his movements under cover of darkness, and generally disrupt his routine.

On October 1st, Berkeley was detached from TU 70.8.9 and proceeded to Nagoya, Japan for R&R on October 6-7, starting the long trip home. Berkeley conducted general visiting in Nagoya, and received over 4,000 visitors over the weekend. Berkeley spent October 9-11 in port Yokosuka, Japan in preparation for the trans-Pacific passage.

From October 12-24, Berkeley made the homeward transit in company with the destroyers USS Agerholm (DD 820), USS Richard B. Anderson (DD 780), USS E. G. Small (DDR 838), USS Porterfield (DD 682), and USS Bausell (DD 845). The task unit refueled at Midway Island on October 17th. Berkeley was detached on October 23rd, and arrived at Long Beach on October 25th, commencing a leave and upkeep period.

On November 3rd, COMDESDIV 192 broke his flag in Berkeley, and the ship assumed duties as division flagship. The division commander also conducted the QRC 99 test and evaluation project in which Berkeley participated in November and December. After a SECNAV Guest Cruise from December 11-14, the ship ended the year with a holiday leave period.

Earl Edwards Obit

Plank owner Earl A. Edwards (IC2), who served on the Berkeley from 1962 to 1964, passed away September 1, 2021. Our condolences to his family and friends.

Jim Barrett Obit

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In July 2000 he married a long-time friend from high school, Elaine Strickland Baxley, and they settled in Pleasanton, California. Jim is survived by children from his first marriage, Patty Genoa, Jim Barrett and Kathy Skelton; grandchildren Amber Genoa, Jazmyne Barrett, Gabi Skelton, James Skelton and Presley Barrett.

Mission Act Basics

On June 6, 2018, President Trump signed landmark legislation known as the "VA Mission Act of 2018". The act affects many VA programs, including changes that make dramatic improvements to how veterans receive health care provided outside of VA facilities.

You may be eligible for community care under the Mission Act if: you need a service such as maternity care that is not available at the VA; you reside in a state or territory without a full-service VA medical facility; you met previous distance criteria or live in one of the least populated states (ND, SD, MT, AK, WY), received care prior to June 6, 2018, and receive care within 2 years after June 6, 2018; you meet average drive time or appointment wait-time requirements; it's in your best medical interest to be referred to a community provider; you need care from a VA medical service that isn't providing care that complies with VA's quality standards.

With regard to drive time, you may be eligible if: your average drive time to a specific VA medical facility exceeds 30 minutes for primary care, mental health, and non-institutional extended care services (including adult home day care); or 60 minutes for specialty care. Average drive time is based on the distance from your permanent residence to the

closest VA medical facility offering the care or service you need. It is based on geo-mapping software that accounts for a variety of factors, such as rush hour traffic.

With regards to appointment wait time, you may be eligible if the wait time for an appointment at a specific VA medical facility exceeds: 20 days for primary care, mental health care, and non-institutional extended care; 28 days for specialty care from the date of request with certain exceptions.

Regardless of which eligibility criterion you meet, community care must be formally authorized in advance by the VA before you can make an appointment and receive care from a community provider. However, you might not need to visit a VA facility to receive an authorization. The law requires that the VA provide authorization before they can pay for non-VA care.

There may be exceptions for emergency and urgent care. If you are eligible for community care, you will be able to receive care from a community provider who is part of VA's Community Care Network.

There will be no changes on how prescriptions are processed. You will be able to get urgent prescription medication in your community, while long-term prescription medication will be provided by a VA pharmacy. Copayment charges work the same way with community care as they do if you receive care at a VA medical facility. Usually, this means you will be charged a copayment for non-service-connected conditions. Copayment charges and payments are made through the VA, not your community provider.

In order to verify that the provided information has not been changed or modified, you can get updates online at www.missionact.VA.gov.