

# KEAR SAGA

*The Newsletter of the KEARSARGE Association*

ISSUE 50

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

FALL, 2013

## **SAN DIEGO SITE VISIT**

California here we come! For many it will indeed be "right back where I started from", literally. Situated on property that once was NTC San Diego is a new Courtyard by Marriott Hotel in which we will be staying. We initially had it on our list as a maybe but removed it because of cost. We were encouraged by one of our members to check it out. He believed that given the time of year they would reduce the rates significantly which they did. In fact they met the rates other hotels of lessor value had given us and in addition gave us more perks.

Now to the price and perks. The room rate per day is \$109 plus tax for a total cost of \$123.00. During the peak season the cost would be about \$190.00. Parking is free. This is a big plus in that some of the hotels we looked at charged up to \$30.00 per day. Shuttle service from and to the airport which is two miles away is provided and free. Most hotels do not offer this service and if they do there is a hefty fee. Don't worry about airplane noise. The hotel, including windows are so well insulated that jet noise is hardly discernible. Breakfast – meaning a huge deluxe full meal is not free but is deeply discounted with a coupon for all members in our group. Alternately, there are 23 restaurants nearby, many of which are within walking distance.

More perks! The hospitality room which is very nice and huge is "ours only" for the entire time at no charge! We can set it up as we wish, bring in food and drinks, ice is available and free. They even offered to clean the room at no cost. My reply was surely we can pick-up after ourselves.

The rooms are extremely nice and well furnished, every room has a refrigerator; there is a large exercise facility and a laundry room. There is a business center adjacent to the lobby where one may print boarding passes.



Now for a little trip outside. WOW, it's nothing like Boot Camp. Would you believe a beautiful view, water, walking trails, benches and immaculately kept grounds? For those inclined you can even look over toward the old NTC and see the USS Recruit. I believe we called it the USS Never Sail.

Getting back to business! We check in Monday, Labor Day, September 1, 2014 and check out Saturday morning, September 6, 2014. The hotel has offered the same rate two days prior to and two days following the reunion.

John Bennett found the following web site. You may want to check it out.

[http://www.pointlomarealestateonline.com/Liberty\\_Station.html](http://www.pointlomarealestateonline.com/Liberty_Station.html)

We are absolutely excited to have found a beautiful place with such historical significance!

**John Starnes**

### **Seeking Information**

Our shipmate J. B. Barbee is seeking information concerning CWO Fry otherwise known as Gunner Fry who was his division officer in the weapons department on the Kearsarge. He may be reached at 706-857-5684. His mailing address is 71 Bittings Ave, Summerville, GA 30747.

### **In-Port Catapult Launch**

During normal air operations, our starboard catapult experienced a severe mechanical problem. We were equipped with two H-8 Hydraulic Catapult Systems each consisting of a large hydraulic cylinder connected to the flight deck shuttle by means of a lengthy cable system with the speed of the shuttle connected to the aircraft being governed by pre-selected hydraulic pressure. After launch, the cylinder and cable system are slowed to a stop by a large metering valve connected to the main cylinder. This valve on the starboard catapult had cracked during a routine launch. Ship's company welded the crack while underway but the weld also cracked under subsequent launch pressures and a replacement valve was ordered through Navy Supply. When we later sailed into Hong Kong for much needed liberty, the starboard catapult was not operational. Subsequently, our liberty was cut short and we deployed to Subic Bay for replacement assistance.



A replacement was not available through Supply and a valve installed on the H-8 training catapult in Philadelphia was removed and shipped by air to Formosa, transferred to an auxiliary ship and high-lined onto the Kearsarge. Once on board and using chain-falls the valve was slowly "walked" forward through existing hatches, cutting through and restoring other bulkheads as necessary and finally down two decks to the starboard catapult room. The valve was finally ready to be installed with installation and testing assisted by the Subic Bay Naval Station. During installation of the valve on the starboard catapult, the launch of AD's using the port catapult was scheduled.

Since catapult launches are seldom observed by the general public, selected students from the Subic Bay Naval Station Public School were invited to the event. Winds at launch time were light, variable and occasionally negative across the flight deck. Without the benefit of underway winds, higher than normally required hydraulic pressures were necessary to launch the AD's resulting in higher stresses on the equipment, the aircraft and the pilot. While the overall launch was successful, the bridle connecting the last AD to the catapult shuttle broke loose after the launch and twirled wildly through the air near the tail of the then airborne AD. From my viewpoint on the flight deck, the bridle appeared to damage the AD's rudder although based on the intermittent sound of the engine and later reports the aircraft experienced a fuel system problem. The pilot successfully maintained sufficient altitude to cross the bay and reached the Cubi Point runway for a safe landing.

The students, however, did not understand the implications of these mechanical problems and fully enjoyed their afternoon "field trip" on board the USS Kearsarge.

**Gene Setula, V2 Division, (1953-55)**

### **Soviet Soldiers Rescued**

Fifty-three years ago the USS Kearsarge rescued four Soviet soldiers who had been adrift at sea for almost 50 days. A lookout saw the men in a landing craft March 7, 1960 about 1000 miles from Midway Island. They had been at sea since January 17, when a storm interrupted exercises off the Kuril Islands north of Japan. They had traveled almost 1000 miles when a helicopter brought them aboard the Kearsarge and they were later dropped off in San Francisco. Years later, around 1994, a Moscow TV station contacted me trying to gather information about this rescue for a TV special.

**John Bennett, B Division, 1959-62**



## **Taken Back**

I was taken back when notified that Paul Czesak had passed away. I had the pleasure of serving with him while we were in R Division during the early 50's. He was a nice guy.

In 1996 after the San Diego reunion there was such an R Division following that Paul decided to start a newsletter for our division. Since Pipefitters, Metalsmiths & Damage Controlmen rates were all morphed into the present Hulltech rate, the newsletter was named HULLTECH HAPPENINGS. Paul was later asked to be the editor of the KearSaga newsletter hence the demise of Hulltech Happenings. He did a great job on both newsletters through the years.

I'm sure I could dig up some Hulltech Happenings if you run short on sea stories.

### **Paul Young, R Division, 1952-55**

#### **Time Flys**

I am enclosing my check for \$30.00 to catch me up on my dues. Time just goes by too fast for me, how about you? I went aboard the Kearsarge, April 1958, right after boot camp and didn't get off until 6 years later, January of 1964. I thought that was too short as I loved every minute of it.

I made many friends aboard and could tell you many stories about the Mighty K but will wait and tell them to you at the 2014 Reunion at San Diego.

### **Louie Mouse, B Division, 1958-64**

#### **Memories**

I served with the Air Group (VF-113) from July '53 to Jan'54. Things that stand out are having Shore Patrol duty in the Phillipines, standing flight deck watch in stormy seas and the time the old babe got hit with a quartering swell that did some damage to the hangar deck.

### **Dwight Langhoff**

#### **TAPS**

**Ronald R. Pence** passed away March 21, 2012. Ronald was in Operations and was aboard from 1965-67

**Charles P. Muckenthaler** died December 17, 2012. Charles spent nearly 30 years in service to his country as a Naval aviator. A Pearl Harbor survivor he flew fighter aircraft in the Pacific during WWII. The apex of his military career came in 1964 when he took command of the aircraft carrier USS Kearsarge.



**James A. Reeve** passed away April 4, 2013. Jim was an IC Electrician aboard the Kearsarge from 1958-1961.

**Neal Reed** passed away September 25, 2012. Neal was in 5<sup>th</sup> Division and served aboard 1952-53.

**Donald L Belleville** – Passed away on April 16, 2013 – He served aboard the Kearsarge from 1951 – 1954 (I think).

My dad was a very loyal Kearsarge member and wore his hat proudly. One of my favorite memories was the day he bought the hat at the Navy Museum in Pensacola, Florida. The hat is now a family treasure and is in a glass case along with his watch & pipe. He spoke often about the people he served with and I believe truly that the Navy made him the wonderful man he was. He spent his life working hard and being dedicated to his family. May God Bless each and every one of you for serving your country.

**Cheryl Fulk**

### **The Meaning of Taps**

When I was a young petty officer stationed at a Naval Air Station (NAS), I was asked to be a member of the NAS honor guard which participated in, among other things, military funerals. I gladly accepted and heard Taps played many, many times. Would you believe it was most recently that I learned the full meaning of Taps? Now that I know, I want to share it with you.

Reportedly, it all began in 1862 during the Civil War, when Union Army Captain Robert Elli was with his men near Harrison's Landing in VA. The Confederate Army was on the other side of the narrow strip of land. During the night, Capt. Elli heard the moans of a soldier who lay severely wounded on the field. Not knowing if it was a Union or Confederate soldier, the Capt. decided to risk his life and bring the man back for medical attention. Crawling on his stomach through gun fire, the Capt. reached the stricken soldier and began pulling him toward his encampment. When the Capt. finally reached his own lines, he discovered it was actually a Confederate soldier, but the soldier was dead.

The Capt. lit a lantern and suddenly caught his breath and went numb with shock. In the dim light, he saw the face of the soldier. It was his son! He had been studying music in the South when the war broke out. He enlisted in the Confederate Army without telling his father. The following morning, heartbroken, the father asked permission to give his son a full military burial, despite his enemy status. His request was partially granted.



The Capt. had asked if he could have a group of Army band members play a funeral dirge for his son. The request was denied because the soldier was a Confederate. However, out of respect for the father, they said they would give him one musician. The Capt. chose a bugler. He asked the bugler to play a series of musical notes he had found on a piece of paper in the pocket of the dead youth's uniform. This wish was granted.

The haunting melody we now know as "Taps" played at military funerals was born and the words are:

Day is done. Gone is Sun. From the lakes. From the hills. From the sky. All is well. Safely rest. God is nigh.

Fading light. Dims the sight. And a star. Gems the sky. Gleaming bright. From afar. Drawing nigh. Falls the night.

Thanks and praise. For our days. Neath the sun. Neath the stars. Neath the sky. As we go. This we know. God is nigh.

I now have an even deeper respect for the song than I did before. I believe you will too.

**John Starnes**

### **Friends**

I served on the Kearsarge from January 1955 through April 1956 as a Captains orderly. I would like to hear from any Marines that were aboard during that period of time.

[donerdmann1@msn.com](mailto:donerdmann1@msn.com)

Thank you and all the people that work so hard to make the Kear Saga successful!!

Semper Fi

**Don Erdmann**

### **DUES, ADDRESSES AND PHONE NUMBERS**

Please check the mailing label on your KearSaga each time you receive it. The label will show the date your dues expire and if due, please remit to John Work.

For us to keep our records up to date please notify us of any changes to your address or phone number. Send any changes to John Work.



## SHIPS STORE LIST

<b>Golf Shirts</b>	Blue or White	Med, Large, X Large, 2X Large	\$29.00
<b>Sweat Shirts</b>	Blue or White	Med, Large, X Large, 2X Large	\$36.00
<b>Hats</b>			
	CV,CVA,CVS 33	Navy	\$14.00
	Marine	Red	\$14.00
	LHD-3	Navy	\$ 7.00
<b>Watch Caps</b>	Navy	CV,CVA,CVS 33	\$11.00
<b>Ships Crest</b>			
	Cloth	CV,CVA,CVS 33	\$ 5.00
	Magnetic	CV,CVA,CVS 33	\$ 2.50
<b>Zippo Lighters</b>			
	CV,CVA,CVS 33	Chrome Ships Crest or Ship	\$15.00
	LHD-3	Chrome Ship	\$15.00
		Brass Ship	\$15.00
<b>50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary First Day Covers</b>			\$ 1.50
<b>Dawn of Glory Print</b>	Watercolor print of LHD 3		\$20.00
<b>Jackets</b>			

The Port Authority jacket has a Teklon nylon durable water repellent outside with a poly-filled body with heavyweight fleece lining. It has rib nit cuffs and waistband, zippered pockets outside and one zippered pocket inside. It comes in Navy with a Navy lining with USS KEARSARGE, CV,CVA,CVS 33 and the ship silhouette on the back.

Sizes- Medium, Large, X Large \$57.00, 2X Large \$61.00 3X Large \$65.00

A light weight nylon jacket with a mesh lining is also available in Navy with the same stitching on the back

Sizes- Medium, Large, X Large, \$52.00 2X Large \$54.00 3X Large \$55.00

**The jackets are a special order item and all sales are final.** We have to order 6 at a time so when I get 6 orders I will place my order.

All prices include shipping and handling

Make checks payable to The Kearsarge Association

Charles Patton, 9125 Live Oak Ave, Ocean Springs, MS 39564

Phone 228-875-7572 E-Mail [charlotteap@bellsouth.net](mailto:charlotteap@bellsouth.net)

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## CHECK MAILING LABEL FOR YOUR DUES EXPIRATION DATE

### Dues and Membership

The annual dues for the Kearsarge Association are \$10

To pay dues, send a check payable to **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**

President John Starnes, 2815 Springs Oaks Dr, Highland Village, TX 75077 Ph: 972-317-0286, Email: pstarnes2815@Verizon.net

Vice President Edward McKee 2005 S 2<sup>nd</sup> Ave. Cheyenne, WY 82007-3900, Ph: 307-632-0743, Email: LoMck3@aol.com

Treasurer John Work, 24611 Sandy Springs Rd., Minerva, OH 446579442, Ph 330-894- 2660, Email: johnlou62@yahoo.com

John Work's Cell Phone numbers: 1-330-205-8056 and 1-330-205-0129

Membership-Vacant

Ship's Store Charles Patton, 9125 Live Oak Ave., Ocean Springs, MS 39564, Ph228-875=7572, Email: charlotteap@bellsouth.net

Honorary President Kenneth McDaniel (Deceased)

Past President – Ed McKee