

President's Letter to Membership February 18, 2020

Dear Shipmates,

We have closed the pages for the year 2019 and moving forward into the 2020 New Year.

I will recap the events of past and upcoming events.

The 2019 Mini-reunion at Corpus Christi hosted by Shipmate Eric and Lady Melba Andersen was in full swing from start to finish and was enjoyed by all. The model replica of our beloved Lady USS Constellation found a permanent home aboard the USS Lexington Museum carrier row exhibit. Honorable recognition and special thanks to Shipmate Gayland Rushing who engineered the measurements, assisted by Shipmate Eric Andersen. They provided the aircraft, and equipment fixed on the flight deck, and coordinated the construction of the model replica with the model builder.

We thank you for an outstanding job!

A special thank you to the Directors and staff of the USS Lexington Museum for their assistance in providing the space to place the model replica in its carrier row exhibit. The honor guard was provided by the U.S. Navy Color Guard, based at the Naval Air Station, Corpus Christi, Texas. A dedication ceremony was conducted in the hangar bay. Thanks to Shipmate Gayland Rushing for coordinating this ceremonial event.

A Wall of Fame donor plaque was placed on the bulkhead next to the "Connie's" model replica.

For a minimum donation of \$20.00, a name tag will be engraved with both your name and your spouse and tags will be added to the plaque.

Make payment payable to "USS Constellation Association" and on the memo part of check/money order write "Wall of Fame" donation.

Mail to:

Capt. Sidney Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer

USS Constellation Association

7706 Cumbertree Court

Springfield, Virginia 22153

Send name tag information to Shipmate Gayland Rushing at: momanddad.rushing@gmail.com.

The 2019 Annual Reunion at El Paso hosted by Shipmate Elias and Lady Gloria Camacho was a complete success coupled with entertainment on banquet night by the Ballet Folklorico produced and directed by Malena Cano's Mexico Vive Showcase. Lady Gloria and her crew did an outstanding job in table decorations, and altar setup of deceased members who have passed on last year.

The membership had fun in participating and dancing with the performers, listening to traditional Mexican songs, 60s popular music, and music performed by the Mariachi's. The performers acted and danced seven programs which were enjoyed by all. Lady Gloria Camacho and Malena Cano performed with singing romantic songs that we are all very familiar with.

The POW/MIA ceremonial and the reading of the association's necrology list was held at the El Paso Texas Flags Across America, Old Glory Memorial grounds. Vietnam Veterans of America, Robert E. Chisolm Chapter No. 844, El Paso, Texas provided the color guard, POW/MIA table reading, taps, and Shipmate Eric Andersen performed the piping of the ceremony. We thank the staff of the El Paso Texas Flags Across America, Old Glory Memorial grounds for allowing us to perform the ceremonies on such a beautiful Ceremonial Pavilion. A special thank you to Shipmate Elias Camacho for coordinating this event.

Of the several tours of historic districts of El Paso, one of the highlights was the tour of the US Army Fort Bliss cantonment areas, where members and spouses participated at the simulated indoor firing ranges, combat tank and artillery training seminars. We were hosted by US Army personnel and Department of the Army Civilian instructors, and we enjoyed a trip to one of the mess halls on the base for lunch.

We now look forward to the 2020 Mini-reunion hosted by Shipmate Leslie and Lady MaryAnn Stessel which will be held at College Station, Texas. Home ground of Texas A&M University. Dates are; check in by Tuesday April 21st thru Thursday, April 23rd, and check out Friday. Note these dates on your calendar and we look forward to seeing you, spouse and guests. Check our website [USS Constellation.org](http://USSConstellation.org) for more information on lodging and sightseeing posted of this event.

Last, but not least, our 2020 Annual Reunion will take place at Louisville, Kentucky, hosted by Shipmate Doyle and Lady Jean Gilliam.

Mr. Ray Casey, Military Reunion Planner has negotiated and secured arrangements with the Sheraton Louisville Riverside Hotel commencing with a Group Welcome Reception on Monday, October 26, 2020, and ends on Saturday, October 31, 2020. Note these dates on your calendar and check our website [USS Constellation.org](http://USSConstellation.org) for additional details reference registration, tours and sightseeing. See you in Louisville!

Our sincere appreciation and thank you to Shipmate Tommie and Lady Rebecca Best for handling the Ships Store business of the Association.

It gives me great pleasure to announce that Shipmate MCPO Robert Parker has joined the Association and stepped up to the plate to serve in the position of Chaplain of the Association. Welcome aboard!

We thank our hosts for volunteering their time and efforts to make it possible for our association to enjoy the brotherhood, fellowship, renew friendships, and assures the Association that the legacy of our Lady USS Constellation continues to live on. It is a labor of love!

Thank you.

May the Sun continue to shine on calm seas,

**Rafael A. Rivas, President
USS Constellation Association**