



# USS FISKE

DD/DDR 842 NEWSLETTER



Volume 28 - Number 4 - November 2012

## Charleston Naval Yard Linked to USS FISKE History



President Gil Beyer

### President's Letter

In less than a year we come together again for our 14<sup>th</sup> Bi-Annual Reunion. We gather as Shipmates that served on – in my admittedly biased view – the best damned ‘Tin Can’ ever to have served in the Atlantic Fleet, the USS Fiske (DD/DDR 842). I’m looking forward to seeing old friends and making many new ones. In September 2013 we will meet in Charleston, South Carolina, and the choice of location couldn’t be more appropriate. Much of Fiske’s history centers in Charleston.

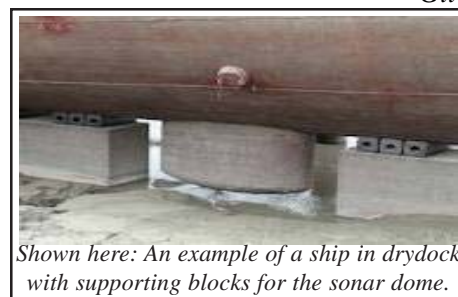
It was Charleston where the Fiske was reunited with a former Fiske Division Officer and Department Head, CDR Cyrus H. Butt III. CDR Butt relieved CDR Hunter in April 1962 as CO of the Fiske. CDR Butt had served onboard the Fiske twice back in the late ‘40’s and was, to the best of my knowledge, the only Officer to have served on her in every capacity from Division Officer through Commanding Officer. It was CDR Butt that planted a seed



blocks required, proceeded to crush the fiberglass shell of her SONAR dome. This ‘error’ resulted in having to replace the SONAR dome and greatly extended our yard period. I’m reminded of the old saying about the original intent being to drain the swamp.



We’ve been fortunate to have several new shipmates added to our rolls, especially since we’ve lost so many shipmates since we left Milwaukee. Our association is a dynamic and changing organization that has been evolving and growing ever since my first reunion back in 2001. I look forward to being involved with this continuing evolution and to seeing you in Charleston. Please try to make it - it's going to be quite a shindig! - Gil



Shown here: An example of a ship in drydock with supporting blocks for the sonar dome.

<i>Featured In This Issue</i>	<i>page</i>
<i>From the Editor.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Officers Contact List.....</i>	<i>2</i>
<i>Report from the Secretary.....</i>	<i>3</i>
<i>Chaplain's Corner.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Treasurer's Report.....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Ship's Log - from the Historian....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>Storekeeper's News.....</i>	<i>6</i>
<i>What's Up With The Web?.....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Cool Ship..the rest of the story....</i>	<i>7</i>
<i>Fiske Mates .....</i>	<i>4</i>
<i>Government Matters.....</i>	<i>5</i>
<i>Ship's Store.....</i>	<i>8</i>

in this young sailor’s mind that a Navy career wouldn’t be such a bad thing.

It was also in Charleston that Fiske entered drydock very early in 1962, and due to a major miscalculation by the yard personnel on the height of the

# From the Editor's Desk



Sandie Siciliano,  
ETN2/USNR 1975-1980

Dear Shipmates,

As the curtain on 2012 starts to draw to a close, I sit here, as usual, pondering what to write. The release date of this newsletter is just a week before Thanksgiving, the religious holidays are approaching, and the never-ending "March of Time" that will start a new year looms in the immediate future. Reflections, joy, and celebrations!

It's a busy time for most of us. We'll all make a wish and a resolution by tradition, but I can't help but wondering if now should be the time for us to reflect on what really matters, and that is to be thankful for what we have, and to count our blessings.

It's no secret that we are older, wiser, maybe walking a little slower or sleeping a little longer; we've made it this far, and as true sailors, we will continue to sail on the voyage of life toward those golden shores until we reach the calming seas and a safe port to shelter us.

We all have different reasons to be thankful. It might be for family - spouses, children, grandchildren - or devoted friends, our health, the health of a spouse, or for the kindness given to us in the past through fellowship and faith. That is part of the dynamic fabric of life and what makes us unique.

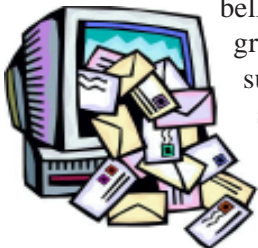
As shipmates, what we have in common is our country, our patriotism, and our service on the Fiske. But what we share with every other American is the fact that we were blessed to have been born (or to have become citizens) of the greatest country on earth. That, indeed, is something to be very thankful for.

2013 will bring new beginnings, and as with every new year, a hope that our blessings will continue.

2013 also brings our bi-annual reunion in the beautiful city of Charleston, South Carolina. Since we're all getting "up there" we hope you will make a concerted effort to attend. As my beloved Granny Franklin used to say - "I'll be there, God willin' and the crick don't rise!"

Those of us "behind the scenes" are pulling out the stops, putting in a lot of time and effort, and sounding the bells and whistles to make this one of the greatest reunions ever. There will be many surprises, good times, camaraderie with shipmates you haven't seen in years, and enough time to unwind and tell your sea stories! Happy Holidays and Happy New Year to all!

- Sandie



## U S S F I S K E

(DD/DDR-842) Association, Inc.  
558 Westbrook Court - Paramus, N.J. 07652



### President & Historian

Gilbert E. Beyer, (208) 265-0950  
vintage40@frontier.com

**First Vice President**  
Frank Nicastro, (860) 585-6070  
franknicastro@comcast.net



### Second Vice President

Ship Storekeeper & Newsletter Editor  
Sandra E. Siciliano, (813) 920-6833  
misschopin@tampabay.rr.com

**Secretary**  
Jeff Kovite, (703) 201-2892  
jkovite@juno.com



### Treasurer

James Rapson, (401) 781-5879  
jrrapson@cox.net

**Chaplain**  
W. Frank Stancil, (919) 467-7547  
fandjstancil@nc.rr.com



### Master-at-Arms

John Degnan, (718) 634-9665  
jbdatlolphin@aol.com

**Webmaster**  
Steven Gilbert, (908) 276-5790  
sgilbert@msn.com



## Are You Moving?

Don't leave your Navy family behind! We don't want to lose track of you. Please let us know when you change your email, phone or home address by contacting anyone above.

Send Ship's Store orders and "Fiske Mates" stories to:

Sandra Siciliano  
USS Fiske Association., Inc.  
6528 Steeplechase Dr  
Tampa, FL 33625



The USS Fiske (DD/DDR-842) Association, Inc. is a Not for Profit Corporation under the IRS Code 501 © 19 rules and incorporated in the State of New Jersey. This newsletter is published quarterly and distributed to all members of the Association.



## Notable Quotes



"The United States Navy is the envy of every other navy in the world. They don't want to be like us - they want to be us."

**Admiral Leighton Smith,**  
16 January, 2012

**VISIT THE WEBSITE!**  
[WWW.USSFISKE.ORG](http://WWW.USSFISKE.ORG)



**UPDATE YOUR PROFILE!!**  
[WEBMASTER@USSFISKE.ORG](mailto:WEBMASTER@USSFISKE.ORG)

**Editor's Hint ...Did You Know? ...Reading the news-**

letter is easier on your eyes if you get it by Email! Why?

**Because you can adjust the view to make it**

**larger! It's in full color too!** It's easy! Just open the

email and double-click on the attachment. You can help the Association save the cost of printing and postage too!

To print your own copy, select "file" and "print"! Try it - you'll like it!

Home Delivery!



## Notes from the Secretary

Jeff Kovite  
SOG2 1959-1961

I am always glad when I learn of a new shipmate that has joined our association, which at present has over 675 members. As always, there are pluses and minuses.

Here is a list of shipmates who have recently joined and whom we welcome back to the crew:

Robert Ferguson, DK1, 1976-80  
David Taylor, LT (Sr), 1966-68  
James Hicok, MM3, 1956-59  
Stanley Paterson, MM3, 1953  
Carl Bailey, GMG3, 1966-68



On another note, the saddest duty as Secretary to the Association is having to report the passing of fellow shipmates. Since the last newsletter,

we received notice that the following crew members sailed their last voyage:

Mark Anthony, BM1,  
1952-53 - passed 2007 \*  
David F. Stone, Captain 1947-51  
Vernon McMullen, FTG2, 1953-57  
George Mitchell, 1975-76,  
passed 1/28/2005  
Richard Karcher, SKSN, 1958-60,  
passed August, 2012  
Duwayne L. Morganson, FT2,  
1959-62, passed August 6, 2012

To view the complete the complete *Honor Roll of Deceased Shipmates*, please visit the Fiske webpage:

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

Wishing you fair winds and smooth sailing, as always,

Jeff

\* Special thanks to past president Dick Hersey for re-searching the "Lost at Sea" shipmates in New Hampshire.

## Charming Charleston . . . .

Reunion Report from Host, Jeff Kovite

In keeping our promise to give you more information about the next reunion site, here are some historical tidbits about Charleston and the Carolinas that you might find interesting:

**1666** - Capt. Robert Sanford explores and names the Ashley River. On June 23 takes formal possession of Carolina for England and the Proprietors.

**1669** - The Fundamental Constitution of Carolina is written by the philosopher, John Locke. Its guarantee of religious freedom will have a profound and lasting influence on the development of Charleston's social fabric, leading to the immigration of such diverse groups as French Huguenots and Sephardic Jews.



**September, 1706** - Joint French and Spanish attack upon Charles Town during Queen Anne's War is repulsed when Colonial forces capture French vessel and crew.

**1718** - Blackbeard the Pirate sails into Charles Town Harbor with four ships; takes hostages for ransom. Also in this year, the pirate Stede Bonnet is hanged at White Point.

*Continued on page 5*

# Fiske Mates



**Featuring Dave Taylor, Lt USNR**  
on board June 1966 - October 1968

Of all the stories I have about my Navy career, the "Cool Ship" article from the last newsletter by Dan Gilroy and Bob Mitchell is my favorite - but - there was more to it. It so happens that I was the OC Division Officer at the time, which you can read in this issue under the heading "The Rest of the Story". My second most favorite involves a First Class Radarman, whose name I can not remember. When standing in port watch, my duty section was required to have any "chits" requesting duty swap turned in before 4:30 pm for approval. The only exception would be if the Sailor requesting a swap could tell me a story I had never heard before.

I do not remember the date of the occurrence, but it was a beautiful evening, about 6PM, when I was approached by the First Class with chit in hand. I immediately reminded him of the 4:30 rule, to which he smartly replied: "Sir, my wife is going to get pregnant and I want to be there". I think I almost died laughing, but told him "get out of here." For 45 years I have wondered just how that shore liberty turned out. If that Radarman reads this I hope he'll answer up!

## **This is Your Column!**

**Fiske Mates want to hear from you!**  
Send (or email) a photo and a short memory of your time aboard to "Editor" USS FISKE. We'll send you a token of our appreciation in return!

# The Treasurer's Report



James R. Rapson  
ENS/LTjg  
1964-1967

It's that time again where I am to report to the members on the financial condition of the Association. We are in excellent shape with a substantial cash balance available to cover all of the activities and needs of the Association.

Thanks to the generous response from the members with dues assessments and your support of the Ship's Store, we can safely embark on any project brought before us.

While the duties of the Treasurer are not only to receive funds and pay the bills, he must look to the future and advise the Officers on expenses and issues and raise the "red" flag if anything seems out of place or should warrant further questioning before we are committed. Fortunately, no "red" flags have been presented and we can sail on very smooth seas financially.

The one area that will need to be addressed in the future is the declining membership as the membership base grows older. While no one likes to discuss that fact, it is there and if we do not seek out crew members who served in the last ten years of the Fiske's service, then our future could become at risk. This is NOT an imminent problem, but one that we should be aware of as we look to the future.

The immediate future is the upcoming 14<sup>th</sup> Reunion in Charleston, South Carolina. Your host, Jeff Kovite, has been working very hard to put together an interesting package for you and we hope that you will show your support of him and the Association by making your plans to attend. We should have some pretty solid numbers as to costs for the next newsletter. I believe we may do as we did in the last reunion and have all hotel bookings made directly with the hotel. We will also offer a program to ease the costs to you by setting up a partial payment amount followed by the balance remaining. Look for more on this later.

Lastly, please visit the web-site and look at the "Lost At Sea" page. If you see a member in your area, please try to help us locate him. The more hands that assist here will get us back in contact with lost shipmates.

Until the next issue, may you always have smooth seas and a following wind.

- James



Free History  
and Rules with  
every order!

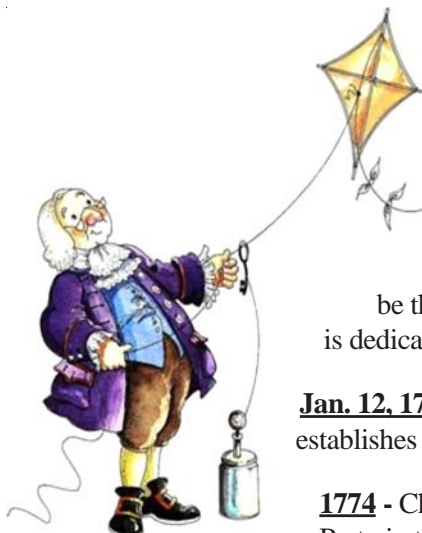


## **Fiske Challenge Coins** **Won't Last Forever!**

This beautiful coin measures 1 5/8" between its crisscross edges. It is two-toned shiny and textured gold with silver/nickel highlights. The DD and DDR ship's patches are featured in full color (one on each side). Finished and sealed with an epoxy coating, the coin is contained within a clear poly envelope.

Yours to treasure for years to come!

**Order Yours Today!**  
**\$13.00 ea, or 2 for \$25.00**  
**Order from Ship's Store**



**April, 1747** - City leaders sign a treaty with Choctaw Indians establishing trade in return for their attacking French settlements.

**1752** - Charlestonians adopt Benjamin Franklin and Dr. John Lining's lighting rod to protect their homes during thunder storms.

**July 5, 1770** - A statue of William Pitt, believed to be the first commemorating a public figure in America, is dedicated at Meeting and Broad.

**Jan. 12, 1773** - A committee of The Library Society establishes the Charleston Museum, the oldest in the country.

**1774** - Charleston has its own Tea Party in the Harbour.

**July 7, 1774** - Henry Middleton of Charleston is chosen President of the First Continental Congress.

**August 5, 1776** - The Declaration of Independence arrives at the city. Maj. Barnard Elliot reads it under the **Liberty Tree** near present-day 80 Alexander St.

**February 13, 1777** - The new state government stipulates that each male citizen shall denounce the King and pledge loyalty to the state.

**November-December, 1779** - Unable to win a decisive battle in the northern states, the British prepare a massive combined sea and land expedition against Charles Town, under the command of Vice Admiral Arbuthnot, General Sir Henry Clinton, and Lord Cornwallis.

**December, 1779** - General Washington orders 1,400 Continentals to join the forces of General Benjamin Lincoln defending Charles Town.

**August 4, 1781** - Col. Isaac Hayne, a Revolutionary leader of the South Carolina Militia, is hanged by the British just beyond the city limits of Charles Town.

**1785** - The General Assembly charters the College of Charleston, making it the oldest municipal college in the country today.

**1801** - The Supreme Council for the Scottish Rite was founded on May 31<sup>st</sup>.

**1818** - Samuel F. B. Morse, inventor of the telegraph, arrives in Charleston to begin a printing business.

**1882** - The first native-born architect in America, Robert Mills, designs the first fireproof building in America standing at the corner of Chalmers and Meeting Streets. A native of Charleston, he also designed the First Baptist Church and the Washington Monument in our nation's capital.

**(More on Charming Charleston in the next newsletter.)**

- Jeff



# Government Matters

## *Proper Burials Ensured for Veterans With No Next of Kin*

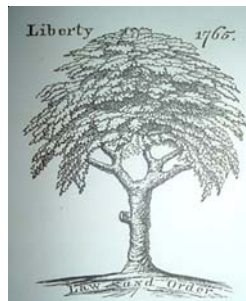
In September, the U.S. House of Representatives passed an important piece of legislation that will ensure the proper burial of our veterans. Known as the *Veterans Fiduciary Reform and Honoring Noble Service Act (H.R. 5948)*, it includes language introduced by Congressman Gus Bilirakis of Florida to provide caskets and urns for deceased veterans with no next of kin.

This language was a result of a discovery that Pvt. Lawrence Davis Jr., a World War II veteran with no next of kin, was buried in a cardboard box at Florida National Cemetery in Bushnell, Florida.

Our Nation's heroes deserve to be buried the same way they served this country – with dignity and honor.

By ensuring our veterans receive proper burial upon their passing, we are not only recognizing their brave service to our country, but also the selfless sacrifices our service men and women and their families make to protect the freedoms and values we enjoy as citizens of this great country.

- Editor



### BUCK KNIVES UPDATE



We regretfully report that the Buck Knife Company has changed its policy for minimum quantity purchases that makes it impossible for us to order these custom-etched knives. We sincerely apologize to those who reserved this special item.





Gilbert E. Beyer,  
ETSN/ETR3 1960-1963

# Ship's Log Entries...

## Historian's Report



*A majestic ship was she,  
that sailed the seven seas,  
we were the crew  
who saw it through,  
and logged our history.*

In the last newsletter I asked the question if anybody knew why sailors wore gold earrings. Now, I'll try to answer that question: Back in the days of sail, sailors from the various maritime nations of Europe often found themselves in strange and exotic lands. Some might even say heathen lands.



Confronted with customs and traditions not found in Europe, these sailors met death on many fronts, whether it be East Indian pirates, African slave traders, savage Maori tribesman, malaria or some other deadly fever. In other words, the possibility of death was an everyday occurrence.

As a hedge against an untimely demise and to try and ensure a 'proper Christian burial' in those heathen lands, most sailors put aside a bit of

cash. Since there was no universal currency, the most readily accepted medium of exchange was gold. And, because the ordinary deckhand didn't have many good options on how to guard his nest egg, it became common practice to wear his 'insurance policy'. He didn't want to wear it as a ring on a finger as there was an excellent chance that it might slip off while he was working aloft. Also, it was not uncommon to lose a finger or two if one was working on a whaling ship cutting blubber into slabs for rendering into lamp oil. So, it became common custom to put burial money into a ring and attach it to the body. As to why the left ear was chosen over the right I haven't a clue.



Another thing that I touched on was the significance of a swallow tattoo. I did a little more research and

ascertained that anyone that made even a single Med Cruise on the Fiske would be entitled to sport two swallows.



I base this figure on the 4000 nautical mile standard for each swallow. From either Mayport or Newport it is more than 3000 miles to the Mediterranean. If the Fiske didn't steam at least 3000 miles between the time the Rock of Gibraltar passed to port and the time it passed to starboard I'll eat my ditty bag! So, all you Med sailors go get your swallows - you've earned them!

One more quick note: As the collector of "Fiske Tales" I am gratified to have received so many new entries over the past year. We are getting closer to having a manuscript that we can send to a publisher. I hope to have a finished product by the time we get to Charleston.

- Gil

## Storekeeper's News...

with 2nd Vice President, &  
Ship's Storekeeper, Sandie Siciliano

Busy! Busy! Busy! That's the only way I can describe the events of the past year. Between publishing this newsletter and keeping up with ship's store business, I have to confess to falling behind somewhat, especially on the website. My thanks to those of you who have placed orders, and to all others for their patient understanding and for not spinning my hat!

As a non-profit entity, we are allowed to "make" just enough to sustain operations with a little left over in the margins. This means that pricing an item competitively and fairly is a major consideration when

we decide to include it in ship's store.

Also, our *Fair Share Shipping* donations have really helped to sustain us, for which we are very grateful.

Recently, having had a senior moment, I double shipped a bunch of orders, several weeks apart, only to discover that costly mistake when a very generous shipmate sent a kind letter and a second check for his extra shipment. Topping it off, was the return of a different shipment, along with a 2nd payment, a shipping donation, and a note to please donate the item to a fellow shipmate. Had it not been for those two shipmates, the mismatch of funds might have had the Treasurer asking some very

serious questions of yours truly. My heartfelt thanks to both shipmates.

With the reunion now ten months away, serious thought is being given to how much should be ordered and in what quantities. There will be plenty of "one time only" surprises, along with a great goodie bag for attendees, but more emphasis will be placed on items that are useful, needed, or popular. Others will necessarily be discontinued.



ETN2 1975-1980

- Sandie



Steve Gilbert  
YN3 1958-1960

# What's Up with the Web?

with Web Master, Steve Gilbert



## So, you finally got a computer! Now what?

Since this column was started a year ago, I've talked about some special features on the website - such as - *member's emails, the scuttlebutt room, the discussion page (where you can blog), and the chat room. Also included was an explanation of how the internet works via a browser, anti-virus software, and "cloud computing".* Perhaps you didn't have a computer and found the articles uninteresting at the time, but maybe things changed and now you'd like to review those articles. If so, there's

good news: Our newsletters are archived on the website. Just click on the "*Quarterly Newsletter / Member E-mails*" page; then click on the newsletter you would like to see and look for this column. It's that simple!

You'll also find many other interesting things there, such as member's profiles, pictures, links to other websites for navy or veteran's issues, links for discounts, and so much more.

Because of space constraints for the hard copy printed newsletter, we are confined to a smaller type. But, on the website, you can adjust the

view to the size type most comfortable for you to read. Print it off, and enjoy it with your morning coffee.

Computers need not be daunting. With a little perserverance, you can find a new way to "*see the world*".

If it's still too new-fanged for you, I'm willing to bet that you know someone who can help you get started.

You can even set up a page, that, with one click, will bring you right to the website! I'll show you how in the next newsletter.



- Steve

## Chaplain's Corner



W. Frank Stancil  
GMG3 1959-1963

Lord, please help us to understand what "shipmate" means. It means that our work day, light or demanding, will be faithfully performed, that our relationship, deep or passing, will be caring and appropriate, that our mind, alert or tired, will be reminded of integrity in thought, so that as a responsible steward of relationships, we will: perceive, but not reject; evaluate, but not condemn; pursue, but not coerce; appreciate, but not take advantage; care, but not overwhelm.

Let us understand that comradeship always has room for one more.  
Amen.

Frank



Fiske Mates, con't from page 4

**You might call this "the rest of the story" for the Cool Ship article in the August newsletter:** On the occasion of that bit of skullduggery I was the OC division officer, and I was well aware of the soda sales operation - hardly a "totally legal" operation by Navy standards. This was facilitated by the mess deck master at arms, also a 1st class Signalmen, and possessor of the only ice maker key. Funny how that works.

Sailors came from all over the ship, including snipes from the engine room, and that is a long climb. At the time I decided it could be dealt with only if necessary. However, I did have one very nervous moment: As fate would have it, I would ride back to the ship, which was at anchor, in the Captain's Gig with the illegal

A/C unit and some weary Signalmen. Of course the OD had to be the Ops officer, my boss, and the department head for the Signalmen!

I doubt if that gig had ever before, or since, been unloaded faster, of both passengers, and cargo. A lot of snappy salutes and the Division officer headed left to the bridge, the Signalmen headed right and up with the A/C. With unbelievable speed that A/C unit was installed in the wall of the signal shack, wired and even painted gray. It was operational in less than one hour!

Absolutely nothing was said to me about the subject for about a week. Then, one sunny afternoon, while we were underway, the Ops Officer approached me while I was standing at the chart table in the pilot house. He simply ask if I knew about an A/C unit in the Signal Shack. I answered

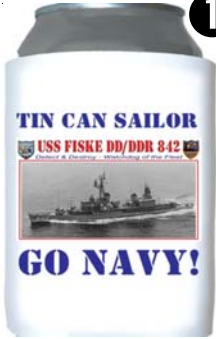


"What A/c?" That was, to the best of my knowledge, the last word....case closed!



The Only Official Ship's Store for the USS FISKE DD/DDR-842 Association, Inc.

# Ship's Store



**1** Custom Printed Collapsible Can Insulators are also known as coolies, can huggers, and koozies. Ours fits standard 12 oz. cans.



**5** Large Magnetic Clip! Koozies and Clips Only \$4.00 ea, or 2 for \$7.00



**2** Ball Caps \$12.00 Embroidered Specify DD or DDR



**3** Mouse Pad \$10.00 8.5" x 9.5" x 3/8" thick



**4** DD/DDR T-Shirts Blue or Grey \$12.00 S, M, L, XL, XXL



**6** Patches DD or DDR Large - \$7.00 Small \$5.00

## USS FISKE PERSONALIZED MUG

**7** Ceramic, Deeply Laser-Etched Black, White, Cobalt Blue or Green DD or DDR now available by special order Fiske Logo with your name, rate, and dates



**NEW ITEM - SUPPLIER DROP-SHIPS \$25**

These are just a few items the we offer in ship's store. Please visit the website to see the entire catalog!

## ORDER FORM

	S T O R E	MissChopin@TampaBay.RR.com (813) 920-6833
	Sandra Ehlers Siciliano ETN2 (USNR)	

More **NEW!** Items Coming Soon!

**Personalized Mug: Name or Nickname** Color: Rate: Years: DD (or) DDR \* \$25.00  
Item 7: Please print clearly to avoid errors

Item #	Quantity	Description	Color	Size	Price	Total

Shipping: Please help us keep it free! Contribute any amount here if you can, with our thanks: \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**SHIP TO:** Make checks payable to the USS Fiske Assoc., Inc. **TOTAL ENCLOSED: \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please print clearly to avoid errors!

Name	Street Address
City	State Zip
Phone	Email Address:

**MAIL TO: Sandra Siciliano, USS FISKE - Ship's Store Keeper - 6528 Steeplechase Dr. - Tampa, FL 33625**

\* Note: Fiske Logo is representative and may not be your configuration.