USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association

NEWSLETTER

2nd Issue 32nd Year June 2024

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From the President:

Well, here it is the end of May. Softball and baseball are in full swing. Joy and I go to both types of games and, as usual in spring, there are a few rain outs. Our granddaughter has been playing hard and has had a few rainouts; the Columbus Clippers have also had their share. Opening day was not so much a rainout but a tornado out. On May 30th we were sitting in the stands with our rain gear on and they cancelled the game. As soon as we hit the parking garage, the sun was shining with blue skies; go figure. Not to worry though, we made a double header the next day with a free game for the future.

The sail away was a good time. Five crew members and spouses, along with a few neighbors and friends, enjoyed the Caribbean warmth and relaxation. If you have the time, think about next year and join in.

I usually jump in about the upcoming reunion, but since this may be the last newsletter before September, I will defer to George Kaiser (see George's column and page 3).

Now it's time for some of the usual newsletter reminders. Keep us informed of any changes of addresses, emails, phone numbers and keep up with your dues. While we are on the subject of dues, as you know with every 5 years you have paid we give out a lapel/cap pin. The executive board has decided that due to the cost and quantities we have to purchase, the pins will be sent out to you as you reach that year, not by how many years in advance you have paid forward. A thank you to all of you who have paid in advance. Your support of the association is very much appreciated.

Hope to see more of you this year in Rhode Island!

Jim Dunno, President

Secretary's Report:

Reporting from the west coast bay area, from San Francisco to Sacramento and Vacaville California.

Small fires have been starting this month in Northern California. We received a lot of rain and snow in the winter and growing things vegetation burns easily. So to be safe, please look around the outside of your house and be prepared to defend your and your neighbors' homes and property. In California, we call it defendable space.

I'm still volunteering at the San Francisco VA one day a month. I'm very limited in driving and don't like to go too far.

I'm hoping to be at the next reunion and will know in the coming months. Please take care of yourself, your friends and family

Joseph Rios, Secretary

Vice President's Words of Wisdom:

There has not been any dues activity for awhile, so our membership remains at 44.

I have noticed an uptick in scam activity as of late. There are people trying to get on the AE-17 Facebook page to sell product1. I'm getting fraudulent calls from people claiming to be from the Fraud Prevention Dept. of my credit card company, Social Security Administration, Medicare, and other organizations. Be vigilant. Never respond "Yes" to the question, "Are you such and such? Respond with, "Who is calling"?

Also, remember federal and state government agencies will *never* ask you for your Social Security number, Medicare number, or other identifying information. If you're in doubt, ask them for a phone number you can use to call them back and verify that number is correct before calling.

Tom Stachelski, Vice President

Greetings From Repair 3:

Without any idle chatter, I'll get right to the point, which is our 2024 reunion.

Room rates are $139 a night. The rate includes a hot breakfast buffet in the hospitality room, complimentary WIFI, and free parking. Room rates good September 12 through 21. Reservations are now being accepted.

(Repair 3 continued on Page 2)

REUNION 2024

Dates: September 15—18. Optional days 19 and 20

Hotel: Crown Plaza Hotel
801 Greenwich Ave
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886
Phone: 401-732-0261

(Repair 3 continued from Page 1)

Details on our itinerary are on the enrollment form. In addition to the formal reunion, there is an optional tour to Newport, Rhode Island on Thursday.

The reunion cost is $250 per person, which includes the bus and all tours Monday and Tuesday, as well as the Wednesday dinner and DJ.

Now for the rest of the story. Right now, despite the publicity provided on several venues, interest is at about 10 people. Maybe because of the costs? Maybe the fact that many shipmates just aren't able to travel? Maybe because interest in an annual reunion has just about run its course after 32 years?

A short story: The retired battleship USS New Jersey (BB62), has been in Camden, New Jersey since 2001. This past April, it was moved to the old Philadelphia Navy Yard to undergo some much needed hull maintenance. As a fund raising idea, the New Jersey opened up the opportunity for people to go down into the drydock, under the 52,000 ton hull of the ship, and see first hand the preservation efforts going on. The cost was $250 per person. I jumped at the chance. In 1970, when Great Sitkin was in drydock at Todd Shipyards Brooklyn, we had the chance to go into the drydock and under her massive hull. The only picture we were allowed to take was from the drydock walls, so mine is me at her forepeak. With the New Jersey we were able take as many pictures as our cell phones were able to hold. Naturally, I got one holding onto her rather large fore-peak.

George the showoff

The next day in church, I mentioned to a friend of ours, who was a U.S. Navy Commander, that I had taken the drydock tour, and she just turned inside out. She's been having some medical issues and probably couldn't afford it, so after a quick chat with Mary, I told her she was going with me the following Saturday for *her* tour. In an instant, I had spent $750 to give a fellow sailor the experience of a lifetime.

So, what does all of this have to do with the reunion? You have to spend your money somewhere. If $250 per person is a lot for you, that's going to be your personal decision. In April, we did another Great Sitkin Sail away; the 7 days are well documented in this newsletter. Time spent with our shipmates is time very well spent.

The cutoff date for applications is August 5th. See you in Warwick!

If you have any questions, call me at 484-614-4897 or email me at dcckaiser@kaiserstorage.com

George Kaiser, Treasurer

Chaplain's Corner:

"Good day" to all of you.

It is hard to believe summer is here. Patsy has the garden planted and the rabbits are already starting to eat it. They have their own salad bar. We have had days in the middle 80's already, and the air conditioning has been running. I'm not complaining, God's been good to Patsy and me.

II Corth. 1:3-4 "Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of mercies, and the God of all comfort; who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God."

John 14:1-3 "Let not your heart be troubled: ye believe in God, believe also in me. 2 In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so, I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you."

May the Lord Bless and Keep You

Let's remember those that have left us.

Mark Rucker, Chaplain

Honor Roll Update

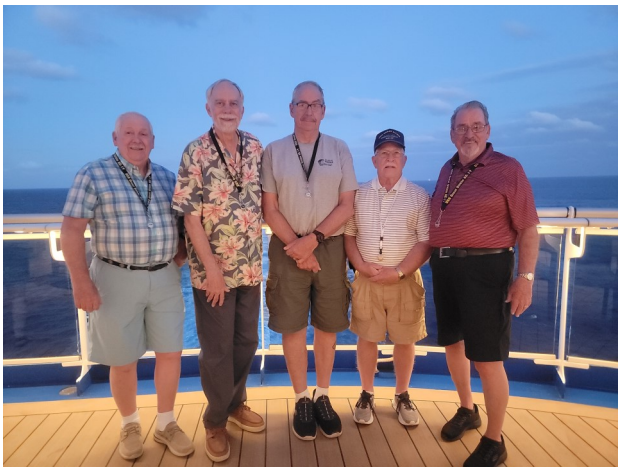
Charles Stephanski
Benny R. Rowley
William J. Shukis

2024 Great Sitkin Sail away

In April, five shipmates and spouses, joined by some friends, enjoyed a 7-day cruise aboard the Enchanted Princess cruise ship. The group included (L-R, with wives in the same order) Fred & Sharon Applegate, Mike & Cathy Kleinbeck, George & Mary Kaiser, Jim & Joy Dunno, and Jim and Mary Connollan.

Because we had booked a large group, we were able to enjoy a specialty dinner in the ship's steakhouse, The Crown Grille.

The cruise included stops in San Juan, Puerto Rico and St. Thomas, U.S. Virgin Islands. The group had private tours on both islands.



Submarine Force Museum & Battleship Cove

Mystic Seaport

Crown Plaza Hotel
801 Greenwich Ave
Warwick, Rhode Island 02886

- Phone 401-732-0261
- Room rates $139 a night
- Includes hot breakfast buffet in the hospitality room
- Complimentary WIFI
- Free parking
- Room rates good September 12 to 21
- Reservations being accepted
- Mention Great Sitkin reunion

USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association

2023 Reunion Registration - Warwick, Rhode Island

September 15th thru 18th, 2024

_____ _____

Crew Member's Name and Age at Reunion Date — Years Served Aboard the Sitkin

_____

Home Address

_____ _____

Home Phone and Cell Number (for reunion) — Email Address

_____

Name(s) of Guests Attending Reunion

Reunion Package

Sunday, 9/15: Opening day. Hospitality room opens at 9am with refreshments

Monday: Submarine Force Museum, USS Nautilus; Clyde's Cider Mill; Olde Mistik Village; Downtown Mystic. Mystic Seaport

Tuesday: Fort Taber, Ft Rodman Military Museum. Tin Can Sailors. Vietnam Veterans Memorial Wall. The Cove Restaurant. Battleship Cove/ Memorial service

Wednesday: Annual Business Meeting, Free Time/Optional Tours, and Evening Banquet

_____Number of attendees @ $250 per person. Amount Enclosed:_____

Make checks payable to USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association and mail registration form and payment to:

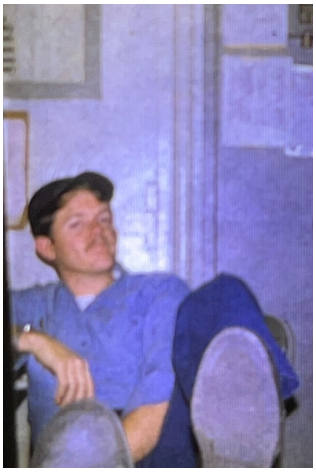
George Kaiser, 311 West Oak Lane
Glenolden, PA 19036

What We Did Then and Later

William Simane

Then: Fire Control Technician

Later: 16 years telephone switchboard testing; 17 years electrical rebuilding of mine equipment; 8 years electrical



Tom Ewing

Then: Storekeeper 2, running ship's store

Later: Attended 3 different colleges but no degree. Three uniquely different careers, now trying to come up with a

Hey shipmates! Send in two photos with the same or a similar pose. One should be recent and one from your time in the Navy. Include a brief summary of your Navy job and what you did after.

USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association Active Membership: Active Member status in the USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association is open to all crew members. Dues are $20.00 per year and are used to cover the cost of the newsletters, website hosting, domain name, administrative and other expenses. The membership year is 1 January through 31 December. Membership cards issued to all crew members paying dues identify the individual by name, expiration date and number of years of Active Membership.

Payment of dues is not required to participate in any official function of the Association but is required for being an Active Member. Notices pertaining to dues will be posted on the website and in the newsletters. Active Members must have their dues paid prior to the annual meeting each year in order to retain their status and eligibility to vote.

To become an Active Member of the USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association, please complete the application form below and send it along with a check made payable to:

USS Great Sitkin (AE-17) Association, c/o George Kaiser, 311 W. Oak Lane, Glenolden, PA 19036

Name: _____

E-Mail: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Dates Served Aboard: _____

Application Date: _____ [ ] New [ ] Renewal

Amount Submitted ($20 per year): $_____ [ ] 2024 YR [ ] 2025 YR [ ] 2026 YR

[ ] Please send me a copy of the Constitution and Bylaws.

Comments: _____

_____