

KEARSARGE II

The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association

Winter

CV CVA CVS 33 LHD3

1994

COMMISSIONING

The Kearsarge LHD-3 became the U.S.S. Kearsarge LHD-3 as the Navy took ownership of the new ship at the October 16th commissioning in Pascagoula, Mississippi. All association members who attended seemed to have a wonderful time.

The festivities started Friday night, October 15, with the Commanding Officers' banquet at which the ship was presented various gifts. Mrs. Alma Powell, sponsor of the new ship, presented a painting of the Sloop of War Kearsarge, and was in turn presented a crystal bowl etched with the profile of the new ship. General Colin Powell accompanied Mrs. Powell and they were both big hits among the guests. On behalf of the Kearsarge Association Jerry Baum presented his original painting "Dawn of Glory"; and John Bishop, President of the Association, presented the bronze plaque made especially for the Kearsarge LHD-3 from the donations of members of this association. Mr. Sam Thompson, on behalf of the Marine Detachment of the Kearsarge Association, presented a flag that had flown over the U.S. Capitol Building; and Jerry St. Pe', President of Ingalls Shipbuilding, presented a framed copy of the newspaper headline announcing the commissioning of the Kearsarge.

Saturday morning it was onto

the buses and to the shipyard! For those of us who had attended the christening ceremony it seemed like only a short time ago that we had watched Mrs. Powell christen the ship. For those there for the first time it was a thrill to see the Kearsarge with fresh paint and all flags flying. A short trip up the gangway and we were aboard and on the hanger deck. Then after a short walk and a ride on the elevator we arrived at the flight deck. More than 4000 guests were on hand to see the Navy take command of its newest Wasp Class carrier.

In attendance were principal speaker General Carl Munday USMC, U.S. Representative Gene Taylor, General Colin Powell, USA(Ret.) and his wife and ships sponsor, Mrs. Alma Powell.

Vice Admiral J. Paul Reason placed the ship in commission by saying, "Today is a significant day for our Navy-Marine Corp team, the commissioning of a ship synonymous with the term seapower. USS Kearsarge will serve as a centerpiece of naval strategy well into the 21st century.

Mrs. Powell drew a rousing "Aye Aye Ma'am" from the crew as she announced, "Men of Kearsarge, man our ship and bring her to life!"

A 21 gun salute and a fly over by Marine helicopters and Harrier jets were exciting parts of the ceremony. After the commissioning the guests were honored with a reception on the hangar deck and in the Officers' Wardroom.

Saturday evening the Kearsarge Association held a seafood buffet at the LaFont Inn at Pascagoula. "Dawn of Glory" painter Jerry Baum gave a short talk at the banquet as did association president, John Bishop. If one listened closely you could hear many sea stories being exchanged at the tables. At last count, 118 members and guests attended and had a good time of fellowship.

Sunday morning Captain Montgomery with the aid of the Air Officer, Commander Dennis Dolfie, arranged for a private tour of the Kearsarge especially for members of the association. We were divided into groups of ten and given tours of the entire ship that lasted a couple of hours. My group was on the bridge when the display aircraft flew off, and I had a very good view of flight operations. The tour guides were very informative, courteous and able to answer most questions. After the tour, the Engineering Department of the Kearsarge was presented a chromed burner barrel like that used aboard Kearsarge 33.

Many thanks to Captain Montgomery for the front row seats that were provided at the commissioning ceremony for the association and for the Sunday tour, to Cliff Buckner for his help with the hotel accommodations, to T.W. Smith and Sam Thompson for scheduling and providing the deposit on busses that we rode to the shipyard and to Art and Betty Killian for the Ships Store.

MARINE REUNION

The Kearsarge Marine Detachment held their first reunion October 15-17 to coincide with the commissioning ceremony. The banquet held Friday, October 15, at the LaFont Inn was a great success. Colonel Henry Hoppe III, who was in charge of the banquet had a wonderful evening planned with MSgt. E.L. Cassell leading a great tribute to the detachment. Colonel Robert Needham was also present to help the marines relive the experience of serving under him. Sgt. Leonard Whalen was resplendent in his "Chosin Few" blazer with his medals earned at the Chosin Reservoir. The detachment was honored that he was once part of it.

A memorial service was held for all departed comrades with a dinner place setting for each and a candle burned in their honor. They were not forgotten. Shirley Dinkelacker sang the National Anthem and Marine Corp Hymn with much gusto, and "rattled the bulkheads with renditions never before heard in Mississippi".

A special thanks to T.W. Smith (US Navy) for his persistence in finding former members of the Marine Detachment who served aboard the Kearsarge. Also, many thanks to Colonel Hoppe and Clayton Saul for their help in organizing the reunion; Ralph Stutes for the frog pins; and Jerry Baum for his painting.

(Edited from information supplied by Cpl. Sam Thompson.)

KEARSARGE PLAQUE

After finding out from Mr. A.C. Weeks, Public Affairs Department of Ingalls Shipbuilding, that it was customary for ship associations such as ours to present a plaque to the

newly commissioned ship, John Bennett got in touch with Captain Montgomery to find out what types of plaques other associations had presented. After reviewing what other associations had done, it was decided that the Kearsarge Association plaque should tell the history and tradition of ships bearing the name Kearsarge. Mr. R.L. Flynn of the Essex Association recommended Bunting Inc.(the reps. for Matthews Bronze) to cast the plaque, as they had been very pleased with the quality of the plaque made for them.

Shortly after Mrs. Alma Powell had christened the Kearsarge, association members were asked in the Kear Saga to contribute to the Kearsarge plaque fund. Later, in cooperation with the commissioning committee in Pascagoula, the association was able to raise over \$5000.00 for the Kearsarge plaque, with the excess helping to pay for the crew's plankowner plaques ...a wonderful accomplishment by the association!

The Monday before the plaque was to be presented at the Commanding Officers Banquet, John was informed the plaque had not been completed. After several days and more than one frantic phone call, John was told the plaque would be ready at 3:00 PM in Pittsburgh, PA the day before it was to be presented. After picking up the plaque in Pittsburgh John still had over 1000 miles to drive. He arrived in Pascagoula two hours before the presentation was to be made(one hour due to a time zone change). John said all the effort was rewarded when the plaque was unveiled at the banquet and he heard all the "Oohs" and "Ahhs". The 2'X4' bas-relief bronze plaque is something our association can be very proud of. In a thank you letter from Captain Montgomery he said it

was mounted on the quarterdeck, and he had received many favorable comments about it. He asked me to thank the Kearsarge members once again for their wonderful gift and continued support.

Thanks to everyone who contributed, and a special thanks to John Bennett Jr., Jerry Freeman and Diane Lewter for their help in designing the plaque.

ARTIFACTS

Divers searching a Confederate warship sunk off the French coast during the Civil War have brought back the first batch of artifacts, including coins and tableware, project organizers said. The wreckage of the CSS Alabama was discovered near Cherbourg in 1984 by a French navy minesweeper. The vessel was sunk in 90 feet of water by the USS Kearsarge, a Union ship, during one of the most far-flung engagements of the Civil War.

(Rod Amelotte '54-55)

CRUISE BOOK

Jerry Abrahamsen, PO Box 491, Adelanto, CA 92301 is looking for a 1955 cruise book. Can anyone help him out?

THE PERFECT ROBBERY

Days and nights aboard the Mighty Kay were becoming longer and more boring as the weeks wore on during our 1959 Far East Cruise. We had finally found a great spot for our poker games. Between the Master-at-Arms shack and their berthing compartment was a passageway. In that passageway was the hatch to the balloon locker. Who would ever think to look in the balloon locker,

right under the noses of the MAA's, for a poker game?

Well, we were having a fairly large stakes game and I don't even remember whether I was winning or losing but I knew that I had the mid-watch so I told everyone that I had to go catch a few Z's before I went on watch.

I was fast asleep in minutes and it seemed it was only about 10 minutes and someone was shaking me awake. I groaned and turned over. "Is it time for my watch, already?" "No, the guy shaking me said. Someone just robbed your poker game."

"You're joking," I replied. "Nope, two guys dressed in dungarees, watch caps, wearing gas masks and carrying 45's walked in and robbed the game." They got away with all the money and now you tell me, who are the players going to complain to?

(Steve Udell '59-63)

INTERESTING NEW MEMBERS

George Teigland (68-70 DC Div.) was driving from Mobile, AL to Gulfport, MS and by luck stopped at the LaFont Inn for dinner, the weekend of the Kearsarge Commissioning and met some former Kearsarge sailors.

Richard Silva (46-48 H Div.) is still riding motorcycles at age 66 and has ridden in the Rolling Thunder parade in Washington, DC the past 3 years. He is waiting for snow so he can ride his snowmobile.

Robert Knapp (57-58 3rd Div.) Is on the board of the non-profit corp. Native American Intertribal Spiritual Commission For Indian Prisoners. They are trying to break

the cycle of children replacing parents in prison.

Charles Vollmer (55-56 Operations) has lived in Anchorage Alaska for 37 years and has bagged 3 Elk, 3 Brown Bear, 16 Moose and has lost count of the Caribou. He also has an outstanding fishing record.

Thomas Rochan (55-56 V6 Div.) was getting bored on the 55 Cruise and decided to paint "Captain's Car" on the door of the Captain's car. Great idea, except it was the Admiral's car.

ROUTINE WATCH

On my first cruise to Korea I was the 7th Division Officer and the Underway OOD. I remember the night that I was on watch and the Kearsarge, Oriskany, and Essex were steaming near Russia and the Oriskany CAP shot down two Russian Migs. I remember quite well when Admiral "JOCKO" Clark told the pilots that "_____ you may have fired the first shots of WW III.

I also had the watch on 11 October, 1952 and had to record the deaths of Walter Bailey, Fernando Magri, Elmer Coon and Harley Haight, killed when the helicopter was blown over the flight deck after flight operations.

I had the watch on 16 October when Commander Simonds crashed on take off in his AD. The Ships Photographer had a picture of Commander Simonds waving to the ship as we went by him. The helicopter was down that day and the destroyer on plane guard could not find him.

I have a picture of an F9F halfway down the "cat", leaving a 250# frag bomb standing on end.

The Kearsarge made an R & R trip to Hong Kong in January of 1953. Upon leaving and while in the Formosa Straits, the ship went to general quarters and launched all of the photo planes. They were sent

over China without escorts and the ship was awarded the "China Service Medal" I think this was the first time the medal had been awarded since WW II.

Then there was the morning flag had us turn into the wind and the DD assigned to plane guard didn't and we almost cut him in half.

Do you remember the day we dropped an Admiral into the "Garbage Chute"? During one of the replenishment days a "Black Shoe" Admiral had come to the Kearsarge to see Admiral Hickey and wanted to return to his cruiser via the highline and a destroyer. He did not want to use the helicopter. Almost everyone was busy with replenishment but BM1 Todd of the 7th division said he could handle it. We put the highland over to the destroyer from the fantail on the port side and got the Admiral into a Bos'n Chair. Todd took a couple of turns around a capstan and lifted the Admiral off the deck but just as he started to go over the side the pad eye on the destroyer turned loose and we dropped the Admiral into the garbage chute. Needless to say the next day a memo came out saying "___ all highlines will be manned by personnel and do not use capstans."

(Thomas Woolf '52-53 7th Div.)

SEA STORIES

I heard a number of sea stories at the commissioning and was told they would be sent to me for Kear Saga but so far I have yet to receive any. With over 700 names on the mail list I know there must be several good stories that haven't been sent in and we will even edit them for you if you like.

"DAWN OF GLORY" PRINTS

If you haven't ordered your "Dawn of Glory" prints like that presented to the Kearsarge at the commissioning they are still available. They can be ordered through John Bennett, 815 Savannah Drive, Columbus, OH 43228-2944. Cost is \$35 including shipping and handling.

LHD-3 INFO

The new Kearsarge is 40,500 tons and is 844 feet long, with a beam of 106 feet. Two steam propulsion plants develop 70,000 horsepower and will drive the ship to speeds in excess of twenty knots. Armament is 3 CIWS mounts, 2 eight-cell Sea Sparrow missile launchers, and 8 fifty-cal. machine guns.

The ship can accommodate 600 patients and has 6 operating rooms for combat support and humanitarian missions.

Three LCAC landing craft can be carried along with a variety of helicopters and Harrier(AV-8B) jets.

SHIPS STORE

Art Killian has a few items that he purchased for the commissioning that are for sale...
COFFEE MUGS with ships crest and association name \$13.50

GOLF SHIRTS M-LG-XLG-XXLG with association patch \$19.50

SHIPS PICTURE color(cvs) \$8.50

PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING

Artemus Killian
3632 Springhill Lk.
Tuscalousa, AL 35405
(205)553-2710

KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION REUNION
MAY 26-28, 1994
VIRGINIA BEACH, VIRGINIA

The 1994 reunion will be held May 26-28, 1994 at Virginia Beach, Virginia. You will be receiving by mail a registration form from the Virginia Beach Resort Hotel to make your reservations and a confirmation card will be mailed back to you. The price of the rooms are \$67.00 and include bedroom, bath and dressing area, living room with sofa and chair, a kitchen area, and private balcony. The Virginia Beach Resort Hotel will provide a hospitality room and a ships store room. Bruce Covington, of Virginia Beach is our reunion coordinator and has assured us that this hotel knows how to show ship reunions a first class time!

Bruce has some interesting tours lined up and needs to know which tours members are interested in, so the proper arrangements can be made. Please call or write Bruce by Feb. 28 so that you can be included in the tour(s) of your choice. Tours will only be scheduled if enough people sign up. Do not send any money at this time. We will collect the money when final plans are made for each tour. These tours are not the only activities available but are apparently the most popular according to the hotel staff.

THURSDAY, MAY 26

SPIRIT OF NORFOLK LUNCH CRUISE AND WATERSIDE, 11:00 AM - 3:30 PM

Enjoy a fascinating narrated tour of the Hampton Roads Harbor while cruising on board the magnificent Spirit of Norfolk. This beautiful ship will thrill you with its sleek design and elegant decor. Feast on a wonderful buffet and then sit back and enjoy the rousing Broadway revue. After your cruise spend time at Watersides, Norfolk's exciting waterfront festival marketplace offering more than 100 restaurants, shops, galleries, bazaars and boutiques. Package Price: \$32.00 per person, inclusive.

* Cruise limited to 46 people

FRIDAY, MAY 27

TOUR 1 - COLONIAL WILLIAMSBURG OVERVIEW & YORKTOWN, 8:30 AM - 4:00 PM
Spend the morning in Colonial Williamsburg. Your historical interpreter will guide you through the past and the events that helped shape America's history, as you stroll through the restored area of this lovely colonial capital city. Following lunch on your own, shop and browse in Merchants Square. Admire the view as you ride along the scenic Colonial Parkway to the quaint village of Yorktown. Visit the National Park Service Visitors Center which includes exhibits relating to the Battle of Yorktown, a 12 minute film, and a rooftop view of the battlefields.
Package Price: \$23.00 per person, inclusive

TOUR 2 - SPIRIT OF NORFOLK LUNCH CRUISE & WATERSIDE, 10:00 AM - 3:30 PM
(SEE DESCRIPTION ABOVE)
Package Price: \$32.00, inclusive.
* Cruise limited to 92 people

SATURDAY, MAY 28 - NAVAL BASE TOUR, LUNCH ON BASE (ON YOUR OWN), MACARTHUR MEMORIAL, RIDING NORFOLK & VIRGINIA BEACH TOUR, TIMES TO BE ANNOUNCED

A special treat for all Hampton Roads visitors is touring the Norfolk Naval Base, the largest naval installation in the world. See aircraft carriers, destroyers, submarines, and aircraft. See the beautiful historic homes along "Admiral's Row", which house the flag officers. Have lunch on base (we will try to arrange lunch aboard the Kearsarge LHD-3) and then tour the USS Kearsarge. Next, ride through Norfolk's beautiful historic district and restored areas. View the lovely homes along the Hague, the Chrysler Museum, the Moses Myers House, old St. Paul's Church and many other points of interest. Visit the MacArthur Memorial for a glimpse into this century's history of our country. A unique collection of artifacts, documents, photographs and memorabilia housed in Norfolk's historic city hall traces the life and times of five-star General Douglas MacArthur. The General is entombed in the rotunda of the memorial. Enjoy beautiful views of the Atlantic Ocean and the Chesapeake Bay as you ride through Virginia Beach. See the historic lighthouse and the First Landing Cross at Cape Henry. Package Price: \$19.00 per person, inclusive.

GOLF AND GOLF TOURNAMENT

There are many fine golf courses in the Virginia Beach area and if you are interested in a tournament please let Bruce know. He will need help in getting this together so don't hesitate to call and volunteer. Please call or write Bruce by Feb. 28 if you are interested in golfing and or helping.

SATURDAY, MAY 28 DINNER DANCE

A sit down dinner is being planned for Saturday evening with a dance to follow. More information about cost and time will be made available as plans are formalized.

VOLUNTEERS

With all the various activities going on during the reunion we will need the help and cooperation of volunteers. If each of us volunteers for one activity everything will run smoothly, everyone will have time to enjoy themselves and everyone can contribute to a wonderful reunion!

Anyone who is interested in going on any of the tours listed, who has suggestions, or who wants to volunteer should write or call Bruce at the address and phone listed below:

**BRUCE COVINGTON
4928 Admiration Drive
Virginia Beach, VA 23464
804-467-1668**

KEAR SAGA^{II}

The Newsletter of the Kearsarge Association

Winter

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1994

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05/94



SHIPS STORE

KEARSARGE HATS CV,CVA, OR CVS
\$12.50

LICENSE PLATE BRACKETS CVA,CVS
\$6.50

VIDEOS OF REUNION ARE ALMOST 2
HOURS AND INCLUDE OPERATIONS
ON BOARD DURING THE 50'S.
\$20.00

ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING
MAKE CHECKS PAYABLE TO

ART KILLIAN
3632 SPRINGHILL LAKE
TUSCALOOSA, AL 35405
205-553-2710

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