



## USS Claude V. Ricketts / (formerly) USS Biddle DDG-5 The Big Nickel #15, February, 2016

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### 2016 Reunion Information

Plans for the 2016 Reunion of DDG-5 Crew Members Association are coming together. 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 of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association, has signed the contract with the (now) DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Riverfront to be the host hotel for our reunion, Thursday, May 12 – Sunday, May 15, 2016.



When you visit the 2016 Reunion website page, you will find buttons to the reunion schedule (currently 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. [Continue to check the 2016 Reunion website page for updates](#). If you have already filled out the Reunion Survey and need to make changes, [please contact me](#) with those changes and I'll update the database.

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 (see the information in the Bring Home the Adams Updates later in this newsletter). If we aren't able to hold the Memorial on board the Adams for any reason, we will hold the ceremony at the Statue of the Lone Sailor as we have done at past reunions in Jacksonville. If the Adams is there, we are also planning a "work party" on Friday, May 13, 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 available a 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.

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 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 is posted on [TheBigNickel website](#). If you don't use the on-line reservation form the hotel has made available to us and make your reservations by phone, remember to inform them that you are a member of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association and that you get the room discount rate.

Again, 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](mailto:Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy) with your information updates and he will do them for you.

Attached to the end of this newsletter is the Reunion Registration Form for you to fill out (if you don't use the on-line versions). Print the form and then mail to Michael Margeotes along with your check/money order. If you have any questions, don't hesitate to contact the [Reunion Committee](#).

I have been requested to put together a PowerPoint presentation about the website. I find that I'm too close to things and can't see the forest-for-the-trees and would like any recommendations you may have about what you would want to see in the presentation. I also plan on posting it on the website shortly after the end of the reunion for those who aren't there or if you are there and wish to be punished again ☺ Any recommendations should be sent to me at [Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy](mailto:Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.Navy).

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

## **Ricketts' Family Push for New USS Claude V. Ricketts Arleigh Burke Class Destroyer**

Just before Thanksgiving last year, I received an email from J. Bruce Ricketts, grandson of Claude V. Ricketts. This was the contents of the email:

Bruce Ricketts here — I'm the grandson of Admiral Claude V. Ricketts and retired from the Navy Reserves as a Commander in 2004. I had the privilege of conning the Claude V. Ricketts while an Ensign (I was in the battle group, stationed aboard USS Caron (DD-970) at the time). I wanted to let you know of a Ricketts' family effort to have an Arleigh Burke class destroyer named the USS Claude V. Ricketts. We are gaining Congressional support as evidenced by the attached letter.

I just wanted to connect to let you know of this focused effort and see if there is any other information I can provide.

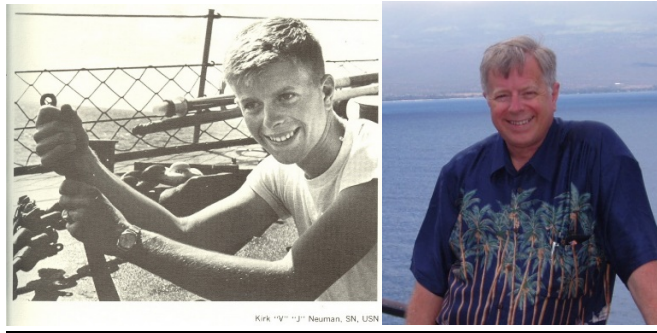
Bruce included a copy of a letter sent by Sam Graves to Secretary of the Navy, Ray Mabus, about this possibility. You can [view the letter by clicking here](#) (it is an Adobe PDF file so you will need at least the [Adobe Reader](#)). If you would like to see another Claude V. Ricketts sailing the seas, write your congressman/woman asking that he/she contact SecNav. To find your local congressman/woman, [click here to find him/her by zip code](#).

## Ship's Treasurer



FTM2 Michael Margeotes (65 – 70): [margeotesm@msn.com](mailto:margeotesm@msn.com)  
Current Association Account Balance: \$1015.09

## A word from the Webmaster



1964

2013

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

### Shipmate Information Database Update:

Since its inception in late 2008, nearly 500 shipmates have registered on [The Big Nickel website](#). I'm currently working on a database clean up and have removed a number of data entries that weren't consistent or duplicated across various tables in the database and attempting to put together a "good email list" from the registration database table and the Master Crew List database table. The Master Crew List is an Excel spreadsheet of some 700+ shipmates who served on board the DDG-5 that was put together by Carl Slack over the years from information on various Navy websites that shipmates registered on. Because I've been trying to clean up things, I have sent out an email or two to see if the email addresses I have are good or not (not meaning I get a bounced email indicating I have a bad address). Also, because of this I'm asking that you log into the site and check/update your information and/or ensure that your registration information is still there and up-to-date. Instructions for doing this are on the website home page, accessible by clicking on the red button titled **"How To Check/Update Your Registration Info."**

Some of you receiving this email have not registered on the website, for one reason or another, and may wonder where we got your email address from. As mentioned above, over the years our late Association Executive Director, Carl Slack, FTM1, 1963 - 1968, gathered emails from various websites where you "reported on board" and left your name and email. He built a spreadsheet with as much information about you that he could find. The end result is something that I call the Master Crew List (MCL). The MCL has some 725 shipmates listed. I have combined both the MCL and those registered on the website into the mailing list used to send out this newsletter.

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](#).

Presently, I have a "bad email list" consisting of shipmates we've either lost contact with or never actually contacted over the years. I will be updating the "bad email list" on the website in an attempt to regain contact with those we've lost. If you are in contact with shipmates, I would ask that you see if their email address is in the "bad email list" and have them contact [me](#) with their latest, up-to-date information.

**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](#).**

Regardless if you are registered on the site or not, you will still receive this newsletter (assuming that the email address I have for you is up-to-date) based off of the Master Crew List (a list of shipmate information Carl Slack put together over the years based off information you filled in on other ship registration sites) and the Crew Roster information I have from your registration.

### **Transition from TheBigNickel.org to TheBigNickel.Navy:**

The \*.ORG designation for the website is being canceled to be replaced by the \*.NAVY designation. Cancellation will take place over the next couple of months so you, if you haven't already, you should change any browser bookmarks accordingly. Also, I have replaced all of the \*.org email addresses with \*.navy addresses (i.e., Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.org is now [Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.navy](mailto:Captain.Kirk@TheBigNickel.navy)) so you should update your email address book(s) accordingly.

## A word from the Storekeeper



RD2 Kirk "VJ" Neuman (64 – 67): [Storekeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy](mailto: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.

Unfortunately, I've had to raise prices on the normal hats since my embroidery costs have gone up. So far that is the only price increase, however other increases may happen over time.

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 5 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 Crew Members Association 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 (probably around the 25<sup>th</sup> of May).

## The Amen Corner

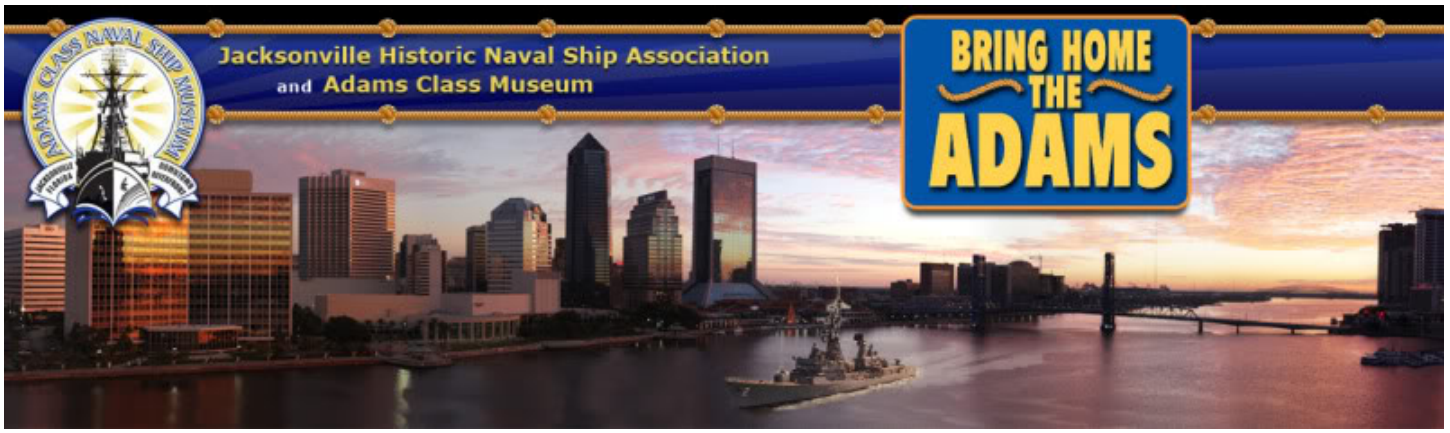
BM3 Wayne Miller (65 – 68): [Choicemedtrans@optonline.net](mailto:Choicemedtrans@optonline.net)

### **Taps:**

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

- MMCS Gary Brown (1988 - 1989), 1990. Passed away from cancer in upstate New York. If you have any information about Chief Brown, [please contact me](#).
- LCDR Leo Donald "Donnie" King (Member of the 1989 decom crew), November 27, 2009. You can view his obituary [here](#) and [here](#).
- BT3 Dennis "Bozo" Brzozowski (1968), August 13, 2015. You can view his obituary [here](#).
- GMGSN James Churko (8/64 - 1/65), October 13, 2015. You can view his obituary [here](#).

## 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.

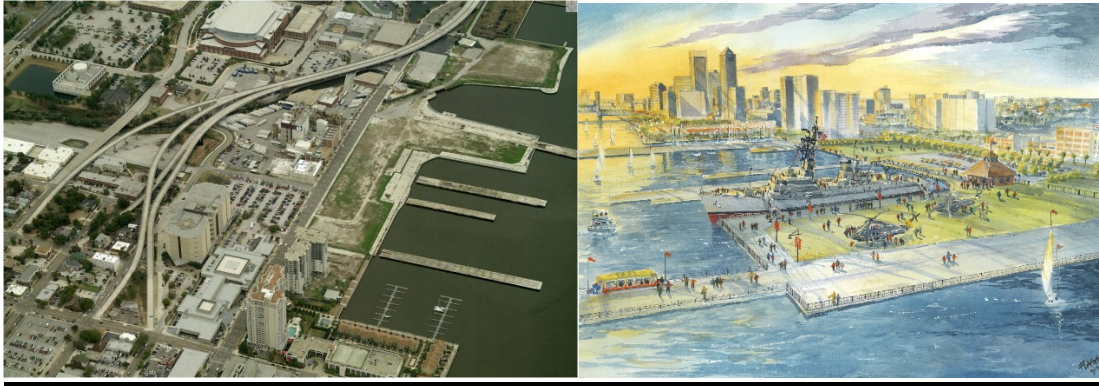
As part of this project, the DDG-5 Crew Members Association sponsored two hull plates at \$2500 each. The Starboard Hull Plate collection was completed at the 2012 Reunion. The Port Hull Plate collection was completed at the 2014 Reunion. Even though we have completed the Hull Plate drive, donations 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 April or May this year (2016). 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).



## **Reunion Registration Form**

Print the form on the following page, fill it out and send to Mike Margeotes (address is on the form) along with your check or money order. If you would rather use the on-line form(s), you can access them from the [2016 Reunion Page](#).

*As an incentive to getting your registration form in early, we have two perks from the hotel which will be awarded in a drawing on April 15 of those who have sent in their forms. The first award will be for an upgrade to a Jr. Suite at our regular \$99 room rate. The second award is for a complimentary (read FREE) Jr. Suite for up to 5 nights.*

**2016 DDG-5 Reunion Registration**  
**DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel Jacksonville Riverfront**  
**May 12 – May 15, 2016: Jacksonville, Florida**

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Send this form along with your check no later than 1 April 2016. After 1 April, bring the form and payment with you.

**Please print names of attendees as you want them to appear on the name badge:**

Crew member name: \_\_\_\_\_ Years onboard (i.e., 7/64 – 3/68) \_\_\_\_\_  
Spouse/Significant other: \_\_\_\_\_  
Guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Registration includes use of the hospitality room with snacks and non-alcoholic beverages (BYOB for alcoholic beverages), name badges and reunion pin (1<sup>st</sup> 100 registries). A coffee mug is also available for registries if wanted.

Crewmember fee	\$45 = \$45
Spouse fee:	\$25 = _____
Guests:	Number attending: _____ X\$45 = _____
Pizza Party:	Number attending: _____ X\$10 = _____
Tour:	Number attending: _____ X\$55 = _____
Welcome reception:	Number attending: _____ X\$40 = _____
Dinner:	Number attending: _____ X\$55 = _____
Donation toward the Charles F. Adams DDG-2	_____
Additional DDG-5 Crew Members Association Donation	_____
Association Dues	\$10 = \$10

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Total registration fee: \_\_\_\_\_

If you would like to pay a deposit now and the balance when you check in at the reunion. As we do not accept credit cards, the balance due must be paid in cash, check or money order. **\$20 of the deposit is non-refundable.**

Deposit Amount (Minimum \$20): \_\_\_\_\_  
Reunion registration balance due (Total fee – Deposit): \_\_\_\_\_  
Send a check with this amount (Either Total due or Deposit amount): \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address 1): \_\_\_\_\_  
Address (2): \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_  
Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

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Make check payable to **DDG 5 Crew Members Association**. Mail to:  
DDG-5 2016 Reunion C/o Michael Margeotes  
49 Columbia Blvd.  
E. Stroudsburg, PA 18302

Make hotel reservations directly with the hotel (1-800-222-8733). Make sure to tell them you are with the **DDG-5 Crew Members Association**. See the website for more details:  
<http://thebignickel.navy/2016Reunion.html>. Also, please fill out the Reunion Survey if you haven't already done so.