

Scuttlebutt

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

Volume 17, Number 2

June 2018



Spring has brought pleasant weather to most of us and summer holds the promise of enjoyable outdoor activities with family and friends. There was a time when we had our own cruise ship and navigated the world's sea ways while enjoying exotic foreign ports, cooling sea breezes, and the best cruise mates anywhere. One of the purposes of the USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Association is to rekindle the memories of that time and reinforce friendships with shipmates, regardless of years served.

In this issue we have articles from our usual contributors, some good news about next years reunion, a look at Desron 24, Vietnam medal many don't know about, the oft delayed license/tag holder feature, and surprises. I sincerely hope you enjoy and strongly urge you to send material for future Scuttlebutt issues.



Vietnam – 1964/66

Honor Roll

Add name

Edgar LaFrance (51-54)

Correct name

Jerry K. Eva (Unknown)
to: Larry K. Eva (58-62)

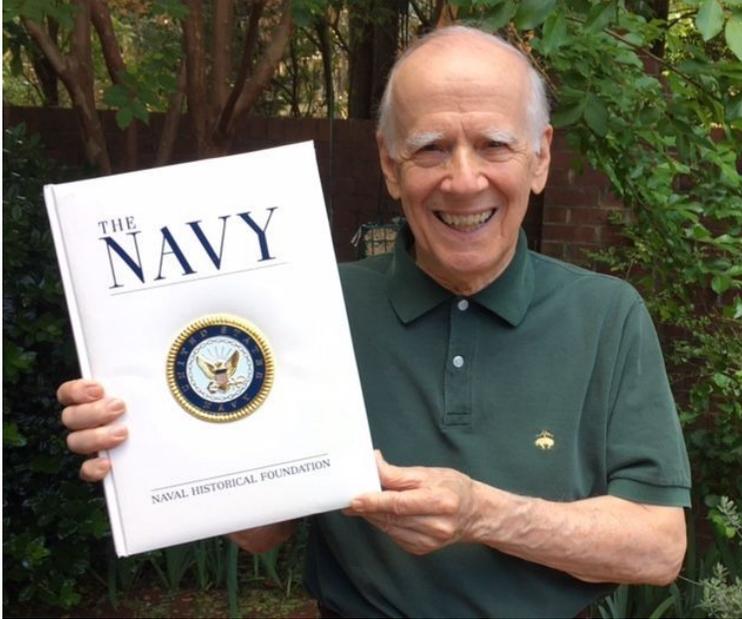
Add dates for Barry Craig (65-67)

Correct name

Warren A. McFarland
to: Orrin A. McFarland

From Our President

We are moving along on our 2019 reunion scheduled for September 30 through October 3, 2019. Our plan is to meet at the Holiday Inn Columbia, East-Jessup which is located a heaving line throw from the Baltimore-Washington International Airport (BWI). Jim Norton,



Kevin McKeown, and I worked out the details and are satisfied we got the best deal for our association. Our plans for Annapolis remain and the town and the US Naval Academy will be an easy bus tour on one of our days. More to follow.

In our last Scuttlebutt, there are two small items needing correction. In my remarks, I mentioned the book Ralph Senk gave to his two grandsons, Kieran and Conor Senk. I had the wrong title and I owe Helen Senk an apology. Her description was perfect and now I have found my copy. To the left is a photo to help. Some of you may remember that the association

Our President Jim Antenucci with the Navy Book
made copies available to members attending the 2009 reunion. The title is The Navy. It was compiled by the Naval Historical Foundation and published by Barnes and Noble in 2004.

The second correction is on page 9 of the March, 2018 Scuttlebutt. Ralph's grandson is Kieran, not Kiernan. We all like our names spelled correctly.

I loved seeing more photos in the last Scuttlebutt of the members, wives, and friends at the 2017 Newport reunion. They are fun to see and I wish we had more. Thanks, Jim Norton, for the spread. There's one guy you may not know unless you were there. Pictured with Mike Cipolla is Harry Winthrop, Mayor of Newport. He stopped by to welcome us, say a few words, take some questions, and proudly display his great handlebar moustache.

Have a great Summer!

Jim Antenucci

Just a friendly reminder to anyone who has forgotten to pay their Roberts Association dues as yet. They are \$10 per year and your check should be sent to Kevin McKeown, 47 Long Beach Drive, Sound Beach, NY 11789.

Bird Droppings

By Don Eagle

Time flies

It seems incredible that this issue of the Scuttlebutt marks the 16th year that this thing has been published. Frank Green and I put out our first edition in 2002, immediately following the first Newport reunion. There were 9 shipmates listed in the obituary column.

This paper, published quarterly, was focused on providing Association news, news about members, upcoming reunions, interesting stories, and of course, a listing of, and special salute to crew members who have gone before.

Frank took over editorship in 2009, and I devoted full time to being your Association President. Frank did a fantastic job of delivering a superb newsletter until his death in 2015. In these intervening years we became close friends, even though we didn't know each other when we served aboard the Roberts. Just goes to show you that friendships cross Time-in-Service lines when you go to reunions.

At any rate, when Frank passed, Jim Norton picked up where Frank left off and has been doing an admirable job in cranking out interesting and informative "Scuttlebutts" ever since. Well done Jim! To commemorate this 16th anniversary of publication, I thought it would be interesting to present a few excerpts from the very first edition:

From Captain Ray Ward: "Perhaps one of the most notable guys who ever served aboard the Roberts was Bill Fitzgerald. Bill served aboard the Roberts as a Seaman in 1957. He was recognized for his outstanding commitment to the Navy, and was offered a fleet appointment to the U.S. Naval Academy at Annapolis. Lt. William C. Fitzgerald was a true hero. He was presented with the Navy Cross posthumously for extraordinary heroism on August 7, 1967. In January 1994, the U.S. Navy launched DDG 62 in Bath, Maine. The name of the new ship was the USS William C. Fitzgerald."

From Frank Green: "As I journey back to the years of boundless energy, a 30 something inch waist, hair and remarkable recuperative powers, it gives me a deep and patriotic feeling of pride to have done my small part as a "tin can sailor." As more years accumulate, the deeper my sense of pride grows."
"Without a doubt, the finest, most outstanding moment of my entire reunion was when we were leaving the Newport Naval base and the two sailors at the guard shack – one of them being a female – saluted as we left. I don't ever remember being as proud as at that instant. The picture of their smiles and salutes are now part of me. May our Navy always have a future."

From Don Eagle: (at the Newport Reunion) "That night we really had a fine banquet at the Officer's Club at the base and heard the very uplifting and poignant remarks of our guest speaker, Commander John Nolan. Pictures were taken and unbeknownst to the good Commander Nolan, nearly everyone tried on his hat in the foyer during the picture taking session." (Even after all these years, I recall that Cdr. Nolan addressed his remarks to the aftermath of 9-11 and the loss of friends that served in the Pentagon – a very moving talk).

God Bless;

Don

From our Webmaster



Operating with the USS Bainbridge (DLGN-25/CGN-25), the Sammy B. along with USS Barry (DD-933), and USS Enterprise (CVN-65) formed the first nuclear powered task force to see combat in 1965.

During our deployment in Vietnam 1965-66, one of the most interesting and potentially dangerous missions was working with the Bainbridge in the Tonkin Gulf.

The Bainbridge was a nuclear powered, guided missile frigate with surface to air missiles and helicopter on the fantail.

Our mission with Bainbridge was search and rescue operations for the recovery of downed pilots who might be forced to ditch their aircraft in the Gulf.

No 5" 38s

Part of the Samuel B Roberts mission was not only to help in the search for downed pilots but also help protect the Bainbridge. That potential opportunity came soon enough.

I was on watch in Combat Information Center when we spotted three high speed patrol boats closing on us on radar. We went to general quarters in a matter of seconds and went into maneuvers for a potential attack.

Several agonizing minutes went by before they were identified as friendly.

One "NAM" memory I'll never forget!

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Tony Zwick".



No Smoke Stacks



Bainbridge Rescue Chopper on Fantail



On the Scope

Recently I had the honor of having the speech that I gave at our Newport Reunion published on our website for all to see. I am very humbled to think that people thought it worthy of being so displayed and I thank our President for doing that. After seeing it on the website I started thinking just how it came to be that over the past several reunions, I have wound up delivering a speech each time. Well, I remember attending my very first reunion and welcoming dinner at Virginia Beach. It was there that I heard Don Eagle delivering the opening talk. Being a sentimentalist at heart, I immediately started recalling things personal to me while Don talked about the Roberts. As he continued, many memories came alive once more. Being a grown man, I tried to conceal my emotions by coughing and reaching for a napkin to stifle a non-existent sneeze. I was actually wiping a few tears from my face. The whole experience was sad and uplifting at the same time. After all this time, I started to think about my days on the Roberts. I left that reunion forever grateful for having attended. As the next reunion started to take shape, I decided I wanted to create a piece for Don to read. After working on it for some length of time, I presented it to Don and asked if he would like to read it. Don read the work and suggested that I be the one to read it. Thus, in October 2005, my unplanned adventure began. Included below is my first attempt for Scuttlebutt. Much of what I have to say is borrowed from writings and poems already out there. I just reinterpret them with some of my feelings and associations on the Roberts.

I was a Sailor Once

*It was oh, so long ago, and I so young, yet it seem like yesterday.`
The seas, the friends, the ports of all, memories, that in me will ever stay.
Yes, I was a sailor once.
I liked standing on the bridge wing at sunrise with salt spray in my face.
I liked the sounds of the Navy: the shrill of the boatswain's pipe,
The clang of the ship's bell on the quarterdeck,
The strong language and laughter of sailors at work.
I liked the proud names of Navy ships: Midway, Lexington, Coral Sea, Antietam,
Memorials of great battles won and tribulations overcome.
I liked the lean angular names of the Navy "Tin Cans" like Sherman, Decatur,
The Sullivan's, especially Roberts. All heroes who went before us.
I liked liberty call and the spicy scent of a foreign port..
I even liked all-hands working parties as my ship filled herself
With the supplies and cut ties to the land to carry out our mission.
I like sailors, officers and enlisted from all parts of the land, farms of the Midwest,
Small towns of New England, big cities and all walks of life.
I trusted and depended on them as they depended on me.
For friendship, strength, courage. They were my shipmates.
Then...Now...and Forever.
I especially liked that one person whom I called my buddy,
Sharing experiences with him that will last a lifetime.
I liked the thrill of hearing; **"Now hear this! Station the special sea and anchor detail.
All hands to quarters for leaving port."**
I loved the thrill of sighting home again,
Knowing I would soon see family and friends.
I liked steaming alongside aircraft carriers,
Once named for battles won but sadly now for politicians.
Enterprise, Independence, Princeton,*

Oh so many more. Some lost in battle and many sadly scrapped.
 I liked the excitement of an alongside replenishment,
 The cry **“Standby to receive shotlines”** I liked the rigging span wires,
 The fuel hoses across the narrow gap of water between ships.
 I welcomed mail, fresh milk, and new movies.
 I liked the serenity of the sea after a hard day’s work,
 flying fish flitting across wave tops as sunset gave way to night.
 I liked the challenge of getting fore to aft,
 Through open midships during heavy seas.
 I enjoyed the feeling of being in another place when our ship in heavy seas
 Rode to the bottom of a large swell,
 And the amazement of rising to the top again and seeing a carrier off our port bow.
 I liked the quiet mid-watches with the aroma of strong coffee,
 The lifeblood of the Navy.
 I liked the cry of “I’ll fly if you buy”
 When the gee dunk wagon was on the pier.
 I liked when asked by newly arrived shipmates,
 “Can you help me find the elusive keys to the oar locks.
 I liked the sudden electricity of:
“General Quarters! General Quarters!”
All hands man your Battle Stations!”
 Followed by running feet on ladders and the sound of watertight doors being dogged down.
 As the ship transformed itself in a few brief seconds
 From peaceful home to weapon of war.
 I liked Christmas in port when guns of war became colorful candles,
 Shining brightly in the night.
 I liked the traditions of the Navy and the men who made them.
 Proud names of Navy heroes: Halsey, Nimitz, Perry, Farragut and John Paul Jones.
 I like the uniform, unlike any other, bell bottoms, dress blues and ever stiff whites.
 They made a sailor stand out.
 A sailor could find much in the Navy...Comrades-in-arms, pride in self and country,
 Mastery of the seaman’s trade...A boy could find manhood.
 In the tears that have come to pass, us sailors are home from the sea,
 But still remember with fondness and respect, the ocean in all her moods;
 The impossible shimmering mirror of calm,
 Sand storm-tossed green water surging over the bow.
 There will come again a faint smell of stack gas, a faint echo of an engine,
 A vision of the bright bunting of the signal flags snapping at the yard arm,
 A refrain of hearty laughter in the wardroom, the chief’s quarters and the mess deck.
 Now, ashore for good, we grow humble about our Navy days,
 Fondly recalling when the seas were part of us,
 When each new port-of-call was ever over the horizon.
 Remembering this, I stand taller and proudly proclaim:
“I Was a Sailor Once.”
 Thanks for letting me reminisce. You know what!
“I Am Still a Sailor.”



Ken Spaidina

We Remember

Many of us treasure memorabilia from our days aboard the Sammy B and like seeing the treasures our shipmates have amassed. We even wear our memories in the form of hats and shirts sporting the proud name. A few of us carry that pride over to our cars and reference it on our tags and tag holders. Examples:



Ken Giardina



Ken Harrod



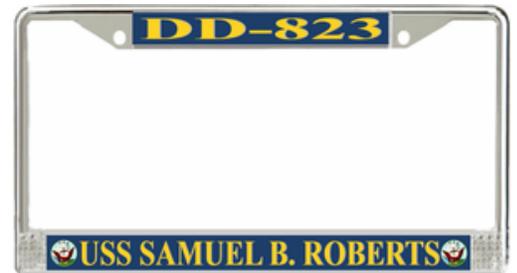
Nine Fingers



Rich Allwelt



Dave Garavano



Frank Paradiso

2019 Annapolis Reunion

We have concluded an agreement with the Holiday Inn, Columbia-East Jessup, MD for them to host our Sept. 30 – Oct. 4, 2019 Annapolis reunion. The hotel is a modern facility and is very convenient to BWI Airport. It runs a continuous free shuttle between the hotel and the airport. It also provides free shuttle service in the area. Room rate is \$89 per night and that includes a complimentary full breakfast each morning. All the amenities we have come to expect will be available including a fully stocked hospitality room, wifi, pool, and a full-service, on-site restaurant.

The banquet menus are currently being evaluated and will be finalized shortly. We will start evaluating tour options during the coming month. Anyone with tour preferences in the Annapolis, Baltimore, DC area, please make them known to Jim Norton at jijo1944@comcast.net. We will endeavor to make them reality.

Complete details and registration information will be included in the December issue of this newsletter. This reunion has the potential to be another great one rivaling even Newport. Start making your plans to attend. Everyone is looking forward to seeing you. I know I am!

Jim Norton

Awards

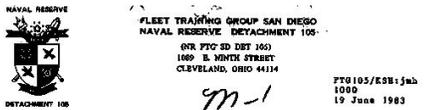
Many of this group served aboard USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) during her Vietnam deployment and combat in late 1965/early 1966. I am included in that group and all of us are proud of our Vietnam Service Medals. However, we are entitled to at least one and possibly as many as three additional medals for our service. Larry Edwards who was part of the crew during Vietnam researched eligibility for the Vietnamese MUC (Civil Actions Medal) and discovered he was eligible. It is now part of his record.



Vietnam Service Medal

Criteria state that Sea Servicemen who served with Naval Forces Vietnam between January 1, 1965 and March 28, 1973 can wear the Vietnamese Meritorious Unit Citation (Civil Actions Medal). SecNav notice 1650 says all staffs, ships or units attached to and serving under orders with Commander, US Naval Forces, Vietnam, during any period exceeding one day of the eligibility period will qualify.

Civil Actions Medal The approval letter for Larry Edwards is shown below.



From: Commanding Officer, NR Fleet Training Group, San Diego Detachment 105
 To: Commander, Naval Military Personnel Command, (ATTN: PERS 3D) Washington D.C. 20370
 Subj: Vietnamese MUC (Civil Actions Medal) and Vietnam Service Medal; eligibility for
 Ref: (a) Navy Times Article of May 01, 1974 (enclosed)
 1. On the basis of the criteria defined in reference (a), please confirm the eligibility of the following personnel for the awards designated below:

Vietnamese MUC (Civil Actions Medal)		
NAME	SEN	Eligible Period
LCDR R.S. HEDMAN		DEC 70 - JUL 72
LT G.A. SIRACUSA		JUN - AUG 72
CMC1 T.R. GOLUBIENSKI		JUN 72 - JUL 73
FTC1 L.P. EDWARDS		SEP 65 - JUN 66
Vietnam Service Medal		
LT G.A. SIRACUSA	265-25-8516	JUL - AUG 72

R.S. HEDMAN
 LCDR USNR-R

FTC1 L.P. Edwards is entitled to the Civil Actions Medal for service aboard the USS Samuel B. Roberts (DD 823) from 22 August 1965 to 27 December 1966.

Edwards Letter

We may also be eligible for the Vietnam Campaign Medal. It is awarded to all assisting Vietnamese forces. However, eligibility for the award is for service after March 24, 1965. If that is the case, we missed by a very short time. It is possible our service may now count. The military often revises dates on request.



Vietnam Campaign Medal

One additional award is a long shot possibility. It is the Vietnam Navy Gallantry Medal awarded for gallantry in support of South Vietnam. Anyone who feels they might qualify should inquire.



Vietnam Gallantry Medal

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Desron

The US Navy acronym for a destroyer squadron is **DESRON**; It comprises three or more destroyers or frigates. It is not generally an operational unit but is responsible for training, equipping and administering of its ships. A mixed unit including destroyers in the cruiser-destroyer group. The officer in charge of **DESRON TWENTY-FOUR**, for example, is designated Commander Destroyer Squadron Twenty-Four, **COMDESRON TWENTY-FOUR** for short.



As during World War II, a full-strength DesRon (as it was abbreviated at the time) comprise two Destroyer Divisions or DesDivs of four ships each, plus a squadron flagship; these were operational as well as administrative units.

In the late fifties and through early 1962, a Squadron (Desron) comprised two four-ship Divisions (Desdivs) with one ship designated the flagship. It carried the Squadron Commodore as well as the ship's Captain. The Squadron normally acted as a unit within a task force or fleet, its main duty being as anti-submarine screen for aircraft carriers. Often, however, the

divisions of the squadron were assigned to separate duties---and sometimes two-ship elements might be sent on individual assignments. The flagship not only carried the Commodore, it also carried the Squadron doctor and chaplain.

From April 1, 1962, Cruiser-Destroyer forces in the Atlantic and Pacific Fleets were organized in Cruiser-Destroyer Flotillas (**CRUDESFLOTs**). These formations included Cruiser-Destroyer Flotilla Two in the Atlantic (including Yosemite) and Cruiser-Destroyer Four in the Atlantic (including Shenandoah). Cruiser-Destroyer Flotillas ten and 12 were also located in the Atlantic.



Prior to FRAM, Roberts was a part of DESRON 10, home-ported in Newport, RI. The Squadron, known as Lightning 10, was a readiness squadron. It has since been decommissioned by the Navy. Lead ship of the Squadron was the USS Forest Sherman (DD-931).



Destroyer Squadron 24, was established on July 1, 1956 and was home-ported in Newport. Its name derived from the Escort Squadron it was formed from, all of whose Captains hailed from Pennsylvania. Roberts joined the Squadron following FRAM conversion in 1962.

During the 1960s, Desron 24 participated in a number of high profile missions including the Project Mercury Space Capsule recovery, the Cuban Missile Blockade, First Atlantic Squadron sent to Vietnam, and part of the first nuclear task force to see combat.

Jim Norton

Ship's Store

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 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

What did one sailor say to the other when they had a problem? "We are both in the same boat."



"Well," snarled the tough old Navy Chief to the bewildered Seaman. "I suppose after you get discharged from the Navy, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and piss on my grave." "Not me, Chief," the Seaman replied. "Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in line again."



Anyone having anything they would like to share with their shipmates can send the info to Jim Norton at jijo1944@comcast.net. It will be included in the next edition of this newsletter.





26 Long Pond Drive Milton, VT 05468

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