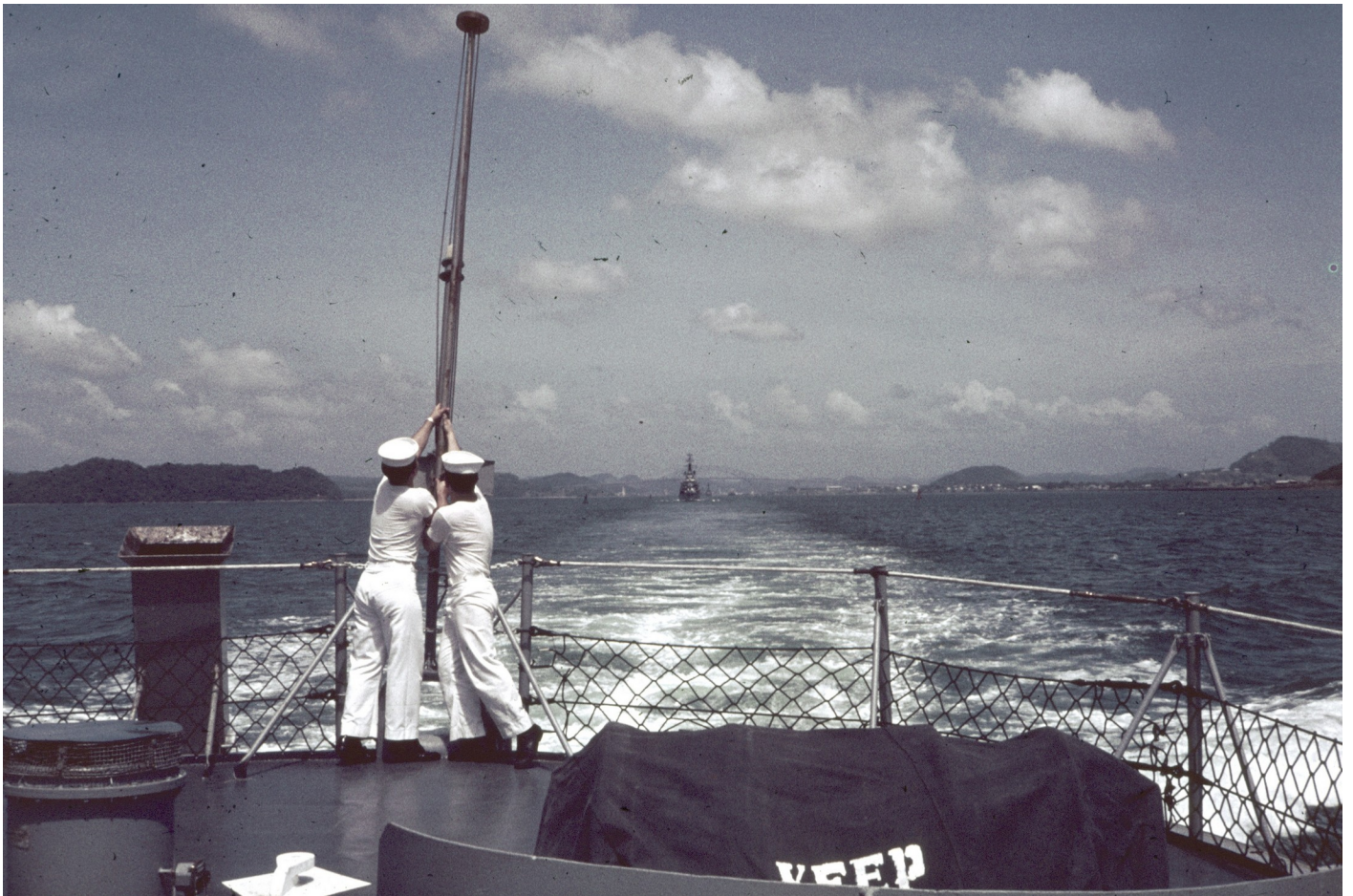


Scuttlebutt

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

Volume 20, Number 2

June, 2021



Here in the north country, as I write this, spring flowers are in bloom, the last of the winter snow is melting, the grass is green and already in need of mowing. It is a time of rebirth and hope. As each of us leaves our cave with the advent of more agreeable weather, we implore Neptune and the other denizens of the heavens on high to grant us good health and the camaraderie of one time shipmates..

That camaraderie will be on full display the first week of October. It will be then that a group of not-so-young ex gobs will get together in Boston to swap sea-stories, share a meal and a few drinks, see some sights, laugh a lot, and relive the glory days when each was cock-of-the-walk and destined to live forever. After the virus, father time and a long winter, it behooves each Sammy B swab to avail themselves of the therapeutic benefits this event will afford. I'll be there and I hope you will be also.

Many have contributed to making this newsletter the quality product that it is. They deserve our support and thanks. Sit back, enjoy the contents herein and dream a little dream.

Honor Roll

Add

Earl Cox (46-48)) Plank owner

John Landahl (60-63)

Charles A. Littlefield (59-60)

From the President's Desk

Hello Everyone! It appears the clock is ticking and this Scuttlebutt brings us ever closer to our 2021 reunion. I hope you all are feeling good and are either in the process of or are completely done being vaccinated. The Pandemic continues but is showing signs of fading. For your safety and for the safety of others, the best action you or anyone else can take is to get fully vaccinated. I sure did!



Kevin McKeown has informed me that registration is going along well and he urges everyone to register as early as possible. He desires that it be brought to everyone's attention that one event, the two-hour cruise on the schooner Thomas E. Lannon (pictured left) has a limited seating capacity (49) which will be filled on a first come, first served basis. When making your reunion plans, make sure to bring along something for our auction to be held on Wednesday of reunion week. The auction is always a fun time and contributes greatly to the support of our reunions. So make sure you dig out and bring that sack of money you have hidden under the mattress.



At this time, I would like to extend an invitation to anyone who might be interested in speaking at our formal dinner to please contact me at my email address giarkc@ptd.net. I am always interested in a shipmate wishing to pass along a tale, or a reflection about their Navy days and/or time aboard the Sammy B.



On a more serious note!!! I recently received emails and phone calls from shipmates informing me that they received emails and phone calls from me requesting financial help. I have stated this before but I think it bears repeating. **“Under no circumstances will I or the Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) shipmates Association request any funds for personal reasons.”**

If there was to be any program in which members are asked for help, it would be made public to all members well in advance and any and all solicitations would be to the Association, never to an individual. Anyone receiving a request for money should make the request known to me and discard it. Sadly, there are people out there who will try anything to make a buck. This applies to our Association and almost anything on the internet. Be on the lookout for scammers.

Trying to keep this short so I'll close by wishing you all a fantastic and safe summer. See you in October.



Ken

Bird Droppings

By *Chief Don Eagle*

Well, in the last issue of scuttlebutt, I came up with the terrific idea of everyone shipping over *en masse* when we get back to Boston. It'd be like a paid vacation year-round. Seeing the world, free chow, free clothes, free haircuts, free medical, and would you believe you even get paid for all of this! Exciting? Of course. What could go wrong? I mean, other than the newly enlarged Chinese fleet in the western Pacific, Iranian gunboats harassing our fleet in the Persian Gulf, Russian troops massing at the Ukrainian border, Myanmar, Syria, well, I could go on. But what the hell? The biggest thing I see is the decision to continue on in your rating. I mean, some of the old ones are no longer there, while there's lots of new ones. If you were a BT, give it up. Now you'd be an MM. Signalman? Well, now you'd be a Quartermaster. Storekeeper? Try being a "Logistics Specialist." Torpedoman? Hah! Now you'd be a Gunner's Mate. Some of the old ratings we were used to no longer exist. Now you can be a specialist or technician overnight. Like for instance. The mailman is now a logistics specialist. A cook is now a culinary technician. Of course there were some really interesting jobs aboard ship way early on that have been retired: Pigeon Trainer, Ship's Lamplighter, Jack of the Dust, Coal Passer, Bag Room Keeper and Cooper. Or, you could just be called "boy." Most of these titles are self-descriptive, though you can google others that aren't familiar. I, for one, am not going to volunteer to become a mainsail trimmer, as I think working in the top-gallants would give me nosebleeds. And how about this one? Just the title alone is so perfect to someone who enjoys their cocktails. Boilermaker.

No, to be perfectly up to date, you can go into exotic job offerings such as Cryptologist, Nuclear Operations, or Information Systems Technician. I'd stay away from being an Airship Rigger though, as there hasn't been much call for these guys since the Hindenburg incident.

Now if we all ship over together, we could probably attract a lot of press attention. So much so, that perhaps they might send the Secretary of the Navy up to Boston to swear us all in. That could give us the leverage to name one of the new ships **USS SAMUEL B ROBERTS the 4th**. And, one other little benefit for you: All the records of your previous tours of duty have undoubtedly been scuttled, so you can go back in at whatever grade you want. Me, I kind of like being a Chief.

I am so looking forward to seeing y'all in Boston. I'm hoping that the Coast Guard ship **EAGLE** might be in port, as I'd like to get a hat with **EAGLE** embroidered on it. How cool would that be? Yeah. A Chief with a ship named after him, and I haven't even croaked yet.

As I write this, our country seems to be having some success in coming to grips with the Covid virus. Though I continue to wear my bandito mask when I go into the bank, nobody is saying anything, and I've been shot twice.

Speaking of Boston, a visit to Old Ironsides may give you some ideas of not only our naval heritage, but of some of the varied jobs that the sailors of the 17th Century had to carry out. "Hoist the Mizzen" echoes down the centuries. Coopers making rum barrels, and visions of bag boys carrying powder to the gunners somehow comes alive. Won't be long!

Very few people have ever seen the sunset from the deck of a US Navy Destroyer. We Have !!!

Onion Peelings

Mike Cipolla VP

Hello Sammy B shipmates. Here is hoping everyone has or will get their covid-19 shots. I am a big chicken when it comes to shots but I got mine and also a Shingles shot. Follow up Shingles in two months. As of this “butt,” another Sammy B shipmate has passed away. Charley Littlefield was a shipmate and we stood many underway watches together. If you are on Facebook, check out Captain Paul Rinn’s log accounts aboard the FFG58 while steaming in the Persian Gulf and the Med. Being a sea detail and underway helmsman, along with another New Englander, I could almost follow the charts. Please continue with the log accounts.

Reunion is well underway with news from Kevin and Jim. Lots of work to put together a function like this. My reservations are in and confirmed. I missed the last one but will certainly be there for this one, God willing. Make sure to bring articles for the fund raising auction. It is always a fun time too.

Before I forget, my email address is mallopic@verizon.net. Sorry if there has been any confusion.

Here’s to a healthy Spring, Summer, Fall and an end to the covid crisis. A terrible strain has been put on all of us and hopefully makes us stronger. See you all in Boston.

Bob Phifer served aboard Roberts as a GM1. His brother Jack was also aboard as an MM2. Bob’s son John, a two tour Vietnam, in-country, air crew vet discovered these photos while going through his dad’s archives.



Roberts Biannual Reunion

October 4-8, 2021 Boston, MA

Schedule

Venue – Best Western Adams Inn located in Quincy, MA, (617) 328-1500.

Monday, Oct. 4

1:00pm – Registration begins, Hospitality Room open
6:00pm – Cocktail Hour
7:00pm – Welcoming Buffet

Tuesday, Oct. 5

8:00am – Salem, MA tour
11:00am – Gloucester, MA tour
2:00pm – Thomas E. Lannon sail
4:00pm – Seaside Dinner
6:00pm – Return to Hotel, Hospitality Room open

Wednesday, Oct. 6

9:00am – Charlestown Navy Yard/USS Constitution tour
3:00pm – Assn. Picnic at Hotel
7:00pm – Assn. Auction
9:00pm – Business Meeting
Hospitality Room to remain open following picnic

Thursday, Oct. 7

9:00am – John F. Kennedy Presidential Library and Museum tour
6:00pm – Cocktail Hour
7:00pm – Formal Banquet
Hospitality Room open from noon on

Friday, Oct. 8

11:00am – Depart

Additional information can be obtained by contacting Jim Norton @ (802) 893-8045.

**2021 Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assoc.
Reunion Registration Form**

Names of Attendees _____

Monday - October 4, 2021

Welcoming Buffet at Hotel Price per person: \$40x____=\$_____

Tuesday – October 5, 2021

Tour of Salem, Gloucester Price per person: \$38x____=\$_____

Cruise on the Thomas Lannon Price per person: \$30x____=\$_____

Gloucester House Dinner – Meal from menu
paid by diner

Wednesday – October 6, 2021

Tour of Charlestown Navy Yard
& USS Constitution Price per person: \$20x____=\$_____

Association Picnic N/Cx____=\$ N/C

Thursday – October 7, 2021

John F Kennedy Museum & Library Tour Price per person: \$32x____=\$_____

Formal Dinner

Roasted Statler Chicken Price per person: \$42x____=\$_____

Grilled Salmon “ “ “ \$49x____=\$_____

Filet Mignon “ “ “ \$53x____=\$_____

Reunion Fee: \$ 20.00

Total \$_____

**Send Payment to: Kevin McKeown
47 Long Beach Drive
Sound Beach, NY 11789**

Of Shoes and Ships

Jim Antenucci

33°56' North Latitude, 84°19' West Longitude – well here we are in Dunwoody, Georgia. Grand. Safe and sound. Landlocked.

I used to enjoy living in New Orleans for many reasons, not the least of which was to know that we were 30°N, 90°W. How droll! Perfect for the City That Care Forgot.

Have a little fun. Draw a line across a Mercator projection of the world. See how many important cities across the globe hover on or near 30°N.

But latitude is not what prompted this navigational aside. Rather it is longitude. A book by the same name came to me twice as gifts. Why? Well, I was a navigator on the SBR. One came from a later shipmate, now deceased and the second from my son-in-law's mother (think about this: we have no word in English – hyphenated or not – to describe that relationship).

Back to the book – “Longitude.” It has been an historical English television drama with Michael Gambon as John Harrison, the carpenter turned clockmaker. He fought for the monetary prize established by an Act of Parliament in 1714 to allow determination of longitude at sea, so crucial for a sea-going nation with its merchant ships and warships plying the seas, for wealth and power. Dava Sobel is the author. I recommend this fast moving and enjoyable read.

We take longitude for granted. The book lays out the details of his struggles for the 20,000 pound prize. It took years, many sea trials, and chicanery trying to detour Harrison. How was it possible to determine longitude at sea, on the deck of a rolling, plunging, wave smashing, shuddering ship? For fun, read the sailor's portion of Psalm 107 that starts in verse 23, “they that go down to the sea in ships...” Maybe even see the 1949 movie – Richard Widmark, Lionel Barrymore the child Dean Stockwell, and the sea. I can remember scenes today.

As a navigator, I took longitude for granted. It was always there. We knew how to determine it. We had the Nautical Almanac. Of course, I had the incomparable QM1 Jim Corbett and my personal “The Child's Golden Book of Constellations!” There was **LORAN**. There were our sextants and stopwatches. There were our ready sailors – QMSN Tom Woodard with whom I still text nowadays, SN King, an OCS rollout, SN Zink whose favorite star was Nunki, and SN Smith. They were like scribes awaiting, “Mark,” from QM1 or me. Watches, pen and paper in hand. Take a look at Winslow Homer's magnificent painting, “Eight Bells,” and you'll get the picture. But that was latitude.



Below the bridge in the chart house were the two heirs of John Harrison's work two centuries earlier, the ship's chronometers. Corbett's babies. Who can forget that nautical statement provided each day by the least seasoned seaman descending to the dreaded wardroom to recite his few lines to the Captain while a table full of officers look on hoping for a flub.

“Good morning, Captain. The Officer of the Deck sends his respects and the 12 o'clock reports. All

chronometers have been wound and compared. Request permission to strike eight bells on time.”

“Permission granted,” says the Captain. Perfect! The Seaman is now among the initiated. No more fear when directed to the wardroom at lunch and asked to tell the Captain something about chronometers. But we know how hard it was to get those special timepieces which kept our ship navigationally safe at sea when far from land and the art of coastal piloting.

But times have changed.

Passings

A short nautical observation. At the recent funeral of Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, on April 17th, naval courtesies and traditions were evident, as was my feeling of a connection between his life and ours at sea.



John Hency & Tony Ramos

Based on the Prince’s naval career as a young officer during World War II, there were the boatswain’s mates piping just before the bier was carried into St. George’s chapel at Windsor. The piping party sounded first, “Still,” then “Side,” and finally “Carry on.” During the order of service in the chapel, we heard the Navy Hymn – “Eternal Father, strong to save....For those in peril on the sea.” Then once again those old familiar lines, “They that go down to the sea in ships...” but this time from Ecclesiasticus 43. We have a long and proud tradition, we Navy men. Even the students at the Prince’s old school Gordonstoun in Scotland dropped a wreath from their sailboat in his memory. Sound familiar?

Home is the sailor, home from the sea. Let the boatswains pipe the side for our recently departed shipmates: Cox, Free, Landahl, Samsel, Littlefield, Gadansky, Hennessey, Ecklund, Bader, Skorupski – shipmates all.



Earl Cox



Earl Cox & Jim Antenucci

Echoes

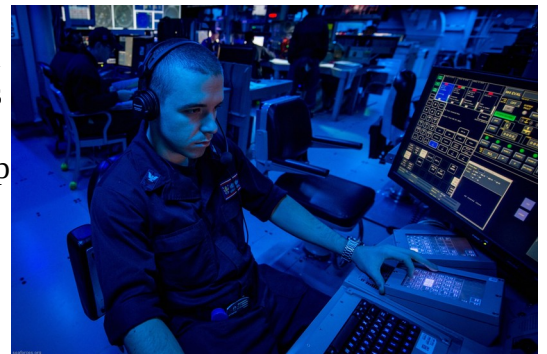
Jim Norton

Recently I watched a video about life aboard a modern day Arleigh Burke destroyer. I was struck by how much life on a tin can has changed from our time cruising the oceans blue yet how much remains constant. Let's look at just a few of the changes and the one big thing that never changes.

The first thing I noticed was the ease with which current sailors navigated ladders, both up and down. Even the overweight had no problems. I know we could do the same during our day but the ability has deserted most of us. Wheel chairs, walkers, replacement hips and knees, as well as the addition of a few pounds are simply not conducive to destroyer living. My next impression had to do with the inclusion of females as crew on all US Navy warships. Back in the day, I remember thinking what a great thing that would be. Now, at a more advanced age, I am not so sure. Seems that some of the freedoms we enjoyed in a society of men might be curtailed. Yet women aren't all that bad to have around. Then there are the respective sizes of the two vessels. The Sammy B was 390.5' long whereas an Arleigh Burke is 410' long. Yet, despite length differential, crew size is up very minimally if at all. Yet today's sailors still grumble about lack of space. Some things never change!



The proliferation of electronics on today's destroyer would dazzle us technically challenged veteran salts, even those of us that carried technician ratings. Except for the chipping and painting, computers seem to dominate every aspect of shipboard life. Monitors, keyboards, printers, etc. are everywhere and control even menu prep and ordering. Of course they are most prevalent in CIC where they direct a vast and very potent array of weaponry. I thought ASROC and DASH made us hot stuff back in the 60s but we wouldn't even be in the game today. Electronic guns, computer guided missiles and digital weapons platforms are now the norm.



Remember entering "Officer's Country" on the ship? Now there is also "Female Country" and all who desire to enter must knock and be permitted entry. Not only females but male berthing has been upgraded. One now has draw curtains for privacy, a small lamp, wifi, and a bulletin board for personal pictures. Luxury, Navy style. Chow is another thing that has changed but not that much. Crew still wait in line but mess is now ladled out by Food Service Technicians. The food itself is healthier and a great deal more ethnic than during our time. I was unable to determine if SOS is still a menu staple but can assure you that today's crews look forward to 'Mess Call' as much as we did. One final big difference that is readily noticeable. In our time almost everyone smoked everywhere on the ship. Today, Navy ships are smoke free. Much Better?



One thing remains constant between then and now and that is the camaraderie that exists among the crew. It is a bond forged from living, working, playing and dreaming together in a small space for extended periods. It has existed throughout naval history and will continue when US Navy vessels patrol the vastness of space.

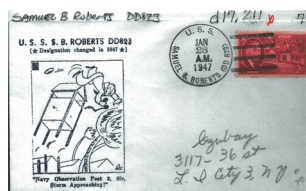
Dues - 2021 membership renewal date was January 1. The dues collected ensure this Scuttlebutt gets to you and the website is maintained. Send your check in the amount of \$15 to USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Assn. Mail to Kevin McKeown, 47 Long Beach Drive, Sound Beach, NY 11789.

Ship's Store — Get your Sammy B themed merchandise for the upcoming reunion from Carol Green who runs our ship's store. She carries a variety of items like hats, tees, sweatshirts, hoodies, etc. Reach Carol at egreen4392@comcast.net. Order form also available on website samuelbroberts.org. Order early!

Officers

President	Ken Giadina	giark@ptd.net
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Secretary	Terry Haskins	haskuf21@cox.net
Treasurer	Kevin McKeown	navymac@aol.com
Historian/Scuttlebutt	Jim Norton	jijo1944@comcast.net
Chaplain	Jim Cruce	virginiacruce@fairpoint.net
Webmaster	Tom Zwemke	tzwemke@gmail.com

Website/Facebook Page — Check out our web page at samuelbroberts.org. It is a source for all things DD-823. Also, you can become interactive on our Facebook page, USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Association. Join now and join the discussion.



Mr. John Walsh, a member of the DE-413 Survivors Association and son of one of the survivors, sent us three (two shown above) early DD-823 postal cancels. If anyone has an interest, let me know. John has also agreed to start keeping us updated on his Association's activities.





26 Long Pond Drive Milton, VT 05468

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