



April 29, 2008

Congressman Cliff Stearns  
115 SE 25th Avenue  
Ocala, FL 34471

Re: USS Samuel B. Roberts, DE 413

Dear Cliff,

On April 28, 2008, I telephoned Glen Foster who represents the Johnston/Hoel Ass'n. regarding the monument in Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego, California. This monument is a memorial to the men of the Destroyers USS HOEL DD 533, USS JOHNSTON DD 557 and USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS DE 413 who were killed in the Battle off Samar on October 25, 1944 when all three ships were sunk by shellfire by a Japanese naval force.

From previous correspondence, you will recall that this monument, dedicated in 1995, is beginning to show wear making some of the names hard to read. Our association, The Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Association, ordered and received a bronze plaque with the names of our 91 fallen shipmates after receiving the "go ahead" from the Interim Director of the Cemetery and his supervisor, Mr. Don Rinker.

Glen Foster told me that they have not changed their minds. They will not permit us to place the plaque over the names of our shipmates. The reason he gave is that that is not how the original was planned, that he has seen bronze plaques that do not look good and he knows that the cemetery officials would not maintain the bronze plaque (although I was assured that they would) and that it is normal for monuments to deteriorate and that is the way it should be. He claimed that 90% or 99% (he wasn't quite clear) of their association are opposed. Whether they are opposed to their placing a bronze plaque over their names or opposed to our placing a plaque over our names, he did not say, but he was adamant in stating that they will not permit us to do so.

Our Board of Directors and our membership are entirely in favor of our pursuing this further in getting Mr. Tuerk to reverse his decision. We were never contacted when he made his decision.

We would be most grateful if you would help us to resolve this matter and we thank you for the help that you have already provided.

Sincerely

Richard K. Rohde, for the SBR Association

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