

Website:

[www.ussstoddard.org](http://www.ussstoddard.org)

Date:

February 2021

# USS STODDARD ALUMNI NEWSLETTER

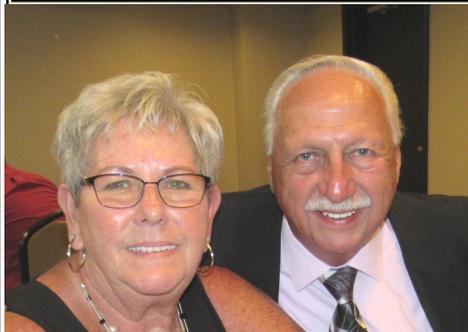


## USS Stoddard Reunions By Years

- [2021 Jacksonville-Cancelled](#)
- [2020 Jacksonville-Cancelled](#)
- [2019 Norfolk, VA](#)
- [2018 San Pedro, CA](#)
- [2017 New Orleans, LA](#)
- [2016 Portland, ME](#)
- [2015 Albuquerque, NM](#)
- [2014 Branson, MO](#)
- [2013 Washington DC area.](#)
- [2012 Portland, OR](#)
- [2011 San Antonio, TX](#)
- [2010 Toms River, NJ](#)
- [2009 Indianapolis, IN](#)
- [2008 Seattle, WA](#)
- [2007 Buffalo, NY](#)
- [2006 Mobile, AL](#)
- [2005 Sacramento, CA](#)
- [2004 Chicago, IL](#)
- [2003 Philadelphia, PA](#)
- [2002 San Diego, CA](#)
- [2001 Pittsburgh, PA](#)
- [2000 Jacksonville, FL](#)
- [1999 Seattle, WA](#)
- [1998 Charleston, SC](#)
- [1997 San Antonio, TX](#)
- [1996 Baton Rouge, LA](#)
- [1995 Boston, MA](#)
- [1994 San Francisco, CA](#)
- [1993 Charleston, SC](#)
- [1992 Baton Rouge, LA](#)
- [1991 Fort Worth, TX](#)
- [1990 Cedar Rapids, IA](#)
- [1989 North Platte, NE](#)

**USS STODDARD DD566  
WWII \* Korea \* Vietnam**

**32nd Stoddard Alumni Reunion  
September - 2022**



**Hosts:**

**Bill & Ulla  
Melyan**

**Email: [keystonewillie@verizon.net](mailto:keystonewillie@verizon.net)**

Greetings from Punta Gorda, Florida,

**Because COVID-19 continues to impact our daily lives, the 2021 Stoddard Reunion in Jacksonville, FL has been cancelled.** We would have to make definite plans now for the hotel and various venues. At this point, there is no assurance things will be open in September, 2021.

We are willing to host the 2022 Stoddard Reunion and are currently exploring several options, and possibly changing the location. We will plan the 2022 Reunion in September as in the past. John and Carlene Rauh will continue to send out the three annual Stoddard Alumni Newsletters to keep you up to date on the plans.

Until we are together again, stay safe and well.

Sincerely,

*Bill and Ulla*

**Inside this issue:**

- I Was A Sailor Once* 2
- Ex-USS Stoddard* 3
- Stoddard History* 4
- Ships Names* 5
- Secretary Notes* 6
- Financial Report* 6
- Email Changes* 6
- Chaplain's Corner* 7



## ***I WAS A SAILOR ONCE.....***

I liked standing on the bridge at sunrise with salt spray and the ocean wind in my face, the ship beneath me feeling like a living thing as she drove swiftly through the sea.

I liked the sounds of the Navy - the shrill boatswains pipe, the ship's bell on the quarterdeck, the harsh squawk of the 1MC, and the strong language and laughter of sailors.

I liked Navy vessels; fast destroyers, plodding fleet auxiliaries and amphibs, sleek submarines and steady solid aircraft carriers.

I liked the proud names of Navy ships: Midway, Lexington, Saratoga, Coral Sea, Antietam, Valley Forge...memorials of great battles won and tribulations overcome.

I liked the lean angular names of Navy "tin-cans" and escorts; Dewey, Farragut, Law, McCloy... memorials of heroes who went before us. And the others, San Jose , San Diego , Los Angeles , St. Paul , Chicago...named for our cities.

I liked the tempo of a Navy band blaring through the topside speakers as we stood out to sea.

I liked Liberty Call and the spicy scent of a foreign port.

I even liked the all-hands working parties as my ship filled herself with stores and fuel in order to cut ties to the land and carry out her mission anywhere on the globe.

I liked sailors from all parts of the land, we trusted and depended on each other for competence, comradeship, strength and courage. They were "shipmates"; then and forever.

I liked the surge of adventure in my heart, when the word was passed: "Now set the special sea and anchor detail - all hands to quarters for leaving port," and I liked the thrill of sighting home again, with the waving hands of welcome from family and friends waiting pier side.

The work was hard and dangerous; the going rough at times; the parting from loved ones painful, but the companionship of robust Navy laughter, the "all for one and one for all" philosophy of the sea was ever present.

I liked the serenity of the sea after a day of hard ship's work, as flying fish flitted across the wave tops and sunset gave way to night.

I liked the feel of the Navy in darkness -- the masthead and range lights, the red and green navigation lights and stern light, the pulsating phosphorescence of radar repeaters - they cut through the dusk and joined with the mirror of stars overhead. And I liked drifting off to sleep lulled by the myriad of noises that told me that my ship was well, and that my shipmates on watch would keep me safe.

I liked quiet mid-watches with the aroma of strong coffee; the lifeblood of the Navy permeating everywhere. And I liked hectic watches when the exacting minuet of haze-gray shapes racing at flank speed kept all hands on a razor edge of alertness.

I liked the sudden cry of "General quarters, general quarters, all hands man your battle stations," followed by the clamor of running feet on ladders and the resounding thump of watertight doors as the ship transformed herself in a few brief seconds from a peaceful workplace to a weapon of war...ready for anything.

I liked the sight of space-age equipment manned by youngsters clad in dungarees and sound-powered phones that their grandfathers would still recognize.

I liked the traditions of the Navy and those who made them. I liked the proud names of Navy heroes: Halsey, Nimitz, Perry, Farragut, John Paul Jones and Burke. A sailor could find much in the Navy: comrades-in-arms, pride in self and country, mastery of the seaman's trade.

In years to come, when sailors are home from the sea, they will still remember with fondness and respect the ocean in all its moods - the impossible shimmering mirror calm or the storm-tossed green water surging over the bow. And then there will come again a faint whiff of stack gas, a faint echo of engine and rudder orders, a vision of the bright bunting of signal flags snapping at the yardarm, a refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom and chief's quarters and mess decks.

Gone ashore for good they will grow wistful about their Navy days, when the seas belonged to them and a new port of call was ever over the horizon.

Remembering this, they will stand taller and they will say,  
"I WAS A SAILOR ONCE AND I WOULD DO IT AGAIN."



Writing by By VADM. Harold Koenig, U.S.N. Ret.

### **Remembering "Swiss Ladder 566" at the Pacific Missile Test Center, Point Mugu**



The last time I saw the Stoddard was winter 1991. I saw her from the deck of an Exxon oil platform, being towed west-bound up the Santa Barbara Channel toward Point Conception. A fleet tug had her in tow, and behind her was PTF-26, a Viet Nam-era 95' fast patrol boat, which was often employed as range security at the Pacific Missile Test Center, NAS Point Mugu, another classic put out to pasture. I knew she was going away to Mare Island, but thought she would be stored at Bremerton, WA. I flew out and circled her a few times with my helicopter, just to say good bye.

I've always had a soft spot for destroyers (even though I was Air Force, myself), my Dad was an officer aboard U.S.S. Eversole (DD-789), Gearing-class, and we would visit aboard whenever we could. I remember the Destroyer Bar at the O-Club at the Long Beach Naval Station, behind the bar was a huge oil painting of a destroyer at speed in heavy seas. Very exciting stuff!

I worked with ex-Stoddard from 1984 to 1990. Aspen Helicopters, Inc. had contracts with PMTC and a separate contract with General Dynamics. I was hired by Aspen specifically for this assignment, due to my experience at shipboard operations. My first landing aboard ex-Stoddard was 02-21-84. GD personnel from Pomona, CA would fly to OLF San Nicolas Island (SNI), where I stayed most of winter and spring 1984, by fixed wing aircraft: Lear Jet, Aero Commander or King Air. I stood by at "Nick" with one of Aspen's Bell 206B-3 JetRanger III helicopters, or sometimes a Bell 206L LongRanger or 206L-1 LongRanger II. My job was to transport GD engineers and technicians, their equipment, 20mm depleted-uranium ammunition, etc., to "Swiss Ladder 5-6-6" (as she was affectionately known) under tow, usually 15-25 miles west-northwest of SNI. They were preparing the ship and the 20mm "Phalanx" CIWS gun system for the upcoming tests. A typical day involved 6-8 trips to the ship, and bringing the GD personnel back to the island at the end of the day. Because of the separate contracts, GD personnel and PMTC personnel were mostly kept on separate flights.

The ship was actually run by civilian workers from "Surface Targets Directorate" at Port Hueneme, CA. (That's WY-NEE-MEE, by the way...) I remember one (Herb Pero) of them was reportedly the highest paid civilian employee of the U.S. Government, because of all the overtime he accumulated aboard the ship while out of the harbor. At the time, they were paid hourly, 24 hours a day!

Most of the time a tug pulled the ship around its station, or moored at the "Bravo Buoy," which was about three miles west of Begg Rock, named for Captain Begg, who discovered the rock by sinking his ship on it. When tests were all set, the outdrives would be lowered, all personnel removed from the ship, either by helicopter or the tug, then she would be on her own. Remote control, you know. Tests were run 35-40 miles west of the island, usually. On test days, we would fly three helicopters, in order to evacuate the ship as quickly as possible. We'd all stand by at SNI. They'd run the test, then we'd take the crew back. E.O.D. personnel first, of course.

We had quite a bit of trouble with Russian AGIs (Code name: "Beeper Bell"). Often they would pull out in front, then turn across the bow of the tug and go dead in the water, hoisting the signal for DIW, engine problems. They caused considerable delay in the program doing things like that. Sometimes, test would have a second Fletcher-class DD, ex-Higbee, towed around as a decoy to try to lure the AGI away. Weather was rough out there. BIG waves. Lots of wind. On several occasions, the tow wire separated. I can tell you, landing aboard a drifting target ship, cross-swell in 40 + knot winds really tested my skills as a pilot. Later in the test program, ex-Stoddard would tow a radar-reflector sled a short distance behind during the tests. The thinking was that the "threat" would go after the sled rather than the ship. A lot of times I'd come back to the ship and find shrapnel all over her decks.

(Continued on Page 4)

(Continued From Page 3)

After General Dynamics finished testing the various versions of their "Phalanx" CIWS system, Signal/General Electric got to use the ship to test their "Goal Keeper" 30mm system. After a test, we'd fly back to the ship, and that gun would swing around and point right at us! We'd always try to approach from ahead, so that it wouldn't target us. (The helicopter's blade-tip speed is in the same ball park as some surface skimmers....)

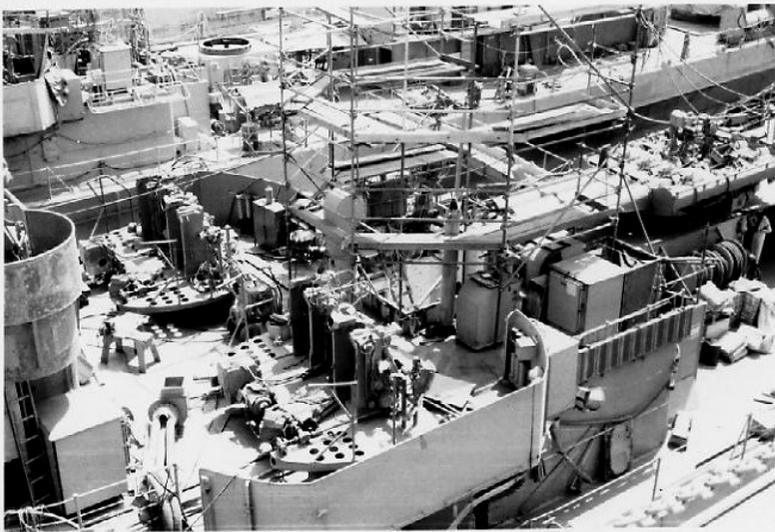
Probably the most exciting time I had was when the ship broke loose from the tug in very high winds. Laguna Peak, which is immediately east of NAS Point Mugu, was registering winds of 95 knots out of the northeast, what we call a "Santa Ana," but this one was a record-breaker! The ex-Stoddard was adrift, between San Nicolas Island and Santa Rosa Island, with approximately 15 technicians aboard. Navy H-46s had been grounded for transmission troubles, as I recall, and are too big, anyway, and the U.S. Coast Guard was involved in a rescue operation in the same area. Other Aspen pilots, Jim McCrory, Ken Host and I had to get those people off the ship! We took turns, landing on the fantail. On one occasion, while McCrory was on deck, a huge wave passed under the ship. The bow came up so far that the keel was out of the water as far back as the forward stack! Then she went down. I yelled at Jim to get off the deck. She went under like a submarine on a crash dive!! I am not exaggerating...well, you know: you've been aboard her in rough weather.... We flew back to the mainland with our passengers, into the teeth of that 95-knot wind. We tried to stop for fuel at the radar site on top of Santa Cruz Island, but, would you believe, the top of the island was socked in! We continued inbound to NAS Point Mugu, and when I shut down there, I had only 4 gallons of Jet-A remaining. A pretty exciting morning...

by: **Bryan Swopes**

**Aspen Helicopters, Inc. 1984-1990**

## USS Stoddard DD-566 History

***Believed to be USS Stoddard in Long Beach being repaired from the Boiler Incident in 1962.***



*Midships with the Quarter Deck along the right edge. The mounts for the 3" A.A. guns (now removed) and the scaffolding for the second Stack is in place awaiting for its return. Note the step ladder on the Port side (Center) leading down into the After Boiler Room. The torpedo tubes are just above the Quarter Deck. This access was necessary according to the News Letter accounts by Gary Stone BT3, and John Erway BT2 in the February News Letter (Boiler Incident). The five upright objects standing on their ends may have been new or salvaged items from the Boiler Room Aft. awaiting for reinstallation.*

My memory (now at 82), was we traveled north up the coast line to Long Beach along the coast at a very slow pace. (With probably only one engine and boiler working). We also had to "Off load Ammo" at the Ordnance Depot and then proceed on to Long Beach itself - so it took more than one day at a distance of 125 miles by a car on the freeway (say 1 1/2 Hours) driving time. It probably would have required a few days to position 4="Fletchers" on blocks before they could drain the drydock itself. The period of time in the docks was about 4 months or so to insure the "repairs" to all four ships in the dock, before they could flood up and float us out. Any "Snipe" from that era I am sure would be able to answer with more details. I am sure any Officer, Chief, Engine Man or Boiler Man would have more details to fill out my memory of this event.

*Fred Crenshaw SK3 1960-1963*

## Ships That Were Named *USS Alaska CB-1* & *USS Hawaii CB-3* Before They Were States



**USS Alaska (CB-1)** was the lead ship of the *Alaska* class of large cruisers which served with the United States Navy during the end of World War II. She was the first of two ships of her class to be completed, followed only by *Guam*; four other ships were ordered but were not completed before the end of the war. *Alaska* was the third vessel of the US Navy to be named after what was then the territory of Alaska. She was laid down on 17 December 1941, ten days after the outbreak of war, was launched in August 1943 by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation, in Camden, New Jersey, and was commissioned in June 1944. She was armed with a main battery of nine 12" guns in three triple turrets and had a top speed of 33 kn 38 mph). Due to being commissioned late in the war, *Alaska* saw relatively limited service. She participated in operations off Iwo Jima and Okinawa in February–July 1945, including providing anti-aircraft defense for various carrier task forces and conducting limited shore bombardment operations. She shot down several Japanese aircraft off Okinawa, including a possible Ohka piloted missile. In July–August 1945 she participated in sweeps for Japanese shipping in the East China and Yellow Seas. After the end of the war, she assisted in the occupation of Korea and transported a contingent of US Army troops back to the United States. She was decommissioned in February 1947 and placed in reserve, where she remained until she was stricken in 1960 and sold for scrapping the following year.



**USS Hawaii (CB-3)** was intended to be the third member of the *Alaska*-class large cruisers. It was the first United States Navy ship to be named after the-then Territory of Hawaii. Because *Hawaii*'s construction was delayed by higher-priority ships like aircraft carriers, her keel was not laid until December 1943, about two years after her sister ship *Guam*. **USS Hawaii** was launched in late 1945, but post-war budget cutbacks necessitated her cancellation in 1947. The *Alaska*-class large cruisers were seen as requiring a crew almost as large as a *South Dakota* or *Iowa*-class battleship, while the armor and protection of the capital ship-sized *Hawaii* was no better than a *Baltimore*-class cruiser and this was particularly significant as the underwater protection designed into *Hawaii* was poor. In a famous Proceedings article in January 1949, Frank Uhlig, dismissed the performance of the class in 1944–1945 and concluded the battle-cruiser had no place in the postwar USN. For a time, the US Navy planned to convert the ship into the US' first guided missile cruiser, but this did not come to fruition. A conversion to a large command ship was later contemplated and planning went far enough that money was allocated in the 1952 budget for this purpose. However, with one command ship already completed, *Northampton*, and a second already chosen, *Wright*, no work was started upon *Hawaii*. Having been laid up for twelve years, the still incomplete ship was towed to breakers to be scrapped in 1959.

**USS Alaska**  
**SSBN-732 (1985)**



**USS Hawaii**  
**SSN-776 (2006)**





*bill melyan,*

*treasurer...*



*carlene rauh,*

*secretary...*

**USS Stoddard Alumni Association  
Financial Statement  
January 1, 2020 - December 31, 2020**

**Beginning Balance 1-1-2020** **\$29,309.55**

**INCOME - 2020**

Membership Dues	\$ 1,340.00		
Ship's Store	\$ 790.00		
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 2,130.00</b>	<b>+</b>	<b>\$ 2,130.00</b>
			<b>\$31,439.55</b>

**EXPENSES - 2020**

Newsletter Costs	\$ 1,233.60
Ship's Store Postage	\$ 129.75
Office Supplies	\$ 191.93
Bank Fees	\$ 39.00
Thank a VET	\$ 27.92
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 1,622.20</b>

<b>Year Total</b>	<b>\$31,439.55</b>
<b>Minus Expenses</b>	<b><u>-\$ 1,622.20</u></b>
	<b>\$29,817.35</b>

**Balance as of December 31,2020 \$29,817.35**

*Respectfully Submitted  
William Melyan, Treasurer*



Looking forward to when we can all be together.

Please continue to let us know if a member passes. The Stoddard Alumni will send a condolence card from the Stoddard family.

In addition, since we are unable to get together and share family stories, you may let us know if you have something to share with the group and we can include it in our newsletters.

Godspeed until we are together again.

Sincerely,  
*Carlene*



*john rauh,*

*email/database  
coordinator.....*

As the years pass we continue to loose members of our Stoddard Family.

**Ralph, Don H., Don R., Joe, Frank** and **BK** were all Stoddard Alumni who attended the reunions. We miss them and all our Alumni, as our numbers dwindle. If you have never attended a Stoddard Reunion, please consider doing so. You will enjoy talking to all your brothers who served on the USS Stoddard. In addition many sons and daughters of departed shipmates continue to attend because they have joined and enjoy our Stoddard Family. As our numbers continue to go down, I am afraid soon we will not have enough members to have reunions. This has happened to many ships reunions. Please plan to attend—you will be welcomed with open arms!

\*\*\*\*\*

***Please send me your email address changes.***

Almost every time I send out an email several come back as not deliverable. Please send me any changes, email, address or phone numbers to:

***cjrauh@LDD.net***

USS STODDARD DD566  
 WWII \* Korea \* Vietnam



*al plapp,*

*chaplain...*

**CHAPLAIN'S CORNER**

**An Oath**

The stress of uncertainty, no matter how it manifests itself, has been the hallmark of the last, plus, year. The intensity of political turmoil and individual beliefs has created internal tension, division, and violence for which each of us has had to find a personal answer and resolution. Enduring COVID personally, in family members, friends, and the changes in life style have gone far beyond inconvenience and a new reality. Death of those in our lives have left us all with heavy hearts.

Since my experience as a Corpsman flying Med Evac with the Marine Corps during the TET Offensive of 1968, picking up dozens of bodies at a time, and seeing things that no one should have to see, I have spent a lifetime making sense of the experience and quieting my PTSD. This has led me to a lifetime commitment of honoring those that lost their lives in Vietnam, whom I had the humbling privilege of escorting on the first leg of their journey home. All of us who served in the military, police, or political office took an Oath to "defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign and domestic, that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same". All of those that I brought home were volunteers or drafted, but all took The Oath we all have in common. They all had dreams that were unfulfilled, they all dreamed of getting home yet they died doing what their country asked them to do. They took an Oath that they lived up to with their lives.

It is my fervent prayer, under God, that we can unite in civil discourse, listening to understand, trust, and embrace tolerance to restore meaning to the sacrifices of those who truly swore to an Oath.

**May you all stay safe, until we meet again,**

*Al*



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- Email/Database Coordinator: John Rauh**  
 email: [cjrauh@LDD.net](mailto:cjrauh@LDD.net)

*May They Rest In Peace*

<b>Frye, Ralph A.</b>	SK2	51-52	6-5-2020
<b>Garofalow, Frank</b>	YN3	58-58	1-13-2020
<b>Gonzales, Frank P.</b>	GMG2	66-67	7-29-2020
<b>Gorman, Phillip</b>	FM1	51-54	5-26-2020
<b>Graves, Billy Kent (BK)</b>	RD2	66-69	11-29-2020
<b>Haj, Richard</b>	LCDR	58-59	11-14-2012
<b>Hanley, Robert "Bob"</b>	?	43-45	1-1-2011
<b>Harkins, William W.</b>	FT2	54-55	8-12-2010
<b>Harpster, Joseph</b>	MM1/C	50-54	6-18-2020
<b>Hummel, Donald E.</b>	EMFN	51-52	10-29-2020
<b>Jerauld, Phillip</b>	Chaplain	59-60	4-11-2020
<b>Malin, Robert A.</b>	LTJG	55-58	4-15-2020
<b>McCue, Paul E.</b>	BT3	65-67	2-19-2020
<b>Rhinehart, Donald W.</b>	S1(FCO)	45-45	12-4-2019
<b>Scrivens, Charles R.</b>	FT3/QMC	55-57	3-22-2013
<b>Tufts, Peter A.</b>	LT	65-69	1-1-2021
<b>Weaver, Don R.</b>	BT2	67-69	12-30-2020
<b>Wiese, Curtis A.</b>	S1C	44-46	1-18-2021



**USS Stoddard Alumni Association**

**4337 S Hwy 51**

**Perryville, MO 63775**

**USS STODDARD SHIP'S STORE-ORDER FORM**

**TO:** Marlene Brant  
 508 S. Maish Road  
 Frankfort, IN 46041

Phone: 765-659-3605 Email: [tmbrant@sbcglobal.net](mailto:tmbrant@sbcglobal.net)

<b>Item</b>	<b>Size</b>	<b>Price</b>	<b>Qty.</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Golf Shirt - navy	L	\$27		
Golf Shirt - navy	XL	\$28		
Golf Shirt - navy	XXL	\$29		
Golf Shirt - navy	XXXL	\$30		
Golf Shirt - white	L	\$27		
Golf Shirt - white	XL	\$28		
Golf Shirt - white	XXL	\$26		
Golf Shirt - white	XXXL	\$30		
Sweatshirt - navy	L	\$24		
Sweatshirt - navy	XL	\$24		
Sweatshirt - navy	XXL	\$27		
Sweatshirt - navy	XXXL	\$29		
Sweatshirt - cream	L	\$24		
Sweatshirt - cream	XL	\$24		
Sweatshirt - cream	XXL	\$27		
Sweatshirt - cream	XXXL	\$29		
Jacket - navy (LT.WT.)	L	\$39		
Jacket - navy (LT.WT.)	XL	\$39		
Jacket - navy (LT.WT.)	XXXL	\$41		
Stoddard Ball Hat -navy		\$13		
Stoddard Ball Hat (mesh)-navy		\$13		
Stoddard Coffee Mug		\$ 6		
Large 12" Steammin Demon Patch		\$67		
<b>Subtotal</b>		<b>\$</b>		<b>\$ 10.00</b>
<b>(Below Items Shipping Included)</b>		<b>Shipping</b>		
Stoddard Pic. 8 X 10 (Side View)		\$6		
Stoddard Pic. 8 X 10 (Rear View)		\$6		
Stoddard Pic. 11X17 (Color)		\$8		
Stoddard License Plate		\$20		
Stoddard Sinking DVD		\$8		
4" Stoddard Patch		\$5		
3 1/2 x 4 Steammin Demon Patch		\$10		
Stoddard Alumni Pin		\$5		
<b>*TOTAL ORDER \$</b>				

**SORRY NO CREDIT CARDS**

**\*Checks only payable to: USS Stoddard Alumni Association**

**Ship to:** NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
 STREET \_\_\_\_\_  
 CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_