## USS I

## FISKE

DD/DDR 842 NEWSLETTER

Volume 28 - Number 1 - February 2012

### President's Report



President Gil Beyer

With the close of the Holiday Season, the beginning of a brand new year, and Spring around the corner, we are entering a new chapter in the life and development of our Association. After the reunion in Milwaukee, we, the newly elected and installed leadership, made conscientious decisions to strike off in some new directions.

The first of these efforts was to update, correct and collate our mailing lists with our rosters. We wanted to do this so that we could have a high level of confidence that our members were receiving our communications in a timely fashion. We felt that if our members were not hearing from us they may get the idea that there wasn't much going on. And, that couldn't be further from the truth.

Since we left Milwaukee in late September there has been produced, edited and distributed a newsletter that has set a very high bar for all the newsletters to follow. My hat is off to our 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, Sandie Siciliano, who assumed the job of Newsletter Editor on very short notice, and who compiled, designed, typeset, formatted and edited that wonderful issue, along with its distribution.

But, regardless of her obvious expertise, she couldn't have done it without the submissions given her by all of your officers and appointees. I offer a well-deserved and sincere 'BZ' to all that contributed to that effort. Judging from the emails, phone calls and letters received from you in the weeks following its release, that edition was a big hit and really got your attention, which is what we wanted to happen. We have already had several Shipmates commit to seeing us in Charleston in 2013.

Your Webmaster, Steve Gilbert, has created new features on our website which include some interactive pages that will allow you to keep on board as to who will be going to Charleston as well as the planned activities and tours. His column "What's Up with the Web" appears in this newsletter.

New in this issue is our 1st Vice President's column "Frankly Speaking" with Frank Nicastro on page 6. As a Connecticut State Representative, his main focus will be on veteran's issues or government bills that have been passed or being considered.

All in all, it has been a fun-filled, if hectic, three months since I assumed this post. Thanks to the team that supports me, a lot has been accomplished and much more is in the works. Your Fiske Association is working very hard to ensure all of you are kept informed. It is our mission to keep the best damned 'Tin Can' ever alive in the minds and hearts of all who ever served on board her.

Shipmates - until next time, may you all have calm seas and following winds.

Gil

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### From the Editor's Desk



Sandie Siciliano, ETN2/USNR 1975-1980

Dear Shipmates,

This edition is scheduled for release on 15 February, but

putting it together requires much planning in advance.

It is New Year's Eve as I write this - Winter Solstice has come and gone, and the world is getting ready for 2012. Spring, a time of renewal, is just around the corner. I join everyone in praying for a better year, continued good health, and real progress for peace and good will.

That said, the key word above is "continued good health". I say this because since we released the special edition of this publication in November, 2011 (with rave reviews), no less than 80 returns came back by email, and I have at least 30 more stacked beside me that were returned by the post office. While we were thrilled by the response (from those who actually got the newsletter) we were distressed at the number of returns.

It's understandable that age and health are factors, and that our roll call for those who have passed on continues to grow, but consider this: Being part of this Association is not just a trip down memory lane for that tin can we all loved so much - it is bordered by fellowship, camaraderie, and friendship, then bound together by collective years of service to our country.

You might like to know that when one of us passes along, we invite the closest kin to remain in the Association as an honorary member. That link is what enables the widow, son, or daughter to continue to connect with the shipmate's history, and to impart, in some small way, that history to their children, grandchildren, and yes, even great grandchildren. They should know that we made a difference!

When the returns started to roll in, your officers quickly formed a team to try to track and relocate missing shipmates. They used every available method - phone - internet searches - friends of friends - and more. If you served aboard the Fiske, and you move, or change your email address, make it one of your priorities to write, email, or call any one of the officers or appointments listed

is something no one, or anything can ever take away from us. In that sense, we are a family that cares about every one of our shipmates. Until next time, I wish you all fair winds and following seas!

Sandie

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### Are You Moving?

Don't leave your Navy family behind!

We don't want to lose track of you, so
be sure to let us know when you
change your email, phone or home address.

Please send your new information to <u>anyone</u> above. Send Ship's Store orders and "Fiske Mates" stories to:



Sandra Siciliano
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Tampa, FL 33625

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"A powerful Navy we have always regarded as our proper and natural means of defense; and it has always been of defense that we have thought, never of aggression or of conquest. But who shall tell us now what sort of Navy to build? We shall take leave to be strong upon the seas, in the future as in the past; and there will be no thought of offense or provocation in that. Our ships are our natural bulwarks."

#### President Woodrow Wilson, 8 December 1914 An Annual Message to Congress





*Jeff Kovite* SOG2 1959-1961

I wanted to begin this report with the phrase "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times," but that's been done and, perhaps, it may be a bit overdramatic. Suffice it to say it has been a mixed bag since the reunion in Milwaukee.

We were notified of the loss of good shipmates in the last few months – J Roy Davis, Lou Schmeiske, Richard Powell and Cliff Myers.

I did not know Roy, but I was on board with both Lou and Richard during the 1961 Med Cruise. Almost everyone knew Cliff, one of the founders of our organization. They will all be missed.

On the plus side, the reunion committee has been looking at hotels in Charleston for 2013; there are many nice locations from which to choose. After we have been able to compare the various plans that are being offered, I expect to provide more specific information about the hotel (and of some of the planned activities and tours), in the next newsletter. Until then, I wish you fair winds and smooth sailing.



#### **TAPS**



#### **CLIFFORD J. MYERS, BT1**

It is with sadness that we report the passing of our cofounder, Cliff "CJ" Meyers, in 2008. Regretfully, we did not learn of his passing until late December 2011. Cliff served aboard the Fiske from September, 1952 until April of 1955. He was career Navy, retiring in June, 1970. Anyone who served with Cliff knew that "the chief was always right". He and shipmate George Post formed the first reunion at Newport, RI. Without their efforts there would be no Fiske Association. We are deeply indebted to both of them for our continued fellowship and camaraderie. There will be a special commemoration in his honor at the Charleston Reunion.

### Web Site Update...

Be sure to check out "What's Up with the Web" on page 7. If you are not computer savvy, or don't "surf" the web because it's a new-fangled thing, this column is for you.

Steve Gilbert, our Webmaster, is the genius behind the USS Fiske website – one of the finest in the fleet, if not *the* finest. Thanks to him, we are able to share common information, provide links to veteran's groups and other military websites, list the officers and appointments along with profiles of our shipmates, showcase

the entire Ship's Store, publish letters, and so much more.

It is a huge job, and like the rest of the officers and appointments, Steve volunteers his time and talent to make us look good and keep in touch. He is a quiet kind of guy, not one looking for praise, but you should know that he is our "silent hero" and that we are grateful to him for all his endeavors.

Through his column we hope to convince you to visit the website. Once you get the hang of it you'll wonder why you didn't go there sooner! *Editor* 

### **VISIT THE WEBSITE!** WWW.USSFISKE.ORG



UPDATE YOUR PROFILE!!
WEBMASTER@USSFISKE.ORG

### Genuine Buck Gent Knife New Supply on Order!



A Steal at \$25.00!

**Reserve Yours Now & Pay Later!** (See Ship's Store Order Form for Details)

1 7/8" drop point blade, 420HC stainless steel, 2 3/4" closed, lockback. Handle has the Fiske hull numbers and image.

### Fiske Mates



Featuring Jim "Ace" Melvin ETN2 on board Sept. 1967-Feb 1969

I was back by the scuttlebutt by the Ship's Store one afternoon shortly after being transferred to the ET Gang, when a young Ensign came though the aft hatch. He looked like a deer in the headlights. He asked me, "where's the wardroom?" In a moment of unthinking brazenness, I pointed forward and said, "It's on the pointy end of the boat, Sir. Go that way 'til you run into a door. You can't miss it."

Later I thought maybe I was out of line and decided to stay clear of the young Ensign. The next morning at quarters in CIC, I found out just how difficult that would be when he introduced himself as our new Ol Division boss. I tried to hide behind radar repeaters and stay out of sight. Thankfully, he didn't remember me. I am still occasionally in contact with that Ensign, now Captain Dale Paquette, USN Retired.

During the '68 Med Cruise, Reserve Sailors were offered an early out; after an informal meeting on the mess deck, most of the guys turned it down until we returned to Newport in February of '69. I never regretted that decision and hope my shipmates didn't either.

#### This is Your Column!

Fiske Mates want to hear from you!

Send (or email) a photo and a short
memory of your time aboard to
"Editor" USS FISKE. We'll send you a
token of our appreciation in return!



### Report from the Treasurer



James R. Rapson ENS/LTjg 1964-1967

To all of those who survived 2011, let's hope that the New Year of 2012 will bring peace, prosperity and joy to all. As I have just closed the 2011 Fiscal Year for the USS Fiske DD/DDR-842

Association, Inc., may I report that we are in continued good financial shape with no outstanding bills to be paid, that the records are being forwarded to the accountant and the appropriate reports will be prepared for the Executive Committee, the Internal Revenue Service and the State of New Jersey.

Now that the 2011 Reunion is also complete, there are several members, Jeff Kovite (Chairman), Gil Beyer and myself, already planning *your* next Reunion in September 2013 in Charleston, SC. Yes, it does take that long to put a Reunion together. Your Ship's Storekeeper, Sandie Siciliano has already selected several items for the Reunion and will be looking for more "deals and surprises" to offer the attendees. Good planning and preparation amongst the Committee Members will keep our ship on an even keel and steadied up on the correct course.

Sandie has also taken on a new responsibility as your Newsletter Editor and I hope that you were as impressed with her first effort as I was. A "Well Done" to Sandie for her extra concentration and excellent results. I should also note that the Newsletter brought many immediate responses from our shipmates that they will be in Charleston in 2013. It's never too early to mark your calendars and make those plans to be there.

We also expanded our distribution of the Newsletter to send it electronically as an E-mail. Of the 365 sent via E-mail, 76 were returned for an incorrect address. There were also many returns of the 240 mailings in the "snail mail" group for incorrect addresses. You can help the Association by ensuring that your address (E-mail and "snail") is correct, and, if you know of a Shipmate who has moved, please let me know so that the master records may be updated.

The last item for me in this newsletter is the subject of Annual Dues. We have maintained the Annual Dues amount at \$10.00 per year and normally receive dues from about 43% of the members. In order to continue keeping costs down, you may send your dues payment payable to the USS Fiske Association, Inc., c/o James R. Rapson, 244 Park View Avenue, Warwick, RI 02888. If you are unsure if you owe for prior years, please email me at jrapson@cox.net.

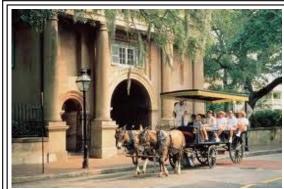
A Voluntary Contribution to assist shipmates who may be unable to pay dues will also be accepted. Your direct response will save about \$.68 per member to do a full mailing (multiply that by 600 members and you see the reason for direct response). Please note with your dues payment if you wish a dues card. Also include your current snail and/or E-mail address and telephone number with area code. We cannot keep in touch with you if you do not keep in touch with us. Fair winds and following seas to all.

James

Order from Ship's Store on page 8 Guaranteed Not to Crack or Peel!



3x10" Magnetic Bumper Sticker: \$4.00 (or) 3x10" Decal: \$3.00 or 2 for \$5.00







Historic Downtown Charleston offers much to keep tourists entertained as they enjoy its unique and charming beauty.

### Search for Reunion Hotels in Charleston in Full Force

Many Locations Under Consideration

ou will like the location of our next reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. It is a beautiful city with wonderful places to visit – plantations, historic district, museums, and tours galore - including waterfront taxi sight-seeing and carriage rides, pirates, ghosts and graveyards, and so much more. Those of you who have already received your



Charleston's Farmer's Market. A tradition and an attraction.

copy of *Tin Can Sailor* already know that the *USS LAFFEY (DD-724)* will be waiting for us at its berth at Patriots Point near the *USS YORKTOWN (CV-10)*. Although the event is more than eighteen months away, the task of getting there requires much work in advance in order to make it enjoyable for all. With this in mind, your reunion host, Secretary Jeff Kovite, is taking offers from various hotels. As he, along with President Gil Beyer and our Treasurer, James Rapson, take the offers into consideration, many decisions must be made. It is not an easy task.

While services and prices are being compared, bartering with management takes place for any "extras" that might be provided (even down to the nitty-gritty of how banners are hung and who does the hanging), to hotel polices regarding whether or not

snacks and beverages can be brought into the hospitality room (and in some states, if it is legal to do so), and will the hotel provide ice, refrigeration, and removal of trash. In addition to all these details, there are agreements to be made for the banquet, and finally, contracts must be signed. All this will, naturally, influence the selection of the location.

Finally, with everything taken into consideration, the goal remains the same: to seek the best value for the cost of the rooms, banquet, hospitality, meals, etc., and to make the Charleston reunion something spectacular to remember.

### Chaplain's



### Corner

W. Frank Stancil GMG3 1959-1963

The relationship between friends involves a mutual commitment. In a genuine friendship, one's faithfulness can shore up the other in times of discouragement or fear. That is what Jesus is to us, our always faithful and forever friend.

The dearest friend on earth is but a mere shadow compared to Jesus. Please never allow the

abundance of God's gifts cause you to forget the Giver.

Frank

### Charleston - A City by the Sea

Charleston is one of the most beautiful cities in America. Gorgeous Southern-style homes, beautiful parks, and a historic waterfront area. A variety of tours will show you the sights, and provide interesting and informative commentary about this special city. One of the most popular attractions is the "Gone with the Wind" tour. The "Charleston City Tour by Minibus" is also very popular for those who want to enjoy as much as possible of the city of Charleston

and the "Southern Experience". The sights of the historic district can also be enjoyed from an entirely different and relaxed view via a Horse-Drawn Carriage tour. There is also a wide selection of interesting tours that focus on Charleston's history, the Civil War, slavery, patriots, military, and so on.

We'll bring more information on some planned tours and activities in the next newsletter.

Jeff Kovite and Sandie Siciliano collaborated on these stories



# Ship's Log Entries....

Historian's Report

A majestic ship was she, that sailed the seven seas, we were the crew who saw it through, and logged our history.

Gilbert E. Beyer, ETSN/ETR3 1960-1963

s your Historian, it has been great fun to dig around in various nooks and crannies of the Internet in my efforts to flesh out the bare bones of the Fiske's history over the 35 years of her service. I recently subscribed to a website that has archived most of the newspapers in this country and many others throughout the world. The archives are very user friendly. I've spent several hours rummaging around in this electronic "attic" (or basement), so to speak.

Most articles are little 'human interest' pieces culled from small town newspapers about local boys graduating from Navy schools and reporting aboard the Fiske; but, one piece really stood out and me took me aback. It was about a Lloyd E. Brown of Tucson, AZ reporting onboard the Fiske in July of 1946. The story appeared in the 'Tucson Daily Citizen'

on August 2, 1946 and said, in part: "is now assigned to duty as a Gunner's Mate aboard the USS FISKE, flagship of Destroyer Squadron Eight, based at Casco Bay, Maine". I never knew the Fiske was ever home ported anywhere other than Newport, RI, or Mayport, FL.

I really hope that there is someone out there that remembers this and will help me get the time lines straight on when Fiske was in Casco Bay and when she moved (back?) to Newport.

I also came across another article from October 1958 about a Fiske sailor that saved a pair of civilians whose boat had capsized offshore in Bristol. Gerald C. Ball of East Providence was onshore when he saw two men clinging to an overturned dinghy about 100 feet offshore in Mount Hope Bay. Ball took off his outer clothing and swam out to the dinghy. The two men, Caeser Morcelli, 16, of Barrington and his uncle, Ubaldo Morcelli, 65 (who could not

swim), of Johnston. Ball took a line from the dinghy and began to tow them ashore. He was relieved by a shore fisherman, Bart McElroy, of Providence, about halfway to shore. Bristol police and firemen responded and took the victims and their rescuers to a fire station for a change of clothes and hot drinks.

If anyone was on board during that time and remembers this event, please let me know. I was unable to find any other mention of the incident in local papers. Gerald's name is not on any roster I have. I did find a Gerald C. Ball, age 77, living in Exeter, RI, which may be him but I can't be sure.

All in all, surfing around on this website is kind of fun and it keeps me out of bars and other low places.

Thinking ahead to the next newsletter, I'm going to do a little bit on tattoos in the Navy - especially onboard the Fiske. Until then, fair winds and calm seas to all. Gil

### Frankly Speaking

with 1st Vice President, Frank Nicastro

#### Dear Shipmates:

In 2010, Connecticut was the second state in the country to pass legislation making March 30th "Welcome Home Vietnam Veteran's Day". A ceremony was held at an event attended by hundreds of Vietnam Veterans from all over the country. I was proud to speak at this event and sound taps 1 at its conclusion.

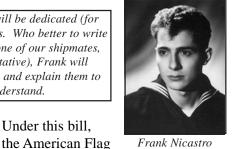
In 2011 several pieces of legislation were passed for veterans past, present, and future. As space is

<sup>1</sup> Frank is also an accomplished trumpeter

Editor's Note: This new column will be dedicated (for the most part), to veteran's benefits. Who better to write it? Our own Frank Nicastro. As one of our shipmates, (and a Connecticut State Representative), Frank will provide an insight on current bills, and explain them to us in layman's terms we can all understand.

limited, I will touch on one piece that I feel will benefit all veterans: S.B. No. 371 Public Act 11-68 - An Act Concerning The Indication Of A Person's Status As A Veteran On A Motor Vehicle Operator's License.

For years, one of the largest complaints heard by veterans, is when shopping where stores give discounts to veterans if they weren't retired, they had to carry a copy of their DD 214.



Frank Nicastro SOGSN 1959-1961

on the individual's driver's license, indicating the person is a veteran.

Under this bill,

will be pictured

In upcoming editions of this newsletter, I look forward to keeping you updated on many other bills that have been passed, and on the progress of others in the 'works".

Frank

### Storekeeper's News...

with 2nd Vice President, & Ship's Storekeeper, Sandie Siciliano

#### Fiske Challenge Coins Get Them While They Last!

This beautiful coin measures 1 5/8" between its crisscross edges. It is two-toned shiny and textured gold with silver/nickel

highlights. The DD and DDR ship's patches are featured in full color (one on each side). Finished and sealed with an epoxy coating, the coin is contained within a clear poly envelope. Yours to treasure for years to come! Free History and Rules with every order.

> \$13.00 ea, or 2 for \$25.00 Order from Ship's Store



.... will return in the May issue, and depending on available space, appear from time-to-time with tips and helpful information. If you have a topic you would like us to explore, please let us know!

#### Hi Shipmates!

First, several new items are in the works, so look for some changes as we tweak and peek the ship's store lockers and get things squared away.

While pricey at first glance, any of you who have ordered the reunion mugs know that pictures do not do them justice. I recently had a call from a shipmate who received his and was so impressed with the quality that he ordered two more as gifts. That makes me want to tell you more about Wealthwood Gifts, the supplier with whom I work when I design and order for ship's store. Top-quality personalized gift items are their specialty - and they are affordable - if you need a special gift, check them out at www.wealthwood.com. Here's the best part: When you order, tell Mary that "Sailor Sandie" from the USS Fiske sent you and get a 10% discount! Free personalization too.

About pricing for ship's store items. We try very hard to keep our prices as low as possible while offering a variety of products. Sometimes, to our surprise, we lose money on an item as our suppliers raise prices due to increased costs on their end. So too, must we, to our great regret. But, your support helps us pay the bills - we appreciate you and we thank you for your continued generosity. Sandie



Steve Gilbert YN3 1958-1960

# What's Up with the Web?

with Web Master, Steve Gilbert

Several new items were recently placed on the website. First, is the 2013

Reunion page. Not much there yet, but check back from time-to-time for updates.

Second, in response to several requests from shipmates, is a Blog <sup>2</sup> called the "Discussion" page. It allows shipmates to ask questions, or have a discussion with each other. You'll find a link to it on all the major pages on the left side of the menu.

To use the USS Fiske Discussion Board Blog, go to the Discussion page and click on Start a New Post. If there is already a topic of interest that appeals to you, just click on the entry to participate in the discussion.

When starting the blog, you may

have a slight delay while another small program starts. Or, you may see a "pop-up prompt" asking if it's okay to run a small program. Accept the prompt and continue to the forum topic. When you're done, click on the Return to Web link. Your discussion will be kept as long as someone is contributing to the conversation.

You'll find the Fiske Chat Room on the Newsletters / E-mails page. The purpose for chat is just that: to chat with a shipmate about anything you wish. Whatever is said is discarded when you end your chat session.

To use chat, first, you will need to contact the shipmate you want to chat with - to set up a mutual time for the chat. At the appointed hour, visit the Newsletters / E-mails page and click on the Enter the Scuttlebutt link.

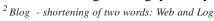
You will be asked to create an alias (nickname) for yourself, but that's all. You need not provide anything else.

Then, you'll see a small window appear at the upper left corner of your screen. Type your message in the box at the bottom of the window and press enter. Others in the chat

room will see what you've typed. They will answer in the same way, and you will see what they typed immediately.



web·mas·ter/ 'web,master/ Noun: A person who designs and develops web sites.



#### \*\*\*\*\*

The Only Official Ship's Store for the USS FISKE DD/DDR-842 Association, Inc.









Ball Caps \$12.00 Embroidered Specify DD or DDR



Patches DD or DDR Large - \$7.00 Small \$5.00

7



Window Decals (apply to inside) \$5.00 - 2 for \$9.00 (not for tinted windows)



DD/DDR T-Shirts Blue or Grey \$12.00 S, M, L, XL, XXL

(8)



Mouse Pad \$10.00 8.5" x 9.5" x 3/8" thick

#### SPECIAL ITEMS FOR COLLECTORS (all prices include shipping)

USS Fiske Challenge Coin DD/DDR



High quality - Custom designed (described on page 7) \$13.00 - 2 for \$25.00

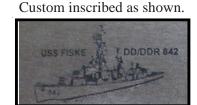
USS FISKE Reunion Mugs Ceramic, Deeply Laser-Etched

Black, White, Cobalt Blue or Green Newport, Post Falls, Milwaukee (Last in this series will be Charleston)



Supplier drop-ships. \$23.00 ea, or \$60.00 for all 3

USS FISKE Buck Knife



(\$25.00 - described on page 3)

**Summer Delivery.** Use order form to reserve now, pay later.

These are just a few items the we offer in ship's store. Please visit the website to see the entire catalog!

### ORDER FORM



#### **BUCK KNIFE RESERVATION**

Yes: \_\_\_\_\_ How Many? \_

Send no money now - we will notify you when this is back in stock. Be sure to include your address and phone below!

Item #	Quantity	Description	Color	Size	Price	Total
				·		

Shipping: Please help us keep it free! If you can contribute to our Fair Share Shipping

Program, please enter any amount here. It helps the Association and is so much appreciated

**SHIP TO:** Make checks payable to the USS Fiske Assoc., Inc.

TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$

Please print clearly to avoid errors!

Name	Street Address	
City	State	Zip
Phone	Email Address:	

MAIL TO: Sandra Siciliano, USS FISKE - Ship's Store Keeper - 6528 Steeplechase Dr. - Tampa, FL 33625