

KEAR SAGA II

The Newsletter of the KEARSARGE Association

ISSUE 41

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

December 2009

Happy Holidays

MAY 16-20, 2010 BRANSON REUNION

Lodge of the Ozarks

877-327-9894 or 417-334-7535

www.lodgeoftheozarks.com

\$93.29 Total, per night

Price includes 11.6% taxes and a **private**, full, hot breakfast buffet in the hospitality room.

Check out the hotel on the web site, but do not make your reservations on line, as you will not get the discounted price. When you call, be sure to tell them that you are with the USS Kearsarge Association.

The Lodge of the Ozarks is centrally located on West Hwy 76, next door to Mickey Gilley's Theater and across the street from the Jim Stafford Theater, and a 90 store outlet mall within walking distance.

The hotel features all interior corridors, a full-service restaurant, an indoor pool, and ample free parking. The rooms with king size beds have refrigerators, microwaves, and Jacuzzis. Some rooms with queen beds have the Jacuzzis but none have refrigerators. If you want a refrigerator, you can request one when you make your reservations. There is no extra charge for one, but the quantity is limited. If these features are important to you, get your reservations in early.

The rates are good three days before and three days after. Plan on coming early and staying late.

You can make plans on your own; however, the Kearsarge Association will not be able to provide transportation for events not included in the reunion agenda.

We realize that many of you may have been to Branson so we are planning as much flexibility as possible. You can pick and choose how many events you want to attend. Choose a little or choose a lot.

The choice is yours.

We've listed approximate times and the prices include bus transportation. We've also provided tidbits of information on each tour.

Events start Monday at 8:30 AM with a guided city tour of Branson and the surrounding area. Then we'll be stopping at the Showboat Branson Belle www.showboatbransonbelle.com for a luncheon cruise, shopping and a memorial to honor deceased shipmates. The cost of the city tour and Branson Belle will be approximately \$60.00 per person. * *"Take your family on a fantastic lake cruise aboard the magnificent Showboat Branson Belle in Branson, Missouri! Journey past lush Ozark Mountains on the crystal clear waters of Table Rock Lake during your 2-hour lake cruise where you'll experience fabulous Branson dining and the best in Branson shows. Your lake cruise and Branson dinner show features Showstoppers, an exciting production starring a tremendously talented cast showcasing over 30 award-winning numbers."* (*Internet information)

Monday evening's event will be a 6:30 PM Welcoming Buffet at the hotel. The cost of the buffet will be approximately \$30.00 per person.

Tuesday's events begin with an 8:30 AM trip to the Bass Pro Shop in Springfield. Then on to lunch at the famous Lambert's Café www.throwedrolls.com. The cost for the trip to Bass Pro shop and Lambert's will be approximately \$25.00 per person. * *"People who visit Lambert's Cafe for the first time are invariably amazed*

at the generous portions served on each order. These generous servings along with our "THROWED ROLLS" have inspired many questions. We cannot describe our activity in great detail, but we've endeavored to point out some of the highlights of our "Thrown Rolls" cafe." (* Internet Information)

We will be returning to the hotel around 2:30 PM. Then it's off to the Dixie Stampede for the 4:40 PM preshow and dinner/show. The cost of the show will be approximately \$50.00 per person. www.dixiestampede.com *"*Visitors and locals agree that Dolly Pardon's Dixie Stampede Dinner and Show in Branson, Missouri is a fun-filled, action-packed extravaganza that everyone should experience! It's the perfect place for families, friends, and groups to gather for spectacular special effects, amazing stunts by the most talented performers in the area. At the Dixie Stampede, each ticket includes our special Carriage Room Opening Act, the thrilling main show in our beautiful Arena, and the most mouth-watering, four-course dinner complete with delicious dessert.*" (*Internet Information)

Wednesday can be a long fun-filled day, but recall, you don't have to attend every event. The day starts with an 8:30 AM trip to the Veterans' Museum. www.veteransmemorialbranson.com The cost will be approximately \$12.00 per person. *"*The Veterans' Memorial Museum is a powerful and emotional experience for everyone. This national tribute to our veterans' contains over 18,000 square feet of art and exhibits progressing through the wars of the 20th Century. Honors all branches of the military and the enduring support of the American people.*" (*Brochure Information)

Then it's back to the hotel for a 10:30 AM business meeting. After the meeting, those that choose can hop on the bus for lunch at the Grand Country Buffet. The cost for lunch will be around \$12.00 per person. www.grandcountry.com/restaurant *"*Lunch is luscious at Grand Country Buffet. For you-on-the-go, the scatter bar features taste-tempting selection of meats, salads, fruits, vegetables, bakery fresh breads and desserts from the no-lines, hot and cold food bars.*" (*Internet Information)

The bus is on the go again at 2:30 PM to The Sight and Sound Theater www.sight-sound.com featuring "Noah-the Musical". The cost of this show will be approximately \$50 per person. *"*Sight and sound theatre is the nation's largest professional Christian theatrical company and has long been one of the nation's most attended live theatres...Our original productions feature compelling musical dramas performed by a professional cast of up to 50 actors, spectacular sets that replicate the show's historical setting, hundreds of elaborate costumes and dozens of live animals.*"

If you are ready for more spectacular shows, Shoji is next on the agenda, leaving at 6:30 PM and returning around 9:30 PM. www.shoji.com The price of his show will be approximately \$50 per person. *"*Just what is the Shoji Tabuchi Show that everyone loving American music is raving about? At its heart is Branson USA's first family of extraordinary musical entertainment...Shoji Tabuchi, his beautiful wife Dorothy and delightful daughter Christina. The family that plays, sings, and dances encompasses all the wholesome values of truly great family entertainment. Yet the show rivals the pure excitement of Las Vegas or New York. With his sense of musical perfection, Shoji searched long and hard for the right professional musicians to form his band. It is with great pride and affection that he introduces each and every member, all of whom have one or more degrees in music. Their repertoire includes everything from country to classic, played with all the subtlety or verve, as the music demands, of a gifted musical organization.*" (*Internet Information) NOTE: Wednesday's agenda does not include an evening meal.

On Thursday you'll get a chance to sleep a bit later. The bus will leave at 9:00 AM for a tour of the Titanic Museum. www.titanicbranson.com The cost of this tour will be approximately \$20.00. *"*Today the great Titanic lives on. A towering symbol of hope and courage recreated in all its glorious splendor in Branson. Here guests will relive the last hours of that fateful voyage. Make haunting emotional connections to passengers and crew through their words and stories. And feel their spirit presence in the galleries where over 400 personal and private artifacts are on display.*" (*Internet Information) Then it's off to lunch at McFarlain's and returning to the hotel.

Yakov is the final tour of the reunion. www.yakov.com The bus will be leaving at 1:00 PM and returning around 4:30 PM. The price will be approximately \$40 per person. *"*There ought to be a caution sign as you enter the Yakov Smirnoff Show in Branson, Missouri. It should read, "Warning! Hold on to your seat, 'cause this guy is about to blow you out of your seat with dynamite comedy!" This "guy" of course is Branson's*

*Two-Time Comedian of the Year, Yakov Smirnoff, the famous Russian comedian. He delivers explosive laughter in a show filled with brilliant special effects, dazzling dancing, heartfelt moments, and just plain fun. Yakov's entire show is filled with comedic tall tales and witty perception, funny facts and huge laughs." (*Internet Information)*

The 6:00 Happy Hour and Dinner Dance will be the final event of the reunion with meals ranging from approximately \$30-\$40 per person. This includes dancing to live music.

Your complete agenda will include nine tour options, and the opportunity to eat three meals per day, excluding Wednesday.

The prices listed are approximate and subject to change. However, hopefully, this will give you enough information to make your decisions. The registration form will be in the next KearSaga and will be in your mailbox by early February. The registration and all money will be due to the association by April 1, 2010. So make your plans as soon as possible and don't forget to make your reservations with the hotel early.

Also, be sure to check out the following web sites: www.explorebranson.com or www.bransonshows.com. See you there!

Edward McKee, Association President

Memorial Service for Shipmates

A memorial service for our departed shipmates will be held prior to and in conjunction with our cruise on the Showboat Branson Belle. Vice president John Starnes is working with the Branson Belle in planning the event. We wish to include the names of as many shipmates as possible. If you know of a departed shipmate(s) please furnish John (address and phone number on the last page) the name(s), date of death, dates served and division, of the deceased. The names will be read during the service.

TAPS

Robert H. Saxby, FCMC ("46-50, F Div)

We were informed by Bob Saxby's cousin Glenn Harrison of his passing away from an inoperable brain tumor at the age of 82.

Robert H. Saxby, 82, a Ventura County resident for 44 years passed away Sunday, 01 Nov. 2009 in Camarillo, CA. Robert was born in Schenectady, NY June 29, 1927 and was preceded in death by his parents, William "Red" and Evelyn Saxby and his brother, Richard Saxby, all of New York. He is survived by his wife of 60 years, Lorraine, daughter Linda Collins and son Robert all of Oxnard, CA.

He loved his family, friends, fly fishing, Friday lunch group and being a Navy man.
Rest in peace Master Chief Petty Officer.....you served your family, the Navy and your country well.

Kevin D. Barry, (TE3 OR Div, 4/57-7/57)

Dear Paul:

Please pass on to the Friends of the KearSaga that Kevin D. Barry, my wonderful husband of 46 years, passed away on January 28, 2009, after 13 months of battling cancer. In of his reminiscences, he spoke fondly of his years aboard the KEARSARGE. We have resided in Pearl River, NY for the past 31 years and very much enjoyed attending three of the ship reunions during the 1990s.

Sincerely,
Marianne Barry and Family

Edward Daniel O'Donnell (PH2 OR Div 4/53-6/55)

June 20, 2009

Dear Sir,

This is to inform you that Edward Daniel O'Donnell, PH2, passed away Feb.18, 2007. Ed served on the KEARSARGE in the Photo Dept. 1952-1956. Ed resided in Ojai, California.

Sincerely, Mrs. Ed (Winsome) O'Donnell, 985 S. Tico Rd, Ojai, CA

Francis H. Ziegler (FN R Div 10/48-6/50)

June 4, 2009

John Work, Treasurer

This is to notify the Association that my husband Francis H. Ziegler passed away May 28, 2009. He served on the KEARSARGE from Octo.1948- June 1950. We had attended several reunions and he always enjoyed them,

Sincerely,

Donna B. Ziegler

Letters

Editor's Note: I apologize to those of you who wrote to John or me and do not find your letters in this issue. Because of the need to get the large amount of reunion information out as quickly as possible I have had to be selective in what is being included, There will be another newsletter published in January which will include the reunion registration information and I will also include the balance of the unpublished letters.

June 23, 09

Sir,

Thank you for the wonderful job you and your associates are doing with the newsletter! I went aboard her almost 62 years ago. It was the proper way to start my adult life! Again, thank you.

Jackie D. Olinger, QM2, N Div, 47-50

June 16, 2009

Just a note to say I really enjoy the KEARSARGE newsletter, and I think this due to our editor Paul Czesak. He is doing a really fine job.

We stood watches together in Engine Room #1. He was the Officer of the Watch and I was on #1 throttle. I was aboard from Oct-1954 till I was discharged June-1958. Then I joined the Reserves until I retired.

William J. Heitz, MM1

723 Niobrara, Alliance, NE 69301

June 15, 2009

John Work, Treasurer

Enclosed \$20.00 for two years membership renewal. In reading Issue 40 "KearSaga" the 53-54 WestPac Cruise is mentioned, and it brings back memories.

The ship had a VIP rickshaw for receiving VIPs at their helicopter or COD aircraft. It was outfitted with the requisite 1, 2, 3, 4, or 5 star flag, and was pulled by an officer-coolie in authentic uniform of flip flops and woven straw hat. It was used often enough to become standard flight deck equipment.

I wondered if anyone knows where it eventually wound up. We never heard if it was privately owned, or stayed with the "K" on subsequent cruises till de-commissioning.

Wm. A. Corkran, AD3, VF-112

154 Greenwood Circle, Walnut Creek, CA 94597-2123 Ph: 925-939-4760

Semper Fi Guys

I came aboard the KEARSARGE in April 1955 straight out of boot camp and Sea School, and sincerely enjoyed the three plus years aboard. A young 18 year old traveling to the far east was the experience of a lifetime, never forgotten.

I very vividly experience the 0500 early runs on the flight deck and lifting weights in the head long after taps for the exercise experience looking for 16" plus biceps. Also seeing the cooks ringing out on the grills hundreds of wonderful looking steaks which turned out to be liver!

I recall the catapult that blew when I was the X.O.'s orderly and wading through the blood and oil mixture in my "blues". Also the few planes that crashed into the fantail.

Then there was the chief that was going to Hiroshima to see his girl friend and possibly marry her, only to be found tied to a tree with his body mutilated. A very tragic end for such a nice friend.

What a joy going to Hawaii, Hong Kong, Hiroshima, Yokosuka, and Tokyo as the Captain's orderly. I remember the seaman printing his "dollars" on the presses and then getting to care for him in our brig.

The Corps made a man out of me and I am very happy that it started on the KEARSARGE. I served 10 years from Korea to Vietnam (PVT to SGTES) and give credit to the Corps – happy to have served. I am a cancer survivor and can credit the Corps for instilling in me the survivor instinct. Thanks to all those I served with – the leadership and all my comrades.

I live in Branson, MO now and hope to see some of my old friends. Please call me If I can help you in your preparations for our reunion.

Semper fi and God Bless you all.

Roger Binneker , SGT MD 1954-1964

November 12,2009

Hi Paul,

Just a note to say that I am enclosing a story re my experience as a Smoke Watch aboard the Kearsarge in the early 1950s off the coast of North Korea during Flight Operations.

Richard K. Backus, USS Kearsarge CVA-33 1952-1955Corvallis, Oregon

The Kearsarge, part of Task Force 77 was operating off the coast of North Korea in the early 1950s during the winter months I was given the responsibility of Smoke Watch while Air Ops was being conducted. This involved both launching and recovery of jet aircraft involved in various missions over North Korean held territory some 20 While air miles away from our carrier, and naturally it was essential that smoke from the boiler rooms was under control which could hinder flight operations.

I still clearly remember being huddled against the stacks on the side of the superstructure high above the bridge under sheepskin coverings wearing winter protective doming, watch cap and gloves due to freezing cold weather. With a headset and mic it was my job to keep open communications with those four firerooms, preventing smoke conditions which could be a potential problem.

Far off in the distance I noticed those snow-capped mountains in North Korea which were a beautiful sight to behold, especially at that time of the year, probably November- December, and they appeared much closer than they actually were, but still I thought to myself," I wonder how much of a threat the enemy can be to our Task Force at this distance, since there had been so much scuttlebutt concerning Russian Migs coming against our Panthers and Banshee Jets " ? (Sometime later we were actually warned of an attack by 3 squadrons of Migs while our aircraft were on a mission. Wow ! That was an unforgettable experience, hugging the deck during GQ

No one had a better view than I did at this location as smoke watch, and had the opportunity to observe so much going on, and the disadvantage of the freezing cold was minimized by what I was able to see from this vantage point. There were times when jets being recovered missed the hook and crashed into the protective barrier, and then there were those who ran out of fuel and had to ditch and be picked up by chopper out of the icy sea, with only a short time to survive before hypothermia set in. Those pilots were at great risk until they could be picked up.

Then there was the time a Panther came in fall of holes, but landed safely with gear up, and I later learned that it had 108 shrapnel holes all around the cockpit but none hitting the pilot, and he being a Christian man said he was well aware the God had spared his life that day !

This smoke watch experience is something I'll never forget while aboard the USS Kearsarge CVA-33 operating off the coast of North Korea with Task Force 77 during the winter months of the early 1950s.

Richard K. Backus, USS Kearsarge CVA-33 R Division1952-1955Corvallis, Oregon

Flight Operations and the Air Department

Paul and I were exchanging e-mails the other day and he asked if I would submit an article for the Dec. KEARASAGA. I said sure, what would you like me to write about? Thus the title of this article! Both Paul and I were in the John F. Kennedy Pre-Commissioning Unit where we had a "School of The Ship". The purpose, at least in part, was for everyone to have a basic knowledge and understanding of every department and division on the ship. The rationale was that we would all come together, support each other and gain mutual respect. Not bad logic! Paul believes and so do I that although years have passed, we can still gain mutual respect by understanding what we all did to make the "Mighty Kay" work

I was in the air department, which is headed up by the "Air Boss" and his assistant. A "snap shot" of all the divisions will be helpful in understanding how it all comes together. The divisions are V-1 Flight Deck, V-2 Catapults and Arresting Gear, V-3 Hangar Deck, V-4 Aviation Fuels – and back then V-5 Ordnance which is now a different division and part of the Weapons Department. There was also V-6 and V-7 Divisions which have since been renamed and are separate departments. There wouldn't be a 24-hour day on the flight deck without the support of all the other divisions in the air department and many more throughout the ship! In the interest of brevity I must stick to short phrases and examples. In V-2, the Cat and arresting gear crew are up and at it long before flight quarters are sounded. It's got to be right! When a catapult launches an aircraft it is either going into the air or into the ocean! If an arresting gear engine or cable fails, an aircraft goes over the side and many on deck may be killed or seriously injured. V-3 is probably the hardest working and most under rated division on the ship. They are always moving multi million dollar aircraft within inches of each other and other objects with the ship often pitching and rolling. They must be able to receive aircraft from and get them to the flight deck quickly. In a word – you show me a weak hangar deck crew and I'll show you a weak flight deck crew. They are that important. V-4, there's more to it than passing gas. They have tanks, machinery, piping, valves, pump rooms, purifiers, filters and other equipment all over the ship. They are often fueling and de-fueling aircraft on the hangar and flight deck almost 24x7. Quality assurance is also a biggie. They are constantly taking and analyzing fuel samples to ensure that contaminated fuel is not delivered to aircraft.

Now to the 24 hour day! When operating 300 miles above the Arctic Circle in the wintertime it is not fun but you find out exactly how many people are needed. The answer is about one-third the number it takes off the coast of southern Ca. in the summer time. Seriously, it's like magic when the flight deck crew is well trained, the pilots are seasoned and accurate and the catapult and arresting gear crews are at their best. The bridge watch team plays an important part as well. Turning the ship into the wind at the correct speed and course to support Air Ops while keeping an even keel and steady deck is a tall order.

When is it not fun or magic? When you hear that dreaded alarm followed by fire-fire-fire on the flight deck. No you don't call 911 you are 911. Either you get the fire or the fire gets you. Seeing missiles come bouncing down the deck when an aircraft lands can also get your attention. Having a shipmate blown overboard by jet blast is a scary thing. Is the water real cold? Will the helo and lifeboat crew get there quickly? Are the waters shark infested? Fatigue is another enemy, one can only go for so long into the wind, up and down the deck, cycle after cycle. The air boss passes the word, launch complete and immediately passes the word stand by to recover aircraft on final. You are exhausted, your feet ache, your timing is off, and your judgment impaired. So what is one to do? Shake it off and get with it, there is a reason for this and a good one. Putting bombs and missiles on target on time saves lives. All of a sudden you feel better, your feet don't hurt and you think more clearly and besides you get relieved in another hour.

John Starnes, Vice President

Date: Tue, 14 Jul 2009 17:19:49 -0400

Dear Ms. McKee,

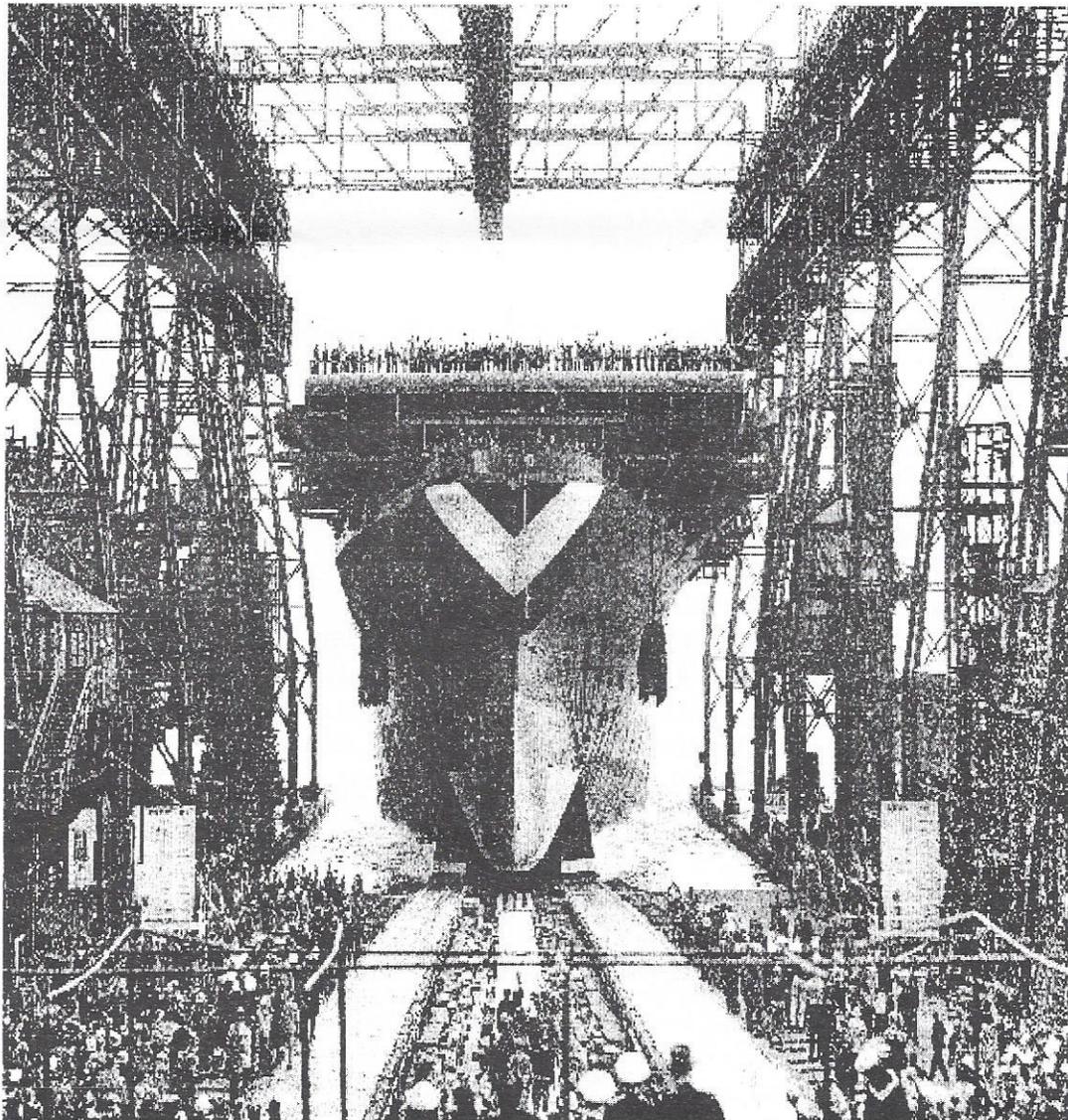
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Shawn O'Sullivan , Photo Editor, DailyNewsPix

This photo of the Kearsarge Launch was published in the New York Daily News about six months ago. I emailed the editor and requested a pdf of the file, but I have to report I got no response from the newspaper. The paper was reporting on the Brooklyn Navy Yard History and this was the ONLY war ship photo that was published. Maybe it should be in the next "KearSaga"

Phil Cohen, EM3 E division 66-68

Caption: Shape up to ship out: The USS Kearsarge, a 27,000-ton aircraft carrier, launches from the Brooklyn Navy Yard. To finish the war in the Pacific, workers kept churning out warships even as the tide turned in Europe. Another aircraft carrier had just been launched the week before.



KEAR SAGA

II

The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association

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Dues and Membership

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

Check your label to see when your dues expire.

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

To sign up a new member, send information to John work, including
name, ratelrank, Division, years aboard, address and phone number

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