
Spring 2019

USS JOHN W WEEKS DD-701 ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER



President's Letter

It gives me much pleasure as your new president to greet everyone in the USS John W Weeks family. You are all very special to me. If we all work together, the John W Weeks Association will be around for several more years. I want to congratulate our new officers that were elected at our last business meeting to

help lead the association. Rodney "Ski" Leskowski is our new vice president. David Parent is a new director. David Connelly is our new secretary. All of these new officers were on the Westpac cruise to Vietnam and part of the task force to Korea in 1969 aboard the USS John W Weeks. They represent long time membership and support of the association. I also want to thank our past president Alan Cutcher, the officers and members for their dedication and much work in making the Association the successful organization it is today.

My wife Aida and I are a Navy family having a combined service of almost 50 years to the US Navy. I entered the Navy in July 1965 as a seaman recruit. After boot camp at Great Lakes I reported aboard the USS Yosemite AD-19 home ported at Newport, RI for my first real Navy job as a mess cook before reporting to Deck Department to work as a deck seaman and First Lieutenant's yeoman. My second tour was aboard the USS Valcour AGF-1 home ported in Bahrain in the Persian Gulf. The John W Weeks was my third ship. I reported aboard the Weeks in December 1968 and went on the Westpac cruise to Vietnam and was part of the task force to Korea in 1969. After release from four years active duty in November 1969, I affiliated with the Naval Reserve where I served over 35 years. I was enlisted for my first 20 years in



Now Hear This!

A REMINDER TO ALL
SHIPMATES RECEIVING THIS
NEWSLETTER...THE
DEADLINE FOR ANNUAL
DUES IS MARCH 31

Please pay to continue
receiving your newsletter
and support your
association.

Thank you!

Shipmates!

Please make sure that we
have both your correct
Email and mailing address.

Also

Please note **that Letters to
the Editor** and officers are
welcome!

the Navy and attained the rank of Senior Chief Boatswain's Mate. My Naval Officer career began in 1986 when I was commissioned a W-2 Warrant Boatswain. I was later promoted to W-3 and selected for promotion to LTJG (LD0) Operations Line Officer in 1989. I served aboard several ships, DESRONS, and shore stations, including two years attached to the Marines followed by two years with Naval Special Forces Group 1 and Group 2 before retiring as a Commander in 2005. It was an honor to have served as Ship's Boatswain, Communications Officer, Operations Officer, Gunnery Liaison Officer, Amphibious Operations Officer, Division Officer, Department Head, Executive Officer, and Commanding Officer of one shipboard unit, one DESRON unit and two Naval Special Warfare Commands before retiring.

It was a privilege to have served as a BM3 in First Division aboard the USS John W Weeks. The Weeks was the ship I loved most. I worked hard to take care of her when I was onboard. I never liked hearing her called the "Leaky Weeks" even though it may have been true. I had some really wonderful times when I was on the ship and we went through some very difficult times together but we loved one another and worked hard together. I had the best crew in the world working for me in the division and on the bridge. We not only worked together on the ship but we were on liberty together. The friendships we developed on the cruise are still there after 50 years. The bonds of friendships that we developed have lasted a lifetime.

My wife, Aida, began working for the Naval Hospital in Subic Bay, Philippines in 1962 after graduating from the University of the East. She worked at the Naval Hospital until April 1972 when we moved back to the United States from the Philippines. Aida worked at the Oak Hill Hospital and Freeman Hospital in Joplin, Missouri until she retired. We have been married 47 years and have one daughter, Kimberly. Kimberly has lived and worked in Japan for the past 17 years and takes care of the computer systems for Burberry Company in Japan as well as some other parts of the world. As a civilian, I worked in research and development for the Electronics Division of Eagle Picher developing special purpose batteries for space, medical, military and industrial applications. I was also the manager of research and development for Eagle Picher Chemical Division, Environmental and Chemical engineer for Teledyne Industries and I taught physics, chemistry and science in high schools.

CDR Fredrick Dalton, USN, Retired

A SPECIAL THANKS

I want to thank Phil and Lynn Varner as well as the officers of the Association for their work in organizing and planning our reunion in Charleston, SC this October 16-20. We expect a much larger group at the reunion this year. There will also be a lot of new members attending for the first time. We will be celebrating every cruise the ship went on as well as every year it was in commission. It is going to be a wonderful time to share and hear all the many stories that happened on the ship during its lifetime. Many past friends and new friends will be reconnected. Everyone is encouraged to notify Phil Varner the reunion coordinator and me of your intentions of attending the reunion as soon as possible so we can block additional rooms while the rooms are still available. We also need numbers so we can plan for a very successful reunion. I am very much looking forward to this reunion and working with each of you as we work together to strengthen our association. May God add his blessings to each of you.

VA INFORMATION FOR BLUE WATER VETS

Department of Veterans Affairs Secretary Robert Wilkie said that the Department will not fight the recent court ruling adding "Blue Water Veterans" to be among those eligible to receive health and compensation benefits from exposures to "agent orange" herbicides. We know that decision is about time...so inform your veteran USN friends and neighbors accordingly...know of any spouses whose husbands passed from the many diseases and cancers listed under "Agent Orange" (here is the site to view the list:

<https://www.va.gov/disability/eligibility/hazardousmaterials-exposure/agent-orange/related-diseases/>)

For Blue Water Veterans suffering from these illnesses, we suggest you contact a Service Officer and get your claims in...for compensation. You will need medical evidence to support the claim.

SPECIAL NOTICE

Included in this newsletter is the dues submission form. On the dues form you will note that dues are payable at the beginning of the year, the hopeful deadline being March 31. As in most associations and organizations, it is our preference that dues be paid in advance not retroactively. Also, there is no correlation between paying dues and attending the annual reunion.

**The following touching letter is from Karen Thomas, daughter of Earl Thomas,.
Plank Owner, WWII Veteran and longtime member of our Association.**

January 23, 2019

Dear Dave and Members of the Weeks Association,

Please forgive my tardiness in getting this thank you letter written. My family and I want to thank you and all the members of the USS John W. Weeks Association for your kind gesture of sending the certificate to my mother honoring my father, Earl Thomas, and his work and dedication to the Association. As you are all aware, he was extremely fond of this group and truly looked forward to attending the reunions every year. Even after he could no longer drive, he made sure to provide me with the dates and location of each reunion, as soon as it was announced, so that I could mark it on my calendar. What you may not be aware of though is what you all gave back to him and our family.

When I was growing up, my father would never discuss the war or his involvement in it. He would not even watch TV shows or movies about the war. It was a chapter of his life that he had closed and did not wish to reopen. As such, none of us knew much about his involvement, except that his ship landed in Japan after the bomb was dropped. It was not until he started attending these reunions that he found a voice to once again talk about his life during that period. Instead of burying that part of his past, he began to open up and tell us about it. Slowly his stories came out and revealed a part of my dad that none of us ever knew. He even began to wear Veteran apparel proudly. When the WWII Memorial was dedicated in Washington, D.C., I got tickets for my parents and me to attend it. Despite the onslaught of the 17-year cicadas that year, it was a day in my dad's life that I will never forget. All day long veterans came up to him asking about his experience and sharing their own. Veterans of later wars came up and thanked him for his service. Not only was he touched by the outpouring of care and respect from so many that day, but I too was profoundly touched to witness it, and deeply honored to be there with him. That moment would not have been possible, I believe, without the foundation that this association gave him to openly acknowledge his service.

While I must admit that I was not especially looking forward to attending my first reunion, which was in Downingtown, PA that year, I was soon pleasantly surprised at how much I enjoyed the time spent there. The displays Dad patiently walked me through, filled in many gaps for me. The other veterans were all warm and welcoming, and I actually found myself looking forward to attending another one. Little did I know how many more of them I would actually attend! I even had the Gatlinburg reunion already penciled in on my calendar last year. Instead I found myself heading to a family wedding over that same period – surprisingly, near the Rocky Mountains. So although I was not with you folks personally, I was with you in my thoughts. I encourage each of you to invite your family members to attend at least one reunion to gain a fuller understanding of the part that each of you played in the history of the Weeks. It is an opportunity that should not be wasted.

I wish you all well in your continuing efforts with future reunions and I hope that the next generations will continue to keep the Association strong. You may never know which lives you could profoundly affect by your dedication. Thanks again for the touching certificate and the invitation to attend future Weeks functions.

All the Best,

Karen

TAPS FOR JOHN W WEEKS AS OF April 25 2019

Verl I Miles, Jr. passed away April 7, 2013. His widow Kathy notified us in November 2018 of Verl's death. Verl served as a Radarman Second Class in OI Division during his time aboard the Weeks in 1968-1969. Verl and Kathy attended many Weeks Reunions in past years. At the time of his death, he and Kathy lived in Akron, Indiana.

Norman Claude Hatfill died on November 29, 2017. His survivors include his two children, Dr. Steven Hatfill and Debbie Hatfill Sparks, four grandchildren and three great-grandchildren. While on board the Weeks, Norm served as a Quartermaster from 1947 to 1948. Norm was very active in his communities of Mattoon, Illinois and Ocala Florida. He was employed for 30 years at Electric Laboratories where he worked as the first Meter Tester, then over the years became Sales Manager, General Manager, and ultimately President and Owner. Norm had a passion for raising, training, and racing thoroughbred horses. Splitting his time between Mattoon and Ocala, Norm loved spending time with his family and friends which brought him great pleasure.

Lewis Reid Justice passed away on December 23, 2018. His son, Jason notified us of his Dad's death. Lewis enlisted in the US Navy in 1960 after graduating from Charlotte Public Schools. Lewis served four years aboard the USS John W Weeks. He was a Machinist Mate 3rd class. Lewis was honorably discharged from the Navy in 1964. After his time in the Navy, Lewis worked with his father Robert at Mooresville Electric Motor Service. He went on to establish a second company, Justice Industrial Drives. In his spare time, he enjoyed hunting and fishing with friends. Lewis also enjoyed attending the Weeks reunions and reminiscing with former shipmates. He is survived by his son Jason, Jason's wife Lindsay, two grandchildren, and Jason's mother, Linda Justice.

Dr. Hiram Thomas Carr, Jr. died suddenly on March 30, 2019. His wife, Charlyn notified us of Hiram's death. After graduating from West Texas State College in 1951, Hiram enlisted in the US Navy. Hiram served in San Diego and then transferred to the USS John W. Weeks. The Weeks was scheduled for a Round-The-World Cruise which included five months in Korea. After his time in the Navy, Hiram received a Master's degree from North Texas State College. He then attended the University of Louisville and earned his Doctorate of Medical Dentistry in 1966. He practiced dentistry in Canyon, Texas for over thirty years. At the time of his death, he and Charlyn were making plans to attend the Charleston reunion scheduled for October. Hiram was the noted Weeks photographer and scrap booker. After our Charleston reunion, Hiram's vast collection of pictures and books will be donated to the John W. Weeks Museum located in Lancaster, New Hampshire. Hiram is survived by his wife of 59 years, Charlyn, his son Dr. Tom Carr and Tom's wife Sheree, his sister Alice Wiles, three grandchildren, and two great-grandchildren.

NEWS FROM THE WEEKS MUSEUM



Weeks State Park Notes

By Park Manager, Rachel Bruce



As Charles G. Washburn once eloquently stated, “Statesman, yet friend to truth! Of soul sincere, In action faithful, and in honour clear; Who broke no promise, serv’d no private end.”

Time and time again, during my research on the late Secretary of War John Wingate Weeks (1860-1926), I have read many well-regarded words from Secretary Weeks’ friends, family, business associates, naval comrades, and political colleagues. All were testament to Secretary Weeks’ good character, morality, statesmanship, selflessness, loyalty, and steely work ethic, astute business like manners, strong leadership, and reliability. Charles G. Washburn, who was a close friend of John Wingate Weeks, and who had served with him in the Fifty-Ninth, Sixtieth, and Sixty-First Congresses, left one of the most lasting and endearing impressions of John Wingate Weeks. Charles G. Washburn wrote the biography, *The Life of John W. Weeks. With an Introduction by Calvin Coolidge, President of the United States.*

The biography contains numerous accounts of John Wingate Weeks’ personal, military, political, and business experiences and dealings. It is from this book that I frequently seek to secure a vast amount of information about John Wingate Weeks to share with the public during tours of the John Wingate Weeks Museum at Weeks State Park. If you would like to learn more about the life and works of John Wingate Weeks, you may find an e-copy of his biography online at

<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc1.b4506928;view=1up;seq=11>

If you have any questions about Weeks State Park or the USS John W. Weeks DD-701 located within the John Wingate Weeks Historic Site, please feel free to visit our website at <https://www.nhstateparks.org/visit/state-parks/weeks-state-park.aspx> or call 603-788-4004.

AVAILABLE WEEKS CLOTHING FOR PURCHASE

By Board Member Dave Parent

The shirts, jackets and hats listed below are now available through Flying Tigers Army-Navy Surplus located in Oak Forest, Illinois. There are many other items listed on their website so we are not limited to the items listed below. Women sizes are available and they carry a full line of awards, hats, pins, military gear, etc. There are many customizing options available and they can be explained by me in person or by calling the company. Orders placed must be by phone to ensure accuracy and are considered "final sale" and thus are not returnable. I will be bringing a few purchased items to the Mini and the Charleston reunions. A big advantage of this program is that no inventory will be held.

[Submit Quote Request](#)



Our in-house embroidery services are the best way to make a gift extra special! We can embroider just about anything, on just about everything! When you are ready, fill out the form to the right for a FREE quote or call 708-535-9921 during our normal business hours for more information.



We offer quality custom embroidery on caps, polos, sweatshirts, jackets, ascots, blankets & more. All of our embroidery is done in-house in Illinois by our certified embroidery specialists. You may choose from our [stock \(Military\) designs](#) or provide your own design for a one time set-up fee. Embroidery jobs take approximately two weeks to be completed and shipped from the time your order is placed.

- Personalize Clothing & Gear!
- Embroider your own logo or design!

Clothing Options:



50/50 Cotton Blend polo
(Available in Navy, White, or Black)
S-XL \$16.99
2XL \$18.99
3XL \$20.99



Hooded Fleece Lined Jacket
S-XL \$49.99
2XL \$54.99
3XL \$59.99



US Made Ball cap, Adjustable back
\$19.99



Alpha MA-1 Flight Jacket
(Available in Navy Blue, Black, or Sage)
S-XL \$149.99
2XL \$154.99
3XL \$159.99

**ALL ITEMS ARE CUSTOM. ALL CUSTOM ITEMS ARE
FINAL SALE.**

Design Options:

Add this cost onto the clothing options



Design #1 Cost \$7.00



Design #2 Cost \$9.00



Design #3 (Ribbon changes optional) Cost \$12.00
Cost will vary due to ribbon options

Thank you so much for your patience. -Danielle

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ALL CUSTOM ITEMS AND SEWING ARE FINAL SALE

Thank you,
Danielle Krull
Embroiderist
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Hey Everyone!

If you think Fort Sumter and Patriot's Point are big Highlights in Charleston, South Carolina, you haven't seen anything yet. Come join the "Leaky Weeks Crew" at our annual reunion in October 2019. Help celebrate the following big events happening in Charleston this year:

The 75th Anniversary launching of the USS John W Weeks DD-701

And

The 50 Anniversary of the Vietnam Cruise!

Imagine, WWII crew members swapping sea tales with the crew that made the last cruise of the Weeks to Vietnam. For you 1st timers, think how exciting it will be seeing guys that you have only thought about for so many years. It's all happening at the USS John W Weeks DD-701 Association Reunion starting October 16 through October 20, 2019 at the:

Town & Country Inn and Suites 2008 Savannah Hwy. Charleston, SC

To make reservations call: 1- 843-571-1000 1-800-334-6660

The Weeks reservation group code is **USSWEE**

Looking forward to seeing you there!

Phil Varner 1-856-464-1727





See you in Charleston SC
Prettiest Town in Dixie!

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