



TAPS



CDR WALLACE DANN, USN (Feb. 10,1921—Oct. 18,2022)



CDR Dann holding Governor’s Certificate of congratulations on 100th birthday.



CDR Dann joined MOAA in April 1970.

Wallace Dann, Junior, was born in Washington, D.C. in 1921, in the last month of the Woodrow Wilson presidency. The first Wallace Dann was an electrical engineer, and his mother was a clerk in the Department of Commerce, under Herbert Hoover as the Secretary. Wally best remembered experience of his pre-teen years was catching fish with a family friend from the Washington Tidal Basin. Fish was also a welcomed dish at the dinner table during the depression era.

After his father died unexpectedly in 1933, Wally and his mother moved to Baltimore to be near family.. Wally graduated from Forest Park High School the Class of 1938. Of that time he recalled that Spiro “Ted” Agnew was an upperclassman and that Ted played the piano superbly at school assemblies. Wally cut lawns with a hand mower or shoveled snow for 25 cents and went door-to-door selling Colliers Magazine. An injured knee prevented him from competing on the high school track team. After graduation Wally was hired as a runner-messenger by the Mercantile Trust Company.

As World War II in Europe began, his circle of friends forecast that the United States would soon be in the War. Wally opted to join the Baltimore Naval Reserve. Wally reasoned that he would get good training and have better odds to survive the War. Alas, he was rejected because he did not have 20/20 eyesight, not able to read the bottom line on an eye chart. However, by memorizing the eyechart, he successfully passed the physical on a second try and joined the Third Division of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Unit, which was also the Maryland Naval Militia, drilling at the old Fifth Regiment Armory on Howard St.

On very short notice in October 1940, all three divisions of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Unit were the first in the U.S to be activated. Dann recalls that the sailors were issued seabags, boarded a train to New York City, then were trucked to embark on the USS Henderson (ATP-1) in Bayonne, NJ. The USS Henderson would take the Reserve Division to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Wally recalled two instances of the 8 day trip to GTMO.



USS HENDERSON (ATP-1)

First there was a need for the sailors to be able to perform as a landing party as an adjunct to U.S. marines. An appropriate uniform was needed for the purpose. Solution was for the sailors to dye their undress white uniforms khaki (more or less) by boiling them in coffee in the huge urns of the troop ship.

Second remembrance by Wally was a lesson about his entrepreneurial method of handling his personal laundry. All of the reserve sailors were assigned cleaning stations. Seaman Apprentice (E-2) Wally Dann on his first experience on a ship had a station on the level above the main deck below the bridge. He took care to wash his clothes during his off time but couldn't locate a place to dry them around his berthing area. But he recalled that near his workstation he had seen some "ropes" that might be excellent for an enterprising sailor's clothesline. And the "clothes stopper" in his seabag would serve to attach his wet clothes. So he strung his laundry out to dry. He was then at his assigned station, noted the Captain had come out on the bridge above him, and watched with a newbie's great interest. The Captain was greatly animated, marching around the bridge, raising his hands in air, which kept the newbie seaman Dann's attention. Until.... One of the Master-at-Arms petty officers arrived with an order to take down the laundry immediately. "Seaman Dann's skivvies were on the signal halyard!! The Captain was upset 'Never in his more than 20 years of naval service...' and a Navy warship was approaching that might be looking for signals from the Henderson!" (The interviewer notes: "How interesting for the approaching signal man to look in the manual for a signal of skivvies and dungarees!")

Upon arrival GTMO the reservists were assigned to the Gunnery Department with tents for berthing accommodations. Their duties involved keeping Battle Rafts in repair. These rafts had wooden-frame structures up to 20 feet tall, which were targets for gunnery practice for warships. If gunners on the ships were successful, the reservists had a very busy day ahead. Later duties were to construct harbor nets and anti-submarine nets. Meanwhile all the activities on the Naval

Base were growing; and because of his civilian banking experience, Seaman Dann became a clerk.. Since there was no building with office space available, the Chief Gunners Mate used the porch on his family quarters as the office. Seaman Dann, his clerk recalled that occasionally the Chief's wife brought out lemonade.

Some other memories:

On one occasion before the War with Germany, while the sailors were installing the anti-submarine nets at the harbor entrance, a Germany submarine was on the surface observing their installation. A number of older, World War I, destroyers, known as "four stackers" were present as a very impressive congregation of warships. A Spanish American War Vet took over the Gunnery Department. He encouraged Wally to seek advancement as a yeoman (Navy clerical and administrative specialist), whereas Wally had been studying to be an electrician's mate. Wally was motivated to pass the Seaman First Class (E-3) exam for the salary raise from \$18 to \$21 per month. Meanwhile Seaman Dann taught himself to type and learn basic shorthand, became a petty officer third class (E-4) and requested an assignment beyond GTMO.

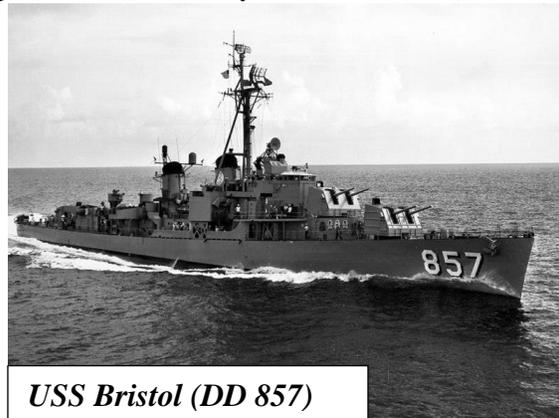


In March 1943 YN3 Dann was ordered to yeoman school in Melville, Rhode Island. With the training behind him, he advanced to YN1 (E-6) as soon as he met time in service. He was promoted to Chief Yeoman YNC (E-7) at five years of active service and assigned to Anti-aircraft Training Center, Princes Neck, near Newport. The Great Atlantic Hurricane of September 1944 demolished the Anti-aircraft Training Center.

In the fall of 1944 Chief Petty Officer Dann transferred to the Pre-Commissioning Unit of the destroyer USS Bristol (DD 857) which was building in the Bethlehem Steel

Shipyard, San Pedro, California, for assignment to the U.S. Pacific Fleet.

Chief Petty Officer Dann was the senior clerical administrator on the USS Bristol, reporting to the Commanding Officer and the Executive Officer. His battle station was as Captain's talker. As such he wore sound powered phones, followed the Captain as he might roam the bridge area, and repeated the Captain's orders to all the battle stations.



USS Bristol (DD 857)

Bristol was commissioned on St. Patrick's Day, March 17, 1945. She did her shakedown and deployment training out of San Diego, then deployed via Pearl Harbor, HI, to join the Japan Invasion Fleet that was beginning to assemble in the Caroline Islands. Called to "Battle Stations" involving a Japanese submarine, YNC Dann anxiously witnessed the wake of a torpedo

passing the bow. When *Bristol* was routed to Guam for repairs, as she neared the island she was misidentified as enemy and just avoided being strafed and bombed by a friendly U.S. bomber.

USS *Bristol* was being repaired as hostilities ended in August 1945, leading to the treaty signing on VJ Day, September 15. Wally recalled an excited crew member shouting “War is over. We dropped the ‘**platonic**’ bomb!” In August 1945, the War Department began discharging servicemen with enough service points. So in spite of his CO’s discouragement, Wally applied and received Navy Department orders for separation. He left *Bristol* at Mog Nog Island, Ulithi, Caroline Islands and boarded a US Liberty ship for Portland, Oregon. He recalls the awesome sight of the hundreds of ships assembled for the Japan Invasion Fleet, and the surreal situation of waiters serving him at table on the cruise back to the U.S.

YNC Wallace Dann was discharged at the South Street Naval Station in Boston in October 1945. When he returned to Baltimore, he was hired again for a more senior job at Mercantile Trust Co. and began a 5 year night school program for a law degree at University of Baltimore.

After graduating first in his 1950 law school class, Wally and a classmate opened a law practice in Dundalk. With an interest in the Reserve Naval Security Group Unit of Baltimore, he re-enlisted in the Naval Reserve as a Chief Communications Technician (E-7) and applied for an officer’s commission. Although he was offered an appointment as Maryland Assistant Attorney General, at the same time he was called to active duty for the Korean War, and so had to decline. However, he served only a few days on active duty as a Chief Petty Officer before his commission as lieutenant (junior grade) came through; and he was then released from active duty.

Attorney Dann accepted a civilian appointment as Assistant General Counsel to the staff of the U.S. Army Quartermaster General. He recalls having to resolve a case of getting Mamie Eisenhower, President’s widow, an ID card for the U.S. Army commissary. Although he was offered a U.S. Army commission, he chose to remain with the Naval Reserve and reconnected with the Naval Security Group in Baltimore. Being promoted through the officer ranks to Commander (O-5), he completed duty with the Security Group as its Commanding Officer. CDR Dann warmly remembered that the personnel under his command presented him with an officer’s sword at the change-of-command ceremony. He completed two more years of service on the staff of the Baltimore Naval Reserve Battalion at Fort McHenry and retired from service in October 1968.

In 1978 Wallace Dann established a solo law practice in Towson, MD. He continued that practice from home until he moved into the Mercy Ridge Retirement Community in Timonium in 2001.

Since 1976 Wally enjoyed winemaking and won prizes: among them the Best in Show at the Maryland State Fair and first prize at the convention of the American Wine Society. As well as being a long time leader in our Star Spangled Banner Chapter, Wally was a 32nd Degree Mason, a member of the Post #174 American Legion, a member of both the St. Andrew Society and the St. George Society, He attended the reunions of the *USS Bristol* Veterans Association until it

disbanded in 2020. He helped in the establishment of St. Francis Episcopal Parish, where he is buried, serving as parish chancellor since 1976.

Wally Dann was the glue --- keeping the Baltimore MOAA Chapter from disintegrating about 12 years ago. At his suggestion the Chapter took “The Star Spangle Banner Chapter” as its name. At the Annual Chapter Banquet Meeting in November 2013, MOAA President, VADM Norbert Ryan, recognized CDR Dann for effective and enthusiastic leadership in the revival of the chapter and presented him the MOAA Leadership Award.

The Star Spangled Banner Chapter enjoyed the privilege of singing Happy Birthday to Commander Wallace Dann, USN (Retired) for his 100th birthday at our January 2021 meeting. I enjoyed being his neighbor and hearing his life experiences over many dinners at Mercy Ridge.
Mike DeHaemer, CAPT USN (Retired)



Vice Admiral James Alvin Sagerholm

December 23, 1927—November 3, 2022



VADM James Alvin Sagerholm, USN (Ret.) passed away 3 November 2022. He was a Life Member of MOAA since 1980 and a Star Spangled Banner Chapter member since the early 2000s. Jim Sagerholm was an active supporter of our chapter, serving as an at-large Board Member during the chapter's reinvigoration from 2010 and the decade after. He was a graduate of Baltimore Polytechnic High School and lived in the Baltimore area after retirement.

Jim enlisted in the U.S. Navy on 15 July 1946 and entered the U.S. Naval Academy from enlisted status in June 1948. He was brigade commander and president of the USNA Class of 1952. During the Korean War (1952-1953), Jim was deployed on the heavy cruiser, USS Rochester (CA 124). After attending Mine Warfare School, Jim served on the coastal minesweeper *Crow* (MSC [Old] 7), then, as a lieutenant, was captain of the minesweeper *Rhea*.

Lieutenant Sagerholm had tours in the Office of Naval Intelligence, on the staff of CinCPAC, and the *USS Epperson* (DD 719), deployed to recover spacecraft in the Western Pacific. In 1961 Lieutenant Commander Sagerholm was executive officer of the *USS Sproston* (DD 557), which was on anti-submarine patrol in the Sea of Japan during the Cuban Missile Crisis. After Nuclear Power Training and Submarine School, LCDR Sagerholm served on the nuclear attack submarine *USS Sea Dragon*, then as commissioning XO of the fleet ballistic submarine *USS Mariano G. Vallejo* (SSBN-658), which began patrols in the Western Pacific.

In July 1968, Commander Sagerholm assumed command of a *Benjamin Franklin*-class fleet ballistic missile submarine, *USS Kamehameha* (SSBN 642) Gold Crew. Homeported in Pearl Harbor, *Kamehameha* conducted deterrent patrols out of Apra, Guam.

Captain Sagerholm served on assignments in the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations and commanded the Naval Intelligence Support Center, Washington, DC.

In June 1976, Rear Admiral Sagerholm assumed command of the South Atlantic Force, U.S. Atlantic Fleet, based out of Roosevelt Roads, Puerto Rico. Under his command South Atlantic Force conducted two UNITAS exercise circumnavigations of South America and initiated the first West Africa Training Cruise. Thereafter he served in higher level intelligence and strategic planning positions in the Department of Defense assigned to the White House.

In July 1978, Sagerholm returned to the Pentagon, to the Office of the Secretary of the Navy, Office of Program Appraisal. In July 1981, he was assigned to the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs as Director, Contingency Planning and Requirements Policy. In April 1982, his role as executive director of the President's Foreign Intelligence Advisory Board at the culmination of

the Cold War was particularly noteworthy. Promoted to Vice Admiral in 1983 and assigned as the Chief of Naval Education and Training during the height of the Reagan administration's "600-ship Navy" buildup, his influence had a profound and lasting effect. VADM Sagerholm retired in 1985.

Jim Sagerholm was a military historian, having earned a Master of Arts in military history in 2009 from Norwich University. He was a frequent participant in roundtables and seminars of the Naval Institute and Navy League. He was editor of *As We Recall: Reminiscences of Naval Academy Class of 1952*, published in 2015. He wrote an autobiography, *From Green Hills to Blue Seas*, published in 2016, and authored a historical fiction, *Sounded Forth the Trumpet*, published in 2021. He wrote the History of the St. Andrews Society of Baltimore in honor of its 200th anniversary, which was formally sent to Queen Elizabeth II.

Burial at Arlington National Cemetery will take place on Thursday, February 16, 2023.