

# KEAR SAGA<sup>II</sup>

*The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association*

ISSUE 31

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD3

WINTER 2006

## A NEWSLETTER AT LAST

Our apologies for the delay in publishing this newsletter. Because of the unforeseen events and our desire to provide accurate information on the May Reunion, publishing was held up until John Bennett, our Past President, was assured that we could go ahead as originally planned.

### *Tribute to Ted Edington*

We are saddened that we have lost our Vice President and dedicated Association member Ted Edington. Ted had organized the highly successful Newport reunion and, as noted below, did the preliminary legwork for the Charleston reunion. Ted's daughter-in-law, Catherine, who had been kind enough to serve as his email communicator sent the following:

**From:** catherine.j.edington@verizon.com

Paul, I suspect that you have heard by now but Ted did succumb to his set backs last Thursday (August 25<sup>th</sup>). We had a wonderful tribute to him with some 400 or so people coming to the Wake and many at the funeral as well. The Scouts that he loved so well came out in force, as did many, many members of the community he served. I appreciate your asking for prayers for Ted in the newsletter. That was very nice.

Best wishes to you for a wonderful Reunion

Take care,  
Cathy

We also received the following letter from his devoted wife, Melba.

October 8, 2005

Dear Paul

Where do I begin – about time I wrote to tell you what happened. It seems like a bad dream. Ted had his operation June 22. The operation all went well – his heart was good – they took him out of intensive care – all seemed O.K. But after two days he was back in intensive care, and from there on it was one thing after another. Bleeding due to his blood thinner, pneumonia, infections, bleeding ulcer, tube put into his neck, on respirator, kidneys acting up, etc. I thought that he was in the best place available, with best care, kept saying that he was going to come home – but it wasn't meant to be.

Over 500 came to the wake, and the church was filled. He touched the lives of many, here in town. He was so friendly and good to all. So many Scouts and former Scouts came. He would have been pleased. We do miss him so!

Melba

## CHARLESTON REUNION MAY 2006

Our past President John Bennett and his wife Dianne have graciously agreed to run the 2006 reunion. John has not been able to visit Charleston because of work commitments (business travel for his employer) so he has used the telephone to check on the arrangements made by Ted Edington last summer.

The dates and hotel are firm. As usual there might be some changes in the program.

Dates: May 1, 2006 through May 4, 2006 (FIRM)

Reunion Headquarters: The Clarion Hotel, Charleston, SC (Exit 209 off Route 26) 843-572-2200  
Rate is \$74.00 per room plus 12%tax, includes bedroom up to 4 occupancy, full hot buffet breakfast each day, free airport shuttle, shuttle to restaurants within a 5 mile area, free parking for self-contained campers, 2 pools – 1 indoors and 1 outdoors (State Kearsarge Reunion when you call) (FIRM)

Reunion Activities: May 1<sup>st</sup> check-in time – 3:00 p.m. Pick up \$8.00 tour package when you register.

May 1<sup>st</sup> – 6:00 p.m. – Buffet Dinner (at the hotel) – Low-Country Barbeque Chicken Dinner - \$25.00 per person

May 2 – Tour of Charleston – 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with shopping and lunch in town - \$25.00 per person for the tour (not including lunch)

May 3 – Patriot Point and U.S.S. Yorktown – Lunch at the CPO Mess – then tour to Fort Sumter - \$56.00 per person includes lunch

May 4 – 2 plantations tours open – Magnolia with Box Lunches - \$54 per person or Boone Hall as featured in the North South Movie and Gone With the Wind - \$37.00 per person. Another tour is also available this day. It is a Grand Homes Tour and requires 6 blocks of walking - \$58.00 per person.

May 4 – Dinner Banquet and Dancing (at the hotel) – Patriots Point Prime Rib and Seafood Buffet - \$35.00 per person

**A registration form is included on page 7. Please complete it and mail it to:**

**John Work, Treasurer, The Kearsarge Association 24611 Sandy Springs Rd., Minerva, OH 44657-9442**

Ms Chris Walz, Sales Manager at the Clarion has sent us the following welcome:

The Clarion Hotel Charleston Welcomes  
USS Kearsarge CV-33  
May 1-4, 2006

Greetings from the Clarion Team in Charleston,

We are looking forward with great anticipation to your visit this spring and thought it might be a good idea to fill you in on things to expect and look forward to while here.



Weather: Likely to be getting a little spongy! Spring is lovely here with all the flowers in amazing colors; a trip to Magnolia Gardens plantation might be in order here. Just remember to bring an umbrella as we have frequent thunder storms that last for ten minutes. Five minutes later, you will never know we had a storm.

Interested in history? You will find it here and actually not have to leave our lobby. Take a stroll around and look at all the amazing Military Reunions we have had. You will find the original Yorktown CV-5, youngsters who passed by Ulithi Atoll back a few years ago, some guys who staged the raid on Ploesti and some Marines who fought through Korea and Khe Sanh. We look forward to adding the amazing Kearsarge to this group of heroes too! But just in case you need some more history, Charleston is the place! Whether it is Fort Sumter or the painted ladies\* of Rainbow Row, the "market" or the plantations, we have it all.

Don't think we are stuck in the past though; shopping and dining is an art form here with world class restaurants all over the Low country. Ladies, step right up to amazing shopping on King St. with stores you will never find anywhere else.

Finally, at our hotel each room has a microwave, refrigerator, coffee pot, hairdryer, iron and ironing board and 27 inch TVs. A full hot buffet breakfast is included in your rate and we have complimentary shuttle from Charleston International Airport. Call early for reservations!

Thank you for making the Clarion your reunion headquarters in 2006

**\* Sorry, I forgot I was talking to sailors here; these painted ladies are houses.**

## TAPS

### SMITH, Jr, BENJAMIN T.

Benjamin retired as an Aviation Ordinance Chief from the United States Navy, finally to retire from the Naval Air Rework Facility at North Island • a total of 45 years government service. Born in Lanette, Ala. In 1926, "Papa" grew up near West Point, Georgia. He joined the Navy to serve during WWII. In 1952, during the Korean War, he proudly served aboard the U.S.S. Kearsarge as A03. Papa was married to his bride for 48 years, Carol Maxine Johnson, whom he lost to cancer In 1998.

Papa died of cancer Aug. 8, 2005. There are no words to express how much we have all been touched by his warm soul and Infectious smile. Papa, you will be missed by your four sons, their wives, your eight grandchildren, your brother, and numerous friends who have known and loved you for your generosity and terrific sense of humor.

Services were held at 10:30 a.m., Thursday, August 18, at Humphrey's Mortuary 753 Broadway, Chula Vista. Ronald Lee GM3 7<sup>th</sup> Div 52-53

August 14, 2005

USS Kearsarge Association

24611 Sandy Springs Rd

Minerva, OH 44657-9442

**RE: Ronald E. Lee**

This letter is to inform you that my dad, Ronald E Lee passed away on August 5, 2005.

I know he served aboard the USS Kearsarge from 1949-1953. He attended a reunion in San Diego, I believe in 1996. He talked about it often and how much fun he had.

I thought you would like to know. He receives mailings from you, so please stop them.

Thank you for your time.

Pamela Bigelow

**R.D. "Slip" Stombaugh AB2 V1 51-53**

Dear Mr. Work,

I have been asked by the family of R. D. "Slip" Stombaugh to inform you at Kearsaga of his passing, 09/21/05, in Springfield, IL.

He dearly loved the Association and attended a number of reunions. He was looking forward to Charleston next May. He will be missed by many.

Sincerely,

Jerry E. Keller AB2 V1 52-54

**Robert Ralph Craig MM3 B Div 46**

Robert Craig passed away on March 7, 2005 at the age of 80. He was a Plank Owner, serving in B Division during 1946.

**Richard C. Cronin DCCM (RET) R Div 60-65**

October 19, 2005

Mr. Work,

It is with great sadness that I inform you of the death of Richard C. Cronin. Enclosed find a card of his. He was in the Navy from 1/19/45 to 2/14/72. If you would, please publish this in the Kearsaga.

Thank You,

Sara Cronin

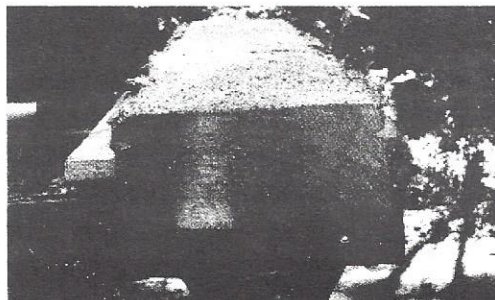
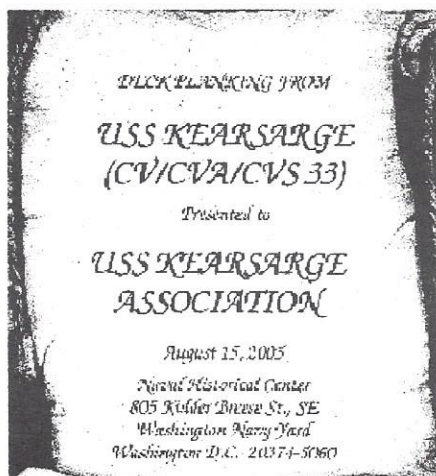
**Earl Waldemar Lofgren Chief Warrant Officer**

Paul Young sent an obituary for a former KEARSARGE shipmate, Chief Warrant Officer Earl Lofgren. Earl had served in the Navy from 1941 to 1972, including service on three aircraft carriers, the KEARSARGE, MIDWAY and Coral SEA. He died in October 2005 at the age of 85.

**Ernest Fox CWO 45-47**

We were informed by his widow, Madeleine, that Plank Owner Ernest Fox passed away.

## FLIGHT DECK PLANKING





The Naval Historical Center has released to the KEARSARGE Association a pallet load of flight deck planking removed from the ship before it was scrapped. Traditionally Plank Owners, those who helped commission a ship, were often provided with a small piece of the planking by the Navy. The Curator Branch of the Naval Historical Center is the Navy's official repository for the planking and had distributed it. It is not a practice authorized by federal law, but a custom that has been observed for many years.

Every year the number of living World War II veterans and Plank Owners grow smaller and reducing the chance to provide them with their piece of their planking. According to the Center's records only 12 Plank Owners had requested pieces of planking. This has lead to a revaluation of the policy, and the planking was donated to the Association for distribution to our members.

Your Editor (Paul Czesak) had arranged to have the planking shipped to the Albany Naval Reserve Center, where I picked it up, 48 pieces - 48 inches long, and have stored it in my garage. I am willing to cut it up, package the piece and ship it Parcel Post for a \$10.00 charge. First priority will go Plank Owners, and secondly to Association members. Also, we have been authorized by the Naval Historic Center to give a piece of the planking to each attendee at the May 2006 reunion. Therefore, we will present each former crew member who comes to Charleston with a 12 inch piece of the planking.

Former Association crew members who are unable to attend the reunion may obtain their piece of planking by mailing their request to:

***Paul J, Czesak, Editor, The Kearsaga, 1206 Oakleaf Hill, Schenectady, NY 12303. Include a check or money order for \$10.00 to cover the cost of packaging and mailing. Note: the planking may not be sold!***

## **KEARSARGE MEMORIAL ROOM - USS HORNET UPDATE**

From:

[DWLevin@aol.com](mailto:DWLevin@aol.com) (Dan Levin)

Hello and Happy Holidays, Paul....

Some time ago you had asked me for some information on the USS Hornet Museum to include in the Kearsarge newsletter. I have attached an email from Bob Fish, CEO of The Hornet Museum which pretty much brings everything up to date as far as what is happening on Hornet right now.

We are still in a holding pattern for the Kearsarge Memorial Room, but I'm as confident as ever that it will happen just as soon as some issues are resolved. The new management team, staff and all of us volunteer docents are committed to making it a "sight to see" in the Bay Area.

Best regards,

Dan Levin

### **Here's a brief update on the USS Hornet Museum situation as of Dec 2005.**

The ACHF Board of Trustees appointed me interim CEO in mid-June when the Hornet experienced difficulty executing its summer programs. My immediate activities focussed on re-establishing basic museum "block and tackling" capabilities, reducing operating expenses, improving the revenue growth and creating a plan to reduce debt.

I'm pleased to say that this course correction is now taking effect. The Hornet is regaining financial strength and widespread public visibility of a positive nature. Here are a few salient points reflecting this course correction.



Our youth Liveaboard program is having a very good season and we are working on some large activities for this coming summer, one of them being the Sea Scout's Ancient Mariner Regatta. November was one of the best months ever for the Hornet's youth program and the number of boys versus girls is about even now. We anticipate the youth program to have about 13,500 guests this season.

Our Private Event bookings remained weak since the 2001 terrorist attacks sent the US economy, and all Bay Area tourism, into a tail-spin. The current nagging recession, redirection of private and corporate donations to natural disasters in 2005, and high gas prices have significantly cut into discretionary spending for both consumers and companies alike. However, the telephone inquiries are now coming in and I expect bookings will grow 25% each quarter during 2006.

To offset the down-turn of general museum admissions that takes place every winter when the tourists head for warmer climates, we've featured TV and film production activities this year. During the last week of Nov and first week of Dec, we hosted a BBC documentary on the Battle of Midway starring Peter Snow, the motion picture Rescue Dawn documenting the Vietnam wartime experience of naval aviator LT Dieter Dengler and directed by acclaimed director Werner Herzog, and the military episode of Fear Factor, which will be shown in May 2006.

Our efforts with other Bay Area and national media are starting to bear fruit as well, reflecting the Hornet's mission as a destination point for young and old. While we don't have the luxury of being moored in a major tourist mecca afforded the USS Midway, we have reasserted our organization's heritage of excellence in becoming a major Bay Area icon.

This tees up the major outstanding issue we face, which relates to our physical location. There is no doubt whatsoever, the lengthy standoff between the Navy and the City of Alameda over the title transfer agreement of the former base is hurting the Hornet. For 7 long years, there has been no redevelopment, and miniscule basic maintenance, of the base area. We are working closely with Alameda and others to find a solution that keeps the Hornet available to the American public for a long time to come.

regards,

Bob Fish

CEO, USS Hornet Museum

[www.uss-hornet.org](http://www.uss-hornet.org)

## **THE HORNET – KEARSARGE CONNECTION**

The HORNET was laid down at Newport News as the KEARSARGE on 3 August 1942. After the CV8 (the HORNET of Doolittle's raid on Japan) was sunk in the Solomons campaign of October 1942, the name was changed from KEARSARGE to HORNET in honor of CV8. She was commissioned on 29 November 1943 and served in the Marianas, Palau, Leyte Gulf, and Iwo Jima campaigns during World War II.

She made three Vietnam War tours and also participated as a recovery ship for Apollo 11 and 12 flights. She was de-commissioned on 26 June 1970.

Since our KEARSARGE was scrapped, we had no permanent home for the memorabilia that has been offered to the Association. At the New Orleans reunion a decision was made to investigate the possibility of having a memorial room aboard the HORNET. Dan Levin, who served on the KEARSARGE and is a HORNET volunteer, agreed to take on the role of being our liaison with the HORNET.

It is our expectation that the partnership with the HORNET will be mutually beneficial and we offer our thanks best wishes to the HORNET Management .

# USS KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION REUNION REGISTRATION

Charleston, South Carolina

1 May – 4 May 2006

Member Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Guest Name \_\_\_\_\_

Total \_\_\_\_\_

Buffet Dinner (1 May)      Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Charleston Tour (2 May)      Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$25.00 = \_\_\_\_\_

Patriot Point Lunch CPO Mess Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$56.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
USS YORKTOWN and Fort Sumter (3 May)

Magnolia Plantation Tour      Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$54.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Box Lunch (4 May)

Boone Hall Tour      Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$37.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Movie locations (4 May)

Dinner Banquet and Dancing      Number of Tickets \_\_\_\_\_ X \$35.00 = \_\_\_\_\_  
Hotel (evening 4 May)

TOTAL \_\_\_\_\_

**Mail to John Work, Treasurer Kearsarge Association**

**24611 Sandy Springs Rd. Minerva, OH 44657-9442**

**Make checks payable to the Kearsarge Association**

**Please return NO LATER THAN April 1, 2006**

NOTE: Make your hotel reservations directly with the hotel at 843-572-2200. The reunion price is good through 1 April and will be honored up to days before and two days after the reunion dates.



# KEAR SAGA<sup>II</sup>

*The Newsletter Of The Kearsarge Association*

USS Kearsarge Association  
24611 Sandy Springs Rd  
Minerva, OH 44657-9442

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**CHECK YOUR MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR DUES EXPIRATION DATE**

## *Dues & Membership*

The yearly dues for the Kearsarge Association is \$10.

Check your label to see when your dues expire.

To pay your dues, send a check payable to *The Kearsarge Association* to John Work.

To sign up a new member, send information to John Work.

Past President John Bennett -815 Savannah Dr., Columbus, OH 43228-2944, 614-272-6842

President George Beam, 1902 Edmund, St. Joseph, MO, 64501, 816-364-0602

Vice-President Theodore S Edington, 97 Main St, Riverside, RI, 02915-3421, 401-433-1277

Treasurer John Work, 24611 Sandy Springs Rd., Minerva, OH, 44657-9442, 330-894-2660

KearSaga Editor Paul Czesak, 1206 Oakleaf Hill, Schenectady, NY, 12303 518-355-8646

Membership - Vacant

Historian Steve Udell, 211 Northwest First St., Young America, MN, 55397, 612-467-3943

HORNET Memorial Room Liaison -Dan Levin, 309 Surry St, San Francisco, CA94133 E-mail DWLevin@aol.com

Honorary President Kenneth McDaniel (Deceased)