**VETERANS OF FOREIGN WARS BLAZING STAR POST #1574**

**17 CANNON AVENUE**

**STATEN ISLAND, NY 10314**

**Website. http://blazingstarvfwpost1574.org/wp**

December 2020

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| BLAZING STAR POST 1574 CONTACT NUMBERS  Al Porto, Commander - 718-578-1242, albert.porto38@gmail.com  Paul Dietrich, Quartermaster - 718-698-5269, paul@the-dietrichs.com  William Alcock, Adjutant - 718-698-1923 |

**Calendar Events**

**DECEMBER MEETING INFORMATION**

**Members, if you have not attended a meeting in a while, now you have three options to attend even if you live remotely from the post, support your post - log in, call in or reserve a seat to physically attend:**

**If you have a computer with a camera, use the link to connect to the meeting from the safety of your home. If the link does not work for any reason, copy it and paste it into your search engine.**

**No computer or camera, call in using the phone number provided, be sure to identify yourself when you get in.**

**A limited number of members may attend in person. Call Paul Dietrich at 718-698-5269 for a reservation.**

**You will get a return phone call either yes or no as limited by COVID rules**

**Saturday, December 5, 2020 at 1000 – 1100 (10AM – 11AM EST)**

**Please join my meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.**<https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/930734589>   
  
**You can also dial in using your phone.** United States: [+1 (408) 650-3123](tel:+14086503123,,930734589) **Access Code:** 930-734-589 

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Event | Location | Time | Remarks |
| 5 December 2020 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |

**Schedule of Meetings and Events for 2021**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Date | Event | Location | Time | Remarks |
| 2 January 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 6 February 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 6 March 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 10 April 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 1 May 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 5 June 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 10 July 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 7 August 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1000 | Saturday |
| 1 September 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 | Wednesday |
| 6 October 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 | Wednesday |
| 3 November 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 | Wednesday |
| 1 December 2021 | Blazing Star Post Meeting | Gold Star Post | 1300 | Wednesday |

**Membership**

REMINDER >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<REMINDER

IF ANY OF YOUR CONTACT INFORMATION (ADDRESS, PHONE NUMBER, EMAIL ADDRESS) CHANGES, PLEASE NOTIFY US AS SOON AS POSSIBLE IN ORDER TO MAINTAIN COMMUNICATIONS FOR MEETINGS AND IMPORTANCE ANNOUNCEMENTS.

REMINDER >>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>>MEMBER CONTACT INFORMATION<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<<REMINDER

2. Consider Life Membership. You save money over the long run and eliminate the need to renew yearly. Below are the membership rates for Life membership and Installment Plan Life Membership.

**Age on 31 Dec             Payment in Full             Installment Plan Option**  
**Total:                   Initial Fee:        11 payments of:**

Through Age 30               $425.00                $45.00                $38.64

31-40                                  $410.00                $45.00                $37.27

41-50                                  $375.00                $45.00                $34.09

51-60                                  $335.00                $45.00                $30.45

61-70                                  $290.00                $45.00                $26.36

71-80                                  $225.00                $45.00                $20.45

81 and over                        $170.00                $45.00                $15.45

3. Dues Renewal Reminder:

Long, Derek expired 4/30/2020

Rabold, Bruce C. expired 8/31/2020

Lawrence, Jay R. expired 9/30/2020

Manna, Michael Current Until 12/31/2020

McCartney, Ian Current Until 12/31/2020

Scher, Adam A. Current Until 12/31/2020

Sjursen, Daniel A. Current Until 12/31/2020

Smith, Gerald F. Current Until 12/31/2020

Sogomonyen, Fianna Current Until 12/31/2020

**Service Officer**

1. Veterans are encouraged to enroll in the VA health care so they are on record should they ever need it.  No cost to apply.  Apply on line at [www.va.gov/healtheligibility/vfw](file:///C:\Users\Albert\Documents\VFW\Newsletters%202011\www.va.gov\healtheligibility\vfw) or call 1-877-222-8387.

2. DD Form 214 website. http://vetrecs.archives.gov. For assistance, contact post service officer, Doug Encarnacion.

3. Online Health Care Application. [www.vets.gov](https://www.vets.gov/).  or call 877-222-VETS (8387).

4. Veterans Representative on Staten Island. Monique L. Rada Engagement and Community Services Coordinator

NYC Department of Veterans’ Services [1 Centre Street, Suite 2208](x-apple-data-detectors://1/0) [New York, NY 10007](x-apple-data-detectors://1/0) [917-628-8487](tel:917-628-8487) [mrada@veterans.nyc.gov](mailto:mrada@veterans.nyc.gov)

5. John Bartow, Assistant VSO, Veterans of Foreign Wars 518-626-5687.

6. A VBA Representative at the Staten Island Vet Center every Wednesday.  There are no walk-ins everyone must call (718)816-4499 to set up an appointment.   All services are free. Samuel B. Cottes, Jr., Veterans Outreach

Specialist, Staten Island Veterans Center, US Department of Veterans Affairs; Readjustment Counseling Services, 60 Bay Street, Staten Island, NY 10301 Tel: (718) 816-4499 x 7747 Cell: (929) 359-2449 Fax: (718) 816-6899

**Employment and Education**

1. Looking for a job? Need quality employees? USE VETJOBS! [www.vetjobs.com](http://svarialce.vfwemail.org:81/CT00004002MzA1OTA1NDk=.HTML?D=2011-08-26)

2. Jobs with Amazon Third Parties. Find a job as a robot technician. Amazon works with third party companies to make it easter for you to apply for skilled positions, such as robotic and maintenance technicians. No post-secondary degree is necessary. Technician – These roles repair, maintain, and perform preventative maintenance on the systems used in Amazon buildings. Opportunities include maintenance technicians, robotics technicians and base building maintenance. Amazon third parties include JLL, CBRE Group, C&W Services and ELS. Benefits of working with an Amazon third party include competitive pay, medical benefits, growth opportunities and no post-secondary degree necessary. Learn more about these skilled opportunities with Amazon third parties amazon.com/thirdpartyjobs.

**Bottom of Form**

General

1. Staten Island University Hospital's Military Appreciation Program. This program entitles active duty members and veterans free parking 12 times per year at the SIUH parking lot. Go to the Security Office with proof of military/veteran status. You will be given 12 parking stamps. Place them on parking ticket and no fee.

2. Free parking for veterans at Richmond County Medical Center. Veterans can park for free in the visitors parking lot where tokens are required. Stop at the main reception desk or security post, show proof you are a veteran (driver’s

license with vet on it, retired ID card, VA card or similar) and they will give you a free token for the parking lot. Get it on the way in as the reception/info desk is not manned all night. Use the token to exit the lot. Saves you $4 per visit.

3. The Defense POW/MIA Office announced the identification of remains and return home of the following personnel:

**Navy Fireman 1st Class Howard D. Hodges,**20,USS West Virginia, Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

**Army Cpl. Paul W. Wilkins,**19, B Co, 1st Bn, 21st Inf Regt, 24th Infantry Div, Choch’iwan, South Korea July 11, 1950.

**Navy Coxswain Paul L. Boemer,**21,USS Oklahoma, Pearl Harbor, Dec. 7, 1941.

4. The Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency is seeking the public’s help to find and encourage more MIA families to donate a DNA sample to help speed the identification process of recovered remains. Each military service and the State Department has a service casualty office that can explain how to donate.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Army: 800-892-2490 | Navy: 800-443-9298 | State Department: 202-485-6106 |
| Marine Corps: 800-847-1597 | Air Force: 800-531-5501 |  |

5. Staten Island Community TV: Veterans TV Shows are available 24 hours a day via YouTube. To view, google "Youtube, Ed Salek, In Honor of" or go to Youtube.com and search for Ed Salek, In Honor of.

**Items of Interest**

**USS *Stockham* (DD-683)**, a [*Fletcher*-class](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fletcher_class_destroyer) [destroyer](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Destroyer), was a ship of the [United States Navy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Navy) named for Gy.Sgt. [Fred W. Stockham](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fred_W._Stockham), [USMC](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Marine_Corps) (1881–1918).



*Stockham* (DD-683) was laid down on 19 December 1942 by the [Bethlehem Steel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Bethlehem_Steel) Co. at [San Francisco, California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Francisco,_California); [launched](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ship_naming_and_launching) on 25 June 1943 and [commissioned](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ship_commissioning) on 11 February 1944. The newly commissioned *Stockham* conducted shakedown training off the west coast until 20 April, and then got underway for [Pearl Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pearl_Harbor), [Hawaii](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hawaii). There, she continued training until departing for the [Marshalls](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marshall_Islands) on 31 May in preparation for the [invasion of the Mariana Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mariana_and_Palau_Islands_campaign). She arrived off [Saipan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Saipan) on 14 June and conducted preinvasion bombardments on that island until the 17th. On the 18th, she steamed to the west of the Marianas with Task Group 58.7 (TG 58.7) to engage the approaching enemy fleet. In the ensuing battle, known as the [Battle of the Philippine Sea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_the_Philippine_Sea) and less formally as "The Great Marianas Turkey Shoot", the [5th Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._5th_Fleet) swept the skies clear of [Japanese](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Imperial_Japan) naval air power, though the two fleets never closed to engage in surface action. Instead, the two adversaries launched their planes at one another and American antiaircraft fire and combat air patrol proved superior to the attacking Japanese planes. During the battle, *Stockham* contributed to the victory by splashing at least three Japanese planes and probably two others. She rejoined the amphibious forces on 25 June and, until mid-August, supported the occupation of Saipan and [Tinian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tinian) and conducted patrols off [Guam](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guam). Her primary responsibilities were to protect the invasion fleet from air attack and to render fire support when called. She helped repel several air attacks, splashing another enemy plane in the process, and dueled with Japanese artillery batteries ashore. On 21 August, she entered the lagoon at [Eniwetok Atoll](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eniwetok_Atoll) for a week before rejoining the [Fast Carrier Task Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Fast_Carrier_Task_Force) for a 33-day sweep of the [Philippines](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philippines), during which the carrier planes hit targets on [Luzon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Luzon) and [Mindanao](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mindanao) in addition to striking the [Visayan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Visayan_Islands) and [Palau](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Palau_Islands) island sub-groups. She entered [Ulithi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ulithi) on 1 October for provisions and upkeep. During her six-day stay, a [typhoon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Typhoon) struck the atoll and broke *Stockham* and two others loose from the nest. She cast off lines and anchored, but was later forced to get underway to evade the storm. She returned with the task group on 4 October to complete upkeep and provisioning in preparation for another cruise with the [aircraft carriers](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Aircraft_carrier). On 6 October, the destroyer sortied from Ulithi with TG 38.2 for a month-long sweep primarily of the Philippines, but beginning with strikes on [Okinawa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Okinawa), on the 10th, and on [Formosa](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Taiwan), from the 12th to the 14th. She supported the [landing at Leyte Gulf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Leyte) on 20 October and screened the carriers during their strikes on southern Luzon and the Visayans on the 21st and 22d. On 25 and 26 October, she joined most of the elements of the [3rd Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._3rd_Fleet) in meeting and defeating the [Japanese Northern Force](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Japanese_Northern_Force&action=edit&redlink=1) during the [Cape Engaño](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cape_Enga%C3%B1o_(Luzon)) phase of the [Battle for Leyte Gulf](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_for_Leyte_Gulf). On the 29th, Task Force 38 (TF 38) resumed air strikes on the Philippines. Those raids continued until Christmas broken only by two provisioning and upkeep periods at Ulithi, from 9 to 13 November and from 25 November until 9 December. *Stockham'*s crew spent Christmas Day and the eight days following it at Ulithi preparing for another cruise with the fast carriers. On 3 January 1945, she departed with TG 30.8, the replenishment group for TF 38, and screened it until 7 January, when she rejoined the carriers. Over the next 19 days, she screened the carriers as their planes made sweeps of the inner defenses of the [Japanese Empire](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japanese_Empire). They hit [French Indochina](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/French_Indochina) and Japanese shipping on the 12th, bombed Formosa a second and third time on the 15th and 21st, and struck [Hainan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hainan), [Hong Kong](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hong_Kong), and the [China](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/China) coast on the 16th. On the way back to Ulithi, they raided Okinawa again, on 22 January. Following two weeks of upkeep, provisioning, and training at Ulithi, *Stockham* put to sea with TF 38 to bomb [Tokyo](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo) on 16 and 17 February and to support the [Iwo Jima assault](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Iwo_Jima) on 19 February. During the short stay in the [Volcano Islands](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Volcano_Islands), the destroyer's guns brought down another enemy plane. On 22 February, she headed north to Japan and screened the carriers during another air strike on the Japanese home islands. On the 26th, she sank an enemy patrol craft off [Tori Shima](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Torishima_(Izu_Islands)), fighting heavy seas as well as the Japanese. On 6 March, she put into Ulithi once again for provisions and upkeep. On 14 March, she put to sea once more and operated with TF 59 until the following day, when she joined the screen of the Fast Carrier Task Force for sweeps of [Kyūshū](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ky%C5%ABsh%C5%AB), Okinawa, and [Kerama Retto](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kerama_Retto). After the 1 April landings at Okinawa, *Stockham* remained off that coast until 29 April, protecting the invasion fleet from the onslaught of

the [kamikazes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kamikaze). On 6 April, she splashed two "[Zekes](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mitsubishi_Zero)". She bombarded [Minami](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Daito_Islands) and [Kita Daito](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kita_Daito) islands on the 21st. She put into Ulithi on the 30th. On 7 May, she put to sea with TF 58 and, conducting drills along the way, headed for another series of air raids on Kyūshū and Okinawa. She screened the fleet from air attack during the strikes, helping to repel several enemy raids. She parted company with the main body of the fleet on 6 June to escort a group of crippled ships, including the bowless [*Pittsburgh*](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Pittsburgh_(CA-72)) (CA-72), to [Apra Harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Apra_Harbor), Guam. She remained at Guam from 11 to 30 June; then escorted a group of ships to Eniwetok, before rejoining TF 38 on 8 July. Between 8 July and 15 August, she screened the fleet carriers while their planes struck their last series of blows at Japan. Starting with Tokyo on the 10th, they moved swiftly up along [Honshū](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Honsh%C5%AB) to [Hokkaidō](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Hokkaid%C5%8D), pounding targets on both islands on the 14th and 15th, then returned to Tokyo on the 18th. On 24 July, she bombarded [Cape Shiono](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Cape_Shiono&action=edit&redlink=1) at the southern extremity of Honshū, and then returned to screening the fleet from suicide attack while it sent planes to pummel Honshū and [Shikoku](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Shikoku). On 15 August 1945, the Japanese Empire capitulated and, four days later, *Stockham* joined the Yokosuka occupation force, which entered [Sagami Wan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Sagami_Wan) on 27 August. She supported the landings at [Tokyo Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tokyo_Bay) and at [Tateyama](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Tateyama,_Chiba) on the 30th and 31st respectively, then anchored off Yokosuka on 2 September for six days of upkeep, provisioning, and recreation. She was underway from 9 to 18 September, supporting the [minesweeping](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Minesweeper_(ship)) operations in [Sendai Bay](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Sendai_Bay&action=edit&redlink=1) and in the vicinity of [Goshi](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Goshi). She returned to Tokyo Bay for a month on 19 September, conducted training exercises between 24 and 28 October, and then provisioned for the voyage home. On 31 October, *Stockham* stood out of [Yokosuka](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Fleet_Activities_Yokosuka) to return to the United States. After more than a year on the west coast, she was decommissioned on 30 August 1946 and berthed at [San Diego](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/San_Diego), [California](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/California). The hostilities in [Korea](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Korea) in 1950 necessitated an increase in the size of the active fleet. *Stockham* was recommissioned on 14 November 1951. She was assigned to the [Atlantic Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._Atlantic_Fleet) until 1953, engaged in fleet training missions out of [Newport, R.I.](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Station_Newport) In December 1953, the destroyer joined the [United Nations Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=United_Nations_Fleet&action=edit&redlink=1) and operated in the Far East, stopping at the southern tip of [Japan](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Japan), then traveling to the [Pusan harbor](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Pusan_harbor) briefly and later [Inchon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Inchon), until the summer of 1954. In July, she returned to Newport after completing a circumnavigation of the world. In November 1954, *Stockham* entered [Boston Naval Shipyard](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Boston_Naval_Shipyard) and, at the completion of her overhaul in February 1955, she shook down in the [Caribbean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Caribbean). She then resumed normal operations with the Atlantic Fleet until 1 February 1956, when she was posted to the [6th Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/U.S._6th_Fleet). She cruised the [Mediterranean](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Mediterranean) for four months; visited [Egypt](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Egypt), [Israel](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Israel), [Lebanon](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Lebanon), and [Greece](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greece); then, resumed operations out of Newport. *Stockham* returned to the 6th Fleet in the fall of 1956; visited [France](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/France), [Italy](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Italy), and Greece; and participated in an antisubmarine exercise with American and [Italian](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Marina_Militare) ships. On 23 February 1957, the destroyer returned to Newport. Seven months later, she was decommissioned on 2 September 1957[[1]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/USS_Stockham_(DD-683)#cite_note-navsource-1) and placed in the [Atlantic Reserve Fleet](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Atlantic_Reserve_Fleet) at [Philadelphia, Pennsylvania](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Philadelphia,_Pennsylvania). *Stockham* was stricken from the [Naval Vessel Register](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Naval_Vessel_Register) 1 December 1974, and sunk as a target off [Puerto Rico](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Puerto_Rico) 17 February 1977. *Stockham* (DD-683) earned eight [battle stars](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_star) during [World War II](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/World_War_II).

**Former Notable Crew Member: Jack O’Day**