

USS Belknap Association



DLG-26 1964 - 1975

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



CG-26 1975 - 1995

USS Belknap Association Newsletter July 2023

Letter from the President

Bill Staley (FTG3, aboard 1965-1969)



Hi, y'all!

This has been a year of notable events for me. Fifty years ago I moved to Greensboro. In June, Rene and I celebrated our 41st wedding anniversary (and they said it wouldn't last - LOL). And now my final year as President of the USS Belknap Association is coming to an end.

We're looking forward to a "beachin" reunion in North Myrtle Beach, at the beautiful Beach Cove Resort. Reunion details are on our web page, and you can check out the resort on their web page and on Facebook. I'm looking forward to a lot of fun in the sun and seeing all of you again. It's not too late to register!

We've made some tremendous strides this year. I'm excited to see more and more shipmates from the 80's and 90's attending reunions and joining our ranks. Our Association is alive and healthy because so many of you are willing to give of your time and talents. Thanks to all for stepping in and stepping up, helping us to grow and survive, many years longer than most such organizations!

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 extend a special welcome to our new Vice President Tom Lewis. We look forward to his leadership, ideas, and contributions.

I especially want to thank Todd Wright for his talent and vision for our ship's store. He has been brainstorming ideas with Storekeeper Lou Apuzzo and creating designs for new products. Lou and Todd are doing an awesome job of updating our selection of clothing and other Belknap items. Be sure to tell your family where to find the ship's store on our web site, so they can shop there for your next birthday

or holiday gift. Don't forget the World Tour Book, *Starbuster*, and the ship's ring. Be proud to have them to show family and friends, and to wear with pride!

I want to extend a big thanks to Jeff Disser, who has succinctly captured what we all believe in our new slogan: "Neither rank, rate, nor regulation can break the Belknap Brotherhood." You'll see this slogan on some new items in our ships store, and we'll include it on our banners as we replace them.

Update on *Starbuster Two, The Next Adventure*: Mike Abbott is looking for your stories to share in this second book of Belknap sea stories, so send him your scuttlebutt stories and tales of your adventures on "Ma Bel." Send your inputs to abbottmdp@aol.com.

To the Ladies' Auxiliary, we can't thank you enough for all you do. We appreciate you more than you know!

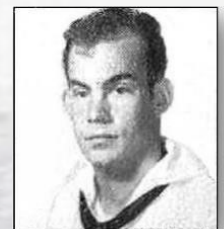
Tremendous thanks to board members, past and present, for your support, guidance and patience. It's been an honor and a privilege to work with you.

To our spouses and families, I must thank you for your support, for attending our reunions, and for truly being a part of our Belknap Family.

At next year's reunion, we'll celebrate the USS Belknap's 60th birthday. She was commissioned in November, 1964.

In closing, although the Belknap was my Navy home for only 3½ years, my time aboard remains very much a part of my mind and spirit. I will always cherish the memories and lifelong friendships from those years, as well as the new friends made at our reunions. Thanks to all Belknap Shipmates – 'love you all!

Fair wind and following seas.



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

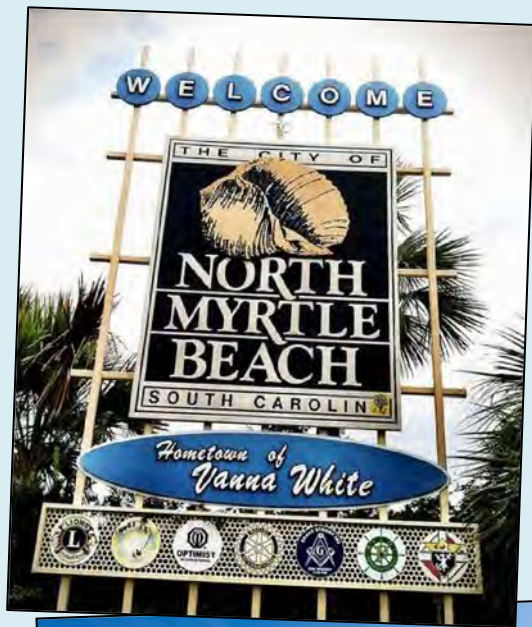
Oct 2002 – Oct 2005	Jim Farrow
Oct 2005 – Oct 2006	Dick Tremain
Oct 2006 – Oct 2007	Dick Lemon
Oct 2007 – Oct 2011	Chuck Taylor
Oct 2011 – Oct 2013	Skip McCarroll
Oct 2013 – Oct 2016	Mike Abbott
Oct 2016 – Oct 2017	Jim Farrow
Oct 2017 – Oct 2019	Mike Reeves
Oct 2019 – Present*	Bill Staley

*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
Historian	Mike Reeves
Chaplain	Dave Jessel
Webmaster	Bob Gilhooly
Publicity & Membership	Ted Hetherington





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

11:30 – 14:00 Ladies Auxiliary Outing to Duplin Winery

16:00 Depart for Nacho Hippos Dinner at 16:30

<https://nachohippo.com>

18:15 Back to Hospitality suite for FUN!

Photos-DJ-Dancing

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

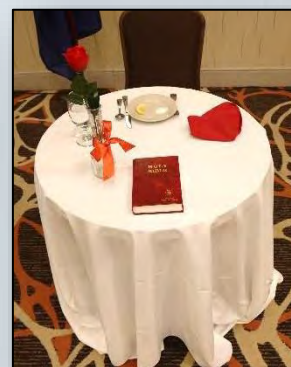
24:00 Hospitality suite closes

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



Watch for word about a golf outing, GM Cruise (with optional gambling), and other activities.

Also, listen up for word to be passed about The Ladies Auxiliary special event and business meeting.



Tom Lewis

Vice President
FC2, Aboard '85-'88

Hello, Shipmates!

The 2023 Belknap Association reunion is fast approaching. There are many activities in the North Myrtle Beach area to keep us occupied and entertained. Golf, surfing, gambling, etc. I have been looking into scheduling a Golf outing on Friday morning! Let me know if you are interested. Send me an email or give me a call, tlewis4504@aol.com, 904-446-7897.

There are also several surf shops that will rent equipment if desired. Miniature golf is well represented and there is the Barefoot Landing Riverboat Cruise (Barefootqueen.com).

The Big M Gambling Cruise is also available (Bigmcasino.com), with two departures on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday, 11 am to 4 pm or 6 pm to 11 pm. Please note that both Saturday cruises conflict with reunion activities. The cruises cost \$20 per person, with reservations required. The port is 15 minutes away by POV.

Additional information will be available when you arrive. 'See you all then - this is going to be EPIC!

Tom

Todd Wright

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



I'm looking forward to seeing everyone in North Myrtle Beach! If you haven't signed up yet, it's not too late. And if you're in touch with anyone who served on the Belknap, no matter what years they were aboard, invite them as well. Our reunions are for ALL Belknap shipmates from the pre-commission crew through decommissioning in 1995.

As I mentioned in our last newsletter, we've been working on a new cruise jacket.

It will include an embroidered image of the ship firing a missile while underway, and is customizable your rating, deployments, etc. as shown. We intend to sell the jackets 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 28 years since our great ship was decommissioned, but every day I think about her, my shipmates and my time aboard.

Again, I can't wait to see each of you. I always look forward to us old salts sharing sea stories! Haze gray and underway, Belknap all the way!

Todd

More from Bill - We had two 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 thank everyone who helped make it happen, and all who participated.

At our banquet, we were honored by a visit by Norfolk Mayor Kenneth Alexander, who 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.



Ted Hetherington

Publicity and Membership Chairman
FTM2 Aboard '68 –'70

Shipmates, our Association's 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..."

We are always looking for "lost" shipmates; if you have moved, changed your email address, or changed your phone number, please let us know through our website: <http://ussbelknap.org>. Click on *Membership and Rosters*, then *Online Shipmate Information Update* and complete the online form. Or if you prefer, email your updated information to webtech@ussbelknap.org or contact me by email: bowtieted@aol.com, Facebook Messenger, or phone 805-218-9025.

While you're on the website, check out the Ship's Store. Proceeds from sales help cover expenses including reunions, website fees, newsletter printing, and postage. 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 for them to do it because US Navy ship names are in the public domain, but buying from them takes potential income away from the USS Belknap Association.

Ted



Don't be fooled by on-line imposters!

Shop at your USS Belknap Association Ship's Store:

<https://ussbelknap.org/ships-store-main/>

Shipmates,

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

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 October!



Louis Apuzzo

Storekeeper
FTG, Aboard '71

Lou

Mike Umbriaco

Treasurer

QM2, Aboard '74 – '75



My brothers, our Belknap has been out of commission for nearly 30 years. Yet our Association is still going strong. We're honored to have active plankowners, and we are willing to help and support any veteran brother or sister. Unlike other ship crews who have tried and failed to stay together, we've kept trucking over the years and are now in our 21st year since organizing in 2002. We had 60 shipmates attend our reunion in Norfolk last year and we're on track for that many or more this year.

In my humble opinion, there are three reasons we are a healthy organization: First, we've had caring, enthusiastic leadership from the very beginning. Eight shipmates have served as president, and a succession of strong leaders have stepped up to make the Association hum. Some officers, both elected and appointed, have kept their jobs for several years; we appreciate their dedication and perseverance. And we were honored to have men like Dick Lemon, Al Sniff, and Captain Dick Shafer attend reunions right up to

their dying days. Good men and good friends.

Second, we structure our reunions to be kick-in-the-pants fun! We usually have tours, and our hospitality room, stocked with drinks and snacks, is a place to share for hundreds of BS (basically salty) Sea Stories.

And the third reason we thrive is that our reunions are more than just a gathering of old sailors – we've become a family! We treat shipmates, families, and friends who attend just like brothers, sisters, and cousins at a family reunion.

Recently, we've been blessed with an influx of sailors who served in the years 1980 - 1995. I'm hoping these younger brothers can keep this awesome organization afloat for years to come!

Mike

Dear spouses and families of USS Belknap Sailors,

If you're new to us, welcome aboard! We are thrilled to have you join our close-knit community dedicated to preserving and celebrating the rich history of the ship, its namesake family, and her brave crewmen.

As our sailors develop bonds unique to serving together as warriors, being part of the extended Navy family means embracing a unique lifestyle where you make lifelong friendships and memories, and where we support each other unquestioningly. Thank you for that service, and I hope you can join us in October at our reunion in North Myrtle Beach.

This year's reunion promises to be a momentous occasion, where we'll welcome the newest members of the USS Belknap Association and their families in a beautiful city on the South Carolina seashore.

A highlight for The Ladies Auxiliary this year is a wine excursion that will combine relaxation and exploration with delightful pleasures of the palate. It will be at Duplin Winery on Friday, 13 October, 11:30 am – 2:00 pm. Thanks to Suzie Sablin for planning this event. Details will be available at the reunion. This outing will be in lieu of our traditional Ladies Breakfast.

Finally, we will hold the popular 50/50 Raffle again this year, with many prizes in addition to CASH. Proceeds go to the Association to cover operating costs. Please let me know if you can contribute a prize for the raffle. As seafarers say, "Fair winds and following seas!"

Sandy Stoma

President

Ladies Auxiliary



Sandy

2022 Reunion – Norfolk, Virginia



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.





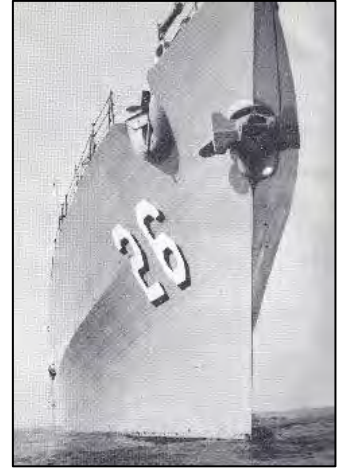
**USS Belknap Association
2023 Reunion Registration Form**

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.



ENJOY

FREE
DJ MUSIC
PHOTO BOOTH
DONATIONS
ACCEPTED

FRIDAY OCT 13TH

DANCING AND FUN

1600 Depart for Nacho Hippos Dinner
1800 Hospitality Room
Photo OP / DJ - Dancing and FUN
FREE



26

Entertainment Provided by Belknap Association Board

Postmaster: Address correction requested.

Stamp
goes
here!

R. Gilhooly
6 Schillhammer Rd.
Jericho, VT 05465

USS Belknap Association Newsletter

July 2023

