



**Volume 9, No. 2**  
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*Dick Rohde, editor*

**TABLE OF CONTENTS (excerpted)**

- [CALIFORNIA, HERE WE COME!](#)
- [A Message from President Jack Yusen](#)
- [NEW WEBSITE INFO: WWW.DE413.ORG](#)
- [REMINISCING WITH THE OLD REDHEAD](#)
- [OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS](#)
- [MAILBOX](#)
- [USS JOHNSTON/HOEL ASSOCIATION will have their reunion](#)
- [NEW FAMILY MEMBERS](#)
- [MORE MAIL](#)

**CALIFORNIA, HERE WE COME!**

President Jack Yusen visited San Diego in late March and with help from our friend John Ibe, plans have been made for our next reunion in San Diego from Saturday October 2nd to Wednesday, October 6th. Following is the important information.

Our headquarters hotel will be the Quality Resort Mission Valley which is located on South Hotel Circle and is within minutes of downtown, the zoo, the airport and has a restaurant which is open 24 hours per day. The daily rate, including tax, will be \$87.33. We will have a memorial service, probably aboard the USS PEARL HARBOR, LSD 52. We will visit

the Taffy 3 Memorial downtown and the memorials at Fort Rosecrans. Optional tours will also be available. Please see the enclosed Registration Form. If for some unforeseen reason we cannot have luncheon aboard the ship, alternate plans have been made.

Make your room reservations directly with the Quality Resort, Mission Valley. Call them at (619)298-8282 or (800)362-7871. Be sure to tell them that you are with the Samuel B. Roberts Survivors' Association to get the special rate.

### **A Message from President Jack Yusen**

Dear Shipmates, Families and Friends,

Ruth and I want to thank all of you for your cards, letters, phone calls and most important, your prayers.

We are happy to report to you that Ruth is doing real well and we can now move on with the important things in life, one of which is the USS Samuel B. Roberts DE 413 Survivors' Association. We certainly hope and pray that everyone will try to attend our reunion, October 2-6, 1999 in San Diego, California.

This reunion is a very special one. I could name a number of reasons for a good attendance, and on top of the list would be, "We are not getting any younger." Next "This will be a very special meeting in that we will be in San Diego and have a special time to visit the monuments that pay a wonderful tribute to our ship-mates who are no longer with us."

Arrangements have been made. Our News Editor, Dick Rohde has put the package together and I cannot say enough about the wonderful job that Dick is doing with the NEWSLETTER. Thank you Dick, keep up the good work. We can help Dick by all of us getting our reservations and money in ASAP, and also your reservations for the Quality Resort Hotel. Please read the reunion instructions and make your reservations.

In closing, Ruth and I hope you are all well and we pray that all of us will be together in San Diego.

Sincerely,

Jack Yusen

**NEW WEBSITE INFO: WWW.DE413.ORG**

We now have a new address on the Internet. I know that for some of you who are not

involved with this stuff, you could care less, however, there are many of you who either have your own access to the Internet, or have family or friends who are involved.

A few weeks ago, our son Cliff contacted an ISP or Internet Service Provider and told them about our Association and that we were looking for a permanent home. Sometimes organizations such as ours that are registered with the IRS as non-profit organizations do receive some consideration. We, however, are really one step lower than non-profit and have never applied for this status from IRS. He contacted the President of The Pressroom Online Services, Mr. Greg Gibson and we have been informed that we now have a permanent URL (address) at no charge. Following is a copy of the letter which I sent to Mr. Gibson.

Friday, April 2, 1999

Mr. Greg Gibson

President

The Pressroom Online Services

13566 Northbourne Drive

Centreville, VA 22020

Dear Mr. Gibson,

I am writing on behalf of the USS Samuel B. Roberts Survivors' Association to thank you for providing a home for our Association's WEBSITE on Pressroom. As you may know, our ship was sunk during the battle of Leyte Gulf by shell fire from Japanese battleships, cruisers and destroyers.

During the engagement, not only did our ship go down, but also two destroyers and two of our escort carriers. There were many American sailors in the water that day, October 25, 1944. Although we were hopelessly outgunned by this superior (in size only) Japanese force, we did manage to drive them off and were successful in ensuring that the invasion of the Philippine Islands, at Leyte, was saved. During this engagement, approximately one half of our crew of 200 was killed and we survivors spent over 50 hours in the water before being rescued.

Our Association is dedicated to preserving the memory of our shipmates who did not return and to providing information to the widows, children and grandchildren of our shipmates. Through the years, we too have become "family" and in our family we include the present and past members of the United States Navy who have served on naval vessels subsequently named after our ship, our captain and a heroic member of our crew. Through

your generous act, we will be able to provide a central point of information about our ship, our families and a history of the events of that time so long ago. We do not want our shipmates to be forgotten.

You will be receiving a copy of the book, "Little Wolf at Leyte" by Capt. J. Henry Doscher, Jr., which will give you the whole story of the USS Samuel B. Roberts as a token of our gratitude for your providing us with a permanent address. Thank you again from a grateful group of old navy vets.

Sincerely,

Richard K. Rohde

In order to make the WEBSITE more meaningful to all, I would greatly appreciate your sending in any pictures, letters, or other bits of information that you have about the Sammy B so that we can put them on the WEBSITE George Bray is sending some copies of the GIZMO for example. You must have some pictures taken before we became a crew or even after. Do you have any pictures that you took in Norfolk, Bermuda, Boston or Hawaii. Seems like I remember seeing some at one of the reunions. If you will send them to me, I will make sure that they are all returned safely. Again >>[www.DE413.org](http://www.DE413.org)<<

## **REMINISCING WITH THE OLD REDHEAD**

Today I went back into those hallowed halls of memory and reread the book, "The Spirit of the Sammy-B" and it still hurts. Men so young that never got a chance to hold a dear one again. A small child that never had a chance to say "Daddy".

Those of us that remember a little black puppy, maddened by concussion and shell fire as man tried to destroy man. Little Sammy, as he was lovingly called, died in our wake before our ship died. How many of you recall this little puppy rescued by our Captain from the docks in Norfolk, scared, wet, hungry, yet he learned to love us all. His own life jacket did not save him. After all these years a tear falls as I recall. Was he important? You're damned right. Enough so we can still say, "We won't forget".

Don't you look ahead, look up, look back, cherish each moment of the life you lived and love as if it is the last thing you will ever do? Gone are the days when your heart was young and gay. I wish I could restore those times and lives lost. Take a few minutes and reread "The Spirit of the Sammy-B". Cold steel, warm dynamite, that spirit that still lives today on the third ship to bear the name. Yes, even as we sleep, the spirit of Sammy B still sails on as a new generation takes the helm.

I remain an ever-loving shipmate,

John E. Harrington

BM 1/C Sammy B.

Now 76. - - - - -

## **OFFICERS AND DIRECTORS**

President .....Jack Yusen

Vice President .....Dudley Moylan

Co-Treasurer.....Vince Goodrich

Co-Treasurer .....Mel Harden

Directors .....Those listed above and

John Harrington and ..... Dick Rohde

## **MAILBOX**

I am always happy when I receive mail from you. It makes life easier for me to fill these pages and to keep them interesting. Some of the communications have been in Email form and others in the conventional "Snail Mail". Keep them coming. Even telephone calls are accepted. First of all, there have been many complimentary notes, email of course, commenting on the Website. Thanks so much. They have all been passed along to son Cliff who is the Webmaster.

Jack MacMillan of the Walter C. Wann, DE 412 wrote to inform us that the Wann will be having their 11th Reunion in San Francisco in early September. I note that their "special" room rate will be \$110 plus tax. He notes that it is getting more difficult to set the reunions as we get older and smaller as a group.

E.E. "Bob" Roberts keeps in touch through Email and mentioned an article in The Atlantic magazine, March issue which is entitled "[Leyte Gulf: The Largest Naval Battle in History](#)". It is an interesting article and worth reading. For you computer people, I was able to read it on the Internet.

Michael Davis, Commanding Officer of FFG 58

"A quick note to let you know FFG 58 is alive and well! Appreciated your note from the Jan/Feb Survivors Newsletter. The ship is doing well. We recently

returned from several weeks away, where we provided a flight deck for helo flight quals, played orange force for a submarine tactical certification, and played orange force for the Roosevelt Battlegroup during its workups. We were fortunate to spend several days in sunny Fort Lauderdale between events as well. We are in Norfolk until 6 April, when we sail for the Caribbean with the other ships in our Destroyer Squadron for some integrated ship training opportunities. Looks like a short visit in St. Thomas is in the works as part of that trip.

Life is pretty good in "Sammy B." right now. We have the vast majority of our training hurdles behind us and are beginning to wind up for a Jan 2000 deployment. We recently shifted to an 8 section duty rotation (from 6 sections) and are working "tropical hours" (0600-1400) in an effort to spend more time at home with our families when in home port. Hope all is well with you and your mates. Stop by and see us if you have occasion to visit Norfolk. You might be interested to visit us on the web at >>[www.spear.navy.mil/ships/ffg58/index/htm](http://www.spear.navy.mil/ships/ffg58/index/htm)<<. I am working to keep "Sammy B." friends and families up-to-date with periodic updates, photos, etc."

Mike Davis

Following is a quote from Mike Davis in his "Tides and Currents" from the FFG 58 web site which is intended for dependents and significant others of crewmembers.

"In closing, these are turbulent times we are living through. Although our economy is good at home, there are challenges all over the globe. Your men continue to excel and are ready to rise to the occasion to insure our freedom, liberty and way of life back home on Main Street. It's a great time to be a "Sammy B." Sailor!"

Jack Photenhauer of the Association of Gunner's Mates writes to let us know that their Association is offering 18" X 24" prints of a painting which is dedicated to the memory of all Gunners and Gun Crew members who made the supreme sacrifice in the line of duty in war or peace. The cost for the prints is \$30 which includes shipping and handling. Checks should be made payable to AGM and sent to P O Box 247, Hammond IN, 46325. The painting shows our Paul Henry Carr attempting to load the "star shell" he was most probably handling immediately before his death.

Vince Goodrich sent along a copy of the word, which is published by the Masonic Service Bureaus. Included is an article excerpted from a talk by former Education Secretary William J. Bennett with his topic, "Does Honor Have a Future? In his speech he was comparing two events in America's recent past, Wood stock and Operation Overlord, the Normandy Invasion. He says "Plato reminds us that what is real is what endures. That is

why events like Operation Overlord will, in a value-laden culture, remain vivid and meaningful. War has always been the crucible --that is, the vessel as well as the severest test -- for our core beliefs. The battles of Trenton, Midway and Tarawa; those who served with John Paul Jones on the Bonhomme Richard and the crews of Taffy Three in Leyte Gulf; the marines and the brave Navy officers at "Frozen Chosin" -- these things endure.....".

Vince Goodrich also sent me a very humorous article from "The Four Stacker 1999" the APD Veterans Newsletter. It is much too long to print in its entirety but the following will give you some idea about it. "That Glamorous Navy Life" This article is in behalf of those of us who are, or were in the U S Navy, who have family members that think sailors live a 'Top Gun' existence. Those family members that have watched one too many episodes of JAG and think that Navy Life is glamorous. Here's how they can experience Navy Life, right in the comfort of their own homes.

1. Buy a dumpster, paint it gray and live in it for 6 months straight.
2. Run all piping and wires inside your house on the outside of the walls.
3. Pump 10 inches of nasty, crappy water into your basement, then pump it out, clean up, and paint the basement "deck gray".
4. Perform a weekly disassembly and inspection of your lawnmower.
5. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays turn your water temp. up to 200 degrees, then on Tuesday and Thursday, turn it down to 10 degrees.
6. Raise your bed to within 6 inches of the ceiling.
7. Have your next door neighbor come over each day at 5 am and blow a whistle and shout 'Reveille, all hands heave out and trice up'.
8. Eat the raunchiest Mexican food you can find for three days straight, then lock the bathroom door for 12 hours and hang a sign on it that reads, 'secured, contact OA Division at X-3053'.
9. Submit a request form to your father-in-law asking if it's OK for you to leave your house before 3 pm.
10. Make your family qualify to operate all the appliances in your home (i.e. dishwasher operator, blender technician, etc.)
11. Walk around your car for 4 hours checking the tire pressure every 15 minutes.
12. Empty all the garbage bins in your house and sweep your driveway 3 times a day, whether they need it or not.
13. Repaint your entire house once a month.
14. Have your neighbor collect all your mail for a month, randomly losing every 5th item.
15. Have your 5-year-old cousin give you a haircut with goat shears.
16. Sew back pockets to the front of your pants.
17. In the middle of January, place a podium at the end of your driveway. Have family stand watches at the podium, rotating at 4 hour intervals. Put your family thru these and then let them tell you how glamorous Navy life really is.

**USS JOHNSTON/HOEL ASSOCIATION** will have their reunion this year in September in Baton Rouge, LA. Their Memorial Service is planned for the USS Kidd. LCDR Bob Chambers writes,

Thank you for accepting the task of producing the newsletter. I have very much enjoyed reading the letters and stories of the original USS Samuel B. Roberts (DE 413) crewmembers. I am a former member of FFG-58 and was on board when she hit a mine in the Persian Gulf in 1988. I'm working in Washington, so if there is anything you or the organization needs here, let me know. I'll be glad to help. I know I've paid my dues in the past, but I'm not sure where I stand this year so here is my check to help defray your costs. P.S. I passed on your last Newsletter to ADM(Sel) Sestak. He just reported in to work at the Pentagon.

Don Young informed me that our shipmate's name was Robert W. Fickett (not Pickett). He and Don were close friends aboard the ship. Bob Fickett died either the first or second day on the Copeland raft. Don sent me a picture of Bob which you may view on our website.

## **NEW FAMILY MEMBERS**

Since the last NEWSLETTER, some new members have joined our family. Do welcome them and if you can, drop them a note or give them a call.

Kathleen Cronin Gastan. Kathleen is the daughter of shipmate Charles H. Cronin, Y2C. She came across info on the "Sammy B" on the Internet and learned that her father was involved in the publishing of the GIZMO. He stayed in journalism, working for PPG for over 30 years. One of the stories that his kids remember him telling is that when he was rescued, the first thing that he got to eat was pancakes. Charles died in 1975 and his wife in 1980. They are survived by three children, 4 grandchildren and 1 great grandson. Kathleen's son Greg remembers that his "Grandpap" smoked a big cigar. He did that aboard ship if you remember. She included a picture of her father and mother on their wedding day, 5/1/43 which will be on the WEBSITE very shortly.

I told her that I would not be living today were it not for her father who tied me to the life net so that I would not keep trying to swim to India where my big brother was in the Air Force. He would take care of me, I knew.

Frank Kupidowski. Frank is the brother of Chester Kupidowski, F1C. Chester was killed when our ship went down. Frank's son gave him a book about the Roberts and in it was Whit's address. From there the contact was made. Leah Felt told Jack and he told me. I spoke with Frank and his wife Gloria the other night and really enjoyed it, as did they. I had to admit that I did not remember Chester but was able to tell him about the ship and that day. Interestingly enough, he told me that he and his brother had a code and so he knew



exactly where we were at all times. How about that, Stevenson and Moylan. He still has the letters but they are written in Polish. That explains a lot. He also has copies of the GIZMO and snapshots of his brother which will shortly be on the website. James D. Luther. James is the nephew of Harold K. Scott, S1C who was killed during the battle. He is the one who saw Red Harrington, wearing his SBR hat at the Dover Air Force Commissary. Since then, Red had a visit from Harold's wife Marian and her son Delbert. I am sure that as the years roll by, we will continue to hear of families of our shipmates. They are the future of our Association.

## **MORE MAIL**

I received a news update from Florence and Leon McCoy about the DD 823, Samuel B. Roberts. Their reunion will be in Baltimore, MD at the Holiday Inn at BWI Airport, from Aug. 26 to 29, 1999. Sounds like they will be having a great time with a tour of the Naval Academy including a noon formation and lunch at the Officer's Club. They will also visit the USS Barry and the US Navy Memorial. We will be with them in spirit.

John Wukovits. John will be with us in San Diego and I hope that he will be our speaker at the closing banquet. He writes that he has completed his basic research and is now compiling a list of questions that he wants to ask of the survivors and as many family members as he can contact. The book will be told from the vantage point of the ship's crew, with the battle off Samar forming the climax. He hopes to show the factors which drew the crew together, how the war affected their lives and the lives of loved ones, and the lessons that can be drawn. He expects to mail the list of questions to the survivors this spring and then arrange telephone interviews. He asks that we provide him with any letters or diaries that still exist as he wants to bring home the human element in "this amazing story" and these will certainly provide that.

Thanks for listening,  
[Richard K. Rohde](#)

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