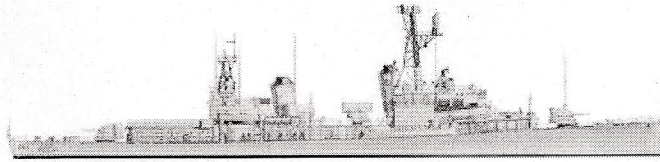




# ***USS Johnston (DD821)***



## **AHOY SHIPMATES**

**December 31, 2006**

The final plans for the 2007 USS Johnston DD-821 Las Vegas reunion have been completed. The dates for our reunion will be from Thursday May 3, 2007, and ending Monday May 7, 2007. Enclosed with this newsletter is a flyer detailing hotel accommodations, tours and registration fees. This year's registration fee includes both banquets, as well as a stocked hospitality suite. Tours are optional if desired. We realize that there is so much to see and do in Las Vegas that we limited the amount of tours we booked for this year's reunion. If you wish to take the Friday tour to the Hoover Dam, which includes a lunch cruise on Lake Mead, it will give us a chance to renew old acquaintances and hopefully make a few new ones. The only other group tour is a city tour on Saturday morning. The rest of the time you are free to take in a show, shop, gamble or just relax in the hospitality room and share sea stories from years gone by.

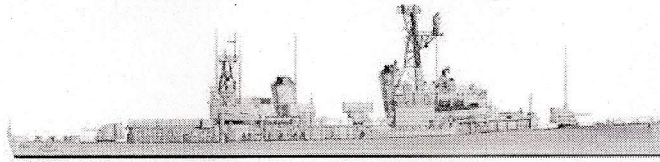
At last year's reunion in Washington, DC we presented a framed picture containing 2 prints of both the original and the FRAM configuration of our ship to the Chen Yang DDG-928 Association. This framed picture with its engraved plaque was given in appreciation of the gracious gift we received from their association. As many of you will remember, the Republic of China Navy acquired our ship after she was retired from our Navy; and the ship served in their Navy until a few years ago. As a gift of friendship they sent us a brass porthole from our ship with an engraved plaque as a good will gesture and keepsake so that we will always have a part of the old girl. They have received our gift, and I received a letter of thanks from them as well. They have indicated that if you go to their web site they have posted a picture of our gift. A picture of it can also be seen on the Johnston web site.

I'm sure many of you are as interested in keeping track of the final disposition of our ship as I am. She is still sitting at anchor in Taiwan awaiting her final fate to be used as a target ship. I sent a letter to the Republic of China Naval Headquarters asking if they would allow a delegation from our association to be present at her sinking or would they consider sending us a video of her final voyage. I was honored to receive a letter sent to our association from Admiral Lin, Commander in Chief of the Republic of China Navy. He indicated that our ship had a glorious history in both our Navies and she is being prepared to be used as a target ship in a future military exercise. He also indicated that they will provide us with a video when the ship is finally sunk as a valuable historical record to be shown at our reunions. His thoughtfulness and that of the Chen Yang DDG-928 Association makes me ever aware that a sailor's love for his ship bridges more than just our Navy alone, but all Navies and all who have served on the high seas.





## ***USS Johnston (DD821)***



I have received phone calls, letters and emails from some of our members and it is always a pleasure hearing from a fellow Johnston shipmate. I'm sure the rest of our members would like to hear a tale or two if anyone of you would be willing to share some with us. We are always looking for content to add to our newsletters or suggestions for making it better. Please contact me, and I would be happy to include anything you think would be newsworthy.

As this year draws to a close I can't help but have thoughts of how fast the years seem to be slipping by. Maybe it seems more so this year because of the alarming rate that we seem to be losing our old shipmates as they set sail on their final voyage. As the years tick away we are losing shipmates in greater numbers than ever before. We will add the names of Martin Bender, John Fedora, Dick Wieland, Evertt Stoner, Lawrence Costa, Charles Hemming, and P. J. Redmond to the list of our fellow shipmates who have left for their final muster and pray for them. Their names, as well as the names of all our departed shipmates will be read during our annual reunion as we pay our final respects in silent prayer. May God have mercy on their souls.

I hope as many of you as possible will join us in Las Vegas this year. Please don't let the years slip away without attending one of our reunions. We all share a common bond that only a sailor who has served on a ship can understand. I assure you that if you attend a reunion you will remember it for the rest of your days and it will not be your last.

That's it for now my shipmates. May God keep you and yours safe and healthy until we set sail once again. I wish you and your families' fair winds and following seas.

Sincerely,

*Tony Tomasin*

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