

The *HUSKEY PUP*

USS Davidson DE/FF-1045 Newsletter

June 02, 2010
Volume 1, Issue 1



USS DAVIDSON Reunion Association Change to Board of Directors

Effective with this past year's annual reunion in Branson, Missouri, and with the resignation of Robert Schippers as president and Karen Schippers as treasurer, the association membership present voted to change the leadership format to (5) members of the USS DAVIDSON Reunion Association being elected as directors on an annual basis. Those members who agreed to serve and were elected for the year 2010 were as follows:

Mike Peck (served aboard 1972-1973)
Matt Bozek (served aboard 1970 – 1973)
Dan Kroeger (served aboard 1969-1973)
Jim Moczarny (served aboard 1971-1973)
Russell Crosby (served aboard 1966-1969)
Belinda Crosby is the Association's treasurer
Brean Crosby Fowler is the webmaster of
the USS DAVIDSON.com website

A Fitting End for the Davy Maru

On November 7, 2009 a ceremony was conducted honoring our ship and of the men who served in her. I don't think I have ever seen anything more moving as an honor to we Navy veterans, our country, and our ship than what these men did here today for us. Please let them know how much this means to each of you. It will bring a tear to your eyes when you watch it. I think tonight our ship rests in peace, a Vietnam Veteran also, knowing the men who sailed in her have not forgotten her, nor has the country of her original commission of



Plankowner and Ret Admiral Bob Weidman (left) and Robert Schippers

which she gave so many years of service. The American flag needed to be aboard her in her final resting place. It looked so beautiful all unfurled with the light shining through it. This was just special. The flag that went down in the box was flown over the USS Missouri Memorial in Pearl Harbor, and the one you saw unfurled for the ceremony is a second one that will be sent back to the association for display at our annual meetings. Incidentally those dog tags you saw are ones of fellow shipmates that our deceased shipmate Deke Keller gathered to have put on the ship in this special ceremony. I wished he could have lived to enjoy this event.

The beautiful box was made by Edu and his men that contained all the mementos of honor. The ribbon was the Vietnam Service Ribbon and also the National Defense Medal was included, along with a flag in remembrance of our POWs, who were not lucky as we were to come home. Also the photo was the group photo of the attendees of the ninth annual USS Davidson reunion. The location on the ship finally selected was as you saw was one of the stacks of the ship from the fire room, first for security's sake so that the mementos will never be bothered, but also as a special tribute to the engineers of the Davidson as well. As an engineer I was especially pleased to see that location for the final resting place for the honors to the ship.

These Brazilian Divers certainly honored the United States of America, and even more so, brought honor of their wonderful country of Brazil. I will always hold that country special for what these men did for us today. Best regards to each of you. Hope to see you all in Branson in October, 2010.

Russell Crosby



Captain Wheeler conferring with fellow Officers on the bridge.

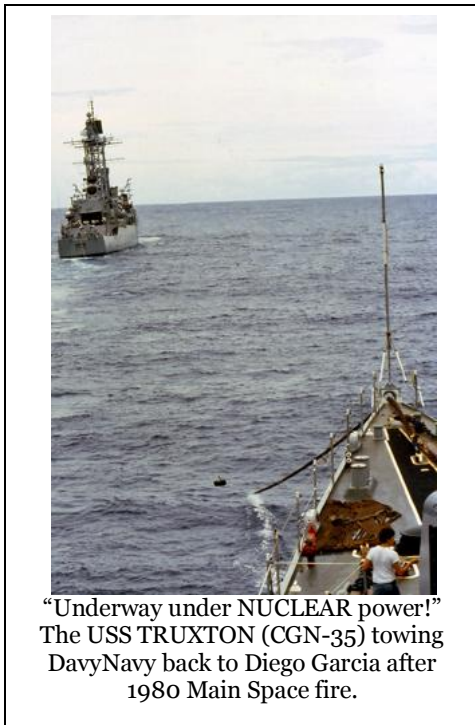
10th Annual USS Davidson Reunion

**Grand Country Inn
1945 West Highway 76
Branson, Missouri 65616**

We are pleased to inform you that we will be holding the 10th Annual USS Davidson Reunion October 7th-9th, 2010. The room **rate is \$64.50** even if you arrive early, which many of the crew do, or stay a few days later. Reservations should be made by calling **1-800-828-9068** and asking for Group Sales. Be sure to mention the USS Davidson when making your reservations to get our special rate. We encourage you to register early to get a room in our building complex near the meeting room.

Almost half the crew arrives several days in advance to take advantage of Branson's 100 shops, 500 restaurants and it's many sights and shopping areas. If your buddies are here, chances are you can start your reunion early. You can find more about the Branson area by calling 1-800-BRANSON or go on line at ExploreBranson.com and ordering the 2010 Branson vacation guide.

We will be having our raffle again this year so your raffle item[s] will be greatly appreciated. Each year it gets bigger, more popular and raises money for our various activities. Raffle items can be just about any item. Previous years we have had military items, Davidson items, books, movies, gift certificates, handmade afghans, pocket knives, etc. Don't forget items of interest to the ladies. You name it, we've had it on the raffle table. How about some gag gifts?



The new Branson airport is now open for those who would like to fly directly into Branson.

The meeting room will once again be alcohol free, family friendly dress is always causal. October can be cool so bring jackets. Bring any display items and photos you would like to share as we have tables to display them.

If you have any questions, you can contact any one of the people below:

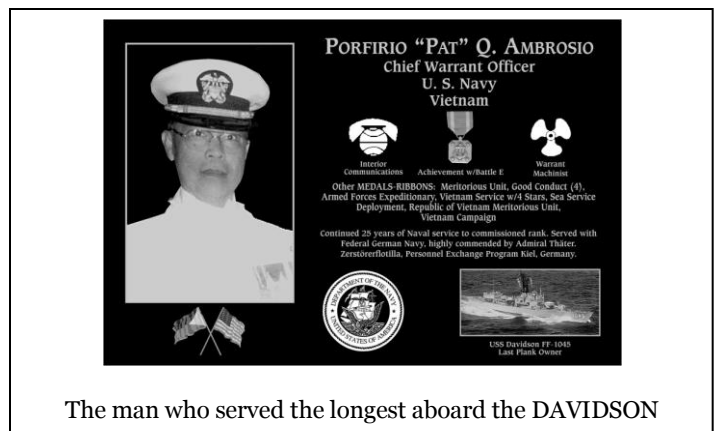
Mike Peck – [952] 922-8536 - Davidson1045@msn.com
Russell Crosby – [918] 224-2215 - CogswellRS@aol.com
Dan Kroeger - [440] 944-9498 – dk_1045@yahoo.com

Fitting Tribute to the Davy Maru

Dive Crew preparing to pay final tribute to the Davy Maru.



**In memory of:
CDR Richard C. (Snuffy) Smith (The Davidson's 3rd
CO – 05/69-05/71) and ETR3 Gregory K. Shore
(1966-1967) passed away this year.**



The man who served the longest aboard the DAVIDSON

Everyone **PLEASE** ensure we have your correct email address! Send us a quick note to: Davidson1045@msn.com

***"The Presumption of Agent Orange
Contamination for Certain Ships"
Attaining the status of
"Inland Waterway Service"***

Jim Kelly
BT1
Class of 67-70

WHERE WE ARE HOPEFULLY HEADED. VA approval of the proposition by members of our crew that the USS Davidson DE 1045, that classic fighting ship, should be given the Status of "Inland Waterway Service Vessel," for service in Vietnam in inland waterways and rivers. This all started for Russ Crosby, Mike Peck a long time ago when both sailors were working hard to assist those members of our crew who were in need of timely assistance with information about their service in Vietnam during the first few years, beginning in 1967. The reason, the VA didn't believe them when they gave their first hand accounts of their service in Vietnam, and the places they served, while in the combat zone, and especially (NGFS), Naval gunfire support missions, was that they could not prove their information as submitted or at the time they applied for a claim with the VA.

This is where I came in. Our shipmate, Ed Snelling, one of my sailors, for a while in the fire room has come to a place in his life where illness has really started to bang him and Buzzy around, and they asked for help from their association. Russ and Mike at the time. Russell was kind enough to keep members of our crew from back them appraised of Ed's situation, and when I got a note one day advising that the VA had turned him down for assistance with Diabetes Two, an allowed illness by their own guide-line. They told Ed he needed more information and to go back and seek assistance from his crew and anywhere he could get it.

Russell and I had a brief discussion and I asked if anybody would mind if I took a look at this situation with respect to further research. My history include 23 years on the Toronto Police Department, much of them as a major case investigator, looking at long term and long dead serious crimes and serial criminals. For a brief look into why I thought I could do the reading required, The last investigation I did, was on a man named Michael Gereaux, who in the 1980's, stalked and raped ten women in the City of Toronto and became known as the, High Park Rapist. I was assigned this case, as a cold case, when it was ten years old as a bunch of women's identification had been located by a builder in a

renovated house that once belonged to Michael Gereaux. Found in a orange canvass wallet, taped to the underside of an old tin ashtray. All of the personal information found in the wallet, belonged to all of the women that were the victims of the High Park rapist. During this investigation which lasted two-and-one-half-years and involved the taking of 1500 hand written statements, one from any person who came near the case. Michael pleaded guilty to raping all the named victims in consideration of not being charged for the other twenty-two who were attributed to him in three separate cities. He is now serving life in prison.

In other words, I have the training to look into matters with respect to what is a lot of paper work and reading. In this case, it was ten years worth of reading. Not unlike the history of the Davidson as she was a good fighter and was on the line in Vietnam, many, many times. I call it fresh eyes. simply, a new reader into the game.

So we began. Weeks ago, probably twelve or fourteen, I was reading a message regarding the Blue Water Sailors Association, of Littleton Colorado, and was very surprised to read, that about twenty ships which included Gator freighters, and destroyers had been placed on a list by the VA that gave the ships and the crew of the mentioned years, in this case, 66 through 68 a presumption of A.O., agent orange contamination and status on record of, Inland Waterway Service Vessel.

This meant that any sailor aboard any one of the listed ships could put a claim into the VA and have it approved within a few days, PERIOD. I looked at the ships named and observed that a couple Destroyers, one being the USS Mansfield was tin Vietnam in 1966 and 1967 and I began to wonder what could be different about what they did compared to the Davidson, and it's time in the combat zone and inland waterways. The Mansfield's work was outstanding and dangerous as it was up rivers and tributaries and in constant contact with A.O. Many of it's crew have died of cancer and other related problems that have been directly, as I understand it, been connected to DIOXIN.

Russ, Mike and myself began reading and since the Blue Waters document openly stated that being in Cam Rahn Bay, was recognized at inland waterway service as in the case of, the USS Niagara Falls, a combat supply ship which, was on the list and was being credited with being in Cam Rahn Bay. It was there but it was also way up the Saigon River and other places, places we

could not go.

The Bays and harbors of Vietnam was to be my starting point, as places like DaNang Harbor, Cam Rahn and parts of the Mekong Delta were apparently given the nod. As I read and read and read some more and with the assistance of Russ and Mike, back and forth through 106 e-mails and information provided by our crew, those that served in 1967 and 68, I was eventually able to put together a short list which basically boiled down to Cam Rahn Bay, DeNang with a few days in Nha Trang harbor. The latter proving to be the key to this old lock.

It is May now, and I had just sent Buzzy, Ed Snelling lovely wife the information we had generated, and our thoughts on how to use it. Not long after, Buzzy came back with the bad news. It was still insufficient, as Ed needed inland waterway service, and that the VA flatly refused to accept bays and harbors, and what Ed needed was more on time spent in places like the Saigon River.

About a week later, I received the May issue of the VFW magazine, inside, attached to another article, and much to my surprise, was the entire article written by Blue Water Sailors still naming the Niagara Falls and still saying that Cam Rahn Bay is an acceptable site for Inland Waterway Status. I immediately jumped on this admission, as it was now public on a national basis. I sent Mr. John Paul Rossie of Blue water a letter introducing myself and asking questions regarding The Niagara Falls and Cam Rahn Bay, and shortly thereafter, Mike sent me a copy of a note Mr. Rossie had written to Buzzy telling her that the Niagara Falls and Cam Rahn Bay information was erroneous. *Much to our great and wonderful surprise, was a first time mention of, Nha Trang Harbor and the Rung Sat Special Zone.* None of us were aware of this zone, but I had read about it in one deck log and I recalled spending time there and on lot of fire missions.

In his note, Mr. Rossie openly stated, IF, we could provide him with information of our presence in Nha Trang Harbor, he would be able to make a full package for the VA and Guarantee the Davidson would be **IMMEDIATELY** be placed on the A.O. database and that meant,, all of her crew would now be covered and helped,(his words.) By proving your presence aboard during that dates shown on the logs for being in the (RSSZ.) Notice that last term, it appears on logs from September 23 and 24 and October 3,4,5

and 6 of 1967. The dates we were in that zone but, how were we to know about it, I believe the VA has not been mentioned, prior to the outing by the VFW publication, of the Blue Water document. It did not appear in any Blue Water correspondence or VA information, and I have a sneaking hunch, it was not mentioned to every sailor as matter of routine. I am just asserting my opinion here, it may well have been put out there, but just not picked up. **We are so close,** days from now June 5th, 2010, Mr. Rossie will have our information and hopefully he will do what he has stated. He will. **IMMEDIATELY** have the Davidson placed on the Inland Waterway Service database, and where home free, at least for the first couple years.

I do believe that our sailors from the years starting with the 70's will eventually also be covered. You folks all showered, ate food and drank water your BT's refined out of the bilge taken in, that was the brown water we lived in. A.O. simply didn't go away with us when we left, and it is probably still discernable in the rivers and harbors and bays of Vietnam.

What I believe, is that any crewman who will file a claim should do it, Ask Mike, Russ and me for a set of logs. Mike I believe has them all or close to it. I know both of them are standing by to help you and I will do all I can for any Davidson sailor regarding AO. Read the logs, determine where you were. John Buche our 67 sonar officer is doing an amazing thing. He is actually charting all of the stated bearings and land points noted in the logs. He has already placed us inside Vietnam, absolutely, and he plans on continuing this mission, I believe that what he is doing will be a whole new way for the VA to look at brown water service, as they do not do any charting. Thank you from all of us John, a very smart move on your part and just as generous as I know it's a time taker. *Remember if you submit a claim, use all the information you can get, places, chart notations and try to put in a package for them as I know if they have to do it themselves, it will go on a pile of paper. Make you effort thorough and complete, with any cruise book pictures and stories, as they love the cruise books.*

Anyway, pray for our guys. And pray that Mr. Rossie comes through.

Jim Kelly

Since this letter was written, Ed Snellings was given 100% disability from the V.A.



Visit by the Secretary of the Navy, J. William Middendorf, 11 Dec 75.



Mount 51 firing



In dry dock



Santa in chopper



Change of Command July 5th, 1980 at Diego Garcia, B.I.O.T. CDR Froehlich and CDR Dalton



Heavy seas in 1967



Motor whale boat



Captain Wheeler and Captain Smith



1982 at sea transiting Philippine Islands
from Tacloban port visit.



LAMPS Helo

For more information go to our web site at:

www.usstdavidson.com

And on Facebook at:

USS Davidson Reunion Association

Everyone **PLEASE** ensure we have your correct email address! Send us a quick note to: **Davidson1045@msn.com**

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