



Starscope

The Official Newsletter of the

U.S.S. Constellation CVA/CV-64 Association

The Alumni Association of the United States Ship Constellation

Website: Ussconstellation.org

Spirit of the Old. Pride of the New!

September, 2020

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If you know of anyone who has a change of address, telephone number, e-mail address, or cell phone, please contact Stephen Ribak

at

603-459-8048 or steven.ribak@comast.net

President's Letter and Official Update

Dear Shipmates,

It is with great reluctance and regret to announce on Monday, 31 August 2020, the 2020 Annual Reunion at Louisville, Kentucky, is officially cancelled, as posted on our website.

All rooms for USS Constellation have been released and all reservations have been cancelled. Our association is not liable for penalties that may be imposed by the hotel. After conducting a research to date and according to the "Corona Virus Update Kentucky" my decision is based on protecting the health and welfare of our members and families, and not to put them at risk. I trust our members and families are exercising rules and guidelines set by State and Municipal authorities to combat and not fall victim to the COVID-19 virus. In addition, the flu season is rapidly approaching. Flu shots are now made available at VA Clinics nationwide.

If you submitted your 2020 Annual Reunion Reservation Form to MRP with monies, i.e. by check, money order or bank card to cover tours, events, meals, etc., and have not received your refund from MRP, proceed to contact MRP by E-mail/Mail notice to credit you and to retrieve your money, as follows:

Phone – 817-251-3551

E-mail: MilitaryReunionPlanners.com

Mail address: MRP, Box 1588, Colleyville, Texas – 76034

I take this opportunity to thank 2020 Mini-reunion hosts Maryann and Leslie Stessel, and 2020 Annual Reunion hosts Jean and Doyle Gilliam for stepping up to the plate as hosts to make the 2020 reunions possible. Unfortunately, the deterrent effect of COVID`19 pandemic prevented our association to hold our traditional reunions this year. MRP will rebook the 2021 Annual Reunion at Louisville, Kentucky for next year and push the Annual Reunion at Buffalo, New York to 2022. More information will follow later.

2021 Mini-reunion update

Our hosts, Maryann and Leslie Stessel, have rebooked 2021 mini-reunion at College Station, Texas as follows:

Holiday Inn Express

1203 University Drive

College Station, Texas 77840

Front desk phone: 1-979-846-8700

Central reservation line: 1-888-653-4858

Name of group: 2021 USS Constellation Navy Reunion

Group reservation code: SNR

Check-in -- Tuesday, 20 April 2021

Check-out – Friday, 23 April 2021

Rate -- \$84.00 per room per night + applicable taxes

Cutoff Date – Tuesday, 6 April 2021

Points of interest/activities will be announced in our fourth quarter newsletter when confirmation is received.

Wall of Fame Donor Plaque

A reminder, the model replica of our beloved Lady USS Constellation now permanently resides aboard the USS Lexington Museum carrier row exhibit at Corpus Christi, Texas. The Wall of Fame donor plaque is exhibited on the bulkhead next to the “Connie’s” model replica.

For a minimum donation of \$20.00, a nametag 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 in the memo part of check/money order, write “Hall of Fame” donation.

Mail to:

Capt. Sidney Rodgers, Secretary/Treasurer
USS Constellation Association
7706 Cumbertree Court
Springfield, Virginia 22153

Send nametag information to Shipmate Gayland Rushing at:

E-mail: momanddad.rushing@gmail.com

Please note all future events, items of interest and a copy of quarterly newsletters will be posted on our website for your information. I encourage you to use our website more often.

God Bless America!

Looking forward to calmer seas in 2021,

Rafael A Rivas, President
USS Constellation Association

In Memory

We have recently lost two of our Shipmates

Shipmate Edward Kassabian passed away on June 29, 2020. He was a plank owner. Our condolences go out to his family and friends.

On September 12, 2020 Shipmate Chief Corpsman E7 Ron James passed away. Our condolences also to his family and friends.

What is a Sailor?

Between the security of childhood and the insecurity of a second childhood, we find a fascinating group of humanity call Sailors. They come in assorted sizes, weights, and states of sobriety. They can be found anywhere: on ships, at shore stations, in bars, on leave, or in love, and always in debt. Girls love them, towns tolerate them, and the Government supports them. A Sailor is laziness with a deck of cards, bravery with a tattooed arm, and protector of the seas with a copy of Playboy.

He has the energy of a turtle, the slyness of a fox, the brains of an idiot, the stories of a Sea Captain, the insincerity of a liar, the aspirations of a Casanova, and when he wants something, it is usually connected with a Liberty Card. Some of his dislikes are answering letters, wearing his uniform, superior officers, the chow, and getting up on time. Some of his likes are women, girls, females, dames, and the opposite sex.

No one else can cram into one jumper pocket a little black book, a pack of crushed Luckies, a Marilyn Monroe photograph, a comb, a church key, and what is left of last month's pay. He likes to spend part of his pay on girls, some on poker, and the rest foolishly.

A Sailor is a magic creature; you can lock him out of his home, but not out of your heart. You can scratch him off your mailing list, but not off your mind. You might just as well give up; he's your long away from home lover, and your one and only bleary eyed, good for nothing bundle of worry. But all your shattered dreams become insignificant when your bleary-eyed Sailor docks, and looks at you with those bloodshot eyes, and says, "Hi ya, honey".

America in Vietnam

In case you haven't been paying attention these past few decades after you returned from Vietnam, the clock has been ticking. The following are some statistics that are at once depressing, yet in a larger sense should give you HUGE SENSE OF PRIDE.

"Of the 2,709,918 Americans who served in Vietnam, less than 850,000 are estimated to be alive today, with the youngest American Vietnam veteran's age approximated to be 54 years old."

If you're alive and reading this, how does it feel to be among the last 1/3rd of all the U.S. Vets who served in Viet Nam?!...don't know about you guys, but kind of gives me the chills, considering this is the kind of information I'm used to reading about WW II and Korean War vets.

(From the Internet)

**USS Constellation Model Ship
Dedication Speech
Delivered by Gayland Rushing
On May 01, 2019 on board the
USS Lexington Museum on the Bay**

Good morning, welcome to Corpus Christi, TX and this very special occasion to dedicate an exact replica of the USS Constellation CVA64, circa 1067-68, for display in carrier's row in the beautiful USS Lexington Museum on the Bay Association, on a permanent basis, and will be returned to the Connie Association if the Carrier's Row exhibit shuts down. I am happy to report, our fund raising efforts exceeded all expectations, and in doing so, it shows Connie's family wanted to be involved in our historical representation of our ship for all generations to come. Now, I would like to compare this dedication ceremony to the original commissioning service of October 27, 1961 when Connie was officially pressed into service at the Brooklyn Navy Ship Yard. It was a great commissioning party filled with VIP speakers (just like today) and there was lots of music and festivities. On that day, some of us became "Plank Owners" by being part of the pre-comm detail or the original crew who took her out to sea trials (twice). By the way, if there are there any Plank Owners or surviving Plank Owner spouses with us today, please stand and be recognized. Thank you to all those folks who served on board during her forty-two years of service.

Our beloved ship was known as "Connie" and "America's Flagship" as stated by President Ronald Reagan, while off the coast of California in August, 1981. This Association has been committed and dedicated to own and preserve a piece of US Naval history, not only for ourselves, but all future visitors to this great Museum. The wheels began to turn about four years ago when we realized how fast time was charging full speed ahead. We searched for what seems an eternity before finding a model ship builder within our meager means. I quickly found twenty to thirty thousand dollar ship builders were in abundance and eager to help us. Fortunately, we found a company in San Diego who agreed to use builders in the Philippines who could fulfill our request for \$5,000 including taxes, shipping of the model ship. There is also an honorary plaque in the Museum naming all contributors to a Wall of Fame. And so today, I will officially dedicate this model ship to be our representative piece of US Naval history—I so declare it as of 10:00 hour, May 1, 2019. This Association was committed and loyal to a cause, wholeheartedly dedicated to the purpose of permanently honoring and preserving "Connie's 42 years of service resulting in many, many meritorious awards. I want you to realize that for us to participate in this dedication of such a monumental historical significance is a rare and precious moment. You, your family and our Association can take great pride in this—your accomplishment. Enjoy the exhibit!

At this time, I would ask Charles Reustle, Steve Banta and Cecil Johnson to approach the podium for a special presentation. We, the USS Constellation CVA/CV64 Association are pleased to donate to your wonderful USS Lexington Museum on the Bay, a check for \$500 in recognition of all you have done and are doing to perpetuate the memory of our great ship. You may say a few words, if so desired.

Will Jim and Lynda Scoggins please stand. You may have noticed on the hangar bay as you came on board today, a 1942 Jeep model MB made by Willis, with a Browning model 1919 30 cal machine gun mounted. This jeep is all original including its equipment, still runs, as no oil leaks and gets excellent mpg now. Jim and Lynda are Eric and Melba Andersen's good friends for 40 plus years, and we agreed to acknowledge his donation to the Lexington Museum on the Bay during our ceremony. Please show your appreciation, and thank you, Jim and Lynda!

If you have contributions for the September newsletter, please get them to me by August 1, 2019. We will be doing a lot of traveling this year, and will need the information as early as possible, to make deadline! Thank you so much.

**Jean Gilliam
Starscope Editor**

