

Thomas Bernard Fern Seaman 2nd Class

Awarded US Navy Silver Star for Heroism



Thomas B. Fern, S2/c
Plank Owner and Survivor of April 16, 1945
Awarded the Silver Star



The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the SILVER STAR MEDAL to


THOMAS BERNARD FERN, SEAMAN FIRST CLASS
UNITED STATES NAVAL RESERVE

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

"For conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity as an Ammunition Passer on a 40-mm mount on board the U.S.S. LAFFEY, in action against enemy Japanese forces in the Okinawa Area on April 16, 1945. When his ship was struck and set on fire by enemy aircraft while on radar picket duty, FERN efficiently performed his duties, thereby contributing to the destruction of an enemy plane shot down by his mount. After his gun was put out of action, he exposed himself to exploding ammunition and dangerous fires in fighting to save the ship until he was blinded by smoke and flash burns from two hits in his vicinity and had to be led away for medical attention. His gallant fighting spirit and devotion to duty were in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service."

For the President,


Secretary of the Navy

The Silver Star is the third-highest military combat decoration that can be awarded to a member of the United States Armed Forces. It is awarded for gallantry in action. Only the Medal of Honor and Navy Cross are higher awards.

Thomas Bernard Fern (1934 – 2010) Obituary

Thomas B. Fern 1924 - 2010 AGAWAM Thomas B. Fern, 85, entered into eternal rest on Thursday, May 27, 2010 in Baystate Medical Center. Born in Adams, son of the late Henry and Mary (Frank) Fern, he was a 1943 graduate of Adams High School. He lived in Agawam since 1954.

Tom was a machine repairman for Pratt & Whitney where he worked for twenty-eight years, retiring in 1986. He was a navy veteran of World War II and was active in the D Day Invasion.

Tom served on the USS Laffey "The Ship That Would Not Die". It sustained the most concentrated attacks of World War II being hit by six kamikaze planes and four bombs. For his heroic efforts during this attack, he was awarded the Silver Star for fighting fires, administering CPR and throwing live ammunition overboard. Tom received the American Theatre Campaign ribbon, the European Theatre ribbon with one star, the Asiatic Pacific ribbon with four stars, the World War II Victory Medal, the Purple Heart, Silver Star and the Philippines Liberations ribbon. He was a member of the USS Laffey Association DD 724, the Sons of the Union Veterans of the Civil War, and the Tin Can Sailors. He was also a communicant of St. John the Evangelist Church.

He leaves his wife of sixty years, Marguerite A. (Dellert) Fern, two daughters, Cynthia M. Fern-King of Agawam, Lisa Fern-Boros of Shelton, CT, a brother, Robert Fern, and two grandchildren, Hilary King and Ashley King.

The funeral will be Wednesday at 11 am from the Agawam Funeral Home, 184 Main Street with a Mass in St. John the Evangelist Church at 12 noon. The burial with military honors will follow in the Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery. Calling hours are Tuesday from 4-8pm

Thomas and Marguerite Fern Memorials

<https://www.findagrave.com/memorial/57710863/thomas-b-fern>

BIRTH 22 Aug 1924

DEATH 27 May 2010 (aged 85)

BURIAL Massachusetts Veterans Memorial Cemetery

Agawam, Hampden County, Massachusetts, USA

PLOT SECTION 6 ROW Q SITE 687

MEMORIAL ID 57710863 ·



For corrections or updates, contact President, USS Laffey Association
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