

# The SixGun



**Vol. XVIII Issue 34 Official Newsletter of the USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 Association April 2013**

President's Message: B. W. Jennings

The efforts of volunteer recruiters this past year has resulted in enrollment of several new members in the Association. We are pleased to report that some of these new members will attend at the 2013 reunion in Essington. We look forward to meeting them. We are grateful to each member who has helped to recruit former Sperry shipmates.

There are two ways that we can keep our Association alive. One is to retain the members we currently have. In other words, don't let your membership expire! The second is to recruit former Sperry shipmates to join our Association. Yes, there are still some former Sperry crewmen who have never enrolled in the Sperry Association, and there are former Association members who have let their membership expire Recruiting them requires searching the internet, contacting old buddies to remind them, visiting or making telephone calls to those who live nearby. Attrition brought on by age, health, death, distance and other factors have taken a heavy toll on our membership. It is up to current members to do so everything they can to maintain our roster.

Each one of us can become a recruiter. Let's get started.

Vice President's Message: Robert Dykes

Well, as we all know the time is near for us... for the 2013 reunion that is. Still surfing the web for fellow shipmates has proven to be a great way of locating the ones we have lost contact with. It will be a great reunion in Philly. We are going to have 13 newbie's so someone has been doing a great recruiting job. See you in Philly.

**U.S.S CHARLES S. SPERRY DD697 ASSOCIATION  
QUARTERLY FINANCIAL REPORT & BANK ACCOUNT ACTIVITY  
MARCH 31, 2013**

**ACTIVITY FROM JANUARY 1, 2013 THROUGH MARCH 31, 2013:**

	<b><u>JANUARY 1, 2013 BEGINNING BALANCE</u></b>	<b>\$12,015.15</b>
<b>JANUARY</b>	<b><u>INCOME:</u> MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS</b>	\$175.00
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> SHIP'S STORE: CHESSER, GARY</b>	\$51.60
	WOJCIK, GEORGE	\$19.50
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> REUNION REGISTRATION FEES</b>	\$486.58
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> DONATION: JOHN HOLMES (REUNION FEES)</b>	\$160.00
	<b><u>EXPENSES:</u> BOB JENNINGS: RECEIPTS FOR POSTAGE (SHIPS STORE &amp; NEWSLETTER)</b>	(\$150.50)
	<b><u>EXPENSES:</u> JOHN HOLMES: REFUND REUNION FEES</b>	(\$160.00)
<b>FEBRUARY</b>	<b><u>INCOME:</u> MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS</b>	\$450.00
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> REUNION REGISTRATION FEES</b>	\$935.64
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> DONATION: GLENN STONE</b>	\$5.00
	<b><u>EXPENSES:</u> NONE</b>	(\$0.00)
<b>MARCH</b>	<b><u>INCOME:</u> MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS</b>	\$475.00
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> SHIP'S STORE: HILBERER, MANFRED;</b>	\$49.01
	MILLER, SCOTT	\$19.50
	SWIDERSKI, KEN	\$19.50
	TORRES, VICTOR	\$85.00
	<b><u>INCOME:</u> REUNION REGISTRATION</b>	\$2,858.62
	<b><u>EXPENSES:</u> REUNION: INSPIRATIONAL CRAFTS</b>	(\$48.00)
	<b><u>MARCH 31, 2013 ENDING BALANCE</u></b>	<b>\$17,446.60</b>

Gary Chesser  
Treasurer,  
U.S.S Charles S. Sperry DD697 Association

## Treasurer/Webmaster Report:

Financially, the Sperry Association is in much better shape than the last few years. The younger generations of Sperry shipmates seem to be coming in to stand watch. Many of us have experienced a rough year with health issues and deaths in the families. Our Sperry prayer list seems to grow more each week. In searching for information on inactive shipmates and verifying information, it is saddening to me to find an obituary for a shipmate instead of a way to reconnect old friends. Being hindered by personal family health problems and loss over the past year, much of what should have been done is yet to do. Several have shared cruise books and pictures, which is a great addition to our web site. In searching for shipmates, I found a copy of the Sperry's "First Muster Roll Of The Crew". This is 142 pages of the actual record of just who the plunkers and first crew were. This is a great find because of the full names and other information helpful in searching for our WWII shipmates. The next update to the web roster will include the first crew names, as well as the names of shipmates copied from the cruise books that were loaned to us. We thank all who have contributed to this effort.

Calling all Shipmates

Clarion Hotel

610.521.9600

76 Industrial Hwy., Essington, PA

The 2013 USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 Association Reunion is just around the corner. It is not too late to get on board for the cruise. Contact your shipmates to be sure they get on board and register.

Please bring your door prize(s) and item(s) for silent auction.



## Crew's News:

**Walter Beattie ('72-'73):** The picture of the two ships (USS Rich & USS C. S. Sperry) was taken in the back basin of the old Philadelphia Navy Yard. The Sperry had already been decommissioned (notice the Sperry is not flying the "jack" on the bow & the Rich is). The photo was probably taken in January 1974, before the Sperry was turned over to Chile. Rich was replacing Sperry in DES RON 30. Many of the guys from the Sperry were transferred to the Rich. Bill Stroud would know more about this, as I am sure he was one of the fellows transferred. The "Old Man" (Captain Robertson) also went to the Rich. I was the oddball (still am, I guess) my original ship was the Rich (Oct. 1970 - May 1972). I transferred to the Sperry in May 1972 & stayed with her until she was decommissioned. I almost went back to the 820, but got a 3-month cut when Sperry was decommissioned. The picture was taken in back of the "mothballed" ships basin at the old Philadelphia Navy Yard, probably January 1974.



Anchored at Winter Harbor, Maine. Lobster Festival



Autumn in New York, 1972

**Skip Belz ('60-'63)** reports: "I found this picture while Searching for shipmates. The Sperry is rendering assistance of the USS Bunker Hill CV 17 on May 11, 1944. Bunker Hill had been hit by a Kamikaze. I remember hearing the story from one of the plank owners (cannot remember which one) at the reunion in Norfolk 2005."



**Jim Masterson ('64-'66)** called March 11 to say hello. **Jim** did not want to alarm any of his shipmates but reported that he found out that the USS Charles S. Sperry DD697 was listed as one of the ships that had contact with agent orange during Viet Nam. He found the information on the veteran's website. **Jim** stated anyone with concerns or questions could visit the veteran's website for additional information. **Jim** said he could be contacted at: [jmasterson@umassd.edu](mailto:jmasterson@umassd.edu).

**Jim** and his wife Lorraine recently returned from Aruba. They spend six weeks a year enjoying the beautiful beach.

It is with sadness we report the passing of Dorothy Barnes on January 11, 2013, wife of **shipmate Lee Barnes ('50-'52.)** Condolences may be sent to Lee at P.O. Box 1024, Orange Beach, AL 36561-1024. Dorothy was always a bright light at the reunions. We will miss her sweet smile and spirit.

On February 4 we received a call from **Charlie Quehl ('54-'55)** that his nineteen year old grandson had been in a car wreck. He has brain damage but is making great progress. He is awake and can speak.

The grandson helps deliver Meals on Wheels with both his grandfathers. He was with his other grandfather and had finished the delivery. Not sure if the grandfather was with him at the time he ran off the road and over compensated causing him to be hit by a pickup truck. The other driver was not hurt.

Please remember the Quehl family in your prayers. Cards may be mailed to 2450 Crane Schoolhouse Rd., Bethel, OH 45102.

***Quehl Update:***

As of Monday, April 1 Charlie and Rose's grandson, Jason is improving every day. He is doing great except his vision is not 100 percent. Rose reported he is still doing therapy and making progress. Charlie will have eye surgery on April 17. Please continue to remember the Quehl family. They send their best wishes to everyone.

**Dick Biondo ('58-'60)** reported in February he may have had a stroke which limits his activities. He is subject to unannounced blackouts and general deterioration. He is no longer able to drive and has turned in his driver's license. **Dick** stated he has great memories of the Norfolk reunion and he values his friendship with the Jennings and the association. Cards of encouragement can be sent to Dick at 4501 Delcord Rd., Virginia Beach, VA 2455.

**Cindy Wolf, daughter of Kenny and Margie Edwards reports:**

Dad got to start the infusions last month or so. He went to see the Lung specialist yesterday he was very pleased with Dad's results. His lungs are exactly the same and he has not had Bronchitis, Pneumonia not even a cold since he has started! My Mom is doing better too. She is using a walker to get around, but at least she isn't hurting as bad. She has been getting Spinal injections. I think they maybe falling apart! But, at least they have each other! And we still have them and all their pieces!! Got to love them! Well, I hope everyone out there is doing well and keeping warm this winter! Dad and Mom misses going to the Reunions and seeing everyone. They told me to tell everyone Hello to you all! Take care and I will talk with you later! Keep Praying for them Please!! Thank you!!

Frankie Eubank reports that his father-in-law was a Plank owner of the Sperry, **Sfc Levie Davis**. My brother-in-law and I reunited him with a fellow Plank owner **Dewey Vick** just a few months before his passing. Most rewarding thing we ever did. A lot of stories I'll never forget. Thanks to all of you that served. May God Bless you and yours.



## We will remember

Shipmate **Gilbert A. Perez** passed away on June 18, 2001, **Raymond N. Gross** passed away in April 2008 and **Edward James Stubenbordt** passed away in June of 2009, **Gordon G. Ragland, Jr** passed away August 28, 2012, **Dewey R. Vick, ('44-'45)** , passed away on March 8, 2004, in High Point, NC., **Doug Brown ('51-'54)** passed away July 18, 2009, **Walker Taylor III ('50-'52)**, **Joseph Balash ('58-'59.)**, **James Kleier ('60-'61)** passed away May 8, 2010, **Norman Cortez Edgar**, **Frank Aloysius Diore ('44-'45)** passed away November 29, 2002, **Frederick Edmund Bitting, ('49-'51)**, 91, died Jan 3, 2002.



## Commander Fredrick Edmund Bitting

Commander Bitting was 91 years of age when he passed on January 3, 2002. He was born in Philadelphia and received his early education in Philadelphia and New Haven, Connecticut. He graduated from the University of Utah with a bachelor of naval science degree. He served as private First Class in the 103rd Calvary of the Pennsylvania National Guard from July 1928 to July 1929. He enlisted in the US Navy in August 1929 and served for 33 years, retiring in November 1962 from The Pentagon with the rank of Commander. Numerous decorations included the Bronz Star Medal, awarded while serving as captain of the USS Red Start for his leadership efforts during the rescue of Navy personnel from the USS Minivet, which was sunk while in Japanese waters.

Commander Bitting served aboard the USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 from January 1949 to November 1951.

Following his retirement from the Navy, he was employed by Howard University in Washington, DC, as plant engineer in charge of operations and maintenance.

## USS Charles S. Sperry DD 697 Officers

### **B.W. Jennings**

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Appointed Position

Chaplain

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**Trustees:** *Cal Dyk, Charlie Quehl*