

# Scuttlebutt

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

**Volume 21, Number 1**

**March, 2022**



**Photo Credit – Charlie Fox**

Numbers may have been somewhat diminished and the atmosphere a little subdued due to Covid, but fun and camaraderie were at peak highs during our recently concluded Boston area reunion. The gala kicked off on Monday afternoon with registration and plenty of time to reacquaint with shipmates in our well stocked hospitality room, which had goodies aplenty due to the efforts of several dedicated volunteers. Monday evening, our welcoming buffet was a fun event, with good conversation and not bad food. Tuesday was an early day with our initial stop in Salem. There we enjoyed a trolley tour of that historic city. Then, it was off to Gloucester, the country's oldest continuous fishing port. After a miscommunication on bus drop-off location, we enjoyed a great (and expensive) lunch at a dockside restaurant. The highlight of the day, a two-hour harbor cruise on the schooner Thomas E. Lannon followed. Fantastic, but cold. We spent Wednesday AM at the Charlestown Navy Yard (more to follow). In the afternoon we held our first Assoc. sponsored picnic. A success! Our auction (fun as always) and our business meeting were in the evening. Thursday saw the group taking a trolley tour of Boston, then resting up for our premier event, our closing banquet. It was a excellent one. Good drinks, good food, good friends, and a good speaker made for an enjoyable reunion climax. More reunion details and a host of other goodies will be found in this issue. Enjoy!!

## **Honor Roll**

**Add**

**Fred Iacovo (51-54)**

**Vincent S. Marino (52-55)**

**Robert J. Shields (52-56)**

**James Wingenroth (62-63)**

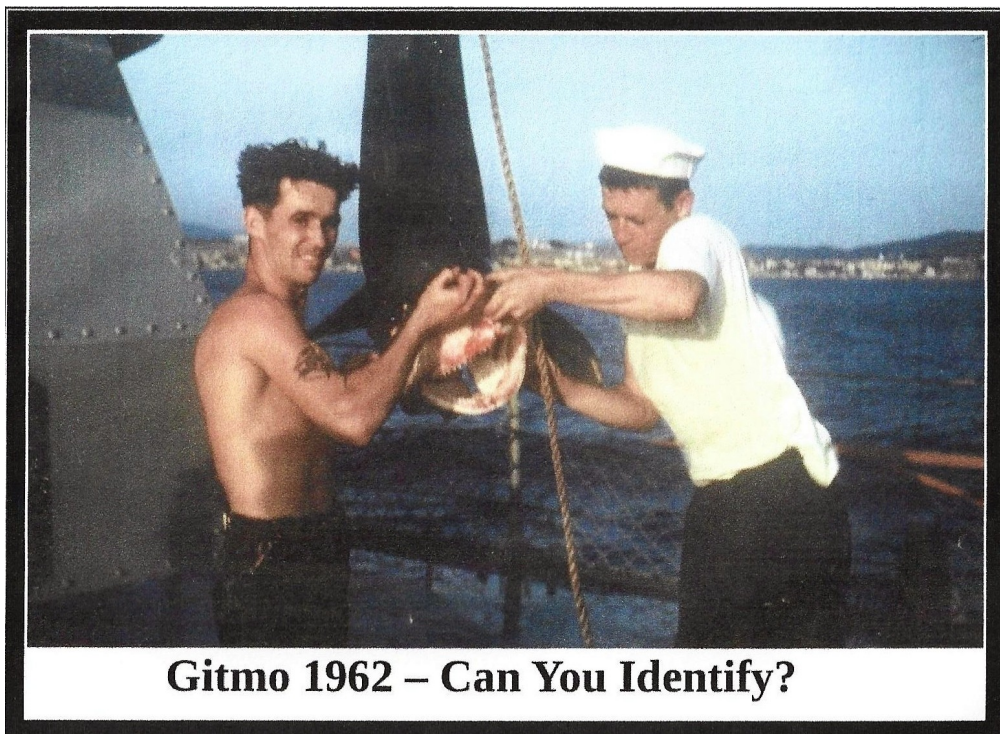
# From the President's Desk

Greetings shipmates. I hope this issue of the Scuttlebutt finds each of you well and in good spirits. I also wish that every one of you enjoyed the holidays and are eagerly looking ahead to all the New Year may offer. It is amazing how quickly time seems to fly by. When we look back on those long ago days aboard Roberts, we **really, really** have to look back. It seems strange that despite our time scampering about the decks of that venerable vessel being nothing more than a historical footnote, most of us have no trouble whatsoever remembering those days. In large part I think our ability to so fondly recall that time and our adventures during it lies in current day bonds forged as members of the Samuel B Roberts Association. Membership enables us to keep in touch with old shipmates, meet new ones who for an all-too-short span lived a similar life aboard the Sammy B, and exchange memories and stories of our halcyon days unique to Robert's crew. The ability to immerse ourselves in those days is attributable, at least in part to this association. That brings me to the point of this little dialog.

It has come to my attention, that the Association's main life line, it's membership list, is somewhat outdated. Through the years there have been numerous changes in our lives that have included moves, change of phone number, relationship changes, and changes of email addresses. Kevin McKeown has not always been made aware of the changes. The only way we discover incorrect data is when we are unable to contact someone because the information we do have is no longer valid.

Therefore, I have asked Jim Norton to include a data update questionnaire along with this year's dues reminder. Your help will be greatly appreciated. Let us all hope that by the next issuance of this newsletter, the weather will have changed for the better and the pandemic will be but an unpleasant memory.

***Ken***





# Of Shoes and Ships

Jim Antenucci



“January 28” I am on notice from our Scuttlebutt Editor Norton, Deadline, or no byline.

By the time you read my Jan. 28 thoughts, Mardi Gras and the Uighurs Olympics will be over.

With apologies to Christopher Robin, A. A. Milne, and Winnie the Pooh, here’s the ever sensitive CCP Chairman Xi celebrating a close of the Winter Games.

On March 2<sup>nd</sup>, I will be granted another Lent “to amend my life. Amen.” Not

too many more.

I thought about writing my 28 Jan. current events for you to read on March 15<sup>th</sup> as old news.

But why not prophecy, predictions, prescient prognostications? I wonder how I’ll do?

Lots going on in the days of our lives: Football, Ukraine, Taiwan, 900,000 Covid deaths, State Department billet-doux to Mother Russia, Bye bye Breyer, face masks bye bye, Neil Young bye bye. Secret flights to your neighborhood, and on and on. So here we go; Prophecy.

Football – Los Angeles Rams - State Department letter – rejected by the shirtless, KGB wunderderkind,



Ukraine – invaded Taiwan – safe so far

900,000 Covid deaths – 50,000 more on our way to one million

Breyer – here until June Masks – gone

Young vs Spotify – Rogan Wins

Secret flights – stopped secretly after those nasty Fox FOIA’S. DHS Secretary Shave Ice silent.

I can’t wait to see my score.

A personal note on the passing of our shipmate, Jim Wingenroth. Jim and I shared a common experience during my early days on Sammy B. Jim served on our ship from 62-63. Picture on left is of Jim at our 2011 Buffalo Reunion on Lake Erie aboard the USS Little Rock (CLG-4).



**Mothers** – One day while tied up at Pier 2, Newport, I was paged on the 1MC to report to the wardroom. When I arrived there were Captain Murray, XO, R F Paul and a lady who was introduced as Mrs. Wingenroth, Jim’s mother. “Oh, Oh, this is serious.” I was her son’s M Division officer. The Captain said, “Mrs. Wingenroth is here to see why her son, Fireman Jim Wingenroth, cannot go to MM ‘A’ School.” You know my answer. It was easy. I knew “Wingnuts” work but didn’t know he wanted this school. The rest is history. Off went “Wingnut” to “A” School.

Jim and I joked about our mothers inserting themselves into our Navy lives. My mother threatened to write Captain Murray to ask why her son Jimmy couldn’t get more “shore leave” to come home to NYC on weekends. I was firm. No letters to Captain Murray, Mom.” Then I explained the 3 section watch rotation while in Newport. Success – no letters. I had been having visions of being called to the Captain’s in port cabin and seeing him with her letter in his hand. Oh, nooooo!

Mothers do not give up their care for sons who trade home apron strings for Mother Navy’s. Jim and I laughed about these stories often – by phone, at reunions. We will miss him.

# My Memories

## *Jim Leslie*

This is a reprint of an August 2005 Scuttlebutt piece by Jim Leslie:

The first memory I shall share occurred during our stay in the Boston Naval Shipyard. Early on I realized that getting yard workers to do a bit of extra, unlisted work involved providing a bit of cumshaw, so we loaded up on coffee and 22 caliber shells both of which were as good as cash as far as the workers were concerned. Nevertheless, toward the end of our stay we were running low of supplies of all sorts. Then one day I noticed a stack of boxes on the pier earmarked for the carrier which was laid up across the dock. I suggested, I believe it was to the chief bosun, Pert, (who was a great pleasure to work with and a fine man) that he mount a midnight requisition. However, he said he had a better idea and I didn't want to know.

The next morning the dock crane started lifting the boxed supplies. Surprise, the name of the carrier had been sprayed out and "Samuel B. Roberts DD823" added. These came aboard.

My next foray involved burst practice as we were going across the Pacific to Japan and Korea. A star shell was launched by the commodore's flag ship and the three other ships in our division scrambled to acquire the target and see who fired first. However, you never knew whether the star shell was going to port or starboard, so the accepted practice was to keep the 5" mounts centerline until you knew where the target was.

Ships, as you know, sail in column according to seniority, so we were immediately after the commodore's vessel with two other ships astern. Someone suggested we put our high powered, fire control optics on the bridge of the commodore's ship, the Brownson. In this way we could track the commodore on the bridge. He always went to the side where the star shell was to be directed. Therefore, on whatever side the commodore was standing our guns followed and we became the perpetual burst champions, since we were the only ship with a line of sight to the Brownson's bridge.

Finally, I have one other confession to make. This involved orienting the screen while operating with a carrier task force. As officer of the deck I depended on CIC and the JOOD to give me a course and speed to our new station. This required them to do a plotting/maneuvering board calculation which took a bit of time. However, our division's ships were judged by how fast they interpreted the signal, did the calculations and changed course and speed after the "execute" command was given.

One day I came up with a great idea. As soon as the "execute" command was given I ordered either "left full rudder" or "right full rudder" depending on my supposition as to which was the correct direction. This was before we had the maneuvering board solution. If my initial guess was wrong, I just kept the original rudder command in place and made a big circle back to the correct course. However, 50 percent of the time I was right. Shortly after adopting this tactic, I was in the officer's club in Sasebo and I overheard the commodore remark: "You know what I like about the Roberts? When I say 'execute,' it moves."



USS S. B. Roberts (DD-823) 1951 Kiel Canal, Germany

# Beautiful Reykjavik, Iceland

*Jim McGill*

It was July of 1955 and President Eisenhower was off to Europe to meet with the heads of foreign states or NATO or some such international group. Your question now might be, “What in the world does that have to do with the USS Samuel B. Roberts and her crew?” A prescient question that, and here is the answer. The president’s airplane might develop some sort of mechanical trouble (I concede it had never happened in the past, but there could always be first time), and if his plane went into the drink somewhere betwixt Washington, DC and Europe, people, especially those politicians not of the governing party, would ask what precautions had been taken against such an eventuality. Who was to blame for precautions not taken?

Let me now introduce you to Precaution Number ONE – Destroyer Division 101. Would it not be a great idea to station destroyers at regular intervals along the president’s flight path? Could we not then point with pride to that string of destroyers strung along the great circle route between us and them, ships which would do SOMETHING should a problem occur? No sooner said than done, so off we went on such short notice that we had no time to refuel and some of the crew were still on liberty.

There were, I believe, two divisions of destroyers, eight ships in all which were sent on this mission. Our station was the farthest one east, up beyond Iceland and over two thousand miles from Newport. We arrived on station after four days steaming and awaited the flight of the president’s plane. By this time I was a qualified officer of the deck (OOD), and I was no longer the most junior officer aboard. Stan Skorupski had just reported aboard after having graduated from 6th Naval Academy that June and HE was now the most junior. I was still the Athletic Officer, however. Some things never change.

I had the mid watch and at about 0200, I was informed by Combat Information Center (CIC) that they had a contact bearing 135 degrees, range 200 miles at Angels three five (35,000 feet), on course 010, speed 450 knots. We had an air search radar repeater on the bridge so I watched with some interest as the contact approached. We had no specific instructions other than to be alert. Being alert at 0200 was one of my specialties (Recall my General Quarters caper off the Korean Coast if you will). So we gathered around the radar and watched Air Force One approach at 450 knots. We continued to watch as it disappeared over the horizon, also at 450 knots. Our big moment had come and gone. We now had three days to wait for the return flight, so we headed to Reykjavik, Iceland and a good time.



Iceland would never be your first choice for a liberty port, believe me. Reykjavik harbor was crescent shaped and lined with low buildings of nondescript architecture. The entire place seemed to be devoid of color when we arrived late in the afternoon, and we contemplated liberty with a jaundiced eye. The island, like Greenland, had been settled by Vikings in the ninth and tenth centuries. They had obtained women by raiding Ireland on the way west and the women, all quite beautiful I am told, were an unfriendly lot. Vikings make you that way evidently.

It was foggy in Reykjavik when we anchored. The seas were choppy and Captain White decided there would be no liberty. It was at this point that a stratagem dreamed up by Ltjg. Dave Seaver got liberty for three quarters of the ship's crew. He had, several weeks earlier, wagered a dinner with the Captain on some subject which now eludes me, but the bet had a caveat: if Dave lost the bet, the dinner would be at a time and place of Dave's choosing. Strangely enough the skipper had gone along with this and, as usual in these situations, Dave lost the bet. After it had been announced there would be no liberty in Reykjavik, Dave decided that now was the time and place to pay his debt since there was no liberty for anyone. You can tell immediately there were no flies on Dave.

He approached Captain White that the lack of liberty would get him out of paying his just debt. "Captain," he announced. "Now is the time and place of my choosing to pay my dinner bet," Chortle! Chortle! Chortle! He had smugly assumed that he had outwitted the captain. Not so! The captain immediately announced that there would be liberty until 2400 hours for all hands in the liberty sections. "Seaver," he stated emphatically, "your liberty terminates immediately AFTER you and I have dinner." And that is exactly how it was.

The only incident which marred our brief stay in Iceland was that Charlie Mac, he of the Subic Bay nakedness scenario, decided on an encore performance. I shall recount his original actions here to allow for a bit of perspective. We were in Subic but all was not well. Charlie Mac was missing. Quarters came and went. No Charlie. We were starting to become concerned when we saw Charlie sitting in the stern sheets of a skiff being rowed back by a Filipino. Charlie looked like Lord Hornblower returning to his flagship.

Charlie's tale was one of stark terror. He imbibed more than his usual quota of I W Harper and soda and remembered nothing until he awakened the following morning around 0430. He was lying on the marble rotunda floor of the administration building and he was stark naked. That in itself was not unusual because Charlie always took his clothes off when he was smashed. Or tried to. What was unusual was that his clothes were nowhere to be seen.

So Charlie went in search of his clothes. Outside the building he hid in some bushes and jumped out at the last minute when someone came by. Must have been a scene. Charlie, pale skinned, 6'3", and naked as a jaybird. By the time the workers had recovered and run off, Charlie had borrowed a poncho. He then set off to find his clothes. He headed to the bay and sure enough, there were his clothes neatly folded in a pile on the beach. He said later, "You never feel as naked as when you awaken on a cold marble floor." We concur.

Back to Reykjavik where Charlie Mac once again returned to the ship at midnight loaded to the gills with double I W Harper and soda and decided that a swim would be just the thing. He removed all his clothes and was about to leap off the forecastle into the dark and murky waters of the bay when he was stopped and hustled off to bed. Some things never change.

The Roberts returned to station the next day and we watched the contrails of Air Force One as it headed back to Washington. Then we turned for home in an anticipatory mood.



Several issues ago the Scuttlebutt posted an anonymous article dealing with the final days of the Roberts. Tarrant H. (Tarry) Lomax was an ensign aboard the ship during the period and offers further insight.

Ken and Association Members:

I read with interest the anonymous article on the Final Days of the Sammy B. and it brought back a number of memories.

I joined the ship in Piraeus, Greece on December 28, 1969 as an Ensign of 6 months, and relieved LTJG Bradford B. Waterman as the Main Propulsion Assistant, as he was doing double duty as MPA and Engineering Officer. I recall only too well the constant problems with the evaporators. Feed water for the boilers came first; fresh water for the rest of the ship came last. Nonetheless, as CDR Richard D. Coogan (the CO) noted in my FitRep following that deployment "the main plant was repaired and maintained such that every operational commitment was met during the deployment," but not without sacrifice on the part of the entire crew. And fortunately we were in the Med and not the tropics.

The primary role we played was plane guard to the USS Saratoga (CVA-60) and the USS Roosevelt (CVA-42). When I arrived on December 28, the Sammy B was Med-moored in Piraeus, and the Saratoga was anchored in Faliron Bay off Athens. We got underway the first week in January and I went on my first Sammy B watch at 1200 that day. Being the fourth officer on the bridge, I basically was assigned a corner to stand in. About an hour into the watch the Saratoga started launching aircraft and shortly thereafter the PriAir radio circuit came alive. Seems that one of the aircraft started to stream smoke from an engine immediately after launch, and then another aircraft spotted an engine on fire. In a matter of minutes both pilot and backseat crew bailed out and I watched as the aircraft hit the water and two parachutes floated down. Helos picked up the air crew and we spent the rest of the watch ensuring that there was no floating debris. So much for my first bridge watch on the Sammy B.

The Saratoga departed the Med in January 1970 and was replaced by the Roosevelt. We continued our plane guard operations. Sadly, the Roosevelt also lost several aircraft and air crew during that deployment. When we departed the Med in May 1970, the Roosevelt remained there.

As the Final Days article pointed out, during that deployment Sammy B also made two trips to the Black Sea to assert the right of free navigation in what the Soviets considered to be their domain. Those trips included being constantly shadowed by Soviet "Bear" aircraft and Soviet patrol craft. The OOD's and CIC watch standers were thoroughly briefed on the limited rules of engagement with the Soviets, and we maintained a course around the Black Sea always in "international waters." As we exited the Black Sea the second time we encountered heavy fog in the Bosphorus Strait and had to anchor. The fog carried the sound of the calls to prayer from the minarets to the ship even though one could not see either shore.

In addition to the Black Sea operations, the Sammy B shadowed the Moskva during her first sortie into the Med. The Moskva was the first of her class of helicopter carriers in service with the Soviet Navy. In preparation for the Moskva assignment we loaded a container in Greece onto the helo deck, and embarked several Navy and civilian personnel who spent most of their time onboard in the hangar and the container. The container held an assortment of electronic snooping gear including thermal imaging equipment, and the electricians had to run external power cables to the container before departing Piraeus. Once equipped we followed the Moskva into the Adriatic Sea off the coast of Albania (then a Soviet-bloc country), where the Moskva and several support ships were operating and anchored, and spent many hours getting thermal images of various Soviet naval ships. I was told by the technicians that those images would be used to ascertain the location of the propulsion equipment and that information would be provided to our submarine forces.



The final deployment included visits to Piraeus, Greece, and Naples (mostly alongside the tender), Salerno and Taranto in Italy. We stopped briefly at Souda Bay, Crete for a load of Bunker C fuel (which we later discovered was so bad that for the next several days we were constantly changing and cleaning the atomizers for the boilers.). But we did get a few days of liberty in Palma, Mallorca, Valencia, Spain, and Gibraltar before departing for Newport, where we arrived on May 22, 1970.

I remained on board during the INSERV and pre-deactivation, and finally departed on November 2, 1970 – the day the Sammy B was decommissioned. Needless to say, the Summer and Fall of 1970 was as hectic as described in the article and with an ever dwindling number of crew. As a “reward” I did get the Engineering Officer billet for 18 months on the USS Borie (DD-704). Same WWII vintage ship, but at least the Bories’s evaporators worked, and nothing penetrated the hull.

Despite the constant engineering challenges, my time on the Sammy B was as rewarding as new Ensign could hope for. I was always busy, with great mentoring from the Chiefs and my enlisted shipmates and learned so much in such little time. I eventually left the Navy in 1977 but treasured my time on the Sammy B and reading the stories in the Scuttlebutt.

**Tarrant H. (Tarry) Lomax**

## **Echoes**

### ***Jim Norton***

I would like to use my allotted space to provide small bit of added context to a couple of the stories related here-in, in the past several years. Let’s start with the fine article in this edition by Jim McGill about plane guarding for Ike and liberty in Reykjavik, Iceland. In the months following our around-the-world cruise there was a great deal of work to be done. Nine months at sea takes a toll on ship and crew. Both needed to be put in order. Good progress was being made when we received emergency orders to get immediately underway. We did as ordered and in our haste left several crew-mates behind. Frank Green and a number of others were flown to Iceland to meet the ship. Panic set in.

When we entered port in Iceland to refuel, the native population had a freshly killed whale laid out on the dock awaiting additional processing. The work had commenced. Ensign Edmund P. Willis, our newly arrived Damage Control Assistant and R Division Officer remembers the sight of the flyover with great fondness. It remains vivid. He has also found it impossible to forget the stench caused by the carcass.

## **2022 Officers**

<b>President</b> <b>Ken Giardina</b> <a href="mailto:giarkc@ptd.net"><u>giarkc@ptd.net</u></a>	<b>V President</b> <b>Mike Cipolla</b> <a href="mailto:mallopic@verizon.net"><u>mallopic@verizon.net</u></a>	<b>2<sup>nd</sup> Vice Pres.</b> <b>Jim Wilson</b> <a href="mailto:martin.wilson@comcast.net"><u>martin.wilson@comcast.net</u></a>	<b>Treasurer</b> <b>Kevin McKeown</b> <a href="mailto:navymac@aol.com"><u>navymac@aol.com</u></a>
<b>Secretary</b> <b>Terry Haskins</b> <a href="mailto:haskuf21@cox.com"><u>haskuf21@cox.com</u></a>	<b>Webmaster</b> <b>Tom Zwemke</b> <a href="mailto:tzwemke@gmail.com"><u>tzwemke@gmail.com</u></a>	<b>Historian/Scuttlebutt</b> <b>Jim Norton</b> <a href="mailto:jijo1944@comcast.net"><u>jijo1944@comcast.net</u></a>	<b>Religious Support</b> <b>Jim Cruce</b> <a href="mailto:virginiacruce@fairpont.net"><u>virginiacruce@fairpont.net</u></a>

# U.S.S. SAMUEL B. ROBERTS DD-823 SHIPMATES ASSOCIATION 2021 TREASURER'S REPORT

Ending Balance (12/31/2020).....	\$4,536.70
Deposits (01/01/2021 - 12/31/2021).....	<u>\$16,182.00</u>
	\$20,718.70
Disbursements (01/01/2021 - 12/31/2021).....	<u>\$16,204.71</u>
Ending Balance (12/31/2021).....	\$4,513.99

## 2021 Deposits:

Dues.....	\$1,380.00
Donations.....	\$510.00
Boston, MA Reunion Registration Fees.....	\$11,912.00
Donation by Shipmate for Boston Reunion Open Bar.....	\$1,500.00
Reunion Auction Income.....	\$865.00
Muster Book Sale.....	<u>\$15.00</u>
Total:.....	\$16,182.00

## 2021 Disbursements/Expenditures:

Scuttlebutt, Letters, Labels, Envelopes, Printing & Postage	\$2,121.05
Eagle One Coach Transportation.....	\$2,250.00
Schooner Thomas Lannon.....	\$1,200.00
Salem Trolley Tour.....	\$500.00
City View Trolley Tour.....	\$760.00
Best Western Inn Buffet & Banquet Dinners.	\$5,389.50
*Open Bar Expense at Banquet.....*	\$480.00
Gratuities for the above Venues.....	\$450.00
Hospitality Room Supplies .....	\$420.06
Reunion Challenge Gift Coins & additional gift item.....	\$673.10
**Reunion Refunds to 4 Shipmates & Their Guests.....**	\$1,561.00
Website Hosting & Maint.....	<u>\$400.00</u>
Total:.....	\$16,204.71

Receipts on file.

Respectfully Submitted,  
*Kevin McKeown, Treasurer*

\*Bar expense at banquet was \$480.00 which was paid by a Shipmate who donated \$1,500. for this purpose in 2021. Remainder (\$1,020.00) carried over in general fund as per Shipmate who made the donation.

\*\*Refunds to 4 Shipmates & Their Guests who paid but unable to attend.

# Membership Update 2022

Last Name\_\_\_\_\_First Name\_\_\_\_\_

Rate/Rank Aboard Ship\_\_\_\_\_

Dates Served aboard DD-823\_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/Domestic Partner Full Name\_\_\_\_\_

Member Home Address\_\_\_\_\_City\_\_\_\_\_  
State\_\_\_\_\_ZIP\_\_\_\_\_

Telephone\_\_\_\_\_Cell\_\_\_\_\_

E mail\_\_\_\_\_

Comments for improvement to Association\_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to - Kevin McKeown, 47 Long Beach Drive, Sound Beach, NY,  
11789**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Dues

Dues in our Association are \$15 per year and are payable January 1 of each year. Monies from dues payments go to the publishing and distribution of the Scuttlebutt, maintenance of the website and all administrative expenses. Most members pay faithfully but a number are 4, 5, even six years in arrears. Last year, the Association took in about \$1,400 in dues payments but expended over \$2,500 in above named expenses. We cannot keep on this way. If not for membership generosity, we would be broke. Yet, since we consider all of you family, we are hesitant to dun for payment. This may need to change in the future. Send your checks made out to USS Samuel B Roberts (DD-823) Shipmates Association to Kevin McKeown, 47 Long Beach Drive, Sound Beach, NY, 11789. **Please Remit Dues Now!!!**



26 Long Pond Drive Milton, VT 05468

*Sammy B. Scuttlebutt*  
A quarterly publication of the  
USS Samuel B. Roberts (DD823)  
Shipmates Association

