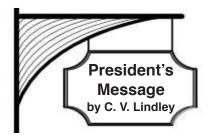


# U. S. S. KEARSARGE ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER

**ISSUE 89** 

CV, CVA, CVS-33, LHD-3

**SUMMER 2024** 





# HELLO KEARSARGE SHIPMATES, FAMILIES & FRIENDS

I hope that Summer has been good to you so far this year and that your air conditioners have kept you cool. A/C is essential for those of us that live here in Florida.

Our Association is continuing to loose members for various reasons but many due to age and possibly medical issues. I don't know who the youngest member is but I expect that they must be in their mid seventies at the minimum, I'll be hitting 82 in early September and I was on board starting in December 1959. My main point is that we will be reaching a time that we are going to have to strongly consider the future of The USS KEAR-SARGE ASSOCIATION. Our bylaws already have an article that addresses the "decommissioning" process when we get to that point. I'm saddened to even open the discussion but unfortunately the time will be here probably sooner than later.

As an aside, we briefly discussed a possible partnership with the Bennington (CVS 20) group but there was almost zero interest from their leadership. (They are "aging out" just as we are,) We have made a very strong effort to bring LHD 3 shipmates into the Association but again, no interest was shown. I think that some of the younger generations just don't have the same interests as we "older" Sailors do.

We had some great articles in the last KEARSAGA edition from shipmates but we need more. It doesn't matter how long or short that some of your personal experiences/adventures/possibly some minor incidents are, send them into our editor Jack De Merit. Jack does a

great job but he also needs some "new stuff" to help fill the KEARSAGA pages. **C.V.** 

#### "IN OMNIBUS PINACULUM!"

## **KEARSARGE IN THE 40'S**

#### **HISTORY & HERITAGE COMMAND**

Kearsarge arrived at her homeport of Norfolk, Va., on 21 April 1946, and for the next year trained along the east coast. The ship cleared Norfolk on a midshipman training cruise into the North Atlantic that carried her to the United Kingdom and also into the Caribbean. She embarked Attack Carrier Air Group (CVAG) 3, consisting of 18 Grumman F8F-1 Bearcats of Fighting Squadron (VF) 4A, 24 Curtiss SB2C-5 Helldivers of Attack Squadron (VA) 3A, and nine Eastern TBM-3E, three TBM-3J, and a trio of TBM-3Q Avengers of VA-4A, along with a single North American SNJ-5C Texan and an SNJ-4. Upon the carrier's return to the United States, she engaged in maneuvers for ten months.

As she prepared to deploy to the Mediterranean, however, a 50-foot open launch carrying 90 men back to the ship from liberty capsized in heavy surf off Hampton Roads, Va., on 31 May 1948. At 2000 Liberty Call expired and launches began to shuttle men from ashore to the anchored ship, but at about 2045 the pounding swells swamped the boat not far from the carrier. The Officer of the Deck sounded general quarters, and the signalmen used searchlights to illumine the exceptionally dark night. Few of the passengers wore life vests, and although many men bravely attempted to battle the swells and reach the ship's gangway, the strong current swept some of them away. Rescuers saved 68 men from the tragedy, but altogether 18 sailors and ten marines died.

The ship's company sadly loaded the aircraft and embarked men of Carrier Air Group (CVG) 3 and Kearsarge stood out of Hampton Roads for duty with the Sixth Fleet on 1 June 1948. During her tour in the Mediterranean the Sixth Fleet stood on alert to insure peace in the midst of the Arab-Israeli War. Kearsarge returned

to Naval Air Station (NAS) Quonset Point, R.I., on 2 October. The Navy repeatedly experimented with new concepts and equipment and VA-174 tested new Martin AM-1 Maulers during carrier qualifications on board Kearsarge off Quonset Point later that year (27–28 December 1948). On 7 April 1949, an entourage of distinguished guests boarded Kearsarge and she carried them to sea to observe a Lockheed P2V-3C Neptune dramatically launch from large aircraft carrier Midway (CVB-41) via Jet Assisted Takeoff (JATO). The ship operated along the Atlantic Coast and the Caribbean until 27 January 1950.

### **KEARSARGE IN THE 1950'S**

#### HER FURTHER CRUISES

She sailed for the west coast without any aircraft embarked. The carrier arrived at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard at Bremerton, Wash., on 23 February. On 16 June 1950, Kearsarge was decommissioned there for an SCB-27A modernization overhaul that would enable her to handle jet aircraft.

Kearsarge was recommissioned on 15 February 1952, Capt. Louis B. French in command. Following shakedown the carrier cleared San Diego on 11 August for intensive flight training off the Hawaiian Islands. Her readiness complete, she sailed for the Far East to engage in combat missions in the Korean War. The ship embarked Carrier Air Group (CVG) 101.

Arriving at Naval Operating Base (NOB) Yokosuka, Japan, on 8 September 1952, Kearsarge conducted air refresher operations, twice refueled destroyer Kidd (DD-661), and at 2322 on the 16th joined the fast carrier Task Force 77 off the Korean east coast. Kearsarge summarized her deployment: "The assigned mission of this force, in support of the United Nations conflict with North Korea, was interdiction of supply and transportation facilities and close air support of United Nations troops." She generally steamed with one to three other carriers: Bon Homme Richard (CV-31), with CVG-7 embarked, Essex (CV-9), with Air Task Group (ATG) 2, and Princeton (CV-37) and CVG-19. All four ships were reclassified to attack aircraft carriers (CVAs) on 1 October. Some of the other ships that screened and worked with the carriers at times included battleship Iowa (BB-61), heavy cruisers Helena (CA-75), Los Angeles (CA-135), and Toledo (CA-133), antiaircraft light cruiser Juneau (CLAA-119), and Frank E. Evans (DD-754), Hopewell (DD-681), and Harry E. Hubbard (DD-748). For the next five months Kearsarge's aircraft flew nearly 6,000 sorties against communist forces in North Korea, unleashing airborne fury on enemy positions. The ship alternatively launched air raids, trained, especially in antiaircraft gunnery exercises and station keeping, and pulled off the line to refuel. Kearsarge started her deployment by hurling a series of air strikes against the enemy, who fought back fiercely.

Ground fire peppered a Skyraider's after compartment during a raid on 17 September 1952, struck the plane's radar scope and splattered metal and glass fragments through the compartment, fracturing the crewman's skull in his left temporal bone. They recovered on board and x-rays revealed that some of the shards lodged around his left orbit. The man was evacuated for further treatment to Naval Hospital, Yokosuka. The following day a hung rocket broke loose from a Banshee and skidded along the flight deck and struck two men. The first one suffered a fracture of the left femur plus a compound comminuted fracture of the tibia and fibula, which necessitated the medical team amputating his left lower leg. The other man sustained a very severe compound comminuted fracture of the left tibia and fibula which required open reduction with bone plates and screws. Both of the men underwent the above treatment on board and were then also transferred to Yokosuka.

Rear Adm. Robert F. Hickey, Commander, Carrier Division (ComCarDiv) 5, broke his flag in Kearsarge as he relieved Rear Adm. Herbert E. Regan, ComCarDiv 1, who flew his flag in Bon Homme Richard in command of TF 77, on the 21st. On the 24th (0830–1253), 5 October (1110–1404), 8 October (0935–1041 and 1133– 1259) helos brought Gen. Mark W. Clark, USA, Commander, UN Forces Far East, Vice Adm. Robert P. Briscoe, Commander, Naval Forces Far East, and Vice Adm. Joseph J. Clark, Commander, Seventh Fleet, from Iowa on board for a conference concerning operations. During this period planners hurled carrier aircraft against communist troops along the front lines in the Korean Peninsula that operated beyond the range of UN artillery. Naval aviators referred to these raids as "Cherokee strikes" in recognition of Clark's Native American ancestry.

Foul weather sometimes compelled planners to cancel their air strikes and such occurred the following day on the 25th. The fighting continued, however, and Lt. (j.g.) John W. Shook, USNR, of VF-884 launched in an F4U-4 (BuNo 81277) from Kearsarge to strafe and bomb enemy troops near Songjin [Kinchaek] in North Korea on 30 September. Shook flew a strafing run but his wingman observed him suddenly fall into an inverted dive and he crashed in the Corsair in the water not far from Songjin from unknown causes.

His wingman sadly reported that he did not see the pilot survive. The following day a helo again transported Adm. Clark from Iowa to Kearsarge for a conference. VF-884 marked another squadron loss when Lt. Eugene F. Johnson, USNR, took off in an F4U-4 Corsair (BuNo

80798), Side No. 412, and attacked enemy supply areas near Yongpo-ri, North Korea. Four Mikoyan-Gurevich (MiG) 15 Fagots pounced on Johnson and shot him down and he crashed in a steep dive into the water near the beach at Wonsan, North Korea. The UN forces besieged the North Korean port from the sea, and temporarily developed the area into a sanctuary for aircraft damaged by enemy fire that ditched in the harbor. Helicopters pulled the downed aircrew to safety and thereby saved men from death or imprisonment by the enemy, but in this instance could not rescue Johnson.

# **KEARSARGE IN THE 1960'S**

#### HER CRUISES

After participating in South East Asian Treaty Organization (SEATO) exercises and Seventh Fleet operations, she cleared Yokosuka for the homeward voyage on 3 March 1960. Three days later in stormy waters about 1,200 miles off Wake Island she rescued four Soviets after they drifted 49 days in a disabled landing craft. They were flown back to their country after Kearsarge arrived at NAS Alameda, Calif., on 15 March. The Soviet Union thanked the carrier for her humanitarian gesture.

A year of training operations witnessed Kearsarge steaming in company with a number of other ships at times including John A. Bole (DD-755), Lofberg (DD-1059), and Taussig (DD-746), and escort ships Bridget (DE-1024), Evans (DE-1023), and Hooper (DE-1026). The training prepared the ship for her next deployment from San Diego on 3 March 1961. The antisubmarine carrier and Antisubmarine Carrier Air Group (CVSG) 53 steamed into trouble as they diverted to Southeast Asian waters. Ongoing attacks by communist Pathet Laotian insurgents threatened the stability of the royalist regime in Laos and the Seventh Fleet dispatched ships to the South China Sea to monitor the fighting on 21 March. Aircraft flew reconnaissance missions over Laos. The insurgents inflicted a defeat on the royalist and neutralist factions within Laos in April, however, and at times the Seventh Fleet also deployed Ranger (CVA-61), with CVG-9 embarked, and Ticonderoga (CVA-14), with CVG-5, to the area. The rival factions signed a cease fire later in the month, which enabled the carriers to come about on 5 May. Following six months in the Far East, Kearsarge arrived at Puget Sound on 1 November for the second phase of her modernization.

Upon completing that work, voyage repairs, and training, Kearsarge departed Long Beach, Calif., on 1 August 1962 for the Pacific Missile Range as a recovery ship in the space program. Cmdr. Walter M. Schirra piloted space

capsule Sigma 7 during the launch of Mercury-Atlas-8 from Cape Canaveral, Fla., on 3 October 1962. Sigma 7 splashed down in the Pacific 275 miles northeast of Midway Island near 32°5'N, 174°28'W, and about 9,000 yards from primary recovery ship Kearsarge. Helicopters dropped swimmers near the capsule and Kearsarge hoisted Sigma 7 and Schirra on board the carrier. Additional vessels that supported the recovery included Lake Champlain (CVA-39) in the Atlantic. Kearsarge returned Schirra to Honolulu, H.I., for a flight back to the United States mainland, and on 16 October he received his astronaut wings.

# **DECLASSIFIED IN 1968**

# SUBMITTED BY RON BROWN

KEARSARGE, Yankee Station operations consisted of four essential tasks in addition to its primary ASW role., In effect, KEARSARGE wore two hats while on Yankee Station She was the flagship for the ASW group of the SEVENTH fleet, designated TG 70.4, and she was also the flagship for the Surface, Subsurface, Surveillance Coordinator (SSSC) designated TG 77.9. Guarding for message traffic to both task group designations, KEARSARGE performed SSSC functions, played a prominent role in the Sea Dragon operations, was the Yankee Team Mail Carrier, and provided Search and Rescue (SAR) and logistic helo services.

SSSC was the central task performed by KEARSARGE when she was on station in the Gulf of Tonkin and later when she was in the Sea of Japan. Yankee Station and SOJ operations consisted of five launches daily, two six hour, two five and three-fourths hour, and one five .and a half-hour flights. When DD in flight refueling was available the helicopters were also able to conform to this cycle. 1

Around the clock SSSC coverage of the area was provided, generally using an E-lB aircraft and two or three S-2E aircraft with occasional use of an SH-3A aircraft for high interest photography. The E-lB was assigned a search area which was oriented slightly Northwest of the center of the Gulf to provide radar coverage of the North Vietnamese coast. the North passage between Hainan and the China mainland, and the Haiphong harbor complex. When on the Southern leg of its search, the E-lB provided radar coverage for the remainder of the SSSC area,2 Surveillance consisted of rigging and photographing all transiting merchant ships and maintaining an up to date plot of all surface and subsurface contacts.

- 1. P111-6 USS KEARSARGE CVS=33 67-68 West Pac Cruise Report.
  - 2,. P X1-7 ibid.

The reporting procedures outlined in COMFIRSTFLT TACNOTE 8-66 (REVISED 15 November 1967) were utilized. All initial and amplifying surface contact reports from the S-2E's were made to the E-lB and in turn relayed to the ship.

Reports were made using locating or serial numbers, and skunk designations. The type, name, registry, position, course, and speed of these contacts were relayed in the amplifying reports. All skunks were designated by the SSSC Commander and were reported with range and bearing from a geographical point. After acceptance of this method of reporting and its facility, the grid system of reporting was seldom used. An hourly surface summary was given to the SSSC Commander by the E-IB, which included updated skunk positions, friendly surface unit positions, and aircraft "operations normal" reports. 3

Most of the ships sighted in the Tonkin Gulf were Soviet Bloc merchant ships or fishing boats. Soviet Bloc ships and those of free world countries were engaged in North Vietnam trade. Vessels belonging to Italy, Greece, Cyprus, Malta, and Great Britain were sighted. Fishing boats varied in number at times from one or two to several hundred. Size ranged from small sampans to steel hulled trawlers. The trawlers were generally found in pairs. Fishing boats in the northern part of the Gulf of Tonkin were mostly Chinese Communist with a few Chinese Nationalists.

As was previously mentioned during Yankee Station periods, recognition emphasis was on rigging merchant ships. Recognition took on added importance upon arrival in the Sea of Japan because of the number and varieties of USSR naval craft sighted. During this operation the below listed naval vessels, USS KEARSARGE CVS-33, 67-68 West Pac Cruise Report were observed: 4

- a. SVEDLOV Class light cruiser, Pendant number 824
- b. KRUPNYY Class DDG, Pendant number 981
- c. KASHIN Class DLG, Pendant number 580
- d. Modified KOTLIN Class, Pendant number 424
- e. RIGA Class DE, Pendant number 800 & 840
- f. PAMIR Class Tug (AGI) PELENG & GIDROGRAF
- g. UDA Class AO VISHERA
- h. KONDA Class AO KONDA
- i. T-58 Class ASR (AGI) GIDROLOG
- j. DNEPR Class Trawler (AGI) PROTRAK'I'OR

The closeness of Vladivostok resulted in the sighting of an average of two Russian merchant ships per day. Non-Soviet-Bloc sightings averaged four per day. A total of 43 Intelligence Reports were submitted during Sea of Japan operations. Surveillance by Russian Naval ships and Soviet SIGINT Trawlers were conducted at all times, The GIDIWLOG joined the KEARSARGE when the YORKTOWN left station. (To be continued)

# LIFE'S RULES

# **SIMPLE RULE 1**

If you don't go after what you want, you'll never get it.

### **SIMPLE RULE 2**

If you don't ask, the answer will always be no.

### **SIMPLE RULE 3**

If you don't step forward, you're always in the same place.



# HAVE YOU HEARD OR SEEN?

Q: What has a thumb and four fingers but is not alive?

-- A glove

Q: How did Benjamin Franklin feel when he discovered electricity?

-- Shocked!

## SHIP'S STORE "SUPER SALE"

Kearsarge Association Members and Families, We are promoting a "Sailor Super Sale" of most Ship's Store merchandise. Prices are marked down below original costs on some items and FYI, in agreement by Association Leadership and with Charlotte Patton, (Ship's Store Proprietor) when this inventory is gone, the store will regrettably be closing due to the decline in membership. It's "first come, first served" based on your order receipt by Charlotte. Here are the reduced "Sale" prices:

Golf Shirts, 1 MED., 3 Large, 2 2XL-----\$20,00

Dress Shirts, 3 Hed., 2 XL----\$20.00 Sweat Shirts, 1 Large, 2XL, 4 2XL-----\$25.00

Magnetic Ship's Crests—\$2.00 Ball Caps and cloth Crests no change. All orders will receive Magnetic Ship's Patch and a First Edition Cover "FREE."

These reduced prices will remain in effect (vice what's listed on the ship's store page, we'll leave those un changed for comparison) until we've sold out. This will be your final opportunity to get memorabilia from your "Kearsarge sea going days."

# **KEARSARGE IN THE 1940'S**



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



#### **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



#### **Hats**



CV, CVA, CVS 33 NAVY - \$16.00

#### **Watch Caps**



Navy - CV, CVA, CVS 33 **SOLD OUT** 



### **Ship's Crests**

CV. CVA. CVS 33 Cloth \$5.00 Magnet - \$5.00





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

#### ALL PRICES INCLUDE SHIPPING AND HANDLING

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

**Charlotte Patton 8165 State Road 39** Martinsville, Indiana 46151

(228) 324-7174 charlotteap@bellsouth.net

# **OLD SAILORS**

OLD SAILORS SIT AND CHEW THE FAT ABOUT THINGS THAT USED TO BE, OF THE THINGS THEY'VE SEEN, THE PLACES THEY'VE BEEN, WHEN THEY VENTURED OUT TO SEA.

THEY REMEMBERED FRIENDS FROM LONG AGO,
THE TIMES THEY HAD BACK THEN.
THE MONEY THEY SPENT, THE BEER THEY DRANK,
IN THEIR DAYS AS SAILING MEN.

THEIR LIVES ARE LIVED
IN DAYS GONE BY,
WITH THOUGHTS THAT
FOREVER LAST.
OF BELL BOTTOM BLUES,
WINGED WHITE HATS,
AND GOOD TIMES IN THEIR PAST.

THEY RECALL LONG NIGHTS
WITH A MOON SO BRIGHT
FAR OUT ON A LONELY SEA.
THE THOUGHTS THEY HAD
AS YOUTHFUL LADS,
WHEN THEIR LIVES WERE WILD & FREE.

THEY KNEW SO WELL HOW THEIR HEARTS WOULD SWELL WHEN OLD GLORY FLUTTERED PROUD AND FREE. THE UNDERWAY PENNANT SUCH A BEAUTIFUL SIGHT AS THEY PLOWED THROUGH AN ANGRY SEA.

THEY TALKED OF THE CHOW OL' COOKIE WOULD MAKE AND THE SHRILL OF THE BOSUN'S PIPE. HOW SALT SPRAY WOULD FALL LIKE SPARKS FROM HELL WHEN A STORM STRUCK IN THE NIGHT.

THEY REMEMBER OLD SHIPMATES ALREADY GONE
WHO FOREVER HOLD A SPOT
IN THEIR HEART,
WHEN SAILORS WERE BOLD,
AND FRIENDSHIPS WOULD HOLD,
UNTIL DEATH RIPPED THEM APART.

THEIR SAILING DAYS
ARE GONE AWAY,
NEVER AGAIN WILL THEY
CROSS THE BROW.
THEY HAVE NO REGRETS,
THEY KNOW THEY ARE BLESSED,
FOR HONORING A SACRED VOW.

THEIR NUMBERS GROW LESS WITH EACH PASSING DAY AS THE FINAL MUSTER BEGINS, THERE'S NOTHING TO LOSE, ALL HAVE PAID THEIR DUES, AND THEY'LL SAIL WITH SHIPMATES AGAIN.

I'VE HEARD THEM SAY
BEFORE GETTING UNDERWAY
THAT THERE'S STILL SOME
SAILING TO DO,
THEY'LL SAY WITH A GRIN
THAT THEIR SHIP HAS COME IN
AND THE LORD IS
COMMANDING THE CREW.





# THE WORDS TO "TAPS"

Day is done, Gone the sun, From the lake, From the hill, From the sky.

All is well, Safely rest, God is nigh.

Thanks and praise, For our days, Neath the sun, Neath the stars, Neath the sky,

As we go, This we know, God is nigh.

Fades the light; And afar Goeth day, And the stars Shineth bright,

Fare thee well; Day has gone, Night is on. Go to sleep, Peaceful sleep,

May the Soldier or Sailor, God keep. On the land or the deep, Safe in sleep.

Love, good night, Must thou go, When the day, And the night Need thee so?

All is well. Speedeth all To their rest.



# FOOD FOR THOUGHT

- 01. If a bottle of poison reaches its expiration date, is it more poisonous or is it no longer poisonous?
- 02. Which letter is silent in the word "Scent," the S or C?
- 03. Do twins ever realize that one of them is unplanned?
- 04. Every time you clean something, you just make something else dirty.
- 05. The word "swims" upside-down is still "swims."
- 06. Over 100 years ago, everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars. Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.
- 07. If people evolved from monkeys, why are monkeys still around?
- 08. Why is there a 'D' in fridge, but not in refrigerator?
- 09. As I've grown older, I've learned that pleasing everyone is impossible, but pissing everyone off is a piece of cake!
- 10. I'm responsible for what I say, not for what you understand.
- 11. Common sense is like deodorant. The people who need it the most never use it.
- 12. My tolerance for idiots is extremely low these days. I used to have some immunity built up, but obviously, there's a new strain out there.
- 14. It's not my age that bothers me it's the side effects.
- 15. I'm not saying I'm old and worn out, but I make sure I'm nowhere near the curb on trash day.
- 16. As I watch this generation try and rewrite our history, I'm sure of one thing: it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.
- 17. As I've gotten older, people think I've become lazy. The truth is I'm just being more energy-efficient.
- 18. I haven't gotten anything done today. I've been in the Produce Department trying to open this stupid plastic bag.
- 19. If you find yourself feeling useless, remember: it took 20 years, trillions of dollars, thousands of lives and four presidents to replace the Taliban with the Taliban.
- 20. Turns out that being a "senior" is mostly just googling how to
- 21. I want to be 18 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas
- 22. I'm on two simultaneous diets. I wasn't getting enough food
- 23. I put my scale in the bathroom corner and that's where the little liar will stay until it apologizes.
- 24. My mind is like an internet browser. At least 18 open tabs, 3 of them are frozen, and I have no clue where the music is coming from

First Class U. S. Postage

# U. S. S. Kearsarge Association Newsletter

#### **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, CHECK THE MAILING LABEL ABOVE FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP EXPIRATION DATES.

If it has been highlighted in yellow, 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.



U.S.S. Gerald Ford CV 78

#### **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 my 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**

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