



USS YosemiteAD-19 Association

From Bill Krug w.krugiii@gmail.com
Cell Phone (570) 878-2860



August 2024 Newsletter

August 3, 2024

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

Providence, Rhode Island, proved to be a great opportunity once again for all those who served on Yosemite and guests to have a great time. The Crowne Plaza Hotel caters to our needs, and we enjoy tours on Thursday and Friday. While we could not go aboard the Nautilus, the WWII Museum was a great substitute. Battleship Cove with the USS Massachusetts, the Newport War Collage and all the shops in the area proved very worthwhile. Lunch at the Quonset Officers Club was very special.

Our Saturday events always were a big hit. The Banquet Dinner was in a great room; we were not rushed, and the food was outstanding. Then of course, we moved our group to the Hospitality Room, where we had our Raffle and Auction. The Auction has only been a tradition for two years and is an event you do not want to miss. We have had some really special items end up in the hands of highly enthused bidders.

Last year, the family of our prior President "Mike Williams" donated a beautiful handmade replica of Yosemite in a glass case. I almost had that. A beautiful Quilt, custom made by Ann Williams that was all about Yosemite went to another member. Smokey's family donated lots of items that were once in the Ships Store inventory that are no longer offered in our store. Every year I donate one of the special items that I have had for over 20 years from Yosemite for someone else to have it.

Once again, we had a lot of exciting items on the table that you don't see every day, like a complete set of *Original Blueprints of the Yosemite* donated by our Webmaster, Alphonso Montibello. Also, a very large *Yosemite Ships Plaque* of solid brass on a quality heavy wood base was donated by Rear Admiral Deborah Loewer. This plaque was the biggest one I have ever seen before. Deborah was our exceptional guest and is now a member of the Association. The *Original Blueprints of the Yosemite* and *Yosemite Ships Plaque* were just two of the many unique and hard-to-find items.

Oh, and while most have never met our infamous Webmaster. He was at the Reunion, and many could see and talk with Alphonso. He is planning to come to the next Reunion in Charleston as it is not too long to travel because he lives near Tampa,



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Florida, and it's a day-trip drive of 445 miles to Charleston, SC. For those living near Jacksonville, Florida, the distance to Charleston is 238 miles or approximately 4 hours away by car.

The Raffle & Auction was a whole lot of fun. Sam & I were able to pull it off with the help of Tina and Howard, Joyce with other helpers she gathered up.

Our Hospitality room was consistently full of members and guests enjoying time together with a constant supply of food and drinks. Being able to support our needs as a group is always an important consideration when choosing a Hotel. While we supplied most of our food and snacks, we allowed the Hotel to provide a mixture of Hors d'oeuvres. While they were good, Joyce Gilbreath, Cindy her sister and Sam's daughters (Catherine & Pamula), created platters of fresh vegetables, cheese, crackers and fruit that went over exceptionally well. Bob Mercier was kind enough to fund a significant portion of that food.

Many of our members had plans to come, and, like it or not, life events get in the way. Please be aware that we missed all of you who couldn't attend. I could list names now, but I will not because I might leave some out. Those who did attend were able to spend time with Rear Admiral Deborah Loewer. Deborah promised after the Providence Reunion because she couldn't attend last year in Jacksonville, to attend this year. We were so pleased to have the opportunity to spend time with her. I hope we have the good fortune to have her in Charleston, S.C., and Deborah will be available to meet and talk with more of our members and guests.

When we last spoke, Deborah was very optimistic about the Charleston Reunion. She spent a lot of time listening to everyone's story and had much to say about her own interesting experiences. Deborah shared her stories of being Communication Director for George Bush and what transpired during 911. If you come to the 2025 Reunion, don't miss the chance to talk with Deborah and hear her stories while she was aboard the Busy Lady.

Please take the time to look at our website and gain insight into who we have in your midst. We gave Deborah a Yosemite baseball hat we sell in the Ship's Store while she was at the Reunion. When we get closer to the Charleston Reunion, I will keep you informed about her confirmation of her attendance at the 2025 Reunion.



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Speaking of Charleston, I just signed the contract for our new Hotel in Charleston. Simultaneously, our Treasurer (Cooper Gilbreath) sent the required deposit to the Hotel. Cooper has graciously kept the position as Treasurer, hoping that when we have our "LARGE TURN OUT" for the Charleston Reunion, he will have a replacement. I want Charleston to be an extraordinary event for all those that come. I have taken two months reviewing input from our Helms Briscoe Representative, LeAnn Bylo. A special thanks goes out to Jennifer Beilstein, one of our members who lives just outside Charleston. She went and looked at hotels that were my top 3 choices. She provided great feedback and helped me decide on the Crowne Plaza. Jennifer and her Husband Christian were on the Yosemite 1983-84.

I am excited about our upcoming Reunion in Charleston, S.C., as we lay out all the details that will allow us to have a fabulous Reunion. The tours are always a big part of what we do as a group. Going to a Reunion should be like a Mini-Vacation. At this 2025 Reunion, there are fun things to do and see, meet old friends and new ones to share our stories and the opportunity to go shopping and browse the merchandise and spend time in our Hospitality Room with good food and drinks complements of our Association.

We will have a 1500 Sq. Ft. Hospitality Room. Breakfast will be included with the reservation and served in the hotel restaurant. Once again, this will be a Crown Plaza Hotel, with restaurants, a swimming pool, fine room accommodations and a great atmosphere. It is close to the Airport and has a free shuttle service to the Hotel and Downtown attractions. The cost will be \$157 for the room with breakfast for two people.

Tours will be as follows:

A Day in Historical Charleston:

Tour Charleston's beautiful old historic district and enjoy the charming ambience found in centuries past. During your tour you will see many of the city's historic churches, take a stroll in one of our neighborhood parks, and drive through the Military College of South Carolina known as the Citadel. View the lovely antebellum homes along the Battery, 18th century Rainbow Row, and magnificent public buildings for which Charleston is known. Throughout the tour, your guide will introduce you to stories of the past and present, magnificent public buildings, and other points of interest. Your



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tour will end at the Old City Market where you will enjoy free time for shopping & browsing, and lunch on your own at one of Charleston's many fine restaurants.
Duration: 9:00 AM – 2:00 PM w/ Transportation

Patriots Point Tour:

Tour Patriots Point, one of the world's largest naval and maritime museums. Visit the USS Yorktown, the famous fighting lady of World War II; the Destroyer Laffey, a participant in the World War II D-Day landings at Normandy; the Vietnam Era Naval Support Base with its Sea Cobra and Huey helicopters; and the newly renovated Congressional Medal of Honor museum. Duration: 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM w/Transportation

The first tour will be on Thursday, and the shorter one will be on Friday as we have the BOD meeting on Friday afternoon.

I can only hope you put the last week of April on your calendar for next year. Our 2025 Reunion is on Wednesday through Sunday, 23-27 April 2025. Charleston is within striking range for all our Florida People who could not venture to Rhode Island, and we need you to join us. We understand those with all the family issues or health issues that prevented them from coming to Providence. People are the most important element to make our Reunion a success. The second element is a top-quality Hotel; the third is an exciting and interesting place to visit; the fourth is having some excellent tours to support our Reunion.

For those that have fallen behind on dues, as we discussed in the previous Reunion, just pay this year's dues, and let's get on with having a good time. Additionally, we have completely changed the scale for dues. If \$15 year does not work, then pay a one-time fee of \$60 to become a life member. Life members pay no more annual dues.

For those sailors who served on the USS Yosemite and are not Yosemite Association members, we encourage you to come to our 2025 Reunion as my special guest. Once you attend our Reunion, we hope you will find our group to your liking. If you can relate to our Association of like-minded individuals with the shared history of Yosemite, then maybe you want to become a member.

Our goal is to keep the memory of this great Ship alive. The only way you can effectively



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do this is to have those who once served meet and share their experiences. Not many can say they were on the Navy's Oldest Ship in Commission. For those who may not know, this is factual. When they Decommissioned Yosemite, she was the Oldest Naval Ship in Commission. How many can say they were on a Ship in naval service for 80 years? USS Yosemite won every competitive award that could be awarded during its final deployment. I had the honor of being in the Gulf on Yosemite during the war serving under Cdr. Phil Johnson (Repair Officer) with the best Commanding Officer, Captain Chuck Tuck.

As Commander Johnson's Assistant, Production was the name of the game is we "Fixed Ships". We were "One Ship" unlike some tenders; we talked about Ship's Company and Repair Department as two separate entities. The Ship was in fine shape because our crew and those who came before us all did their part. Consistently we all worked together. Decommissioning the Ship was not in any way, shape or form the result of any wanting Material Condition of the Ship. I will say it was a huge shock as we headed back to our homeport in Mayport to find we were to be decommissioned. Especially after our achievements while serving in the Gulf during the war, as well as, all the recognition, awards and not to mention our solid reputation that goes back to WWII.

None of us can change what occurred, nor do most know why, but we can keep the memories of this fine Ship and the thousands that served on her alive and in the thought of people associated with the Busy Lady.

So, mark your calendar for April 23-27, 2025 and plan to join us at the Reunion in Charleston. I will keep you updated as we proceed, and when we have the link to book Hotel Rooms, you will have it. I hope this finds all of you in good health and spirits. It is my honor to work on your behalf to support our great traditions.

Wishing you all the best,

William C. Krug III (Bill)
President USS Yosemite Association