



# Scuttlebutt

A quarterly publication of the USS Samuel B. Roberts (DD-823) Shimates Association



Volume 17, Number 4

December 2018



Another year is almost entered in the ship's log and each of us is a little older. Our lives have taken us in many directions but we all share the commonality of our time on the Samuel B. Roberts (DD-823) and this year we get to relive great memories at our biennial reunion in the Annapolis, MD area.

This issue will have some of the normal columns from our talented contributors. It will also contain complete details of our Annapolis get-together along with a registration form. A 2019 dues reminder (they have increased slightly this year), a short remembrance of one of our XO's, Rod Stewart, and some surprises.

I wish to all of you, regardless of beliefs, the happiest of Holiday seasons.



# Honor Roll



*We Remember*

**Add names**

**Frank Kopfer 58-60**

**Joseph Shifton 48-49**

**Rod Stewart (XO) 64-65**

## From Our President

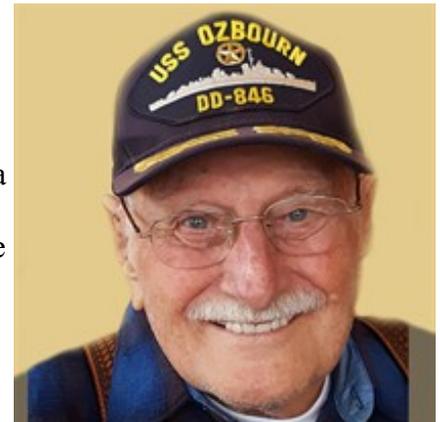
I am in an autumn frame of mind. The days are getting shorter and the chill reminds me of Newport after summer. We know what's ahead – the coldest place on earth – the quarterdeck jutting out into Narragansett Bay with a determined north wind – low steam pressure from the destroyer piers. You know the feeling.

The autumn brings to mind the three shipmates we have lost since the last issue of the Scuttlebutt. They remind me why we do reunions – Frank Kopfer, Joseph Shifton, and Rod Stewart. I did not have the pleasure of meeting Joe Shiton but Frank made the Washington/Dulles 2015 reunion among many others but missed Newport and Rod could not be coaxed into Newport by John White. Age and illness stepped in.



LCDR R. L. Stewart

Frank and I broke bread together in DC. We enjoyed our banquet dinner. It was the first time I got to talk to Frank and I looked forward to seeing him again in Newport. We served on the Roberts at different times and had different jobs aboard. When Frank was leaving the Navy, I was entering. Only after the DC reunion did I find his comment in the SBR “Muster Book – 1945-1971.” It was about a three day liberty in 1960. “April in Paris celebrating my 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. We could have had a great conversation about that.



I knew Rod well as my XO, but again those two enemies, age and illness, stopped him from joining us. That would have been a blast. If you knew Rod, you'd know what to expect – fun, laughs, that booming voice, and sea stories. All that brings me to reunions. See what were working on for October, 2019 and try to be there. You may meet some shipmate from a different era that you never met before and you'll see why we get together before Father Time plays his cards.

## On the Scope

Greetings fellow shipmates! By the time you receive this “Scuttlebutt”, Thanksgiving will be a memory and you will avidly be anticipating Christmas and New Year's. Let me start by wishing each of you a Merry Christmas and the Happiest of New Year's.

It is truly amazing how fast time goes by. I started thinking about “Father Time” and realized that April will mark 56 years since I stepped off the gang plank of the Roberts for the very last time. It was a day I will never forget, for besides my being discharged, the ship was getting underway on an emergency search and rescue mission looking for USS Thresher (SSN-593). My life, like all of ours, lay ahead and Navy life was being left behind. We still had memories to cherish thinking we could never return. I never thought that all these years later Robert's life and comradeship would still be alive. This however is the case as we sail (metaphorically) through our interactions in the Roberts Shipmates Association. It is a great thing and reliving our days aboard Roberts keeps us young. We are truly lucky to have an association like this.

Final point. In this issue of the “Butt” you will be treated to the efforts of the brass of this organization in their efforts at putting together this coming October's reunion. They worked endlessly putting together an exciting and interesting package. Read about it and make plans to go. “Father Time” waits for no one. Let's beat him at his game by packing our sea bags and preparing to get **UNDERWAY** for the **Reunion!!!**

# Bird Droppings

## It's the Little Things...

Beyond all the sea stories we hear at the reunions, the ports visited, the liberties kept, the friendships forged, we lose sight of what it was like to live aboard ship. Well guys, it's the little things that keep creeping back into one's memory. Not important stuff, mind you, just the day-to-day things we all went through, how it was, what we did, and just some stuff that sorta sticks out. Maybe if your wife reads this article, she'll have a better understanding of what it was like. For instance:

**Eating** - The Navy broke meal time down into three separate functions: Breakfast, Dinner, and Supper. Dinner (which we normally think of as lunch) was the principal meal of the day. Makes sense because you could then work off those calories the rest of the day and maintain your 31" waist and trim 150 pounds. Supper was a bit lighter, and breakfast was always a big deal. Anyway, they were all served on groovy metal trays with compartments. You went through the chow line, then carried your tray to a table which had a raised lip around its perimeter. This was supposed to keep the tray from sliding to the deck in case of foul weather or heavy seas. After eating you dropped your tray in the scullery. Sundays in port were good because there were fresh baked biscuits and eggs the way you liked them.

**Sleeping** - Ah, the good old rack system. 3 or maybe 4 aluminum frames with a canvas pad laced into each and all stacked up on top of each other with maybe a 36" separation between each rack. Between you and the canvas pad was a 3" thick mattress covered by a fart sack. The fart sack totally enclosed your mattress, which was a few inches thick. You also had a blanket and a pillow.

**Reville** - Normally at 6 AM each morning. No need for alarm clocks, this morning greeting was broadcast throughout the ship and began with "heave out and trice up (trice, what the heck does that mean?) Well, after 60 years I looked it up and "trice" means to haul up bedding by means of ropes. From here, you hit the head. Flip flops and wrap around towels. A short climb up the ladder, short showers, a quick shave, brush your teeth, either use the urinal or sit on the slats with moving water beneath you.

**Other tidbits** - Keys on a belt snap. The more keys you had the more important you were. Unless you had NO keys, then you were really important. Red lights in the passageways. The payday queue. Laundry and clothes cleaning ( you dumped your dirty stuff in a big bag that was then hauled to the ships laundry, washed, then returned in the same big bag to be sorted out.) The smoking lamp, Suffice it to say that the bottom of all the oceans are littered with cigarette butts from all the Roberts guys who e'er sailed the seven seas. The language. No, I don't mean the colorful language of a sailor, I mean things like decks, bulkheads, overhead, ladders, head, gangway, chow, bow stern – all that good stuff you needed to know just to get around (and after all these years, how many of us still call the floor the deck?)

**Tattoos** - Its almost laughable that back then getting a tattoo was almost exclusively a sailor thing and that there was some anguish involved as to whether you wanted to mark yourself up permanently or not. Today, not so much. A lot of people could get a job in a circus, and as many women have tattoos as men, and they are big (the tats not the women!)

One more thing – I think that a typesetter gremlin got into the last issue of the Scuttlebutt – and just so's you know, the California wildfires were one hundred miles from our place, not one thousand (that would have put them in Kansas, or North Dakota, or someplace but not around here.)

And one last item. Recall the Christmas dinners we had aboard, complete with a printed menu and a Charlie Brown Christmas tree in the corner of the mess deck. As you recall them, know that you are wished a blessed and very merry Christmas.

*Don Eagle*

**USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc.  
13<sup>th</sup> Biennial Reunion  
Annapolis-Baltimore-DC**

**September 30-October 4, 2019**

**Venue – Holiday Inn Columbia/East Jessup, MD 20794**

**Monday – Sept. 30 – Reunion registration in Hospitality Suite beginning at noon  
- Welcome Buffet in hotel banquet room starting at 6:00 PM**

**Tuesday – Oct. 1 – Tour to US Naval Academy/Annapolis waterfront/historic  
Annapolis leaving at 9:00 AM, Lunch on members. Returning  
approx. 3:30 PM – Evening free**

**Wednesday – Oct. 2 – Tour of Baltimore/lunch on members at Baltimore Inner  
Harbor, Baltimore. Harbor cruise. Leaving at 9:00 AM,  
returning approx. 3:30 PM. Auction and business meeting  
in evening.**

**Thursday – Oct. 3 - Bus leaves at 8:30 AM to the US Navy Memorial where  
plaque will be dedicated to USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823).  
Memorial Service will probably occur at this time. Lunch on  
members. Bus returns approx. 2:30 PM**

**Reunion banquet beginning at 6:00 PM. An effort is being  
made to secure entertainment.**

**Friday – Oct. 4 – Reunion concludes, members depart.**

**This is shaping up to be a dynamite reunion. The hotel rate is very favorable with full  
breakfast included each day. The tours will be fun but not overtaxing, and the food  
should be tasty and plentiful. A highlight will be the dedication of a plaque recognizing  
the contribution of the DD-823 to the Navy and the country. Of course, the best part of  
the reunion will be mixing with others who shared our lives aboard the Sammy B.**

# 2019 USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc. Reunion

**Venue** – Our headquarters for the reunion will be the Holiday Inn Columbia East Jessup at 7900 Washington Blvd, Jessup, MD 20794. It is very highly rated with a well regarded in-house restaurant. Room rate will be \$89 per night for 2 double beds or \$95 per night for a king room. A full breakfast is included each day in the rate. Rooms can be reserved by calling (410) 799-7500. Make sure you get the Samuel B Roberts rate. Any one coming in early needs to request a shoulder date and will be given a separate reservation but with all rates the same. Check in time is 3:00 PM.

I ask that you reserve early. Rates are only guaranteed until 60 days before the reunion. Thereafter, it is room availability and pricing. A hotel shuttlebus is available for hotel pick-up and local transport.

## Monday, September 30, 2019

Kickoff on Monday will be at noon with the opening of the hospitality room and the manning of the registration desk. Renewing old acquaintances and forging new ones is the plan-of-the-day for the afternoon. A few snacks and a libation or two might also be in the offing. At 6:00 PM, we will meet in the banquet room for a cash bar happy hour and at 7:00 PM we will dig into our Welcoming Buffet.

The buffet will include roast Turkey, shrimp scampi, and grilled London broil with green salad, mashed potatoes, gravy, rice pilaf, rolls, and coffee or tea. Cost of the buffet is \$52 per person and the price includes tax and gratuity. There will be opening remarks, but by who, I have no clue.

The hospitality room will be open following the banquet. It will close at midnight.

## Tuesday, October 1, 2019

Day will start with breakfast in the hotel restaurant. It is a full breakfast and is included as part of your room rate.

Tour bus will depart from the hotel at 9:00 AM with a destination of US Naval Academy and Annapolis, MD. Cost of tour will be \$48 per person.



We will enter USNA by gate 3 at about 10:00AM for a 1 ½ hour easy, fully guided walking tour through the Academy campus. If the cadets are mustering for lunch before we leave, will stay to view this striking event. The main hall, chapel, athletic facilities, many other buildings, and the museum are included in the tour. A picture drivers license is required for entry and an additional picture ID is required for certain midwest states. Please check if from the midwest. The tour will conclude at the main gate at 11:30 AM/12:15 PM and just outside the gate is the historic waterfront with great dining and shopping.

## 2019 USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc. Reunion

We will have until 2:00 PM to enjoy lunch, shopping and sightseeing. At two we will need to board our bus for a fully guided, one hour tour of historic Annapolis. The bus will meet us at the **84 College Ave. Bus Kiosk**, a couple of blocks from the waterfront. A tour guide will then lead us through the historic city



while we relax in the comfort of our motor coach. The city tour will conclude about 3:00 PM and we should be back to the hotel at approximately 4:00 PM.

The hospitality room will be open. Dinner is on each attendee (it is **not** part of the package). The hotel has a good restaurant (Spurrier's) and there are several fine bistros nearby that will satisfy any craving and that are easily serviced by the hotel's shuttle. Hospitality room will remain open until midnight.

### Wednesday, October 2, 2019

Our day will start in the hotel restaurant with a full breakfast that is included in the room rate.

Tour bus will depart at 9:00 AM for a tour of Baltimore and a cruise on the Inner Harbor. Cost of the day's tour will be \$50.



Our motorized, fully guided tour of Baltimore and surrounds will depart from the Baltimore Visitor Center at 10:00 AM. Included in the morning session is a look at the historic city of Baltimore, its architecture, relevance, and the people and places that set Baltimore apart. Tour will last 2 ½ hours.

The bus will return to the Baltimore Visitor Center by 12:30 PM. The Visitor Center is located in the Inner Harbor. Numerous restaurants, shops and vantage points are available within steps of the bus park area. Members will have their choice of many fine restaurants very nearby but cost is not included in tour.

# 2019 USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc. Reunion

We will board a harbor cruise boat at 1:45 PM for a 1 hour harbor cruise. We will see all the sights afforded



by a busy harbor and do it from a great vantage point for sailors, on the water. The boat will return to the pier at 2:45 PM, and the bus parking area rejoins the pier. Should be back to the hotel by 4:00 PM and the hospitality room will be open. Dinner is again on each guest but there is a varied array of restaurants near the hotel and a shuttle is available to ferry everyone back and forth.

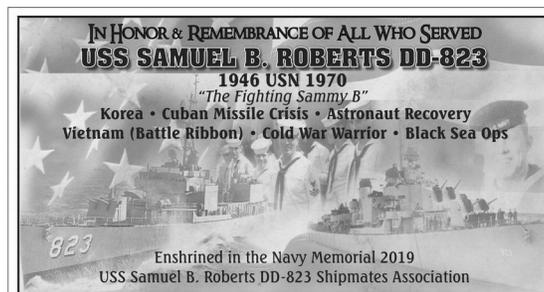


At 7:00 PM, one of the reunion's most looked forward to events will take place in the hospitality room. It is our biennial **auction**. We are fortunate to have a number of witty and talented auctioneers to run this event for us. There are great items to be auctioned and unbelievable laughter as each item falls under the auctioneers hammer. In the past there has been spirited bidding and our treasury has been enriched. Hospitality room will close at midnight.

## Thursday, October 3, 2019

Once again our day starts with a complimentary full breakfast in the hotel's restaurant, following which we will board a bus at 8:30 AM for a trip to the Navy Memorial (see below). This is a special and unique one time only event and is fully explained as follows. Cost for the event is \$30.

*Many of you will recall visits to the US Navy Memorial and having your picture taken next to the "Lone Sailor." At our 2019 reunion, we will have the opportunity to help honor the DD-823 with a special 3.25" x 7" plaque on a special wall within the Memorial.*



# 2019 USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc, Reunion

*Our bus will arrive at 10:00 AM and our visit will begin at 10:15 AM in the theater which seats 230 people. Welcoming remarks from the President and CEO of the Navy Memorial, followed by remarks from SBR Shipmates Association officers and conclude with a special DD-823 video to close the session.*

*Following that, everyone will adjourn to where the commemorative plaque wall is located for the official unveiling of the plaque honoring all who served aboard the 823. Lunch is on your own at one of the fine restaurants directly adjacent to the Navy Memorial. We will board our return bus around 1:00 PM and expect to be back at the hotel by 2:00 PM. Plenty of time to rest up and prepare for the evening's festivities.*

*Our 2019 reunion is one you'll remember for a very special reason...honoring our ship as a living memorial for thousands of visitors in the years ahead. See you in October!*



At around 5:00 PM, we will gather somewhere for group photos. Exact location to be provided at reunion. Happy hour begins at 6:00 PM. As with the past couple of reunions, one of our members has donated \$1,000 to enable an open bar, at least for awhile.

Dinner will be served at 7:00 PM in the hotel's banquet room. We are being offered three choices; Prime rib, chicken picata, or seared salmon. All entrees to be served with Greek salad, asparagus & carrots, mashed red bliss potatoes, rolls, and coffee or tea. Cost of the dinner regardless of selection will be \$45. Association officers will dazzle you with speeches and we may even hear another poem from our Poet Laureate, Ken Giardina.

There is a possibility we may have entertainment this year. The officers are pondering the question but there does not appear to be strong sentiment one way or the other. Let us know your feelings! Following the dinner and apres-diiner shenanigans, the hospitality room will be open until midnight.

## Friday, October 4, 2019

Our final day will begin with a full breakfast in the hotel restaurant. Cost of meal is included in tour room rate. Our regular business meeting will take place around 9:00 AM in the hospitality room. However, if past years are indicative, the business meeting would have occurred after the auction on Wednesday night. Then we will all check out and another great reunion will be in the books.



**2010 Buffalo Reunion**



# Letters to the Sammy B

I am putting together a book for the membership with the above title. Although I have 70 pages complete, I need your help to make the project a success. I am asking that you submit letters to our beloved ship detailing your love for her or an incident that occurred that has remained vivid to you after all the years. If you could, make the letters at least a page and send to me at [jjjo1944@comcast.net](mailto:jjjo1944@comcast.net). Thank you!

*Jim Norton*

## USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmate's Assn. Contacts

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## Ship's Store

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Our Ship's Store is being run by Carol Green. She carries a number of USS Samuel B Roberts items including hats, tees, sweat shirts, hoodies, etc. at very attractive pricing. Contact Carol to order, to get a listing of items carried, or pricing at [cgreen4392@comcast.net](mailto:cgreen4392@comcast.net) or call at (856) 935-4392. Give Carol a call. She will be glad to hear from you and get you your desired Sammy B gear. You can also download an order form on our ship's website at [samuelbroberts.org](http://samuelbroberts.org)

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## Annual Dues

Annual dues are due January 1, 2019. They will be \$15 this year. Send a check made out to the USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Association to Kevin McKeown, 47 Long Beach Drive, Sound Beach, NY 11789-1833. Please notify Kevin of any changes to your personal profile. Dues monies pay for the Scuttlebutt, our web-site, Facebook page and incidental Association expenses. Please mail in your dues as early as possible.



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*Shipmates Association*

*USS Samuel B. Roberts (DD823)*

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