

## BALCH/PORTERFIELD REUNION ASSOCIATION



November, 2009

Greetings,

The Chicago reunion was a success, thanks to the hard work of Jack Corcoran. See his recap below.

At the Board Meeting, Pat Fisher resigned as secretary and Jim Siler was elected secretary. We owe many thanks to Pat and Claudia for their tireless work for this association for many years. Pat and I will do our best to do a good job for the association. Our contact information is on the last page of this newsletter. Please feel free to contact us with comments and suggestions on how to make this an even better newsletter than it is already.

If you currently receive this newsletter by US mail and you have an email address, please send your email address to one of us. As you know, postage is increasing nearly every year and the more we can send via email, the less postage the association has to pay. Also, if your address, phone number or email address changes, please be sure to send it to us as soon as possible. We want to be sure you continue to receive newsletters and that we have correct contact information.

We often receive information of benefit to veterans. If space allows, we'll include this information on the Veterans Information Page. In this newsletter, there is information on Agent Orange exposure in Vietnam and the fact that the VA now recognizes several conditions that are "presumed" to be caused by exposure. If you've previously filed a claim and been denied, you may now be eligible for VA disability benefits.

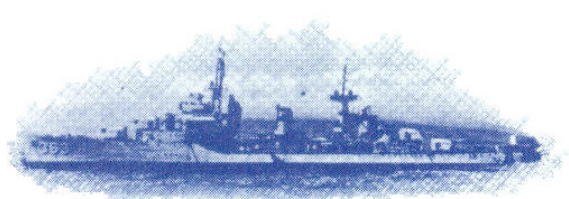
The next reunion will be in Salem, OR in Sept. 2010. Details will be in the next newsletter.

Fair Winds and Smooth Sailing  
Jim & Pat Siler

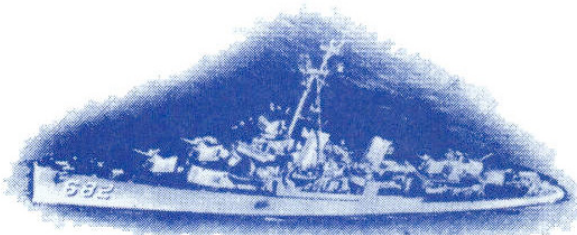
### Message from Jack Corcoran

Thank you for all the kind words and thank you notes which I've received. They are extremely appreciated. Everyone can take credit for the Chicago Reunion. Any time I needed assistance or direction, someone was right there to guide me. The accommodations and hotel staff were superb. Everyone seemed to be fed well and enjoyed the events we experienced. One of the most enjoyable things about reunions is the week long camaraderie and BS, which we love. John Bryan won the \$25 prize for the password selection "Tin Can" for our visit to Tommy Gun's Garage. Marie Lesh launched her career challenge to Martha Stewart with her excellent breads and cookies. One of my perks was taking home the breads that were left. Thank you Marie! I'm lathering them up with butter and enjoying every slice.

Ruth Hamilton, as always, did a fantastic job of getting our lunches spread out. On Friday, we had a small window of time between returning from Great Lakes and attending the business meeting and raffle to have lunch. On the bus, I mentioned to Ruth how little time she'd have to get the lunch out. Well, BINGO! We returned to a full table, courtesy of Pat Godfrey. She stepped up and had everything ready for us. A big thank you to Pat Godfrey.



**U.S.S. BALCH DD363**



**U.S.S. PORTERFIELD DD682**

Our group was recognized as being in attendance at the Great Lakes Graduation. We even had the opportunity to tour Great Lakes Naval Station and visit the Exchange. A salute to Frank Bruno (WWII) for having eight family members join us at our banquet.

Unfinished business is that I have shirts available. I have five shirts on hand. They're the same powder blue Polo w/pocket and our reunion assn. emblem on the back. Small, medium and large are \$18. Sizes XX and above are \$20. They would make great Christmas gifts. Email Jack at amadon1940@gmail.com or phone him at 309-379-7040 to order.

There were two group pictures taken, one at Soldier Field after the Memorial Service and one at the banquet. The pictures are \$15 each. Copies can be ordered from:

Pam Proctor Photography  
7986 Bunton Road  
Ypsilanti, MI 48197  
831-902-0814  
pamproctor@msn.com



Now that I'm no longer President, I'm going to miss the playing of "Hail to the Chief" whenever I enter a room! Collectively, let's all wish the best of luck to Diane Essig and Jim & Pat Siler for a successful reunion and better attendance in Salem, OR in 2010.

### Mini-Reunion, Kerrville, TX – 2010

Sam Thomas provided information for the next mini-reunion. The reunion includes the Memorial Day service at the Nimitz Memorial. Sam says, "Anyone who has ever served in the United States Navy and their families should try and make it to the Nimitz Memorial at least one time." Many Balch and Porterfield sailors' names are on bricks at the memorial and there is a large plaque on the Memorial Wall showing both ships. Also, there are individual plaques of Balch-Porterfield shipmates on the Wall. Our small association has more of the above than any other ship that served in the United States Navy. To order bricks online: <http://www.nimitz-museum.org/memorial.htm#bricks>. Or contact Pat Siler for a copy of the form to be mailed to you.

Dates: Sunday, May 30 – Thursday June 3, 2010 (Some come in Saturday)

Rates: Fri. & Sat., May 28 & 29 - \$89.00 + tax, Sun. through Thur. - \$85.00 + tax

#### Hotel Information:

Y.O. Ranch Resort Hotel  
2033 Sidney Baker  
Kerrville, TX 78028  
830-257-4440

Be sure to mention you are with our group.  
Cut-off date – April 28, 2010

## News

Sam Thomas spoke with Frank Kurtz. He was really honored to have the reunion dedicated to him. He's having problems with his legs but hopes to attend the Oregon reunion next year. Sam also spoke with Marv Westcott. Marv had planned to attend the Chicago reunion but got sick at the last minute and was unable to attend.

**Sick Bay** - Please keep the following in your thoughts and prayers.

Clements, Russell (Porterfield, BMSN, 62-64)  
Forbes, Oscar "Oz" (Porterfield, SHCS, 58-60)  
Hegel, Eileen, wife of Fred (Porterfield, MM3, 60-62)  
Hutten, Ken, husband of Mary (widow of Augie DeWolf, Balch 43-44)  
Laycock, Carol, widow of Cliff (Porterfield, MM, 51-55)  
Shaffer, Bonnie, wife of Jeff (Porterfield, TM3, 60-63)  
Thomas, June, wife of Sam (Balch/Porterfield, 42-43/43-45)

## Additions to the Memorial List

Dirlam, Jr., Frank J. (Porterfield, WWII)  
Fogler, Samuel J. "Sam", (Porterfield, WT1, 43-46)  
Pearl, Richard J. "Dick", Porterfield, ET2, 51-54)  
Schmitt, Faye, wife of Big Joe (Porterfield, TM3, 43-45)  
Toal, Bill (Porterfield, FTSN, 52-54)

## Additions to the Roster

Hayhurst, John  
mochi36@peoplepc.com  
Porterfield, EM, 59

Jenkins, Rex H.  
766 Harpeth Rd.  
Nashville, TN 37221  
615-646-4475  
rexjenk39@yahoo.com  
Porterfield, SF3, 61-62

Jochim, Stanley  
Balch, WWII  
chuerbin@gmail.com  
Email is daughter Carol Huerbin

Retton, Tony  
PO Box 7124  
Eugene, OR 97401  
341-344-1976  
dixietony@aol.com  
Porterfield, BM3, 52-56

Tagg, Robert "Bob"  
btagg@lawrencehall.com

Wilkerson, Fred  
5060 California Ave #1000  
Bakersfield, CA 93309  
661-633-3818  
fred.wilkerson@cbre.com  
Porterfield, SM, 67-69

## Address, Phone, and/or Email Changes

Butler, James  
3405 Hyperion Way SE  
Palm Bay, FL 32909  
Cell: 321-506-5200

Ditzler, Donald  
1282 N 11<sup>th</sup> St.  
Daved City, NE 68632

402-367-3500  
Ditzler@neb.rr.com

Sam Thomas  
3571 Vista Grande  
Shingle Springs, CA 95682  
530-677-6384

**Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association**  
Expense Report  
Fiscal Year Ending October 31, 2009

<u>Item</u>	<u>Expenses</u>	<u>Income</u>	<u>Totals</u>
Balance 10/31/2008			\$7,587.48
<u>Income - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap & Decal Sales		\$176.00	
Donations		<u>485.00</u>	
Total non-reunion related income		\$661.00	
Balance			\$8,248.48
<u>Expenses - non-reunion related</u>			
Cap Expenses	\$ 12.86		
Newsletter - printing & postage	<u>726.13</u>		
Total non-reunion related expenses	\$738.99		
Balance			\$7,509.49
<u>Reunion Income</u>			
Money credited to Jack Corcoran		\$2,000.00	
Registrations		235.00	
Kitty		1,345.00	
Raffle		250.00	
Activities		<u>11,908.00</u>	
Total Reunion Income		\$15,738.00	
Balance			\$23,247.49
<u>Reunion Expenses</u>			
Tommy Gun's Garage	\$2,115.00		
Music - Monday	395.00		
Music - Friday	495.00		
Abbot Tours	4,648.00		
Photography	250.00		
Museum & Confectionary tours	235.00		
Hotel Expenses - Food	2,180.00		
Quarterdeck - food and beverages	880.12		
Printing & Engraving	195.98		
Advance to Jim Siler for Oregon reunion	0.00	**	
Wreath	<u>263.00</u>		
Total Reunion Expenses	\$11,657.10		
Bank Balance 10/31/09			\$11,590.39

\*\* No advance was given for the Oregon reunion at the request of Jim Siler.

## Veterans Information

### VA INCREASES AGENT ORANGE ILLNESS PRESUMPTIONS LIST

**WASHINGTON (October 13, 2009)** — The Veterans of Foreign Wars of the U.S. is applauding Veterans Affairs Secretary Eric K. Shinseki's decision to increase by three the number of illnesses that can now be linked to the herbicide defoliant Agent Orange, which was used extensively during the Vietnam War.

Today's addition of hairy cell leukemia, Parkinson's disease and ischemic heart disease raises to 15 the total number of "presumed" service-connected illnesses the VA considers linked to Agent Orange.

"This is very significant," said VFW national commander Thomas J. Tradewell Sr., a Vietnam veteran from Sussex, Wis. "Veterans who contracted one or more of the 15 associated illnesses no longer have to prove their illness was due to their service in Vietnam during the war. The VA is saying 'We believe you,' which will enable more veterans to receive the healthcare and benefits they earned and deserve."

Shinseki's decision is supported by an independent study by the Institute of Medicine, entitled, "Veterans and Agent Orange," which was released on July 24, 2009.

Tradewell called the IOM report — the eighth in a series — extremely important because scientific research is continuing into the long-term effects of Agent Orange and other herbicides used during the Vietnam War.

"The report also means scientific research is continuing to validate what the veterans' community has been saying for decades — that Agent Orange is making people sick," he said.

"As a former Army chief of staff and twice-wounded Vietnam combat veteran of two tours, Secretary Shinseki knows how to take care of troops and their families. His acceptance of the IOM recommendations also proves that he will listen to the scientific community and act on their recommendations if it helps to better serve veterans and their families," said Tradewell. "The veterans community is extremely fortunate to have him in our corner."

The new list of 15 illnesses now recognized under VA's "presumption" rule are:

- Acute and Subacute Transient Peripheral Neuropathy
- AL Amyloidosis
- Chloracne
- Chronic Lymphocytic Leukemia
- Diabetes Mellitus (Type 2)
- Hairy Cell Leukemia
- Hodgkin's Disease
- Ischemic Heart Disease
- Multiple Myeloma
- Non-Hodgkin's Lymphoma
- Parkinson's Disease
- Porphyria Cutanea Tarda
- Prostate Cancer
- Respiratory Cancers
- Soft Tissue Sarcoma (other than Osteosarcoma, Chondrosarcoma, Kaposi's sarcoma, or Mesothelioma)

To read the VA press release with links to more information on each illness, go to <http://www1.va.gov/opa/pressrel/pressrelease.cfm?id=1796>

## Contact Information

James W. "Jim" Siler, Jr. (BT3, 64-66)  
835 Claybanks Drive  
Callaway, VA 24067  
H: 540-483-5727  
C: 540-420-5809  
jwsilerbtc@earthlink.net

Pat Siler  
C: 540-420-5808  
silerpugs@yahoo.com

Please contact either one of us with address, phone, email changes and any other crew information. If you have questions relating to other subjects, we will see that it gets to the proper person.

## Website

<http://www.balch-porterfield.org>

The Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association website is managed by Jeff Shaffer. Please contact Jim Siler with website questions or information and we will see to it that Jeff gets them.

## Baseball Caps

For baseball caps, please indicate which ship you were on. The price is \$10.00, which includes shipping.

The first patch, with the Pacific Ocean globe with Pride of the Pacific on it, was issued during the Korean Conflict (price \$4.00) and the second patch, with a seahorse and spear came out in the 60's (price \$4.00). The decal is the same design as the 60's, with the seahorse (price \$1.00).

To purchase, send a check payable to **Balch-Porterfield Reunion Association** to Jim Siler, 835 Claybanks Dr, Callaway VA 24067.

## Facebook Page

For those of you who have computers and internet access, we have a "group page" for the USS Porterfield on Facebook ([www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)). It's a place where shipmates can swap sea stories, post pictures and otherwise keep in touch. There's even a "chat" feature where you can write back and forth in "real time". If you're already on Facebook, Type **USS Porterfield** in the search box at the upper right hand corner of any page and click to search. Then click on the name of the ship to reach the page. On the left, there is a list where you will see "Join Group". Click on that and you're in. It's as simple as that. If you know of other shipmates who are on Facebook, you can "Invite" them to join as well. If you're not on Facebook, it's easy and free to join. We already have several members on there and welcome more, including family members. Reunion information will be on the page as well. To find us on Facebook, type James "Bill" Siler or Patricia Anderson Siler in the search box. When you find us, send us a friend request.