

USS Belknap Association

Honoring **all** shipmates, **all** years, **all** crews



DLG-26 1964 - 1975



CG-26 1975 - 1995

USS Belknap Association Newsletter February 2023

Letter from the President

Bill Staley (FTG3, aboard 1965-1969)



Shipmates and Family,

Our 2022 Homeport Reunion in Norfolk gave us another great time! We renewed old friendships and met new shipmates. We are pleased to welcome newcomers and their families, and we extend thanks to everyone for attending reunions and helping our Association thrive and grow.

I'm excited to see many shipmates from the 80's and 90's attending reunions and joining the Association. We extend a special welcome to our new Vice President Tom Lewis. We look forward to his leadership and contributions. Our Association is alive and healthy because so many of you are willing to give of your time and talents. On the next page you'll find lists of our past presidents and current officers. Will your name be on a list in the future?

We had a couple of very special events at the 2022 reunion:

We held a Two Bell Ceremony at the Belknap Memorial on the waterfront, to honor the shipmates who died in the 1975 collision at sea. It was a moving and emotional experience for everyone who attended. I am very grateful for all of you who helped make it happen, and of course for all who attended.

At our banquet, we were honored by a visit from the Mayor of Norfolk, Kenneth Alexander. He thanked us for our service and for being a part of the history of Norfolk. We presented him with a World Tour Book and other Belknap memorabilia.

Our Ship's Store continues to expand, with many new items. Your suggestions for products are very helpful to

make the store a success. Many thanks to Lou Apuzzo for his tremendous work in managing the ship's store!

Remember, buying wearables, mugs, license plates, and other logo items from YOUR Ship's Store supports YOUR USS Belknap Association.

I encourage everyone to do two things:

First, please share your stories and experiences for our new book *STARBUSTER 2*. Email your stories to Mike Abbott (abbottmdp@aol.com), who compiled and published the original *STARBUSTER* and is now compiling the new book. Mike needs your inputs to make the book a success. Thanks, Mike, for your hard work.

Second, buy a World Tour Book. It's a great way to show your children, grandchildren, family and friends where you served and the places you traveled while on the USS Belknap.

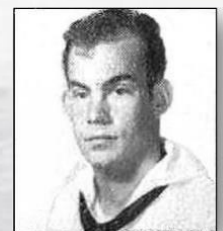
As always, I am grateful to the Board and Past Presidents for their advice and support. It's an honor to be part of this special group and to have fun while preserving our legacy.

I want to say a special *Thank You* to the Ladies Auxiliary. You are instrumental in helping set up and tear down the hospitality suite, assembling goodie bags, getting everyone registered, managing raffles, and just jumping in to help wherever needed. Your contributions to making our reunions successful cannot be overstated.

This year's reunion promises to be another memorable gathering, on the oceanfront in South Carolina. I'm looking forward to sea breezes, spectacular sunrises and sunsets, and all the fun North Myrtle Beach has to offer. 'See you there!'

Full Sails, Shipmates!

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'BStaley'.



USS Belknap Association History

Our Association was started in 2002 by shipmates Jim Farrow, the late Dick Lemon, and the late Al Sniff. The first reunion was held in Norfolk, Virginia that year, and Jim Farrow was elected as the first Association President.

Early on, it was decided to hold every 5th reunion in our homeport of Norfolk/Hampton Roads. Our next homeport reunion will be in 2027. A list of reunions is shown below.

Past Reunions

2002	Norfolk, VA
2003	Pensacola, FL
2004	Charleston, SC
2005	San Antonio, TX
2006	Nashville, TN
2007	Norfolk, VA
2008	Mobile, AL
2009	St. Louis, MO
2010	Tampa, FL
2011	St. Louis, MO
2012	Virginia Beach, VA
2013	Tampa, FL
2014	Portland, ME
2015	Branson, MO
2016	Charleston, SC
2017	Virginia Beach, VA
2018	Las Vegas, NV
2019	Mobile, AL
2020	Canceled (COVID-19)
2021	Kissimmee, FL
2022	Norfolk, VA
2023	N Myrtle Beach, SC

Association Past Presidents

Oct 2002 – Oct 2005	Jim Farrow
Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Dick Tremain
Oct 2006 – Oct 2007	Dick Lemon
Oct 2007 – Oct 2011	Chuck Taylor
Oct 2011 – Oct 2013	Skip McCarroll
Oct 2013 – Oct 2016	Mike Abbott
Oct 2016 – Oct 2017	Jim Farrow
Oct 2017 – Oct 2019	Mike Reeves
Oct 2019 – Present*	Bill Staley

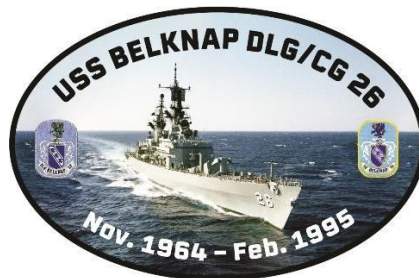
*Due to COVID-19, no elections were held in 2020 or 2021. Officers volunteered to stay in their positions until 2022.

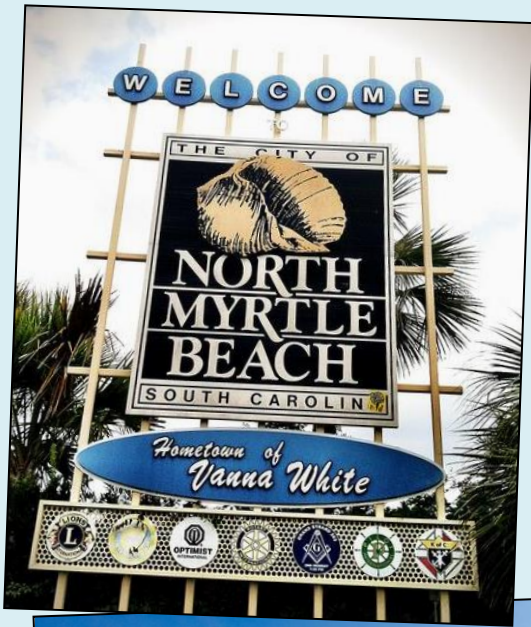
2023 Belknap Association Officers

President	Bill Staley
Vice President	Tom Lewis
Secretary	Bob Gilhooly
Treasurer	Mike Umbriaco
<i>Ladies Auxiliary President</i>	Sandy Stoma

Appointed Positions

Storekeeper	Louis Apuzzo
Asst. Storekeeper	Todd Wright
Historian	Mike Reeves
Chaplain	Dave Jessel
Webmaster	Bob Gilhooly
Publicity & Membership	Ted Hetherington





Beach Cove Resort





2023 USS Belknap Reunion PLAN OF THE DAY – North Myrtle Beach, SC

Wednesday Oct 11: Celebrate NAVY BIRTHDAY! 248 Years Young all day!

By 12:00 Hospitality suite available for set up
15:00 Early Check-In for early arrivals

Thursday Oct 12: Liberty Call! Go have fun all day!

06:30 – 09:30 Breakfast served
08:00 Hospitality suite opens
23:00 Hospitality suite closes



Friday Oct 13: Liberty Call! Go have fun all day!

06:30 – 09:30 Breakfast served
08:00 Hospitality suite opens
24:00 Hospitality suite closes



Saturday Oct 14: Liberty Call! Be back aboard by 15:00!

06:30 – 09:30 Breakfast served
08:00 Hospitality suite opens
15:00 Hospitality suite closes, Executive Board Meeting
15:45 General Meeting – Elections, Dues, Business Old & New
18:00 Banquet—Cash Bar and be seated
18:20 Last Call for Cash Bar before Memorial Service
18:30 Memorial Service (doors will be locked and cash bar closed until after the ceremony) Banquet after the ceremony, cash bar open
20:00 Banquet ends, hospitality suite re-opens. Farewells and Full Sails
24:00 Hospitality suite closes



Sunday Oct 15: Set Sea and Anchor Detail – Prepare to get underway.

06:30 – 09:30 Breakfast served
07:00 Hospitality suite opens for packing Association property
11:00 Official hotel checkout – Late checkouts will be charged for another day

Notes:

1. Watch for messages about optional golf outing, GM Cruise (with optional gambling), and other activities.
2. Listen up for word to be passed about The Ladies Auxiliary special event and business meeting.



Tom Lewis
Vice President
FC2, Aboard '85 – '88

I hope this newsletter finds each of you well! As I have said before, it's an honor to be associated with every one of the Belknap Crew and their families.

At the last reunion in Norfolk, you gave me the opportunity to serve as the Association VP. My goal is to further strengthen and grow this group! With the help of all of you, we will accomplish this feat. I have attended the last three reunions and each time they have been an awesome experience. I will always appreciate seeing my own shipmates and meeting others who served both before and after my time on this great ship.

For our next reunion in North Myrtle Beach, I have been tasked to organize a golf outing on Friday, October 13. If you are interested in participating, please send me an email: tlewis4504@aol.com.

“I know of no ship or crew greater that the one we have with the Belknap!” *Tom*

Todd Wright

Immediate Past Vice President
ET3, Aboard '93 – '95



I hope everyone had a great time at the 2022 reunion in Norfolk. I'm looking forward to seeing each of you in North Myrtle Beach this year.

We've been working on a cruise jacket for those who've never purchased one, who have lost theirs, worn it out or, like me, can no longer fit into it! I swear the dryer made mine shrink - LOL 🤔.

We have some digitized designs for embroidery, including a very nice image of the Belknap. This design combines a view of the ship with the painting of her firing a with the ship underway. We are also working on other designs that should be available soon. The designs will be customizable with your rating, deployments, etc. as shown below.



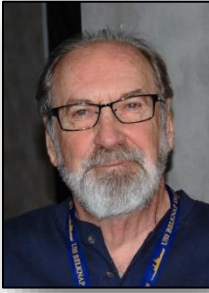
We intend to make the jackets available through the Ship's Store, so if want something special, send our Storekeeper Lou Apuzzo a note and he'll try to get it for you.

It's been 27 years since our great ship was decommissioned, and not a day goes by without me thinking about her and those who rode the seas aboard.

If you stay in touch with anyone who served on the Belknap, no matter what years they were aboard, please reach out and invite them to the reunion. Our reunions are for all Belknap shipmates from the early 1960's all the way to 1995.

Again, I can't wait to see each and every one of you. I look forward to hearing sea stories again from the “old salts!” Haze gray and underway, Belknap all the way!

Todd



Ted Hetherington

Publicity and Membership
FTM2, Aboard '68 –'70

Shipmates, our Association constitution stipulates that our purpose is to “...*preserve the history and memory of the USS Belknap DLG/CG 26, its naval crews; to foster and strengthen the fraternal, civic, and patriotic ties among shipmates; to memorialize departed shipmates who served in USS Belknap...*”

Toward that end, we are searching for "lost shipmates;" if you have moved, changed your email address, or changed your phone number and have not notified the Association, you may do so through our website: <http://ussbelknap.org>. Click on *Membership and Rosters*, then *Online Shipmate Information Update* and complete the online form. You may also send the information by email to webtech@ussbelknap.org or by US Mail: USS Belknap Association 2011 Lynwood Drive, Greensboro NC 27406. Additionally, you may contact me via Facebook Messenger, email: bowtieted@aol.com, or phone 805- 218-9025.

While you're at the website, check out the Ship's Store. Our non-profit Association has limited sources of funding to cover expenses that include reunions, website fees, printing, and postage. Our income is from membership dues, Ship's Store sales, and limited profits from reunions and raffles. Your patronage of the Ship's Store helps sustain your Association. If you want something not in the store, our Storekeeper Lou Apuzzo may get it for you, and he is always looking for merchandise ideas.

Beware of for-profit companies selling merchandise with the USS Belknap name It's legal because US Navy ship names are in the public domain, but buying from them takes potential income away from the USS Belknap Association.

Ted

Louis Apuzzo

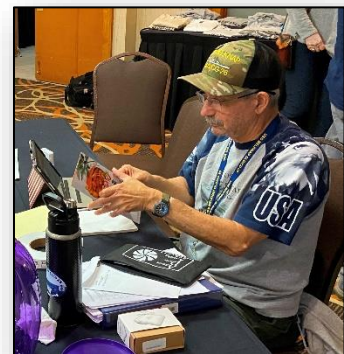
Storekeeper
FTG, Aboard '71 – '75

Shipmates,

Please check out the Ship's Store on our website. We have many new we think you'll like, and we can get many custom items. Just let me know what you want and I'll try to find it.

If you have questions or suggestions for the store, please email me at ljappuzzo@snet.net or message me on Facebook.

I look forward to seeing you in North Myrtle Beach!



Lou

Mike Umbriaco

Treasurer

QM2, Aboard '74 – '75



Ahoy! Can it be yet another new year for us Belknap Association types? Our Association is nearing 21 years old and growing as we go. How is it that some ship's organizations go the distance and others fade away after ten years or so? I think the answer is that we were blessed with some great forefathers who put us on a course of comradery, brotherly care, and support of one another. I found a newsletter article written in 2014 by one of our founders, the late Dick Lemon. He described meeting with Master Chief Al Sniff right after the Belknap's decommissioning ceremony in 1995. They spoke of how the spirit of the Belknap

lives on through its collective crews over the years. Plans were made to contact former shipmates and see if there was interest in having an association and yearly reunions.

They found many enthusiastic shipmates, such as our first president Jim Farrow. They also found a very special shipmate, an officer who was first XO and later CO: Captain Dick Shafer enthusiastically embraced the USS Belknap Association and faithfully attended our first 19 reunions, from 2002 until his death in 2020. He was an inspiration to all of us who knew him.

As we prepare for our October reunion in North Myrtle Beach, SC, we are grieving the loss of another founding father, Al Sniff. Al was a WWII veteran and our Association's "ancient mariner." With a Navy career that ran from the 1940's to his retirement in the mid 1970's, he was always one to "snap ya" with sailor humor or share a sea story. The Association embraced Al's late wife, and his daughters who accompanied him in later years. If any of you have special memories of Master Chief Sniff, we plan to have a special memorial tribute to him at the reunion. Please email a note about your memory to our president Bill Staley or to any board member so we can include it in the tribute.

Belknap shipmates hanging out in a great coastal resort town like North Myrtle Beach sounds like great liberty to me!

Mike

Belknap Association Elected Officers for 2023-2024

President: Bill Staley – goodstuff003@triad.rr.com – FTG, 1965-1969

Vice President: Tom Lewis – tlewis4504@aol.com – FC, 1985-1988

Secretary: Bob Gilhooly - gilhooly@comcast.net - STG, 1964-1967

Treasurer: Mike Umbriaco - mumbriaco@gmail.com - QM, 1974-1975

From Webmaster Bob Gilhooly: Our website is divided into two areas, one open to everyone and an area with benefits reserved for dues-paid members. All shipmates on our roster receive the newsletter and all-hands broadcasts via email. Dues-paid members will also receive the newsletter via the US Postal Service and may access all areas of the website. Don't miss out - support your Association and become a dues-paying member today!

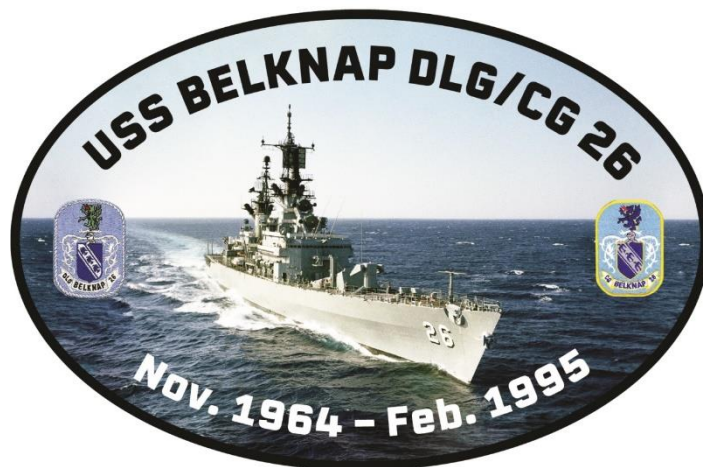
On-line Services: At our website www.ussbelknap.org, you will find registration forms, lists of shipmates, the Ship's Store, and lots of other great Belknap and Navy stuff! You may pay for reunions and dues online too, via PayPal. You DO NOT need a PayPal account to use this feature.

Postmaster: Address correction requested.

Stamp
goes
here!

R. Gilhooly
6 Schillhammer Rd.
Jericho, VT 05465

USS Belknap Association Newsletter February 2023



Hi, Ladies and Families.

I'd like to thank Lori and her staff for all the hard work they've done for the Auxiliary. And thank you for electing your new board, with me as President, Betsy McALoon as Vice President, Helen Strupczewski as Secretary, and Debbie as Sergeant at Arms.

Susie Sablan has worked very hard to research activities in North Myrtle Beach. With no tours planned this year, we'll have a special outing instead of the usual Ladies Breakfast. We'll need to have our business meeting before the Association's general meeting on Saturday, so watch for information about the outing and our meeting. If you did not receive a survey by email, please let me know: email tsstoma@yahoo.com; phone 631-445-8175.

Sandy Stoma
President,
Ladies Auxiliary



We'll hold a raffle again this year. The raffles are fun and raise money for the Association, with lot of great prizes. Thanks to everyone for your amazing donations!

We're working with Bill Staley on Belknap Christmas ornaments; more information to follow.

Even if you're not an Auxiliary member, please join our activities. We have a good time and make new friends as we support our Belknap sailors enjoy their time together. Although my husband Ted was on the Belknap 51 years ago, every October is like a family reunion for us both, because we have become a *family*. I Hope to see everyone in October!

Sandy



Don't be fooled by on-line imposters!

Shop at your USS Belknap Association

Ship's Store: <https://ussbelknap.org/ships-store-main/>



USS BELKNAP DLG/CG-26

2022 Reunion – Norfolk, Virginia

NOV 7 1962



Happy Birthday Gil Sanchez!



Giving World Tour Book to Norfolk Mayor Ken Alexander

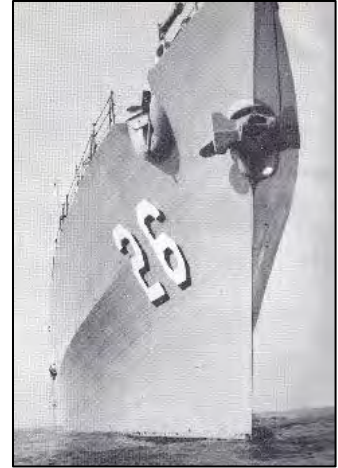


**USS Belknap Association
2023 Reunion Registration Form**

October 11 – 15

Beach Cove Resort

4800 N Ocean Blvd, North Myrtle Beach, SC 29582
Ph 843-286-5690



Shipmate Name _____

Years on board (ex: 66-68) _____ Rank/Rate when aboard _____

Guest Name # 1 _____

Guest Name # 2 _____

Guest Name # 3 _____ (Add sheet for more guests) **Total # Attendees:** _____

Registration Fee (Shipmate only \$25.00, \$40.00 after 31 July) ----- \$ _____
(Non-refundable after 30 September)

Registration Fee, Guests (1 guest free, additional guests \$20.00 each) ----- \$ _____

Banquet (including Memorial Service): Saturday 14 October # People

Prime Rib with Homemade Horseradish Sauce ----- \$ 50.00 ----- \$ _____

Grilled Salmon with Chef's Choice Sauce ----- \$ 50.00 ----- \$ _____

Oven Roasted Chicken Breast with Red Wine Sauce ----- \$ 40.00 ----- \$ _____

Prices includes tax and gratuity (Non-refundable after 5 October) *Meal choices and prices not guaranteed for registrations after 29 Sept. An alternative selection may be offered at a different price.*

Meals include Coffee, Tea (Hot or Cold), Roasted Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable Medley, Garden Salad with Ranch or Balsamic Vinaigrette Dressing, and choice of Dessert. Please indicate number of each dessert in the space provided:

Chocolate Peanut Butter Cheesecake ----- _____

Key Lime Pie/Tart ----- _____

Special Meal Requirements (please specify) _____

Annual Dues (for those who need to pay) ----- \$ 25/year non-refundable \$ _____

Total Registration Fees and Dues ----- \$ _____

Make checks payable to USS Belknap Association and mail with this completed form to Treasurer Mike Umbriaco, 82964 Ash Lane, Creswell, OR 97426. Call Mike with questions at 541-895-2168. Or,

Register and Pay Online at www.ussbelknap.org using PayPal – you don't need an account.

Breakfast: The hotel is offering a breakfast buffet for reunion attendees at a fixed price of \$13.21, including tax. Be sure to request when you make your reservation; pay when you check out. For our records, please indicate how many breakfasts you request for each day: Thursday _____ Friday _____ Saturday _____ Sunday _____

Hotel Reservations: Call 888-974-5531 and identify yourself as a USS Belknap Reunion attendee, Registration # 612601. (If you encounter a problem, call Maryanne at 800-704-3030 or Angie at 843-918-7762.)

All rooms are ocean front condos: one, two, or three bedrooms. Location in one of three towers available at time of booking. All taxes and fees are included in the prices shown. For Association records, please indicate which accommodations you are booking:

- 1 Bedroom: \$ 138.88/night _____ # Nights
- 2 Bedroom: \$ 239.68/night _____ # Nights
- 3 Bedroom: \$ 301.28/night _____ # Nights

When you register, please request any special needs, e.g., wheelchair accessible.

Free Parking in the hotel garage. **Space for RV's** is available in the open parking area across the street, for hotel guests only; no hookups for RVs.

For hotel planning, do you plan to drive to North Myrtle beach? Yes _____ No _____

Are you staying at hotel? Yes _____ No _____

Airport Transportation not provided. Arrange your own transportation via airport shuttle, taxi, or Uber.

No Tours are scheduled this year, to allow attendees to take advantage of North Myrtle Beach entertainment and attractions.

Options may include a Golf Outing or a Big M Gambling Boat Cruise. If you are interested, contact Association Vice President Tom Lewis: tlewis504@aol.com.

If interested in a group outing to a theater, contact Assn. President Bill Staley: goodstuff003@triad.rr.com.

Details will be forthcoming about a Group Dinner on Friday Night, October 13.

Ladies Breakfast: The Auxiliary is planning a special event in lieu of a Ladies Breakfast meeting this year. Contact Sandy Stoma for details: tsstoma@yahoo.com, phone 631-445-8175.

Saturday 14 October: Executive Board Meeting and Association Business Meeting in the afternoon, and Banquet at 1800 hours. Saturday morning is free time.

Questionnaire:

Please check here if this is your first reunion. If not, how many reunions have you attended? _____

Please provide your current contact information below so we can keep our master roster up to date.

Address: _____

Email: _____

Phone: (home) _____ (cell) _____

Are you willing to help out during this reunion? Yes _____ No _____

Ladies: Are you an Auxiliary Member? Yes _____ No _____ Please check here if you'd like to join.