

KEARSAGA^{II}

The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association

Spring

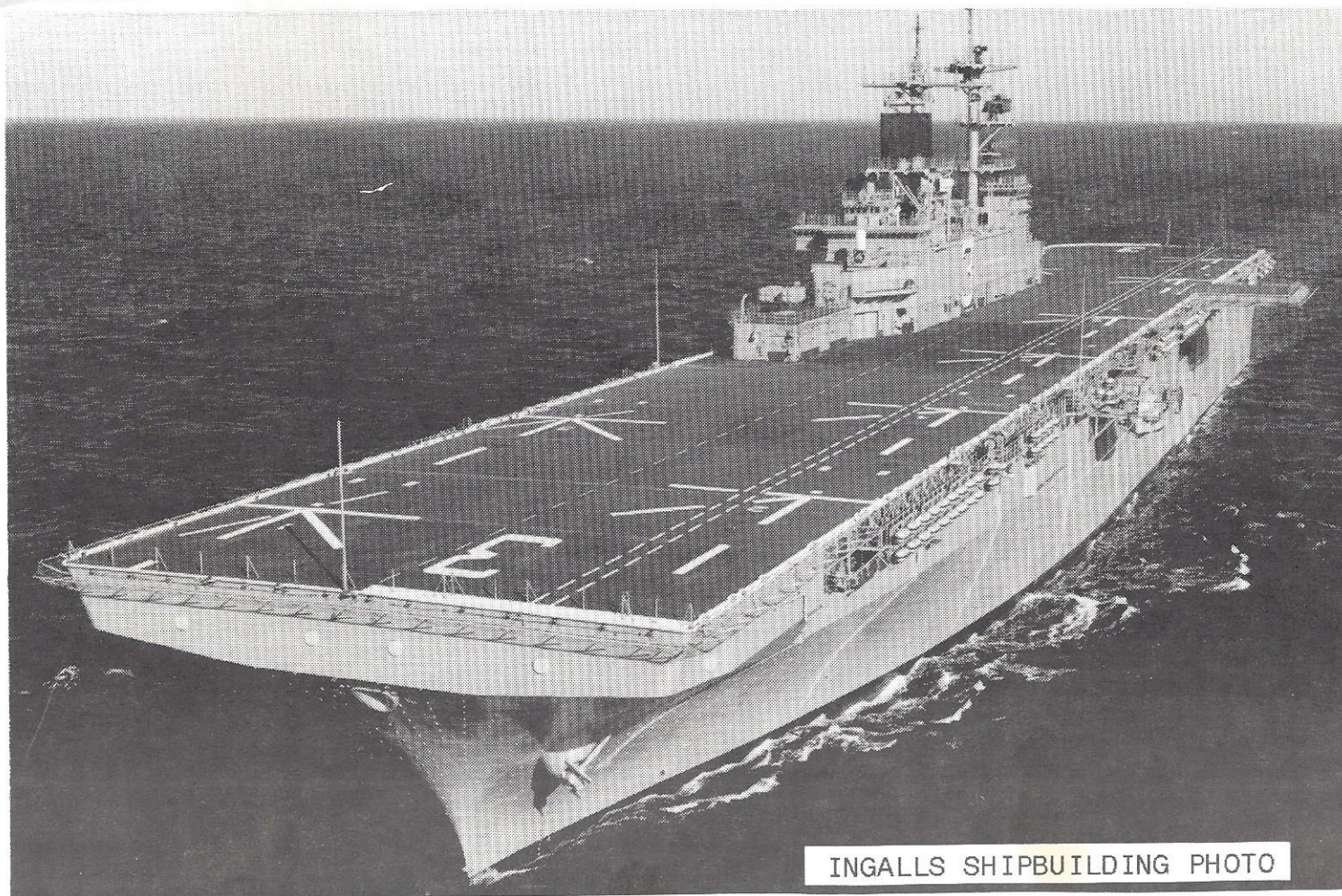
CV CVA CVS 33 LHD3

1993

BUILDERS TRIALS

The Kearsarge LHD 3 went to sea for the first time April 19 at 6:00 AM and returned the 22nd at 10:00 PM. Captain Montgomery said the trials went well and the ship ran full speed for four hours. No major problems were encountered but usual shakedown bugs were there that will keep the shipyard busy until the acceptance trials, that are scheduled for mid June.

One of our members, Charles Patton (who was in A Division 1964-67), works for Ingalls Shipbuilding and had the privilege of working on the new Kearsarge. Charles, who works as a shipfitter, worked on the new Kearsarge from the time the keel was laid until the ship was put in the water. Due to his attachment to the old Kearsarge, Charles decided he wanted to be aboard when the new Kearsarge went to sea for the builders trials, but his department was finished with their part of the construction, so he needed to figure out a way. He talked to a lot of people at the shipyard but was getting nowhere. His wife got involved in his search to



INGALLS SHIPBUILDING PHOTO

find a way to go to sea on the new ship, and lo and behold when the Kearsarge went to sea Charles was aboard as a steward. He said he served three meals a day and served "HOT" mid-rats. (I never recall getting hot mid-rats in the OLD Navy). Charles said the Kearsarge rides smooth and puts out a nice wake at full power. He also said he did miss the ship not having a fantail but the straight scoop from Charles is that she's a great ship and one the Association can be proud of. J.B.

COMMISSIONING MEETING

John Bishop, Sam Thompson, and I attended a commissioning meeting the 8th of February at Pascagoula, Mississippi to decide what part The Kearsarge Association will take in the fund raising for the commissioning ceremony. Our Association has agreed to join together with the Commissioning Committee to raise funds for the plaque the Association will present the ship and with the excess money donated to help with the purchase of plank-owners plaques for the crew members. The money will be collected by the Commissioning Committee and the funds I have collected will be turned over to them. The Commissioning of a Navy ship is paid for, for the most part, with private donations and not by the Navy. The various contractors that have supplied parts and services for the ship will make donations and other organizations such as ours will help also.

After the meeting we had the pleasure of going aboard the new ship, meeting some of the crew members and getting a first class tour. At this time a lot of painting and cleaning was going on, but it was still a great time and everyone really enjoyed it.

Captain Montgomery has put together a great crew that is very friendly and takes great pride in being part of this new ship. They are very supportive of our Association and I hope we can show our support by

giving generously to the Commissioning Committee, and commission the new Kearsarge in a grand manner. You will be receiving a letter from the Commissioning Committee about this in the near future. J.B.

MINNEAPOLIS VISIT

I had a school to attend (for work), in Minneapolis and I asked our Historian, Steve Udell, who lives in that area, if he would contact Association members in that area and invite them to meet for dinner. Harvey Danielson and John Hamack, both former marines, accepted the invitation and the four of us met at Chi-Chi's and had a great time. Steve brought a box of memorabilia and both John Hamack(52-56) and Harvey Danielson (a Plank-owner) brought Cruise Books. Margarita's were ordered, dinner served and many stories shared. Harvey informed me that he joined the Marines at age 14 and was sworn in when he was 15. He is wondering if any of our members joined at a younger age?

If your going out of town, find out if a member lives nearby and give them a call and say hi. If you need help finding out who lives in that particular area, call me or send me a line and I will be glad to furnish the information. J.B.

KEARSARGE MEMORIES

The Kearsarge was in drydock in the Brooklyn Navy Yard when I reported aboard on November of 1947. I was straight out of Great Lakes by way of the Philadelphia Receiving Station. I went home for Christmas and when I returned to New York City it was paralyzed by 25 inches of snow. There wasn't anything moving in Times Square and cars and Taxis were abandoned everywhere. Fortunately the subway to Sands Street wasn't effected.

The Kearsarge tried to leave the Brooklyn Navy Yard in March of 1948 but the morning was "Pea Soup Foggy" and we barely escaped being run down by The Queen Elizabeth in the outer harbor so we came back to the dock and waited for a better day. I remember someone saying that our radar was stored at Bayonne, New Jersey because it was too tall for the New York bridges.

We home ported in Quonset Point, Rhode Island in early 1948. there wasn't much to do around Quonset Point so we went to Providence for liberty. Some buddies and I got to frequenting a nite spot in Valley Falls called the "BLUE MOON CAFE". We went up there every chance we got and soon realized we needed a car. A shipmate had a 1934 Ford for sale that was in running condition so a hometown friend of mine and I rounded up \$75.00 and bought it. We didn't bother with the legal technicalities of transferring the title or any of that. We just gave him the money and he gave us the keys. My co-owner buddy drove it to New York City one weekend and was involved in a 5 car pile-up on the Merrick Parkway. Since he had no title, no insurance, and no drivers license he just left the car and hitch-hiked back. That was the last of our car.

In early June of 1948 we were getting ready for a Med Cruise, went to Norfolk for some reason and anchored out in Hampton Roads. One stormy night one of our liberty launches swamped on the way back to the ship and I think 29 of our shipmates lost their lives that night. Probably a little known tragedy in Kearsarge history.

I stayed with the Kearsarge until de-commissioning at Bremerton Washington, the spring of 1950. By mid-June only a few of us storekeepers were left and were living on a personnel barge and eating at the base mess hall. When our work was finally done I only had 30 days left before being discharged so I went to the Personnel Office on the base and they agreed to discharge me 30 days early. They didn't know too much about the process of discharging and unknown to

me they left blank a space on my discharge that was to indicate "Recommended or Not Recommended" for re-enlistment. As it turned out that little oversight nearly cost me my life several times.

After all the adventures of 2 1/2 years aboard the Kearsarge civilian life was too dull for me and I decided to go back in the Navy in the spring of 1951. The Navy recruiter told me he would have to send my discharge papers to Washington to find the reason the space was left blank and had no idea how long it would take. So in my impatience I went down the hall and joined the Army giving no thought to the fact that there was a war going on in Korea and that I might end up in it. Sure enough I did and in the infantry too. Many a time in the cold, heat, mud, and dust wondering if the next shell or bullet had my name on it I thought about the oversight at the Bremerton Personnel Office. Seeing the old Navy Corsairs planes strafing and dropping napalm on the Chinese, I wondered if maybe they came from the new Kearsarge somewhere off the coast as I sure would have liked to be out there on it.

I am now 63 years old and adventures are a thing of the past, but I dearly love to remember them and share the memories with anyone interested.

JOSEPH E. LONG
750 Sandpiper Ct.
Lexington, KY 40505

COMMISSIONING UPDATE

As of this writing the commissioning ceremony is tentatively scheduled for September 25, 1993 at Pascagoula, Mississippi. The first of two sea trials has went well and Acceptance Trials are scheduled for mid June. If things go well on this trial the Sept. 25 date will be kept. This is when we will know for sure. For planning purposes this is the date we are now using and will keep everyone informed

of any changes. We will be staying at the LaFonte Inn located in Pascagoula and will join the Marine Det. (who are having their first mini-reunion) for a buffet dinner Saturday evening at the hotel. J.B.

RICKSHAW FOR SALE

While the Kearsarge (CVA33) was at anchor in Hong Kong Bay in October 1953 a most unusual occurrence happened. A naval officer of junior rank purchased a rickshaw and unknown to him the coolie was included in the purchase.

The officer requested permission from the Marine on duty at the forward accommodation ladder to bring the rickshaw aboard, who asked the Corporal of The Guard, who in turn asked the Officer of The Deck. The Officer of The Deck, much to his better judgement, reluctance, and consternation gave his permission for the rickshaw minus coolie to be brought aboard. Bringing the rickshaw aboard was like The Divine Comedy and a Keystone Cops episode. Lights strung along the ladder were broken out, grooves were cut into the handrails, and the canvas and ropework damaged. The coolie who thought he was part of the deal had to be thrown off the platform and was left to flounder in the water. The Marines on duty were drenched and with torn shirts, and was rumored the Corporal of The Guard went nuts. The O.D. thought he would be drawn and quartered while everyone who witnessed the event laughed their butts off.

The Admiral and Captain were due to return to the ship so much activity took place to camouflage the damage that was done. They never knew anything happened except that a rickshaw had somehow come aboard.

Rumor has it that Elmo Hale, Fred Lemieux, and Cliff Phillips were the Marines on duty that night. The identity of the O.D. is not known but is believed to have resigned his commission.

ANONYMOUSLY SUBMITTED (BY SAM THOMPSON

USMC)

LAND ROVER

A good story comes from one of Capt. Nebletts orderlylies about an old car that was reconditioned aboard the Kearsarge. The car which was a pile of junk when brought aboard was transformed into a grand hunting and fishing vehicle by various members of the ships company. It was outfitted with various compartments to store hunting, fishing, camping, and survival gear. Dual rear wheels could be fitted for travel in the boondocks and the engine was fine tuned to purr like a Rolls Royce. All body work was repaired and a old rusty shovel was even reconditioned. The orderly, who had the opportunity to go on several shakedown and tests in the California desert, said it could have passed for a modern day Hummer.

Anyone who worked on this vehicle is asked to share the experience with us.

WATER OVER FLIGHT DECK

Several members have asked about a photo taken while the ship was in route to Bremerton Washington around 1950. Some rough water was encountered and someone took a picture of water coming over the flight deck. I remember someone had this picture at the reunion but I don't remember who. We would like to get some copies made of this photograph. J.B.

VICE-PRESIDENT

T.W. Smith was born October 11, 1931 and joined the Navy in 1951. His first time aboard the Kearsarge was the 1953-54 Cruise as Plane Captain in VF112, CAG II. He then spent one week aboard the Yorktown and then made the 1954-55 Cruise aboard the Kearsarge.

Upon completion of his enlistment Tom went to work for AT&T and retired in 1989 as a Rapid Response Engineer. T.W.'S hobbies include woodworking,

most sporting events and dog shows. T.W. has breed and showed Chow dogs and is still active in putting on dog shows in the Atlanta area.

One of T.W.'s special talents is finding former shipmates. T.W. has helped in locating about 50 former shipmates. Once T.W. gets on your trail you might as well give up as he has many clever ways of finding you. If everyone in the Kearsarge Association had one half of T.W.'s dedication we would have the largest and best ship association going.

T.W. and his wife Elizabeth have one daughter, Lisa. J.B.

TAPS

Lester Reese 6,22,1992

James Dawson 10,20,1992

J.L. Arnold MD(52-3)

Roger Duncan MD(53-4) 1982

J.C. Beauvais MD(52-3)

Boyd Knowles MD(52-4)

Major John Bugg MD 1990

Major John Bugg joined the Marines in 1943 and won a Battlefield Commission in Korea. John was a LT. aboard the Kearsarge 1953-55 and had received the Purple Heart, Silver and Bronze Stars and various other medals. He was very well liked and respected by the enlisted men who served under him.

NEWTON'S LAW OF LOVE

The name of Rev. Benny Newton does not appear in Who's Who, nor does his marble likeness adorn a city square, Society's mistake. Newton embodied the very best in the human spirit during last year's Los Angeles riots when he interposed himself between a mayhem-bent mob and its victim.

Latino trucker Fidel Lopez was about done for when Newton, who had seen the uprising on TV and sped to its epicenter, arrived. Lopez had been yanked from his truck by a black

crowd and worked over with fists and feet. Worse was in store when Newton, also black, covered Lopez's body with his and yelled, "If you kill him, You'll have to kill me, too!" Facing something more powerful than its hate, the mob retreated.

In risking his own life and standing foursquare against "racial solidarity" in an evil purpose, Newton was Double courageous. Justly, he was doubly rewarded. Not only did he save Lopez's life, but he probably saved several frenzied youths from becoming killers.

Rev. Benny Newton has died of leukemia, his exemplary work on Earth done. He had a small ministry in the inner city. He hosted no TV show and packed no stadiums when he preached. But he delivered the world's finest sermon last year in the lawless streets of L.A.

Reprinted with permission from the Birmingham News

Benny was aboard the Kearsarge 1952-55

U.S.S. ROSS

In a follow up from the last KEAR SAGA the Navy has announced that Ingalls Shipbuilding will build the Ross (DDG 71) that honors Captain Donald K. Ross, USN, (1910-1992). Captain Ross was aboard the Kearsarge during the Korean War and was awarded the Medal of Honor for his actions during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor.

BOMBER PILOTS

The Kearsarge Association has two members who have flown bombers and both of them were not pilots while aboard the ship. As most of us know John Bishop our President used to own and fly a B-25 and now I find out that J.D. "DON" Carter of the Marine Detachment (1954-55) flies a B-17. They should have some interesting stories to tell at the next reunion.

A GIFT FROM JERRY BAUM

While at a newspaper office in Vincennes, Indiana, watercolor artist Jerry Baum saw an article about the Kearsarge Association and inquired about it because while with the Military Police at the Marine Corp Recruit Depot at San Diego, Jerry had on many occasions been aboard the Kearsarge to pick up and deliver messages. During this time, he became acquainted with Marines and Sailors aboard the ship. The newspaper put Jerry in touch with Sam Thompson so he could find out more about the Association. When Jerry found out from Sam that a new Kearsarge was being built he immediately offered to do a painting of the new ship, that we could present to the ship when it is commissioned. When Captain Montgomery was presented with the idea he was all for it.

I had the opportunity to meet Jerry before he started the painting and he was doing some sketches to show Sam Thompson and me what he had in mind. I was very impressed with the sketches but even more impressed with the painter. Jerry has a great desire to make this painting very special and is very pleased to be able to give something back to the Navy and Marine Corp who corrected a medical problem with his knees. Jerry has done many humanitarian paintings and is the type of man who enjoys giving. His enthusiasm about the new Kearsarge and our association is unbelievable. I hope everyone will have the opportunity to meet him at the Commissioning Ceremony.

The painting is now finished and is called "Dawn of Glory". The painting depicts the new Kearsarge, along with the other three Kearsarges to one side sketched in graphite. I will have more about Jerry, the painting, and news about prints of the painting in the next Kear Saga. J.B.

DUES

Thanks to all who have sent in their dues. The response has been good but we still have a lot of members who haven't paid yet.

I have been updating the records as dues are being paid and if I am missing information on a member I send them a postcard asking for the needed information, so when members ask for a list of members in their division I have the needed information. Please keep me informed of changes of address or information on your address that is incorrect because the Kear Saga is mailed bulk rate and the Post Office will not forward them.

We don't want to loose track of anyone. J.B.

FOR SALE

Two cigarette lighters, one CVA-33 with ship and aviator wings and one CVS-33 with ship and aviator wings plus ships seal, are being sold by

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Albany, OR 97321

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1ST DIV. 1947-50

ALBERT NEITZKE
11163 S. TRUMBULL AVE.
CHICAGO, IL 60655
312-779-9850
V1-H DIV 1946-48

1994 REUNION

The 1994 Reunion will be upon us before we know it, so the planning

needs to get started. I noticed that we have a lot of members who live in the Norfolk area and we are asking for your help with making this a first class affair. I would like to find someone to volunteer to be the Reunion Chairman and to help organize most of the Reunion and to assign jobs to the other volunteers. A lot was learned from the last reunion that can help improve this one. If we can spread the work around, no one person should have to be over burdened. So anyone intersted in volunteering please contact me. J.B.

Phantom, or Phantoms, may have been members of the Marine Detachment aboard the Kearsarge. From a pretty reliable source I hear that four marines performed a similar act while serving with the Second Marine Division. My source tells me that these marines are quite famous in Marine history for an act that took place in the fall of 1954, but he would give no details other than to recommend a talk with Don Cavell, John Hines, Roger Muckway, and Bob Landry when you see them at the Commissioning. J.B.

COMMANDING OFFICERS

Capt F.J. McKenna	Mar. 1946
Capt W.T. Rassieur	Apr. 1947
Capt C.S. Smiley	Jan. 1948
Capt W.R. Vieweg	Feb. 1949
Cdr H.T. Johnson	Sept. 1949
Decommissioned	June 1950
Capt L.E. French	Feb. 1952
Capt T.B. Clark	Feb. 1953
Capt T.B. Neblett	Nov. 1953
Capt W.L. Kabler	Sept. 1954
Capt E.O. Wagner	Sept. 1955
Capt W.T. Shields	Sept. 1956
Capt P.E. Emrick	Sept. 1957
Capt W.A. Dean	Aug. 1958
Capt R.L. Townsend	June 1959
Capt P.W. Jackson	June 1960
Capt L.E. DeCamp *	June 1961
Capt E.P. Rankin	July 1962
Capt P.N. Gray	July 1963
Capt C.P. Muckenthaler	June 1964
Capt M.M. Hershey	Apr 1965
Capt W.L. Nyburg *	Apr 1966
Capt B.C. Tate	Mar 1967
Capt C.W. Cook *	Oct. 1967
Capt L.M. Nearman	Jan. 1969

* Members of our Association

SEMPER FI

In our first Kear Saga was an article about the Phantom and how he roamed the passageways of the Kearsarge. Most thought it to be perhaps a member of the one of the air groups but now I am hearing that the

NEWS

Lets keep the stories of events that happened while you were aboard The Mighty Kay coming in. Everyone likes to read these stories, so don't keep them to yourself, send them to me so we all can enjoy them.

SHIPS STORE

Art Killian, our Ships Store operator is in the process of adding a few more items and should have them for the Commissioning Ceremony. Art has also found a way to lower the price of our hats. They will now be \$12.50. The lack of funds has kept Art from adding more items before now. I would like to thank Art and his wife Betty for the nice job they are doing.

STUDY GROUP

Rudolf J. Friederich heads up The Aircraft Carrier Study Group which keeps track of all the active carriers and has articles on the history and interesting stories of all the past carriers. They print interesting events that happened aboard carriers from the USS Langley to the USS George Washington, for others to enjoy and to keep them from being lost. For more information contact

Robert D. White
225 Camp Lane
Guadalupe, CA 93434

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Spring

CV CVA CVS 33 LHD3

1993

USS Kearsarge Association
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