

Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)
Association
Volume 1, Issue 2
September, 1998
Editor: Jim Timmons
Assn. Membership 35

Association Membership Grows

Keep the Memories Alive



As of this writing, our association membership rolls now stand at 35. The following shipmates (Nitro tour dates) have signed on as Charter members during the month indicated:

June 1998: Robert Eberlein (67-69); James Timmons (68-69); Brian Evans (84-87); George Gregory III (63-66); Harry Jackson (43-45); Robert Peiffer; William Stralo (59-61); Barry Smith ('65) and James Herron Jr. (43-45).

July 1998: David Holtzbauer (77-79); Vincent Troiola (70-71); Christine Crites (92-95); Morris Holman (64-67); John Foley (62-63); William Lewis (43-44); Robert Flynn (72-75); Bennett Landry, Jr. (37-41); Randy Deitsch (70); John Bakshis (72-73); Trevor Richards (43-45); Raymond Murray (59); David Lesso; James Glass; Eddie Cantrell (62-64); Frank Alley (59-61); Robert Theirrien (69-73); James Musumeci (76-78); James Andross (70s); Richard Steinreich (42-45).

August 1998: Norman Bauernfeind (43-45); Russell Garbutt (60-64); Frank Schenck (67-68); Kevin Clavin (82-85); Walter Newsome (62-66); Steve Boerstler (72-75).

Remember, Charter Membership status will be conferred on persons joining the association through 31 December 1998. Any one desiring to become a member of the USS NITRO (AE-2/AE-23) Association may do so by sending a **check made payable to:**

USS NITRO Association
% Mr. Robert Eberlein
12215 Ashland
Granger, Indiana 46530-9654

Membership packets (\$12.00) include a '98 Reunion booklet, membership card & certificate and quarterly newsletters.

Philadelphia, Here We Come!

Monday, 21 June - Thursday, 24 June, are the dates for our 1999 Reunion. Hotel accommodations are still pending and will be published as soon as they are finalized.

Now, Set the Sea and Anchor Detail! Familiar sounds when coming into or leaving port. Making that long transit up the Delaware River to the Navy Yard in Philly is something that most of our shipmates have experienced.

When we meet for our 3rd Annual reunion next June in Philadelphia, we may have an opportunity to be on the Delaware River, but we will not set the Sea and Anchor Detail. We are attempting to schedule a visit to the **USS Nitro (AE-23)** for a possible **wreath laying ceremony**.



There are many attractions to take advantage of while in the Philadelphia area. Some of these activities, such as the Nitro visit, should be made as a group. Another group activity we are considering is a visit to Washington DC.

If you are planning to attend the 1999 reunion, please let us know how many people will be in your party.



USS Nitro Ball Caps



We have decided to include, as the premium for our 1999 Association Dues (\$20.00), baseball caps with an embroidered patch bearing USS NITRO above the AE-23 silhouette and AE-2/AE-23 hull number under the silhouette. The caps will be Navy Blue in color and have adjustable head bands.

In order to purchase these caps in the most economical quantity, we need to know how many of our former shipmates would like to have one as part of the annual dues. Let us know, when filling out the attached questionnaire, if you are interested and how many caps you would like. Additional caps may be purchased for \$14.00 ea.

The ball caps will be ordered early in 1999 and be available in time for the Philly Reunion. If you are planning on attending the reunion, you may pick up your ball cap upon checking in at the Nitro Quarter Deck. If you will be unable to attend, we will be happy to mail the ball cap to you (1999 Annual Dues \$20.00 + \$3.00 S/H = \$23.00)

Also available at the reunion, will be the 1999 Reunion Booklet. This booklet will be similar to last year's and will contain updated historical information on the Nitro (AE-2) and (AE-23); a current listing of former crew members and of course *new* cruise stories.

These booklets are not part of the Association dues and may be purchased separately for \$5.00 each (\$6.50, if shipped). Proceeds from the sale of these booklets will help us defray the cost of sending out the newsletters and other notices mailed throughout the year.

◆◆ Request Historical Data



In preparation for the 1999 Reunion, we are in search of any historical information relating to the USS Nitro (AE-2 or AE-23). A substantial amount of data has been assembled on AE-23, and we would like to concentrate our efforts primarily on the AE-2.

Specifically, we are looking for a listing of Commanding Officers for the USS Nitro (AE-2), areas of operation and ports of call. We are also interested in obtaining copies of any commissioning or decommissioning brochures that might be in existence.

AE-2 cruise or "sea stories", either of a first hand nature or any that might have been related to family members, would be appreciated. Typical entrees should be between 100 and 500 words in length.

✂ *The Nitro Sage* - B.

Gregory ✂

The hardness of the butter is proportional to the softness of the bread.

Experience is something you don't get until just after you need it.

✂ **The Crows Nest** ✂

Land Ho! Ship off the Port Bow! Familiar shouts from the Crow's nest. We're going to change the meaning of "crows nest" a little. This area is intended for the use of our former crew members (no pun intended - well maybe a little one) to "crow" about special events in their lives; look for former shipmates, etc.

Angela at ARob803180@aol.com is looking for anyone who has

information on the USS Nitro (AE-2). Her grandfather, Gerald E. Hedge, served from 1939 until ?? and she is looking for info on him as well.

(If you're looking for a former shipmate, please provide as much information as possible)



A Final Thought



What started out as "I wonder if anyone would be interested in having a ship's reunion" has developed into a full fledged association. Thirty-four charter members, and over one hundred-seventy five members listed on the database, and growing weekly. All this due to you, the crew members.

A web site, thanks to the computer talents of Robert Peiffer. Without this valuable site, I really doubt the association would be where it is today. The writing background of James Timmons, for his gathering the vast information on the AE-2/23, publishing the newsletter, the "Nitro Blast" and the reunion booklet.

The third reunion is being planned for Philadelphia, PA, and we are hoping to see an increased attendance of members, and to visit the Nitro, if at all possible. After viewing pamphlets dealing with Philly, there seems to be something of interest to all who attend.

Nitro Blast Newsletter

%James Timmons

S37 W27575 Windsong Ridge

Waukesha, WI 53189

Again, thanks to all who have sent us names and addresses of crew members they have been in contact with and hope to see you in Philadelphia in 1999.

Fair winds and following seas,
Bob Eberlein, Founder, Nitro Assn.



USS Nitro Web Site



This is the place to watch for frequent updates on the Nitro reunion, association and other related activities
<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/>

homepages/nalc820/ussnitro.htm

1998 Reunion Booklet Correction

Captain D. Cone, USN, date of command was listed incorrectly. The correct date should be Oct 1960 - Dec 1961. Please make the necessary corrections.

VA Healthcare Eligibility Update

Special Nitro Blast Insert

Bob Peiffer, our Nitro Web Master, received an email from one of our former crew members regarding VA Healthcare Eligibility. The following is a copy of the discussion concerning this topic. Any questions should be directed to your nearest VA medical facility.

A recent email making the rounds of Internet newsgroups/ mailing lists gives the impression that veterans will lose some medical benefits.

"The President of the U.S. has recently signed into law a bill that affects all veterans. This law states in effect that if a veteran has not registered at a Veterans Affairs Hospital since Oct. 1, 1996, then on Oct. 1, 1998 he or she will lose all medical benefits for life. To make it worse, the V.A. cannot notify veterans about it. That information must be disseminated via word of mouth or by letter. We called the local V.A. office and found out this information is true."

The following was posted by CPortlock@aol.com concerning that email.

You said you called the local VA Office and got confirmation. I took it a step further and contacted Veterans administration in Washington and received the following reply. It differs from what your local office informed you of.:

Misinformation has led some veterans to wonder whether they will lose their eligibility for VA health-care services if they are not enrolled at VA by October 1, 1998. The answer is NO, they will not lose their eligibility, but in most cases, they do need to apply for enrollment by contacting their nearest VA medical center. VA health-care eligibility reform was authorized by Congress and signed into law by the President in October 1996. The new law required VA to manage veterans' access to VA care by using a system of enrollment priorities. There are seven enrollment priority groups, and VA will enroll veterans from as many of the groups as possible.

Veterans can apply for enrollment AT ANY TIME that they come to a VA medical facility for care, even AFTER the trial enrollment period, which ends on October 1, 1998. For details about the seven enrollment priority groups, and enrollment in general, please refer to the VA home page subject, "Benefits" and under the section "Benefits in Detail," go to the link "Eligibility Reform Page."

(<http://www.va.gov/health/elig>)

VA will automatically process an "i" application for any veteran who has received VA health care since October 1996. To receive information about individual eligibility, a veteran should contact the nearest VA medical center. Its address and telephone number are listed on our home page under "Facilities" on the VA home page.

(<http://www.va.gov/facilities.htm>)

Teresa Connelly
Customer Service

Hope this helps clear the air and at least it gives a name at the VA to contact and also web pages to obtain further information