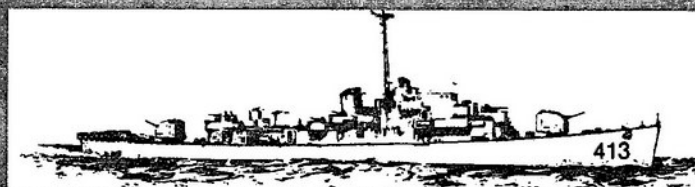


Dedication

This Newsletter is dedicated to the memory of our shipmate and friend Whit Felt.



Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, San Diego CA

Pictured above is the monument dedicated to those men who sacrificed their lives in the Battle of Leyte Gulf on October 25, 1944

My apologies go to one and all for the delay in sending out this issue of the Newsletter. I had planned a special edition dedicated to the task of convincing the powers that be within the hierarchy of the Department of Veterans Affairs that our cause to place the bronze plaque over the names of our shipmates on the monument in Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery in San Diego was a just one. I then received another letter from the Under Secretary stating that he had again reviewed the facts and that any change in the monument must be agreed upon by all three ship associations. The Johnston/Hoel Assn. will not change its position. More info inside.

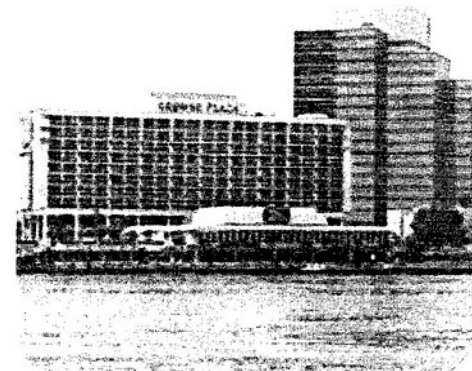
REUNION NEWS

Our reunion will be held in Jacksonville, Florida. Please plan to join us.

- Thu. 9/18 Registration
- Fri. 9/19 Memorial Service, FFG 58 Luncheon at Mayport Business Meeting
- Sat. 9/20 Bus Tour to Amelia Island
- Sun. 9/21 Luncheon Cruise on river.
- Mon. 9/22 Closing Banquet
- Tue. 9/23 Farewell Breakfast

Sign Up Now

Crowne Plaza Hotel, Jacksonville
Our reunion headquarters will be the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Call 904-398-8800 for reservations.



Reunion Information

CROWNE PLAZA HOTEL
1201 RIVERPLACE BLVD.
JACKSONVILLE, FL 32207
TEL: 904-398-8800

Rooms - The hotel has reserved 15 rooms for our reunion at a guaranteed rate of \$92.00 + Sales Tax of 13% for a total of \$103.96. If you think that you will be attending, I would suggest that you make your reservations now. Rooms are being held under the name Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Association. The hotel telephone number is 904-398-8800. The Crowne Plaza worldwide number is 800-227-6963.

The Hotel does not have transportation service from the airport. Cabs and vans are available.

There is free parking for hotel guests.

Schedule of Events

Thursday, September 18

Plan to arrive by this date. Registration will be in the main lobby. Information on times and events will be available. The Hospitality Room will be open in the afternoon and evening. No planned dinner so make arrangements to meet with others.

Friday, September 19

Following breakfast, buses will take us to Naval Station Mayport for the Memorial Service aboard USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS, FFG 58. Following the ceremony and tour of the ship we will proceed to Steel Beach Restaurant on the base for luncheon and then return to the hotel. In the afternoon, we will have our Annual Business Meeting. Decisions will be made regarding the monument in San Diego. Please plan on attending this meeting.

Saturday, September 20

This morning, the buses will take us to Amelia Island and Fernandina Beach which is the only city in the USA to have been under the domain of 8 different national flags. This vibrant Victorian Seaport Village was the birthplace of the shrimping industry and

has many shops, galleries and restaurants. We will be on our own for luncheon and will return to the hotel in the afternoon. Dinner is on your own and the Hospitality Room will be available.

Sunday, September 21

Today we will embark on a luncheon cruise on the St. Johns River which is the second largest north flowing river in the US. 310 miles in length, it is the longest river in Florida.



The river abounds with wildlife such as porpoises, manatees, rays, osprey, eagles and alligators. Watch out for the low flying sturgeon.

We will return to the hotel and the rest of the day we are free. The hospitality room will be open.

Monday, September 22

You are on your own for the day, until the Closing Banquet at 6 p.m. Use the day to explore the hotel, the area, Jacksonville or just take it easy. You can river watch or take a river taxi or just relax around the pool. We are promised an excellent meal by the hotel. We hope to have guests from the ship with us and will have a guest speaker. Following the banquet, the Hospitality Room will be open and hopefully Tom Stevenson will share with us his unforgettable version of "Skin".

Tuesday, September 23

Be sure to attend the Farewell Breakfast this morning starting at 7:30 am. Then it is homeward bound with pockets full of memories. Let's try to be together again in 2009.

Bravo Zulu to Sam Stewart for planning this reunion. We thank you!

For Your Information

Board of Directors

SBR Survivors Association

Mel Harden, Co-Treasurer
Bob LeClercq, Director
Dudley Moylan, Chairman
Dick Rohde, Co-Treasurer
Sam Stewart, Director
John Walsh, Director
Bill Wilson, Director

Newsletter Editor

Richard K. "Dick" Rohde
9045 SW 91st Circle
Ocala, FL 34481-8404
Email: rkr6@cornell.edu
Telephone: 352-861-0616
Cell Phone: 518-852-0368
Website: www.de413.org

Just a Reminder

Dues are \$15 per year and are much appreciated. They are, however, voluntary. Please make payable to "SBR Survivors Association" and send to Dick Rohde, address above. Thank you.

We also urge your support of DESA, USS SLATER, U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL, NIMITZ FOUNDATION AND THE TIN CAN SAILORS ASSN.

We Get Letters

Ralph Cantrell sent an email asking whether anyone might remember his father



Chief Quartermaster Frank Cantrell. I think it is safe to say that most of us do. He said that his father rarely spoke of his Naval Service, his tour aboard DE 413 or of his shipmates. He would appreciate hearing from any of his shipmates who could relate any

information. You can contact Ralph at 847-441-7433 or at his email address << hylas45@sbcglobal.net >>. I put him in touch with Elbert Gentry and they have spoken.

I received the following email, "My name is Cody Seidler, formerly Cody Ross. My uncle was on the Samuel B. Roberts. My dad looked for him for a while. My mother told me that my uncle was last seen on a raft, but never heard from. Do you think any of you might remember him? Anything you may be able to tell me would be great. Thank you. Cody". The uncle in question is **Charles A. Ross, S2C** who is listed as Missing in Action.

If you remember Charles please contact Cody. She would love to hear from you. Address and telephone number follows: 1031 S. Hiawassee Rd. Unit 2525 , Orlando, FL 32835, Tel: 407-925-7695 or

<< c.seidler@cthsu.com >>.

James "Jay" Young informed me of the death of his mother, Virginia "Gin" Young on July 11th 2008. She was the widow of shipmate Don Young. Memorial contributions can be made to The American Cancer Society or to St. Joseph High School, 4120 S. Bradley Road, Santa Maria, CA 93455.

Jay's address is:
PO Box 85
748 Main Street
Los Alamos CA 93440

The following was received and I pass it along.

To the officers and men of DE 413,
My uncle, Cyrus DeCoster, was ASW officer on USS Abercrombie at Samar, and several times I heard his account of the day, and of the loss of the Roberts. I also heard the story from my father, Robert Olson, who was gunnery officer on DE 704, the Cronin. Although not at Samar, the crew of DE 704 knew all about the heroic service of the Roberts.
Please accept my personal thanks for your service, and my admiration for your courage in the face of impossible odds.

Captain Stephen Olson (merchant marine)
Belfast, Maine

JoAnn Mitchell wrote the following:

My uncle, STEVE MUDRE was on the USS Samuel B. Roberts, DE 413. He was one of the unfortunate ones who didn't make it out alive.

I wanted to express my gratitude though in meeting J. Dudley Moylan this past October in Minneapolis. Mr. Moylan remembered my Uncle Steve and it was wonderful to meet someone who knew my Uncle. He was killed before I was born.

p.s. I greatly enjoy receiving the Survivors Assn. newsletter. Hope to get to one of the reunions soon.

Gratefully,

JoAnn Mitchell

My name is Richard Swiggett, My father served on the samuel b roberts and was one of the survivors of her sinking, I was just curious about this and would appreciate any info you could give me. His name was Kenneth J Swiggett. Thanks for your time.

Richard Swiggett

I replied to Richard, giving him as much information as I could and suggested various books to read and websites to visit on the internet. If any of you have any information, please contact him.

His email address is << Harley2go@aol.com >> Ken was a Seaman 2c and is listed as wounded in action.

More Letters

Jim Hornfischer sent me an email with an attached essay from the Naval Institute Proceedings in which Captain Stephen F. Davis, who until his death served on the staff of CNO suggests that every sailor in the U.S. Navy read *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors* because the story "reminds those of us in the Navy of who we are at our finest". Jim says that he has thought about all of us for a very long time but it was nice to see the sentiment in print.

The article is named "Let's Have One Book for Every Sailor, Too" and is in response to the Commandant of the Marine Corps promulgated ALMAR 030/07 which directed, in part, that all Marines read and discuss the marquee title, Lieutenant General Brute Krulak's *"First to Fight: An Insider's View of the U.S. Marine Corps"*.

Captain Davis states, in part, "It may be time for the Navy to take a lesson from the Marine Corps and designate our own 'marquee title' - one book to be read and discussed by every sailor, regardless of rank or warfare specialty, that links us to an honorable past, a difficult present, and a dynamic future. There are many candidates, such as *The Cruel Sea*, *The Good Shepherd*, and *Winds of War*, among others. I believe, however, there is one clear choice - James D. Hornfischer's *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors*. In the same way Krulak gets at those elements that are essentially 'Marine' Hornfischer reminds those of us in the Navy of who we are at our finest. The story of Leyte Gulf is important to understand; the story of the USS JOHNSTON (DD 557) and her captain, Lieutenant Commander Ernest E. Evans changes who you are. Rebuilding our warrior ethos might start with something as simple as reading *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors*".

The above excerpts may be read in their entirety in Proceedings, U.S. Naval Institute, Annapolis, Maryland.

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Jim, I'm sure that all of us from Taffy 3 would agree with Captain Davis. We thank you for all that you have done in telling the story of the valiant men and ships while we were still around. We know that we will not be forgotten.

Mr Dick Rohde

Dear Sir,

I would like to become a member of the Association. My sister in-law's Dad, John L Conway was aboard The "Sammy B" when she was sunk.

Also I am having a plaque made up for him to go in the USS Little Rock CLG 4 museum on board the ship in Buffalo NY...Mr Conway is a "PLANK OWNER" of the Little Rock when it was CL 92.

My sister in law was a host to your association when it came to Albany NY at the USS Slater. So she is happy about my efforts. She is Patricia "Conway" Hedgeman.

I appreciate the time you take to answer.

Sincerely

Robert J Hedgeman BM 2

U. S. Navy vet 1964-1968

USS Little Rock CLG 4 1967-1968

We welcome our newest member, Patti Hedgeman's brother-in-law Bob Hedgeman.

Mark Mathewson sent an update on his San Diego 4th graders and Taffy 3.

Dick,

Sorry it has been so long since checking in with you. Due to California budget cuts, I was actually laid off from my position for next year and had to focus for the last four months on getting my job along with over 900 others from my district reinstated.

My fourth grade and one other fourth grade earned a field trip to visit the USS Midway last Wednesday. I made sure before we left that we walked over to the Taffy 3 memorial across the way. When we got there, I gave a quick summary of the events of October 25, 1944 for the other fourth grade class. I also mentioned how Bob Hollenbaugh (a survivor from the Johnston living in San Diego) had visited my class earlier in the year and shared his story. I noticed while I was telling the events of that day, quite a number of tourists stopped to listen to the impromptu history lesson as well.

I am attaching a photo taken that day at the monument for you to share.



I just had to include this picture of the two 4th grade classes from San Diego. Teacher Mark Mathewson in the back row, center. Please note the message that they included. "We Will Not Forget".

An Update on our Monument at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery

Since the last Newsletter and the letter from Under Secretary Tuerk denying us the right to affix the bronze plaque to the monument, I contacted my congressman, Cliff Stearns who is the Deputy Ranking Republican on the Committee for Veterans Affairs. Cliff wrote an excellent letter to the estimable Mr. Tuerk reviewing our case and concluding as follows, "Therefore, I respectfully request the VA move forward and allow Mr. Rohde on behalf of the USS Samuel B. Roberts Survivors to upgrade the monument by placing the bronze plaque over their existing portion of the monument. Thank you for your attention to and continued work on this matter. I look forward to your positive response."

His reply was sent to Cliff Stearns. In it he states that we did not inform him that there were two other ships associations represented by the Memorial. I had informed them that there were three ships on the monument. He speaks of a series of miscommunications concerning the improvements. He further states that "any change to the monument must be agreed upon by all three associations." He then offered to provide a base on which we can mount the bronze plaque as well as space at the cemetery to display it. Upon receiving this, I telephoned Mr. Glen Foster (USS HOEL survivor) who seems to be the representative of the Johnston/Hoel Association. He absolutely refuses to permit us to affix the plaque. And there it stands.

Elizabeth King, who is a member of our Association and the daughter of shipmate John Jacob Newmiller wrote an excellent letter to her congressman who wrote to Mr. Tuerk on our behalf. John Walsh was able, through his brother, to make our situation known to Barack Obama. I have no update on that situation. I shall enclose a list of the members of the Veterans Affairs Committees of both the House and the Senate and addresses of The Secretary of Veterans Affairs as well as that of under Secretary Tuerk I encourage you to write. I will be more than happy to provide you with any background material, letters etc. that you might want.

Commander Wally Lovely, CO of the USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS, FFG 58 called to tell me that he would be honored to have the plaque aboard the ship. The plaque could also go in the Gazebo at the Museum of the Pacific in Fredericksburg Texas. There are then, the three possibilities of a "home". I personally would like to continue our efforts to place the plaque where it was designed to be and where we were told it would go (in writing) by officials of the Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery and an official of the National Cemetery Association.

This will be discussed by the Board of Directors at the Business Meeting to be held on September 19, 2008.

House of Representatives

House Committee on Veterans' Affairs

335 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515
Telephone: 202-225-9756

Note: an asterisk* before the name indicates a member of the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs

Democrats

Bob Filner (CA) Chmn.
Corrinne Brown (FL)
Vic Snyder (AR)
Michael H. Michaud (ME)
Stephanie Herseth Sandlin (SD)
Harry E. Mitchell (AZ)
*John J. Hall (NY)
*Phil Hare (IL)
*Shelley Berkley (NV)
John T. Salazar (CO)
*Ciro D. Rodriguez (TX)
Joe Donnelly (IN)
Jerry McNerney (CA)

Republicans

Steve Buyer (IN) Ranking Rep.
Cliff Stearns (FL)
Jerry Moran (KS)
Jeff Miller (FL)
Henry E. Brown, Jr. (SC)
Ginny Brown-Waite (FL)
John Boozman (AR)
Brian P. Bilbray (CA)
*Michael R. Turner (OH)
*Gus M. Bilirakis (FL)
*Doug Lamborn (CO)
Vern Buchanan (FL)

U. S. Senate

U.S. Senate Committee on
Veterans Affairs
412 Russell Senate Building
Washington, DC 20410
Dem. Telephone: 202-224-9126
Rep. Telephone: 202-224-2074

Democrats

Daniel K. Akaka (HI) Chmn
John D. Rockefeller IV (WV)
Patty Murray (WA)
Barack Obama (IL)
Sherrod Brown (OH)
Jon Tester (MT)
Jim Webb (VA)

Republicans

Richard Burr (NC)
Arlen Specter (PA)
Larry Craig (ID)
Johnny Isakson (GA)
Lindsey Graham (SC)
Kay Bailey Hutchison (TX)
Roger Wicker (MS)

Independent

Bernard Sanders (VT)

James B. Peake, M.D.
Secretary of Veterans Affairs
810 Vermont Avenue
Washington, DC 20420

William F. Tuerk
Under Secretary for Memorial Affairs
Department of Veterans Affairs
National Cemetery Association
810 Vermont Avenue
Washington, DC 20420

You will
never be
forgotten!

MUDRE, Steve
NATTER, Charles W.
NEWMILLER, John J.
O'CONNOR, Dudley B.
OLIVER, Clarence E.
ORLOWSKI, Joseph
OSBORN, Jerry G.
PAONE, John J.
PIERSON, Hilan R.
RIEBENBAUER, Leop
ROSS, Charles A.
ROZZELLE, John T.
SAYLOR, Arthur E. Jr
SCHAFFER, Darl H.
SCOTT, Harold K.
SERAFINI, Tuho J.
SHAFEEER, Russel W.
SMITH, Charles N.
SPEARS, Mabin L.

