

# KEAR SAGA II

*The Newsletter of the KEARSARGE Association*

ISSUE 39

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

December 2008

## **Happy Holidays**

### **The 2008 Seattle reunion is behind us, and what fun it was!**

Seattle was such an exciting city to host a reunion. There was so much to see and do. We tried to fit in as much as we could in four short days, and we certainly stayed *on the go*. The weather turned out to be exceptionally nice, and the tours went smoothly.

The Silverdale Beach Hotel was a good choice. Having our welcoming buffet on the patio, overlooking the Puget Sound, was a perfect end to a beautiful day on Monday. And nobody seemed to mind the travel time to Seattle for three more days of food and fun.

However, it wasn't the hotel, the exciting tours, the excellent meals or even the weather, that made this reunion so successful. "It was," to quote shipmate Gene Setula, "the comradeship with each and all attending that made the reunion so enjoyable." I couldn't agree more. Visiting and sharing memories with fellow shipmates, old friends as well as new acquaintances, is what the reunions are about.

It was a team effort. Vice president John Starnes and Paula shopped for and kept the hospitality room running smoothly. They were there to meet any need. John Bennett has provided me with support and encouragement for the past two years. His expertise has been invaluable. John Work kept track of the registrations and the money in spite of a very busy schedule. Without Paul Czesak's dedicated work and the KearSaga, we could not have kept members informed. Many hours have been devoted to keeping the association strong and the reunions available to all who have proudly served aboard the USS Kearsarge.

For those who want to relive their memories of the reunion and for those who may want to view the event, Lois and I are putting together a VCD. It will include our photos as well as photos contributed by attendees. The price for the VCD and shipping is \$10.00. Send your check or money order to me, Ed McKee, and I will mail it in a timely manner.

Also, I have a few extra copies of the West Sound Navy Base Guide. It contains a lot of interesting information about the Naval Base in Bremerton, as well as other areas around Kitsap. If you are interested in having one mailed to you, contact me. Because I have a limited number, check with me before you send your check for \$5.00 to cover the mailing costs.

Paul Czesak sent me the last three small pieces of planking from the Kearsarge. If anyone is interested, contact me for availability and shipping costs.

I'm looking forward to Branson in 2010. I think attendance will be high for this one. Many members have already stated that they will be there. I have been in contact with, and received information from, several hotels. We are planning for mid to late May at this time. I'll keep you informed of our progress in the next KearSaga.

Ed McKee



**Subject: Seattle Reunion article for next KEAR SAGA**

For those of you who missed the Seattle reunion I am truly sorry and for those of us who attended --- wasn't it just wonderful? An event such as this, and one that is held every two years, is most difficult to plan, organize and make it happen with the desired results. In my view we could not have asked for or had a better reunion. Folks, this was not by happenstance. It was through the hard work, sound judgment and prior planning on the part of a few key individuals who deserve our recognition and sincere appreciation. Sure as shooting I will leave someone out so I apologize up front. *With that said, we must give Ed and Lois McKee, John Bennett and Dianne our hardy thanks for a job well done.* I will also share an Ed McKee and John Bennett character trait with you. They are extremely conscious of all matters concerning cost and value. If the value is not there they will not obligate the funds!!

Wouldn't it be nice if our government adhered to this basic principle? If you will please, just recall the quality of the hotel, the tours and the meals where included, our transportation services, going through the locks and all of the other things we did. Now, consider the cost and compare this to other things you have done. If you have ever done better than this and are planning another trip, please let me know. I want to go too.

By the way, Ed asked Paula and I to take care of the hospitality suit, which we eagerly agreed to. We had the very pleasant task of greeting the first guest of the day and saying good night to the last. What a job! I laughed the entire time and visited with some wonderful people, many of whom I had never met. That didn't matter. Shipmates are instant friends and for that I am so thankful.

Looking forward to seeing you at the next reunion,  
John Starnes

**Minutes of Kearsarge Association Business Meeting Held October 1, 2008 in Seattle, Washington, submitted by Vice President John Starnes.**

Our president, Ed McKee, called the meeting to order, welcomed everyone and thanked them for attending. He asked our President Emeritus, John Bennett, to present our financial report. John said we have 600 paid up members; the expenses of this reunion will be about \$4,000; the cost to print and publish the Kearsaga is \$664.00. Our current balance is \$23,509.99.

Charles Patton reported on our Ship's Store. He said he had about six more jackets, all size regular. The expense of shipping merchandise to and from reunion sites and the importance of offering items that sell was also discussed. Sidebar discussions favored having more and perhaps only ball caps. Another sidebar discussion addressed the fact that Charles and his wife are spending a considerable amount on out of pocket expenses. Most have to do with shipping and mailing merchandise and the process by which they are reimbursed. John Bennett resolved this.

Paul Czesak said the next Kearsaga will be out in December or January. As always, he welcomes input from our membership. Ed said he believes the Kearsaga can be a tool to increase membership. There was a short discussion concerning the Kearsarge Room aboard the Hornet. In a word - - if we get it we may restore it to our likening and we foot the bill.

Someone from the floor directed the discussion back to increasing membership. The following suggestions were made: advertising in Shift Colors, participating in honor guard duty and requesting local papers and radio stations to run community service ads.

Ed opened the floor to old business. There was none. He then opened the floor to new business. The first item was the election of new officers. A motion was made that all officers, with one exception, remain in their respective positions for an additional two years. Dan Levin, currently liaison to the USS HORNET, was nominated for Historian, subject to his acceptance. The motion carried.



Ed suggested we consider having our membership on e-mail, subscribing to a web site and perhaps making a memory book. While there was much favorable discussion concerning this, nothing was agreed to or voted upon.

Paul welcomed and recognized our former president George Bean. For those of you who may not know, George has not been well for several years. We are pleased and thankful that he could be with us.

Ed called for location nominations for our 2012 reunion. Pensacola and Jacksonville was voted on with Pensacola winning by a small margin. So Pensacola it will be.

Ed reminded everyone that the hospitality room will be closed all day on Thursday and asked that all personal items be removed by tonight.

Ed adjourned the meeting by looking forward to seeing everyone at the dinner dance and in Pensacola in four years.

Subject: Kearsarge reunion VCD, (From Vice President John Starnes)

Will you please consider including the following in the next KEARSAGA?

Ed and Lois McKee have made a wonderful VCD covering our Seattle reunion from beginning to end. It literally covers every event and identifies individuals and couples by name. Even the cover is impressive, it clearly shows the city and the needle as we approached the ferry landing. What a view! Lois also got a shot of the Sleepless in Seattle house boat. Best of all, she got a shot of me tying a bowline on the stern of the locks tour boat - now that's a site to behold!

Seriously the entire VCD is done in excellent taste with beautiful background music while depicting a particular tour or event. There are also group shots and pictures of gorgeous flowers and gardens. There are pictures of aircraft and yes aircraft carriers and other ships as well. In a word, one would think they are professionals.

Ed and Lois did all of this just for us using their time, effort, expertise and money. They are making the VCD's available to all members and especially to those who attended the reunion. They may be purchased for \$10.00 a copy and this includes shipping and handling. They have no intention of making a profit but would like to recover their expenses. Following are ways in which they may be reached: Ed and Lois McKee, 2005 S. Second Ave, Cheyenne, WY. 82007. Their phone number is 307-632-0743, e-mail is Lomck3@aol.com. We sure do treasure ours and are sure you will as well.

John Starnes

John,

Thank you for all your kind words; however, please know that not all the photos are ours. Several members sent us CDs of their photos as well. We're glad you enjoyed it. We think others will too. Sorry we didn't get more pictures of members that didn't attend all the tours. I believe the only one we were missing was June Boyd and nobody seemed to have taken one.

Ed and Lois

**TAPS**

Sunday, 13 July 2008  
Minneapolis, MN

Dear members of the Kearsarge Association,

It is with great sadness that I write to tell you that our beloved father and husband Trygve Arnold Holl, CDR USN (Ret) passed away on 14 June 2008. Tryg was Navigator in Kearsarge in 1960 and 1961, from the end of the ship's overhaul through refresher training and then a WestPac cruise.

I remember CVS33 with great fondness. She was a lovely ship, very exciting to a teenager as I then was.  
Sincerely Yours,  
Stephen Holl



### **White, Richard Edward**

ARENA - Richard Edward White, age 73, passed away Friday, Nov. 3, 2006, at the Don and Marilyn Anderson HospiceCare Center, Fitchburg. He was born May 31, 1933, in Madison, the son of Harold and Lorraine (Link) White. He married Carol Tedeschi on Jan. 23, 1982, in Madison. Richard graduated from St. John's Military Academy in Delafield. He served in the Navy from 1956 to 1960 in the Pacific. He worked for the UW-Madison paint shop. Richard received many awards serving as quartermaster of the Arena VFW. He enjoyed traveling, the outdoors, and fishing in Canada. Richard is survived by his wife, Carol, of Arena; a daughter, Sherry (Jim) Salsberry; three granddaughters, Chelsia, Tanya, and Sara; and special friends, Jim and Lyn Rose. He is preceded in death by his parents. The family would like to extend special thanks to the HospiceCare Center for their care and support. All Faiths Funeral and Cremation Services Madison (608) 442-0477

### **Maurice Silver**

John Work,

Sorry I took so long to get this to you. I had never met this man, but he was on the KEARSARGE, Maurice Silver was a native Houstonian. After graduating from San Jacinto High School in 1945 he immediately enlisted in the Navy. He served aboard the USS WAKE ISLAND AND THE USS KEARSARGE. George Vaughn (GM3, W Div, '61-'63)

### **Ronald Mark Alber** (SN, OI Div, '62-'66)

Dear Paul, It is with regret to inform you my shipmate for 4 years passed away at home of cancer on Sept.5, 2008. His ashes were buried at sea by the US Navy in the South China Sea where we operated. Respectfully, Robert Smeck, RD3, 01 Div, '62-66

### **James Touchstone**, (FN, M-Div. 65-68)

Sadly I must report that James Touchstone, FN, M-Div. 65-68 lost his battle with mesothelioma 9 August 08. He left his wonderful wife Barbara, 2 loving daughter and 3 grandchildren. Thank you, to all who showed concern during my friend's illness.

Warm regards, Jerry McCullough

## **Letters**

Paul,

I was stationed on the Kearsarge 68-69 in the Second Division/Side Cleaners.

I just received the September issue Kear Saga. I have read many articles about the Kearsarge online and they never mention the West Pac Cruise of 68-69. I have copied the Dedication page from the Kearsarge Cruise Book for you. On this cruise we had a fire while entering Sasebo Japan, 4 crew members died in the fire, and we went to the North China Sea to show US force when the Pueblo was captured. This event extended our cruise by 40 days. You also have her built in NJ, I'm pretty sure she was built in the Brooklyn Navy Yard, NY.

I have been a pest long enough. I enjoy the Kear Saga very much, thought I have not seen anyone that I was stationed with in the deck division, except for one, which his email was returned. I do keep in contact with a shipmate that was with me in side cleaners, and than by chance I relieved on YTB-784 in Vietnam. I wanted to come to the reunion when you had it in Charleston, SC, but never made it.

Keep up the good work

Earl (Buddy) Wilson SN - BM3 USN 67-70, BM3 - BMC USCG 72-90 Retired

Presently Tugboat Captain on the East Coast, My web site: [www.eastcoastmarineservices.com](http://www.eastcoastmarineservices.com)

## **DEDICATION**

*Ilord guard and guide the men who fly through the great spaces in the sky. Be with them always in the air, in darkening storm or sunlight fair. Hear us when we lift our prayer for those in peril in the air ...* This book depicts KEARSARGE during her third western Pacific cruise in support of our country's efforts in the Far East. The period is 1967-1968, that period which saw the abortive Communist attacks in Vietnam: Con Thien, Saigon, Hue, Khe Sanh, and the PUEBLO incident off North Korea.



The pictures that follow display KEARSARGE as a capital ship—a fighting ship—of the Line. Shown is an exceptional combination of equipment and men. Although extended and long, the deployment was a meaningful experience for all of us. Though we were provided with an opportunity to visit many new and interesting places, each of us was aware continually of the contribution we were making toward national policy. The tasks assigned were hot easy ones; some died in their execution.

TRACKER and TRACER aircraft spotted naval gunfire, destroyed and disrupted sealane traffic with guided missiles, and constantly surveyed vast expanses of ocean. Helicopters transported tons of mail and hundreds of personnel to and from accompanying ships and provided, most-importantly, heroic rescue service to downed aviators and distressed sailors. Throughout, a taut anti-submarine warfare posture was maintained. Operational commanders frequently proclaimed that all tasks were accomplished magnificently.

Making the Air Group performance possible, and giving substance to the directives of Commander Antisubmarine Warfare Group FIVE, embarked, was the exceptional performance of KEARSARGE'S ship's company, which was required to work long hours, difficult hours. For many crew members around the clock performance was not uncommon. As true professionals in the world's greatest Navy, all members of the KEARSARGE team gave of themselves in a tireless manner without complaint. Selfless performance was without parallel and serves as a sterling example of dedication to duty which exists aboard this fine ship.

The following pages show that all was not glamor aboard. Those involved in continuing, pressing damage control requirements, those below decks in the firerooms, the laundry, the mess decks, the magazines, those involved on the flight deck and in the hangar bays, those performing the back breaking underway replenishment tasks, all can attest to this. Yet each crew member deserves an equal share of the glory that was KEARSARGE during 70,000 miles of steaming.

I, as Commanding Officer, am thankful for and proud of the ship and the spirit we call KEARSARGE. My association with you who have made it so will remain one of my most endurable memories. KEARSARGE will always symbolize for me the highest standards of Naval Service to our great and wonderful country.

For most of us the deployment contained periods of loneliness and thoughts of home. These periods were particularly acute after extension rumors became reality, when Tonkin Gulf gave way to the Sea of Japan, and a planned winter transit home became, instead, a spring transit. But despite our feelings, we were well aware of the stresses and difficulties those we left behind were called upon to endure during the prolonged months of separation. With this in mind then, it is my honor and pleasure to dedicate this Cruise Book to the families, sweethearts and loved ones who also served by supporting us and whose continued support made our tasks easier, our days brighter ... *Eternal Father, strong to save, Whose arm hath bound the restless wave, Who biddest the mighty ocean deep its own appointed limits keep; hear us when we cry to Thee, for those in peril on the sea!*

CREIGHTON W. COOK  
CAPTAIN, U.S. NAVY  
COMMANDING OFFICER

Sept 17, 2008

Dear John,

Enclosed is my check for dues. Sorry if it is too late, I served aboard the "K" from October 58 to July 62. I went to Boot Camp at NTC San Diego July-October 58, Co. 440. When I reported to the "K" I was in the OI Div. CIC. I thought that was good duty until I was sent to the Mess Deck as a Mess Cook about 2 months later.. After being there I decided the cooks had the best job in the Nvy! I requested a transfer and got it! I was in S@ Div for the balance of my time aboard.

I would love to hear from anyone who might remember me, My email TroyJohn@allwest.net

Thank you very much,

John D. Davis (CS3, S2 Div Dec 58-July62)



4207 Prickly Pear Drive  
Austin, TX 78731-2017  
17 September 2008

Dear John,

Here is a check to cover whatever I owe in membership dues and something for a membership roster. My personal data as follows: Name-Frank Lyons Crump, Jr.; Rank – Ensign; Division – At first 4<sup>th</sup> Division then while in training for turret officer I was kidnapped by the Chief Engineer and became successively A Div., then C&R Div., Acting First Lieutenant, and Damage Control Officer, etc. All the time being trained by certain Chiefs and Warrant Officers to become an effective officer: Years aboard – 1947 to 1949; Phone – 512-345-1313.

All the Best

Fran Crump, CDR USN (Ret) (New Shipmate)

## **“The Great Carrier Race”**

Jerry McCullough

Paul:

I saw in the September, 2008 newsletter that "The Great Carrier Race" got some attention. When I first read Mr. Oxendorf's letter it made me laugh and I just thought maybe he was dreaming on the trip home or maybe hearing a lot of bad scuttlebutt.

It was not a race, we left Hong Kong on the morning of 21 August 69. A short time later Capt. Nearman came over the 1MC to tell the crew about the change in our plans. We had been ordered back to the states for deactivation. Two or three days later we rendezvoused with Kitty Hawk and 2 Destroyers. Our escorts did not get to return when we did. So when we met Kitty Hawk, Desron 23 left us and returned to Yankee Station. Capt. Nearman came over the 1MC and told us the reason we were steaming in front was that the Commander of the ASW group aboard Kearsarge was the senior ranking officer in the group so we would take the lead.

It was a fast trip with lots of shaking and vibration. I was a MM3 in the Forward Engine Room at the time and stood all my watches on #1 throttle for the trip home. I don't remember ever getting a Flank Bell, but we ran Full hour after hour. You could hear the force draft blowers in #2 and #3 fire rooms screaming just about all the time. The senior people were really uptight, the MMC and the MM1 in the (FER) just walked around chewing A and had looks on their faces like you could not have driven a straight pin up their posterior with a sledgehammer.

The day before we pulled into San Diego was the only time we had Flight Ops and that was to let all the planes and helos go on into North Island. When I stood my last watch, it was either the Mid or the 4-8 and we were going real slow, the EOOW told me we were outside the breakwaters of Diego waiting for daylight so we could pull in.

— So go figure, leave Hong Kong on 21 August 69 and arrive in Diego on the morning of 4 September 69, add an extra day for crossing the International Dateline. That's pretty fast. I'll end with tongue in cheek, if there is an Aircraft Carrier Heaven, Kearsarge is there, because we ran the Hell out of her coming home for the last time.

Always,

Jerry McCullough (MM3, M-Div., USS Kearsarge CVS-33)

## **ESSEX CLASS AIRCRAFT CARRIERS**

Dan Levin, Historian and HORNET Liaison

There were 24 Essex Class aircraft carriers commissioned between December of 1942 and May of 1946 of which Kearsarge was one. Of the 24 built only 4 are still afloat and they are now floating museums dedicated to preserving the history and accomplishments of these great ships and a legacy to the sailors who served aboard.



They are as follows:

USS Yorktown CV 10 Charleston, South Carolina

[www.patriotspoint.org](http://www.patriotspoint.org)

USS Intrepid CV 11 New York City

[www.intrepidmuseum.org](http://www.intrepidmuseum.org)

USS Hornet CV 12 Alameda, California

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

USS Lexington CV 16 Corpus Christi, Texas

[www.usslexington.com](http://www.usslexington.com)

While not an Essex Class carrier, the USS Midway CV41 is also a floating museum in San Diego, California.

[www.ussmidway.org](http://www.ussmidway.org)

I have a particular interest in the USS Hornet Museum. I am a volunteer docent/tour guide and it would be a great pleasure of mine to give a tour to any Kearsarge shipmate would like to visit Hornet while in the San Francisco Bay area.

A day spent touring aboard one of these magnificent ships is time well spent. You may not be able to climb up the ladders as fast as you one did, or slide down while holding onto the rails as we used to do, but you'll have a day of wonderful memories and most likely get to areas of the ship that you never saw.

Below I am listing some sites that will give you an incredible amount of information regarding the Essex Class carriers as a class, but also specifics on each individual ship.

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essex\\_class\\_aircraft\\_carrier](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Essex_class_aircraft_carrier); [ww.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/ship/cv-9.htm](http://ww.globalsecurity.org/military/systems/ship/cv-9.htm)

[www.history.navy.mil/photos/usnshtp/cv/cv9cl.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/usnshtp/cv/cv9cl.htm); [www.history.navy.mil/photos/usnshtp/cv/cv14cl.htm](http://www.history.navy.mil/photos/usnshtp/cv/cv14cl.htm)

[www.steelnavy.com/essex-data.htm](http://www.steelnavy.com/essex-data.htm)

### SUPPORTING THE TROOPS

**Editor's Note:** During the Reunion several attendees mentioned their participation in activities by their Veterans Organizations such as providing Honor Guard for Military Funerals, visiting patients in Veterans Administration hospitals and sending "CARE" packages to troops. Charlie Crookshanks, (LTJG, V7 Div, '53-'56) sent in the following information on the "CARE" package project of the Western Montana Military Officers Association of America:

Using Priority Mail boxes, furnished by the Post Office, which have a flat postage rate regardless of weight, Charlie and his colleagues with the Western Montana Military Officers Association pack them as tight as possible. Charlie says "This war is not a popular war, but we can't do to these young men and women what was done to the warriors in the Vietnam War." Now retired in Missoula, he saw an opportunity to change that for today's troops. WMMOA sent its first shipment last Christmas, and is now trying to muster a new load every quarter. One thing that's risen to the top of the troops' wish list is first-aid supplies. Troops are asking for disinfectant, bandages and other personal-use material to share with their counterparts in Iraqi or Afghan defense forces. Most of those troops don't have medical supplies of their own, he said. This time, first-aid supplies will make up 60 percent of the boxes." Another popular item is toothbrushes and toothpaste, which the soldiers share with area children. Some local medical clinics, hospitals and dentists have been generous in donating such material for the boxes, he said. *The boxes must be addressed to specific soldiers*, or they end up in a Dumpster. Changes in security rules have eliminated the old "Any Soldier" addresses for care packages. So the local ROTC staff have been providing names of Montana-connected personnel who are stationed overseas.

"My entire section enjoyed the items you packed, and I made sure to share the treats with as many soldiers as possible," wrote Lt. Sara Bower, one of the recipients. "We all appreciate the support from the States, so thanks for taking the time and effort to try to give us a piece of home."

The Christmas boxes also contained letters written by students at Meadow Hill Middle School and Frenchtown Public School District. The priority mail boxes cost about \$12.00 in postage, and contain about \$35 in supplies. Raising money for the effort is another challenge to the quarterly delivery schedule. Charlie said he'd approached numerous military support groups, businesses and community organizations for donations. The local WALART generously donated \$1000.00. If you are interested in contributing to the next shipment with letters, shippable goods or postage costs, contact Crookshanks at 406-728-2014.

Let us hear *your* success stories in supporting the Troops, which I will include in our next newsletter.

In Closing – A well deserved "Well done" to Ed and Lois, John and Paula, John and Diane, and John Work!



# KEAR SAGA

II

*The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association*

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

FIRST CLASS  
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395648543 R019



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

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

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