

April 2003

NEWSLETTER 13.1

R E U N I O N

September 10 thru 14

Albany, New York

Vince Goodrich and Sam Stewart have been hard at work planning our next reunion and it looks like everything is now in place.

We will arrive in Albany on Wednesday September 10th and register at the Ramada Inn Downtown which is within walking distance of The State Capitol, Empire State Plaza and New York State Museum. It is also only a few hundred yards from the USS SLATER.

On Wednesday evening, the hotel will provide a complimentary one hour reception in our Hospitality Room with beer, wine, soft drinks, dry snacks, pizza squares, egg rolls, vegetable tray and dip.

A bus trip to Cooperstown, New York, the home of the Baseball Hall of Fame is the plan for Thursday, September 10 with a departure at approx. 8:30 a.m. and return to the hotel by 5:00 p.m. This will give us about five hours to spend at the Hall of Fame and plenty of time to explore this historical area where James Fenimore Cooper wrote ³The Last of the Mohicans².

R E U N I O N

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On Friday, the 12th we will depart the Ramada Inn at 9:30 a.m. Our first stop will be the Albany Visitor's Center for an exhibit and film. From 10:30 to noon we will tour Albany Highlights followed by a luncheon at The Albany Pump Station. Our return to the Ramada will be at 13:45. The rest of the day and the evening you are on your own, remembering of course that the Hospitality Room will be open.

Saturday will be a full day, so you had better not stay up too late the night before. Wait, I am not your mother. Scheduled for this day is the Memorial Service aboard the USS SLATER, which as most of you know is a renovated Destroyer Escort. There will be an opportunity to tour the Slater but we will then be off for a cruise on the ³Dutch Apple² sailing on the Hudson River from 1100 to 1300 with luncheon included. The closing

banquet will be this evening at the Ramada Inn. Details on the programs are still being finalized.

Our Farewell Breakfast will be on Sunday morning, the 14th of September.

I realize that most of the above is a bit sketchy. As all plans are finalized, I will send all of you the details with costs along with a registration form.

Vince and Sam (good guy, bad guy) have been working hard on this reunion and have made two trips to Albany inspecting the hotels and making sure that the proposed bus trips and restaurants are what we want. They have kept Dudley Moylan and yours truly up to date on their activities and peregrinations. (Is that a word, Dudley?)

Please plan on attending!

Hotel Information

The Ramada Inn Downtown has reserved 20 rooms for us at a rate of \$72.00 (single or double occupancy) plus tax which comes to \$79.92 per day. The rate includes a full American Breakfast, served from 6:30 to 10:30 a.m. in their Hudson River Cafe. The address is 300 Broadway, Albany, NY 12207 and their telephone number is 518-434-4111. When making a reservation make sure that you mention the name of the group (Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Association and the guaranteed rate of \$72.00).

The Inn, which is only 9 miles from the airport, provides airport pickup at no charge but request that you notify them of your expected arrival time so that they may coordinate proper shuttle service.

Please mark your calendars now and plan on joining us for this reunion. We have moved the date to September because the weather in late October in the Albany could turn very cold. We should avoid that by meeting in September.

As you know, we decided to go on our own for this reunion. We all agree that we could not have been treated any better than we were by the Hoel and Johnston Association and we thank Bill Mercer and Bob Hollenbaugh for all of their courtesies and good times for the past two years. We wish them well for their coming reunion in Cincinnati.

Shipmate Ken Saunders died on the 12th of February after a four week illness. Ken was present at most of the reunions along with his wife Eloise and a strong supporter of our Association. We will miss Ken and hope that Eloise will continue to join us. Please pray for Eloise and the family and I am sure that she would appreciate a note or card.

Eloise Saunders
7290 Jesse Briggs Road
Rural Hall, NC 27045

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BILOXI MEMORIES

Our reunion with the USS Johnston/Hoel Association was one that we will long remember. The hotel did a great job for us and we adjusted to the rigors of being exposed to various games of chance whenever we wanted to get a meal ³on the pier². I didn't hear of anyone chartering a plane for the ride home on their winnings nor did I hear that anyone had to mortgage the house to get home. It was fun watching all those people exercising all day by pulling on those handles of the slot machines.

The opening breakfast was followed by a whole lot of humorous Cajun stories, narrated by comedian Ed Taylor. He did a great job! Then, Navy Captain David Kennedy spoke about his plans of a movie about the life of Cdr. Ernest E. Evans, skipper of the Johnston. He promised we'd hear more from him. I did sell him a copy of ³The Spirit of the Sammy B² so that he would know ³The Rest of the Story².

Thursday featured a bus trip to New Orleans and a visit to the National D Day Museum and then a trip to the French Quarter. In light of the current situation and thinking of some people, I wonder whether there will be a hue and cry raised to change it to the CEFreedom Quarter¹.

The battleship USS ALABAMA, berthed in Mobile, Alabama was our destination on Friday for our Memorial Service, ably conducted by Chaplain Paul Miranda. A color guard was present for the ceremony which was held beneath those huge 16² guns

Luncheon was served in the Ward Room which was about the size of our ship. We then toured the ship. I really had no idea just how large they are (were). Mel Harden's brother-in-law John Montgomery served on the USS CALIFORNIA during the war and was able to tell some of us about life on a battleship. One of my friends here in Florida served aboard the Alabama as part of the Marine Detachment. Most of his memories are good ones but he says that he never did get around to see all parts of the ship.

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Saturday evening we had a very fine meal prepared by the hotel and the wind-up was the traditional drawing for door prizes.

On Sunday morning, the SBR Survivors met for our traditional ³Farewell Breakfast² and we went our various ways back home with pleasant memories of another reunion.

A Letter from Bob Hollenbaugh

³Survivors of Taffy III Screen² (Battle off Samar)

October 25, 2004 is the 60th Anniversary of this great sea battle, of which we all took part. More importantly it is 60 years from the date that the demise of 525 of our friends and shipmates occurred, off the Island of Samar, in the Philippines. Since 10-25-1944 we, the survivors, have lived a full and valued life. Not so the 525.

We the survivors have remembered the 525 with a beautiful monument, bearing the names of those left behind off Samar, in Ft. Rosecrans National Cemetery, bordering the entrance to San Diego Harbor. It is only fitting and proper that we make a special effort to pay tribute to their sacrifice on the 60th anniversary of their demise.

Would you plan on attending a tribute we are organizing, at Ft. Rosecrans on Monday, October 25, 2004? (continued on page 4)

Hollenbaugh Letter.....continued from page 3

This special memorial service will be part of our annual reunion of the USS Johnston/USS Hoel Association. We are hoping the survivors of the USS Samuel B.

Roberts will also participate, inasmuch as the names of their lost shipmates also appear on the identified monument.

There is a strong possibility that other surviving members of Taffy III will be participating in this memorial. It is our plan to extend an invitation to them.

Your views concerning the planning of the affair are solicited. details of the memorial service, and other activities at the 2004 reunion in San Diego will be forthcoming in Association Newsletters. Address views and remarks concerning the Reunion to:

Robert R. Hollenbaugh
11669 Westview Pkwy.
San Diego, CA 62126
Tel: 619 425-6706
E-mail: rrhollen@cts.net

(Ed. Note: The Board of Directors of the SBR Survivors Association will discuss the above proposal.)

LETTER TO SAM SAYLOR

11/11/02 Destroyer Escort Historical Museum

Enclosed is a check in the amount of \$1,000 made out to DE Historical Museum. This check was authorized by the SBR Survivors Assoc. at our meeting October 26, 2002 in exchange for permanent Memorials for the names of our members who are deceased, under terms of your letter of October 24, 2002.

Copies of this letter will be forwarded along with copies of yours to all of the present Directors of our association. Memorial requests will be sent to you until we are notified differently. In addition to the handling of memorials as outlined in your letter it is expected that they will also be included on any permanent memorial that may be set up in Albany in the future.

As verbally indicated to you, the SBR Survivors will have their 2003 reunion in Albany, probably in October.

Sincerely,
Vince Goodrich

Chain of Command

ADMIRAL: Leaps over tall buildings with a single bound. Is more powerful than a locomotive. Is faster than a speeding bullet. Walks on water. Gives policy guidance to God.

CAPTAIN: Leaps short buildings with a single bound. Is more powerful than a small engine. Is just as fast as a speeding bullet. Walks on water if the sea is calm. Talks with God.

COMMANDER: Leaps short buildings with a running start. Is almost as powerful as a small engine. Is slower than a speeding bullet. Walks on water in indoor swimming pools. Talks with God if special form is provided.

LIEUTENANT COMMANDER: Barely clears little huts. Loses tug of war with small engine. Can fire a speeding bullet. Swims well. Is occasionally addressed by God.

LIEUTENANT: Crashes into buildings trying to leap over them. Is run over by small engines. Can sometimes handle a gun without inflicting self injury. Dog paddles. Talks to small animals.

LIEUTENANT JUNIOR GRADE: Cannot recognize buildings. Recognizes small engines two or three times. Is not issued ammunition. Can stay afloat if instructed in Mae West. Talks to walls.

ENSIGN: Falls over doorstep when trying to enter a building. Says, ³Look at the choo-choo² when locomotive passes by. Plays in puddles. Talks to himself.

CHIEF PETTY OFFICER: Lifts tall buildings and walks under them. Kicks locomotives off tracks. Catches bullets in teeth and eats them. Freezes water with a single glance. He is GOD.

Officers and Directors USS Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Ass'n.

- Dudley Moylan
- Sam Stewart
- Bob LeClercq
- Don Young
- Co Treasurer, Vince Goodrich
- Co Treasurer, Mel Harden
- Newsletter Editor, Dick Rohde

MORE ABOUT BILOXI

The high point of our reunion may well have been the visit by Chief Storekeeper Doug Ferm of the USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (FFG 58). Doug was the official envoy from the ship and brought a letter from Commander Randall C. Snyder, CO of FFG 58. Following is the text of his letter.

On behalf of the Officers, Chief Petty Officers and Crew of USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS I'd like to express our thanks for everything all of you have done for the Navy and the country. SAMUEL B. ROBERTS is a proud name and there have been three proud ships named for him. As members of the first USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS you and your shipmates have left us a legacy of Honor, Courage and Commitment that we onboard the current ³SAMMY B² always try to keep in the forefront of our minds as we execute the missions we are assigned. Our ship's motto, ³No Higher Honor² truly expresses the honor and privilege we all have to be associated with the name SAMUEL B. ROBERTS. From Leyte Gulf to the Persian Gulf and throughout the North Atlantic and Mediterranean deployment the ship just recently returned from, all of the men and women who have served on one of the three great ships named SAMUEL B. ROBERTS are truly bonded together by a namesake who placed his shipmates and the mission ahead of his own personal safety. There is ³No Higher Honor².

Sincerely,

RANDALL C. SNYDER
Commander, United States Naval Reserve
Commanding Officer
USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (FFG 58)

Included in the presentation folder is a picture of the ³Sammy B² underway with the following note.

Mr. Rohde,

Fair winds and following seas from the officers and crew of the ³Sammy B².

Signed: R.C.Snyder, CDR, USNR, CO

October 2002

This becomes a part of the archives of our ship.

Dear Captain Snyder,

We thank you for the greetings and kind words. We also thank you for allowing Doug Ferm to join us for our reunion. He is the kind of young man that we aspired to be those many years ago. How reassuring it was for all of us to know that he represents the kind of person who makes up today's Navy. We are indeed in good hands.

We all got to know Doug fairly well and learned about his wife and baby daughter. He fit right in with us and was willing to listen to our old ³sea stories² . While I am quick to state that he was always a gentleman, I did notice some of our wives and widows casting longing eyes in his direction. Enough of that.

Doug read your letter at our Memorial Service aboard the USS ALABAMA. As you may know, we were in reunion with the USS HOEL (DD 533) and USS JOHNSTON (DD 557), both of which were sunk along with us that October morning, 59 years ago. Your remarks were enjoyed by them and they shared in our admiration of Chief Ferm.

From all of us with the SAMUEL B. ROBERTS, HOEL AND JOHNSTON, we return those wishes for ³Fair winds and following seas². Please know that our thoughts and prayers are with you and all the members of our Armed Forces who are currently fighting for us. We pray for a speedy and decisive victory. God bless you all!

This and That from Here and There

Don Young is back home following serious surgery and doing well. He will have some radiation treatments but no more chemo. Don reports that his grandson Jason will start training with the SEALS in April.

Ed Wheaton sounded very well when I spoke with him a few weeks ago. He and his dog are living the quiet life in Ohio. He no longer has his driver's license and has to hoof it to the store. The world is probably a safer place now.

Dudley Moylan has finally moved to a new apartment in Minneapolis, not too far from where he formerly lived for 52 years. Rumor has it that the local historical society has made some interesting digs and many artifacts of old Mnpls have been found including a first edition of Playboy magazine.

Perry Schulze sent me an update on the Carr Family. Paul's 8 sisters are still going strong but were saddened this January with the death of Johnny Woodard, Tressie Carr's husband. Our sympathies and prayers to Tressie and the families.

Joe Fortier keeps in touch. He is doing as well as can be expected. Marie is in a nursing facility and Joe is with her every day. He keeps busy volunteering.

Vince Goodrich had a bit of a scare and was taken to the hospital with chest pains. It was angina, not a coronary and so Vince was able to go to Albany with Sam Stewart to make arrangements for the reunion.

Sam Blue, Lou Gould and Bob LeClercq keep my e-mail humming with stories and anecdotes, some inspirational, some humorous and some just plain confusing. Please keep them coming guys.

George Bray keeps up his usual good spirits but has been taking care of his sister who is in very poor health. George has been coping but admits that it has been rough. He keeps threatening to learn how to work his computer and get back ³on line².

Bill Katsur has been in touch and sent me a video which contains footage of ³the battle² taken from Navy footage. He has slowed down the action to the point that you can see the shells being fired. There is also a lot of the life of Red Harrington, including his singing and pictures of him as a young lad.

Tom Stevenson keeps in touch. Tom and Virginia are in Florida now, with their dog Daisy May, a beautiful cocker spaniel. I think that the first offer will get you a dog however. When the dog ate Tom's hearing aids, that did it.

Leon and Flo McCoy visited us this month for an afternoon. They have a 36¹ motor home and do extensive traveling in the east and midwest. Leon, you will remember is the founder of the USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (DD 823) Shipmates Association.

Jack Yusen is totally wrapped up in his work with the Bob Hope Memorial. It was good to see Jack on the ³Today Show². He represented us well. Treasurer Vince sent a check in amount of \$200 for the memorial. I believe that Jack and Ruth will be with us in Albany.

Leah Felt is also planning to be with us this year. We're counting on it Leah. You are our ³First Lady².

I apologize for being so late in getting this edition of the NEWSLETTER out to you. Life is getting a bit easier in the Rohde household. Helen doing her fair share of the cooking. I think a matter of survival on her part. Otherwise no changes in our life. I'm still chasing that little white ball.

When plans are finalized, which will be very soon, I shall send out a registration form with all of the information.

HUG ONE ANOTHER!

Richard K. Rohde, Newsletter Editor
USS Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Ass¹n.

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