

T
H
E

BRIGHT PENNY

July -September 2024

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

Bremerton Reunion Details to be Announced Soon

Director's Update



I had hoped to announce the dates and host hotel for our 2025 reunion in Bremerton, Washington in this edition of the Bright Penny, but we are still awaiting a revised proposal from a Bremerton area hotel that meets most of our requirements. There is a possibility that we may need to consider a Seattle hotel if the Bremerton hotel does not respond with an acceptable proposal. As soon as we are under contract with a hotel for our reunion, we will post the information on our web site and send an email update to our members. Late September 2025 is still our time frame for the Bremerton reunion.

Once our 2025 reunion dates and hotel are announced, we would like the assistance of all of our members in getting the word out and encouraging former shipmates who have yet to attend a Berkeley reunion to consider coming aboard in 2025. We are seeing an influx of our younger shipmates at the past couple of reunions, and would like to see even more new faces in 2025! Many shipmates are not aware of our reunions and starting reunion chatter now via phone, email or texts, and social media can help us gather even more old friends for a fun time in Bremerton!

2025 will be a year of transition for the association and we have been documenting association procedures and creating digital copies of association records in preparation for welcoming our new director at the 2025 Bremerton

reunion. All of this work will be completed by the end of 2024 ensuring that the association is still in sound condition moving forward. All essential procedures and records will be in the possession of at least two association officers.

This issue of the Bright Penny continues our series of "The Year In Review" articles with the 1978 episode. Beginning with the October 2024 issue of the newsletter, a series of articles covering the history of the U.S. Navy will be published. The source for these articles will be the Great Courses' "The History of the United States Navy". I hope these articles will be a popular addition to our newsletter

The Year In Review - 1978

The beginning of 1978 found the USS Berkeley tied up at the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard (PSNS) in Bremerton, WA under the command of Commander Jack E. Helmann. The ship was passing the halfway mark of its current overhaul period. Berkeley had just completed a dry-docking period at the end of 1977 and was back in the water once again.

During January and February, shipyard workers accomplished final refurbishment of Berkeley's equipment before testing and reinstallation onboard. The engineering ratings were busy preparing the propulsion spaces and learning their watch duties in preparation for the ship's first major milestone at the end of its yard period - the Light Off Examination.

Much of the same activity was going on in the months of March and April. More and more of the ship's equipment was being put together in preparation for operational testing and sea trials.

On March 9th and 10th, the CINPACFLT Propulsion Examining Board (PEB) visited Berkeley to hold its first of two Light Off Examinations of the aft engineering spaces. The results were satisfactory, and on April 6th and 7th the Board returned to inspect the forward plant. The ship also passed this examination, and the engineering plant was safe for light off.

Work progressed smoothly without major hitches, and it became clear that the ship complete overhaul earlier than originally scheduled. On April 29th, the ship conducted dock trials. During dock trials, various systems were tested individually to check their reliability and identify any problems before the ship put to sea. Dock trials were successful, leaving the way clear to conduct the ship's "fast" cruise.

The "fast" cruise was held on May 3rd and 4th. While still being moored "fast" to the pier, the Berkeley crew followed normal underway routine to train the ship as a whole for normal operation at sea.

With the completion of "fast" cruise, all systems were ready for sea trials May 5th - 9th off the coast of Washington state. Except for completing a full power run, all systems were tested satisfactorily. A ruptured boiler tube prevented completion of the full power

continued on page 2

**USS BERKELEY
ASSOCIATION**

5052 Mertola Drive
El Dorado Hills, CA 95762
408-656-3879



E Mail: ddg15@ussberkeley.com

Website: www.USSBerkeley.com

Annual Dues: \$40.00

Director: Al Meier

Asst. Director: Tim Soule

Secretary: Tammy Meier

Treasurer: Gerald Hansen

Advisory Staff:

Todd Frazier Elray Boudreaux

Frank Almeida Brian George

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: April 2024**60 Years Ago, 1964:**

Detailed monthly ship's history is not available. The ship was on a WESTPAC cruise during this time.

50 Years Ago, 1974:

01 - 10 Escort CTG 77.6, enroute Subic Bay

11 - 13 Inport Subic Bay, R.P.

14 - 19 Enroute Yokosuka, Japan

20 - 22 Inport Yokosuka, Japan

22 - 24 Enroute Kure, Japan

24 - 27 Inport Kure, Japan

27 - 30 Enroute Yokosuka, Japan, joint operations with Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force

31 Inport Yokosuka, Japan

40 Years Ago, 1984:

01 - 04 Enroute Subic Bay, R.P.

05 - 08 Inport Subic Bay

09 - 22 Enroute Pearl Harbor

16 CHOP to COMTHIRDFLT

23 - 24 Inport Pearl Harbor

25 - 31 Enroute San Diego/Tiger Cruise

30 Years Ago, 1994:

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

continued from page 1

run. From May 7th - 17th, Berkeley stayed in port at PSNS preparing for its full power run and completing minor adjustments to the rest of the equipment. She was underway on May 18th to conduct another full power run which again failed due to another ruptured boiler tube.

On May 19th, Vice Admiral St. George, Commander Naval Surface Forces, Pacific Fleet, visited the Berkeley and toured the ship. This was the official close of the overhaul period. Overhaul was completed one month ahead of schedule.

To celebrate the end of the yard period, Berkeley held visit ship for all the shipyard workers and their families and friends. The ship was tied up to the USS Missouri (BB-63) for the day. Approximately 4,000 people toured both ships.

Berkeley was underway on May 25th and 26th to attempt another full power run and was successful this time, thus completing sea trials. The ship attained a speed of over 33 knots on the morning of May 26th.

The ship was tied up at PSNS until June 5th making final preparations for the upcoming homeport shift to her new home port of San Diego. During this time frame, the ship had two inspections (ASIR and ARE) which certified her safe for helicopter operations. The ship was then underway June 5-8 conducting underway training for the crew.

Before returning to Bremerton, the ship held a dependents cruise on June 9th. On June 13th, the ship left the PSNS to return to San Diego and the Third Fleet. Approximately a dozen male guests of crew members were embarked for the transit. While enroute, the ship pulled into Vancouver, BC for a port visit June 13-15. Berkeley then transitted south and then pulled into Seal Beach Naval Weapons Station to onload standard missiles, 5" projectiles,

ASROCs and torpedoes. The ship then sailed to Long Beach Naval Shipyard where she remained in port thru June 23rd for sonar testing at the SACS facility. She was then underway on June 24th for training in the SOCAL ops area before sailing to San Diego and a warm welcome from family and friends on June 28th.

Berkeley remained in port for most of the month of July preparing for the upcoming Combat Systems Quality Assurance Tests (CSQAT) which began on July 17th. CSQAT's purpose was to thoroughly check out all weapons systems for reliability and accuracy in addition to training combat systems teams in the operation of their systems. The in-port phase of CSQAT lasted July 17-23. The ship was underway for the at-sea phase of CSQAT, going out to sea weekdays and returning to San Diego on weekends from July 24th thru August 16th.

During this period, the ship conducted various air tracking, ASW (including ASROC and torpedo shoot) and gunnery exercises. The culmination of CSQAT was a missile shoot on August 16th on the Pacific Missile Range. Berkeley shot 3 missiles that day, but only one was considered a hit, thus only certifying one of the ship's missile fire control systems. The ship's combat systems team improved their skills considerably and improved the reliability of their equipment.

Upon Completion of CSQAT, Berkeley found herself in port in San Diego for an extensive period. From September 1-22 she was the engineering school ship for the engineering students at San Diego's Fleet Training Center. Also, during this period and thru September 27th, most of Berkeley's crew members were involved in an upkeep period for the ship while other crew members attended schools for further training.

Berkeley was again underway September 28th to provide plane guard duties for the USS Ranger (CV-61). After

continued on page 3

continued from page 2

being detached from the Ranger on October 1st, Berkeley spent the remainder of the week conducting Engineering Casualty Control Drills in preparation for the Operational Propulsion Plant Examination (OPPE) in addition to conducting various AAW and ASW exercises. Berkeley returned to San Diego on October 6th for a brief upkeep period and was underway again the week of October 16th. The first part of the week found Berkeley on the missile test range for another missile shoot to qualify its second missile fire control system for CSQAT. On October 17th, Berkeley shot two missiles and successfully qualified her other missile fire control system. The remainder of the week found the ship off the coast of San Clemente Island involved in Naval Gunfire Support (NGFS) qualification exercises. After 2 1/2 days of day and night firing exercises, Berkeley headed back to San Diego on October 20th having obtained her NGFS qualifications with her highest score to date. After another brief in-port period, Berkeley was underway on October 30th to conduct more engineering drills. During this period, she conducted other exercises including a surface gunnery shoot and another missile shoot. The November 2nd missile shoot was another success. During this particular exercise, both the missile and gun systems were employed together very effectively as the target drone simulated the path of a Soviet cruise missile. Berkeley then remained in port concentrating most of her efforts towards preparations for her Operational Propulsion Plant Examination. The ship was then underway briefly for a final OPPE workup on November 16-17. On

November 20th, the Pacific Fleet PEB returned to conduct the OPPE. After two and one-half days of extensive administrative, material and operational inspections, Berkeley received a grade of conditionally satisfactory on November 22nd. Berkeley then remained in port through the Thanksgiving holiday period until December 11th preparing for its next major milestone which was Refresher Training (REFTRA) in January of 1979. During the week of December 4th, Fleet Training Group conducted its preliminary inspection, the Training Readiness Evaluation (TRE), where the ship was evaluated for its administrative readiness for REFTRA. Various major safety and other minor discrepancies were pointed out to the Commanding Officer which were to be corrected prior to commencement of REFTRA on January 8, 1979. The ship was then underway one more time in 1978 from December 11-15. During this period, the ship was assigned plane guard duties for the USS Enterprise (CVN-65). When not actually plane guarding, the ship conducted various drills and exercises in preparation for REFTRA. While back in port the week of December 18th, the ship underwent an extensive type commander 3-M inspection which lasted about three days. Overall, the ship received an above average grade for its implementation of the 3-M system. Particularly impressive was the damage control (ER-09) work center which scored one of the highest grades. After a long and hard, but rewarding year, which saw Berkeley complete a regular overhaul and become an operational member of the Third Fleet, Berkeley remained at pier 5 at the naval station in San

Diego for the close of 1978.

David Meier Obit

David A. Meier, RD3 who served aboard the Berkeley 1964-67 passed away on April 24, 2024. Our condolences go out to David's wife Donna and his family and friends.

Bremerton Area Attractions

There are many choices of things to do in Bremerton and Seattle and an interesting Friday tour will be available as part of our reunion activities. Some of the attractions in the Bremerton and Seattle area are the Puget Sound Navy Museum, the USS Turner Joy museum ship, the United States Naval Underwater Museum, the Kitsap History Museum, the Museum of Flight, Pike Place Market, Ivars Fish Bar, the Space Needle, etc. A day trip to Mt. Rainier, Olympic National Park or Bainbridge Island are some other possibilities.

