

# KEAR SAGA II

*The Newsletter of the KEARSARGE Association*

ISSUE 38

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

September 2008

## REUNION EDITION

Our 2008 Reunion is fast approaching and we are anticipating a great time despite a smaller than hoped for response. We understand that health considerations, as well as these economically challenging times may have discouraged many who would otherwise attend to skip this one. Hopefully, next year and the year 2010 will bring both better health and greater prosperity to "All Hands" in time for our next reunion. President Ed McKee is already gathering information on Branson, Missouri in preparation for the reunion there in 2010. For the benefit of our Shipmates who did not have the opportunity to access information on the Internet, regarding the attractions that we will be enjoying during the reunion, the following article has been prepared for you:

### ADDITIONAL INFORMATION FOR THE TOURS AND HOTEL

Most of the plans for the reunion have been finalized. However, I thought I would provide some additional information on some of the tours that we will be attending in Seattle and Bremerton. I included web site addresses on most of the tours in previous Kearsagas; however, some of you may not have access to the internet. Therefore, I gleaned the following tidbits of information from the internet to share with Kearsaga readers. If you haven't signed on, you're going to miss a great reunion!

**SILVERDALE BEACH HOTEL** provides 151 guest rooms and suites – the majority of which offer inspiring views of Puget Sound – with a single focus of making each visitor feel as welcome as possible. Choose from nearby activities or the sanctuary of a waterfront getaway. Or enjoy both. Here you're only one hour from downtown Seattle by ferry, a quick shuttle ride from Sea-Tac International Airport, and minutes from Bremerton and Naval Station Kitsap. We are also located close to popular shopping destinations and award-winning golf courses, as well as walking distance from Silverdale's waterfront park and Clear Creek trail system. On-site amenities include a remarkable restaurant with outdoor seating, an upscale lounge, an enclosed pool and spa facing the sound, a fitness center, sauna, and tennis courts. So you can go ahead and mix business with pleasure. Simply put, Silverdale Beach Hotel is more than a place to stay or meet. It's an experience.

**USS TURNER JOY (DD-951)**, famed Navy destroyer from the Vietnam War, is now maintained and administered by the Bremerton Historic Ships Association. The museum ship and memorial honors not only the men and women of our modern US Navy, but also recognizes the accomplishments of those who help build and maintain the Navy's ships as well. An active and educational facility makes the USS Turner Joy a unique and lasting legacy to Puget Sound's maritime heritage.

It was the last ship in the FORREST SHERMAN - class of destroyers and the first ship in the Navy to bear the name. Her keel was laid down on September 30, 1957 in Seattle, Washington and launched on May 5, 1958. Then commissioned on August 3, 1959, with Comdr. Ralph S. Wentworth, Jr. in command.

Turner Joy's distinctive service included a double-duty role as flagship for Destroyer Squadron 13 and Destroyer Division 131 with several tours in the Pacific. She also stood air-sea rescue duty near the Marianas Islands for President Dwight D. Eisenhower's visit to several Asian nations. In terms of history, this vessel is



most remembered for her participation in the Gulf of Tonkin incident which escalated the United States involvement in the Vietnam War.

Turner Joy remains close to her original 1959 configuration. The destroyer has been restored to reflect the appearance during her active years between 1960 and 1982. Decommissioned on November 22, 1982, and stricken from the Navy list on February 13, 1990, the TURNER JOY was donated to the Bremerton Historic Ships Association on April 10, 1991. The ship now serves as a museum at Bremerton, Washington.

**NAVAL MUSEUM of the PACIFIC** first opened its door to the public in 1954 as the Shipyard Naval Museum located in the Craven Center on Burwell Avenue. It later relocated to the Washington State Ferry Building on Bremerton's waterfront. In 1986, it became Bremerton's Naval Museum. Starting with just over 600 items, the Museum has now grown to full capacity, brimming with items from the Navy's historic past providing a very valuable and unique historical source for historian, researchers and students. (Also for the many sailors who served in the area.)

The Naval Memorial Museum of the Pacific (also known as Bremerton Naval Museum) is loaded with treasures from Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the Navy's past. Its large collection of memorabilia specifically focuses on the history of the Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and the capitol ships that frequently visited the Navy Yard.

**THE NAVAL UNDERSEA MUSEUM** combines naval history, undersea technology, and marine science to create an exciting and educational experience for visitors. The modern building offers visitors the largest collection of naval undersea artifacts in the United States. Major exhibits interpret the Ocean Environment, Torpedo and Mine Warfare Technology, and U.S. Submarines in WWII.

Significant artifacts include all major U.S. torpedoes from the 1890s to the present, a Confederate mine from the Civil War, and a recreation of the control room of the submarine USS Greenling. Outdoor exhibits include the deep submergence vehicle Trieste II and the sail from the submarine USS Sturgeon.

The exhibits incorporate numerous video, audio, and hands-on, interactive displays to enhance a visitor's experience. The museum is nationally accredited by the American Association of Museums.

**THE KIANA LODGE** offers sophisticated elegance in classic Northwest style. The lodge is surrounded by fragrant cedars, majestic firs and a stunning variety of blooming plant life. In addition to this lush atmosphere, Kiana Lodge is situated on 1,000 feet of no-bank waterfront and six acres of beautiful gardens. Our manicured grounds are ablaze with spectacular color from early spring to late fall. We're just a short drive from the Seattle-Bainbridge Island ferry, but a world away.

Starting with the Suquamish descendants of Chief Sealth, Kiana has been entertaining distinguished guests with traditional alder-roasted salmon dinners for over 200 years. Located on Agate Passage, just across from Bainbridge Island, Kiana's sandy beaches are still carpeted with white clam shells left by generations of Native Americans who inhabited the original Suquamish village where Chief Sealth lived, just two miles North. (Seattle was named after this famous Chief.) Our famous, signature salmon lunch or dinner is well known, but menus can also be customized to suit your special event. Pamper your guests in the serenity of this private, six acre, waterfront haven where you can stroll the beach, enjoy a bonfire or just wander among our fragrant cedars and enjoy the beauty of our extensive gardens.

**THE MUSEUM of FLIGHT** lets you experience flight as you never have before. Step into the Personal Courage Wing and experience stories of courage as told through a collection of 28 fighter aircraft in a setting that will simply amaze you. In the steel and glass Great Gallery, the history of aviation soars past, with dozens of full-size aircraft flying in formation six stories above. Sit in the cockpit of a real SR-71 Blackbird or F/A-18 Hornet. Board America's first presidential jet Air Force One. Climb aboard the sleek Concorde.



Step back 95 years in the magnificently restored Red Barn, birthplace of The Boeing Company. From hands-on kid's workshops, to fly-ins, to interaction with the people who made aviation history, The Museum of Flight has something to offer every member of your family or group. Come experience the story of flight from the dawn of aviation to the Space Age.

**THE SPACE NEEDLE** is Seattle's number one tourist destination and no trip to Seattle would be complete without visiting it. The 605-foot tall Space Needle was completed in December 1961 and officially opened a mere four months later on the first day of the World's Fair, April 21, 1962. When the Space Needle was built it was the tallest building west of the Mississippi River. During the World's Fair, nearly 20,000 people a day traveled to the top. The Space Needle hosted over 2.3 million visitors during the Fair. Then in 2000, the Space Needle completed a \$20 million year long revitalization.

**HIRAM CHITTENDEN LOCKS CRUISE** Since 1963, locals and visitors alike have enjoyed the 2-1/2 hour Locks Tour. The cruise connects the salt water of Puget Sound and the fresh water of Lake Union via the Hiram Chittenden Locks. Enjoy live narration of Seattle's history, while viewing the historic waterfront. View the spectacular city skyline one of the world's largest shipping terminals, the majestic Cascade and Olympic mountain ranges and the "Sleepless in Seattle" houseboat community.

## **HISTORY OF THE USS KEARSARGE CV,CVA,CVS 33**

(Copied from the Internet)

USS KEARSARGE was the 16th ESSEX - class aircraft carrier and the third ship in the Navy to bear the name. Made redundant by the general fleet drawdown of the late 1960s and early 1970s, USS KEARSARGE was decommissioned on February 13, 1970. Following three years in the Reserve Fleet, she was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register in May 1973 and sold for scrapping in February 1974.

General Characteristics: Contract Awarded: 1942

Keel laid: March 1, 1944	Catapults: two
Launched: May 5, 1945	Length: 888.5 feet (270.8 meters)
Commissioned: March 2, 1946	Flight Deck Width: 191.9 feet (58.5 meters)
Decommissioned: February 13, 1970	Beam: 101 feet (30.8 meters)
Builder: New York Naval Shipyard, Camden,	Draft: 30.8 feet (9.4 meters)
NJ	Displacement: approx. 40,600 tons full load
Propulsion system: 8 boilers	Speed: 33 knots
Propellers: four	Planes: 80-100 planes
Aircraft elevators: three	Crew: approx. 3448 as CVS: 115 officers and
Arresting gear cables: four	1500 enlisted
Armament:	

1946: 12 5-inch (12.7 cm) 38 caliber guns and 40 40mm guns

1952: 8 5-inch (12.7 cm) 38 caliber guns and 20 3-inch (7.6 cm) 50 caliber guns

1954: 8 5-inch (12.7 cm) 38 caliber guns and 16 3-inch (7.6 cm) 50 caliber guns

1961: 7 5-inch (12.7 cm) 38 caliber guns

1966: 4 5-inch (12.7 cm) 38 caliber guns

### **History of USS KEARSARGE:**

USS KEARSARGE was launched 5 May 1945 by the New York Naval Shipyard, New York; sponsored by Mrs. Aubrey W. Fitch; and commissioned 2 March 1946, Captain Francis J. McKenna in command.

KEARSARGE arrived at her homeport, Norfolk, 21 April 1946, and for the next year engaged in training operations along the east coast and Caribbean. She cleared Norfolk 7 June 1947 on a midshipmen training



cruise to the United Kingdom. Upon her return to the United States in August, the carrier engaged in maneuvers for 10 months before departing Hampton Roads 1 June 1948 for duty with the 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet.

During her tour in the Mediterranean, units of the 6th Fleet were placed on alert to insure peace in the Arab-Israeli area. KEARSARGE returned Quonset Point, R.I., 2 October 1948, and operated along the Atlantic Coast and the Caribbean until 27 January 1950 when she sailed for the west coast. The carrier arrived at the Puget Sound Navy Yard 23 February, and decommissioned there 16 June 1950 for a modernization overhaul that would enable her to handle new jet aircraft.

KEARSARGE recommissioned 15 February 1952, Captain Louis B. French in command. Following shakedown, the carrier cleared San Diego 11 August for intensive flight training in the Hawaiian Islands. Her readiness complete, she sailed for the Far East to engage in combat missions in the Korean War. Arriving Yokosuka 8 September 1952, KEARSARGE joined the fast carrier Task Force 77 off the east coast of Korea six days later. For the next five months, the carrier's planes flew nearly 6,000 sorties against Communist forces in North Korea, unleashing considerable damage on enemy positions. She completed her tour in late February 1953, returning to her homeport, San Diego 17 March. While serving in Korea her classification was changed to CVA 33.

KEARSARGE sailed again for the Far East 1 July 1953 and operated with the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet fast carrier force during the uneasy truce in Korea. The "Mighty Kay" also kept watch over the Formosa Straits to prevent the Communists from interfering with the Chinese Nationalists on Taiwan. KEARSARGE returned San Diego, 18 January 1954, to resume training operations off California.

Clearing San Diego 7 October 1954, she steamed toward her third deployment to the Far East. While operating with the 7th Fleet, the carrier stood by to assist the Nationalist Chinese in the evacuation of the Tachen Islands. From 6 to 13 February 1955, KEARSARGE supported units of the fleet in the successful evacuation of 18,000 civilians and 20,000 military personnel from the islands. Her cruise ended at San Diego 12 May. The carrier was again modernized in 1956-57, receiving an enclosed "hurricane" bow and an angled flight deck to better equip her to operate high-performance aircraft.

KEARSARGE was assigned a new role in October 1958, becoming an anti-submarine warfare (ASW) support aircraft carrier, with the new designation CVS 33. Following intensive training in her new role, the carrier sailed 5 September 1959 for 7th fleet operations in the Far East. Early in her tour, Japan was hit with a violent typhoon, and KEARSARGE played an important role in providing relief to the victims. Her planes landed parties of medical and supply units, while her crew and air group donated clothing and money to the distressed people. After participating in SEATO exercises and 7th Fleet operations, she cleared Yokosuka, 3 March 1960, for her homeward voyage. Three days later in stormy waters 1,200 miles off Wake Island, four Russians were rescued after drifting 49 days in disabled landing craft. They were flown back to their country after KEARSARGE arrived Alameda, Calif., 15 March; and the carrier received thanks from the Soviet Union for this gesture.

A year of training operations preceded her next deployment from San Diego which began 3 March 1961. The anti-submarine carrier steamed to Southeast Asian waters as the Communists intensified their effort to overthrow the government in Laos.

The power and determination of the 7th Fleet was observed by the enemy and the crisis eased. Peace prevailed. After 6 months in the Far East, KEARSARGE arrived Puget Sound 1 November for the second phase of her modernization. Upon completion of repairs and training, KEARSARGE departed Long Beach, 1 August 1962, to station herself in the Pacific missile range as a recovery ship in the Mercury orbital space flight of astronaut Walter Schirra. In October, after a flawless flight, the carrier played her role in the space age by retrieving Schirra and his capsule and returning him to Honolulu for flight back to the States.



KEARSARGE resumed training exercises, continuing these for six months before arriving Pearl Harbor 29 April 1963 to once again take part in the space program. The carrier repeated her earlier recovery by plucking astronaut Gordon Cooper on 18 May 1963, after he orbited the earth 22 times in his capsule Faith 7. She returned the space hero to Pearl Harbor, then departed 4 June on her eighth cruise to the Far East. Operations with the 7th Fleet included keeping watch on the unsettled problems in Southeast Asia. KEARSARGE returned Long Beach, 3 December, for training exercises off California.

Six months later, 19 June 1964, the anti-submarine carrier was deployed on her ninth Far Eastern cruise. Arriving Yokosuka 30 July, KEARSARGE was dispatched to the South China Sea, following the North Vietnamese patrol boat attack on U.S. destroyers in the Gulf of Tonkin. While U.S. Navy planes destroyed North Vietnam oil and supply depots, KEARSARGE provided anti-submarine protection for the 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet. The decisiveness of American action persuaded the Communists to delay their objectives for the time being; and KEARSARGE returned Long Beach, 16 December 1964.

After overhaul during the first half of 1965, KEARSARGE operated off the West Coast until sailing for the Far East 9 June 1966. Steaming via Hawaii and Japan, she reached "Yankee Station" 8 August and operated off Vietnam through 24 October. The next day she headed for the Kuala Lumpur area and anchored in the Strait of Malacca on the 30th. She returned via Subic Bay to "Yankee Station" 5 November and operated there through the 23d. The next day, the carrier started home via Hong Kong and Japan, arriving San Diego 20 December 1966. She operated on the west coast until departing San Diego 18 August 1967 and reached Pearl Harbor 10 days later to prepare for future action.

Made redundant by the general fleet drawdown of the late 1960s and early 1970s, USS KEARSARGE was decommissioned 13 February 1970. Following three years in the Reserve Fleet, she was stricken from the Naval Vessel Register in May 1973 and sold for scrapping in February 1974. KEARSARGE received two battle stars for Korean War service.

## FLIGHT DECKS

Editor's Note: As a tribute to the many dedicated shipmates who manned the Flight Deck during Flight Ops we are including the following, copied from some material sent to Charlie Crookshanks (LTJG V-7 Div 1953-56) by BM1 Charles Brown who served aboard the KEARSARGE in 1970. In the past, the fighting power of major combatants was gauged by the size of their "Main Battery". With the advent of the aircraft carrier's ascendancy to the role previously held by the battleships it became customary to refer to the Air Group as the "Main Battery". Thus flight deck crews are the ones that load and fire the "Main Battery"

A correspondent who spent time aboard the USS Hornet (CV-12) in WW2 wrote the following description of Flight Deck duty in the ship's newsletter:

"When the war is done, it will be forever easy to identify any man who worked on the flight deck of an aircraft carrier. He will be the one who spends his life leaning fore or aft 20 degrees from the vertical. He got that way working 10 to 18 hours daily in the tornado blast of slipstream from engines generating up to 2,000 horsepower.

Few will quarrel, I think, with the proposition that a carrier's flight-deck crew works harder physically, with greater general skill and timing, habitually splitting hairs with sudden death, than anybody else in the Navy. Watching them when planes are taking off or landing is being witness to a mad ballet danced by crazed scarecrows, flapping perilously about the jaws of monsters amid a hurricane of wind and a mighty, crashing violence of sound.



A hundred roaring engines swing unseen guillotines so closely packed that the deadly arcs interlace like dragon's teeth. The wind is 40 knots across the bow, multiplied nobody knows how many times by the swirling slipstreams behind the planes.

Dancing backwards in the gale, spotters motion the planes forward to the takeoff line. Chockmen play a deadly game of tag inches from the swinging blades, a buffet to the wind, ready instantly to block each wheel.

As each plane rolls forward, four figures spring out and spread the folding wings. Heavy work that, and dangerous too. Once in an emergency, a husky kid tried to spread a wing without help. The hinged airfoil swing forward, caught him in the stomach, and pitched him overboard 80 feet down to the sea. He lived. Now and then, one of the hooded figures loses his footing. Instantly the wild slipstream seizes him and sends him spinning down the deck among the eager guillotines. This carrier has never lost any man that way, but others have. There's a rule for it. Never try to run or regain you balance. Fall fast and grab a finger hole in the deck.

Braced against the howling gale, seemingly within inches of the snarling propeller, the dispatcher stands, signals the engine to a screeching zenith of it's power, waves the pilot away, and ducks under the wing as the plane charges forward. Landing is a beautiful, high-speed synchronization of man and machine. If a cog slips, a man dies. Planes thud down on the deck, figures sprint from nets, disengage landing hooks, and scurry for safety as the plane taxis forward and another plunges to the deck with seconds between. Among the snarling monsters men work, ordering them (the planes) about, grooming them to fly again. They leap from all sides, fold wings, lead planes to stalls, inspect guns, bring fresh bombs, rush up and down the elevators.

They work like fiends, look like fiends, and obey one cardinal rule: Never turn your back on an airplane. When they're not working, they play six-man football on the flight deck."  
(Excerpts taken from Aircraft Carriers by Michael and Gladys Green)

## **The Great Carrier Race**

From: JBenn20630@aol.com

To: LoMck3@aol.com, p.czesak@att.net, pstarnes@houston.rr.com  
Subject: Re: News Letter - Carrier Race

I read the article by Eric Oxendorf and got a few chuckles from it. It did say memories and I guess most of our memories are not as good as they used to be. I worked in the Oil Shack and during full power runs the fire rooms went through a tank of oil every four hours and the ship had to use eight boilers instead of the four she usually steamed on. It would have to refuel and I think it would have shook apart before getting there. The ship never retired in Bremerton but was put up in San Diego and later cut up in Long Beach.

John Bennett

Subject: News Letter - Carrier Race  
Ed,

The article in the newsletter on the great carrier race really got my attention! Allegedly, the Kitty Hawk and Kearsarge raced across the Pacific. I spent 30 years in the Navy and never heard of carriers racing. Had the event occurred, Kitty Hawk would have won. She was much larger, more powerful and a more capable ship in every respect - including fuel capacity.



I was in the Ship Material Section at Air Lant for three years and worked with a group of Engineering Duty Officers (EDO's). They were forever computing speed, distance and fuel consumption for all of the Atlantic Fleet Carriers - eight at that time. One of the EDO's told me if a carrier increased speed from 30 to 34 knots fuel consumption would almost double. Steaming a few knots faster would again double fuel consumption. All ships, less the nukes, have a speed at which they steam fast enough to get there yet slow enough to conserve fuel thus extending their range. For example, on the Kennedy this speed was 19-1/2 knots. The point is, they would have to have refueled underway and ships don't refuel at flank speed!

I was in the JFK pre-commissioning unit and went on sea trials prior to commissioning. We steamed at flank speed for a short period of time and the shaking and vibration was something I had never experienced before, or since. Thus another reason the great carrier race seems a little suspect to me.

John Starnes

Editor's Note: I concur with John Bennett and John Starnes that the "race" did not take place. During the spring of 1956, prior to returning from WestPac, the Engineering Department completed a "Full Power Run" as a competitive exercise for qualifying for the Engineering "E" (for excellence). I was the Main Propulsion Assistant and CDR Riddle was Engineering Officer. In addition to the excessive fuel consumption and the great magnitude of the shaking and vibration of the hull, there was also the physical and mental strain on the personnel.

## LETTERS

Aug 1, 2008

Ahoy,

I received the Kearsarge today and the letter from Eric Oxendorf brought me back to the WestPac back in '68. As I get older, the past is what I think about and bring back the times on the Mighty Kay. I just wish I had taken the time to get the phone numbers and addresses from my friends. I have spent many years trying to find them without much luck. I have found one or two, but not all. Are there any web sites that might help?

Thanks for the memories and keep up the good work.

Joseph W. Chamberlain (Gunners Mate Striker, 5<sup>th</sup> Division, '65-68)  
561 Ocean Blvd, Unit 7, Hampton, NH 03842-3684

Dear Kearsarge Shipmates,

As a "plankowner" (Nov '45-Dec '46) and a junior Dental Officer I was glad to see the letter from B.F. Cunningham, SIC(SSML). Maybe he remembers such plank owners as Don Kimmel, Al Nazarek, ENS Ostrow, Manley Zenner, Husselrath, Slepicka, Bowen, Chaplain Butz, DRS. Darden and Brown. They all appear in my snapshots. You may remember that the ORISKANY was under construction in dry dock while we were about to leave Brooklyn Navy Yard. (It is now serving as a reef off the coast of Pensacola and has become a destination for divers)

The fire that was started by the collision with a tanker occurred June 15<sup>th</sup> according to the copy of the ship's log I have. I am enclosing a check for dues plus a few pictures that may be of interest. Don't expect to make Seattle but have a great time!

Randolph B. Green, D.D.S. (LT D.C. USNR)  
26 Crestwood Drive, Rome, GA 30165

P.S. Add Henry Burgess to my list above. CAPT McKenna was C.O. and CDR Byng flew the first plane aboard off Norfolk, VA.

Note: B. Pat Herron of 4813 Picadilly Place, Tyler TX 75703 has asked to have his Email address listed in this newsletter. It is: bpat01@yahoo.com



# KEAR SAGA

II

*The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association*

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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, rate/rank, Division, years aboard, address and phone number**

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