

Scuttlebutt



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

Volume 17, Number 1

March 2018



The Christmas and New Year's holidays are now history. Even Valentines Day is in the rear view mirror and this month we will all be Irish for a day. Memories of a great reunion are cherished and anticipation for Annapolis is already high. In this Scuttlebutt issue will be all the regular columns that are enjoyed by all of us, as well as a feature on Sammy B license plates and plate holders. We will also include items of general interest to everyone or those needed to fill all the pages. Hope you enjoy!

Please add the following to the Honor Roll;

Dwayne Barnhart - 56-57

Anthony J Carella – Unk

Jerry K Eva – Unk

Warren A McFarland – 47-49

Steven C Robinson – Unk

William Ross – 50-53

From Our President

After writing a few words for the Scuttlebutt, I just wrote two condolence notes. You should know what we, your officers, do. Notices of death often come late and addresses are not always available. First, a card is sent by Virginia and Jim Cruce, our chaplain. Later, I write a personal note. Some are short and others missed. Some include info I glean from Kevin McKeown, the Log Book, the Muster Book, info I may have from earlier, and from personally meeting the shipmate. Some notes reach the families and I may hear back. Some may be lost and the rest is silence. At least we try to reach out.

For those who were unable to attend the Newport reunion, we are including in this edition a letter that the late Ralph Senk (EM1, 54-57) sent to his grandsons, Kieran and Conor. Their father, Ralph's son Kyle, read it in Newport. I received a copy from Ralph's widow, Helen. She also told me the book mentioned in the letter is the large Robert's History, A Look Back. Great letter and gift from a great Tin Can sailor.

At the reunion banquet, Ken Giardina read his tribute to the Sammy B. He used his own words as well as lines from other writers including our own Don Eagle. Ken stitched a beautiful memoir of our ship and its sailors. I have selected a few of my favorite lines:

*Through all of her 26 years, we sailors of the Roberts stood the watch.
While some of us were in our bunks at night, one of us stood the watch.
While some of us were at school learning our trade
A shipmate stood the watch.*

*We stood that watch so that our family,
Our friends, our fellow countrymen
Could sleep soundly in safety
Each and every night knowing
That a sailor stood the watch.*

It was moving for me and I am sure for others too. Thanks Ken. At the end all I could say was, "Wonderful." and close the 12th reunion. We will work to get Ken's entire offering on our website.



A number of Newport reunion attendees have mentioned that they were disappointed not to see the Robert's ship's models that are usually at our reunions. Their builder, caretaker and our shipmate, Tony Sardinelli, was unable to attend the reunion but sent his best wishes. Tony is a well loved member of our association and his model's attention to detail is impressive to say the least. The picture to the right shows Tony explaining the finer points of one his creations to our guest speaker in Jacksonville. It is expected we will see Tony and his models at our 2019 reunion. Thank you Tony!



Bird Droppings

By Don Eagle

Thank you for your service

How many times have you been stopped by someone who says “Thank you for your service”? More than probably, you were wearing a DD823 cap, a sweatshirt or jacket that called attention to the fact that you were once a sailor. And how many times have you struck up a conversation with someone who was wearing something that said they were in the military? And you wound up thanking them for their service. Through all the Hospitality Room conversations, and throughout the reunion, we tended to focus on friends, events, liberties, and stories that brought back many memories. But today, sitting on the Atlantic sand, deep in the water, quietly lies the Roberts. Stripped of all armament, devoid of all recognition, somber in her underwater surroundings, yet she sails on in our memories.

It was she who carried some hundreds—well thousands of crew over her 25 year life. It was she who was a vibrant part of the US Navy and it was she who generated good will in countries too many to enumerate. It was she who supported military operations in Korea, Vietnam, Lebanon, and Nicaragua. It was she who challenged the heavy seas of the North Atlantic, and it was she who rendered aid to those in need. It was she who we called “home” for years, as we swept her decks, polished her brightwork, painted her hull, and maintained her operating systems. It was she that we came home to after liberty or leave, and it was she that we were so proud to have been part of.

Many things have changed in the intervening years, ships have gotten larger, crews have gotten smaller. Our Navy has contracted, women have joined our ranks at sea, names like “deck apes” and “snipes” have largely disappeared, and it is rare that you see dress blues or dress whites anymore. Yet somethings haven’t changed. For deep in the heart – or soul – of every sailor who ever stepped aboard the Roberts, there lingers an admiration of the ship itself, in pride of having served aboard her, of a deep seated attachment that bubbles to the surface regularly.

It’s hard to imagine this great ship, this “home,” this place where we worked, sweated, appreciated, and ultimately became so attached to, is now the object of curiosity for marine life. Or to think of her valiant decks, passageways, mess, or fantail where we gathered once, to be devoid of life. Instead, the image of her nested along Pier One lives on. To feel her straining at her lines, to see an outsized “823” shimmering in the water, her brow welcoming you aboard, the excitement of getting underway. Or the intensity and purpose of “GQ” at sea. To remember the guys who served aboard her, and what they did to give her life.



The End

The fluttering ensign on the fantail, the constant coffeepot in Sonar, the concentration of the bridge, the noise and heat of the engine rooms – they all paint a picture of a vibrant, living ship. And you were part of it. Today, let’s stand back, throw a salute at old 823, and say what she so richly deserves:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SERVICE.

Don

On the Scope

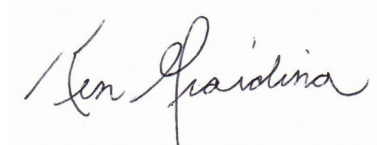
To all, I trust that you had a nice Holiday and even though it snowing here, spring is on the horizon. I was planning on writing something profound for this issue of the Scuttlebutt but two things occurred over the holidays that have changed my direction. Two sea stories, one of our Navy, and one of today's Navy.

Let's start with days gone by. I have a friend who was a Boatswains Mate who served aboard the USS Newport News (CA -148) during the 1960s. He told me this story that actually happened to him. As a newly arrived "boot" on board, he was assigned to the deck force to start his naval career. Shortly after his arrival on board, the 2nd class called him aside for a special assignment. It seemed that the 2nd class had a friend on the base who worked in the mess hall. The friend owed him a favor. To make good on his favor, he made arrangements to get the 2nd class a full bologna (commonly called a "Horsecock" in the Navy). So my friend, remember he was still a boot, was told to go to the mess, ask for so and so, and he would receive some "HC" on the spot. He was then told to bring it immediately back and give it to him and him only.

He went as directed to an out of the way spot and received his booty carefully wrapped. He was then sent on his way. While he was returning to the ship with his package safely tucked under his arm, he passed a female officer but failed to salute. Needless to say, the officer stopped him and began lecturing him. During the course of this dress down, the officer asked what it was that he was holding. Not knowing anymore than he was told, he simply told her "HC sir." After a further delay, he was allowed to be on his way and he finally made it back to the ship. He told the 2nd class of his encounter. After a good laugh, Boats told my friend what "HC" was. Hey, this story is no bologna!

Now to today's Navy. My granddaughter is going out with a young man who was in the Navy for six-years, stationed on a submarine on the west coast. He was a 2nd class by the time he recently got out. Since my granddaughter lives in Florida, I have yet to meet him but I have managed to speak to him on the phone. While we were talking, he told me he wasn't doing much that day, just sitting on his butt. Jokingly, I told him he had better "Turn To." His reply was one of total bafflement. He asked what "Turn To" meant. Welcome to today's Navy.

After you finish reading this Butt, you better "TURN TO."



Webmaster's Words of Wisdom

If you haven't been to Samuel B Roberts website lately, you should really check it out. You'll see a lot of reunion photos that you can access from the Home Page. Simply click on one and scroll through them all. Who knows? You may see yourself in one.

To access the website, click on samuelbroberts.org
Then click on Home.



2017 Newport Reunion Images





Below is a repeat of a 2001 Scuttlebutt article written by Capt. Bill Ward concerning just one great Sammy B. icon.

Perhaps one of the most notable guys who ever served aboard the Roberts was Bill Fitzgerald.

He 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. Upon graduation and commission as an Ensign, "Fitz" was assigned to the USS Roan. I met him in late 1965 when I took command of the Roan in Newport. Fitz was the Weapons Officer. In addition to being an outstanding Department Head, he was a superb OOD. Younger officers learned what was important as they stood underway watches with him. Though he was not the senior department head, he was the one the XO and I relied on in tight spots. He volunteered for assignment in Vietnam, was selected and left us upon our return to Newport in July, 1966. Just after our return from another Med deployment, we learned that Fitz had been killed in Vietnam.



Lt William C. Fitzgerald

We have been privileged to serve with brave men during our lives, and, on occasion, we live with true heroes. Lt. William C. Fitzgerald was a true hero. He was presented with the Navy Cross posthumously for extraordinary heroism on August 7, 1967. While serving as senior advisor to Vietnamese Naval Coastal Group SIXTEEN, the group was taken under attack by numerically superior Viet Cong forces. Lt. Fitzgerald immediately established communications with the Vietnamese Navy commanding officer, and attempted to coordinate assistance with free-world forces in the area. The enemy fire soon became too intense to resist successfully and the VC completely overran the base. Aware that his bunker was the only remaining source of resistance, Lt. Fitzgerald ordered his men to evacuate the base toward the river. He gallantly remained in the command bunker in order to provide covering fire for the evacuating personnel. Before Lt. Fitzgerald could carry out his own escape, he was fatally shot by the VC aggressors. By his fearless dedication to duty, courage under fire, and heroic actions in defense of the base, despite overwhelming odds, Lt Fitzgerald served as an inspiration all persons engaged in the effort

in Vietnam and upheld the highest traditions of the US Naval Service.



Fitz during his Roberts Days



USS William C. Fitzgerald (DDG-62)

In January 1994, the US Navy launched DDG 62 in Bath, Maine. The name of the new ship was the USS William C. Fitzgerald. The ship was commissioned in Newport, RI the next year and several of us who had served with Fitz were able to attend. He is part of a great legacy and I feel honored to have served with him.

Capt. Ray Ward (1960-1962)

Ralph Senk

Ralph Senk was a Robert's veteran and long time Association member. He passed away a while back but before he did, he penned a letter to his grandsons, Kiernan and Conor. At last year's reunion in Newport, Kyle Senk, Ralph's son and father of Kiernan and Conor, read the text of that letter. It is poignant, a testimony to Ralph himself, and an indication of the bond between Roberts and those who served aboard her.

Kieran, Conor,

Would like you to have this book - something to remind you that Grandpa Ralph Senk was in the U. S. Navy from November 1953 to November 1957.

I went to boot camp in Bainbridge, Maryland; then to Electrician's Mate School in Great Lakes, Illinois. After school, I wanted to go to sea so picked from a list of ships and I chose a destroyer based in Newport, Rhode Island.

In June 1954, I reported to my ship, The USS Samuel B. Roberts, a Gearing Class Destroyer, built in 1945. This ship was driven by steam (oil fired boilers) and there was no air conditioning at all. I was, now, a "Tin Can Sailor" and this would be my new home for the next 3 years and 4 months.

My first time that I went to sea was the world cruise that took 6-1/2 months. That was, also, my longest. Most of this cruise was spent around Korea and to Japan for supplies. We traveled over 43,000 miles, used 2.5 million gallons of oil, made 28 ports of call and experienced a typhoon near Japan. The ship rolled to 55° some say, 57°, which is about 40° more than I like. The only time this ship didn't roll was in dry dock.

The last 2-1/2 years a First Class ran the crew reporting to the Engineering Officer. I was an Electrician's Mate, First Class, when I was discharged. I was in charge of a group of 5 electricians my last year on board.

I have no regrets as there were a lot of good times and some not to good. Working conditions were not that great - hot engine rooms and plenty of rough seas - BUT THAT'S PART OF BEING A "TIN CAN SAILOR".

*SMOOTH SAILING
Grandpa Senk*



U.S.S. SAMUEL B. ROBERTS DD-823
SHIPMATES ASSOCIATION
2017 TREASURER'S REPORT

| | |
|---|-------------|
| Ending Balance (12/31/2016)..... | \$5,067.89 |
| Deposits (01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017)..... | \$20,102.50 |
| | \$25,170.39 |
| Disbursements (01/01/2017 - 12/31/2017).... | \$20,115.74 |
| Ending Balance (12/31/2017)..... | \$5,054.65 |

2017 Deposits:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Dues..... | \$1,659.00 |
| Donations..... | \$419.00 |
| Newport, RI Reunion Registration Fees..... | \$15,584.00 |
| Reunion Auction Income..... | \$1,356.00 |
| Donation by a Shipmate for Reunion Open Bar..... | \$1,000.00 |
| Fee Income for Returned Check..... | \$12.00 |
| Sale of Challenge Coins..... | \$62.50 |
| Sale of Muster Book..... | \$10.00 |
| Total:..... | \$20,102.50 |

2017 Disbursements/Expenditures:

| | |
|--|-------------|
| Scuttlebutt, Letters, Envelopes, Printing & Postage..... | \$2,185.99 |
| Viking Tours - Bus Tours, incl gratuities..... | \$5,660.00 |
| Battleship Cove Tour & Lunch..... | \$1,540.00 |
| Buffet & Banquet Dinners..... | \$4,634.52 |
| *Open bar at Banquet.....* | \$1,000.00 |
| Hospitality Room Supplies..... | \$826.41 |
| Reunion Gift Items (Shipmates & Guests)..... | \$1,087.29 |
| Reunion information & misc. gift packages..... | \$431.25 |
| Reunion Photographer..... | \$200.00 |
| **Reunion Refunds to 9 Shipmates & Guests.....** | \$2,102.00 |
| Website Hosting & Maint..... | \$400.00 |
| Check Reorder Charge..... | \$14.28 |
| Bank Service Charge..... | \$34.00 |
| Total:..... | \$20,115.74 |

Respectfully Submitted,
Kevin McKeown, Treasurer

*Approved with James E. Cipolla
thanks, Kevin President
Shipmates Association
Feb 8, 2018*

*Actual bar bill at banquet was \$1,563.84 of which \$563.84 paid by another Shipmate directly to the restaurant by credit card.
**Refunds to 9 Shipmates & Guests who paid but unable to attend.

**2018 Membership
Dues - \$10 yearly**

Name _____

Address _____

Home Phone _____ Mobile Phone _____

Email _____

Highest Rank on Roberts _____

Dates of Service _____

Spouse/Partner Name _____

Checks payable to USS Samuel B Roberts Assn.

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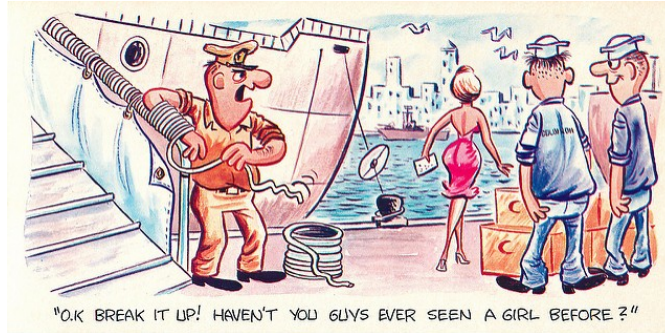
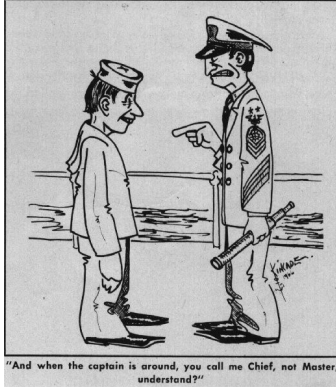
Tom Zwemke
tzwemke@gmail.com

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

Around the Scuttlebutt

A feature that was to appear in this issue, at the suggestion of Tony Ramos, showing the US Navy/Samuel B Roberts auto license plates/plate holders of shipmates will not appear this month. I had a problem with my computer and lost some files, The only images I have are from Rich Allwelt, Ken Giardina and Ken Harrod. I request others who sent me images to resend them. Article will appear in next issue. Thank you!



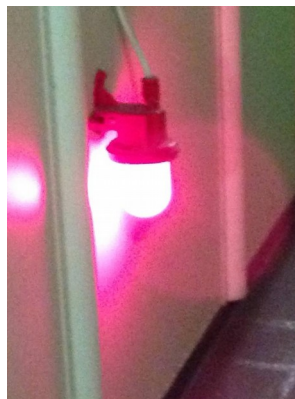
One morning a shipwrecked US Navy Boatswain's Mate noticed something floating towards the deserted island that had been his home since his ship went down six months earlier. As the object came closer, he realized that it was a large barrel. He very soon thereafter realized that hanging onto the barrel was a very attractive, scantily clad female. In fact she was the most beautiful woman he had ever seen.

Arriving on the shore, the woman left the barrel and started walking very suggestively towards him. When she was next to him, she whispered in his ear, "I have something that you want."

The BM broke into a run and entered the waves yelling; "Don't tell me you've got beer in that barrel?"



Can you Identify?





26 Long Pond Drive Milton, VT 05468

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