



USS Yosemite AD-19 Association

From Bill Krug

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From the President's Desk:

TO ALL HANDS,

The Yosemite Reunion at Sea was a whole lot of fun and for those that have not taken a moment to look at the pictures, please visit our website. It provided everyone with a great atmosphere to get together and reminisce telling all the great stories associated with individual experiences on the Yosemite. There is something about getting underway, leaving your port and now you become focused on your immediate surroundings. I believe this was instrumental in helping everyone leave life as it was behind and concentrate on immediate company. We come together each year as a group to share experiences and enjoy the camaraderie of former shipmates that once walked the decks of the Busy Lady, Battle Tender, YO-YO, "The Lady", "The Mighty Y" or whatever name you know this great ship by. Additionally we have come to know spouses and family members that accompany these individuals...and their children and grandchildren.

We know that 50 years of service from 1944-1994 allowed a lot of sailors both male and female to be a part of a ship that impacted the entire Navy. We as an Association have a great advantage being tied to a ship that was in service so long with over 1,000 people on the ship at a time. While other ships had much smaller crews and a much shorter life in Commission...we have generations of people tied to this great ship. I take great pleasure in spending time with all of you that served before me. I, as most of you know, came late in my career to this ship. I did not know that October 1991 would mark Yosemite's final deployment. It also marked my final deployment on a Navy Ship. But not knowing the future was bliss. It would not have been the same for anyone if we knew this great ship would not go on and on. The material condition of the ship improved with time...by no means was the condition of the ship a factor in deciding to Decommission the Ship. The Yosemite would travel the Mediterranean Sea, Red Sea, and Arabian Gulf. Just as Yosemite did great things during each of your times on board...Yosemite would make a final deployment and continue to bring "Brave Zulus" and received numerous accolades. The crew's dedication throughout the final deployment earned the



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ship the Meritorious Unit Commendation in 1992. She was determined to come out on top in the fleet, she earned the Battle "E" and the CNO and CNSL Surface Ship Safety Awards for excellence in safety and overall combat readiness. This ship through the dedicated individuals that served on her...would continue to make a name for herself that made all of us proud right till the very end. 50 Years of service put a lot of Sailors on her decks. On 27 January 1994, Yosemite passed the "Don' t Tread On Me" Jack in Honor of being the Oldest ship in continuous commissioned service. I, as many of you, have a collection messages, papers, newspaper articles and documents that shed light on events on this ship. I found this one to be inspiring to all of us that follow this ship.

Four Star Admiral Arleigh Burke wrote a fine letter that captured all of the Yosemite's present and past crew members efforts. He wrote:

A Message for the Officers and Crew of USS YOSEMITE

"The passing of any ship from active service is a sad occasion. The passing of YOSEMITE is especially solemn when one considers that she has played a significant role in every seagoing conflict from World War II to the recent Gulf War. We as shipmates and crew members past and present, however can put aside the sadness of the event and take great pride in the fact that we went to sea in this magnificent ship and did our duty.

YOSEMITE was not one of the elegant grand dames of the fleet, but she was there to repair the wounds, care for the crews, and fix their ailments. Without her, they could not have done their duty. She was a true Battle Fleet Tender! The Yosemite each of you as past and present crew members had a hand in building will live on forever. My very best to you all, and God Bless."

Sincerely,

Arleigh Burke

I looked at Capt. Tuck's letter to the President of the Yosemite Association dated 10 May 93. I will share a small portion with you.



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He started the letter:

“I am sure the news of the early retirement of YOSEMITE is as much a shock to you and your association as it was to me and my crew. He went on to indicate that it was a “budgetary consideration”, as she was in excellent shape both structurally and mechanically.”

Capt. Tuck would go on to report as Commander, Fleet Training Group, Guantanamo Bay Cuba. Making this last deployment as CO of Yosemite his last deployment and a most memorable one.

I would proceed to the Mediterranean and become part of COMNAVSEFRGRUMED / COMSERVFOR SIXTHFLT/ CTF SIX-THREE taking the job of OIC Ship Repair Unit Naples / Bahrain. Yosemite would turn out to be my last ship as I completed 26 years of service and retired. So I say to all of you...it is my honor and pleasure to spend time with you and your special people. My job is to help bring you together once a year for a matter of days and together we will enjoy our past experiences, and if all goes well be able to recall our time together as a most positive one.

This year our initial plan for the Philadelphia Reunion was to visit some specific places as a group very much as we have in the past at Reunions. What I call “Organized Touring”. However, in the past we just provided a small deposit and pulled in as many people as possible never guaranteeing numbers and paying for the whole show in advance. The final pricing that came in days ago for the projected tours was cost prohibitive. We as an Association would have to guarantee in advance minimum numbers for tours (usually 40), pay for them in advance and stand the chance that the average person could not afford to spend \$155.00 for the Independence After Hours Tour. While that included dinner...most would say wow!

The past had us touring for a significantly less amounts. I felt we would be served better to do our touring under our own terms. The hotel we are staying at is about 35 minutes outside the heart of the city where all the sights are. The Visitors Center would offer a “Philadelphia Pass” which grants access to many of the most sought after attractions, over 33 museums, the Battle Ship New Jersey, The Aquarium. I would encourage you to Google



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“Independence Visitors Center “. and get an idea of all they have to offer. You will have the opportunity to buy a one day pass to see the sights of your choice for \$59.00 or a two day pass for \$79.00 and finally a 3 day pass for \$89.00. The one day pass gets you on a double-Decker bus that will take you all over the city passing major sites and by speaker you will hear about each one. If you wanted you could exit the bus at any stop and see that Museum or the Betsy Ross House...but if you stayed on the bus, made the full circuit then the next time around you get off where you want. About every 20 minutes a similar bus comes by and you can get on and continue your touring. This is a “Hop On Hop Off” touring process. Lets say you purchase a 2 or 3 day pass. The second day you would want to purchase a \$10.00 bus ticket to continue to use the double Decker bus system. Similarly, if you got the 3 day pass you would want to get the bus ticket covering the 3rd day. You must use the pass on consecutive days.

We are arranging for transportation from the hotel to the Independence Visitors Center. Then a bus on Thursday departing at 3:00 PM from the Visitors Center back to the hotel. Friday the Bus will depart the Visitors Center at 2:00 PM to support meetings and our social events scheduled. When you arrive Wednesday we will have touring information in our Hospitality Room (Conestoga Room). We will have 10 copies of the Philadelphia Tour Guide Book and a copy of the agenda for the period of 2-6 May. You can look forward to food and drinks (Alcoholic / Non-Alcoholic), snacks, Pizza each night and the best of company to put your spirits where they should be. Wednesday afternoon we will have a spread of HORS D'OEUVERS that will be set up by the hotel in our Hospitality Room. The Hotel will also have a full agenda of events that will be posted once they are scheduled. Currently we are too far out to be able to tell you about the shows and such. Some of you spend great periods of time in this room that becomes our central point no matter what hotel we stay in. I am looking forward to seeing lots of you at tables conversing and sharing your special moments. Please look at the enclosed Registration Form and before you do anything else call the phone number listed and book your room for the stay. Or if you prefer go on line using the link on the registration form and book your stay.

Then mark up the Registration Form and enclose a check and mail it to our Treasurer. We really need this all done sooner as opposed to later. We have to get numbers and know that we have enough rooms blocked out for our



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group.

Remember to bring a special gift to our Banquet Dinner for inclusion in the raffle. For those that have not been with us before...this is so much fun. We always have special things, including a quilt. Some of us swap things and that always keeps it interesting.

This year we are forgoing the normal donation we put out for the Scholarship fund. Our funds have not been sufficient to justify giving out the scholarship. We have things we do that enhance our reunion that have costs. Providing food and beverages to the hospitality room, paying for the HORS D'OEUVRES for Wednesday afternoon. Perhaps even offset a transportation cost if we need special arrangements to move someone to town. So from my prospective, the \$500.00 will be used to enhance our reunion.

I wanted to link up with Capt. Tuck and some other old shipmates that live in the Mayport / Jacksonville area and have a "Coffee Break" to gain new members from the area. The ship was home ported for so many years in Florida that it far exceeds other ports when it comes to Yosemite numbers. I was not able to schedule this event for a whole host of reasons. All tied to me. In the near term I hope to share information with the local papers about our Association and gain some new members. The current group of members in almost all cases knows people that they served with on the ship in all areas of the country. Let them know about our Association. Encourage them to join our group and spend time with us.

So, I will look forward to seeing as many of you as possible in Philadelphia. I wish you all safe travels.

Bill Krug III