

With Thanks to Dennis L. Groves NROTC '65



Dennis Groves is very generous as a benefactor of the unit. He has been funding the Dennis L. Groves Family Scholarship Fund for somewhere around 14 years. There is a commemorative plaque in the main passageway at the unit. He was an outstanding student and unit leader and enjoyed a highly successful Navy and civilian career. He was gracious to share his story that we present in his words.

I was a Midshipman from 1960 - 1965 when Industrial engineering, and all engineering programs for that matter, required five years to include a number of business courses. A few years later, the program was modified to four years, but if you took the other business courses you were awarded a Master's degree as well. Great timing on my part!

When I was in the unit, it was comprised of at least 300 Midshipmen. In my freshman year, we formed a glee club which we named "The High Seas" just to have some fun and a chance to socialize. Since I was playing solo cornet in the OSU Concert Band (one of only 5 non-music majors in the band), when the band was considered one of the 5 best concert bands in the world at the time, I was asked and agreed to take over as director in my Sophomore year and remained director for the remaining 4 years. During that time we ended up making a couple of LP records and touring pretty extensively, including a featured spot on a national TV broadcast when we were performing in New York City.

In 1964 and 1965 I served as NROTC Battalion Commander, was in a number of Navy, Military, Engineering, Music and University honorary societies, including Bucket & Dipper and Sphinx, the Junior and Senior OSU Honorary Societies.

Upon commissioning, I requested destroyer duty. Although graduating #1 in my class, my detailer apparently looked at my initials (DLG) and assigned me to an Engineering billet on USS William V. Pratt (DLG-13). There I served as Electrical Officer and then Damage Control Officer reporting to the Chief Engineer who was a young LT who was destined to become Admiral John Poindexter, head of NSA and made famous during the Iran Contra hearings. While serving on the Pratt, we were blessed with a new Executive Officer, who was my 3rd Class Midshipman instructor at OSU. He did a great job as our NROTC instructor and an even greater job as Pratt's new Executive Officer.



USS William V Pratt (DLG-13), later designated DDG-44

She was named to honor Admiral William Veazie Pratt, a President of the Naval War College and a Chief of Naval Operations

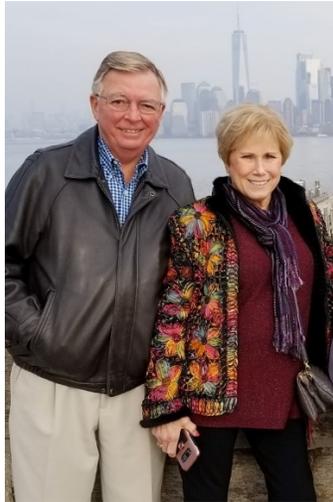
Most of my first two years were spent in the Caribbean and Mediterranean, but toward the end of those two years, I was reassigned to the on-board division staff of Destroyer Division 82 as Material Officer and deployed throughout 1967 to the Pacific. While in the Pacific our DesDiv 82 staff moved from ship to ship and had combat duty in North Viet Nam for about three months. As a result of that assignment, I was awarded the Viet Nam Service medal with a campaign star and the Navy Achievement Award with Combat "V". These along with an oil painting of the William V. Pratt are still proudly displayed in my home office. While en route to the Pacific, we stopped in Guam, where I was able to have dinner with Guam's commanding officer, who happened to be OSU's NROTC Commanding Officer during my fourth and fifth years. Small world.

As I was nearing the end of my fourth year of active duty (four years required because of the NROTC Captain's awarding me a Regular Commission rather than the Reserve Commission) and knowing that I would not be able to go back to Procter & Gamble, from where I was on a military leave of absence, I called my detailer, explained the situation, and requested a shore duty assignment for the next two years, knowing that I would be heading back to sea after that assignment, assuming the war would still be in progress. I was not hopeful about shore duty, but was delighted that he thought that would not be a problem, so long as I chose between Danang and Hanoi!! Somehow, however, I received an assignment to Naval Schools Command in Norfolk where I completed the Navy Instructor School, ranked first in my class, and immediately became Director of the Data Analysis School and the Storekeeping School. After that year, I was assigned to be Personnel Officer of that command. Just at the end of that assignment, we had our first child who recently celebrated his 50th birthday. I'm not sure how that happened since I have not aged 50 years during that same period of time.

I then returned to Procter & Gamble and completed my 35 years with them in Manufacturing Management. A move to Oliver Wight International, an international consulting firm, who we were using in P&G during my last five years followed. I agreed to work with them for a couple years after my P&G retirement, but spent the next 19 years with them including 9 to 10 years as President of their International Company and Chairman of their Americas Company. While at Oliver Wight I was a principal author of two books. The first is "Achieving Class A Business Excellence, An Executive's Perspective". The second is "An Executive's Guide to Achieving Class A Business Excellence".

So, I have retired from the Navy, retired after 20 years as a professional trumpet player and retired from P&G after a 35 year career. I retired as President of the International consulting company and I retired two years after that as a consultant with that company. That was two years ago, and I am not anticipating the need to retire from any other careers!

My Ohio State roots began in 1900 when my paternal grandfather enrolled in agriculture. I had two uncles, also OSU grads, who were agricultural photo-journalists. My son, the only person in my dad's side of the family in the last 121 years who isn't an OSU graduate, also picked up the writer's gene and is senior news producer for NBC TV in Sacramento. His choice of college The University of Missouri was excellent for journalism (and it only took him 5 years to get back in my will ☺!). Not to worry. My daughter is a Buckeye. And her two pre-teen boys in Arizona are our 5th generation Buckeyes!



My bride Penny and I overlooking New York harbor and 1 World Trade Center in the background when we visited NYC to see TBDBITL march in the Macy's Thanksgiving Day Parade.

A note from the NROTC Alumni Society:

BRAVO ZULU Dennis! You are an outstanding graduate of the NROTC unit and The Ohio State University. Your scholarship fund continues to make a positive difference for current NROTC students. Thank you for sharing your story.