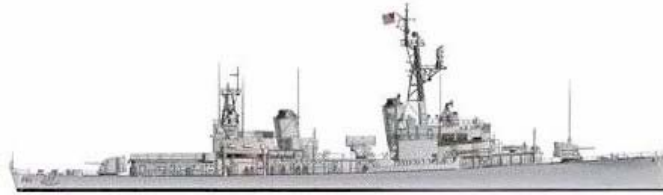


USS Johnston (DD821)



Volume I, Issue I

August 2009

2009 Reunion, Virginia Beach, VA

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Ahoy mates! We just wrapped up the 2009 USS Johnston DD-821 reunion in Virginia Beach, VA. The weather was perfect and a great time was had by all.

Thursday night was the usual "Welcome" dinner where we all get to know each other again and start trading sea stories. After dinner we all retreated to our hospitality suite. The suite was large with two small TVs and one large projection TV showing a video of past reunions.

Friday was a free day and many of us formed into groups and did various things from visiting museums, walking the beach, taking a river cruise and/or shopping at



the local malls.

A fun filled Saturday started at the arrival of two large cruise buses. First stop was downtown Norfolk to visit the Nauticus museum and the battleship USS Wisconsin BB-64. Most of us stood

in awe of the large 16" guns. What an awesome sight. Next was a tour of the Norfolk Naval Base, then lunch at the old train station used by many sailors in the past—which probably includes many of us.

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2010 Reunion sure to be a hit!

The newly elected board has been working hard to make the 2010 Reunion as great as our past reunions. Plans are included in this newsletter. Make sure to reserve your room early.

Mark your calendars, the dates are Thursday April 29 through Monday May

3, 2010. The Welcome Banquet will be Thursday April 29 with the Farewell Banquet on Sunday night May 2 – checkouts May 3rd. The hotel has extended us a \$99/night rate which includes breakfast and a complimentary hospitality room.

For those wishing to ar-

rive earlier or depart later, the same rate will apply.

We will be staying at the Town and Country Resort & Convention Center in San Diego, California. We hope to see all of you there. We have a couple of wonderful side trips arranged.



New 2009/2010 Johnston DD-821 Association Board Elected.

During this years business meeting and after much discussion, four former Johnston sailors stepped up to serve the ol' girl one more time. The new board will serve a two year term which will end during the 2011 reunion business meeting. The new board is:

President—Robert (Bob) Nava, IS1 (1957-1959)

Vice President/Historian—Ralph Hocking, DC2 (1951-1955)

Treasurer—George Sites, RD2 (1968-1971)

Secretary—Harold (Hal) Rosenthal, YN3 (1957-1958)

This is the first time on the board for three of the new members: Bob, George and Hal. Ralph has served several times in the past.

All of the board members are look-

ing forward to their new role in the Association and look forward to meeting and getting to know all of you better. Please don't hesitate to contact any of us concerning the Association or any of the members.



Left to Right Plank Owners Harold Olsen and Art Damm with 2009/2010 board members Bob Nava, Ralph Hocking, Hal Rosenthal, Alida Breen (assistant treasurer) and George Sites.

What Did You Do During The War?

Part Thirty-seven: Nebelle vs. the carrier

By: Jeff Hunt, News Editor, Mt. Pleasant News

It was 1945. Dick Nebelle, a Chicago native, had joined the Navy, gone through boot camp, and was now off to win the war. He had joined at the age of 17, and even his mother said the war wouldn't be over until Dick had a chance to end it. Two months after Dick entered the military, the Japanese surrendered, but that's another story.

Nebelle was in the process of crossing the Atlantic Ocean. He was a tin can sailor, serving on the destroyer U.S.S. Johnston. The Johnston and her sister ship were accompanying an aircraft carrier overseas. As was the case so often, the sailing was far from smooth. Nebelle said it was at this time that an accident occurred.

"Our skipper got too close on a swell," Nebelle said. "We rolled into the carrier, taking out all of our radio communications, our smoke stacks, our radar, just everything on our ship that was there."

Nebelle said he was one deck below

the one that had been damaged. "If it had gone down one deck farther, there would have been significant casualties due to that accident," Nebelle said.

Nebelle said there was a rip in the seam at the waterline and was taking on water. Repairs were made at sea and the Johnston returned to port in Boston where it was in dry-dock for several months while repairs were being made.

Nebelle said there were a few injuries on the Johnston, and three men on the aircraft carrier were killed. Millions of dollars in damage was done to the destroyer.

"It was all due to negligence by our skipper," Nebelle said. "At the time of the accident our executive officer put him under arrest and took over the ship. The last I saw of him was when he was taken off the ship by shore patrol in Boston. I understand he was charged with dereliction of duty and spent some time in jail."



Dick Nebelle

After the war Nebelle had the opportunity to tour Europe where he was treated as a goodwill ambassador. When he returned to the United States he was stationed in Memphis, Tenn., and then in Ottumwa. While in Ottumwa, Nebelle met his future wife, Helen. The two were married and celebrated their 60th wedding anniversary in June 2009.

2009 Reunion (continued from page 1)

After lunch we were shown throughout the USS Gonzales DDG-69. Many things have changed since we served but one thing is the same—the U.S. Navy is still the most powerful Navy in the world. After the Gonzales, we returned to the hotel with the evening free. Many of us ended up in the hospitality suite.

Sunday afternoon we had our business meeting led by Tony Tomasin, Johnston Association President. After much discussion, Tony was relieved to have four Johnston sailors step up to serve the old girl one more time. Tony and the new board want to encourage all of you to consider getting more involved with the association. Contact any of the board members to see how you can help.

Sunday evening we had our banquet dinner. Dinner was great, the ladies were beautiful, the guys???? Well they kind of looked salty. After dinner we auctioned off lots of gifts donated to the association. Photos followed and then back to the hospitality suite to start our

good-byes until next year.

Some members stayed around until Monday and had breakfast with some of their old friends. Without question, the reunion was a hit and we all look forward to meeting again next year.



The board wants to thank Tony Tomasin for putting together the 2009 reunion without the use of a reunion planner and almost entirely on his own. “A Job Well Done Sailor!”

Left—Johnston sailors and wives standing in front of the 16” guns of the USS Wisconsin BB-64.

Johnston Association presents Tony Tomasin ship’s plaque.

During the annual business meeting, Tony Tomasin was presented a plaque believed to have hung on the USS Johnston. The plaque was donated by Romain Bastian and presented to Tony by USS Johnston Captain John Mingo. Our Captain read the inscription from the back of the plaque.

TONY TOMASIN

President

USS Johnston (DD-821) Association

WITH APPRECIATION FROM
YOUR SHIPMATES

“Bravo Zulu”

May 2009



Above—Captain Mingo presenting Tony with the Johnston plaque.

In addition to the plaque, Ralph Hocking presented Tony with an official USS Johnston coffee

cup. We’re sure Tony will get lots of use out of it.

If you were at the reunion you know Tony came down with a terrible cold that got worse by the day. He probably should have gone home! But as we all know, the Johnston Association is extremely important to Tony so he hung in there and made the reunion another one for the ship’s log.

Thank you Tony!

USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION

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**USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION**

THE PURPOSE OF THE USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION IS TO PERPETUATE THE BONDS THAT WERE FORMED AMONG THE PERSONNEL WHO EXPERIENCED THE "TRADITION OF THE SEA" WHILE SERVING ABOARD THE USS JOHNSTON DD-821, IN PERPETUITY.

WE DO THIS BY PROVIDING SHIPMATES A WEBSITE SECOND TO NONE THAT WAS BUILT BY AND OPERATED BY FORMER SHIPMATE DUANE MALLAST, AND WITH THE SUPPORT OF THE USS JOHNSTON ASSOCIATION AS A MEANS TO MEMORIALIZE AND SHARE THE EXPERIENCES WE ALL HAD WHILE SERVING ABOARD THE U.S.S. JOHNSTON. IN ADDITION, THE ANNUAL JOHNSTON REUNION REINFORCES THESE BONDS AND BRINGS US ALL TOGETHER AGAIN.

THE ASSOCIATION IS A "NOT FOR PROFIT" ORGANIZATION FORMED BY AND OPERATED BY USS JOHNSTON SHIPMATES.

Let's tell the real story of the USS Johnston DD-821

After having written two technical books and working on a third, I decided long ago I would like to write a different type of book. My idea is simply this—write a book about the USS Johnston DD-821 as told by the many officers and sailors that served aboard her.

Simple, right? Not really! To make it work I need the help of all of you. Here is what I need from as many of you as possible. I need your story whether short or long, serious or comical. It doesn't matter. All the stories are important.

The information I need from each of you is your story or as many different stories as you want to provide. Included with your story I need the following information.

Your Name, your rank, your years on the Johnston, your age, your picture then, important dates associated with the story if you know them and of course any other pictures associated with the story. Anything that helps tell your story. If a few of you are buddies, you can write a story together.

I will do the rest. I will compile all the stories, I will type or retype the stories, I will organize the stories into a book format and I will take care of getting it published. Now this may seem simple or even easy but take my word for it, it is no easy chore.

Your stories can come to me in any format you want. If you type, then type it, if not put it down in long-hand. Make sure you label any pictures you send (do it lightly on the back so you don't put indentations

on the picture). Please send copies of the pictures so I don't have to send them back.

Send the stories to me via the US Postal Service or via email; george.sites@gmail.com. My address is:

USS Johnston Association

c/o George A. Sites

5653 Haydens Reserve Way

Hilliard, OH 43026.

The more stories, the better; and the sooner I get your stories, the sooner we will have a book we can all be proud of. I suspect the book will take about 1 to 2 years to complete depending on how quickly the stories come in. Please send me any questions you might have about this project.