

USS Samuel B. Roberts DE 413 Newsletter

VOLUME 22, ISSUE 2
SEPTEMBER, 2013

Dedicated in Memory of Shipmates Whit Felt and Dick Rohde

USS Carr (FFG 52) Decommissioning by Mike Rush

February 13, 1924. October 25, 1944. July 27, 1985. March 13, 2013. The ship lived longer than the man it was named for. Dates. History. Family.

Sadness. Pride. Bitter-sweet memories. Brother, he was to his sisters. Silver Star recipient, leading his gun crew to accomplish the near impossible, as his gunnery officer was to say after the battle.

Uncle Paul to his many nieces and nephews, our mothers' brother who never came home from the war, but never left their hearts. Like music, history plays its notes and moves on.

The USS CARR (FFG-52) was decommissioned March 13, 2013, at Pier 10, Naval Station Norfolk. In its usual tradition bound way, the US Navy gave a fine send-off to the ship, its crew and its namesake. In keeping with the respect that has been shown to the family and particularly the sisters of Paul Carr, Juanita Carr Rush, Paul's youngest sister, and the only one capable of traveling, was asked to make a few remarks after being presented with the shadow box that has ridden on the CARR for over twenty-seven years. Lucille Carr Seifert was glad that her sister could go to represent her, but even though resigned to the fact that her health would not allow her to travel, frustrated that she could not see the ship one last time.

Lucille remembers the Vice President of the Todd Ship Yard telling her that the commissioning ceremony of the USS CARR in 1985 was the largest crowd and show of family that they had ever seen. Even in 2013, 15 extended Carr family members were able to make the trip to Norfolk for the forty-five minute ceremony. Many more wanted to

come, but could not. One in particular, played a greater role than perhaps she realized. When Juanita was working on her speech, she got three-fourths of the way through it and got stuck. She could not "wrap it up." When asked if she would be willing to let her granddaughter, Keely Rush West, a former speechwriter for President David Boren at the University of Oklahoma, take a look at it, she said, "Oh I'd much rather have her standing right beside me on the stage!" Keely was one of those who wanted to come, and looked at her family budget six ways from Sunday but could not make it work (especially coming in from the west coast). So, we contacted Keely and she said, sure send it on over and I'll look at it. What came back was the capstone-Juanita had shared the feelings, and Keely had given it context. Keely was standing next to Grandma on the stage that day, just not in person. Family. One of the TV reporters came up to Juanita after the ceremony and told her that they usually try to get "color" or a better quote from someone to use in the story, but that her talk had been so spot on, the reporter did not feel the need to follow up!

The Carr Sisters (all eight of them!) were, are hard working, plain country folk. As proud as they were of the fact that a ship had been named after their brother, I think it was more important to them that it had been his shipmates that lobbied the U.S. Navy to have a ship named after Paul Carr. Those who were able to witness the love affair the Survivors' and the Sisters had over the years at the commissioning and reunions got a rare treat indeed. Continued on page 6.....

Taps

With sadness, we report the passing of shipmate **Robert R. Brennan, RM3/c** of Bethlehem, PA. He was preceded in death by his wife Marie in 1984 and survived by a son Robert M. (Elizabeth) ,two daughters Maureen (Ed) Berezny and Patricia (David) Knappenberger, six grandchildren and three great-grandchildren

Robert M. Brennan wrote of his dad: "I always said my dad was a hero. His answer was 'I am no hero; I just did what had to be done. The true heroes were my shipmates who didn't come back.' To me, all the men of the Samuel B. Roberts were heroes. They attacked a vastly superior Japanese force and for what ever reason won the battle and made the supreme sacrifice by losing their ship and 96 shipmates. On March 22, 2013, I lost my hero, my dad, Robert R. Brennan."

We offer the Brennan family our sympathy on the passing of their father, grandfather and great-grandfather. The Brennans have been very loyal supporters of our Survivors' Association.

Roll Call

To the best of our knowledge, the following is a list of the living survivors of the USS Samuel B. Roberts DE 413. If we have made any errors or omissions, please let us know.

James F. "Bud" Comet	Bill Katsur	Albert Rosner
Herbert E. Eskins	Adred C. Lenoir	Jack Yusen
E. Glenn Huffman	James E. Myers	

Treasury Report September 2013

Starting Balance 1-2-13	\$2,370.27	
Dues Received and Deposited	<u>590.00</u>	(Thank You!)
Total	\$2,960.27	
Expenses (Newsletter Printing Jan. 2013)	(-207.65)	
(Flowers, Brennan)	<u>(-101.00)</u>	
Balance 8-27-13	\$2,651.62	

With Sympathy.....

We would like to extend our heartfelt sympathy to the family and friends of **Maxine Sinclair** who passed away on February 1, 2013. She is survived by her son Fred Strehle III and daughter Linda Sinclair Holloway, four grandchildren and 3 great grandchildren. She was preceded in death by her husbands Shipmate Fred Strehle II, SC1/c (Oct. 25, 1944) and Bill Sinclair.

Many of you remember Maxine and her vivacious personality from our reunions. She was often accompanied by her friend Becky Roebuck, who kindly informed us of Maxine's passing.

“ Do You Want To Walk or Do You Want to Ride??”

An interesting story we would like to share:

As a young man of seventeen growing up in North Carolina, Glenn Huffman thought it was his patriotic duty to enlist in the war effort. Having no means of transportation other than his own two feet, Glenn set out for town to join the Army. Along the way, a local farmer drove by and stopped to give Glenn a ride. Asking young Glenn where he was off to, Glenn said he was going to town to join the Army. The farmer asked “What are you going to do that for?” Glenn, somewhat bewildered, said “Why, there’s a war going on and I need to do my part.” The farmer then said “I know there’s a war going on, but why are you going to join the Army? You should join the Navy.” Glenn, being only seventeen, asked, “Well, what’s the difference?” The farmer smiled, shook his head and said “Well, hell, boy, do you want to walk or do you want to ride?”

And the rest, as they say, is history!!



FYI.....
The 2014 Version of David Sears’ “Tin Can Calendar” is available at www.dlsearsbooks.com

Fredericksburg Book Signing Event

On April 6, 2013 in the auditorium of the Nimitz Hotel in Fredericksburg, Texas, John Wukovits gave an outstanding presentation of his recent book For Crew and Country: The Inspirational True Story of Bravery and Sacrifice Aboard the USS Samuel B. Roberts. With several family members of the original crew and many visitors present, John told the story of how he first became involved with the Samuel B. Roberts and how that experience led him to write his wonderful book.

John took many questions from the audience and then did a book signing for all in attendance. Family members on hand included Juanita Carr Rush and son Mike Rush, Lucille Carr Seifert and daughters Brenda Seifert Webb, Carol Seifert Lohn and granddaughter Sarah Lohn, Bob LeClercq and John and Sue Walsh.

The Samuel B. Roberts Survivors’ Association can never repay John for all of his efforts to keep alive the story of the heroic deeds of all the brave sailors who served on the DE 413.

Thank you, John.



Pictured: Bob LeClercq, John Walsh, John Wukovits

Memories of A Tin Can Sailor

Last summer, we were able to meet with Jack Yusen when he traveled to Illinois to be with his family. We were also able to meet Jack's son Jeffrey and his wife Natalie and also Jack's brother Jerry. Jerry Yusen was a young boy when his big brother Jack went off to war. Jerry has shared a few stories with us regarding that time in his life. Most recently, Jerry sent us the following poem with a note describing the author Andy Schuchardt, as "a very dear friend. We met years ago on a flight to Seattle where he now resides. Enclosed is a poem he penned upon meeting Jack and Ruth as he listened carefully and sensitively to the stories of war."

The poem follows:

Memories Of A Tin Can Sailor by J. Andrew Schuchardt for Jack Yusen, a Tin Can Hero

We are expendable; there is little choice.

We have no options; we lack any voice.

A need does exist, making our course very clear.

We must press on, while dismissing our gravest fear.

Our fleet is minute; we have nothing more.

A terrible burden; I've never met such before.

But the task must be done; we can't allow it to fail.

We realize why we've been ordered to set sail.

Our lives are so few, but all know quite well,

Many others must be spared some devilish hell.

The plan is insane, but it has to suffice.

We follow the order; it spells sacrifice.

The sea punishes us with cold stinging foam.

Thoughts wander back to wife, child and home.

Is there any hope for some to return?

I think not; ugly shadows emerge off our stern.

Silhouettes appear atop this cruel sea.

Are we shrouded, or have we been seen?

Ships must converge; so for help we do plea.

Lord, help us shorten the distance between.

Battleships and cruisers begin to take shape;

Images from which we will never escape.

A screaming shell passes over our mast.

We look to heaven; the next may be our last.

The distance lessens and the time has come.

We sense our bodies, but much is just numb.

More salvos pass us, but how on earth why?

Every gunner must see us with his bare naked eye.

And then it dawns upon our meager crew.

There are even grins on the faces of a few.

We are too small; their guns are far too great.

We have time before we all meet our fate!

But time is scarce; not a moment to waste.

Fire the torpedoes, and damn it make haste!

Our target is hit; a ship thrice our size,

And now all can cheer her awful demise.

Joy passes quickly; we did what we could.

What yet lies ahead is now understood.

Our small ship shudders; a shell hit its goal.

Some will soon know if they own a true soul.

Memories of A Tin Can Sailor...continued from page 5

Another shell; we are robbed of our stern.
 There are screams and a turret begins to burn.
 The ship is doomed; she begins her slow death.
 But pride takes possession; we could have done less.

We are ordered to leave; we face our ship's end.
 Below are lifeless bodies, each an abandoned dear friend.
 I pause for one last look. Can I grasp what I see?
 The torturous enemy has chosen to flee!

With a glimmer of hope, I now feel the ocean.
 There are others, all with their own prayers and emotion.
 Our ship was lost, but duties remain.
 Injured must be helped, but there is little for their pain.

Thoughts focus on just staying alive.
 But how long can we hope to really survive?
 Surely there are those who know of our plight,
 Some must surely know of our long gallant fight.

Hours pass, and then there is night,
 Dark hours consumed with lingering fright.
 Our world is hunger, thirst, reflections of past sins,
 Putrid oil, and predators with fins.

The sun rises and bright light returns.
 A shipmate continues to moan with his burns.
 And then appears a new grim distraction.
 A ship approaches. Joy is not our reaction.

Many thanks to Jerry Yusen for sharing this wonderful poem with us.

A cruiser from Japan rushes by with high speed.
 Will they fire on us, so more must now bleed?
 We see its Captain, grimly rendering a salute.
 We stare back, but we remain simply mute.

Cruel capture seems worse than the ocean.
 But the water takes on a brutal new motion.
 Some face a will that threatens to break.
 We struggle not to drown in the violent wake.

The day struggles on without new detection.
 The sun burns and mirages form in every direction.
 Oil washes off, and we lose some protection.
 Eyes grow weary from the steady reflection.

Another shipmate drifts aimlessly away.
 I'm too weak to beg him: "It is best to stay!"
 Another night approaches; another curse.
 Daytime is better, or is it really worse?

The third day arrives like some vague fevered dreams.
 When rescue arrives, all becomes quite unreal.
 It takes time to accept the hard deck I now feel.
 Is it life, death or reality? Nothing is as it seems.

And as cooling water soothes my now burning throat,
 A feeling of guilt descends, although remote.
 Why me? So many others stayed with the ship,
 A ship some dared to call a mere tin can boat.

Carr Decommissioning....continued from Page 1

Juanita recognized that preparing for the trip to Norfolk was like putting on a persona for a specific job, but that coming back to Muskogee and living her daily life as best she can pays an ultimate respect to the memory and sacrifices of the past crews of the USS CARR, Paul Carr, and the many, many people who have crossed our paths over the years in connection with Brother.

Lucille admits to being a bit greedy, in that she thinks that another ship named USS CARR would be just fine and dandy!

The USS CARR had one last Tiger Cruise in which family members are allowed to embark and be afloat for some period of time with the crew members. Jeff Rush, as a nephew of Paul Carr, was allowed to participate in the CARR's last days at sea as it made its way from Mayport, Florida, to Norfolk, Virginia. Jeff said that at the conclusion of the trip he did not want to leave the ship. Paul Carr never had a homecoming; Jeff as a member of the extended Carr Family, had ridden the CARR home. Jeff felt like he gave Uncle Paul the homecoming he never had.

The Paul Henry Carr Memorial Foundation is almost finished with the design and building of the new Paul Carr Exhibit which will be housed in the Katy Depot, Checotah, Oklahoma. Some items from the USS CARR will be loaned by the U.S. Navy to the Katy Depot to be a part of the exhibit.

How do I put this tastefully? All of the foregoing takes money, and we are accepting contributions (which would be tax deductible if you itemize) to pay for the exhibit, the cost of transporting the artifacts from the East coast to Oklahoma, and other educational endeavors that the Board is pursuing. You may send contributions, if you are so inclined, to: PHCMF, P.O. Box 2214, Muskogee, OK 74402-2214.

We also hope at some time to possibly host a mini-reunion for Sammy B Survivors and their relatives that live in the central United States area. You could see the exhibit and the home town of one of the many, many heroes of the USS SAMUEL B. ROBERTS (DE-413).

There's a lake nearby for recreational purposes (Lake Eufala), and other possibilities. If the plans come to fruition, be looking for more details in subsequent newsletters (or, e-mails if the idea takes off).

Editors note: Thank you! to Mike Rush for this contribution to the "Newsletter". The speech that Mike's mom, Juanita Carr Rush, gave at the decommissioning is printed in its entirety on the next page.



A Carr Sister's Heartwarming Speech

Thank you, commander Kulakowski.

Guests, dignitaries and Carr Family members,

I guess I always knew this day would come, but as with so many things in life
We are never ready when they actually happen.

In Seattle, at the Christening, when we saw the USS CARR slide down into the
water,

We knew its life would be limited, but we felt so blessed that we pushed the fu-
ture aside.

My sister, Peggy Dodd would put her hand on the ship and say,
"I just want to touch it."

It was almost as if we had a small part of our brother back again.

We have met many of our brother's shipmates and they have taken us into their
hearts.

And, we have taken them into ours.

They will always remain a part of us.

So the shadow boxes will go onto our walls and the memories back into our
hearts where they have comforted us so many years.



But, now we also have the added memories of the ship-
mates

And all the stories they have shared with us. We will
also have the books written about the battle and our
brother's part in it.

The nieces and nephews are now learning about him
from Oklahoma history books.

The ship, like so many others before it, is passing into
another stage of history.

And we will continue to move forward as survivors
must, holding the past in our hearts and sharing it with
those who come afterward.

Thank you to everyone who has been part of that shar-
ing.

We wish you well with Fair Winds and Following Seas.

Juanita Carr Rush, the youngest of the eight Carr sisters

USS Samuel B. Roberts DE 413
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Newsletter 22.2
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Association dues are \$10.00 per year

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Phone, write or e-mail us with any news or information for the next Newsletter

Thank you!

