

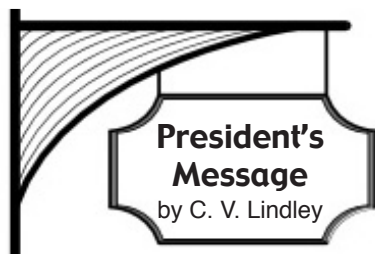
KEARSAGA

U. S. S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

ISSUE 81

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

SUMMER 2022



BRANSON REUNION RECAP & BUSINESS MEETING NOTES

Shipmates, Families and Association Friends,

Although the 2022 reunion attendance was probably the lowest ever, it was a very memorable event and all those present had many good times. For those members and families that were unable to attend, you were missed! The Branson Radisson Hotel provided great hospitality and exceeded all of our needs and members requests. As always, the "hospitality room" was the "main event" after hours where many "true stories", "sea stories and maybe a "fairy tale" or two were told.

Monday was registration day with FREE pizza, wings and salad served and a special THANK YOU goes to Lynda Rittle, Barb Hollywood and Jan Lindley for their hard work in setting up the hospitality room with memorabilia displays, table decors and auction items. Your elected Officers Barry Rittle, Bill Hollywood and Jack DeMerit started working the reunion organization plans in mid 2021 and were diligent in all aspects that concluded another successful event.

Live shows, music and excellent meals highlighted our Tuesday-Thursday events. Shows included The Beach Boys "California Dreamin", "#1 Hits of the 60s, (that included an excellent "salute" to your KEARSARGE Shipmates with a great video presentation on the big screen, (provided by ETN 2 Barry Rittle)). Other shows were "All Hands on Deck", and Dancing Queen with a lot of "Abba" on Wednesday. Thursday culminated with a superb Patsy to Patsy (Montana to Cline) show (W/John Wayne appearing), A trip to The Veterans Museum and the finale aboard and underway on the Branson Belle Showboat. It was another great show with a very good magician and our VERY OWN Barry Rittle played a great supporting role and kept the Magician confused throughout the performance.

Friday morning was the business meeting. All reports (Secretary-Treasurer) were given and accepted by membership vote. Low reunion attendance and Association membership decline were the main topics. A motion was made to keep our Association active with the proviso that starting immediately, we will suspend future reunions and essentially a "newsletter"

Association.

Regretfully and sadly, these actions were taken to keep us active. Another motion to revise Association by-laws accordingly was made and accepted with a unanimous vote.

VP Barry Rittle resigned as VP but will continue to serve as our "Webmaster" and KEARSAGA printer/distribution liaison. Nominations were opened for ALL Officer positions and ICC (SW) Stephen D. Norton stepped up and agreed to serve as our incoming VP. All other currently serving officers agreed to continue and were nominated from the floor and elected by "acclamation. All changes will be reflected in this KEARSAGA edition.

Friday night brought our "Farewell" and "Sayonara" banquet to close out our 2022 Branson reunion. We enjoyed a superb 3 entrée buffet meal to include appetizers and dessert served by the Radisson staff. Young "Sea Cadet Troops" from Springfield Mo. presented colors followed by a POW-MIA REMEMBRANCE Ceremony. To close out the evening, we were honored with a TWO Bell Memorial Ceremony to honor the 37 Association Shipmates that have departed to the "Supreme Commander" since the 2018 reunion. The Two Bell Ceremony was performed by a group of former "Sea Service" personnel from Fleet Reserve Association (FRA) Ozark Empire Branch 316 of Springfield Mo.

Last, We are revising The KEARSAGA Newsletter to reflect more of our KEARSARGE history and also want to publish more articles ("sea stories/on board experiences, etc.) from and by YOU. So, please, start sending articles to any elected officer and we'll strive to get them in print. C. V.

"IN OMNIBUS PINACULUM"

WELCOME ABOARD New Members!

Marilyn L. Mouse	1958-1964	B	P186
Anna M. Charles	1968	X	1377
Robert Eddington			A200
Allen P. Grant	1967-1970	OE	1528
Howard R. Haase	1960-1963		1529
Jimmie Dawkins	1964-1967	E	1530
Stephen Davenport	1966-1969	E	1531
John M. Licht	1968-1970	G	1532
Lawrence Spites	1969-1970	B	1533
Stephen Norton	1965-1968	E	1534
Jim D. Porter	1962-1965		1535

CPO ROBERT THACKER

SWTIMES.COM - Max Bryan

The United States Navy serviceman who died aboard the U.S.S. Roosevelt will be buried with military honors in his hometown, but his funeral date is yet to be determined because of COVID-19 restrictions.

United States Navy Chief Petty Officer Charles Robert Thacker Jr., 41, of Fort Smith died from COVID-19 on April 11 in a United States Naval Hospital in Guam after serving aboard the naval ship with more than 750 infected crew members. Thacker's funeral date at Fort Smith National Cemetery has not yet been determined because of a Department of Defense travel ban through June 30 to prevent the spread of the virus.

The U.S. military has also halted military honors at burials and funeral services, said Edwards Funeral Home Manager Jim Edwards. "It's going to be determined by when things can go back to normal," Edwards said.

Thacker was the first active duty military member to die from the virus, according to the Associated Press. He is survived by his wife Symantha Thacker, whose Facebook account showed her and her husband with two children.

Edwards on Friday did not disclose the location of Thacker's body but did say the date of the funeral will not be determined until after the travel ban is lifted. Department of Defense officials implemented the travel ban on March 11 and have extended it twice as they have seen fit. The ban is reviewed every 15 days. If the travel ban was not in place, Thacker could be buried without a graveside service — the National Cemetery has still buried caskets while loved ones have watched at a distance, outside the cemetery fences. But this kind of a burial would prevent military funeral honors.

Edwards also said Thacker's military honors will also include planeside arrangements prior to the funeral. "All of that is very important to the family," he said.

Thacker died in the Guam hospital after he was moved from the Roosevelt on April 9. He had tested positive for the virus 10 days earlier. His wife, an active duty military member stationed in San Diego, was at his side at the time of his death.

Thacker attended Southside High School, according to former principal Wayne Haver. Mayor George McGill said he was sad to hear about the death of Thacker, who he called one of Fort Smith's "fighting men." U.S. Rep. Steve Womack and Sens. John Boozman and Tom Cotton each expressed their condolences after his death was announced.

"Thacker's dedication to our nation was perhaps only surpassed by the tremendous love he had for his dear family. Petty Officer Thacker's appreciation for the special things in life — particularly his loved ones and passions — reminds us how precious time really is and how this virus poses a threat to all of us, even the warriors dedicated to defending America. My thoughts and prayers are with the Thacker family and all who counted Petty Officer Thacker as a friend or loved one. We honor his life and service in uniform, and pledge to keep this proud son of Arkansas's legacy alive in the years to come," Boozman.

BRANSON REUNION

Merlin Simonson

We Kearsargers landed at Branson, Missouri May 23, 2022, weighing in at 115 lbs each. Give or take.

Kearsarge Association President and Master at Arms, Maser Chief C. V. Lindley, and Vice President Barry Rittle, made sure all attendees were present or accounted for at all times.

Branson, is a gracious host particularly for veterans and spouses and attendants. Led off by signing in and reception, and rest, our 2022 Kearsarge Association Reunion attendees went to shows of instrumental musicians, singers, and dancers, followed by evenings of remembrances and stories.

Inclusive of: High compression dome lights. Relative bearing grease. Sea bats. Buckets of steam. Not least — the mail buoy. No reporters. No fact checkers.

The Veterans Memorial Museum was a significant visit, with entire walls of names of American military losses.

Live shows with dancing and singing: Beach Boys California Dreamin', #1 Hits of the 60s, All Hands on Deck Authentic 40s Road show including a special Kearsarge video presentation, Dancing Queen Ultimate 70s Show, Patsy and John Wayne, and — the highlight — The Branson Belle dinner theater with guest appearance by our very own — magician and drummer Barry Rittle!

We lunched one day at Mel's Hard Luck Diner, served by singing waitresses and waiters.

Auctioneer C. V. Lindley sold indispensable Kearsarge-related things. The 'guys' recited the Pledge of Allegiance, discussed business, and re-elected officers, switching out only for a new vice president.

High school Sea Cadets presented the Colors for our final banquet. We sat/stood for our photo group portrait, said our good-byes and departed our own ways for home on 27 & 28 May at 165 lbs. each. Give or take.

LIES YOU LEARNED IN SCHOOL

Mark Twain famously said, "Don't let school interfere with your education." Although the famed author who quit school at age 12 had more meanings in mind than calling out specific educational untruths, it turns out plenty of the "facts" learned in school are actually myths, propaganda, misinformation, or downright lies.

Touching Frogs or Toads Gives You Warts - You should definitely avoid touching frogs or toads, some of which secrete powerful toxins from their skin. But if the poison doesn't kill you, you're not going to have to worry about getting warts. In fact, the bumps that cover some frogs and toads aren't warts at all, and even if they were, warts can only be caused by a human virus.

In Australia, Water Swirls Down Drains in Reverse -It's likely you were told growing up that in Australia, water runs down sink, toilet and bathtub drains in the opposite direction — and even that storms swirl in reverse — because Coriolis forces tug in the opposite direction on different sides of the Earth. Coriolis forces are real, but they apply only on a scale much larger than toilets or even hurricanes can produce. According to a tweet from superstar astrophysicist Neil deGrasse Tyson, "toilet bowls drain however they're designed to circulate water. It's irrelevant whether you live above or below the equator."

FRIDAY, 27 MAY 2022

By Philip Cohen

Today we closed our quarennial reunion with a two bell ceremony honoring our fallen brothers, not of war but of the plague of old age. Our once 1,000+ member society has shrunk to a mere 238 aging members. I was the youngest shipmate, at 75, to attend this reunion, The forty odd of us, members and significant others and family members, had a great time in Branson's Radisson hotel, and visiting several of Branson, MO's entertainment venues (some photos of venues were posted on Kearsarge CV33 Facebook page) and meeting telling our sea stories.

Seeing the small turnout, we had to face the inevitable realization that unless more of our shipmates would be willing to partake in reunions and become active within the association, we will have to suspend, indefinitely, any future reunion and association activities other than quarterly Kearsaga's.

Kearsaga will continue to offer tales of adventure of our shipmates and unfortunately the inevitable, and hopefully rare, obituary of another shipmate. I love to read the stories of old salts ventures aboard the Mighty K and will miss these if we need to close down all activities of our society.

Those of us at this "last reunion" voted to donate all residual funds to The Reserve Fleet Activity scholarship charity fund

if and when the suspension of all Kearsarge Association activities should become necessary.

Some years ago we opened membership to veterans of Kearsarge LHD3. However, those folks, a few who have joined and pay annual dues, have not chosen to become active in the organization, nor join us at our reunions.

A sad day for me as this was my first and probably only reunion I will be able to attend. Although my membership dates back to the 1990's, as with many of other shipmates, my business, retiring in 2018, and family responsibilities always seemed to conflict with scheduled reunions. I was determined this year to prioritize this week to meet and enjoy my shipmates. I only regret that I never did this years ago.

Re-acquainting with shipmates brought back my three years of memories on Kearsarge, which include: Shellback initiation, and visiting Asian ports of call Yokosuka, Sasebo, Subic Bay buried deep and had nearly evaporated. I urge all of my shipmates don't waste any more years, reconnect with old friends retell your sea stories and bring back great memories.

Finally let us know through letters via Kearsaga (Editor, Jack De Merit at abcusa@earthlink.net, or to the president Master Chief C.V. Lindley, that you are willing to become active in any way possible. Once Kearsarge Association is gone, your access to former shipmates will be lost.

U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION SHIP'S STORE



Ship's Crest

Cloth CV, CVA,
CVS 33 - \$5.00



Magnetic - CV, CVA,
CVS 33 - \$5.00



Golf Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33 - Navy
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$29.00



Sweat Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33 - Navy
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$36.00



Dress Shirts

CV, CVA, CVS 33
Short Sleeve Navy
Med, Large, X-Large, 2X Large-\$29.00

Hat



CV, CVA, CVS 33
NAVY - \$16.00

Watch Caps



Navy - CV, CVA, CVS 33
\$11.00



**50th
Anniversary
1st Day
Cover
Envelope
\$1.50**

Jackets



The Port Authority Challenger jacket has a Tekon nylon durable, water repellent outside with a poly-filled body with heavyweight fleece lining. It has rib knit cuffs and waistband, zippered pockets outside and a zippered inside pocket. We are offering it in Navy with a Navy lining with USS Kearsarge, CV, CVA, CVS and ship's silhouette on the back. Small, Medium, Large & 1X Large for \$57.00
2X Large for \$61.00 — 3X Large for \$65.00



A light weight nylon jacket with mesh lining is also available in Navy with the same stitching on back. Small, Medium, Large & 1X Large for \$53.00
2X Large for \$55.00 — 3X Large for \$57.00

They are Special Order items only and all sales are final. When I have 6 orders, I will place the order with the supplier. We need a minimum of 6 to be eligible for the above mentioned prices.

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING AND HANDLING

Make your checks payable to the Kearsarge Association and send order to:

Charles Patton

2501 Bienville Blvd., Unit 514

Ocean Springs, MS 39564-3129

(228) 324-7174

charlotteap@bellsouth.net

VETERAN MEMORIAL BENEFITS

Preparing for the passing of a loved one, or even yourself, can be a difficult and confusing time. VA can help you and your survivors prepare for the future. Here's how VA's burial and memorial benefits can honor your legacy.

No one wants to leave their family with large burial and funeral expenses. VA's compassionate and professional memorial and burial services can help ease families through loss and save them thousands of dollars. If you are a Veteran, service member, spouse or dependent, you may be eligible for burial in a VA national cemetery and other benefits. These benefits include:

- Access to more than 140 national cemeteries, 95 of which are open to interments of caskets or cremated remains. Specific burial options are limited to those available at a cemetery and will vary based on availability.
- A United States flag, provided at no cost, to drape the casket or accompany the urn of a Veteran who served honorably in the U.S. Armed Forces.
- A single headstone, columbarium niche cover or a flat marker for a Veteran's final resting place, whether in a private, state or national cemetery.
- A medallion for use on a headstone, or other memorial in a private cemetery, to indicate a deceased person's Veteran status. Multiple sizes are available, and VA delivers the headstone or marker anywhere in the world at no cost.
- A Presidential Memorial Certificate – an engraved certificate signed by the current president that honors the memory of honorably discharged Veterans – for families of deceased Veterans.

VA also provides burial benefits to partially offset the cost of burial expenses, plot costs and transportation costs for a Veteran's remains. These benefits are paid at different rates based on whether the Veteran's death was service-connected or non-service connected. More information on burial benefits compensation is available at VA.gov. VA will pay the first living person to file a claim as listed below:

- 1 The Veteran's surviving spouse, or
- 2 The survivor of a legal union between the deceased Veteran and the survivor, or
- 3 The Veteran's children, regardless of age, or
- 4 The Veteran's parents or the surviving parent, or
- 5 The executor or administrator of the deceased Veteran's estate, or the person acting for the deceased Veteran's estate.

When applying for burial and memorial benefits, there are basic forms that must be completed, including:


VA Form 21P-530 for burial benefits (must be received within two years of burial or cremation)

VA Form 40-1330 for a headstone, grave marker or niche marker

VA Form 40-1330M for a medallion to be placed on a privately purchased headstone or marker

VA Form 40-0247 for a Presidential Memorial Certificate

VA Form 27-2008 for a U. S. flag for burial purposes

The VA Survivors and Burial Benefits Kit provides instructions on how to apply for each benefit and includes copies of the VA forms needed, so you can familiarize yourself with them now. Current versions of these forms (and more) are available on VA.gov. The Survivors and Burial Benefits Kit also includes tips on how to fill out applications with examples of completed forms. 

KEARSARGE SAGAS


By Kearsarge Member Richard Takahashi

While aboard the Kearsarge, we had an Exec who was not very likeable. One of his traits was that even when he was really ticked off, it appeared that he was smiling. Sailors brought before him for the 'Executive Officer's Preliminary Hearings' for infractions would smile back at him thinking he was smiling, and they would suffer the consequences.

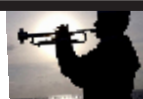
Being the 'G' Division/EOD/Diving Officer, along with munitions items, I also had access to several munitions training devices. I was approached by one of the more senior officers one day, and he wanted me to rig the Exec's ventilator system with a tear gas canister and set it so it would release a minimal amount to cause him to tear, but not enough for the Exec to suspect what was happening. Of course I refused. I could just picture myself doing time at Leavenworth!!!

Another time, just as we sat for dinner in the Wardroom and soup was served, the ship started to rock n roll, and as the ship rolled to starboard, all the soup bowls started to slide down the table onto the Exec's lap. He was seated at the head of the table. Most of the officers seated at the table did not bother to grab their bowls and instead allowed it all to end on his lap.

While on our WestPac cruise, the Exec had a slight heart attack and was air-evacuated to Subic Bay. The morale on the ship instantly went sky high. A few weeks later we received word that he was coming back. All of the Junior Officers, along with several of the Senior Officers donned their Mourning Badges on their sleeves.

The Junior officers had an unofficial 'watch 'list' and about once a week, one of them would call his stateroom, usually between the hours of 0100 to 0400, let the phone ring once or twice, then hang up. 

TAPS!



Donald B. Charles	'66-'68	X	1377
George Eckstein	'53-'55'	AG11	525
Dale Maddy	'67-'70'	OE	1432
Asa Lee Norwood		Former Member	
Larry Rauch	'55-'56	E	1458
Ronald S. Zongora	'63-'67	Non-Member	

PHILIPPINES STARTS USING SUBIC BAY AS NAVAL BASE TO COUNTER CHINA

(KYODO NEWS 27 MAY 22)

The Philippines has begun using Subic Bay facing the South China Sea as a naval base, the country's navy said this week in a move aimed at countering China's increasing assertiveness in the contested waters.

One of the Philippine Navy's two guided-missile frigates was deployed at the new base on Tuesday, about 30 years after the U.S. Navy withdrew from the strategic area about 80 kilometers west of the capital Manila.

The base sits on the roughly 100-hectare plot of a former shipyard acquired by U.S. private equity firm Cerberus Capital Management LP that has been leased to the navy. It is possible the U.S. military will seek joint use of the facility, which is located across the bay from the site of the former U.S. naval base.

The Philippine Air Force, meanwhile, plans to station aircraft at Subic Bay International Airport in order to monitor and respond to maritime disputes, according to a Subic Bay port official. The airport used to form part of the U.S. base.

Following the U.S. withdrawal in November 1992, the former naval base was turned into a sprawling port known as Subic Bay Freeport. But amid heightened tensions in the nearby waters, where Manila and Beijing are locked in a territorial dispute, there has been a renewed appreciation of the bay's strategic importance.

Rolen Paulino, chairman of the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority, which oversees the port, said in an interview that Subic Bay has become "more important" given its "strategic location."

The rest of the Navy fleet may move into the base "within the year," Paulino said, adding that he welcomes port calls by U.S. and Japanese naval vessels.

The port authority head also said a U.S. naval presence in the area would help keep a balance as the Philippine Navy is not able to match the Chinese navy, which is becoming more powerful.

According to Zharrex Santos, an official in charge of operations at Subic Bay airport, the port authority signed an agreement with the Philippine Defense Department in February to "delineate" a portion of the airport as an Air Force forward base.

The airport allows a shortened response time as it is "two minutes closer" by air to disputed areas in the South China Sea compared with Basa Air Base in Pampanga Province, northwest of Manila, he said.

The U.S. military forged an accord with the Philippines in 2014 to strengthen defense cooperation. The U.S. military is permitted to build facilities within Philippine bases, making it effectively possible to station troops in the Southeast Asian country again.

Over the last couple of years, the U.S. Navy has used Subic Bay as its landing port when it conducts joint exercises with the Philippine Navy.

A small number of Philippine Navy vessels had already been stationed at the commercial port since the port authority agreed in 2015 to lease part of the port to the Philippine Navy for free.

In a press conference Thursday, incoming President Ferdinand Marcos Jr. said that while the Philippines and the United States have had a "very strong and very advantageous" relationship for many years, he also intends to maintain communication with China over the maritime dispute.

"I've said it before. I'll say it again," he said. "I do not subscribe to the old thinking of Cold War where we had the spheres of influence. I think that we just have to (have an) independent foreign policy where we are friends with everyone. That's the only way."

U.S. WARSHIP IN SWEDEN WITH A NATO MESSAGE

Helene Cooper, New York Times

ABOARD U.S.S. KEARSARGE, in the port of Stockholm — If ever there was a potent symbol of how much Russia's invasion of Ukraine has altered Europe, the sight of this enormous warship, bristling with 26 warplanes and 2,400 Marines and sailors, moored among the pleasure craft and tour boats that ply this port, would certainly be it.

"No one in Stockholm can miss that there is this big American ship here in our city," said Micael Byden, the supreme commander of the Swedish Armed Forces, standing on the amphibious assault ship's deck in the shadow of an MV-22 Osprey under a clear sky on Saturday. "There are more capabilities on this ship," he marveled, "than I could gather in a garrison."

In this perennially neutral country that is suddenly not so neutral, the Kearsarge, which showed up just two weeks after Sweden and Finland announced their intention to seek membership in NATO, is the promise of what that membership would bring: protection if President Vladimir V. Putin of Russia turns his ire toward his Nordic neighbors. But the ship is also a warning to Sweden and Finland of their own potential obligations should a conflict arise, as Gen. Mark Milley, America's most senior military commander, made clear during a visit Saturday.

"The Russians have their Baltic fleet," General Milley, the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, said, but NATO would have its own slew of member countries wrapped around the Baltic Sea once Sweden and Finland join. In essence, the Baltic would become a NATO lake, save for St. Petersburg and Kaliningrad.

"From a Russian perspective, that would be very problematic for them, militarily speaking," General Milley said. Prime Minister Magdalena Andersson of Sweden, appearing in a shipboard news conference beside General Milley, sought to emphasize the defensive nature of NATO.

But military experts say that there is a clear expectation that Sweden's and Finland's accession to the alliance means that they would contribute to any maritime chokeholds that NATO might put in place in the Baltic Sea in the event of a war with Russia, a potentially tall order for the historically

nonaligned countries.

Both countries want security assurances, particularly from the United States and other NATO allies, during this interim period while negotiations with Turkey are holding up their formal membership to the military alliance. Sweden's Defense Minister Peter Hultqvist told reporters in Washington two weeks ago that the Pentagon had pledged several interim security measures: U.S. Navy warships steaming in the Baltic Sea, Air Force bombers flying over Scandinavian skies, army forces training together and American specialists helping to thwart any possible Russian cyberattacks.

But while President Biden has pledged that the United States would help defend Sweden and Finland before they join the alliance, American officials have refused to say specifically what form that help would take, beyond what General Milley characterized Saturday as a "modest increase" in joint military exercises.

The refusal of any NATO country to send actual troops into Ukraine, Nordic officials acknowledged, lays bare the difference between promises of military help for friendly countries versus that under a Senate-ratified treaty that says an attack on one is an attack on all — NATO's famous Article 5.

Still, the Kearsarge is in the Baltic Sea to take part in exercises meant to teach NATO, Swedish and Finnish troops how to carry out amphibious assaults — storming land that has been seized by, say, Russia. It is a hugely complex kind of war operation — think the D-Day landing during World War II — that requires coordination between air, land and naval units in what military planners call a "combined arms" mission.

If the exercises go according to plan, thousands of marines, sailors, pilots and other troops from 16 different countries will be seizing a beach head in the Stockholm archipelago.

It is exactly the kind of military operation that Russia has not managed to pull off yet in Ukraine, and that inability to do so, military experts say, is a big part of why Russia has not managed to take the southern Ukrainian port city of Odesa.

Pentagon officials note that when thousands of Russian marines landed in southern Ukraine on the Sea of Azov coastline on Feb. 25 to target Mariupol, they did so some 43 miles to the east of the city, avoiding having to do an actual contested amphibious assault.

Along with the rupturing of the notion that the Russian military is an efficient machine, the request by Sweden and Finland to join NATO is perhaps the biggest unintended consequence of Mr. Putin's decision to invade Ukraine. Instead, Mr. Putin is now facing the prospect of a NATO military alliance that is not just on his doorstep but wrapped around part of the house.


The accession of Latvia and Estonia to NATO stretched its Baltic border with Russia just over 300 miles; Finland's joining the alliance would add another 830 miles, putting St. Petersburg almost within artillery range.

Sweden, meanwhile, shares a maritime border with Russia, as does Finland. Within a day of Finland's leaders announcing their country should apply for NATO membership, the Kearsarge, named after a Civil War Union sloop famous for sinking Confederate ships, was heading to join Finnish and Swedish navies for training.

In fact, NATO has scheduled many shows of force with Sweden and Finland. "A whole host of exercises that didn't exist on the exercise schedule are there now," said Charly Salenius-Pasternak, a military expert with the Finnish Institute of International Affairs in Helsinki.

The emerging partnership is a two-way street. For NATO, beyond wrapping the alliance all around Russia's western border, the entry of Sweden and Finland allows military planners to reconceptualize all of northern European defenses. In the past, the alliance had to make compromises about where to concentrate troops, headquarters and command and control to provide the best advantage.

All of this will undoubtedly draw the ire of Mr. Putin, who has long complained about the expansion of the military alliance into what he sees as his own sphere of influence.

"There's going to be a continuous presence of non-Finnish military units in Finland," Mr. Salenius-Pasternak said. "Are they the key to Finnish defense? No. But it probably adds to the calculus of our eastern neighbor." 

THOUSANDS OF SQUARE DANCERS PERFORM ON THE CARRIER KEARSARGE

From the San Diego Union Tribune Archives

On Friday, June 22, 1956, the aircraft carrier Kearsarge welcomed an invasion of 6,300 square dancers to its flight deck.

The squeak of fiddles and shouts of callers replaced the roar of jet planes aboard the Carrier Kearsarge last night as 6,300 square dancers crowded the flight deck for an evening of dancing.

The novel hoedown was a preliminary to the 5th National Square Dance Convention which opens in San Diego today.

The Carrier was docked at North Island. Its flight deck was filled to capacity by the dancers in colorful western costumes. A few sailors in navy blue uniforms danced the intricate steps with the civilians.

Two sailors from the repair ship Ajax and the father of one of them, called the Square-D Toon Twisters, provided the music.

The square dance aboard the Kearsarge was one of several Trail End Dances held throughout San Diego last night under sponsorship of the Heartland Square Dance Federation.

Mrs. Ruth Engle, president of the federation, said they were called Trail End Dances because they meant the end of the trip had been reached for an estimated 15,000 square dance enthusiasts who came here from all parts of the

United States.

Among the larger Trail End Dances last night was one at the Spring Valley Community Center sponsored by the Calico Twirlers Club.

Searchlights from the Kearsarge pierced the sky as the thousands of square dancers rode across the bay in motorboats for the dance aboard the Carrier. For many of the visitors this was their first visit aboard a ship of any kind.

Rear Adm. J. M. Carson, Pacific Fleet Air Force chief of staff and Capt. E. O. Wagner, commanding officer of the Kearsarge, welcomed the visitors. Carson told the group the Navy was pleased to have been able to assist in opening the square dance convention.

Masters of ceremonies for the evening were Ron East and Frank Dyson. Fifteen callers from the Heartland Federation alternated in calling the square dances.

Interspersed with the regular dances on the program were round dance exhibitions by three groups. They were lifted to the flight deck on one of the Carriers elevators.

Volunteer Navy square dance callers directed several of the dances. Mrs. Engle said arrangements for the dance aboard the Kearsarge were made with Vice Adm. Alfred M. Pride, Pacific Fleet Air commander.

Among the callers were Kip Muse, Clarence Montgomery, Al Schaeffer, Marion Ashtron, Pete Mighetto, Helen Mighetto, Gladys Ronney, "Hoppy" Hopkinson, Al Rider, Roy Close, Bill Keller, Wally Riggs, Sylvia Conkie, Don Frank, Juan Frank, Ralph Miller and Stan Bryan.

Exhibitions included "The Rock and Roll Waltz," by the Candle Lighters, "Rainbow Round My Shoulder," by the Rainbow Twirlers and "Rosen Cavalier Waltz," by the Rhythm Rounders.

The convention will open formally today with registration and opening ceremonies in Balboa Park at 9 a.m. Square dance and round dance workshops will be held in the morning in the Balboa Park Club, the Municipal Gymnasium, the Recital Hall and Federal Building.

Clinics on the round dance, contra and the square dance are scheduled in the early afternoon with a waltz quadrille clinic and workshops at 3 p.m.

A cavalcade will be held in the Balboa Park bowl at 7:00 p.m. Impromptu dancing will be held almost continuously during the day at various locations in the park.

The federation has 28 clubs in San Diego County with a membership of 3,000. 

INTER-SERVICE TRANSFER

By Kearsarge Member Richard Takahashi

I received an Inter-Service Transfer upon completing my tour aboard the Kearsarge.

At the time, most of the Navy EOD/Diving Officers were classified as 'Reserve,' and very few 'Regulars' were in that field, and there was no career progression as such in that field. As a result, those EOD officers had to get out of that field in order to make a career in the Navy, as 'Unrestricted Line Officers.

I wanted to stay in the Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) field, and had learned that the President (Eisenhower) had signed an Executive Order allowing Officers to transfer between services, providing the gaining service had a requirement for that specialty.

The Air Force was short of EOD Officers then, and one of my AF EOD contacts told me about the Executive Order, and that they wanted to see if I would be interested in being a 'Guinea Pig' to switch. I verbally agreed and they apparently started the ball rolling. At the time, I was on an extension to my Navy service. I enlisted in the Navy, and was later selected to attend OCS, was commissioned, and sent to EOD/Diving school. I did a tour on Midway Island prior to being assigned to the Kearsarge.

With just a few months remaining aboard the Kearsarge, I called the BUPERS EOD assignment desk to inquire if they had heard anything about the possible transfer. They informed me that the Navy had approved the transfer request from the Air Force, and that the Department of Defense agreed to the transfer upon completion of my Navy tour. I had not mentioned this to anyone in the Navy.


The following morning (after my call to BUPERS), the Gun Boss, Commander B. Sorem, called me and said that the Exec wanted to see both of us. He also mentioned that the Exec sounded very teed off. We reported in to the Exec, and throws this TWX on his desk toward us and says, "What the hell is this about? How come I didn't know anything about this?"

I glanced at the message and saw in the Subject Line: "Inter-service Transfer of LTJG R.T. Takahashi." I said a silent 'Oh Shit' to myself, and blurted out, "I think the Air Force did this, Sir!" The Exec then says to both of us, "Get the Hell out of here!" My poor Gun Boss had no clue, and as we got out of the Exec's office, says, "What was that all about?" I then had to explain the situation to him.

Word soon got out, and everyone on the Kearsarge started calling me a 'Traitor' for switching services. I believe that someone in the Medical Dept. got even with me, as when I finally completed my tour aboard the Kearsarge and the Navy and reported to my initial Air Force duty station and was being processed, I discovered that someone had removed my Shot Record from my Navy Medical records! I had to receive all of my then current inoculations all over again!

I was discharged from the Navy and picked up by the Air Force as a 1st Lt. the same day.

I spent the next 15+ years in the AF in various EOD/Munitions assignments at various Strategic Air Command bases/Headquarters, along with several Pacific Air Force Command Bases/Headquarters. The most exciting of all was a year tour in Vietnam as OIC of the Air Force's Mobile EOD Team.

I retired with a total combined time of a hair over 20 years service at the grade of Lt. Colonel. It was a great adventure, and the most notable, of course, was the two years I spent aboard the USS Kearsarge!!!! 

KEARSAGA

U. S. S. Kearsarge Association Newsletter

First
Class
U. S.
Postage

U.S.S. KEARSARGE ASSN.

% Bill Hollywood
3059 Crest Ave.
Ketchikan, AK 99901

ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED

MEMBERSHIP DUES

All KEARSARGE Association Members, Please be attentive to your membership expiration date that's on the address label. We don't want to be forced to drop a single member for any EXPIRED dues.

SHIPMATES, PLEASE CHECK THE MAILING LABEL ABOVE FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATES.

If it has been highlighted in yellow, please renew immediately.

You can also check your membership details on the website roster to determine your membership expiration dates. That is the date on which your dues payments are due and payable.



DUES and MEMBERSHIP

Annual membership dues are \$15.00

Check payable to the: **Kearsarge Association**

Mail to: **Bill Hollywood**
3059 Crest Ave.

Ketchikan, AK 99901

New members, send your information including:
Name, Address, Phone Number, E-Mail Address,
Rate, Rank, Division, and years serving aboard.

If you are interested in receiving your Kearsaga via E-Mail, go to our website and leave a message stating: "Send KEARSAGA via E-Mail"
If you do not have a computer, we will continue to send it via U. S. Postal Service.

Association Office Holders

President: C. V. Lindley, 9729 Shadow Wood Dr., Pensacola, FL 32514 • (850) 712-4664 • cvjan78@gmail.com
Vice President: Stephen Norton, 124 hilltop Drive, Chula Vista, CA 91910 • (760) 809-6618 • iccswn@gmail.com
Secretary / Treasurer: Bill Hollywood, 3059 Crest Ave., Ketchikan, AK 99901 • (907) 225-6556 • aknos@outlook.com
Webmaster: Barry Rittle, 10 Valley Dr., Annville, PA 17003 • (717) 673-6189 • rittleskokomo@aol.com
Editor: Jack De Merit, 4112 W. 161st Street, Lawndale, CA 90260 • (310) 367-3259 • abcusa@earthlink.net
Ship's Store: Charles Patton, 2501 Bienville Blvd, Unit 514, Ocean Springs, AL 36564 • (228) 324-7174
charlotteap@bellsouth.net

Honorary President Kenneth McDaniel (Deceased) Association Founder
John Bennett "President Emeritus," John Starnes Past President

www.kearsargeassociation.com