



## **USS Claude V. Ricketts / (formerly) USS Biddle DDG-5**

### **The Big Nickel #16, November, 2016**

**Newsletter Editor comment:** This newsletter is way, WAY overdue. For some reason, I had writers block or something that caused me to keep putting off working on it. My intentions were to get this out quite some time ago. I'm also way behind on updating the website with 2016 Reunion updates, but am working to get that rectified ASAP.

**Thanks, Kirk "VJ" Neuman, Newsletter Editor and Webmaster**

### **2016 Reunion Wrap-up**



**DDG-5 Shipmates reuniting during early check-in**

The 2016 DDG-5 Crew Members Association Reunion sailed over the horizon on Sunday afternoon, May 15. The Reunion opened on Wednesday afternoon, 11 May, with early check-in for those of us who arrived early. Patrick Raines and Kirk Neuman drove over to the Adams Museum located in the Jacksonville Landing shopping mall to pick up some USS Charles F. Adams DDG-2 ship models (which can be configured for any of the Adams class DDGs) for sale. (Kirk has several of the models left if you are interested in getting one.)

Contact him at [StoreKeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy](mailto:StoreKeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy) if you would like to order one. Cost is \$20 + \$6 shipping.)



Jamey Hutson (guest of Ron Beckett) and the Ship's Store Items

We also setup the Ship's Store items that our Ship's Storekeeper (Kirk Neuman) brought with him for sale at the Reunion. Kirk brought along denim shirts, polo shirts, hats, challenge coins and other items. If you would like to place a Ship's Store order, make sure to check out the [Ship's Store page](#) on The Big Nickel website. Kirk also went over to the Adams Museum and procured 20 of the USS Charles F. Adams DDG-5 models for sale at a discounted price. If you're interested in one of the models, contact Kirk at [StoreKeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy](mailto:StoreKeeper@TheBigNickel.Navy).

Thursday, May 12, was the “official” Reunion check-in day. The Hospitality Room opened at 0800 and we had a lot of shipmates checking in. Ultimately we had 23 shipmates in attendance whose time on board ranged from 1962 to 1989.

Thursday evening, we had our 2016 Reunion Reception. We gathered in the Amelia Room for what turned out to be an open bar, thanks to the fantastic hospitality of one of our shipmates, and hors d'oeuvres.

After the reception, most of us went back to the Hospitality Room to continue getting reacquainted and catching up.



Sandy Williams and Danny and Cissie Timm (L-R) enjoying the DDG-5 2016 Reception.



On the bus to St. Augustine

Friday morning, we all met in the hotel lobby at 0900 for our day-trip to St. Augustine, Florida, the oldest continuously occupied European-established settlement within the borders of the contiguous United States. We had a tour of the city on our bus, stopping at the Flagler Memorial Presbyterian Church for a guided tour and history talk. Then were dropped at the St. Augustine visitor center where we were on our own for lunch and our own self-guided tour.

We returned to the hotel around 1600 and were on our own until 1900 when we all gathered in the Hospitality room for the DDG-5 Reunion Pizza Party.



Glenn Johnson calling the 2016 Crew Meeting to order.

Saturday morning, we had our DDG-5 Crew Meeting where we had officer elections, discussions about the 2018 Reunion (place and date), and other topics. The meeting minutes can be found on the website under the 2016 Reunion Wrap Up page.

At 1200 Saturday, we gathered at the Statue of the Lone Sailor, just a short walk from the hotel on the Riverwalk, for the Crew Memorial. The names of shipmates and family members who had passed away since the 2014 Reunion were read and a prayer was given by Mike Schmitz.

John Cubells and Mike Cheney preparing to toss the Memorial Wreath into the St. John's River.



(L to R) Carole & Ben Bassford, our tour guide and Charlie Brown getting ready for the walking tour. Glenn Johnson is hiding behind the pillar trying to get permission from Mary Lou to go on the tour.

Saturday afternoon some gathered in the hotel lobby for a walking tour of Jacksonville. The tour was about 2 hours and covered the Riverwalk, a water taxi ride to the South side of St. John's River and a tour of downtown Jacksonville and its historic sites.



Saturday evening was our 2016 DDG-5 Reunion dinner. We had quite the feast with salads, beef, chicken, fish, various breads and desserts. After dinner we had our drawing for raffle prizes and most everyone won something. The 50-50 drawing was won by our new president, John Cubells and his wife Stacy.

[Shipmates in line for chow](#)

More pictures of the 2016 Reunion and other information is available on [TheBigNickel.Navy](http://TheBigNickel.Navy) website.

## **2018 DDG-5 Reunion Planning**

Plans for the 2018 Reunion of the DDG-5 Crew Members Association are already underway. Glenn Johnson is in contact with the DoubleTree by Hilton Riverfront Jacksonville to have our contract with the hotel wrapped up early. The 2018 Reunion is being planned for Thursday May 3 – Sunday May 6, 2018. Other than the usual reception, pizza party and dinner, nothing has been set yet so if you would like to make recommendations for a Friday tour, please contact the Reunion Committee (currently consisting of Glenn Johnson and Kirk Neuman).



[The DoubleTree by Hilton Jacksonville Riverfront](#)

If you have any questions about the 2018 Reunion or would like to volunteer (I know, something a Sailor NEVER does), 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](#).

## **Executive Director/Vice President**



BT2 Glenn Johnson (64 – 68): [gjohn11905@gmail.com](mailto:gjohn11905@gmail.com)

Dear Shipmates and families,

As I write this, tomorrow is Memorial Day. A great day to visit with friends and family. We are going to a picnic with the neighbors. As I look at the list of friends that will be there, I noticed only two of us are veterans. I found that to be the norm where ever I go anymore. Whatever the reason may be, we are grateful for our veterans and their families. Please keep them in your thoughts and prayers as you celebrate this great country of ours on Memorial Day.

Many shipmates and families recently attended our “ships reunion” in Jacksonville, FL. We had a small crowd (around 50 people) but a fun bunch of good sailors, three officers, many wives, and some families. We visited St. Augustine, did a walking tour around Jacksonville, had a great banquet, and a wonderful cocktail hour. Our hotel was accommodating, our tour guides were great, our raffle was the best it had ever been, and a good time was had by all. I am sure Carl would have been proud.

Our Memorial Service was held at the Lone Sailor’s Memorial on the river walk along the St. Johns River, which is walking distance from our Hotel. It was a beautiful service with a Bugler who played “Taps” and wreath was cast into the river in memory of our shipmates who have passed on. There were many comments made about our past friend and Executive Director, Carl Slack. Carl was dearly missed and will always be remembered for his vision and organizing our DDG5 Crew Members Association. Carl’s wife, Beverly was with us and extremely grateful for our kind words and thoughtfulness that was expressed at our service.

On May 3, 2018, we will do this again in Jacksonville FL. Our goal is to get 60 shipmates (Officers and Sailors) plus spouse and any family members that choose to come. The USS Adams, DDG-2 will be moored on the St. Johns River, adjacent to our hotel. We will have the opportunity to go onboard and possibly engage in some activities that we would normally do in other places. Some of us have signed up to do some work (chip paint and paint) or anything that we may feel qualified to do. At this point it is not clear as to the condition of the ship, however we will access that as time goes on.

In closing I would like too say that keeping our organization alive, so we can continue to enjoy each other, is no easy task. Together everyone accomplishes more (TEAM). We are hoping to see some new and old faces at our next reunion. Kirk Neuman (editor of this newsletter) also keeps records on as many shipmates as we know of that still exist. There are many that we have no record of. I challenge each one of us to find a shipmate or two, get them registered if they are not already, and ask them to attend our next reunion. Feel free to contact Kirk for any info he may have, that may assist you in contacting someone that has already registered but has not attend a reunion. With more attendees and the USS Adams being in port, our next reunion will be more special than the last one.

Finally, I would like to thank everyone that helped with our last reunion. A special shout out to our officers and our Webmaster. Everyone did a wonderful job and for that I am grateful to all of you.

I wish for your sails to be full and the wind at your back,

Sincerely,

Glenn Johnson - Executive Director/Vice President - DDG5 Crew Members Association.

## **President**



ET3 John Cubells (85 – 88): [63jcubells@gmail.com](mailto:63jcubells@gmail.com)

I want to thank everyone for the great reunion. All the hard work that is required to have a successful reunion payed off. Thanks to the members who made this possible and to our shipmates and family members who were able to attend. From all the sea stories to the trip to St Augustine a good time was had by all. Thanks to everyone for their donations for the raffle as that was one of the highlights of a great dinner. Stacy and I are looking forward to May 2018 and seeing everyone again. Hopefully we can locate more shipmates and get them to enjoy the next reunion with us

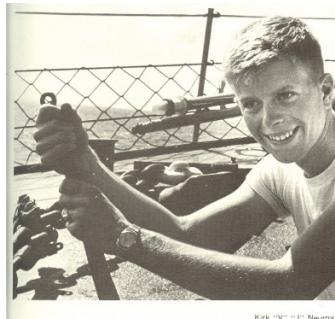
Your CMA President,  
John Cubells

## **Ship's Treasurer**



FTM2 Michael Margeotes (65 – 70): [margeotestm@msn.com](mailto:margeotestm@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](http://TheBigNickel.Navy) – [USSClaudeVRicketts.Navy](http://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 several 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 (if the email address I have for you is up-to-date) based off 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.

## 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.

A note for the 2018 Reunion. My wife and I will be flying to the reunion in 2018. We discussed things after our drive down for the 2016 reunion and we both decided that doing that drive again in 2 years wasn't something that we would be looking forward to. As a result, I won't be bringing a bunch of stock for sale at the 2018 Reunion, but will have samples of shirts and other items. You'll have to fill out an order form and I'

## The Amen Corner

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

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

- BTFN Gary W. Smith (1966 – 1968), September 12, 2016. You can [view Gary's 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 is that JHNSA is still waiting on a time to get her into dry dock in Philly. If they can get her there this year(2016), they will have her towed to Jacksonville by the end of the year. If they have to wait until the beginning of next year (2017), they will have her in Jacksonville in either January or very beginning of February. Unfortunately, it's a long, slow process but it is a labor of love. As soon as they have more information to share with the public, they will certainly do so.

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).



(To donate to the DDG-5 CMA, fill this form out and send it to Mike Margeotes)

## **DDG-5 Crew Members Association**

### **Donation Form**

#### Donor Information:

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, St, Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone 1 | Phone 2 \_\_\_\_\_

Email \_\_\_\_\_

#### Donation Information:

Donation Amount: \$\_\_\_\_\_

Check  Credit

I wish my donation to remain anonymous.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: DDG-5 Crew Members Association

c/o Michael Margeotes  
49 Columbia Blvd.  
E Stroudsburg, PA 18302

Select credit card:  Visa  MC  AmEx

Enter card number: \_\_\_\_\_