

Newsletter, 17.1, May 2007

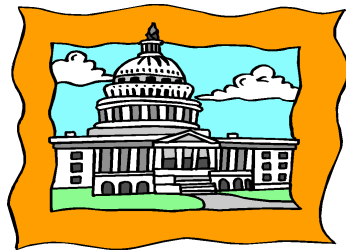
As I was saying.....

When last we spoke, back in November, I did not think that it would be this long before the next Newsletter would be mailed. My apologies.

Much has happened during the intervening months - some good and some bad, but that is to be expected.

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Reunion 2007 Mark the Dates

This year's reunion is set for the Washington DC area, from Sept. 26 thru Sept. 30, 2007. Please mark down these dates now. The Hilton Springfield Hotel in Springfield, Virginia will be our headquarters.

The hotel is located 10 miles south of Washington, just minutes from the Capitol, White house, Washington Monument and Smithsonian Museums, including the Air and Space Museum. It is 10 miles from Washington Reagan

National Airport and is directly across the street from the Springfield Mall and close to Mt. Vernon. Complimentary transportation is provided to the Springfield/Franconia Metro, just one half mile from the hotel.

Hilton Springfield Hotel
6550 Loisdale Road
Springfield, VA 22150-1801
Tel: 1-800-717-3691

September 26 - 30, 2007
SEE YOU THERE!

Obituaries

Everett E. “Bob” Roberts -

On Wednesday, February 14, 2007, our Executive Officer, Bob Roberts died at his daughter's home, following a long illness.

He was assigned to the USS Indianapolis upon his graduation from the US Naval Academy in 1940. The Indianapolis was conducting Marine Landing Drills at Johnson Atoll at the time Pearl Harbor was attacked. Following that tour of duty, he was assigned as Executive Officer of DE 413. Following the war, he continued his naval service and retired with the rank of Captain.

George E. Bray -

Shipmate George Bray died of pneumonia on April 10, 2007 following a fall and broken hip. He had recently moved from Montgomery Alabama to Jacksonville, Florida to be with his daughter Allicia Briant.

If ever there was a story teller, it was George. We will always remember his stories of life aboard the Sammy B. Just the mention of Kool Aid brings back fond memories. Reunions, bus trips, dinners and hospitality rooms were all settings for George to share his memories of the good things that happened aboard ship.

We will miss you both as you sail on that last voyage to your final resting place in God's heaven. We wish you fair winds and following seas.

“Family” News

Tom Stevenson -

Following a series of serious mishaps and illnesses including broken hip and replacement, breathing problems and finally a rare type of staph infection, Tom is very much on the mend, feeling much better, chasing the little

white ball and trying not to trip over his “best(?) friend” Daisy. A major concern is that it may be a while before we hear “Oh have you seen the muffin man?” sung properly in the Hospitality Room.

Billie LeClercq

Billie LeClercq is finally making some recovery, slow but sure, following a broken pelvis. She was hospitalized for quite a while but is now home, much to her and Bob’s delight. The biggest concern was (and is) the extreme pain that she experienced. She went through the entire lexicon of pain killers and narcotics trying to find something that would work and still leave her in control of her mind. Somewhere between prayer and medical knowledge, she now has relief. We hope to see them in Washington.

Bob Bingaman -

As most of you know, Bob suffered a massive stroke shortly before our reunion in Jacksonville. Since then, he had made remarkable progress and was at home. working on his speech and walking with excellent prognosis. Through all this, Norma had her share of problems with heart blockage and placement of stents. I have just learned that in April he fell in the parking lot of his rehab center and suffered a broken clavicle. he is currently in a hospital but will soon move to a new neuro rehab center. He is in good spirits but in a lot of pain when he is up. Your continued prayers will be greatly appreciated. We wish them both well and hope also that they can be with us in Washington.

Sam Blue -

This has not been the best year for Sam. He has been in and out of the hospital several times but he says that he and Louise are coping with much help from God and their family.

Esther and Bill Wilson -

We join in mourning the loss of their grandchild. He was the son of Bill and Rhonda Wilson who were with us at the Jacksonville Reunion last year. Our prayers go to all the family.

Fort Rosecrans Monument

As you will recall from the last *Newsletter*, our fellow survivors of the Battle off Samar from the destroyers Hoel and Johnston voted at their last meeting to leave the monument “as is” and neither add a bronze plaque with names nor attempt to paint the names. This was their decision and although we did not necessarily agree, we respect their decision.

The Samuel B. Roberts Association, however, had solicited donations for the bronze plaques, similar to those placed on Gambier Bay and St. Lo Monuments, and raised more than our goal. We received donations from various interested groups such as VFW posts, American Legion and other groups as well as our own members and friends. These donations totaled \$10,505 for which we thank you all sincerely.

Following the decision of the USS Johnston - USS Hoel Association, we explored the possibilities with the officials of The Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery, and explained our situation. They were completely responsive to our plan of placing a bronze plaque over the names of our fallen shipmates on the Monument and gave us their full approval to proceed.

Accordingly, with unanimous approval of our Board of Directors, I contacted the firm of Seaman-Poe who have done the above named bronze plaques as well as having been responsible for the original Monument. A contract has been signed, payment made and the work is under way. It should be completed in eight to ten weeks.

Plans for the formal dedication of this plaque are still to be decided and will be the first item of business at our reunion in Washington D.C. this coming September. We can now rest assured that the names of our shipmates who gave their lives will ever be present for those who come to view, to mourn, to praise and to remember those gallant heroes.

Our shipmate, John E. “Red” Harrington wrote and read the following at the Dedication of the Memorial.

The Thing That We Feared

“We remembered “Band of Brothers” forever on watch below would not be forgotten in passing of time. These are the things we now know.”

Acknowledgment

The Board of Directors of the Samuel B. Roberts Survivors Association would like to thank the following individuals and organizations for their donations to the fund to place a bronze plaque with the names of our shipmates on the Monument at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery.

Ed Wheaton, Elbert & Mable Gentry, Adred C. Lenoir,

Herbert M. Bridge, Elizabeth M. King,
Mark Hovander, Mel & Leona Harden, Glenn & JoAnn Huffman, Dick &
Helen Rohde, Bob & Billie LeClercq, Jim Hornfischer, Rosemary Dyke, William
A. Rogers, Jr., Audrey Berg, Fred Strehle, Leah B. Felt, Robert E. Olson, Courtney
Vaughan, Robert R. Brennan, David L. Sears, Dudley Moylan, Wiley E. Fields, Ralph
DeSantis, Jr., Sam & Louise Blue, Madeline M. & Morris V. Dadd, Nancy Grove, John
Wukovits, Weininger Foundation Tom & Virginia Stevenson, John &
Susan Walsh, Linda DeCubellis Huttzell, Maggie Hayes, Nancy Hawkins, Frank
Kupidlowski, Lillian Brodsky, P.E.A.C.E Inc., VFW Mt. Pocono Post 3448, Bud
and Lil Comet, Susan F. Weaver, Robert W. Denny, Patti Hedgeman, Barbara Gould,
Bob Roberts, Bill & Esther Wilson, Richard Brescher, Ann Natter, Linda Hardin,
Matthew McPartland, Denise Riggi, VFW 3448 Associate Members, Ned Bagley.

If there are errors of omission or misspelling, please inform the editor and corrections will be noted in a future letter.

I would like to thank Bob LeClercq for his time and effort expended in this effort and for his discussions with the National Museum of the Pacific War (Nimitz Museum) as we explored the possibility of a Memorial to our shipmates in that fine facility.

Thanks also to Admiral Grojean for his time, patience and understanding and for the remarkable leadership he has shown in making this Museum what it is today. Well Done!

The Spirit of the Sammy B

This book was written by Rear Admiral Robert W. Copeland with Jack E. O'Neill in the early 1950s and chronicles the brief history of the USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS, DE 413, known affectionately by its crew as "The Sammy B". It begins on March 4, 1944 when Lieutenant Commander Robert W. Copeland reported to The Brown Shipbuilding Company in Houston, Texas with orders to take command of the above named destroyer escort, then under construction and follows the ship from commissioning on April 28, 1944 to its final descent into the deep on October 25, 1944.

To my knowledge, the first printing was in 1982 at the time of the commissioning of USS COPELAND, FFG 25. The CO of the COPELAND, CDR Chip Seymour distributed them to crew members and dignitaries involved in the commissioning and also to the known survivors at that time. There were later printings which were sold to interested family members and friends. Shipmate Whit Felt, and later his widow Leah were most generous in making the printings possible. It was also available for viewing on the excellent website <www.bosamar.com> by Robert Jon Cox whose great uncle, Virgil Cox, was a survivor of the sinking of the Gambier Bay.

The latest edition, which includes an index and glossary of naval terms used, is now available on line at the following website address:

www.lulu.com/content/235241

The cost is \$9.99 plus shipping . I also have some copies at home for those of you who are not yet comfortable with those newfangled computers. Just drop me a note or give me a call and I'll be happy to sell you as many as you want.

You might be interested in knowing that since the book has been available via the internet, we have sold sixteen copies.



Speaking of Books

It is amazing to me just how many emails I receive from people who have heard about our ship and the other ships of Taffy 3. The comments are usually in response to their having read one of the books or seen one of the television shows about the exploits of the Hoel, Johnston and Samuel B. Roberts. They are all complimentary in nature and certainly inspire good feelings about those terrible times back in October 1944.

I just can't help thinking of the days, months and years following the battle. Once I arrived in San Francisco aboard the SS Lurline, I was separated from all of my fellow survivors. It was as if they, or I, had just fallen off the face of the earth. I continually looked for any mention of our ship - maybe I would see a reunion notice or perhaps someone looking for shipmates who had served aboard our ship - but nothing. I had joined the American Legion and their magazine was full of such notices but nothing that rang a bell with me. It wasn't until 1982, 38 years later, when my telephone rang one night and there was shipmate Jack Keefe asking if I had served on the Samuel B. Roberts. The miracle had finally happened. The reason - because the USS COPELAND, FFG 25 was to be commissioned.

If men like Henry Doscher, Jim Hornfischer, and David Sears had not researched our history and written their books, the world would probably still not know what went on that morning of October 25 1944. I thank them for getting the word out so that our departed shipmates will now never be forgotten and know that they did not die in vain.

Following is a recent sample of what I am talking about.

"I just finished the book *The Last Stand of the Tin Can Sailors...as a former submariner SSBN 616 Blue Crew 1985-1990, US Navy 1983-1993, I was honored to serve in the tradition of the United States Navy that such fine men as your crew established. Your story was inspirational and I felt obligated to say thank you and God Bless America."*

EMI/SS Richard Wagner

NEWS from FFG 58

“A Year with USS Samuel B. Roberts”

ENS Christy Campbell , Public Affairs Officer

Over the past year, Sailors of USS Samuel B. Roberts have traveled all over the world and completed a wide variety of missions. From training, to inspections, to high priority port visits, to multinational exercises to deployments, the “Sammy B” has carried out her high paced operational schedule with hard work, dedication and professional excellence.

In March 2006, USS Samuel B. Roberts successfully completed Inspection and Survey (INSURV). Only a few months after, in June 2006 she completed SRA and rolled directly into a training cycle ending in September 2006. In August of 2006, the “Sammy B” traveled to Camden, Maine for a high priority port visit. After being honored by hosting the DE413 Survivors Association Reunion in early October, the “Sammy B” spent the rest of October and November participating in Neptune Warrior exercises.

At the start of the new year, the “Sammy B” was chosen to be a part of a History Channel series honoring Hero Ships. The ship was chosen largely due to the heroic efforts of the crews of the Samuel B. Roberts DE 413 and the original crew of FFG 58, who saved the ship from a mine strike. A film crew stayed underway for a week interviewing crew members, filming operations, and experiencing the “Sammy B” way of life. The History Channel special on Hero Ships is scheduled to air in the fall of 2007.

In February 2007, the Samuel B. Roberts was chosen to be the guest of the city of Mobile, Ala. for Mardi Gras celebrations. The Sailors of the “Sammy B” were treated like royalty as they attended traditional Mardi Gras Coronation balls, marched in parades, attended ceremonies and enjoyed the week of festivities.

On March 28, 2007, USS Samuel B. Roberts along with Chilean Ship Almirante Latorre left on Partnership for the Americas deployment to South America. After completing a port visit in Fort de France, Martinique, the Roberts and Latorre commenced exercises with Standing NATO Maritime Group One. Stopping briefly in Salvador, Brazil, the two ships then met up with USS Pearl Harbor (LSD 52) and USS Mitscher (DDG 57) as well as ships from Brazil, Spain and Argentina to participate in UNITAS Atlantic 2007. Meeting first in Puerto Belgrano, Argentina, the ships planned a coordinated week of multifaceted training exercises culminating with a three day final battle problem in which the ships were split into two teams and simulated a high intensity, multi national threat environment.

UNITAS 2007 was a great success operationally. However, the sailors of USS Samuel B. Roberts left the exercises with more than just operational training. During the exercises, sailors from all ships had the opportunity to transfer to other ships and experience their counterpart’s way of life. Sailors from all countries participated in community service projects, conducted training seminars and even interacted socially at different receptions and ceremonies.

The year has been a busy, and the Roberts has sailed thousands of miles from Jacksonville Fl to Cape Wraith, Scotland to Bahia Blanco, Argentina. Partnership for the Americas is a deployment focused on engagement (military to military and military to civilian) and it affords the crew of “Sammy B” the opportunity to accentuate positive military reinforcement through developing cooperative relationship with the navies and citizens of our South American partners. This summer, the “Sammy B” will continue on with the Partnership for the Americas deployment, and her sailors remain

committed to our mission remain excited about the experiences to come.

A Note from Alicia Briant and Family -

Dear Sammy B. Shipmates,

I received the letter regarding a gift given in Daddy's name for the Memorial Museum. Daddy would have liked that. Thank you too for the beautiful flower arrangement, it added to the beauty surrounding Daddy's farewell.

All of your cards and letters and well wishes were greatly appreciated.

Oh, how I miss him.

Steve and I are going to try to come to Washington in Oct. It would mean a lot to me to be there. You all are a wonderful family that I have grown to love.

God Bless You,

Alicia Briant and family

**Officers and Directors
Samuel B. Roberts
Survivors Association**

Dudley Moylan, Chairman

Bob LeClercq, Director

Sam Stewart, Director

Bill Wilson, Director

John Walsh, Director

Mel Harden, Co-Treasurer

Dick Rohde, Co-Treasurer

Reunion Information

As previously mentioned, the hotel is:

Hilton Springfield

6550 Loisdale Road

Springfield, VA 22150-1801

Tel: 800-717-3691

Website: www.springfieldva.hilton.com

Reunion Dates - 9/26 thru 9/30/07

The room rate will be \$139.00 per day plus state tax of 9%, for total of \$148.60. When making your reservation (ASAP) be sure to mention "Samuel B.

Roberts Survivors Ass'n.”. If you plan on arriving earlier than Sept. 26 or staying for a few days following, be sure to check the rates for those days. The above room rate includes two buffet breakfast tickets per day.

Sam Stewart has been working diligently to arrange for the hotel and for the tours and has spent a lot of time in the area looking for the best deal. Certainly there are other hotels that are less expensive but this one seems to best fit all of our needs.

If you are flying, Reagan National Airport is the closest, 10 miles away. The hotel does not provide shuttle service to or from the airport. Cabs and super-shuttles available.

If you are driving.

From the North: Take I-395 South to exit ramp 1-B Springfield. Take exit 169-A, Franconia Road. Take the first right at the stoplight onto Loisdale Road. Turn right into the Hilton parking lot at the Hilton sign and follow directional signs to the entrance.

From the South: From the US Interstate Highway I-95 North, take Exit 169A, Franconia Road (Route 644 East). At the first stop light make a left onto Loisdale Road. Turn into Hilton parking lot.

There is self parking - complimentary.

Facility: Houlihan’s restaurant is available for all meals, every day. There is an indoor heated pool with outside sun deck. All the usual hotel amenities are available in the beautifully appointed guest rooms. **Make your reservations now.**

Itinerary: (Subject to possible change)

- | | |
|-----------|--|
| Wed. 9/26 | Registration
Hospitality Room open |
| Thu. 9/27 | Memorial Service at Navy Memorial
Tour of World War II Memorial
Business Meeting in afternoon.
Hospitality Room open. |
| Fri. 9/28 | Tour of Arlington Nat’l. Cemetery
Tour of Mount Vernon, incl. lunch
Hospitality Room Open |
| Sat. 9/29 | Free during day.
Closing banquet at Hotel |

Hospitality Room open

Sun. 9/30 Farewell Breakfast

We look forward to seeing as many of you as possible. The Washington area has many places to visit such as The Smithsonian, National Cathedral, Viet Nam Wall, Lincoln and Jefferson Memorials, river cruises and many others. Sam Stewart has information and will be happy to share with you as well as help in getting groups together for the free times.

Please don't delay. Make your hotel reservations now and complete registration form.



SAMUEL B. ROBERTS SURVIVORS ASSOCIATION

Reunion, Washington D.C., September 26-30 2007

Please mail completed form by August 27, 2007 to:

Richard K. Rohde
9045 SW 91st Circle
Ocala, FL 34481-8404

Make check payable to: SBR Survivors Association

PLEASE PRINT THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION

Your Name _____

Partner's Name _____

Guest # 1 _____

Guest # 2 _____

Guest # 3 _____

Guest # 4 _____

	A	B	C	D	E
1	Date	Event	How Many	Price	Tot
2	Wed Sept 26	Registration Fee per person (No charge under age 16)		20.00	
3					
4	Thu Sept 27	Bus trip to Navy Memorial & World War II Memorial		35.00	
5					
6	Fri Sept 28	Bus tour to Arlington Nat'l Cemetery and		65.00	
7		Tour of Mt. Vernon includes luncheon at Mt. Vernon Inn			
8					
9	Sat Sept 29	Closing Banquet - Oven Roasted Sirloin of Beef OR		40.00	
10		Closing Banquet - Sautéd Chicken Portabella OR		40.00	
11		Closing Banquet -Broiled Tilapia with Dill Sauce		40.00	
12					
13	Sun Sept 30	Farewell Buffet Breakfast		15.00	
14					
15		I am enclosing my dues for 2007, suggested \$15			
16					
17					
18		TOTAL			
19					

My check for \$ _____ is enclosed.

Name: _____

Street Address: _____