



USS Claude V. Ricketts/ex Biddle DDG 5 The Big Nickel

Keep on sailing great ship in our memories

#2

Next Reunion

Jacksonville, FL 30 April to 3 May 2009

There is a lot to do in Jacksonville so come early and stay late. A firm schedule has been set for the reunion. There will be a tour of Mayport Naval Station and a tour of a ship, hopefully one of the newer DDG's. We will have a hospitality room, so bring your cruise books, pictures, and memorabilia to share with everyone.

The reunion is being held at the Jacksonville Crowne Plaza. Special room rates have been arranged for the DDG 5 Crew Members Association so make sure to mention that you are with the association. Room rates are \$95.00/night for a standard city view, \$115.00/night for a standard river view, and \$155.00/night for a Jr. Suite-all river view. The rates are good for three nights before and three nights after the reunion dates. Reservations can be made with the Crowne Plaza at 904-398-8800 ext 4141. Crowne Plaza World Wide Reservations 1-800-227-6963. The cutoff date for making reservations at the hotel is 1 April 2009. After that date it will depend on availability. When you make a hotel reservation, make sure that they explain their policies for canceling a reservation, no shows, and early departures. If you have a problem making a reservation or needs assistance call Carl Slack 603-986-4661. When you make a reservation make sure you tell them you are with the DDG 5 Crew Members Association. There are other places in Jacksonville that are cheaper. For those who are eligible there are Navy Lodges and BOQ's at both Mayport and NAS Jax.

The reunion is being held at the Crowne Plaza because of the location. The hotel is right on the St John's River, across from The Landing which is an area in downtown Jacksonville for restaurants and night life. There is a ferry service which runs from different locations on the river including one near the hotel. The future site for the Charles F. Adams DDG 2 is upriver on the same side of the river as the hotel and is a short walk. You are welcome to stay anywhere and we can help you find something that meets your requirements. We get some perks from the hotel if we take 25 rooms. The most important one is the hospitality room at no charge.

Kirk Neuman is the winner of the suite. Howard Gillispie won the free upgrade to a suite.

Reunion Schedule

Thursday 30 April

1000-2300 Crew check in Hospitality room snacks and non-alcoholic beverages (BYOB)

Friday 1 May

1000 Base tour departs hotel

1300 Golf tournament

1700 to close Welcome reception with invited guests from the Jacksonville area who are supporting the Charles F Adams DDG 2 as a museum ship.

Saturday 2 May

0900 Crews meeting. Presentation of Bylaws and Constitution and vote on same.

Afternoon free

1800 to finish Buffet Dinner. Guest speaker Mr. Bert Watson of the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ships Association. Raffle, to benefit what the crew decides at the business meeting.

Sunday 3 May

0900-1100 Farewell Breakfast

Note the hospitality room will be open each night until 2300 with light snacks and non-alcoholic beverages (BYOB).

At the dinner on Saturday night we will have a raffle to raise money for whatever purpose the crew decides at their Crew Meeting Saturday morning. Everyone who can, should bring something for the raffle. Bring something that reminds you of your time on the ship, ports you visited, or where you come from. Example maple syrup from Vermont, Italian Red Wine, etc. It could also be something for a laugh.

From The Bridge

Hi Shipmates,

Well as I write this we are just over three months to our 2009 reunion in Jax. Right now it looks like it will be an excellent turnout. Now as you know times are tough just about everywhere. So, if you want to come to the reunion, but can't afford the whole thing, consider coming to part of it. The same goes for staying at the Crowne Plaza. The XO has gotten us a really great rate. I know the regular rate is a lot higher. But, if your budget, is tight (like mine) there are other options (especially if you still have an ID card). Anyway something for you to think about or ponder. The agenda is shaping up real nicely for the reunion, but I'll let the XO go into the details.

OK, a couple of reunion notes before I close this one out:

- 1) The organized tour of NAS Jax that I was looking into is off for right now due to lack of interest. If you are interested please let me know. It's easy enough to set up with the base, but interest has to be there.
- 2) Start putting together a sea story (or two) of those shipmates who have passed. At each reunion, we say the names of each Shipmate (as well as immediate family members who have passed). At the 2005 Philly reunion, we also went around the room, after all the names had been said, and asked for anyone to share a sea story or two about each of those Shipmates, so that those of us, who hadn't actually served with them, would get to know them a little better, other than just a name read at a reunion. So, put together those sea stories.

Finally as many of you know, I have announced a couple a weeks ago, that unless you, the crew, told me otherwise, my plan was to finish my service as your President, effective with the 2009 reunion. Now, I can't say how much I appreciate all of you who have contacted me, and urged me to change my mind and stay on. My heart tells me to stay on and continue as President, but my mind tells me for a number of reasons (that I won't go into right now) that it's time to go. So if you've been out there and through-I can do a better job than those guys (the XO and I) then now's the time to step forward (or for some Shipmate to push you forward, as they step back). There is a vacancy that needs to be filled. I hope that whoever we elect either at the reunion or at a future reunion, always keeps in mind (like I've tried too), that this is the DDG 5 Association. Which means that it belongs to the crew and not any one individual.

Well that's all for now. I'll put out a sort of Farewell Address at a future date. As always feel free to contact me anytime.

TCAMGB

Your Shipmate

Bob Haner

From the Quarterdeck

Shipmates,

This is the last newsletter before the reunion. This reunion marks ten years since the first reunion in Norfolk, VA in 1999. This will be the sixth reunion and promises to be the best ever, and greater times

ahead for the association. As the President Bob Haner has said the Association is not about any one individual, but about each and every crew member who served on DDG 5. From the beginning when it was the USS Biddle, through the Mixed Manning Demonstration and the change in name to the USS Claude V. Ricketts. From the first shakedown cruise to deployments in areas of the world, and many more places than world travelers get to see. The crews learned how to do their jobs through extensive training and drills. Practice and more practice and it paid off when the Ricketts when alongside the USS Belknap and helped save that ship after her collision with the USS John F Kennedy. All the Adams Class DDG's set a fine example for others to follow, and the Claude V. Ricketts was one of the best.

This reunion will also be a showcase reunion for all the Adams Class DDG's in Jacksonville. We are holding the reunion there to show our support and demonstrate what an asset the USS Charles F. Adams DDG 2 will be to Jacksonville. The Friday night Welcome Reception will be co-sponsored by DDG 5 Crew Members Association and the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ships Association. Invitations will be extended to military and civilian supporters of the Adams Museum.

Until the reunion ends on Sunday 3 May it will never be too late to attend. Two days and two events are the most important. The Friday night reception is important to show our support for the Adams Museum. It's our chance to show our support for the Adams being home ported in Jacksonville as a museum ship.

Saturday's crew meeting is also important for our Association. It will be a critical meeting that will determine how the Association will continue to grow and represent all who served on board the DDG 5. We are an association that represents everyone from the lowest non-rated to Commanding Officer. It will also be a time to remember those shipmates who have been given their final orders and now serve our Supreme Commander. Everyone should have an input to the meeting. The proposed bylaws are posted on the ships web site-[http:// thebignickel.org](http://thebignickel.org), so you can read through them and make any comments you may have before the reunion. I encourage everyone who can to attend the reunion.

If for whatever reason you cannot make it and wish to express your views email them to Slack_39 @Yahoo.com or send them to Carl Slack C/o Robert Chamberlain 4733 Devon Lane, Jacksonville, FL 32210. Unfortunately to have a vote you must be in attendance at the reunion. So if you can make the reunion even if only the Crew Meeting Saturday at 0900 please try to do so.

I again want to express my appreciation to Bob Haner and those that helped him back in 1999 to hold the first reunion. We have come a long way in the past ten years. As all journeys need to start with but one small step they took that step that has brought us here. And I know with Bob's continuing support we will sail onward to more and better times for the association.

Once again I would encourage everyone to take the time to read the bylaws posted on the web site, <http://thebignickel.org>. And also if you have not registered please do so. These bylaws are not an attempt to change things or to create a corporation or non-profit. Their purpose is to clearly state who and what we are, to establish the duties of elected officers, to make sure that it is an Association of and for all DDG 5 crew members and not that of a select few. I would like everyone to read them with an open mind and provide feedback both positive and negative. I strongly urge everyone to support the final version of the bylaws.

It is important that all crew members take the time to check out TheBigNickel.org website and to register. Registration on the site is our way of making sure we keep all crew members informed and up to date about our Association. I also recommend that everyone take the time to look at Adams Class Veterans Association Web Site and to join that group. The Adams as a museum ship in Jacksonville will represent every DDG including DDG 5.

A word from The Big Nickel Webmaster

Ahoy shipmates! I hope everyone had an enjoyable holiday season and your new year is off to a good start. I wanted to take this opportunity to tell you a little bit about **The Big Nickel**, how it came to be, why the name (if you don't already know or haven't guessed) and give you a dump about where the site is at now and where it may be going in the future.

After I retired from Lockheed Martin in 2005, I spent most of my time working on things around the house and pulling together all the family and vacation photographs (both digital and non-digital) into slide show and writing them to CDs and DVDs. It was during one of my slide show creation efforts that I had the thought that I could reduce my efforts by creating a web site and putting them on the site for all the family to see rather than burning a CD/DVD for everyone. Long story short, I ended up putting together a relatively decent family web site (or at least I thought it was decent) and used that for all my family slide shows.

I don't remember when I first registered at one of the ship's crew sites that maintain lists of crew members, but I, along with most of you, registered at a few of them. As a result I ended up getting in touch with some shipmates that I hadn't heard from since I transferred off in March of '68. Along the way, I kept Gogging for a site specific to the DDG-5, but never found one. Then, in June of last year, I received an email from Danny Timm saying that Ray Engel had passed away. I remembered that Ray and I had served together in 1st Division during the Mixed Manning Demonstration (MMD). It was then that I thought about putting together a web site dedicated to the crew that had sailed on board during the MMD. After I had played around and come up with a style that I liked and then scanning the pages out of my MMD cruise book with pictures of the crew, cropping, resizing, getting them into order and then published to the web site server, I started thinking that maybe the site should be more about all of the crews that sailed aboard both the DDG-5 when she was the USS Biddle and when she was the USS Claude V. Ricketts.

So, over the next couple of months, I tried different things and finally got something together that I thought might float and asked Danny Timm and Bob Haner to take a look at it. Bob contacted Carl Slack, who then called me and we talked about the upcoming reunion and getting the October newsletter on the site. So what you see today at <http://thebignickel.org> is the result. As an aside, you should know and bear in mind is that the site started out as and continues to be strictly a hobby. I am not now and never will be a "professional" web designer.

Now, about the name of the site. While I was on board, some of us began to call the ship by the nick name, The Big Nickel. The name stuck with me over the years and thus, when it came time for a site name, I picked it. I had thought that the nick name was crew wide and used throughout her lifetime, but based on some comments I've seen, I guess that wasn't so. So if the site name has confused you, hopefully this will allay that confusion.

I will be the first to admit that there are some short comings to the site, some major and some minor. The biggest problem right now is the registration process that I implemented. Currently it's a two-step process. The first step is the entry of your information, name, dates on-board, rank/rate, etc. The registration form also asks for your personal information, home address and phone number(s). The ship information is what is displayed in the Crew pages. The personal information is maintained in a secure database and is accessible only by me. I will only release that information to our President (Bob Haner) and/or our XO/Treasurer (Carl Slack) so they have correct addresses and phone numbers for contacting you. At this point, the information you enter is not modifiable by you. Any modifications you want to make will have to be made by me. This is a major short coming and I am working to rectify the matter in a future update of the site. As a side note, those of you that registered early on when the site first went "prime time" weren't given the opportunity to enter your personal information.

The second step in the registration process is that of registering for the Crew Forum. This registration asks for user name, password and, just recently, your real name. I put the request for your name in the registration form so that it would be possible to correlate your information from the first step with

your forum username. I put the forum in because I thought it would be a good way for shipmates to contact each other, reminisce about your ship board experiences, and post any photos you have of your ship board life and other things as they came along.

I am currently working on upgrading the whole registration process so that you will be able to edit your own information rather than having to go through me. However, this isn't going as smoothly as I had hoped it would. Firstly, I am working on learning the programming language to interface with the database where information is stored and also learning the database language to manipulate the data. Secondly, I want to make sure that things are secure and only you can modify your entered data. Thirdly, my work on the site is very part time and subject to the whims and wishes of my personal Commander-in-Chief ☺

All of that being said, I am always open to suggestions for improving or adding to the site. If you see anything that isn't right or needs changing, let me know. You can always contact me via email (captain.kirk@thebignickel.org) or by personal message via the forums.

One final thing before I close. You may or may not be wondering about my user name, Captain Kirk. Since the resurgence of Star Trek back when the first Star Trek movie was released, my co-workers started calling me Captain, of course referring to Captain James T. Kirk. Thus my "promotion" to Captain as well as the fact that I am Captain of thebignickel.org.

Thanks for visiting the site and I hope you keep coming back and participate in the forums. Hopefully you'll find shipmates you haven't seen since your ship board days and renew friendships of old.

Remember that if you have any pictures of your days on board, you're welcome to post them in the Forum Gallery.

Kirk "VJ" Neuman

Webmaster, thebignickel.org

VOLUNTEERS FOR USS CHARLES F. ADAMS RESTORATION

We need all of those former Adams Class veterans to sign up as Volunteers on our web page so that we can move ahead with our planning for the restoration of the ship after it is donated by the Navy. Even before we get to the day to day operation of the ship museum in Jacksonville, there will be a great deal of work to restore the ship to look like it did when it was at sea. The web page, www.adamsclassddgvets.org has a Volunteer link where veterans can sign up and give information about their sea duty experience so that we can plan and organize our effort. Whether you were a Deck Seaman, Gunners Mate, or Boiler Technician we will need volunteers to do everything from painting to repairing broken gauges and welding bulkheads. It will help the cause greatly if you not only sign up as a volunteer yourself, but also contact several old shipmates and get them to sign up to help us as well. The ACVA thanks all of the ship associations and veterans for their support.

Bob Branco, President ACVA



Set the special sea detail
Make ready DDG 2
Destination final Homeport Jacksonville, FL

Brought to you by the DDG 5 Crew Members Association
DDG 5 Association

XO

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The registration form has been changed. Crew Members who registered early received the early bird rate. Anyone who prepaid the \$40.00 for the base tour will receive a \$15.00 refund.

From the Fantail

In 1977 I was serving as the Disposal Office at the Naval Inactive Ships Facility (moth ball fleet) in Philadelphia PA. Was involved in turning over ships to become museums. When we were working on the Sullivans, myself and some others who had served on Adams Class DDG's through that someday we would like to see one of them as a museum. Myself and Captain Fortson felt that DDG 5 because of its history with Mixed Manning and the Belknap collision would make a great museum. Since that time I have worked off and on for that to happen. Have given my time and money to various groups working for such a museum. Now with Jacksonville we are as close as we have ever been. I also believe that it is now or never. The Adams is the last, if she goes to disposal, for anyone to see one of those ships they will have to go to Germany. That is the reason I strongly feel that this reunion is important not only for our Association but to show our support for the Charles F. Adams DDG 5 being home ported in Jacksonville, FL

Hard times

Last year coming south for the winter 60 gallons of gas cost \$185.00
August 60 gallons was \$240.00
Coming south this winter it was \$85.00

As I was driving through Connecticut on I95 there were no trucks. Why were there no trucks, no one is buying. So no trucks on the highway.

Not everything is bad, just depends on where you are and how you look at it.

My grandparents brought stock because they were buying a share in the company and they got dividends and they purchased a house to live in all their lives and not as an investment. We need to return to fundamentals.

See You All At the Reunion
Carl



**Crowne Plaza Jacksonville Riverfront
USS Claude V Ricketts/ex Biddle DDG 5
2009 Reunion Package**

Welcome Reception

Buffet Dinner

Buffet Breakfast

Hospitality Room

Adults \$90.00 per person inclusive.

Welcome Reception

Crudités, Fruit & Cheese Display

Pre-carved Ham or Turkey Display with Rolls and Condiments

Buffalo wings w/Bleu Cheese

Spanakopita

Mini Chicken Quesadillas w/ Salsa

Bacon Wrapped Scallops

Shrimp Scampi Skewers

Assorted Petit Fours

Iced Tea/water Station with lemon

Cash Bar

Buffet Dinner

Entrees

Roast Sirloin of Beef w/Au Jus

Baked Chicken w/ BBQ Sauce on side

Salad Bar

Romaine lettuce, tossed greens, Roma Tomatoes, Cucumbers, Shredded Parmesan Cheese, Croutons, Choice of Salad Dressing.

Side Dishes

Green Beans, Carrots & Broccoli, Wild Rice Pilaf

Deserts

Assorted desserts to include

Key Lime Pie, Cheese Cake, Carrot Cake, Chocolate Delight

Coffee, Decaf & Iced Tea

Cash Bar

Breakfast Buffet

Orange Juice, Sliced Fruit and Berries

Scrambled Eggs, Bacon and Sausage

Southern Style Grits, Biscuits w/sausage gravy, Butter and preserves.

Coffee, Decaffeinated Coffee, Specialty & Iced Tea

DDG5 Association
Reunion 30 April to 3 May 2009

Reunion Registration Form

Please complete and return your registration no later than 15 April 2009. Please use this form and not the earlier form. After 15 April bring the form with you.

Please print name of attendees:

Crew member _____
Spouse _____
Children _____
Guest's _____

The registration fee is \$90.00 for each attendee over age 18. The registration fee includes three days of the hospitality room with snacks and non-alcoholic beverages (BYOB). A welcome reception on Friday night. Buffet Dinner on Saturday night. Sunday Farewell Breakfast. Name Badges and a souvenir pin for the first seventy who register.

Number of persons attending _____ X \$90.00 = \$ _____

Tour of Navy Base Mayport _____ number attending _____ X \$25.00 = \$ _____

Golf Tournament \$24.00 Green Fees and cart pay at club number Playing _____

Donation to the Association \$ _____

___No Reception -\$15.00 ___No Dinner -\$50.00 ___No Breakfast -\$15.00 \$ - _____

*****Total Amount Remitted*****

Balance due by 15 April 2009 after that date bring it with you. \$ _____

Name _____

Signature _____

Address _____

Telephone # _____ Email address _____

Comments _____

Make Checks payable to DDG 5 Association, Mail to DDG 5 Association, C/o Robert Chamberlain, 4733 Devon Lane, Jacksonville, FL 32210

Make Hotel Reservations directly with the Crowne Plaza. 904-398-8800 ext 4141, 800-227-6963. Make sure you tell them you are with the DDG 5 Crew Members Association.

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