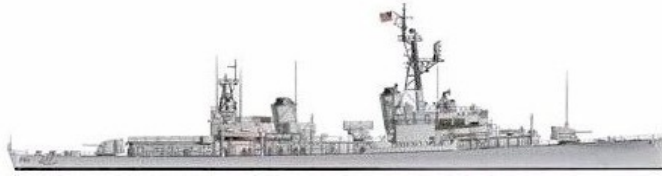


USS Johnston (DD821)



Volume 9, Issue I

January 2017

In this issue

- 2017 USS Johnston DD821 Reunion—I
- My Service in the United States Navy 1945 to 1949 by Michael Persiano—2 & 3
- Taps—4
- A Letter From Daun (Harry) Harris—5 & 6
- Navy Restores Traditional Job Titles—6
- USS Johnston DD-821 Association—4
- Association Newsletter—5
- 2016 Association Dues Reminder—5
- 2016 Dues Request Form—6 & 7

2017 USS Johnston DD821 Reunion

Ahoy Shipmates. It looks like we will have another great turn-out for the 2017 Johnston Reunion in the Boston area. We got a great rate for our hotel with free parking and discounted breakfast. In addition to our “quality” time with shipmates (that means time for sea stories), we will also visit the city of Boston, the USS Constitution, the Joseph P. Kennedy DD850 (very similar to the Jolly J), Lizzie Borden’s house along with lots of food and lots of fun for everyone. If you haven’t registered by now, please check out the reunion forms included with this newsletter, fill them out and send it in along with payment asap. We only have a few seats left on the busses so don’t delay. Please follow the directions on the reunion forms as closely as possible and make your hotel reservations asap!

This newsletter is intentionally short in order to preserve Association funds for mailing expenses, etc. . We hope you understand.

We hope to see you in Boston as all of our reunions are a lot of fun. See you there! In the meantime, have a wonderful holiday in 2016!

Bob Nava, Charles Copeland, John Argonti & George Sites



2017 2017 2017



MY SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES NAVY— 1945 TO 1949

By Michael Persiano, BT3, Served on Johnston 1947 to 1949



To the average person, my service in the United States Navy would not be very impressive. However, to me the four years from August 1945 to May 1949 were years of service to my country that I have not forgotten over the years since my discharge.

Being a Depression baby, life was a lot different than today. We did not have the many things that are available today, we did without but had a ball making our pastimes enjoyable.

As I got older my interest turned to art and I really wanted to be an artist. I joined the Art Class in school and worked on school projects along with another student making background murals for different school plays. It was very exciting times for me. I was approached by a representative of Famous Art Studios to take a course...however my Father just could not afford to pay for it. No problem, I under-

stood.

When I turned 17 I made up my mind that I would join the United States Navy. Being a minor, I had to get my Father's permission. I asked and he said "NO!". I was very disappointed but very determined to get him to change his mind. Rather than getting into details, he finally gave in.

On August 18, 1945 I enlisted in the United States Navy Reserves as an Apprentice Seamen. After 24 days I was called in and then enlisted in the United States Navy. I was immediately sent to Great Lakes, Illinois for Boot Camp training and made Seaman Second Class.

On December 17, 1945 I was transferred to Shoemaker, California until March 4, 1946 and then transferred to the Brooklyn Navy Yard and was assigned to my first destroyer, the USS Wallace L. Lind DD703. When I came onboard I was nothing more than a deck hand who had the privilege of keeping it in tip-top shape from bow to stern by chipping sea weary paint from the decks and repainting them. I decided this was not for me and would make a change as quickly as possible. Finally one day when I was chipping away at the deck there was a call for three volunteers to go below for job training as a Boiler Man. With my fingers crossed I was one of the lucky ones to be chosen from a large response to the call. On November 1, 1946 I was made Fireman Second Class. Then on September 1, 1947 I became a

MY SERVICE TO THE UNITED STATES NAVY—1945 TO 1949

By Michael Persiano, BT3, Served on Johnston 1947 to 1949

(continued from previous page)

Fireman First Class. I was then transferred to the USS Johnston DD821. On October 15, 1947 I was promoted to Boiler Man Third Class and served on board the Johnston until February 14, 1949.

Serving on board the Lind and Johnston were good years for me at the tender young ages of 17 to 21 to be sailing to many ports of call with the Navy. Some ports were: Cuba; Jamaica; Gibraltar; Tangiers, Morocco; Dublin, Ireland; Copenhagen, Denmark; Liverpool, England; Cardif, Wales and Brest, France. What a great experience for a youngster of my age. It was very gratifying., As far as State side, being in the Atlantic Fleet took me all over the place so I will not elaborate further.

What stands out the most to me was when I was in Liverpool, England and it was all in shambles. What a mess, bombed out areas all over the place, I could not believe what I witnessed. The people just seemed to take it all in stride, just unbelievable.

My final experience in the Forward Fireroom on the Johnston is one that I will remember the rest of my life. I had the 12:00 am to 04:00 AM Forward Fireroom watch. We were at 1/3 speed when suddenly we received a FULL ASTERN from the bridge. The first thing I did was open the Water Check Valve all the way (you have to have enough water in the Boiler or you will not get enough steam). Then I opened up the Blower Fans, jumped down to the Burner floor and between my burner man and I, we ignited every burner we had to increase steam to handle the FULL ASTERN Signal from the bridge. When you get the FULL ASTERN SIGNAL, the steam is sucked out of the boilers like a Vacuum Cleaner. While the ship was in FULL ASTERN the Vibration was intense. It seemed almost unbelievable, the sides of this Destroyer were only 3/8" thick between me and the ocean and that gives you something to think about. We finally got the steam pressure back to normal pressure and we both sighed with relief.

The following morning I found out why our Bow was gone. The Cruiser USS Kearsarge on patrol with us in the Atlantic collided with us because it was off course. It crossed our Bow, tearing it off. If the Forward Compartment doors had not been closed during the impact, we might not be here to talk about it today. We then proceeded to the Boston Naval Shipyard where a new Bow was installed and we then resumed our previous Sea Duty. I have not forgotten this experience since it happened and probably never will forget it as long as I live. I always said someone was really covering my back.... AMEN!

[The beautiful picture on the previous page is Michael and his lovely wife Regina!](#)

TAPS



Donald Kearney	3/24/2016
James Bulger	8/1/2003
Tom Redmond	5/26/2016
Carl Camerano	8/11/2016

A LETTER FROM DUAN (HARRY) HARRIS

Hello George:

It's me again, I have some time on my hands as I recently had a bit of an accident while out working. A while back our electric company replaced an electric pole in our north pasture that had been damaged by lightning. A neighbor came over to help me saw it up for fence posts and then we put the pieces in the back of his pickup. While unloading them we dropped one on my foot and I have been a semi-invalid for the last couple of weeks. I am slowly improving, but I have had plenty of time to read, watch TV and play around (and write letters) on the computer.

I couldn't help but notice (again) in the last USS Johnston newsletter that you were running out of ideas on what to write and would appreciate more input from Association members. I wouldn't want members to think that you are playing favorites and only printing letters from your former shipmates, but if you could use my help I'll add another article and a suggestion.

I'll start off with the suggestion. As you know Jack & Kris Hughes and Joan & I often meet for lunch as we live in the same general area of east Texas. Since we served at different times, we never actually knew each other until we started meeting like this for lunch. We try to get together every month or so depending on our various schedules. "The Tin Can Sailor" magazine often lists and advertises "bull sessions" and that's essentially what the four of us are having as we do look forward to these periodic lunches together. You may want to write up a short article suggesting that other members do the same thing.

The following you may wish to print in one of your future newsletters:

Before we leave our little hobby ranch for an outing of just about any kind, aside from removing my bib overalls and floppy straw hat, I dress appropriately for the occasion and usually wear my USS Johnston cap. As most of you know who wear your cap as often as I do mine, this draws quite a bit of attention and stimulates lots of short conversations with other veterans of not only the Navy but of other military services as well. I have sometimes said that I now do more saluting wearing this hat than I did when I was actually in the Navy. Anyway I would like to pass along a couple of these instances.

One time, while we were grocery shopping, I was stopped by a gentleman who was at least 20 year my senior. He pointed at my Johnston cap and said he too had served aboard the USS Johnston, but it had a different hull number than the one on my cap. I asked if he served aboard the 557, and he said that was the one. When I asked if he had been aboard her in 1944 in Leyte Gulf, he informed me that although he had been a plank owner of the DD-557, he had been transferred to a different ship shortly after it had been commissioned. I truly wish I had asked this gentleman for his name and phone number but I did not do so.

Another incident took place when we visited my mother-in-law at an assisted living facility where she now lives. One day while visiting this facility I saw an elderly gentleman wearing a "World War II Veteran's" cap. After we exchanged salutes I asked this man what branch of the service he had served in during the Great War. He then told me he had also been in the Navy. Shortly after our conversation began he told me how he had been part of a task force near the end of the War that had picked up some (continued on next page)

Japanese sailors who's picket ships had been sunk by a destroyer in his group. I asked if the ship that had sunk these Japanese picket ships had been the USS Haynesworth DD-700, as I had remembered this incident after reading about it in a previous "Tin Can Sailor" magazine. This elderly gentleman's eyes lit up, and although he told he had not served aboard the Haynesworth, he repeated almost the exact story I had read just a few months before. We took my mother-in-law out for lunch and after returning I saw the lady who manages the facility and asked if she thought this gentleman would enjoy reading my old "Tin Can Sailor" magazines. She sadly informed me that she didn't think so as most of the time this elderly man didn't really know who or where he was. She turned out to be right as just a few minutes later when I saw this same gentleman again he didn't even recognize me even though I was still wearing my Johnston cap. It's sad to see so many elderly people like this who can vividly remember where they were and what they had done 70 years ago, but couldn't remember what they had done the day before. There are other individuals at this same home, most of whom had served in World War II. All are interested in swapping stories so if any of the members of our USS Johnston Association wishes to brighten an old vet's eyes for a while, take some time to visit one of these senior facilities in their area.

Hopefully my suggestion and proposed article will help you out. Take care and keep up the good work.

Your old friend and former shipmate,

Harry

Navy Restores Traditional Job Titles

By Ben Kesling and Gordon Lubold, Wall Street Journal

WASHINGTON—The U.S. Navy said Wednesday it will once again let enlisted sailors use traditional job rating titles, an about-face by top leaders who wanted to scrap a system as old as the Navy itself but who faced pushback from sailors world-wide.

Traditionally, an enlisted sailor's title has consisted of both an occupational rating and a pay rate—for instance, Electrician's Mate First Class or Culinary Specialist First Class. In September, Navy officials announced a new system that would give those sailors—and all others with the same pay rate—the same title: Petty Officer First Class.

In announcing that change in autumn, Navy officials said the decision was a way to modernize the byzantine system and help make it more understandable to the American public.

Many sailors and veterans complained. Once moved to petition the White House to restore the system, getting more than 100,000 online signatures within a month, drawing a response from the White House backing the Navy's decision.

Wednesday's policy reversal by Chief of Naval Operations, Adm. John Richardson, came after conversations with sailors throughout the Navy. Adm. Richardson, the top officer in the Navy, has said that he values the variety of communities in the ranks and believes the elimination of the occupational ratings could deprive sailors of the pride they have in their jobs.

The push to eliminate ratings stemmed in part from the desire to demystify the naval personnel system, which can be confusing, especially when sailors leave the service and try to translate their experience to potential employers. And it was designed to allow sailors to move back and forth more easily between jobs in the Navy.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, who has been an outspoken advocate for equality for women and gay service members, pushed for the change in part to eliminate jobs with the terms "man" or "men" in the name, like "Aviation Ordnance-man." Mr. Mabus, likewise, has advocated for gender-neutral names for jobs in the Marine Corps, a military branch that falls under his purview.

A spokesman for Mr. Mabus said Wednesday that he agrees the changes in Navy titles seemed to distract from the broader goals of modernizing the personnel system.

USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION

5653 Haydens Reserve Way
Hilliard, OH 43026
George.sites@gmail.com

Webmaster: Duane Mallast
Newsletter Editor: George Sites

WWW.USSJOHNSTON.ORG

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 IS 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 RE-UNION REINFORCES THESE BONDS AND BRINGS US ALL TOGETHER AGAIN.

THE ASSOCIATION IS A "NOT FOR PROFIT" ORGANIZATION FORMED BY AND OPERATED BY USS JOHNSTON DD-821 SHIPMATES.

Board Members

President—Bob Nava, 541 Heswall Ct,
Henderson, NV 89014 usnavy821@cox.net

Vice President—Charles Copeland, 3227
Battlefield Rd, Strasburg, VA 22657
cicbnc@shentel.net

Secretary—John Argonti, 2515 Madison
St, Cambria, CA 93428 johnarg@juno.com

Treasurer—George Sites, 5653 Hayden's
Reserve Way, Hilliard, OH 43026
george.sites@gmail.com

USS Johnston DD-821 Newsletter

As the editor, I have to admit I've run out of "items/ideas" to put in the Johnston Newsletter. This is the 25th newsletter and I'm willing to continue putting the newsletter together but I need your help. Anything you feel would interest our shipmates would be appreciated. Articles such as "my favorite Johnston port", "my scariest moment of the Johnston" or your biography. Basically any short story and your photographs make the stories even more interesting. Have you written a book and want to share it, send me the information. Any articles you may have about the Jolly J, books that include our favorite ship and whatever else you can think of. I really enjoy reading about all our shipmates. I'm sure you would especially enjoy reading about that favorite officer and/or sailor you served with. I find it interesting to know what my former shipmates have been doing in their lives all these years since I left "J" in 1971. Your story can be a few paragraphs to a page or more. The best length is one type written page. Please email them to George Sites at "george.sites@gmail.com". You can also mail them to: USS Johnston DD-821 Association, 5653 Haydens Reserve Way, Hilliard, OH 43026.

Secondly we would appreciate payment of the yearly dues if at all possible. We do understand that not all can afford to pay and that is OK. However at \$15/year, you have to admit it's a great deal. At the time of this writing, we have only **27** paying members for **2017** or beyond out of the **345(less than 8%)** that are currently listed on our roster. All shipmates on the roster receive our newsletters and have been sent a dues payment form. The dues basically keep the Association afloat by not only paying for the printing of the newsletters but the cost of mailing them also. Dues also help to defray the costs of maintaining the USS Johnston website (www.ussjohnston.org). Now I don't know about you, but in my opinion, our website is second to none. You do the math, each mailing of the newsletter cost about \$300. One Hundred paying members equals **\$1500**. That barely covers the cost of three mailings and maintaining our website. Extra donations have been our saving grace. Some are now receiving the newsletter IN COLOR via email and that has helped lower our delivery costs. Keep in mind the dues are **NOT** tax deductible! Contact George Sites via email if you don't know your dues status. We are including the **2016** dues payment forms at the end of this newsletter in case you have misplaced yours.

USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION

2017 ANNUAL ASSOCIATION DUES

AHOY SHIPMATES! Once again it is time for our annual dues request to help support the USS Johnston DD-821 Association. While we know these are trying times, your dues make it possible for us to stay in contact with as many former Johnston shipmates as we can reach. Your generous donations help us cover the cost of postage, newsletter mailings and maintenance of our website. At this time each year we ask all our shipmates to please help support our Association and keep it growing. Our dues rate is still just \$15.00 per year, but we will accept any additional donations you may wish to include and help us offset membership costs for shipmates that may be less fortunate than yourself. We currently have only about one-fourth of the known Johnston shipmates as paying members. Our roster has 346 names on it. Keep in mind, over 4000 served aboard the Johnston over the years.

PLEASE NOTE WE SEND THIS FORM OUT WITH EACH NEWSLETTER AS A FRIENDLY REMINDER. MANY HAVE SENT IN DUES MULTIPLE TIMES WHEN THEY HAVE ALREADY PAID FOR THE CURRENT YEAR. WE ALWAYS APPLY YOUR PAYMENT TO THE NEXT YEAR'S DUES IF YOU HAVE ALREADY PAID FOR THE CURRENT YEAR. WE APPRECIATE HAVING YOUR PAYMENTS IN ADVANCE BUT IF YOU ARE NOT SURE IF YOU ARE PAID UP TO DATE, PLEASE CONTACT GEORGE SITES VIA EMAIL (george.sites@gmail.com) OR SNAIL MAIL.

If you wish to continue your membership in the USS Johnston DD-821 Association or are an individual wishing to join, please fill out the information on the next page and send it to George Sites at the address shown on the form along with your annual membership check for \$15.00 payable to the USS Johnston DD-821 Association. Even if you choose not to join or cannot afford the dues at this time, please fill out the personal information sheet so that we may keep track of your current mailing address and email address. We will never turn our backs on our shipmates, and maybe someday we may need a little help as well. By sending us your completed information sheet it helps us keep our database current and up-to-date so we can continue to send you all our newsletters and reunion notices.

The requested dates of service should include any and all time spent in any branch of the US military. This will help us determine if your donations in the future can be considered "tax deductible". Currently your dues and/or donation are **NOT** tax deductible. Many of our shipmates have asked for a copy of our membership roster. We are asking you for permission to add your name to the published roster.

On behalf of all the officers of the USS Johnston DD-821 Association, we thank you for your support and wish you and your families our very best.

Sincerely,

George A. Sites, Treasurer

USS Johnston DD-821 Association

USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION

2017 ANNUAL ASSOCIATION DUES

NAME: _____

SPOUSES NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBERS: _____

DATES SERVED ON THE JOHNSTON: _____

RATING WHILE ON THE JOHNSTON: _____

DATES SERVED IN ANY BRANCH OF THE US MILITARY INCLUDING THE JOHNSTON:

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____

YES I WANT TO JOIN, ENCLOSED ARE MY **2017** ANNUAL DUES FOR \$15.00 ()

I DO NOT WISH TO JOIN AT THIS TIME BUT INCLUDE ME IN THE ROSTER ()

YES, PLEASE ADD ME TO THE PUBLISHED ROSTER FOR ALL TO USE ()

IF ADDITIONAL FUNDS ARE INCLUDED, PLEASE INDICATE IF THEY ARE FOR FUTURE DUES OR A DONATION TO HELP DEFRAY OPERATING COSTS:

FUTURE DUES: _____ DONATION: _____ (Currently dues and/or donations are **NOT** tax deductible)

Dues are due upon receipt.

Make Check Payable To: **USS Johnston DD-821 Association**

Send To: **USS JOHNSTON DD-821 ASSOCIATION**
C/O GEORGE A. SITES, TREASURER
2204 Ravinia Circle
Venice, FL 34292