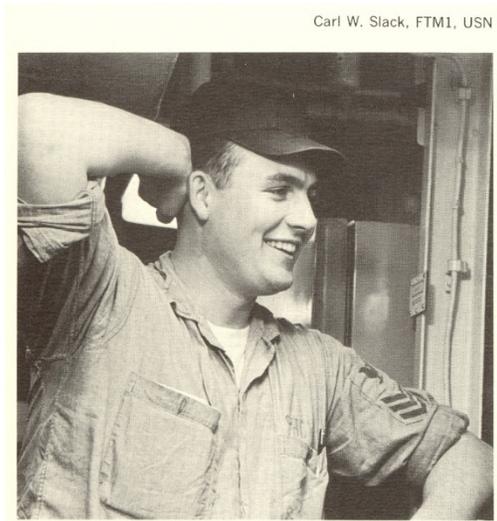




USS Claude V. Ricketts / (formerly) USS Biddle DDG-5 The Big Nickel #14, July, 2015

Executive Director FTM1 Carl William Slack (9/63 – 9/68) Passes Away 8 April, 2015



Carl in 1964 on board the USS Claude V. Ricketts during the Mixed Manning Demonstration (MMD)



Carl at the 2014 Reunion 50th Anniversary Ceremony of the commissioning of the ship as the USS Claude V. Ricketts, July 28, 2014

Carl William Slack was the DDG-5 Crew Members Association Executive Director from 2009. He was the driving force behind the reunions in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2014.

Carl was born in Hammington, New Jersey June 18, 1941. He passed away in Polatka, Florida April 8, 2015. Carl joined the U.S. Navy in June 1960. His career in the Navy is capsulated in the table below.

Years	Duty Station	Rank/Rate
1960	RTC Great Lakes	SA
1960 – 1961	Fire Control Tech A/C-School	SN
1961 – 1961	USS Stribling DD-867	SN
1961 – 1962	USS Robinson DD-562	FTM3
1962 – 1962	USS Leahy DLG-16	FTM3

1962 – 1963	Fire Control B-School	FTM2
1963 – 1964	USS Biddle DDG-5	FTM2
1964 – 1968	USS Claude V. Ricketts DDG-5	FTM1
1968 – 1969	Instructor, Dam Neck, VA	FTM1
1969 – 1971	Obtained Assoc. Deg., Industrial Management	FTM1
1971 – 1972	USS Conyngham (DDG-17)	FTM1
1972 – 1976	USS Richard L. Paige DEG-5	FTMCS
1976 – 1977	NRMF, Philadelphia	FTMMC
1977 – 1978	NSY Philadelphia	ENS
1978 – 1979	USS America CVA-66	LTJG

Carl retired from the U.S. Navy in 1979. He remained active in some of the ship originations and reunions that he had served on. At the reunion in Jacksonville, Florida in 2009, Carl was influential in the formation of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association, insuring the creation of Association bylaws and ensuring the passage of those bylaws at the Crew Meeting during that reunion.

Carl will be greatly missed, especially by those of us who worked with him over the years in planning and executing the DDG-5 Crew Members Association reunions. For those of us currently planning the 2016 Reunion in Jacksonville, Florida next May 12 – 15, 2016, we can only hope that we do justice to Carl's memory. We have plans for a special memorial for Carl during the reunion and if you would like to have input on what should be included, please contact the [Reunion Committee](#).

Individual memories of Carl are included at the end of this newsletter.

2016 Reunion Information

Plans for the 2016 Reunion of DDG-5 Crew Members Association are currently underway. With the passing of Carl Slack, who was the primary Reunion Coordinator for the past 4 reunions, a [Reunion Committee](#) made up of 3 members of the Executive Council was formed to try and step into Carl's shoes. Members are: Glenn Johnson, LeRoy Kidd and Kirk Neuman. If you would like to volunteer (I know, something a Sailor never does) to help out, contact the [Reunion Committee](#) and we'll be glad to assign some job(s) ☺

Glenn Johnson, Executive Director and Vice President, has recently signed the contract with the Crowne Plaza Jacksonville Riverfront to be the host hotel for our reunion, Thursday, May 12 – Sunday, May 15, 2016. The Crowne Plaza will be rebranded the DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Jacksonville Riverfront in September, 2015 after undergoing a \$5 million renovation and that is the link you will see when you visit the [2016 Reunion website page](#).

When you visit the 2016 Reunion website page, you will find buttons to the reunion schedule (currently very tentative and subject to change), a 2016 Reunion Attendance Survey (which you are encouraged to fill out if you are planning or just thinking about coming to the reunion), current information about Shipmates who have already filled out the survey, access to reunion registration forms (payable by personal check or via PayPal), and access to the hotel room reservation process. Note that the reunion registration forms won't be available until late summer 2015 as the reunion committee is still working out costs and we are still waiting on the hotel reservation information. The reunion hotel room reservation process information will also be available sometime late summer 2015. [Continue to check the 2016 Reunion website page for updates.](#)

We're planning on the Charles F. Adams (DDG-2) being in Jacksonville during the reunion and are planning to hold the Crew Memorial on board. We are also planning a "work party" on Friday, May 13, for the Adams, assuming they need work done, which is very probable. For those who sign up for the work party your

spouse/significant other will have a probable tour to St. Augustine, FL, the oldest city in the United States, for a day of touring the historic city, and of course, shopping. The tour isn't set in concrete yet and is subject to change.

Please continue to visit the [2016 Reunion website page](#) for updates to the schedule and other information as they come available. If you haven't been to a reunion before, they are fun and you get to get reacquainted with other shipmates you may have served with or those who served before or after you. If you haven't been to a reunion recently, you should really try to make this one.

Your Reunion Committee has arranged with the Crowne Plaza/DoubleTree for special room rates for members of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association (of which you all are members). We have also arranged to have those rates in effect 3 days prior to and 3 days after the reunion start and end dates (May 10, 2016 to May 17, 2016). Again, information about room reservations will be posted on [TheBigNickel website](#) when it becomes available, probably late August/early September.

Please take the time to fill out the survey, accessible via the [2016 Reunion page](#), if you are planning on or just thinking about attending the reunion. The information you provide will be used by the reunion committee for reunion event planning so it's important that you take a few minutes to fill out the survey. If after submitting your survey information you have changes you'd like made, contact Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy with your information updates and he will do them for you.

Once the arrangements with the hotel for room reservations have been finalized, a special edition of this newsletter will be sent out with pertinent information. You should also continue to check the [2016 Reunion page](#) on the website for any updates as they will be implemented as soon I know anything.

If you have any questions about the 2016 Reunion, don't hesitate to contact the [Reunion Committee](#).

Executive Director/Vice President

BT2 Glenn R. Johnson (64 – 68): gjohn11905@gmail.com



Dear Shipmates and Families

It has been a difficult past few months with the passing of our dear friend and leader Carl Slack. I don't feel that a newsletter article would fairly do justice or is the proper place to eulogize our friend Carl, however I do feel compelled to say a few things about him.

I have known Carl for about 50 years since we both served together on board the DDG-5, but worked more closely with him over the past 6 years. Carl never met a Shipmate that he didn't already know. That's what made Carl an interesting character and that is why so many of us got to know him and gathered around him to hear a good "sea story".

I spent the last days and hours of Carl's life at his bedside, watching him slowly make his pathway home. He was a man at peace and in no pain. He leaves his wonderful wife Beverly, two daughters, three grandchildren,

his brother and sister, his mother, many nephews, nieces, many personal friends, fishing buddies, Shipmates, and acquaintances.

We will all have an opportunity to talk about our memories of Carl at our reunion in Jacksonville FL in May of 2016. ([Click here to check the website for the latest 2016 Reunion details and information](#)). I am hoping for a great turnout. Nothing would make Carl happier than all of us together telling “Carl Stories”.

One of Carl’s last requests was that I take his place as Executive Director of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association. I agreed and contacted the other members of the Executive Council for their vote of confidence in me. They voted unanimously for me to take Carl’s place and for that I am very appreciative. We have a great council and are willing to help me with anything that requires attention. I will never pretend to try and fill Carl’s shoes, however with everyone’s help we will make this a very successful organization that is known for its good times, great events and helping where and when we can in the name of USS Biddle/USS Claude V. Ricketts DDG-5, its officers, and crew.

As you all know, Carl always had a lot of things on his plate that needed attention at some point in time. I, along with a great Executive Council are picking up where Carl left off. We are planning for a great reunion next year in Jacksonville. I most recently signed the contract with the Crown Plaza Riverfront (soon to be the Doubletree Hotel Riverfront) in Jacksonville FL. We have had reunions there in the past and they do a great job of being the host hotel including catering and working with us to help satisfy our needs during the reunions. You can be assured that the reunion will be fun and eventful!

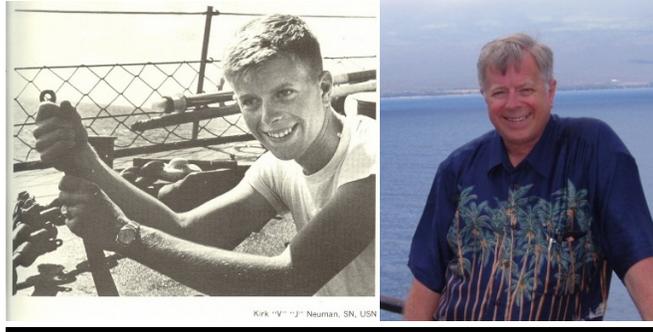
The next thing on my agenda was to obtain tax exempt status for the DDG-5 Crew Members Association. I applied and recently received notification from the IRS informing us that we qualify and now have 501 (c) (3) status. This will allow donors to deduct contributions they make to us and we are also qualified to receive tax deductible bequest, devises, transfers or gifts. This is a big step in obtaining funds which will allow us to help others and grow our organization. I am excited about discussing our possibilities with the Executive Council and at the Crew Meeting during the reunion next year.

I hope this article finds everyone in good health and safe. I ask that you all please take a moment to look at the reunion information provided on the website. Please register early and fill out the necessary forms provided on the site. Also, if you are coming to the reunion or just thinking about coming, take time to fill out the Reunion Attendance Survey available on the [2016 Reunion site page](#). This is important and necessary for the successful planning of our event. Kirk has worked hard to make this a very user friendly process. If you have any questions or suggestions about any of the processes, [feel free to shoot Kirk an email](#). He is great at what he does and will work with you. Contact a Shipmate and bring a friend to the reunion! Hope to see you at the May 2016 Reunion.

Sincerely, Your friend and fellow Shipmate,

Glenn Johnson
Executive Director and Vice President of DDG-5 Crew Members Association

A word from the Webmaster



1964

2013

RD2 Kirk “VJ” Neuman (7/64 - 3/68): Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy
TheBigNickel.Navy – USSClaudeVRicketts.Navy

I encourage you to check/update your registration information if you have not done so recently. Simply click the BRB (Big Red Button) on the Home Port page for instructions on how to do this. I am asking you to do this because there are some of you who have changed your email address since you registered. As always, if you have questions or problems you can [contact me](#).

As of the end of October, 2014 we now have a new domain extension. You can now reach the website by going to TheBigNickel.Navy or USSClaudeVRicketts.Navy. The existing domain extension (*.org) will remain active for the time being, but I would encourage you to change any bookmarks you currently have to the new site link(s) since at some point I'm going to cancel the domain renewal (saves me some \$s).

In addition, if you have not yet [registered on the website](#), I would encourage you to do that. It is easy to do and the information you enter will be kept private except for on board information, which will be displayed in the Crew Roster. If you are already registered and log in to the website, you will be able to email other registered shipmates via the Crew Roster as well as being kept up-to-date on activities for the DDG-5 Crew Members Association. If you have questions or problems registering, please [contact me](#).

On November 7, 2014, I had a major senior moment and managed to take the website down. In order to fix things, I had to do a total reinstall of the Crew Forums. During that reinstall I think I lost some of the pictures some of you had uploaded to the Forum Gallery. If your pictures are not there, I sincerely apologize and will accept any flogging you think is necessary.

A word from the Storekeeper



RD2 Kirk “VJ” Neuman (64 – 67): Storekeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy

The [DDG-5 ships store](#) is open for business. Items for sale include ships cups, ships hats, ships patches, challenge coins, polo shirts and denim shirts (long and short sleeve). I've implemented a new order form that you can now fill out on-line with buttons at the bottom to save and/or print the form. I'm also reworking the

postage rates based on your order. Sorry to say that postage has gone up a bit and I will be making changes to the order form to accommodate those changes. Until I have those changes in place, I will eat whatever the difference is.

I've also added a pay via PayPal button near the bottom of the Ship's Store page for those who may want to pay that way rather than sending a check. Note that there is an additional fee for using the PayPal method. Unfortunately, my pockets are only so deep and I can't really afford to absorb the fee PayPal charges. Should you want use the PayPal method, make sure to email me your order form.

If you will be placing orders to be delivered at the 2016 Reunion in Jacksonville, **please make sure to get your orders in by April 1, 2016.** My wife and I will be heading out for Jacksonville (driving) on 8 May and I will need time to get your orders processed. This is especially true if you are ordering shirts and you would like them embroidered with your name, rank/rate, time on board, or any other information. I will have with me a dozen or so of the short sleeve denim shirts in sizes L, XL and 2XL with the DDG-5 CMA logo over the left pocket, but no other embroidery. I will also have with me short sleeve polo shirts in various sizes with the DDG-5 CMA logo over the left breast, but no other embroidery. If I don't have in stock at the reunion what you are looking for, you can order it and I will get it to you within a week or two after I get home.

The Amen Corner

BM3 Wayne Miller (65 – 68): Choicemedtrans@optonline.net

Taps:

We have received notification of the passing of the following shipmates and family members since the last newsletter:

- [SN Walter William Tushkow](#) (March 1968 - November 1970), September 15, 2013. You can view his [obituary here](#).
- EW1 Kermit "Ed" Williams (Years on board uncertain. If you remember Kermit, [please contact Captain Kirk](#) with any information you may have.), May 22, 2001. You can view his [obituary here](#).
- [FTM1 Carl William Slack](#) (1963 - 1968), April 8, 2015. Carl was the DDG-5 Crew Members Association Executive Director from 2009 until his death. He was the driving force behind the reunions in 2009, 2010, 2012 and 2014. [You can view his obituary here](#). You can view his duty stations during his [20 years of Navy service here](#).
- MMCS Gary Brown (1988 - 1989), 1990. Passed away from cancer in upstate New York. If you have any information about Chief Brown, [please contact Captain Kirk](#).
- LCDR Leo Donald "Donnie" King (Member of the 1989 decom crew), November 27, 2009. You can view his obituary [here](#) and [here](#).

2015 JFK Reunion

A reunion for the USS John F. Kennedy CV-67 is being planned for this coming August, 2015. As part of the reunion is a dinner on August 20, 2015, honoring the crews of the USS Belknap CG-26 and the USS Claude V. Ricketts DDG-5 for their parts during the collision of the Kennedy and the Belknap the night of November 22, 1975. If you are interested in attending the August 20th dinner, please contact Bob Haner at bobnghaner@yahoo.com for the reunion specifics.

Bring Home The Adams Updates



The Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association (JHNSA) is hard at work in their efforts to bring the USS Charles F. Adams DDG-2 to Jacksonville, FL as a museum ship. They continue to maintain the Adams Class Museum in downtown Jacksonville at the Jacksonville Landing. If you find yourself in Jacksonville, stop by and say hello.

As part of this project, the DDG-5 Crew Members Association sponsored two hull plates at \$2500 each. The Starboard Hull Plate collection was completed at the 2012 Reunion. The Port Hull Plate collection was completed at the 2014 Reunion. Even though we have completed the Hull Plate drive, donations can still be made to Save the Adams by going online to the [Adams Class Museum website](#).

The latest word as of this newsletter is that the USS Adams will be in Jacksonville yet this year (2015). An article in the [Jacksonville Business Journal](#) on November 13, 2014 indicated that the Navy will hand over the Adams to the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association (JHNSA) “which should happen at any moment.”

The Adams is in rough shape after nearly 25 years and will need lots of help to get back to her former glory.



Below are photographs showing the existing Shipyards Downtown Jacksonville (left) and an artist's rendition of the USS Adams DDG-2 moored amidst the redeveloped shipyards (right).



Shipmate Memories of Carl Slack

FTM2 Michael Margeotes (on board 4/65 – 4/70):

The year was 1965 and here I was a snot-nosed 19-year-old FTMSN being assigned to the USS Claude V Ricketts right out of “A” school. That’s when I met the unflappable, except when it came to talking, Carl Slack. Somewhere between being an E3 and an E5 I was fortunate to become good friends with Carl. I guess it started when he conned me into being on the welfare and recreation committee. I became the guy who set up the projector, showed movies on the mess decks on movie night and the gofer for everything else Carl needed for the committee. It’s okay because it turned out to be a blast.

On our 1968 Med Cruise Carl got permission for me to rent a van in Palermo, Sicily and drive to a US base in Cantania, Sicily. I pick up 30 cases of Heineken beer for a ship’s party we planned on the beach in Valletta, Malta. We stored the beer under the fantail in the laundry room. Thanks to Carl the party was a hit. Most came back to the ship feeling good, some were, excuse the expression, shit-faced and some we literally carried back on board. One shipmate named Dyer was stoned, not drunk, but stoned with stones, but only on his legs. All had a great time, even Dyer, thanks again to Carl.

Carl and Bev visited Marcella and I several times at our apartment while I was attending “C” school in Dam Neck and a couple of times at our home in Pennsylvania. I don’t remember Carl being quite the talker back in the sixties, but he sure made up for it at the reunions. Thanks to Carl I started coming to the reunions in 2007 and haven’t missed one since.

At the 2007 reunion is when Carl again conned me into a committee, this time as Treasurer of the Association. He was probably the one that in a round-about way conned me into researching and writing the history of the CVR. By the way, I am very thankful for that.

I only remember a piece of two stories Carl once told me, one was about a house his family owned in somewhat of a swamp on the Jersey shore and the other was a funny story on how he once had to carry Grace Kelly. Hopefully Bev can fill us in on the details of these two stories.

When it came to the CVR and the Paige there wasn’t much that Carl didn’t know. If you mentioned either one of these ships Carl could talk for an hour. I once told Carl that if he really got bored and no one was around he was capable of carrying on a conversation with the wall.

Over the years Carl worked very hard and was the backbone for raising funds for the Port and Starboard Hull Plates. It is very sad that Carl won’t get to see the arrival of the Adams in Jacksonville come to fruition.

Carl will always be in my heart and my memory as a shipmate, a story teller, a naval historian and most of all as a good friend. He will be sorely missed, especially at the 2016 reunion.

FN Pat "Spider" Raines, ex Royal Navy (on board during the MMD, 7/64 – 12/65):

Hi shipmates of "The Big Nickel".

Where to start? Well I guess July 1964. So here goes. I joined the USS "Claude V Ricketts" in early July, 1964, and was assigned to "R" Division. Because Carl was in 2nd Division our paths rarely crossed, except perhaps when I was cleaning the A.C.U. filters. Therefore, thru out MMD we hardly knew each other.

Fast forward to Washington DC, July 2014. It was the day before my wife Carols birthday and were having dinner with my old run ashore buddy, Ron Beckett. We decided to visit Georgetown as a birthday treat. Ron declined, saying we did not want a Missouri "redneck" tagging along. Next day the three of us were having breakfast with Carl and Bev when Ron changed his mind. He was at a loose end for the day awaiting the arrival of his sister Regie and her husband Jamie from Florida. It was here that Carl stepped in. Ever generous he offered the keys to his car. None of us fancied driving in DC so Carl said he'd take us. (Bev was not consulted!)

The fun started at the hotel reception forecourt when Carl went LEFT round the mini roundabout. Ron, sat in the front passenger seat, said " did you not see the arrows? " No" said Carl. " I guess you did'nt see the Indians either" said Ron. (as referred to in my earlier missive). Well, from then on it was like a Mack Sennett comedy between Carl and Ron. We were actually nearly in Georgetown when we met traffic & roadworks. Carl, stubborn as ever followed his SatNav & off we went. If we went thru Rock Creek Park once we went thru four times. We even saw the same woman jogger three times! He eventually dropped us off, and the three of us had a great day.

Carl was irascible, stubborn at times, but always generous to a fault. On the same theme, carl was driving Carol & myself to New York after a day & night in Norfolk. En route we had an unforeseen tour of the Little Creek Navy Base with a couple of assault carriers alongside! There then followed an unforgettable drive north including a tour of the less salubrious areas of Staten Island (SatNav again!) before crossing the Verrazano Narrows bridge into Brooklyn. Ah well all went well in the end & we're back here in Spain OK.

Carl, God bless you. Safe sailing, having crossed the bar.

Yours Aye,
Pat "Spider" Raines, ex Royal Navy,
MMD, USS Claude V Ricketts, 1964/65.

RD2 Kirk "VJ" Neuman (on board 7/64 – 3/68):

Carl and I served together during the Mixed Manning Demonstration and for a few more years after. Since I went straight to 1st Division when I first reported on board and then transferred to OI Division after the MMD where I spent the remainder of my time on the ship, Carl and I weren't really acquainted though we knew each other while on board.

It wasn't until 2008 when I first started putting together the website, TheBigNickel.Navy, that Carl and I connected again. He found out about the website I was developing dedicated to the ship and her various crews. He called me one Sunday morning in September of 2008 to talk about how the website might be used to spread the word about reunions and other information. At that time Carl was working on plans for the 2009 Reunion to be held in Jacksonville, FL and he pushed me to register to attend. Up to that time I'm sorry to say that I had never attended let alone think about attending a ship's reunion and was

hesitant to commit. But in typical Carl fashion he kept on me until I more-or-less said that I would attend along with my wife, Anne. Of course it didn't hurt when Carl told me that my name had been drawn for the free suite for the duration of the reunion. I still wonder today if that wasn't somehow fixed.

Before I really knew what was happening, I was soon deeply involved in the infancy of the formation of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association, assisting Carl in putting together the Association By-Laws, helping with the first Big Nickel newsletter, and adding information about the upcoming 2009 Reunion to the website. There was lots to do and I learned a lot about web design that I originally hadn't thought I needed to know and in that I'm thankful to Carl for getting me so involved since I think it's made the site better than it would have been otherwise.

For the next 6 years, Carl and I had a more-or-less love/hate relationship, though we became good friends. We both had our own ideas about how the Association should evolve and how the website should be used in that evolution. Carl had the idea that the website should be the Association website, while I wanted it to remain more-or-less independent while providing Association information and support. I think in the end, I won out.

Also during those years, Carl "volunteered" me to be in addition to The Big Nickel Webmaster, but also the Newsletter Editor and the Ship's Storekeeper. I don't regret taking either of those positions although I need to apologize for not getting this newsletter out sooner, but circumstances here at home and other things have caused various delays.

I will miss Carl and his irascible ways. If it weren't for the driving force that Carl was, I don't believe that we would have the DDG-5 Crew Member Association that we have today.