



Nitro Blast

The Newsletter of the
USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23)
Association
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Editor: Jim Timmons
Assn. Membership 210

Return to Rhode Island *Keep the Memories Alive*



2003 Reunion



Sorry for the delay in sending out the September newsletter and the 2002-2003 Crew Member directory, but a situation came up that might have necessitated a change in dates for the reunion. When checking with several hotels in the Providence area, we discovered that another convention has booked most of the rooms (800 of 1200 available rooms) in these hotels. This posed two problems. Problem #1 was the price and problem #2 was the location of the hotel. After widening our search and with some help from the Davisville Seabee Association chapter, we were finally able to reserve a block of 50 rooms for most nights of the reunion at the Crowne Plaza in Warwick, RI.

Because we have extended the reunion by an additional day (Wednesday, 18 June through check-out on Sunday, 22 June), the room blocks are as follows:

Tuesday night 10 rooms (for fishing, golf, etc. On Wed)
Wednesday night 20 rooms (check in is Thursday)
Thursday night 40 rooms
Friday and Saturday night 50 rooms each night

We are hopeful that more rooms for those nights will need to be reserved. The rate for the reunion is \$99/night for either a "king" or "double bedded" room and applies for 1 to 4 people occupying a room. Both smoking and non smoking rooms are available as well as handicap rooms. Anyone requiring special assistance should inform the hotel when making reservations.

Each person will be responsible for making their reservations and may do so by calling the Crowne Plaza at 401-732-6000. Let the reservation clerk know you want to reserve a room for the **USS Nitro Association Reunion**

for "x" number of nights. Your credit card will not be charged until you check out and you have up to 24 hours before the date of arrival to cancel your reservations.

The Crowne Plaza is located four miles from T F Green airport and conveniently off of the I95 expressway at exit 12. This property is located on 75+ acres of land, has an indoor pool with whirlpool, an exercise room with sauna. The meeting and banquet rooms are numerous and varied. The guestrooms are spacious and each contains an iron and ironing board, hairdryer and coffee maker. The hotel will provide complementary transportation to and from the airport as well as occasional trips to the local mall for shopping. Abundant "free" on property parking is also available for both cars and RVs.

We have undertaken the most extensive hotel search in our short history, contacting 6 hotels in the Providence area and 5 hotels in the Newport. We wanted to find a good location to serve as our headquarters while in Rhode Island, convenient to the airport, our visit to Davisville and within the price range of those attending. With the Crowne Plaza, we have found that and much more.

At the request of some of our members, we checked hotels in the Newport area and found the average group rate for a comparable hotel in Newport in June or most of the time in the Summer is well over \$200/per night. Most of the hotels charge for parking and attendees flying into T F Green airport would have to take a shuttle bus to and from the airport at the cost of \$20/person each way.

2003 - Providence/Davisville, RI

We now look forward to the 2003 gathering and, as mentioned earlier, have expanded the number of days we will be in reunion in Rhode Island to 4 from the usual 3

days. Because we anticipate the Providence reunion to be the largest one yet, we want to have an extra day in the schedule for those who would like to get together for a round of golf, fishing or just to swap "sea stories". We are in the process of setting up these activities. A reunion activity sheet will be mailed along with the December and March 2003 newsletters and will detail the costs of these activities and the association dinner. If you have ever thought about attending a reunion, *THIS IS IT*. NOW IS THE TIME TO GET THE WORD OUT !!!

We have contacted the Rhode Island Economic Development Corporation about the possibility gaining access to the Davisville Piers while there on Saturday for the wreath laying. The USS Nitro (AE-23) was homeported at Davisville, RI. from 1959 to the mid 1970s.

Next year's wreath laying will be part of a joint USS Nitro – Seabee Island X-1 (Davisville chapter) memorial ceremony and will take place at the location of the Seabee Memorial park. The memorial park is still under construction, but you will be able to see several trails bulldozed into a wooded area, a number of Quonset huts in the midst of restoration, the Chapel in the Pines (the church from Quonset Point Naval Air Station). The famous Seabee statue, which was located at the entrance of the Construction Battalion Center will become part of the centerpiece of the park. After the memorial ceremony concludes, we will travel to the N. Kingston Golf Course (former Quonset/Davisville golf course) for a clambake.

We would like to get as much publicity about the Nitro's return to Rhode Island as possible, so please submit the following reunion notice to your local newspapers:

The USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) Association announces that our 2003 reunion will be held at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick, Rhode Island from June 18 - 22. For more information, contact either:

USS NITRO Association Mr. Robert Eberlein 12215 Ashland St. GRANGER IN 46530-9654 <u>Email at:</u> ebb23@aol.com or, visit our website at http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/nalc820/ussnitro.htm	USS NITRO Association Mr. James Timmons S37 W27575 Windsong Ridge WAUKESHA WI 53189-6133 stitch@ticon.net
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In addition to the day's worth of activities surrounding the Association wreath laying, we will conduct our annual business meeting, hold our Association dinner and take a motor coach tour to other local and New England attractions.

Because of the anticipated size of this reunion, we are requesting help from our New England shipmates to make this an event to remember. If you can help us in any of the following areas, it would be greatly appreciated: Securing transportation (motor coaches); locate possible military color guards and buglers; get pricing on the wreath; make phone calls to TV and radio stations; help in lining up activities; restaurants to stop at while we on a day tour (if needed).

If you can help, please contact any of the board members.

Additional Classification for Assn. Dues

A proposal was made and adopted at the San Diego reunion to incorporate another classification of dues into the Nitro Association dues structure. The new classification is that of Associate Member and will be for spouses of former or deceased USS Nitro (AE-2/AE-23) crew members, children of former or deceased crew members or for any former U. S. Navy personnel having an interest in or desire to join the USS Nitro Association. This classification would allow those members to receive a membership certificate & card and 4 quarterly newsletters each year (*dues premiums will not be included in this classification*). The cost of the Associate Membership will be \$12.50 per calendar year.

Memorial Donation Made

We are pleased to announce that the Association has donated \$325.00 from the proceeds of the San Diego reunion raffle and auction to the Mount Soledad Veteran's Memorial Wall fund. As mentioned in previous editions of this newsletter, a portion of the monies collected are set aside for contributions to worthwhile Navy related projects.

The Crow's Nest

The Association had received a packet of photos and personal photocopies for our archives from Ed Finney, Jr. Ed is the grandson of Capt. Earl Peck Finney (AE-2) and works for the Naval Historical Center in Washington, DC. We now several photocopies of the AE-2 in different stages of completion, an obituary for Captain Finney, a 2 photos of Capt. and Carlton Finney.

We are also in receipt of a scrapbook from the estate of James Burnett, Ops. Officer, commissioning crew AE-23. Among the items are: personal papers, original copiers, Navy photos of the commissioning., commissioning pamphlets, guest cards, menus for holidays and other

personal photos. Mr. Burnett served as an Episcopalian Priest in California for 20 years after retiring from the Navy in 1973.

TAPS

From Charles Smith - CDR William J. O'Connell USN (Ret.) passed away on 21 July 2002. He was Chief Engineer of (AE-23) from 59-60.

USS Nitro (AE-23) & (AE-2) Video Tapes

We are assessing the interest in two video tapes that have been given to the USS Nitro Association. We have a black and white videotape of the USS Nitro (AE-2), circa 1929-31 (made from a 16mm. film). The AE-2 tape, which is of significant historical importance because of its rarity, is about 20 minutes in length. It was given to the association by the Ed Case family of Lansdale, PA.

A copy of the USS Nitro (AE-23) decommissioning ceremony videotape has been obtained from COMLOGRON2, NWS, Earle, NJ. After some editing, this tape will be about an hour in length.

If you are interested in purchasing either or both of these tapes, please let me know either by letter or email. It is anticipated that the ship's store price for these tapes will be about \$10 each plus S/H. **Do not send any money at this time.** Delivery time for the video tapes depends upon the interest in them. Please read future newsletters for additional information.

The Nitro Sage

Nitro Blast Newsletter

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Address Service Requested



A Final Thought



At the June reunion, our World War Two members had a chance to see their old ship one more time, even though it was on VHS tape. Attending members, spouses, family members and guests watched as every day life aboard the ship unfolded and saw the AE-2 ship's baseball team at play.

Next, the AE-23 crewmembers watched as our lady was decommissioned. The pomp and circumstance caught on tape so this day will be remembered forever. After the speeches and the dismissal of her final crew, the film was fast-forwarded as the Nitro was prepared to be towed to Philly. A glimpse back into history and a lot of memories.

As mentioned earlier, the reunion committee can use more assistance to make arrangements for the 2003 reunion, especially from our members who live in the Rhode Island and surrounding states. If you can lend a hand, it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Jim or me.

The auctions have been a real hit at the past two reunions. Here are a couple of examples of items that have been donated for the 2003 Reunion: An autographed photo by the "Duke of Earl", Gene Chandler and an original piece of artwork - Garfield the Cat as a Nitro crew member.

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



USS Nitro Web Site



The place for frequent updates on the Nitro reunion,
association and other related activities:

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/>

[homepages/nalc820/ussnitro.htm](http://homepages.nalc820/ussnitro.htm)

Nitro Association Active
Membership Map

