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# BRIGHT PENNY

January - March, 2023

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

## Happy New Year 2023!

### Director's Update

As we welcome a new year, we wish you a healthy and happy year. The association is in good shape and we are looking forward to our next reunion in Corpus Christi this September. Reunion registration is underway, and reunion registration forms can be found on the website on the "Reunion Info" page and on page 3 of this newsletter. Updated Corpus Christi reunion information can also be found in the October 2022 newsletter and will be updated in the April 2023 newsletter.

The 2023 master rosters will be available for delivery to all active association members in April. If any of your contact information has changed in the past 1-2 years, please provide an update via the "Quarterdeck" page on the website. Our master roster currently contains listings for approximately 1,150 former Berkeley sailors.

As we review last year's accomplishments, website upgrades and 2023 reunion planning were the main ones. As we set goals for 2023, we will mainly focus on the September reunion in Corpus Christi and increasing active membership in the association. Another goal for 2023 will be ensuring we have documented association procedures for the website, newsletter, and master roster, etc., in the possession of at least two association officers/staff.

A couple of articles on the free Lifetime National Park passes for



veterans and the 2023 U.S. Navy Budget appear in this issue.

### The Year In Review - 1972

The new year found Berkeley in port at Long Beach under the command of Commander J. A. Dickman. For the first 2 1/2 months of the year, Berkeley remained in leave and upkeep status, except for 5 days of independent ship exercises off the Southern California coast.

On March 20th, Berkeley steamed to the Pacific Missile Range to exercise various weapon systems. During a 3-day period, Berkeley conducted ASW exercises with the USS Camin, fired torpedoes, a tartar missile, and her five-inch guns. Berkeley returned to Long Beach on March 24th to pick up families of two deceased Navy Chief Petty Officers for a ceremonial burial at sea with full military honors.

Berkeley returned to the SOCAL Op Areas on March 29th to conduct gunnery exercises for two days.

During the period of March 31st to April 4th, Berkeley rested easily at her berth in Long Beach not knowing until April 7th that she would be deploying to WESTPAC in 72 hours in response to the North Vietnamese Spring Offensive. This short notice caught many of the crew on leave and liberty. Berkeley's recall of crew members on such short notice was miraculously effective: only 2 crew members were left behind.

Berkeley arrived in the Gulf of Tonkin on May 1st to support the South Vietnamese counteroffensive raging in

the Demilitarized Zone. Assigned to the "Linebacker" surface strike force, Berkeley participated in surface strikes against North Vietnamese supply routes for almost two months. The highlight of Berkeley's operations at the time came on the morning of May 9th when, in the company of five other destroyers of the Seventh Fleet, Berkeley raced into Haiphong Harbor to provide a protective barrage of five-inch shells while carrier-based jets peppered the harbor with mines. Her large battle ensign flying, Berkeley delivered over 280 rounds in a half hour before the ships of the task unit raced seaward, weaving through plumes of water sent skyward by shells from coastal defense guns.

Shortly after the morning raid on Haiphong, Berkeley was assigned to surveillance duties. Her first job came on the "Notification Line", 25 miles from Haiphong. With two other destroyers, Berkeley kept foreign shipping informed of the newly-cordoned waters nearby. A month of merchant shipping surveillance followed, further down the coast of North Vietnam at Hon La Island. Again in a group of three destroyers, Berkeley worked with jets and helicopters to suppress small boats running supplies ashore from larger ships anchored outside U.S. minefields. In the course of three weeks, the ship sank over thirty of the small craft.

During the next three months,  
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## USS BERKELEY ASSOCIATION

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Annual Dues: \$40.00

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Asst. Director: Dale Johnson

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Treasurer: Gerald Hansen

Advisory Staff:

Todd Frazier

Frank Almeida

Francis Sholly

Lee Peters

Tim Soule

Ship's Store Mgr.: Gerald Hansen

Bright Penny Editor & Publisher: Al Meier

Webmaster: Gerald Hansen

Newsletter Distribution: to current (paid) dues members e-mail in pdf form, and non-e-mail members via U.S. Mail

### Ship's History: January 2023

#### 60 Years Ago, 1963:

History not available. Ship was in commission for one month. CDR. Wyatt E. Harper Jr. was the Commanding Officer

#### 50 Years Ago, 1973

01 - 05 Inport Long Beach

05 - 08 Transit to Bremerton, WA

08 Commencement of Complex Overhaul

12 Enter Drydock #6, Puget Sound Naval Shipyard

12 - 31 In Drydock, PSNS

#### 40 Years Ago, 1983

01 - 31 Overhaul Long Beach Naval Shipyard

#### 30 Years Ago, 1993

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

The H.S. Themistokles was decommissioned in February 2002 in Salamis, Greece

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Berkeley supported South Vietnamese ARVN forces by operations on the "Gunline." A mile seaward of the Demilitarized Zone, she fired daily missions which were coordinated by Marine and Army spotters ashore, who guided her gunfire on target. Maneuvering with as many as seventeen ships in the vicinity, Berkeley brought her mounts to bear on targets ranging from Vietcong supply stations, to command posts, to troop concentrations. These Naval gunfire support, or NGFS commitments, required Berkeley's services along the entire northern portion of the South Vietnamese coast. In the final two weeks of Vietnam operations, Berkeley was again ordered north to join the "Linebacker" strike force. Berkeley fired her final round in anger on October 11th, which brought the total number of rounds fired to well over 11,000 for this deployment. While on these hazardous operations, over 1,580 rounds were fired at the ship - some falling so close that the decks were covered with shrapnel.

Berkeley's officers and crew enjoyed a break in the vigorous schedule every 30 - 40 days, sailing most often to Subic Bay. On August 22nd, the ship had the opportunity to visit Sasebo, Japan. There the crew had a chance to experience the unique character of the Orient, as they did later on a five-day visit to Hong Kong on October 14th.

During the return home, Berkeley's command passed from CDR. Jerry A. Dickman to Lieutenant Commander Jerry S. Jones on October 25th. After steaming over 40,000 miles and meeting many challenges, Berkeley returned to her Long Beach home port on November 9th. For the remainder of 1972, the crew enjoyed a well-deserved holiday leave and post-deployment standown period while preparing for an overhaul in early 1973.

### 2022 U.S Navy Budget

The House and Senate have released final text for the National Defense Authorization Act for 2023. Key provisions include a topline of \$847 billion.

Items of interest for Surface Warfare include authorization for multiyear or block buy contracts for 25 ship-to-shore connectors, 15 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, 8 Lewis-class oilers, 5 amphibious ships, and CH-53K helicopters. It authorizes \$32.6 billion for Navy shipbuilding which includes procurement of 11 battle force ships, 3 Arleigh Burke-class destroyers, 2 Virginia-class submarines, 2 expeditionary fast transports, one Constellation-class frigate, one San Antonio-class amphibious ship, one John Lewis-class oiler, and one Navajo-class towing, salvage and rescue ship. An additional \$2.2 billion is authorized for a third Arleigh Burke-class destroyer.

Items of interest for Undersea Warfare authorizes full funding of the budget request for Columbia-class submarines, and full funding of the budget request for 2 Virginia-class submarines.

### National Park Passes

A new, free lifetime pass to more than 2,000 federal recreation areas, including all national parks, is available for veterans. Current members of the U.S. military and their dependents are eligible for free annual passes. Both the annual military and veterans lifetime passes provide free access to national parks, forests, wildlife refuges and other federal lands.

You can get the passes at national parks that charge fees. Visit [nps.gov](https://www.nps.gov) for additional information about the passes.

### Obits:

**William Peirce.** QM2, 1966/67, passed 2/19/2022

**Forris L. H. Hudkins II,** RMCM, 1973/75, passed 12/10/2022



### 2023 Corpus Christi Reunion Registration Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Contact email or phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Staying at the Omni Hotel? Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Reunion (all events including Banquet) 09/14 – 09/17 \$85x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-member \$95x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Banquet Only Saturday 09/16 \$70x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Non-member \$80x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Dinner Entrée: (please insert quantity for selections)

Crew Member: Grilled Flank Steak Bourguignon \_\_\_ Chicken Matagorda \_\_\_ Grilled Salmon with Pecan Butter \_\_\_  
Vegetarian Entree \_\_\_

Guest: Grilled Flank Steak Bourguignon \_\_\_ Chicken Matagorda \_\_\_ Grilled Salmon with Pecan Butter \_\_\_  
Vegetarian Entree \_\_\_

Ladies Social (Saturday 12:00 – 2:00 PM) Yes \_\_\_ No \_\_\_

Members are those who have paid 2023 dues. If you have paid 2023 dues, both you and one guest will pay the member prices.

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### 2023 Corpus Christi Reunion Tour Order Form

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Corpus Christi Historical Tour Friday 09/15 \$25 x \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Total enclosed (check or money order payable to the USS Berkeley Association) \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Please mail payment to:

USS Berkeley Association  
C/o Gerald Hansen  
6318 S 20<sup>th</sup> Street  
Milwaukee, WI 53221

All Payments for the reunion and tours must be received by August 31, 2023