



# Ready Eddie Reader!!!

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 1

SUMMER, 1998

## WELCOME SHIPMATES



**This is the maiden voyage of the official newsletter of the USS Richard S. Edwards DD950 Association, Inc. Sounds formal and official but it's sole purpose is to encourage and nurture communication and friendship amongst former ship mates of the Edwards through this, your newsletter, and reunions.**

**This is also another commissioning for USS Richard S. Edwards and it's crews. We are commissioned to share and keep alive it's history and the memories of it's great crews. US!!!**

**The format, direction, and identity will be determined by input from you. I plan on changing the name (retaining the "Ready Eddie" portion of course) for the first few issues to give people a look at some of the ideas that have been tossed on to the table. All of them good.**

**Few people know the history of the Edwards in it's entirety. There's a lot of it, and we'll strive to pass along as much past and current info as accurately as possible. Sea stories WILL be sea stories. All contributions to the newsletter will greatly appreciated and will only be excluded due to space (\$\$) available.**

**Many of our shipmates have already put in hundreds of hours either organizing the association,**

**the reunion, or doing searches for former crew members. Many more have volunteered to continue to do the same and take on additional tasks necessary to grow the association. I hope that all will pitch in as time in their busy lives allow, to make this light work and an enjoyable experience.**

**Special thanx to the people who jumped at the chance to contribute to this "commissioning" issue. Jim and Sandy Vanderwyst, Jerry Beck and Jack Sanders for the great photos. They all speak a thousand words. I'll probably include some in future issues as space precludes the inclusion of all in this one. I tried to use the photos that would reproduce the best to black and white and give an overall view of the reunion and the people there. Thanx to Skip Minks for his recollections, and Jim Kress, Jack Sanders and Martin Jasso for their support, words of wisdom and hard work. We have a crews in place working to set up a web page for DD 950, and considering reunion sites. Anyone who has skills or knowledge in these areas feel free to jump in. We need to generate some revenue. Maybe in the form of t-shirt, hat sales, etc. Any alumnus have some experience there?**

**Time to get underway. Hope you join the association and enjoy the newsletter.**

**Bob Tuttle, Editor**



**Jack L. Sanders**

*"On the 30th of May, 1998 at the pre-incorporation meeting of ex-crewmembers of the Edwards, I Jack L. Sanders was elected president of the Richard S. Edwards DD-950 Association, Inc. I'll do my best to serve you in this position. Thank you for your confidence (and your vote) in me and in all the elected officers. As a member, please volunteer to help us. Our Association is new, but it's members are old friends and some are new friends. Our link together is our memories of service time on board the Edwards and of liberty call and ports of call. This is why the reunions will be fun for all who attend and for anyone who asks about the reunions they have missed.*

*"No Annual Dues"*

*You've already paid those in full. But as we all know, nothing is free as there is always printing and postage charges as we send out newsletters and mailings. So with your small tax deductible donations our association will get underway.*

*Hope to see you at our next reunion."*

*Jack L. Sanders, Pres.*



**Martin Jasso**

Martin Jasso, of Houston, Texas was not only the first person to volunteer to be an officer of the association, he has undertaken the dual role of Secretary/Treasurer. Regardless of the size, overseeing the finances and records of an incorporated non-profit organization, especially in it's infant stages is a huge task. Either one would be a job and a half. Please note his numerous duties in the by-laws when you see them and look for an opportunity to lend a hand.

**"My personal thank to the "real pros" at Flagship Press whose volunteer time and know-how transformed this from a boring letter to a real newsletter I'm proud to mail out. You're awesome!!!**

**Bob T**



**Bob Tuttle, V.P.**



**Jim Kress**

*"My memories of the reunion will be how well we all got along. It was like we all had been friends forever. It was great sharing sea stories and liberty experiences with each other. The good old Navy days will always be remembered and relived over and over again. You can take the boy out of the Navy but you can't take the Navy out of the boy. Good slogan for us.*

*I have so many memories from aboard the Edwards I never know which ones to share first. When I first went aboard and was assigned to the after fireroom I wondered what hell I'd gotten myself into. Boy, I thought that had to be the worst place there was to spend the next four years of my life. Then I was granted a temporary pardon in the form of mess cooking for three months. Anything was better than down in that hole. Once I got to know the guys down there though, it wasn't as bad as I thought it would be. Damn good group of guys down there. Found out we all liked to have a good time. We worked hard, but we played twice as hard. People who worked topside didn't know how easy they had it. It was hot down there.*

*Over the years I had tried to find some of my old buddies*

but had no luck. Then about five years ago I got a computer listing from my son of all telephone listings. I looked up a couple of guys I remembered, and it all stated from there. We had our first reunion in Branson, MO. The day I returned from Branson I started working on the next reunion, the one we just had in MN. It's been a long road, but well worth it.

Everyone I've found has been really surprised. I got the same response from all.. "How the hell did you find me?". I've found that the Edwards had a mighty fine crew, no matter when they served on her. All I've met have been great guys and would do anything to help out."

JimKress, Godfather of the reunion.

*The Ready Eddie Reader* is the official publication of the USS Richard S. Edwards DD 950 Assoc. Inc. Published as often as time permits. The views expressed are the views and opinions of the individual contributor.

**Association Officers**

**Jack Sanders..President**

**Bob Tuttle..Vice-President**

**Martin Jasso ..Secretary/Treas.**

**Members-at-Large**

**Jim Kress**

**Carl Dege**

**Don Kruger**

**Doug Swires**

**Tom Petersen**

Newsletter correspondence should be sent to: **Bob Tuttle, 12 Concord Ave, Derry NH 03038-1900 E-mail to [tuttlebd@juno.com](mailto:tuttlebd@juno.com)**

"When I was on the Edwards it was in pretty bad shape (engineering wise). The day I checked aboard (June 1967) the chief boilerman said "Boy am I glad to see you, Chief. We have 4 boilers condemned and can't get underway." I was seriously considering calling my detailer back to say, HELP! I stuck it out though, and in 1970 went into the yards at Long Beach where we underwent a \$15 Million conversion.

I've got to tell you though, the cruises that I made to Vietnam were really spectacular in that our Gunners Mates were really deadly with those 5-inch guns. My god, they just couldn't miss and we had a great war record of about 50,000 rounds per cruise. One time, up on Seadragon, a cruiser fired on a bridge on Hwy #1 for 3 days and managed to increase the size of the channel but never hit the bridge. We had 3 barrels loaded and when the cruiser ran out of shells we were given permission to unload our barrels. The results were 2 direct hits which severed the bridge. We didn't even get a "Good shooting Ready Eddie", but we knew we kicked that cruisers butt."

Marshall (Skip) Minks (BTCS,ret. '67-'72)

### *Ready Eddie*

We show the flag in many ports  
to keep our country free

Our screws, they churn in endless turns  
Our eyes, they search the sky  
We listen through the ocean depths  
For submarines on the sly.

Where we go we leave no tracks  
In cunning stealth we prowl  
So best not cross the Richard S.  
Lest you may hear our growl.

For hard we work, and hard we play  
As many can attest  
And proud we are as eagles  
For all know we are best

So please don't cross the Richard S.  
Or you may feel our bite  
And find yourself in the ocean's depths  
In a grave of endless night.

Author unknown

# Reunion "1998"

The first official reunion of the USS Richard S. Edwards took place in Bloomington, MN, May 28-31, 1998. It was attended by 18 former crew members and a number of "better" halves. Those in attendance included, Jim and Mary Kress ('61-'64), Carl and Pat Dege ('64-69), Gene and Thelma Hart ('61-'65), Alan Ezzell and Bonnie Rhodes ('66-'68), Don and Connie Kruger ('66-'69), Dick and Joanne Zahn ('63-'65), Andy and Sharon Lee ('62-'64), Jim and Sandy Vanderwyst ('66-'70), Tom Petersen ('67-'68), Wade Gilbert ('62-'66), Jack Sanders ('62-'65), Martin Jasso ('66-'69), Jerry Beck ('71-'74 plank owner), Doug Swires ('59-'61 plank owner), Bob Tuttle ('71-'76), Loren Page ('67-69), Nat Fuller ('68-'69), and last but not least Jeff Durfee ('67-70).

The accommodations at the Days Inn were just right for a fun weekend with easy access to public transportation to down town Minneapolis, casinos, and the Mall of the Americas conveniently located across the street. The Mall could be made into a weekend in itself with it's over 400 stores, restaurants, bars, nightclubs, and an amusement park in the center. In between "mallin'", folks did some gambling at the local casino, saw a Twins baseball game and got together for many hours of reminiscing. Most attended the official meeting on Sat. afternoon, followed by a sit down dinner at the hotel.

We returned to our hospitality room after dinner to share our last night together. The souvenirs and momentos that people have saved over the years was phenomenal. There were cruise books, commissioning programs, picture albums, crew lists, movies, tapes and much more. (cont. on page 5)

## reunion attendees



Wade Gilbert, Jack L. Sanders, Mary Kress



Jim and Sandy Vanderwyst, Connie and Don Kruger, Loren Page, Andy and Sharon Lee



"Deluxe Accommodations"



Days Inn says "Aloha" to Edwards reunion

## Reunion (cont.)

The fine evening was interrupted at about 10:30 by the sounds of people screaming, sirens blasting and glass shattering as a storm rolled through cracking windows, tearing off sections of roof and trees outside and tossing them around the grounds and parking lot like twigs. Many cars were totaled, including Loren Page's Lincoln Town car. (ouch!!) The Days Inn sign, tells the story for the hotel this year, "Closed for the summer" (you have to read between the lines). There was widespread panic inside as huge panes of glass and plexiglass panels fell into the pool area where many families were still enjoying the evening, NOT ANY MORE. While some of the Edwards guys gathered up the valuables from the hospitality room, others helped direct traffic away from the pool area where glass was everywhere, and still falling. Some, Gene Hart in particular, did all he could for those who had suffered more damage than he. "Way to go Gene". Many people were completely flooded out by the heavy rains coming in from the second floor, and burst water pipes. Some of those in the pool were left without a stitch of dry clothing. The gas had to be shut off throughout the hotel. Most people who had rooms on the outside walls of the hotel were transferred to other hotels for what remained of the evening. Actually it was early morning before most made it to another room. Some of the inside rooms suffered no damage and people opted to stick it out for the last few hours of their stay.

Whatever the situation called for, the crew was still, after all these years, "Ready".

### *The Edwards Association, Inc.*

*The members present at the reunion voted unanimously to form an association, incorporate, and apply for non-profit status. Pres. of the assoc. Jack Sanders had been working on this and had all of the ground work done and info at hand to answer any questions brought up by members. Jack and Sec./Treas. Martin Jasso have since filed and gotten approval for inc. from the State of Oklahoma (Jacks home state). That had to be done before filing for non profit status.*

*It was also decided to have the next reunion two years from now, on the same weekend (the one after Memorial Day) in a somewhat central location, but all suggestions are welcomed and will be considered.*

*Please take the time to complete and mail the enclosed membership form. It is most important in getting the association going and growing.*



*Photos at right show some of the damage done to the grounds and cars parked at the Days Inn. Not a pretty site.*

# SHIPS STORE!!!

## World Famous Ready Eddie Ball Caps

These great (Navy) blue hats have "USS RICHARD S. EDWARDS DD-950" embroidered in gold and underneath "the Ready Eddie" in a subtle (haze) grey. A limited number are available now but when current supplies are depleted it will be 5-6 weeks for delivery as we need to meet minimum order requirements until our funds permit us to stock up in advance. Please make checks payable to the R.S. Edwards Assoc. c/o: Jim Kress, 3090 Keokuk St., Dubuque, IA 52001

Prices are: 1 \_\_\_ \$25.  
2 \_\_\_ \$45  
3 \_\_\_ \$65  
4 \_\_\_ \$85

Prices include shipping, which is subject to changes in Postal rates.

## ..T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS...T-SHIRTS..

The Ready Eddie T shirts are Hanes Beefy T's of 100% pre-shrunk cotton. In black, grey and red (lead) they show the silhouette of the Ready Eddie stating she is "Just another proud old war veteran" "Serving America from 1959 'til 1982. As with the hats, please make checks payable to R.S. Edwards Assoc. and send them and your order to Jack L. Sanders, 111 E. Commercial St., Broken Arrow, OK 74012. Please allow 5-6 weeks for delivery.

Please specify silhouette "A" (pre-1971)  
"B" (post 1971)

T-shirts	Mid-weight (7oz) Sweatshirt	Heavyweight (9oz) Sweatshirts
Small to XL ___ \$15	Small to XL ___ \$19	Small to XL ___ \$22
XXL ___ \$16	XXL ___ \$21	XXL ___ \$24
XXXL ___ \$17	XXXL ___ \$23	XXXL ___ \$26

Prices include shipping, which is subject to changes in Postal rates.

All items for sale include a small mark up for the association. All labor and handling is done on a volunteer basis by your fellow alumni. As we grow, prices and shipping times should get better. Thanx for your help and support. Any help for, or feedback about, the Ships Store will be greatly appreciated.

# Membership Form

Name \_\_\_\_\_

St \_\_\_\_\_

City, St., Zip. \_\_\_\_\_

E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Ph. H. \_\_\_\_\_

W. \_\_\_\_\_

Are you a veteran of...Korea\_\_\_ Vietnam\_\_\_ Desert Storm\_\_\_ Other\_\_\_\_\_

Donations\_\_\_\$10

\_\_\_\$15

\_\_\_\$20

\_\_\_\$Whatever

Years aboard\_\_\_\_\_

Rank/Rate\_\_\_\_\_

Donations/contributions/additional info not required for membership. Just send in the form.

## Additional Info

After the Edwards I...

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After the Navy I...

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I would be interested in purchasing Edwards...\_\_\_lighters  
\_\_\_license plates,\_\_\_T-shirts,\_\_\_hats,\_\_\_ashtrays,\_\_\_coffee  
mugs,\_\_\_\_\_etc.Please check any of interest.

The membership year will run from July-July. All membership forms and donations should be sent to Martin Jasso, 11655 Sagelink Dr., Houston TX 77089. Donations to the Association are tax deductible. Thank for your help and support.

# OTHER REUNION ATTENDEES



(L-R) Pat and Carl Dege, Wade Gilbert, Martin Jasso, Mary and Jim Kress, Bob Tuttle, Jerry Beck, Doug Swires



(l-r) Jack L. Sanders, Wade Gilbert, Carl Dege, Alan Ezzell, Martin Jasso, Jim Kress



Tom Petersen, Jim Vanderwyst, Don Kruger



Gene and Thelma Hart



Dick and Joanne Zahn



Alan Ezzell, Bonnie Rhodes



Doug Swires, plankowner



Jeff Durfee, Don and Connie Kruger, and Tom Petersen check out a cruise book

# The back page

## "FREE SERVICE"

**I CAN SCAN COLOR/BLACK AND WHITE PICTURES AND SAVE THEM TO DISK IN JPG FORMAT FOR ANY CREW MEMBERS WANTING THEIR PHOTOS SCANNED FOR DIGITAL DISPLAY. I'LL DO THIS FOR FREE, LIMITING THE SCANS TO 2-3 PER PERSON. YOU NEED ONLY SEND THE PICTURES TO ME WITH A SELF ADDRESSED STAMPED ENVELOPE AND A (1) 3.5" DISK, IBM FORMAT ONLY.**

**ALL SHIPMENTS WILL BE DONE AT YOUR OWN RISK VIA THE US POSTAL SERVICE.**

**SEND TO: Don Farrar  
8593 Ridge Road  
Dittmer, MO 63023-1609  
e-mail: [don@foreverinbloom.com](mailto:don@foreverinbloom.com)**

**Ready Eddie Newsletter  
c/o Bob Tuttle  
12 Concord Ave.  
Derry, NH 03038-1900**

**THE EDWARDS HISTORY IN A NUTSHELL  
Keel laid at Puget Sound, WA 29 DEC 1956  
Launched, 24 DEC 1957  
Commissioned, 5 FEB 1959  
*CO, CDR Richard R. Law*  
Decommissioned 27 FEB 1970  
Recommissioned, 15 JAN 1971  
*CO, CDR Walter C. Deal*  
Decommissioned, 15 DEC 1982  
*CO, CDR Jerry R. Bailey*  
Stricken from the NVR, 7 FEB 1990  
Sunk as a target, 12 MAY 1997**

Crews lists available

As a search aid, muster rolls for the years 1939-1971 are available on microfilm, for \$34 by writing for a particular year to the National Archives at College Park, 8601 Adelphi Road, College Park MD, 20740-6001. Access to 1972 muster rolls require special handling as they utilize social security numbers as service numbers. The info on obtaining them, and for 1973-on will be listed in the next issue of the newsletter or by contacting me at [tuttlebd@juno.com](mailto:tuttlebd@juno.com).

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