



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

May it always remain in our hearts

#1

A ship is put together with tons of parts. DDG 5 was built at New York Shipbuilding and Drydock in Camden, NJ. Launched into the Delaware River and manned by crews for the time it was in commission. What makes a ship is not only the steel and bolts that she is built with, but the crews who served on her. It's that crew who become shipmates and who keep the ship alive long after she has finished her service and been reduced to scrap metal. All of the shipmates who served on the Claude V or Biddle or as I say DDG 5 retain memories of their time aboard her. They remember the good and the bad. But as time goes by for the most part there seems to be more good memories than bad. Even some of the bad times often make for great sea stories. It is these memories that bring the crew members together for a ship's reunion. A reunion is a time to get together with old shipmates, to meet new ones and catch up on the latest happenings in our lives, and to relive those days of our youth. Remembering days spent at sea or in port, GQ or liberty and all the other things that happen during our time on board. There was a lot of seawater that passed under the keel of our ship, from cruises to the Med, Northern Europe, and warm southern waters. DDG 5 played an important roll in the Cold War. She took part in the Cuban Missile Crisis, Mixed Manning Demonstration, Yon Kipper War, Belknap fire, and many more events.

### Next Reunion

#### Next Reunion Jacksonville, FL 30 April to 3 May 2009

There is a lot to do in Jacksonville so come early and stay late. Plans are still to be firmed up for the reunion. There is a plan to have a tour of Mayport Naval Station and 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. 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. Room 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. 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 done at the Crowne Plaza because of the location. It 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 near the hotel. The future site for the Charles F. Adams is upriver same side of the river as the hotel 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. We

also receive one Jr. Suite free for the reunion, and one upgrade from a standard room to a Jr. Suite. These will be raffled off. Everyone who gets their registration form in by 1 Jan 2009 will be put into the drawing. If we do not meet our minimum requirement for rooms those winners will receive another prize.

## From The Bridge

Hi Shipmates,

As our next reunion draws closer (30 April-03 May 2009 in Jax) it's time for another newsletter. Our XO – Carl Slack is taking care of this one. Now, we really need to put an effort in getting as many shipmates as possible to this reunion. I know Carl is putting a lot of effort into it. So, let's make it a successful one.

Now, a couple of quick items:

1) Reunion Tours – Carl is working on a tour (or tours) at NAVSTA Mayport and will have more on that. I'm working on a tour at NAS JAX. What I'd like to know from y'all, is the interest there to do a tour at NAS Jax. It's easy to set up and do, but if the interest isn't there, then it isn't. I know most of the crew are surface sailors. I spent 13 out of just over 20 years on the airdale side. So, I know I'm interested, but need to know if anyone else is. From what I found out, it would be a basic tour of the base with a stop at the patrol (or VP) squadrons and/ or the HS squadrons (if they are there (the HS are in the process of moving to NORVA)). There might be some type of lunch involved (no word on price of the lunch, but it's easy to check providing the interest is there. Anyway if you are interested please let me know.

2) Jax Lodging – Carl is setting up a GREAT deal at the Crowne Plaza where the reunion will be held (and it really is a Great deal) but, he will talk more about that). The rates are better than what the ACVA got for a Navy Appreciation Days event there that occurred there 10-13 Oct 08. I strongly encourage you to stay there. However, I know times are tough for everyone (me included). So, if after you look, at everything and are at the point, where you agree that it's a great deal, but money just isn't there, please contact me and give me a chance to try and work out something for you.

3) DDG 5 Website – Some good news here. Kirk Neuman has set up a website for us and willing to be our Webmaster. That website is - **<http://thebignickel.org/>**

4) DDG 5 Association Officers/Board of Directors – We've got a webmaster, but we're still looking for someone to be our Personnel Officer to operate our Ship's Store, and to be the full time editor of the newsletter. I won't use the "V" word, but if you think you might be interested (or just want to know a little more of the billet description) please contact me.

5) Money matters – First thank you to those who have given. Just a quick plug for any you can spare and send the association way, would be further appreciated. Money should be sent to Carl, with any checks or money orders made out to either "DDG 5 or DDG 5 Association".

6) Reunion attendance – Outside of the normal reasons to come to 2009 reunion, is the fact that as an association, it's becoming clearer that we are approaching a key point in our existence. As an organization do we continue as is, with the minor adjustments/changes that I mentioned both in the April newsletter and talk about in number 4) or do we become more formally organized (which along with other changes, would mean adopting a set of formal by-laws (the XO is working on a set of proposed by-laws, which will be presented at the reunion). Good discussion/points can be made on both sides. But, this is an issue I feel the whole crew needs to decide, and not the normal business that the XO or I can take care of. So really consider coming to the reunion, and again, if money is an issue, there are other options.

Lastly, while this has always been the case, let me just say again, that anyone is welcome to contact me at anytime – 25/8. You can use either my Yahoo address- [Bobnghaner@yahoo.com](mailto:Bobnghaner@yahoo.com) or my Earthlink address – [bbngh@earthlink.net](mailto:bbngh@earthlink.net) or call me on my Landline – 407-682-2613. Also, depending on the time of day

that you call, I may not call you back until the next day. I normally I don't like to call people past 2200, unless it's an emergency.  
Well enough from me for now. Again always feel free to contact me with any moans/groans/complains or even a "BZ". :)

TCAMGB.  
Your Shipmate & President  
Bob Haner

## From the Quarterdeck

Reporting aboard,

This is the first time that some of you have heard from me, and for those that I have had the pleasure to swap sea stories with at the last three reunions and those who I have talked to on the phone or by email you know that I am a person of few words, they just never stop. I know that thanks is never said enough, so let me again express my great appreciation for the work that Bob Haner and the previous XO Gary Chiaverotti and those other shipmates who helped them in getting this organization up and running. Having done this for another ship, I know what a challenge it is.

This will be the sixth reunion, and as Bob has pointed out it will be an important reunion. We need to continue to increase the membership. I feel that we need to formally organize. To do that we need to adopt a set of by-laws. The by-laws would establish how the association is run. Without by-laws, as it presently stands leaves it up to remembering what was decided at the previous reunions. In my present position as XO having only been to the dinner at the 3rd reunion and the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> reunions I find myself in a position not knowing all that was decided. I brought this up at the third reunion when I suggested that we incorporate and file as a non profit. The non profit status would allow anyone who wanted to give to the association a tax deductible contribution. By not being incorporated the shipmates who are setting up a reunion are liable for anything that goes wrong. At least I think we need to create a basic set of by-laws. We can also remain the way we are. The 2007 reunion only had 8 crew members attending. I was the host and will take the responsibility for the low count. Even with a low turnout the shipmates who attended had a good time, and if any of them had also been to the all of the other reunions, just think, in the future they will be the only ones to say they have been to all.

At the reunion in Fall River it was decided to have the next reunion in Florida. We were looking at doing it at Disney World. When it became apparent that progress was being made on placing the Charles F. Adams DDG 2 in Jacksonville, Florida as a museum it seemed a better place to do the reunion. The final word has not come down yet from the NAVSEA in the Navy, but it appears to be proceeding at the normal pace and is looking good that Jacksonville will get the ship. There are two groups working on this project. Adams class veterans association (ACVA), and the Jacksonville Historic Naval Ship Association. Some of you belong to ACVA for those that are not members I strongly encourage you to join and help save our sister ship. ACVA is creating a list of volunteers who will help rejuvenate the Adams. The Web site For ACVA is [www.adamsclassddgvets.org](http://www.adamsclassddgvets.org). We have been in contact with Bert Watson of the Jacksonville Naval Historic Ship Association and have been impressed with what he is doing and his vision for the Adams. I would like to see the time come when we would be able to spend some time on the Adams, bringing her back to life as a memorial to all that have served aboard an Adams Class ship. It would be nice to spend a week-end or week sleeping aboard with a working gallery, being volunteer tour guides, cooks, painters, and snipes, wouldn't it

The reunion has a cutoff date for registration of 1 April. The reason for the early registration of 1 Jan is so that we can have some kind of idea how many will be coming before we commit to our schedule and put out the next newsletter in Jan 2009. We will make room for anyone who show up at the door, will set an

extra chair or make a place on the floor, find someplace for you to sleep. The cut off date for the hotel is 1 April 2009, but they assured me they will give you a room at the rate agreed upon if available. When you make a hotel reservation, make sure that they explain their policies for canceling a reservation, no shows, and leaving early.

For the Crew Members who will not be coming to the reunion for whatever reason, we would still like to hear from you. Send us any comments, ideas, suggestions, or a great DDG 5 story. If you have a place in mind for a reunion send that. Just remember a reunion needs someone willing to host it, so unless you have a real large estate, you need a facility. We can do regional reunions, Ed Grant and anyone who lives in far away places might consider this.

For someone who says he is just learning to be a web site producer I think that Kirk Neuman has finished his Masters and must be about due for a PhD. If you have not seen it, now is the time to take a good look, while you do, take time to register. It already is a great addition to our association and will become a tool for our growth. In the future some of the things we hope to have on the web site, are all past newsletter, dispatches, ship store items and, hints on how to find missing shipmates. Kirk you have my BZ.



Save the Charles F. Adams DDG 2  
She was our sister ship and the last of those gallant ships

Brought to you by the DDG 5 Association

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