

World War II Cogswell officer dies

## Judge Reavley leaves impressive legacy

**T**homas Morrow Reavley, who followed his World War II service aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 with a long and distinguished legal career died December 1, 2020 in Austin, Texas. He was 99. At the time of his death he was the oldest serving federal judge.

As a gunnery and torpedo officer aboard the Cogswell, Judge Reavley told family and friends about being a part of the convoy that delivered President Franklin D. Roosevelt to the Yalta Conference. He also remembered the famous incident involving the USS Porter in which that ship fired a live torpedo at the battleship carrying the President during a training exercise. **(See Page 19 for related story)**

Prior to joining the Navy, Judge Reavley had earned a bachelor's degree at the University of Texas and had one year of law school there.

After his service, he continued his legal education at Harvard University graduating in 1948. He later received a Master of Laws from the University of Virginia School of Law in 1983.

After graduation he was an assistant district attorney in Dallas, Texas from 1948 to 1949. From 1949 to 1951 he was in private practice in Nacogdoches, Texas and then a county attorney in that same county in 1951. **(Continued in Taps, Page 9)**



Judge Thomas Morrow Reavley

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FEBRUARY 2022

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### Join your shipmates in Orlando, Florida

If you haven't made your reservation for the next Cogswell reunion, what are you waiting for? Time is short to make your reservations to join your shipmates in Orlando, Florida in June for our USS Cogswell DD-651 Association reunion.

To make hotel reservations call 407-239-4540 or go to our website ([www.usscogswell.com](http://www.usscogswell.com)) and click on reunion information, click on the news tab and all the info is there. Your reunion specialist George Overman has negotiated a great rate (this is Orlando folks!) at \$106 night, includes free breakfast too. See pages 15-16 for the many things to do in and around Orlando.

Extend your stay and do all those wonderful things you've always wanted to do in Florida after your time with shipmates. **See page 13 for more reunion information.**

# A message from President Frank Wille

It pays to have connections!

Our members voted to have the 2022 reunion in Orlando after its Visitor's Bureau actively sought our business. Then, the fun began. George reached out to several hotels in the area. None were interested in our reunion, leaving us without a host hotel. George started looking around in nearby cities hoping that a hotel would be interested. He sought help from his reunion planner in San Diego. This is where the magic happened. Her daughter was good friends with someone who was a coordinator at an Orlando hotel and, yes, they were interested in our group. And, because she got involved, they agreed to our reunion contract. Way to go, George!

We learned of the National Museum of the Surface Navy based at the Port of Los Angeles. This has been the Battleship Iowa museum, now expanded to include all of the surface Navy. That's us! We contributed \$100 and are now Plank Owners in the Museum. I encourage anyone visiting the area to visit the Museum. We'll share more details in future newsletters.

Looking forward to seeing you at the reunion in Orlando. We all want COVID restrictions to no longer be necessary.

Be well and happy.

Frank Wille



Frank Wille, Zola Low, Lyna Low

## **NOW HEAR THIS! THE SHIP'S STORE IS OPEN. NOW AVAILABLE NEW T-SHIRTS, SWEATSHIRTS AND BALL CAPS.**

Selena Simmermann is the Ship's Store manager. She and husband Buddy have created some great new items. Her address is:

SK 67 Lake Cherokee,  
Henderson, TX 75652.

To reach her by phone, call 903-263-1059.

Email: [simmermann@sbcglobal.net](mailto:simmermann@sbcglobal.net)

Hats, t-shirts and sweat shirts are available along with other items. Contact Selena for these items and she will mail them to you with just a small added shipping charge.

**See Pages 7-8 for additional items.**



Shipment of "NEW" stuff for the ship's store!

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“Smooth seas don't produce  
skillful sailors.”

— Lynn Austin

## **ATTENTION!**

If you have not received an e-mail message from the Cogswell Association in the past month it is probably because we do not have your valid e-mail address on file. Please send us your current e-mail address if it has changed recently. Send current e-mail address to: Secretary@usscogswell.com

## Visit the Association Online

[www.usscogswell.com](http://www.usscogswell.com)

**FINANCIAL STATEMENT  
USS COGSWELL DD 651 ASSOCIATION  
August 1, 2021 to February 1, 2022**

**Balance, Sept 2021** **\$20,220**

**Income**

**Dues** **460**

**Donation** **35**

**Ships Store** **154**

**Reunion payments** **\$1,119**

**\$21,988**

**Expenses**

**Reunion expenses** **637**

**Assn Admin** **553**

**Donation to SNM** **100\***

**Balance, February 2022** **\$20,696**

**Notes:**

**\*Donation to new Surface Navy Museum**

# USS COGSWELL ASSOCIATION

## DATABASE STATISTICS as of 02/01/2022

- Active = 170 ( paid dues are current) - 126 Life Members
- Inactive = 6 (have not paid dues for more than two years—house cleaning of these inactive members)
- New = 0 (New members found who were mailed a membership form, waiting for return.)
- No Interest = 564 (members who have indicated they have no interest in the Cogswell Association—some newly found who chose not to join)
- Deceased = 851 (known deceased shipmates—some newly found crewmembers)
- Not Located = 1712 (continues to be the largest number in database - we still need help locating)

**New members— August 01, 2021—February 01, 2022**

Last Name	First	City	State	Years Aboard	Rank
COLLIER	THOMAS	WICKENBURG	AZ	68-69	OFFICER
STOMBAUGH	THOMAS	EQUINUNK	PA	55-57	MM3
WILLIAMS	HOWARD	NEWPORT	RI	68-69	CS3

**Known Deceased since August 01, 2021**

Last Name	First Name	City	St	Years Aboard	Rank
CLARK	LAWSON	WICHITA FALLS	TX	68-69	MMC
COLLINS	MELVIN	ELLAVILLE	GA	62-65	MM2
MEYER	DONALD	LAS VEGAS	NV	67-69	OFFICER
REAVLEY	THOMAS	HOUSTON	TX	43-45	OFFICER
STEVENSON	JOHN	LA JOLLA	CA	53-56	OFFICER



# A letter from your editor

One of the great advantages of being the USS Cogswell DD-651 Association's newsletter editor is that I get to learn about the many great people who have served on her. Our lead story in this newsletter is about Federal Judge Thomas Morrow Reavley. Judge Reavley was one of our dwindling members who served on the Cogswell during World War II.

But like many of those who sailed on the Cogswell, Judge Reavley's service didn't stop with World War II. His service to his country continued until his death a year ago while he was still serving as a federal appeals judge in Austin, Texas. You can read the obit for all the details but it never ceases to amaze me at the impressive work done by Cogswell sailors long after they left the sea service.

As I write this column I'm enjoying the fine weather of Tucson, Arizona while I strain to meet yet another Scuttlebutt deadline. Some of you will remember my father, Lee Smith, who was our tour guide at the Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum at Dulles International Airport during our Herndon reunion in 2016.

I'm proud to say that Dad is about to celebrate his 97<sup>th</sup> birthday and even more impressive spent a month with my wife and I here in Tucson this winter. While he was here he fulfilled a 70-year dream to complete a parachute (tandem in this case) jump.

You see my father was a World War II Army Air Force enlisted man in World War II and while he did ground training for a parachute jump he never actually got to jump and he always felt he had missed something.



My Dad and Navy parachutist Steve Lobin

Thanks to a Navy sailor named Steve Lobin my father was in good hands on his trip from 10,500-feet to earth on Saturday, January 15, 2022. Lobin, who has jumped as part of his Navy service, strapped my father to him and brought him safely back to earth. In truth, me and the owner of Sky Dive Marana were much more nervous than my father.

But when I met Steve and saw how strong and caring he was, most of my concerns evaporated. Needless to say the parachute jump was the highlight of his trip with us although a tour of nearby Davis-Monthan Air Force Base came close.

Members of Fighter Squadron 47 at the base invited my father to be their guest on January 21, 2022 and gave him a VIP tour of their A-10 Thunderbolt (Wart Hog) hangar. An A-10 pilot, Major James Buchanan, presented my father with a 30mm shell engraved with my Dad's rank and name along with a number of special uniform patches.



Dad and Steve on the way back to earth

The squadron traces its history to the attack on Pearl Harbor where two of the 47<sup>th</sup> fighter pilots got airborne and brought down 7 Japanese aircraft. We got to see the photos of the two pilots and the 47<sup>th</sup> Fighter Squadron sign that once hung on Iwo Jima during World War II.

All this to say that all of us were impressed with the quality of all the men and women we met at the air force base and that our country is in good hands as far as the military goes.

As a token of my appreciation I gave Major Buchanan one of our Cogswell challenge coins and I am waiting a shipment of more challenge coins from our wonderful Ship's Store operator Selena Simmermann so I can send more of them to the other airmen that made my Dad's visit there so memorable.

Here's hoping I see you all in Florida this June.



Dad and his new best friends at Davis-Monthan AFB

# Items in the Cogswell Ship's Store



Embroidered cap (wear it for unexpected discounts at retailers)



Carry bag (Not currently in stock— Selena is looking for a new supplier)



Front 1



Front 2



Carolyn Sessions models the new Cogswell blanket.



Common back

See next page for exciting new USS Cogswell plaque.

See Ship's Store ad on Page 2 for ordering information.



Our terrific new ship's store operator, Selena Simmerman has been working hard to create new items for sale. See page 2 and below for ordering information.

Use SHOP Drop Down Menu on Left to Browse or Use Search Beneath Cart On Right

Home Shop Our Story Contact Us Bulk Purchases

Shop > USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque



USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque

\$50.00 Free Shipping!

Special Instructions

QTY

1

Add to Cart

Navy USS Cogswell 12" Laser Carved Wood Plaque Laser Carved Wood Plaque Use our contact form or e-mail me at [marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com](mailto:marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com). Be sure to include a phone number and e-mail address in case I need to contact you.

<https://precisionwoodcraftingok.com/> To purchase contact [Marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com](mailto:Marge@precisionwoodcraftingok.com). Include an email and phone number in case they need to contact you.

McAfee SECURE

11:20 AM 1/11/2020

**Tom Lamson (RM3 67-68)** is one of the first Association members to purchase one of the custom designed 12-inch Cogswell plaques shown above. Selena has purchased three plaques for sale and one for the reunion auction. If you want one like Tom's you'll need to contact Precision Wood Crafting on your own. Use the web-site address above or email the company at: [Jim@precisionwoodcraftingok.com](mailto:Jim@precisionwoodcraftingok.com). There is no charge for artwork and the price includes standard shipping. Tom said his plaque was \$45, but he received a \$5 discount, so \$40. Larger sizes are available. Contact them for the cost of the larger sizes.







# TAPS



*(Continued from Page 1)* He then had a private law practice in Lufkin, Texas from 1951 to 1952 and then in Jasper, Texas from 1952 to 1955.

In 1955, Democrat Governor Allan Shivers appointed him as Texas Secretary of State a position he held until 1957. Following that he was in private practice in Austin, Texas from 1957 to 1964 until he became a Judge in the 167<sup>th</sup> District in Austin from 1964-1968. In 1968 he was an Associate Justice of the Supreme Court of Texas a position he held until 1977 when he went back into private practice in Austin until 1979, followed by service as Special Judge of the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals in 1978.

On May 17, 1970, President Jimmy Carter appointed him as a Justice to the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Circuit. He was confirmed by the U.S. Senate on July 12, 1979. A court biography lists his birthdate as June 21, 1921 in Quitman, Texas.

A fellow federal judge Rhesa Hawkins Barksdale, who served on the Fifth Circuit with Judge Reavley, reflected on his friend and colleague of 31 years in an article titled "A Tall Texan, A Great Man: Judge Thomas Morrow." In that article Judge Barksdale talked about what he learned about his friend's World War II service.

"Upon completing midshipman school and being commissioned an ensign in the spring of 1943, he attended torpedo training before reporting to his ship, a new destroyer. His sleep the first night at the school, however, was fitful. As a result, he fell asleep during a class the next day, with the instructor-officer sternly — if not angrily — ordering him to leave class and report to an office. Tom walked to the door of the classroom, paused, and said calmly to the officer, who was but a few years older than Tom: "Alright, but I want you to know that my bed had bedbugs". The officer was visibly horrified by that news and immediately greatly apologetic. That officer was future U.S. Secretary of State Cyrus R. Vance."

Judge Barksdale also recalled another story that Judge Reavley told him: "One of the harrowing events aboard his destroyer that Tom would laugh about involved extremely important captured Japanese documents, which had been delivered to his destroyer for transfer to another vessel — while both vessels were running parallel — for delivery to the headquarters at Pearl Harbor of the legendary Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz, another Texan. For the transfer, Tom had the duty of attaching a satchel containing the documents to a cable-and-pulley system rigged between the vessels. As he was doing so, he almost dropped the satchel over — as Tom described it — the deepest part of the Pacific. Had he done so, he could only imagine the ensuing retribution."

"In the closing hours of the historic multi-day Battle of the Philippine Sea in June 1944, west of the Mariana Islands, our carrier aircraft inflicted huge, greatly-disproportionate losses on Japanese aircraft, in what became known as the "Great Marianas Turkey Shoot". Because our aircraft were launched late in the afternoon against distant Japanese vessels, some of our returning aircraft ran out of fuel and had to ditch in the ocean in the dark, with the pilots hoping to be rescued by our ships. Tom's destroyer was one of many engaged in that duty. When a rescue took place by his vessel, Tom recognized the fortunate pilot; he was an acquaintance from Texas. On approaching him, Tom called him by name and jokingly asked what he was doing there."

In April 1945, Judge Reavley told Judge Barksdale he was transferred to an aircraft carrier in the Pacific Theater and entered Tokyo Bay on the carrier along with his former ship, the USS Cogswell.

Judge Barksdale also remembered that Judge Reavley had been instrumental in the 1960 Texas campaign of then Senator John F. Kennedy and Lyndon B. Johnson who were running for President and Vice-President.

In addition to his service on the various benches, Judge Reavley published many legal articles, served as an adjunct professor at the University of Texas School of Law and lectured at the law schools of Baylor, Pepperdine and Texas Tech.

Judge Reavley was married for 60 years to Florence Wilson Reavley, who died in 2003. The couple had four children, two sons and two daughters. In 2004, he married Carolyn Dineen King, who was also appointed by President Carter, who was then Chief Judge of the Fifth Circuit Court. They were the only married couple among the federal appellate judges. Judge King had three sons which brought to 7 the number of children the couple shared. All seven children attended the 2004 nuptials of the two judges. The couple shares six grandchildren and five great grandchildren.

Judge King, recalled that her husband was proud of his service on the Cogswell and had a large model of the ship in his chambers. "He would point at the model with pride."

"Judge Reavley was a person of great personal integrity, compassion and magnetism," she said. "He had a well-developed view of the law and its central place in a thriving society. No judge worked harder to master the facts of the cases under decision and few had the skill to present a decision with so much clarity and candor."



World War II officers on the Cogswell



# TAPS

(continued)



## Donald C. Meyer, Executive Officer USS Cogswell DD-651 1967-69

Donald C. Meyer, who was executive officer on the USS Cogswell during the command of Capt. Fred Kraft, died peacefully in his sleep of natural causes in Las Vegas, Nevada on December 25, 2020. He was 86.

Born on June 14, 1934, Don was affectionally known as “everybody’s friend.” He earned the nickname “Windy” from an elementary school teacher because he loved to talk.

After graduation from the University of Utah he joined the Navy and Officers’ Candidate School in 1957. Don met the love of his life, Barbara Thompson while both were stationed in the Philippines. Barbara was a nurse and at the time outranked him.

Don earned his Naval aviation wings by completing six solo landings aboard the USS Antietam (CVS-36) in 1958. Don also served aboard the USS Intrepid (CVS-11), USS Yorktown CVS-10, USS Robert A. Owens DD-827 and the USS Cogswell, DD-651.

While aboard the USS Yorktown he participated in the atmospheric nuclear test on Johnson Island, an experience he often said was “the scariest thing he ever experienced.”

He was Commander Destroyer Squadron 19, executive officer Naval Station Guam, Commander Fleet Training Group San Diego. He retired honorably from the U.S. Navy on August 1, 1979, after 22 years of service.



Donald C. Meyer

Before his Navy retirement Don earned his Masters of Business Administration in 1977.

Don earned the following medals and awards during his service: Navy Commendation Medal with 2 gold stars V for combat; Joint Services Medal, National Defense Service Medal, Vietnam Campaign Ribbon with 4 bronze stars, Vietnam Service Ribbon, Armed Forces Expeditionary Medal and Humanitarian Service Medal.

Several Cogswell officers recalled their service with Don.

“He was a good guy and I think everyone liked and respected him, I know I did,” said Ron Riley, 1967-69.

“Don Meyer was my XO on Cogswell roughly 67-79 under Commander Fred Kraft, commanding officer,” said Bruce Hulbert, 67-69. Both now deceased and both great officers and gentlemen.”

“I was onboard during that time as the Main Propulsion Assistant and Don was the XO,” said Jim Bos, 67-69. “He was a great guy to work for.”

“I’m sorry to hear about Don Meyer’s passing,” said Donald Tennant, 67-69. “In my memory he was a great XO. “He and Fred Kraft made a great team and together they turned around the ship and built a hard working and cohesive team that made life aboard the ship a constructive and rewarding experience for most of us.”

“I remember him as cool-headed, detail oriented, understanding when he needed to be and strict when it was called for,” Don Tennant continued. “He was a good teacher for the officers and a good navigator for the ship. He was up before the rest of us and worked long into the night both at sea and in port. He worked hard to develop and promote deserving crewmen and to learn the strengths and weakness of the sailors who were aboard Cogswell during those years. He was a professional in every respect and earned the support and loyalty of the crew very quickly.”

“He will be long remembered by me and by others who served with him, I’m sure.”

Survivors include his wife of 61 years, Barbara; two sons Christian (Terri) Meyer and Patrick Meyer, a daughter, Mary (Mark) Grant; five grandchildren.

Funeral services were held January 15, 2021 at Veterans Memorial Cemetery in Boulder City, Nevada with military honors.



Donald C. Meyer

## Lawson “Sonny” Alex Clark

Lawson “Sonny” Alex Clark, who served as an MM1 aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1968-69 was reported deceased in late 2021 by his daughter to Retired LCDR Anthony Carambia. No formal obituary could be found and attempts to reach family were unsuccessful. Anthony Carambia, an Association member, served with Clark during the same time. He reported that Clark retired as an MMCM.



# TAPS

(continued)



## John “Jack” Stevenson Jr.

John “Jack” Stevenson Jr., who served as an officer aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 from 1953-56 died January 29, 2021 with his wife of 63 years holding his hand and his three children by his side.

Jack grew up in the Township of Thornburg a suburb of Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1953 from Carnegie Tech University with a degree in architecture. After graduation from OCS he flew halfway around the world to join the Cogswell in Japan.



Jack and Barbara Stevenson

After four years he was discharged in 1956 as a LTJG. He continued to serve in the Naval Reserve, retiring in 1989 as a captain. His final assignment was in command of Inshore Undersea Warfare, responsible for the defense of the West Coast.

In his civilian life he started his architectural career working for Richard George Wheeler and Deems Lewis Martin in San Diego. He received his California architectural license in 1960, later opening his own office. Jack’s architectural practice focused on forensic interpretation and problem solving. He was sought after by homeowners, HOA’s and both prosecuting and defense attorneys to analyze building problems and provide solutions.

In 1971 he served as President of the American Institute of Architects in San Diego and on the National AIA Code Committee for many years, appointed chairman for two separate terms. He later established a scholarship in his mother’s name. She was the first woman to graduate with a degree in architecture from Carnegie Tech.

Jack excelled in all interests he embraced. He was President of the Boy’s Club of San Diego, Broadway Theater League, Episcopal church groups and active with groups involving children. He was creative with carpentry and gardening. Until Covid-19 stopped court play he was an avid tennis player.

He loved to travel, crossing throughout the USA, Mexico, Canada and South American by car, train, plane or cruise ship. His favorite places were Hawaii and Alaska.

While in college he was a member of the Kiltie Band and Sigma Nu Fraternity. Later in life he continued his love of the fraternity establishing a chapter at San Diego State University, becoming their first advisor and House Corporation Chairman. He was in contact with the initial members of the chapter until his death.

He married his wife Barbara in 1957, moving to the new community of Claremont, their home for 50 years. In 2005, the

couple rebuilt Barbara’s childhood home in La Jolla, moving there in 2007. Part of the renovation included a new second story on the detached garage to house his model train collection. He spent many hours working on an expansive HO layout.

The couple had three children; John III, Kimberley (Falk), and Cameron (Dawson). The Stevenson’s had 9 grandchildren and 12 great-grandchildren.

Jack and his wife, Barbara attended a number of Cogswell reunions. One Cogswell sailor remembered him fondly.

“Jack Stevenson was my Division Officer on my days,” said Tony Emmolo (TE3 54-56). “I never forgot him, he personified what a true gentleman was. I was the mailman and he had to check the sum of cash and stamps. He didn’t have to but always told me when he would do it just in case I borrowed a few dollars from the till. To this day I remember him passing by the ship’s post office like it was yesterday. I never saw him angry.”

Jack’s ashes were placed aboard the USS Carl Vinson (CVN-70) in mid-June. An unpublicized crisis off the shore of Hawaii caused the Pacific task force to deploy unexpectedly and delayed full military honors until August 4.

“The bonus here is that Jack was able to be at sea one more time in a military face-off with the Russians,” said his wife Barbara. “I know he was loving it, with the Hawaiian waters an extra bonus.”

## Melvin Ray Collins Jr.

Melvin R. Collins Jr., of Ellaville, Georgia died August 12, 2021. He was 80.

Melvin served aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 as an MM2 from 1962-1965.

Born November 24, 1940 in Hawkinsville, Georgia, following his Navy service he owned and operated South-eastern Pneumatic in Ellaville, GA, Southwestern Pneumatic in Venus, TX, Kyle, TX, Houston, TX and Pneumatic Exports in Miami, FL.



Janice and Melvin Collins

He attended Ellaville Baptist Church.

Survivors include his wife, Janice Marie DeVane Collins; two daughters and a son-in-law, Tina Rae Collins, Tammy Womack and her husband Al; a son, Tony Collins and daughter-in-law, Tina; sister-in-law Lauralane Easom; eight grandchildren and six great grandchildren.

Funeral services with military honors were held August 15, 2021. Interment followed at Oak Grove Cemetery.



# On The Road Again (Still)

By George Overman

On May 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021, I left Southern California pulling my new toyhauler to attend the Cogswell reunion in Bellevue WA. My previous RV had started to wear out and was costing too much in repairs so we had to part ways. When I left Washington, I headed east to Lincoln Nebraska where I spent time with family. We were working on finding an assisting living facility for my 90 year-old-sister.

As with all things when the government is involved, my brother-in-law Terry Klich and I, were hitting walls. After two trips back and forth to Southern California to take care of other matters we were finally able to get my sister into a facility in mid-November.

So, it was back to Deming, New Mexico where I left my rig when I drove up to Nebraska the last time. Upon returning to Deming, I headed east where I was going to spend one month in Mission, Texas in search of warmer weather, at least until the cold front moved in. I did at least get the chance to sightsee. Off I went again to meet up with my grandniece, Giannina Mixco, near Giddings, Texas for dinner.

From there my next meet and greet was in Henderson, Texas with Gale Sessions, Carolyn, Buddy Simmermann, Selena. Unfortunately, my other little sister, Melissa Davis was under the weather and couldn't make it. Gale of course is a Cogswell shipmate.



**Gale Sessions, Carolyn Sessions, Buddy and Selena Simmermann with George Overman**

After that stop I went to Chandler, Texas to visit with the last manager I had at Hewlett-Packard. That would be Kasey Mayfield and her husband George. Then it was on to Mansfield, Texas to visit my brother and sister-in law.



**George Overman and Mack Stringfield in Texas**

After a visit to two museums in Waco, I ended up in Belton, Texas where I had the opportunity to visit with Mack Stringfield and his wife Sherri. We had a nice visit and they are looking forward to the reunion in Orlando. Mack of course is another Cogswell shipmate as can be witnessed by the sweatshirt.

Texas was unusually cold everywhere I traveled and I found the same thing in New Mexico and beyond.

Now it's back to Southern California via Laughlin, Nevada for a Family Motor Coach Association rally. After taking care of things in Southern California, it's off again in search of warmer weather.

**I HOPE TO SEE MANY OF YOU IN ORLANDO.**

# Update on June 2022 USS Cogswell DD-651 Association Reunion

## From George Overman

This is a brief update on the reunion planning as it goes forward. We have booked a presentation from Matt "Mas" Wittal. His presentation will cover something called NASA's role in the modern world. You can see Matt's biography in another article of this newsletter. If the current Covid restrictions of no personal appearances are still in place in June, the presentation will be via Microsoft Meeting. If the restrictions are lifted by then we should be able to get the speaker in person. **(See Page 16 for more)**

I received this note from Orval Mills suggesting the following: "Let me toss this out, anyone wearing their uniform to the banquet will get the first drink for them and a significant other for free at the banquet bar. We do that at the Hollister reunion and still have five or six encouraged to wear whatever uniform they earned the right to wear."

I always assumed that unless a person was retired the wearing of a uniform was not authorized. Well Orval set me straight on this as well: "I reviewed the rules for Military Veterans and retired members of the Military. If you are a veteran or a retiree having served any length of time with an honorable discharge you may wear your dress uniform to functions that would be military in nature and would honor the military uniform. A reunion banquet would be one of the many times it could be worn." I would add to that the rating/rank on the uniform would be the highest rate/rank attained when in the military.

So, the board decided this was a good idea. Each veteran showing up in a dress uniform at the reunion banquet will receive two drink tickets to be used at the banquet bar. The tickets will be issued at the photo shoot.

PLEASE GET YOUR HOTEL RESERVATIONS MADE AND YOUR REGISTRATION FORMS MAILED. WE HAVE AT LEAST TWO NEW MEMBERS AND FIRST TIMERS SIGNED UP FOR THE REUNION.

***It's pretty easy to find information on the reunion hotel and registration. Go to our website ([www.usscogswell.com](http://www.usscogswell.com)) click on the Reunion Information tab and you can click on News for hotel registration and then click on Registration form to print the necessary form to register. If all else fails contact George Overman at [Secretary@usscogswell.com](mailto:Secretary@usscogswell.com) and he'll provide the form.***



**Don't miss the fun!**

## A Pause for our Reunion Planning Process

Normally this February edition of the newsletter would contain three venue "brag sheets" and a vote form for our 2023 reunion in the mountain time zone. Because of diminishing attendance at our reunions due to active member reduction and the Covid epidemic, we are not certain on whether we can continue the typical planning process we have used in the past. The Cogswell DD-651 Association BOD has decided to take a breather until after the Orlando reunion to see if the attendance will be stabilized. With only a small attendance it is difficult to gather much negotiating power with hotels for our reunions. Even with the USS Wedderburn DD-684 Association joining us in San Antonio that has faltered as well. It appears their leadership structure is in tatters. We have also contacted someone within USS Ingersoll DD-652 Association who tried to elicit interest in their group to join us but did not get much response from their membership. We will have to make some decisions on future reunions but those decisions will need to wait until Orlando.

***To say Congress is spending like drunken sailors is an insult to drunken sailors. - Ronald Reagan***

***The difference between congressmen and drunken sailors is that drunken sailors are spending their own money. - Tom Feeney***

# Tin Can Sailors Magazine Mail Call! Includes Cogswell tidbit

**Editor's note: Scuttlebutt Editor Jim Smith's father wrote a letter to the editor of the Tin Can Sailor's Magazine and it was published in the Summer 2021 edition. The letter was about a chance encounter between Lee M. Smith and Donald Tennant, who served as an officer on the Cogswell between 1967-69. A picture accompanied the article and is reprinted here.**

Dear Lisa,

I've addressed you in a familiar manner as our paths have crossed in the past. We've exchanged correspondence and emails. I am a former docent at Udvar-Hazy and we, at one time, discussed a special tour for you and your husband. Never happened. Oh well. The following is a special experience that defies the ability to explain. The odds of this happening are beyond any explaining I can do. This experience may be of interest to you. Although I'm not a sailor, my son was and he supplies me with copies of The Tin Can Sailor. Here's the event, you figure the odds.

For fifteen years, I was a docent at the Smithsonian's Steven F. Udvar-Hazy Air and Space Museum. I conducted countless number of tours for veterans, school children, foreign visitors, the sight impaired, and of course, the general public.

One morning in 2019, I was assigned a tour for a large family group. After the tour, I thanked the family for attending the museum and hoped the tour was enjoyable. The senior male member of the group shook my hand, thanked me for the tour, and noticed a pin on my jacket noting I was a veteran of World War II.

He said he was a veteran of the Vietnam War and asked what branch of the military I served. "I was Army Air Force." He said he was Navy. I then said my son was Navy in the Vietnam War and served as a quartermaster on a destroyer. I was asked, "Do you remember the name of his ship?" "Yes, it was the USS Cogswell (DD-651)."

Hearing that, the man pulled out a cap from his pocket; it featured the Cogswell. This man, Don Tennant, and my son, Jim Smith, served together on the ship! They know each other. Don lives with his family in Maryland. Jim lives in Michigan. Lisa, what are the odds on this ever happening? I'm still blown away by this experience.

Thought you might be interested in this as it involves two men who shared an experience oh, so many years ago.

I enjoy reading the publication. Thanks for your good efforts.

My very best wishes.

**LeeM. Smith**

*Hello Lee,*

*What a great story! I always love this kind, unknown connections. Thank you so much for the offer of the museum tour. I was saving it for a really good time and then COVID hit. Also, thank you for being an avid reader of the magazine. It's also always great to get a different perspective to help guide me on the right destroyer path. I wish you and your family well, always.*



Don Tennant and Lee Smith at Udvar-Hazy Museum

## It all "Depends"

Perhaps you have been lying awake at night wondering why baby diapers have brand names such as "Luvs", "Huggies", and "Pampers", while undergarments for old people are called "Depends".

Well here is the low down on the whole thing.

When babies soil their pants, people are still gonna Luv'em, Hug'em and Pamper' em. When old people soil their pants, it "Depends" on who's in the will!

Glad I got that straightened out so you can rest your mind. *(Sent to the Scuttlebutt editor by an unknown member)*



# Things to do in/around Orlando, Florida

There's more to the greater Orlando area than the "Mouse."

Sure, everyone knows Disneyworld is the 1,000-pound gorilla, but it is far from the only attraction to visit in Orlando, Florida.

The USS Cogswell DD-651 Association reunion is making its first ever visit to Florida. In fact, there are so many great places to visit, the Association is not scheduling a bus tour for this reunion because one-size-does-not-fit-all.

The hotel has some limited shuttle service and the plan is to mix and match potential destinations and car pool to various locations as needed. Because of the many area attractions, and that includes the mouse house, this might be a



**Air boat adventure**

chance to see some of Florida's exotic wildlife up close and personal as well as getting a little wind in your hair. There are many choices within 45 minutes of the Orlando area. There are also glass bottom boat and kayak tours as well.

The **Kennedy Space Center** is only 45 miles from Orlando and provides some great tour opportunities. If you are a fan of the American Space Program, and any Cogswell sailor



**Bok Tower Gardens**

**Bok Tower Gardens**, is a little over an hour from Orlando, and represents one of Florida's first attractions and best-kept secrets. The National Historic Landmark was dedicated in 1929 as a gift of gratitude from Edward Bok, a humanitarian, Pulitzer Prize-winning author and world peace advocate. Bok Tower Gardens' nearly 700 acres of citrus groves, woodland gardens, nature trails, conservation lands and endangered plants are the perfect setting for visitors to explore breathtaking sights throughout the year.

**Titanic – The Artifact Exhibition.** Located in Orlando this unique exhibition allows people to view 300 artifacts recovered from the wreck of the famous "unsinkable" luxury liner. A variety of tours are available. *(Continued on Page 16)*



**Walt Disney's Magic Kingdom**

wonderful opportunity to bring the family to the reunion and perhaps extend a couple days and take in as many sights as possible.

You won't find any better bargains than the \$106 a night rate for the hotel.

Let's get the big ones out of the way: **Walt Disney World** and its extended parks (Magic Kingdom, Epcot, Disney's Animal Kingdom, water parks, etc.) and **Universal Studios Theme Park** really need no further description.

But there is much more than just theme parks available for fun.

If you've never done an **air boat adventure** there are plenty to choose from in the Orlando area. An air boat ride is a great



**Kennedy Space Center**

knows that we can boast that the first American in space was Alan Shepherd a former World War II Cogswell officer, this is a must see. Shepherd is a main feature in the Heroes & Legends section at the Center. Admission nets you the chance to see Space Shuttle Atlantis and the Saturn V moon rocket, plus a wealth of other artifacts, replicas and displays, but the fun doesn't stop there. You can also experience Heroes & Legends, an immersive experience where the stories of NASA's pioneering astronauts come to life, plus other features.



**Titanic exhibition**

(Continued from Page 15) For candy lovers, **Chocolate Kingdom** in Orlando offers a 45-minute factory tour.



**Sea Life Aquarium**

For a deep dive underwater, **Sea Life Orlando Aquarium** offers another great tour possibility. There are incredible views in Orlando's only 360-degree underwater tunnel, where sharks and rays swim overhead. Gaze at breath taking creatures as you walk through themed habitats. The aquarium is located at ICON Park.



**Chocolate Castle at Chocolate Kingdom**

The **Wheel at ICON** park is a Ferris wheel on steroids. This stunning 400-foot-tall observa-

tion wheel gives you a view of Orlando like no other. Cost of the ride is \$27.49 per person.



**Lake Eola**

Looking for something a little less thrilling than a 400-foot ferris wheel? How about a quiet walk around pretty **Lake Eola** in downtown Orlando. A .9-mile paved path offers pretty views of the lake, the downtown skyline and the bird life that calls it home. There are restaurants and if you desire to be on the water Swan-



**The Wheel at ICON Park**

shaped paddle boats are available for rent.

Shoppers can take a break from sea stories with a visit to **The Mall at Millenia**, Orlando's luxury shopping and dining destination. More than 150 shops, restaurants and world-class guest amenities.

**Madame Tussauds** wax museum offers another unique experience if you are into posing with wax figures.

Mel Fisher's Treasure Museum is about a 90-minute drive from Orlando to Sebastian, Florida.

It would be impossible to list all the possible tourist stops in the newsletter, but we hope we have given you a little glimpse of the possibilities.

## Reunion Speaker is "Out of the World"

With the proximity of the Kennedy Space Center to the reunion city, the executive committee (George Overman mostly) reached out for an after-dinner speaker from that facility.

Matt "Mas" Wittal, an Automation and Robotics Systems Engineer at NASA's Kennedy Space Center's Granular Mechanics and Regolith Operations Laboratory and Mission Design Specialist for the Deep Space Logistics service.

Matt is a U.S. Navy veteran and a doctoral student at Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University (ERAU) pursuing a PhD in Aerospace Engineering focusing on guidance, navigation and control. He holds a bachelor of science degree in Space Physics and an MS in Aerospace Engineering both from ERAU.

It is not yet clear if Matt will be able to join us in person or if Covid restrictions may require a virtual presentation but he has a number of topics he can enlighten us on including space mission design, the Artemis program, NASA's role in the modern work, lunar dust and more.

The Artemis program is an ambitious commercial and international mission to land the first woman and first person of color on the Moon and explore more of the lunar surface than ever before. The plan is to establish the first long-term presence on the Moon. This is the first step on the next giant leap, sending the first astronauts to Mars.

If he is able to join us in person, Matt is invited to attend our banquet.



**Matt "Mas" Wittal**



# Remembering pay day in the Navy and the \$2 bill

A young Navy Seaman Apprentice waits in the pay line aboard the USS Cogswell DD-651 in 1966. His base salary is \$86 a month, but in a month or so he'll get an extra \$60 in combat pay when they enter the war zone.

Not needing the entire \$86, the sailor asks the disbursing officers for \$35 to get him through until the next pay day. The rest he'll leave on the books. The disbursing officer hands him a \$20 bill, a \$10 bill, a \$1 bill and curiously to him two, \$2 bills.

The sailor looks at the \$2 bills quizzingly because he has never seen such a thing before. Thomas Jefferson looks back at him from the face of the bill and he contemplates whether this is real money or not.

The whole process of getting paid was a strange one to a new sailor. No paycheck, just cash handed out by armed shipmates. At the end of the pay line were a couple of loan shark sailors looking for shipmates who owed them money and interest on slush funds loaned to settle a gambling debt, pay for a liberty call or just to buy cigarettes from the ship's store.

Loan sharking wasn't legal, but no one seemed to care. This sailor is not concerned because he has been warned by his father on entering the Navy, "neither a borrower nor a lender be."

Today's Navy has a much different pay process. Like everything else, there is little cash used on ships. Direct deposit is the method today and many ships have cashless ATMs that allow sailors to

download money to an electronic card that can be used aboard for geedunk.

There must still be cash aboard for the after-hours pleasures that involve dice and cards.

But back to the \$2 bill story. The \$2 bills were likely used by the military because civilians rarely used the bills although they have been in circulation since March 1862. Since then they have been in continuous circulation up to the present day. There was a 10-year period between 1966 and 1976 when the Treasury Department suspended printing them. They were brought back for the bicentennial and have been printed since.

Believing they are scarce many people hoard them hoping they will be worth more than face value, so far that hasn't worked out.

There has been a lot of speculation on why the military became the main source of distribution for the bills, but one reason the Navy liked them is they took up half the space as a pile of \$1 bills. When spent in ports like San Diego and elsewhere they were an obvious sign to local merchants of the advantage of having sailors in town.

Horse race tracks liked them for betting purposes and gentlemen's clubs liked them because it meant bigger tips for their employees.

The \$2 bills could be challenging away from port towns, because they were not widely recognized.

"I remember going to LA in 1964 on the bus to spend Christmas with my sister," said USS Cogswell DD-651 Association Secretary George Overman. "She was going to pick me up at the bus depot. I went into a small restaurant near the depot and ordered coffee. I laid down one of the \$2 bills and the woman didn't want to take it. I guess she had never seen one before. She finally took it for the coffee."

Here are some facts and myths about the \$2 bill:

The scene of the Declaration of Independence that appears on the flip side of Tom Jefferson's photo is not a perfect duplicate of the John Trumbull painting. Five figures were removed to fit the painting on the bill.

In 2004, admission to President Jefferson's estate and home Monticello had an admission price of \$13. As a result most people received a \$2 bill in change for cash payments.

A \$2 bill is sometimes used as a tracer by small stores to track robberies. A store clerk can keep a \$2 bill at the bottom of their \$1 bill slot in the cash drawer with its serial number recorded in case of a stick up.

In 2005 Stuart Woods wrote a novel called "Two Dollar Bill." One of the major characters made it a point to always tip with \$2 bills.

The \$2 bill is the rarest of US currency, constituting only 1 percent of all notes in circulation.





## USS Recruit (New York) provided a strange shore duty

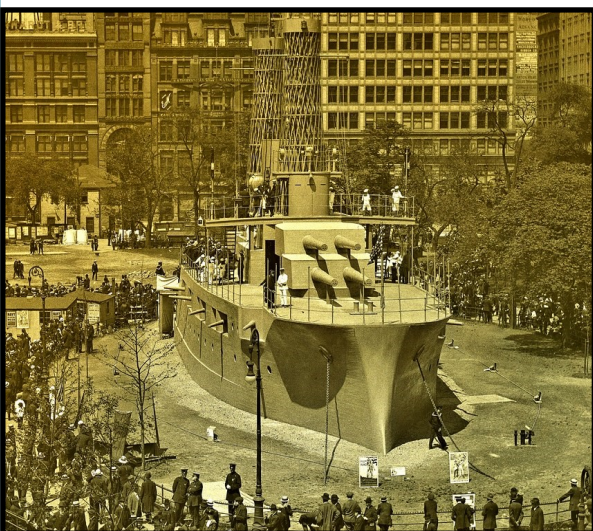
For those who went through boot camp in San Diego most will remember USS Recruit 1, which was also known more affectionately as USS Neversail, The training ship is still there, but no longer in use by the Navy.

It was part of our reunion tour when we visited San Diego in October 2014.

Less known, is the USS Recruit that was built in New York City In 1917. The New York "Neversail" dwarfed the San Diego one.



USS Recruit 1—San Diego



USS Recruit—New York

The U.S. Navy built a full-size battleship in Union Square, New York. It would stay there for the next three years.

Intended as a recruitment and training center, the ship was commissioned as

a normal seagoing ship, under the command of Acting Captain C. F. Pierce, and manned by trainee sailors from Newport Training Station. Internally the ship had a wireless station, full officer's quarters, doctor's quarters and examination rooms to assess the health of potential candidates.

Constructed from wood, the USS Recruit carried two cage masts, a conning tower and a dummy funnel, or smokestack. It had six wooden replicas of 14-inch (360 mm) guns housed in three twin turrets, 10 wooden five-inch (130 mm) anti-torpedo boat guns and two replica one-pound saluting guns, matching the configuration of battleships of the time.

According to the August 1917 edition of Popular Science, the Recruit followed the normal Navy routine. Sailors rose at 6 a.m., scrubbed the decks,

did their laundry, and attended instructional classes. They then stood guard over the ship and were available to answer questions from visitors. By night, all the ship's lights were turned on, including a series of searchlights.

The ship hosted a variety of social events and receptions, including a christening, patriotic speeches and visits by various dignitaries, a group of Native Americans and the women's motor corps.

As a recruiting tool the ship was very successful, helping to recruit 25,000 men into the U.S. Navy.

The First World War ended in 1918, and by 1920 the Recruit was no longer needed in Union Square. It was properly decommissioned and dismantled, with the intention of relocating it to Coney Island's Luna Park. This did not happen and the fate of the Recruit is unknown. The speculation is that the cost of moving the "ship" exceeded the cost of the materials used to build it.



USS Recruit -- New York

## As luck would have it

# USS Cogswell, USS Porter share WWII patrols, different fate

At the USS Cogswell DD-651 reunion in Buffalo, New York Joe Marheineke, a World War II Cogswell crewmember told attendees that they believed the ship was “lucky.” The moniker “Lucky Cogswell” came from the fact that the ship, although very much entangled in Pacific Theater combat never suffered severe damage or deaths.

The “lucky” Cogswell shared some history with perhaps the unluckiest ship in the Navy, the USS William D. Porter DD-579. The Porter was named for Commodore William D. Porter, who served during the Civil War.

The Porter, often nicknamed the “Willie D,” earned a terrible reputation of unhappy mishaps during its service in World War II. The worst and most significant was the accidental friendly--fire torpedoing of the USS Iowa BB-61 on November 14, 1943.

Here it should probably be mentioned that aboard the Iowa were some pretty prominent folks, not the least was President Franklin D. Roosevelt who was headed to a high level war conference in North Africa. The Cogswell was also along on this mission as one of many escort ships.

Along with President Roosevelt were Secretary of State Cordell Hull, Chief of Staff Admiral William D. Leahy, Chief of Staff of the army General George C. Marshall, Chief of Naval Operations Ernest King, Commanding General of the U.S. Army Air Forces Henry “Hap” Arnold and Secretary of Commerce Harry Hopkins and other high ranking officials.

But the trouble actually began two days earlier as the Porter, who was commanded by Commander Wilfred A. Walter, was leaving Norfolk to join the convoy it improperly raised its anchor and did major damage to the railings and lifeboat mountings to another destroyer at the dock as she backed out of her spot.

After joining the convoy, she accidentally dropped a depth charge during rough seas and the exploding weapon caused the Iowa and other ships to take evasive maneuvers believing that perhaps the convoy had come under torpedo attack by a German U-boat. Normal cruising resumed after the Porter reported they were the source of the explosion. Oh, but the next day it got much, much worse.

Perhaps bored, or needing some excitement President Roosevelt requested from Admiral Leahy an anti-aircraft drill. A number of balloons were released as targets and the Iowa gunners shot down most, but the Porter also shot down a few balloons as well. The next drill was a torpedo drill with a simulated launch at the Iowa.

A torpedoman on the Porter failed to disarm one of the torpedoes and a live, armed torpedo was launched from the Porter toward the Iowa and its distinguished passengers. What followed was some tense moments when the Captain of the Porter not wanting to break radio silence tried to use a signal light, but the messages were garbled.

Finally, the Porter broke radio silence, used code words that finally allowed the Iowa to take evasive action and the torpedo exploded safely about 3,000-yards astern of the Iowa. President Roosevelt requested that he be moved to the rail to watch the torpedo.

Admiral Leahy was not amused and ordered the Porter to head to Bermuda where the entire ship’s company was held to account for the mishap. In the end only Lawton Dawson, the torpedoman who failed to disarm the torpedo, faced a court martial

and was sentenced to 14 years at hard labor. President Roosevelt quickly intervened and pardoned the man for what the President understood was an accident.

Although legend had it that the entire ship’s company was arrested in Bermuda, the ship’s log and Navy history does not bear that out.

Amazingly, Capt. Walter was kept as captain of the Porter until May 30, 1944, but the Navy **(continued on Page 20)**



USS William D. Porter DD-579—“The Willie D”



USS William D. Porter listing after kamikaze strike

**(Continued from 19)** transferred the ship to the Aleutian Islands for war escort patrols there. Probably believed there would be few dignitaries in that area to fire torpedoes at. For the duration of its service the Porter was often greeted by other ships with: “Don’t Shoot! We’re Republicans!”

That would be the last time the Cogswell and Porter would be together until the two ships joined in war patrols in the South Pacific and the Battle of Okinawa. There is another legend about the Porter that is also not found in the ship’s log or Naval history. Reportedly a couple drunk crewmembers near Attu decided to fire one of the five-inch mounts and the round ended up in the garden of a military commander on the shore. It is very likely that this is not true.

The Porter’s service in the Aleutians was competent, but unremarkable.

On May 30, 1944 Commander Charles M. Keyes relieved Walter of command. In Late 1944, the Porter, apparently successfully fulfilling its banishment to the Aleutians, was reassigned to Leyte and the Philippines campaign. It is at this time that the Porter and Cogswell began serving together again.

The Porter acquitted herself well in repelling aerial attacks and providing escort to a number of war convoys.

Following the Philippines campaign the Porter (and the Cogswell) were moved north to participate in the invasion of Okinawa. As a member of Task Force 54 the Porter did gunfire support for assault troops on Okinawa. She fired 8,500 rounds of 5-inch ammunition between April 1 and May 5, 1945 and added five enemy planes shot down to her total.

During the period of May 5-9, 1945, the Porter accidentally damaged the USS Luce DD-522. Some accounts said fire from the Porter raked the Luce’s superstructure, but others just refer to accidental damage done by the Porter to the Luce.

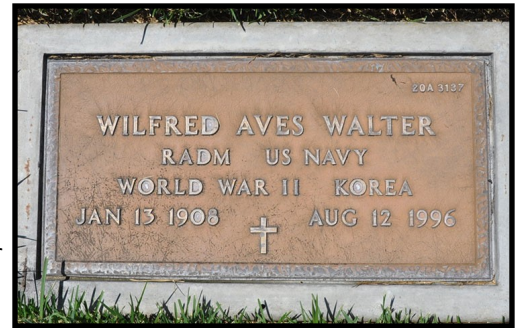
It is on June 10, 1945 at 0815 hours that an obsolete Japanese kamikaze dive bomber dropped out of the clouds and straight for the Porter (some World War II Cogswell sailors believed the plane was headed for them and then diverted to the Porter). Although the Porter evaded a direct hit, the plane splashed down near her and then exploded almost directly under her.

The Porter immediately lost power and suffered broken steam lines and a number of fires broke out. The crew fought for three hours to save the ship, but all efforts were in vain. Just 12 minutes after the Captain order the ship abandoned she heeled over to starboard and sank by the stern. In maybe a change of luck, the entire crew escaped without dying.

The torpedo incident involving the Iowa was kept classified until 1958. At the time of its declassification it received very little coverage in the press.

As we all know the Cogswell went on to enjoy a long and distinguished career as a warship in two more wars, Korea and Vietnam. The Porter ended its checkered three-year career at the bottom of the sea. No new ships have been named for Commodore William D. Porter, but his father and brother David Porter (1780-1843) and brother, David Dixon Porter (1813-1894) and his foster brother Admiral David Farragut (1801-1870) have had several Naval vessels named for them.

In case you were wondering about Commander Walter, the skipper in charge during the Iowa “torpedo incident,” he went on to serve in the Korean War and rose to the rank of Rear Admiral.



Grave marker for Capt. Wilfred Walter

## **“Damn the torpedoes”**

# **Navy’s first Admiral shared a salt water legacy**

The Navy’s first admiral, David Glasgow Farragut, has had five Navy ships named for him. Born in 1801 as James Glasgow Farragut, he later changed his first name to David to honor his foster father Master Commandant David Porter (see story Page 20) .

His birth father, was a Spanish merchant captain and Revolutionary War naval veteran. David Porter and his father had served together in the Revolutionary War. To say Admiral Farragut had salt water in his veins is an understatement.



USS Farragut DD-300

Farragut sided with the North during the Civil War. **(Continued Page 21)**



USS Farragut TB-11 (first one named)

Later, his foster brother David Dixon Porter, (see also Page 20) would distinguish himself in the Navy.

His foster father commanded the Naval station in New Orleans. It was after his commission from the Naval Academy that Farragut went to sea and changed his first name to honor his foster father. Although born in the south,



*(Continued from Page 20)* Farragut saw action at the age of 12 in the War of 1812. He commanded a prize ship captured during the war. He joined the Navy in 1810.

He battled pirates in the Caribbean, saw blockade duty during the Mexican-American War and more familiar to Cogswell sailors oversaw the building of Mare Island Naval Shipyard in the San Francisco Bay Area.



USS Farragut DDG-37

Because of his familiarity with New Orleans he was in command of the Gulf Squadron working with his foster brother, David Dixon Porter. Farragut guided his fleet up the Mississippi River past Forts Jackson and St. Phillip to capture New Orleans, Baton Rouge and the lower Mississippi.

He was unable to capture Port Hudson and Vicksburg, but he worked with Army commanders to eventually take those ports as well. His last major duty of the Civil War occurred at the Battle of Mobile Bay (we visited some of those historic places during our June 2013 Reunion in Mobile).

It was in this battle he uttered the words "Damn the torpedoes. Four bells, Captain Drayton, go ahead, Jouett full speed." It has often been shortened "Damn the torpedoes, full speed ahead."

A Naval career that began at age 9, ended when Farragut was 69 in 1870. He was buried in Woodlawn Cemetery in The Bronx, NY. Five Navy ships have been named for him, four of them destroyers, two that were class leaders.



USS Farragut DD-348



USS Farragut DDG-99

### "Praise the Lord and borrow the ammunition"

## Danish Navy captain exhibited old school "civil" war

Wars used to be fought with a strange civility. Civility and wars would seem to be an oxymoron but consider this true tale from the 1700s.

A Dano-Norwegian flag officer and nobleman named Peter Tordenskjold was a career sailor with the Royal Dano-Norwegian Navy. Renown for his courage and brashness he was one of the most famous naval captains in both Norway and Denmark. He rose in rank rapidly, but died in 1720 at the age of 30.

Born Peter Jansen Wessel in 1690, he was ennobled and renamed Peter Tordenskjold, which translated to "Thunder Shield," by King Fredrick IV. He started his Navy service in 1705 at the age of 15.

The most interesting story about Tordenskjold occurred on July 26, 1714 when his warship, the Lovendals Gallej, flying a Dutch flag encountered a frigate named De Olbing Galley flying an English flag near Lindesnes. The De Olbing Galley was outfitted in England for the Swedes and had 28 cannons. The ship was enroute to Gothenburg and was in the command of an English captain named Bactmann.

When Bactmann's ship signaled to Tordenskjold's ship the latter rose the Danish flag. In return Bactmann fired a broadside at the Danish ship. A furious sea battle broke out between the two ships and they fought to a draw after a full day of fighting. When the De Olbing Galley attempted to escape the Lovendals Gallej set more sails and continued the duel.

A truce was called for the night hours, but the battle renewed the next morning. After 14 hours of fighting, both ships were heavily damaged and Tordenskjold's ship was running short of ammunition. In

what may be one of the most audacious moves by a commander, Tordenskjold sent an envoy to the De Olbing Galley cordially thanking the ship's English captain for a fine duel and then asked to borrow some ammo so they might continue the fight.

Bactmann declined the request. The two captains drank to each other's health and proceeded on their separate ways.

King Fredrick IV was not amused by the incident as he believed his flag officer had revealed vital information about the lack of ammo available in Norway and taken on a far superior enemy. Tordenskjold successfully defended himself at a court martial against the accusation, arguing logically in his favor citing sections of the Danish Naval Code. Fredrick IV was impressed with him and later promoted him, eventually to the rank of Vice-Admiral.

Tordenskjold is also remembered in history as the destroyer of Charles XII's supply fleet in the Battle of Dynekilen.

In November 1720 he was killed by a sword after he was challenged to a duel by a man who was offended because Tordenskjold called him a cheater at gambling.



Peter Tordenskjold

## Tin Can Sailors - A group worth joining

For those who love destroyers (and who wouldn't?) The National Association of Destroyer Veterans is a group you should consider joining. They publish a great quarterly newsletter and offer announcements of coming events of interest to anyone who has served aboard a destroyer. TCS supports museum ships across the country and membership offers free or discount admission to most of them. Field days offer a chance to work on a museum ship and Bull Sessions offer one-day opportunities to meet with other tin can sailors. To join call (800) 223-5535.

A membership also comes with free or reduced admission to many of the museum ships that are supported by donations from the Association.

To find coming events such as TCS reunions or Bull Sessions, go to [destroyers.org](http://destroyers.org) or For more information on any event, see The Tin Can Sailor newspaper or call the office at (508) 677-0515.



## Tell us your stories

Just a reminder that this is your newsletter. If it is going to be of interest to you we need to hear from you about what you want to read and hear about. Many of you have been very helpful, but others have been silent. We realize that you may be silent because you are happy or satisfied with the direction and content of the newsletter. If not, please let us know what you would like to read and hear. We all share a common experience, but within that common experience are many, many different stories, please don't keep yours a secret. Even if you don't think you are a writer, let us help you put your story together. Easiest way to do that is to contact Jim Smith at [jlsmidiaservices@gmail.com](mailto:jlsmidiaservices@gmail.com) or on his cellphone (810) 338-3015 and tell him your stories.

## Check out the Cogswell website

If you haven't checked out the new USS Cogswell DD-651 Association website do yourself a favor and try it out.

[usscogswell.com](http://usscogswell.com)

George Overman did the association proud with his design of the new website. There are many new features including photos and videos.

You can also see the latest information on reunions and visit and read past newsletters there. Let us know what you think. (And thank George if you get a chance)



Thanks to Walt Dziedzic for this great cartoon

## Bleeding for fun, dollars

During service on another destroyer we pulled into Yokosuka, Japan for a brief port call and replenishment. We had been at sea for several weeks and were looking forward to some liberty.

On the morning of our arrival the captain announced that there was a blood drive ongoing on the Navy base and that all sailors were encouraged to voluntarily give blood.

The incentive for doing so was the captain further announced that no one would be allowed liberty on that first night if they didn't give. That's the first time the term "vampire liberty" came up. Most everyone eligible to get off the ship checked in with the lieutenant from the ship standing guard at the door to the donation center on the base.

We had also heard that your beer went farther after you gave blood, because you were a pint low to begin with.

The next time the term was used was when we were in port in the states and there was a plasma center paying \$10 to \$15 for a plasma donation. For a sailor short on funds in the 1960s, \$10 or \$15 was a tempting incentive.



# Time for a laugh

AUTO REPAIR PRICE LIST	
Ping-Ping-Ping	35.00
Plunk-Ping-Plunk	50.00
Klunk-Ping-Klunk	125.00
Thud-Klunk-Thud	200.00
Clank-Thud-Klank	325.00





# USS Cogswell DD-651 Association

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