

USS FRANK E. EVANS DD754



WWII
KOREA
VIETNAM



FOOT LOCKER TALK NEWSLETTER NUMBER 75 FOURTH QUARTER 2019

AHOY SHIPMATES, FAMILY & FRIENDS

We hope you noticed the new masthead for the newsletter. Hats off to Rolf Buchener for the new design. In 2020 plans are underway to restructure the way the newsletter is published. As many of you know we are limited to the number of pages that can be published due to the costs of mailing. Therefore in 2020 we are going to be producing two publications. One specifically designed for USPS mailing and the other designed for emailing. If we do not have your email, please submit it so we can add you to the email distribution list.

2019 certainly was a busy year. The 50th of course, was our main event, but other happenings took place this year. We were able to dedicate two memorial stones: Illinois and California. Both are covered in this newsletter. We have three remaining states to be set: Michigan, North Carolina and West Virginia. Our target is to have them all completed by Memorial Day,.

Also, this summer our objective to get the names on the wall gained momentum with a Senate Bill and the Amendment in the NDDA. As of the publication of this newsletter both are still active, and our fingers are crossed that they will be voted upon soon. Please keep the pressure on your governmental representative. We have had a strong presence across the country. We can't back off now.

Lastly, mark your calendars for October 21—24, 2020 for the reunion in San Antonio, Texas. We have contracted with the Historic Menger Hotel in downtown San Antonio. The Hotel is positioned perfectly for ease of visiting the sites of the city. Look for detailed information in early June for this reunion.

Steve Kraus

Association President

JOHNSTOWN 2019 VETERANS DAY DISPLAY



1st Summit Bank Cambria County War Memorial Arena, Johnstown, PA
March 29, 2019 Vietnam Veterans Day by Robert Mucciola
Ed Hoppsole **USS Frank E. Evans DD-754 Lost 74 Display**

2020 Reunion Information

Dates: 21 October through 24 October, 2020

Location: Historic Menger Hotel
204 Alamo Plaza
San Antonio, Texas 78205

Additional Information: We plan on having the details and registration for the reunion out early June 2020.

This is by far one of the best locations in San Antonio. The Alamo is right across the street. Riverwalk is 1½ blocks away and the City Tour (get on/get off bus) is out the front door of the hotel.

Do not make reservations yet. Wait until the details mentioned above have been sent out!

ILLINOIS MEMORIAL STONE DEDICATION 19 OCT. 2019



Two memorials were unveiled Saturday October 19th, at the Warren Cemetery & Mausoleum, located at 1475 N. Cemetery Rd., Gurnee, Illinois. The Lost Sailors from Illinois Memorial Stone and a six-foot-tall granite memorial with the names of the "Lost 74".



BTFA Gerald Smith's brother, Gary Smith and sister Janet Koteles; IC2 Linden Orpurt's sisters Barbara Greenan and Beverly Lodato



Survivors Jeff Covert, Bob Mason, Glenn Belec, Dean Wyse, Joe Mulitsch and Terry Vejr, along with John Coffey unveiled the "Lost 74" Memorial.

CALIFORNIA MEMORIAL STONE DEDICATION 11 NOV. 2019

SOME GAVE ALL
3 JUNE 1969
IN THE COLLISION OF
USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD-754)
AND HMAS MELBOURNE (R-21)
DURING THE VIETNAM WAR
SAILORS FROM
CALIFORNIA

YN3 ANDREW JAMES BOTTO
ENS ROBERT GEORGE BRANDON
BT2 WILLIAM DANIEL BROWN II
RD2 CHRISTOPHER JOHN CARLSON
SN DANNY VICTOR CLUTE
SA JOE EDDIE CRAIG
SA LEON LARRY DEAL
GMG3 STEVEN FRANK ESPINOSA
SA WILLIAM DONALD FIELDS
SA HENRY KENNETH FRYE
SN FRANCIS JOSEPH GARCIA
SA DEVERE RAY GRISSOM, JR.
SA JAMES WILLIAM KERR
SA ISAAC LYONS, JR.
SA ANDREW MARTIN MELENDREZ
ENS GREGORY KOICHI OGAWA
SA CRAIG ALLEN PENNELL
BT3 LAWRENCE JOHN REILLY, JR.
STG2 JOHN RAYMOND SPRAY
LTJG JON KENNETH STEVER
RD2 RONALD ARTHUR THIBODEAU
SA JOHN THOMAS TOLAR

"LEST WE FORGET"

Seaside California, 11 November 2019,
a perfect spot and a perfect day.

Relatives of the Lost, Shipmates,
Survivors and Friends gathered to
dedicate the California Memorial
Stone for our fallen 22 sailors.
Mission Mortuary & Memorial Park,
tucked away against the hills of Sea-
side, overlooks the Pacific Ocean.
All that were there agreed it was a
perfect location.

In the opening remarks of the ceremo-
ny Paul Nelson (General Manager of
Mission Park) summed it up by saying
"We couldn't say no to honoring these
22 sailors, they earned the respect
and honor of having their Memorial
here in Seaside."

Mission Mortuary & Memorial Park de-
cided months ago to place the stone
as the center piece for their Memori-
als Section of the cemetery. The
stone stands four feet tall and 2 1/2
feet wide. Directly behind it is a
water fall and a wall that awaits fu-
ture memorial dedications.

Mission Mortuary & Memorial Park pro-
vided hot dogs, hamburgers, chips and
drinks following the ceremony.

Paul Nelson stands watching
as Frances Botto-Camagna,
Fred Kerr and Ron Stever
present three wreaths at
the foot of the Memorial.
The dedication program in-
cluded participation by all
Relatives of the Lost,
Shipmates and Survivors.
Masters of Ceremonies du-
ties were shared between
Paul Nelson, Steve Kraus
and Pete Peters. Local VFW
and AL showed their support
and came out in numbers.



CALIFORNIA DEDICATION CONTINUED



SEASIDE MEMORIAL PARK
SEASIDE, CALIFORNIA
11 NOVEMBER 2019
10 AM

CALIFORNIA MEMORIAL STONE DEDICATION
IN HONOR OF 22 FALLEN SAILORS, 3 JUNE 1969
USS FRANK E. EVANS (DD 754)

MASTERS OF CEREMONIES
WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS
PAUL NELSON - GENERAL MANAGER
SM2 STEVE KRAUS (SURVIVOR)
MM3 PETE PETERS (SURVIVOR)

INVOCATION
MM3 RICHARD ALVERDES

PRESENTATION OF THE COLORS
SEASIDE HIGH SCHOOL JROTC
"SPARTAN BATTALION"

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE
MM3 JACK SHEEHAN

ODE TO THE FALLEN
SA TERRY VEJR (SURVIVOR)

THE TURN
MM3 RICHARD ALVERDES

UNVEILING OF THE MEMORIAL STONE
RELATIVES OF THE LOST

LAYING OF THE WREATHS
FRANCIS BOTTO-CAMAGNA
FRED KERR
RONALD STEVER

NAME READING / RINGING OF THE BELL
SM2 STEVE KRAUS (SURVIVOR)
MM3 PETE PETERS

TAPS
PFC CARL TRIPLETT

CLOSING REMARKS
PAUL NELSON GENERAL MANAGER
MM3 PETE PETERS (SURVIVOR)
SM2 STEVE KRAUS (SURVIVOR)

BENEDICTION
MM3 RICHARD ALVERDES



WEDDING CONGRATULATIONS TO THE FOLLOWING COUPLES



Patrick Richardson & Wendy Burke married on September 17, 2019 in Sedona, Arizona. Now residing in Grafton, New South Wales, Australia

Loretta & Del holding a plaque that says

Mr. & Mrs.

What God has joined together, let no one separate. Mark 10:9.

Del & Loretta Frances

Established, October 12, 2019



Dell Francis and Loretta McKay. married on October. 12, 2019 at the 1st United Methodist Church in Sulphur Springs, Texas.

MEET THE NEW EXECUTIVE OFFICER OF USS KIDD (DDG 100)

By Rich Alverdes

Commander Matt Noland became the new Executive Officer of **USS KIDD** in September of this year, stands before the original **USS KIDD (DD 661)** anchored in the Harbor of Baton Rouge and is the centerpiece of their military museum.

You can call this a "Cinderella Story" for Commander Noland. When Matt was a young Boy Scout, he spent a night aboard **KIDD**, the original World War II ship pictured above while he was in elementary school, but not like the other kids, he had a dream, and it was to be stationed aboard a naval ship like the **KIDD**.



When Noland joined the Navy, there was no active ship named **USS KIDD**, but in 2007 an Arleigh Burke-class destroyer was commissioned and like its predecessor it was named for Rea Adm. Isaac C. Kidd, who died aboard the **USS Arizona** in the December 7th. 1941 attack on Pearl Harbor, the first American flag officer killed in the war.

Meet the New Executive Officer Continued

According to staff writer George Morris of the news letter Advocate, "As Noland grew up he spent time visiting the USS Kidd Veterans Museum in downtown Baton Rouge and got to know its original director, Maury Drummond." Noland said, "I spent lot of time talking to him and he had built ship models, and if you spent any time going around the museum, there's all these beautiful model warships and he had built some of the exquisite ones ... I spend lots of time wandering around that museum as a teenager and as an early college man just enjoying those models and talking to Mr. Drummond about them.... It definitely sparked my fascination with ships and with the US Navy."

After graduating from McKinley High School and attending LSU, He decided to become a Naval Officer. Noland has served aboard three guided missile frigates, earned a masters degree from the Naval War College, had a exchange tour with the Canadian Navy and served as a warfare and tactics instructor before getting the opportunity to become an executive officer. When he was up for his upcoming assignment change, Noland did not initially pursue the KIDD but when told he would likely be sent to Everett, he asked to be assigned to the KIDD. He had no assurance he would, but as we all know, the US Navy doesn't always follow your way of thinking and Commander Noland got his wish and as the story will go, after the next 18 months he will become the Commanding Officer of the USS KIDD and truly this is an outstanding "Cinderella Story" for a young Baton Rouge native.

VETERANS BENEFITS UPDATE

Starting 1 Jan. 2020, Purple Heart recipients, former prisoners of war and all service-connected disabled veterans, regardless of rating, as well as caregivers enrolled in the VA's Comprehensive Assistance for Family Caregivers program, will be able to shop at Defense Commissary Agency stores and military exchanges. They also will have access to revenue-generating Morale, Recreation and Welfare amenities, such as golf courses, recreation areas, theaters, bowling alleys, campgrounds and lodging facilities that are operated by MWR.

Facilities such as fitness centers that receive funding from the Defense Department budget are not included.

Since most new patrons lack the credentials needed to get on military bases, installations will accept the Veteran Health Identification card, or VHID, from disabled and other eligible veterans. For caregivers, the VA plans to issue a memo to eligible shoppers in the coming months, which will be used in conjunction with any picture identification that meets REAL ID Act security requirements, such as a compliant state driver's license or passport.

Justin Hall, director of the MWR and Resale Policy in the Office of the Under Secretary for Personnel and Readiness, said that, after 1 Jan. 2020, newly eligible patrons should go to the visitors' center at the base where they plan to do most of their shopping to register their credentials. Thereafter, they will be able to access the base in the same way as CAC and DoD ID card patrons.

USS KIDD (DDG 100) Change of Command

By MM3 Richard Alverdes

On Thursday, October 25th. **USS KIDD DDG 100** hosted the change of command ceremony on the aft deck of the destroyer. Commander Matthew McNealy was officially relieved and Commander Nathan Wemett became the 9th Commanding Officer of KIDD.

CDR Nathan S. Wemett was born in Fairfield, California. He enlisted as a Hospital Corpsman in 1993 and was selected for the Enlisted Commissioning Program in 1999. He attended the University of Washington where he graduated and received his commission in 2001.



Wemett's first tour of duty was aboard **USS LEYTE GULF (CG-55)**, where he served as Anti-Submarine Warfare Officer and later Training Officer. In January 2004, he reported to the **USS BOXER (LHD 4)** where he served as Training Officer. In March 2009, CDR Wemett reported to **USS SAMPSON (DDG-102)** and served as Operations Officer. He was then selected for Early Command and assigned to MCM Crew **PERSISTENT**. Upon completion of Executive Officer and Commanding Officer tours with **CREW PERSISTENT**, he served a follow on Early Command tour as the Commanding Officer of IA MCM Crew Olympian.

CDR Wemett's tours ashore include a staff tour at Commander, Pacific Fleet, a Personal Exchange Program tour aboard the German Fast Patrol Boat **Hyaene (P6130)** a tour as a student at the Naval War College and as the Operations Officer for Afloat Training Group Pacific Northwest.

During the Change of Command ceremony I had the pleasure to present Commander McNealy the USS Frank E. Evans Association's honorary membership plaque. (Just don't call me 'Shorty')



For the remainder of this year, the KIDD will spend more training time at sea in preparation for their next upcoming West-Pac deployment in early 2020. You can always track what the USS KIDD is up to by going to their Facebook page. They post a lot of pictures of what they are doing and where they are going. Please remember to keep them in your prayers.



**WISHING EVERYONE
MERRY CHRISTMAS
&
HAPPY NEW YEAR**



MEET MICHAEL D. 'MIKE' MCGOUGAN JO2, NAVY JOURNALIST

This is a 3 Part, 1st Person Account by Michael D. "Mike" McGougan of Exercise Sea Spirit, the Reilly and Sage Families. Part 2 & 3 will be in future editions of the newsletter. Michael and his wife Nita attended the 50th Remembrance in Long Beach



This account was written in the spring of 1970, prior to the first anniversary of the collision of the U.S. Navy destroyer USS Frank E. Evans (DD-754) and Australian aircraft carrier HMAS Melbourne (R21).

Fifty years have now passed since that fateful day when the collision occurred in the early morning hours of June 3, 1969, in the South China Sea, resulting in the death of 74 U.S. Navy crew members of the USS Frank E. Evans (DD-754). McGougan was a U.S. Navy Journalist 2nd Class (JO2) assigned for temporary duty to the Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) Command Information Bureau (CIB) aboard Melbourne during the multi-nation naval "Exercise Sea Spirit."

It was McGougan's responsibility to write press releases and feature stories about the participants (both men and ships) and their roles in the SEATO Exercise Sea Spirit for release to various news media. McGougan and a U.S. Navy Photographer's Mate were transported via helicopter to the USS Evans six days prior to the collision where they interviewed and photographed crewmen for approximately three hours.

Because of the collision, a feature story written by McGougan—which focused on Evans' crewmen Senior Chief Lawrence Reilly Sr. and BT3 Lawrence Reilly Jr., and three Sage brothers BM2 Gary, RD3 Greg and SA Kelly --never was released. The proposed story entitled "Sea Spirit in a Family Way" was ready to be released two days before the collision.

However, the account that follows, which chronicles the scenario between the Evans and Melbourne immediately after the collision and later when survivors were gathered aboard Melbourne, recounts some of the feelings of both the Reilly and Sage family members when they were interviewed by McGougan during his visit to Evans six days before the collision.

McGougan was able to obtain copies of the last photographs taken of father and son Reilly together during the interview that day he was aboard Evans. The photographs were delivered by McGougan to the Reilly family in Costa Mesa, Calif., in October 1969.

McGougan was told that the Sage family later received copies of the last photographs taken of the three brothers--Gary, Greg and Kelly--together aboard Evans during the interviews that day. The photographs were sent by the U.S. Navy some time later.

This account that follows was submitted to Reader's Digest First Person Section in 1970. It was returned to McGougan several months later only with an explanation that it could not be used in their publication

Larry's little boy romped on the living room rug with his uncle Jim. A small face peered intently from inside a football helmet; tiny hands and arms clutched a ball tightly. Focused on his play, the toddler--not yet 2-years-old--didn't notice the two strangers.

A game may teach a child many lessons. Perhaps, I thought, this pint-sized football player is receiving bumps that will enable him to bounce back from the bigger blows that life will bring.

My memory jogged back to that day in late May, 1969, when I was a visitor aboard the United States destroyer USS Frank E. Evans (DD-754). The Evans had taken a "time-out" from its role in the Vietnam conflict to participate in a "war game." Larry was a player in that "game," which had more serious implications than the one his little son was now playing in front of my wife and I.

Larry--Boiler Technician 3rd Class Lawrence J. Reilly Jr.--was a crew member aboard the destroyer USS Frank E. Evans (DD-754). Larry's father, Senior Chief Gunners Mate Lawrence J. Reilly Sr., was also serving as a crewman on the Evans.



The Evans was participating in a "war game" being conducted by the South-East Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO). This game, called "Exercise Sea Spirit," involved some 40 ships of six navies which were testing their ability to work together with an overall goal of "a safe, timely arrival of the SEATO convoy in Thailand from the Philippines while under threat of simulated attacks and mining" during navigation through the South China Sea.

There were also three brothers--Gary T., Greg A., and Kelly J. Sage--aboard the Evans. Gary, 22, was a Boatswain's Mate 2nd Class; Greg, 21, a Radarman 3rd Class; and Kelly, 19, a Seaman Apprentice. Greg, the only one of the three brothers who was married, preceded Gary in receiving an assignment to the Evans. Kelly, who had been in the Navy for only five months, requested duty with his brothers aboard Evans "so we could serve together." The brothers had been together aboard the Evans for three months.

Kelly said that he would like to become a radarman, like his brother Greg, so that he "would be doing something useful."

When I asked Greg what he thought of SEATO, he said that he enjoyed getting to meet the sailors from the other five countries during off-duty shore "liberty" in the Philippines before the Sea Spirit convoy set sail to get the exercise operations underway in the South China Sea. He thought "the Australians were great people."

I questioned Gary about what, if any, had been the effect of the three brothers serving on a ship together?

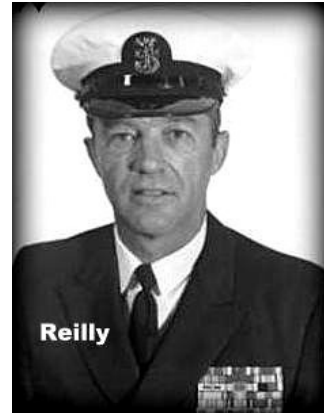
"We get along good," was Gary's answer. "In fact, we get along better now than before we came in the service."

Chief Reilly and his son, Larry, had been able, by a coincidence, to receive duty together on the Evans. Larry came aboard the Long Beach, California-based destroyer when he transferred from the East Coast to the West Coast ship. The junior Reilly wanted to be near his wife and small son in California.

The senior Reilly was serving his final two years of a 20-year Navy career.

As I chatted with Senior Chief Reilly, I learned that I had served with another son, James T. Reilly. Jim Reilly was a Naval Officer assigned in Charleston, S.C.

I had met Lieutenant Reilly several months earlier when we both were working out of the same U.S. Navy 7th Fleet Public Affairs Office in Saigon, Republic of South Vietnam.



After a while on board Evans, Senior Chief Reilly invited me as a guest into the Chiefs' Mess (dining area for crew's Chief Petty Officers). As we were "shooting the breeze," I asked Chief Reilly what he thought about working with the different countries in the SEATO exercise.

**LOOK FOR PART 2 OF 3 IN THE UPCOMING
NEWSLETTER FOR THE CONTINUATION OF THIS STORY**

Welcome and warm wishes to our new member. Steven was found through Pat Sheehan, nephew of Jack Sheehan, at the Veterans office in Vallejo, California.

NEW MEMBERS

NAME	RANK	RELATIONSHIP	SERVICE	CITY/STATE
Steven Myers	STG3	Shipmate (Survivor	Navy	Vallejo, CA

IN MEMORIAM

NAME	RANK	SERVICE	CITY/STATE	DECEASED
Marcus Rodriguez Survivor	SNSM	1986-69	Freson, CA	16 Oct. 2019
Arthur M. Martin Plank Owner	S1C	45-46	West Linn, OR	9 Oct. 2019



USS FRANK E EVANS ASSOCIATION
2286 Morgan RD.
Carlsbad, CA 92008

CHECK OUT OUR
Revised & UP-
DATED WEBSITE

USSFEE.ORG

Our Next
Reunion is in
San Antonio
Texas, OCT.
21-24, 2020

