



-Photo by Paige Gnann

USS Stark's stern-plate is on display during the 2016 Stark memorial, donated by Janna Ryals. This year's memorial commemorates the 30th anniversary of the attack that killed 37 Sailors.

Mayport Gears Up For Stark Memorial

From Staff

NS Mayport will host USS Stark memorial ceremony commemorating the 30th anniversary of the attack on the ship on May 17 at Mayport's Memorial Park. The ceremony will be at 10 a.m. and guest speaker for this year's event is Rear Adm. John Mustin, Deputy Commander, Naval Surface Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. All military ID holders are invited to attend.

On May 17, 1987, while on patrol in the Arabian Gulf, 37 Sailors died when two Iraqi missiles struck USS Stark. Despite the severe damage inflicted, the heroic efforts of Stark's crew saved the ship. Stark was decommissioned at Mayport in 1999. In order to preserve the tradition once the ship was retired, the Naval Order of the United States, North Florida Commandery, assumed sponsorship for the memorial service.

Mustin is a native of Alexandria, Virginia. He is a graduate of the United States Naval

Academy, where he earned a Bachelor of Science in Weapons and Systems Engineering and was commissioned in 1990.

His initial sea duty assignment was aboard USS Vincennes (CG 49), where he served as combat information center officer and the Independence (CV 62) Battle Group's air warfare commander and later as navigator. Subsequent sea duty assignments include a tour as the pre-commissioning operations officer on USS Donald Cook (DDG 75), where he served as the Navy's first underway Regional Air Defense commander during the All Services Combat Identification Evaluation Team exercise.

Affiliating with the Navy Reserve in 2001, Mustin served as assistant operations officer at Battle Group Staff 2 in support of USS George Washington (CVN 72) Strike Group during Operation Enduring Freedom.

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Other staff assignments include tours as the training department head (N7) Navy Reserve (NR) Chief of Naval Operations for Operations, Plans and Strategy (N3/N5) at the Pentagon Navy Command Center; deputy commander and plankowner at Maritime Expeditionary Security Squadron (MSRON) 14; operations officer (N3) at NR Carrier Strike Group 10 in support of USS Harry S Truman (CVN 75) Strike Group; and executive officer at Personnel Mobilization Team 101.

His command tours include NR Joint Staff South; NR U.S. Fleet Forces Command Maritime Operations Center, Greensboro, North Carolina;

NR MSRON-6 in Portsmouth, Virginia; and Inshore Boat Unit 22, including a mobilization to Kuwait during Operations Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. Additionally, he served for two years as the Littoral Combat Ship (LCS) Navy Reserve Enterprise director, responsible for the reserve manning, training and equipping of the projected 1000-billet LCS surface reserve force.

Several members of the 1987 crew of Stark will attend the service.

Mayport's Memorial Park was established Aug. 1, 1987, with the dedication of the Stark monument.

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