



USS YosemiteAD-19 Association

From Bill Krug

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Cell Phone 570-878-2860

Home Phone 352-419-6620



2021 USS Yosemite Reunion in Jacksonville, Florida
28 April 2021 through 01 May 2021

May, 19, 2020

Fellow Association Members, Former Sailors, Friends, & Family,

I am pleased to confirm our 2021 Yosemite Reunion in Jacksonville, Florida at the Embassy Suites Hotel at 9300 Baymeadows Road for 28 April 2021 through 01 May 2021. Full steam ahead!

Embassy Suites Hotel, what a great place! I found the staff to be totally attentive to me, the place is alive with smiling faces. Good food, great drinks, top notch sleeping rooms and all that is missing is Yosemite People. So let's change that. It starts out with the Reunion Registration Form being filled out and sent to our Treasurer (Mike Polyniak), then making your Hotel Reservations. While this may seem like a long way in advance, the more we know sooner the better. Our Hospitality Room size is based on projected numbers. I am elated to see the list of 15 new members that was part of the Financial Report from our Treasurer.

Now is the time to make your hotel reservations for 28 April – 01 May.

Our Yosemite Reunion is a memorable experience. I want all of you to be able to relax, enjoy the discussions with new acquaintances, reminisce about the ship and exchange old war stories, drink whatever you want, have some delicious meals, attend some interesting tours, and be able to safely return to your room every night. Your time with fellow Yosemite Sailors, Family Members, and Friends makes this a special occasion to be treasured. We have a significant number of people that have just joined our group and it will be great to meet them in person and share information with them. Knowing that many live in the area, it is tempting just to stop by and meet people and go home...we really need you to stay at the hotel so you can drink and enjoy yourself without getting back on the road. We do not want anyone in harm's way. Even if you limit your involvement to Friday and Saturday we will take what works for you.



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Register Now for the Reunion

Please take a moment to fill out our Yosemite Reunion Registration Form. A registration fee of \$25 is to accompany the completed Yosemite Reunion Registration Form. Please mail the completed form and check for total of the registration fees to:

Mike Polyniak, USS Yosemite Association Treasurer

PO Box 20863

Bakersfield, CA 93390-0863

The registration fee will be used to support our Hospitality Room, hors d'oeuvres, drinks, snacks, and other costs. Please note our registration fees are separate from the hotel reservations. Keep in mind you need to make Hotel Reservations directly for yourself.

Hotel Reservations

Hotel reservation must be made directly with the hotel. The USS Yosemite Association doesn't make any hotel reservations and doesn't take any payments for the hotel.

I think you will find the \$119.00 you spend per night for you and your wife or significant other will be well worth it. Also a double occupancy room with 2 large beds is \$129.

Please call (904) 731-3555 to make your reservation at the Embassy Suites Hotel in Jacksonville for the USS Yosemite Reunion from 28 April through 1 May 2021 and mention the group code of "USY".

Also, you may also click on the link below to make your Hotel reservation to support your Yosemite Reunion booking that is part of our room block. Our group code is "USY"

The link is:

https://embassysuites.hilton.com/en/es/groups/personalized/J/JAXJAES-USY-20210428/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG



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Bring Your USS Yosemite Stories

I meet new people at every Yosemite Reunion. I walk away remembering stories, touching the lives of Yosemite sailors, appreciating their contribution to the USS Yosemite History and hoping that I will see them and talk together at our next event. I do not need to remind you that life is short. You are an important asset and living testimonial of Naval History. So, please don't put off connecting with Yosemite People. We want to hear all your stories.

This year we will capture some of those stories with a digital recorder and then our Webmaster, Alphonso, will post them on our website and save these valuable stories for posterity before they're lost. Now, I know most of you remember the fond experiences, stories, drama of battle-stations, and history of the "Busy Lady". We shared a common history of the USS Yosemite and when we tell our stories the room lights up. Think about some of the really unique things you were involved with that very few know about. Think about your funny stories, finest moments, challenges that you met, first port you visited with your buddies, etc. Bring them to the Yosemite Reunion and if you want we will capture them and share them.

Reunion Arrival and Length of Stay

The full Yosemite Reunion experience is from 28 April to 1 May 2021. We encourage our attendees to arrive on 28 April Wednesday during the day and sign-in and pick up your name tag, welcome bag, and meet the Yosemite Reunion crew at 7:30 PM for hot hors d'oeuvres. Some will be flying in to Jacksonville, some will drive cars/ trucks. Parking at the Hotel is free for guests. If you have special parking requirements please share them with me and I will have an area marked off for your vehicle.

Next, stay and enjoy tours, attend the General Meeting, and be with new people. In a perfect world you will be leaving like most on Sunday morning. This suggestion provides a leisurely stay with no rush or stress.

Some of you have jobs and you can't take the time off to attend the entire Yosemite Reunion. I understand. Please try to take all the time off as possible, even if that means attending just one or two days. Remember Friday and Saturday are key days. Saturday being the most important. Whatever time you can dedicate to being with the group will be important.



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Saturday is the Banquet Dinner. Following that we have our Raffle. Lots of people have expressed a desire to arrive Friday and be with us Saturday for the festivities.

Reunion Food Notes

- On Wednesday April 28th, our Association will have a “**Welcome Table**” that has your name tags, welcome bag, and guide book covering the Jacksonville Area with dates, times and places for all the things a newcomer may want to see or know about. We will have Hot Hors D’oeuvres later that evening in our Hospitality Room.
- **Complementary full breakfast** (all you can eat) is included every day.
- **Hospitality Room:** Every night we have a complementary evening reception from 5:30 – 7:30 pm with a host of snacks and drinks (beer, wine, mixed drinks, soft drinks, etc.) that is part of your hotel stay. Remember we also have our own complement of drinks for you to enjoy while you socialize. That normally satisfies everyone. For those that prefer nonalcoholic beverages we will have a good assortment. We also have chips, and snacks and pizza at night too.
- **Banquet Dinner is \$40.00 per person and select the from 3 dinner choices.**

Reunion Raffle – Bring a Gift to Ruffle

Most people attending bring a gift for our Raffle, with the proceeds used to support our Association. The gift may be a bag of small gifts, or a single gift. In any case, the gift should be of interest of the group and what you think is best. The gifts will be put on a table in a designated secure area. Gifts are displayed until the Raffle that follows after our Banquet Dinner Saturday evening. We will take our time and raffle the whole table of gifts to the Reunion attendees.

You may buy raffle tickets. You can place as many tickets as you want into the container associated for each gift. Then, sit back and we will draw tickets for each item on the table. Some people leave with a whole pile of things. I have seen some really special gifts, paintings, ships clocks, naval memorabilia, brass compass, ships sextant, or items that are directly tied to the ship that were given out to crew members (Yosemite Belt Buckles made in the foundry & Yosemite Yo – Yo’s made in the machine shop.) So take your time and bring something special that some lucky person will cherish.



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Banquet Dinner

I am excited to pass on to you the main selection for the Banquet dinner menu. The following is not the complete menu that includes assorted bread, salad, and desert. **The cost of the Banquet Dinner is \$40.00 per person.**

Main Entrees:

- Rosemary Breast of Chicken, Oven Dried Tomato Barley, Crispy Summer Squash, Reggiano Sauce
- 6 oz. Grilled Flat Iron Steak, Oven Roasted Potatoes, Asparagus and Baby Carrots, Cremini Mushroom Reduction, Chimichurri Sauce
- Atlantic Salmon, Braised Lentils, Sweet Pea, Cremini Mushroom, Bay Leaf Shallot Sauce

Tours for Thursday & Friday

Thursday Tour (29 April)

Amelia Island and Fernandina Experience Tour

We start the day with stories of the first inhabitants of the area, the Timucuan Indians. Our destination is Amelia Island which was founded by the French, settled by the Spanish, named by the English, and tamed by the Americans. It is the only area in the U.S. to have been under eight different flags!

Our first stop will be at Kingsley Plantation to hear the amazing story of Anna, a former slave who rose to become a property owner. We explore the grounds which include the slave quarters, barn, waterfront, kitchen house, and interpretive garden.

We take the old buccaneer trail across Ft. George Island and the Talbot Islands following the picturesque Atlantic coastline. Next we go to the quaint town of Fernandina on Amelia Island to hear the stories from the Fairbanks Folly to Florida's oldest tavern and resident ghost. The turn of the century town is filled with Victorian architecture and has the appearance of being caught in a time capsule. Your guide creates an interactive tour atmosphere which is fun for everyone.



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Price: The tour is priced per person and includes motor coach transportation, driver gratuity, cooler of bottled ice waters, escort and tour guide. \$52/person is based on a minimum of 40 people in a 56-passenger motor coach. Max of 54 people.

Kingsley Plantation National Historic Site Fairbanks Folly Centre Street Shopping

Sample itinerary 9am – 3pm (6 hours)

- 9am Depart from hotel
- 9am – 12noon Kingsley Plantation, Barrier Islands, Fernandina tour
- 12noon – 2pm Lunch on your own, free time
- 2pm – 3pm return back to hotel

Friday Tour (30 April 2021)

St. Augustine – Nation's Oldest City Driving Tour

Enjoy your day in the Nation's Oldest City! The various architectural styles, narrow brick streets, and European flavors combine for a unique escape. Your professional tour guide meets the group dressed in period costume and weaves a tapestry of stories from the early colonial years to the Victorian Flagler era.

We tour all the major sites including the Fountain of Youth, Spanish Mission Grounds, City Gates, Spanish Plaza, Cathedral-Basilica, Spanish Government House, Flagler Memorial Church, and the old Ponce de Leon Hotel. We disembark for photos at the Castillo de San Marcos, the stone fort that was never captured in battle. On the fort grounds, listen to the story of how the early Spanish survived under siege from the English attackers.

The tour includes one more stop at the old 1888 Alcazar Hotel or Flagler Memorial Church. Lunch today is on your own combined with shopping and free time exploring the historic district. During your free time, you can visit attractions such as the free Government House Museum. Your personal tour guide in colonial attire creates an interactive tour atmosphere which is fun for everyone.



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Price: The tour is priced per person and includes motor coach transportation, driver gratuity, cooler of bottled ice waters, church donation, escort and tour guide. \$52 per person is based on a minimum of 40 people in a 56-passenger motor coach. Max of 54 people.

Sample itinerary 9am – 3pm (6 hours)

- 9am Depart from Embassy Suites Baymeadows hotel
- 9:40am Bathroom break in St. Augustine
- 9:50am – 11:45am St. Augustine tour with 2 stops (Castillo, Flagler era site)
- 11:45am – 2pm Lunch, free time
- 2pm - 3pm return time back to hotel

Saturday 1 May 2021

Our General Meeting on Saturday and followed by our Banquet Dinner followed by our Raffle that can last for an hour or longer. This is the highlight of our Reunion.

In Closing....

In Summary, please send your Registration Form with Registration Fee, Banquet Dinner Fee, and Tour Fees to our Treasurer “Mike Polyniak” PO Box 20863 Bakersfield, CA. 93390

We will have a requirement that you enclosed the proper amount to cover the Registration Fee, Banquet Dinner and any deposit for the tours. Your Hotel Reservation is directly with Embassy Suites Hotel and you must pay your room cost directly to Embassy Suites via credit card.

Your cooperation in getting these funds to us is appreciated. Tours require a minimum of 40 and maximum of 54. We will reserve your place first come first serve. If we exceed one bus we will list names and attempt to get numbers high enough for a second bus. If that is not successful, we will see that you receive a refund.

A reminder, please send Association dues to our Secretary, Alan Koepke, at his Florida address. Alan Koepke 881 Boundary Blvd. Rotonda West, Florida 33947



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I am excited for the time we will have together in Jacksonville. You can expect a newsletter to be posted on our site and mailed to those that require a hard copy. I am writing it now. In the mean time I wanted all of you to have this information that is directly related to our upcoming Yosemite Reunion 28 April – 1 May 2020.

All the Best,

William C. Krug III (Bill)

President USS Yosemite Association