

FROM THE QUARTERDECK

The time is rapidly approaching to the reunion date in Salt Lake City. We are looking forward to another great get together. we are putting together a program that we believe will live in your memory. We always have a great time at our reunions. We always find a few new shipmates each year. It is saddening that we are losing so many of the old timers. This year will be something special for those of us who were aboard the West Virginia on 7 December, 1941 as we will now be able to pay formal respect to our great Commanding Officer, Captain Bennion. We will also pay our respect to our shipmates of all times during the years of service of the "Mountaineer" ship. It will be a time for our shipmates who fought the West Virginia and revenged Pearl Harbor. Those of us of the Japanese attack of the "Day of infamy", thank you and we are proud of your accomplishments.

NOW HEAR THIS!!!

Time, age, asbestos, stack gasses, chipping of red lead from the double bottoms and fiberglass has finally taken its effect on this 82 year old body. The recent hospital sessions with pulmonary disorders and blockages has taken its toll. It is time for me to turn in my steaming shoes and turn over the helm of Reunion Association to a younger person. One with new ideas and lots of imagination and vitality. I have really enjoyed my two tours as coordinator. The Salt Lake City reunion must and will be my last run. We have a sound organization, due to the foresight and excellent business abilities of Alton Meyer. He is the one who put our organization on solid footing. I shall always appreciate the kind thoughts and friendships that I have experienced because of our fine shipmates



CAPTAIN MERVYN SHARP BENNION, UNITED STATES NAVY, DECEASED.
Born on the 5th of May, 1887, at Vernon, Utah, was awarded the Medal Of Honor for conspicuous devotion to duty, extraordinary courage, and complete disregard of his own life, above and beyond the call of duty, during the attack on the United States Fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, by Japanese Forces on the 7th of December, 1941, after being mortally wounded, Captain Bennion evidenced apparent concern only in fighting and saving his ship, and strongly protested against being carried from the bridge.

***"Our Shipmates That Have Entered Into Eternal Rest Since
Our Last Edition of The Mountaineer"***

***Bill Mc Quaid
Frank Cooper
Lester E. Radine
Clifford Barr, Sr.
James B. Potter***

***Lloyd A. Sage
Frank Cooper
William G. Gibson
Eugene N. Mecham
Louis Besso***

***H. H. "Ho Ho" Hozzer
Charlie Throm
William T. Hickerson
Harry W. Fessler, Sr.***

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**WYNDHAM HOTEL - SALT LAKE CITY, UTAH
(801) 531-7500**

The Wyndham Hotel is located at 215 W. South Temple, Salt Lake City, UT 84101. The hotel is situated next to Salt Palace Convention Center and across the street from The Delta Center sports arena--home of the NBA Utah Jazz. The Salt Lake City International Airport is just ten minutes from the Wyndham Hotel.

Directions, if driving:

-From I-15 (north or south) exit at 600 North. Turn east at exit; drive east until you get to 200 West. Turn right (south); continue to South Temple Street. The hotel is on the corner of 200 West and South Temple.
-From Salt Lake International Airport (west of Salt Lake City), head east on North Temple (follow signs directing you to Downtown/City Center). Turn right (south) on 200 West. Drive south (one block) until South Temple Street. The hotel is on the corner of 200 West and South Temple Streets.

All guest rooms feature mountain views and are furnished with a hair dryer, iron/ironing board, coffee maker with coffee, alarm clock, and color TV with cable. The hotel has an indoor heated swimming pool, jacuzzi, and sauna. The hotel gift shop is open daily 6:30am-11pm for the convenience of guests.

Handicapped accessible and non-smoking rooms are subject to availability. Please request these special accommodations when making your hotel reservation. Underground parking is available with unlimited in/out privileges at \$6 per car per day for overnight guests, \$9 per day for valet parking. Daily attendees pay \$4 per car for up to 16 hours. There is no hotel parking for RVs. The Parking Place could accommodate RVs which is just across the street from the Wyndham. The hotel provides complimentary transportation to and from the Salt Lake International airport. The shuttle runs every half hour from 6am until midnight. Hotel check-in time is 3pm; check-out is noon.

Hotel dining:

-*City Creek Grill* is open for breakfast, lunch, and dinner.
-Room service is available 6am-11pm seven days a week.

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NEARBY RV PARK

The VIP Campground, (800) 226-7752, is only 12 blocks from the hotel. They offer a 10% discount with your AAA or KOA membership cards. Bus No. 50 will take you from the campground to the hotel.

A Letter from Ken and June Butts:

To All Wee Dee Sailors: My wife & myself want to thank everyone who participated in the little sojourn at the Executive Room at the Imperial Palace Hotel in Las Vegas. Did not have as many people as we thought, 30 showed up. Most of them had not been at the re-union in Santa Rosa and not been to one for a long time. Bob and brother Ed were happy to see old and new shipmates. Lots of food and drinks, had enough for another 30 people. A gavel and striker was presented to Bob with "Bob Kronberger P,H,S,A. Natl. Pres." on the plaque and the striker with "Gifted by Wee Dee Sailors". We collected from the membership at the Santa Rosa Re-union, and were able to meet expenses.

I reiterate thank you Wee Dee Shipmates.

/s/ Ken Butts

We Received This From Don Seibold.

A Long -awaited light

I served in the Navy during World War II. After 11 battles, we were in Tokyo Bay to protect the U.S.S. Missouri while Gen. MacArthur signed the peace treaty ending the war. We left Japan a couple of days later. It was dusk, and as the sun hit the tip of Mt. Fuji, a searchlight drill was sounded. We hadn't lit searchlights (or even had a drill for it) for over three and a half years, so everybody went helter skelter. Then the captain announced, "This is a searchlight drill. Light all searchlights, open all hatches - the war is over!" To this day, I get goose bumps when I tell this story.

Robert N. Erlandson (From The Good Age, Nov. 1998)

A Few Items From 1941 Issues of the "MOUNTAINEER".

May 12th: "Kenworthy, one of our young Pharmacist's Mates believes in keeping on the good side of the law even to the point of "banging ears". Cant say as we blame him when the law is represented by a maid so fair as the policewoman at the Palace Grill over Honolulu way. June 8th: It seems as if Donald Prill, that good looking tailor with the curly hair, cannot stay out of the limelight. Donald got all dressed to go ashore last Sunday morning and charged the gangway when he saw what appeared to be a liberty party leaving. Donald found out in the nick of time that it was no liberty party, but a church party. He is still recuperating from the shock. W Va Swimming Team Wins in meet with California; Results were as follows: 150 yard backstroke-Johnson (Wva), O'Neil (Wva), 50 yard freestyle Switenki (Wva), Bagley (Wva). 440 yard freestyle, Graver (Wva), Czerwenka (Wva), 100 yard freestyle, Switenki (Wva), Diving, exhibition of platform diving by Bagley (Wva), 220 yard freestyle Surtenki (Wva), Graves, (Wva) and Ferris, (Wva). Relay won by Wva- Ens. Hasler, O'Neill. Switenki and Johnson. September 13th, The brothers O'Neill, John the Quartermaster, and Ronald the Storekeeper, were recently

granted two days leave. The reason: to extend a hearty "Aloha" to the mother and sister of the O'Neill family as they debarked from the Matson liner, and further to welcome them to their new home in Aloha land. Now, methinks, the Irish lads won't be hitting the nightspots quite so frequently... What say boys? September 20th, You know Rockette? No relation to sky rocket (ouch); he's that elephantine PhM 3/c. Anyway, if you're seeking the eighth or ninth wonder of the world, try seeing him when he hasn't got a stogie protruding from that cavity beneath his nose. Its something that can't be seen. I really believe the man sleeps with a cigar. Nov. 29th Radioman Al Czweruka is somewhat of an amateur candid-camera fiend. Not so long ago, at Waikiki, he snapped a picture of a cute Hawaiian wahine. The out standing feature of the finished print was the wahine's long tongue sticking right at him.

West Virginia Watertender Becomes President of Pearl Harbor Survivors Association,

Bob Kronberger, WT 1/c, B Biv., son of Sam Kronberger, CFC, F Div. and brother of Ed Kronberger, Sea 1/c VG Div. was elected to the lofty office of President of PHSA, Inc., Bob is currently our Reunion Coordinator. As you all know The PHSA was started as an organization as the result of our first reunion. Of the 11 Founders of PHSA; Sam Kronberger, CFC, Bob Kronberger, WT1/c, Ed Kronberger Sea 1/c, Louis P. Smith BM 1/c and Ed Steffa, WT 1/c were all from the West Virginia.

We Hear From the Mighty Missy Alumni Club.

SURIGAO STRAIT.

Mike Hulen, President of the U.S.S. Mississippi Reunion Organization advises us of a reunion of the Crews who served on the "old" battleships who fought in the historic battle of Surigao Strait is being considered for late October, in the year of 2000. The flyer for this event appears elsewhere in the "MOUNTAINEER", for those who wish to participate in great get together.

We Will Pay Our Respects To Our Gallant Captain.

Captain Mervyn Sharp Bennion, U.S. Navy, Deceased, Holder Of The Medal Of Honor.

While we are in Salt Lake City, we will be holding a memorial service for our Medal Of Honor Recipient, Captain Bennion, who lost his life on the bridge of the ship he was commanding during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on the 7th Day of December, 1941. At this memorial service we will also honor all of our U.S.S. West Virginia shipmates who have passed away over the years. This ceremony will be conducted and planned by our most able Chaplain, Jim Downing. The events will take place on Saturday the 28th of August. You will receive final directions at the reunion.

Proclamation
by
Governor Cecil H. Underwood

Whereas, hostile aircraft of the Empire of Japan launched a sneak attack on strategic military and naval targets at Pearl Harbor and elsewhere on the Island of Oahu, Hawaii, on the morning of December 7, 1941; and,

Whereas, the attack's element of complete surprise resulted in thousands of military and civilian dead and wounded, plus the destruction of a major portion of the United States Navy's Pacific Fleet; and,

Whereas, the Battleships USS WEST VIRGINIA – (BB-48), USS ARIZONA, USS OKLAHOMA, and USS CALIFORNIA suffered major damage through Japanese bombs and torpedoes; and,

Whereas, the USS WEST VIRGINIA was ablaze from one end of the ship to the other; the crew fought the enemy as well as fires while endeavoring to evacuate the wounded for more than 30 hours; and,

Whereas, through the immediate actions of officers and crew of the USS WEST VIRGINIA, skillful damage control avoided capsizing of the ship, and she settled right side up on the shallow bottom; and,

Whereas, although severely damaged and sitting on the bottom of the harbor, the USS WEST VIRGINIA was re-floated, refurbished and served with distinction in several campaigns during the remainder of World War II;

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Cecil H. Underwood, Governor of the State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim *December 7, 1998*, as:

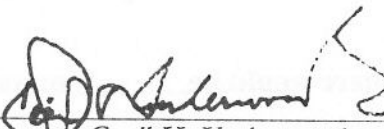
USS WEST VIRGINIA (BB48) DAY

in the Mountain State and urge all citizens to observe the occasion and to display the United States Flag.

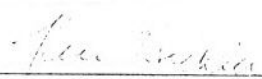
In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

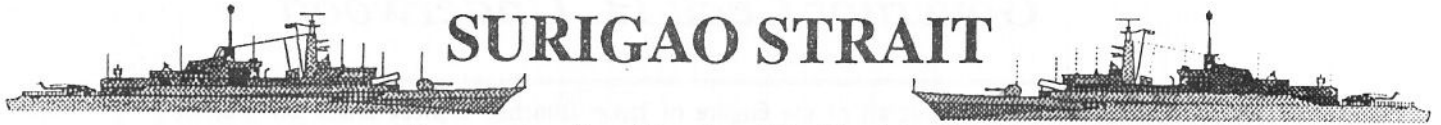
Done at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the First day of December, in the year of our Lord, One Thousand Nine Hundred Ninety-eight and in the One Hundred Thirty-sixth year of the State.




Cecil H. Underwood
Governor

By the Governor:


Ken Hechler
Secretary of State



SURIGAO STRAIT

Remembering the Last Battleship Battle

The early morning hours of 25 October, 1944 marked an historic event for six "old" battleships of the U.S. Navy. The *California*, *Maryland*, *Mississippi*, *Pennsylvania*, *Tennessee* and the *West Virginia* lined up across the mouth of Surigao Strait. This resulted in the maneuver which is called crossing the "T" and won the Battle for the U.S. Forces. This engagement was the last Battleship-to-Battleship confrontation in history.

A reunion of the Crews who served on the "old" battleships and who fought in this historic battle is being considered for late October 2000, during the 56th anniversary of the Battle of Surigao Strait. **This would include men from all six battleships and would be separate from our regular reunions so as not to interfere with our own schedule.** However, before we can go further in planning this event, we need to know your interest in such a reunion.

A location has not been selected at this time. A city in the central part of the country would probably be more suitable to most of you. Cities such as Memphis, TN and Austin, TX have been suggested. An Austin reunion would allow us to visit the Adm. Chester Nimitz museum in nearby Fredericksburg, TX. The museum houses plaques commemorating each of the battleships involved in Surigao Strait and other historic items from other naval battles of World War II.

To all hands of the 6 Battleship crew: We need a head count so even if you can't attend please fill out this short form below as soon as possible and return it to **Mike Hulen, P.O. Box 97, Swifton AR 72471-0097** so we can determine if there is enough interest to have this reunion.

Yes, I am interested in attending a Surigao Strait Battle Reunion October 23-26, 2000.

I would be attending the event myself.

There would be _____ other family/friends attending with me.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Ship: _____

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and total the amount. Send that amount payable to ARMED FORCES REUNIONS in the form of check or money order (no credit cards or phone reservations accepted). Your cancelled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before July 26, 1999. After that date, reservations will be accepted on a space available basis. We suggest you make a copy of this form before mailing.

Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
P.O. Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: USS WEST VIRGINIA

***** OFFICE USE ONLY *****

Check Number _____

Date Received _____

CUT-OFF DATE IS JULY 26, 1999

	PRICE PER	NO. OF PEOPLE	AMOUNT
Thursday - Hill AFB Tour & Lunch	\$26	x	=
Thursday - Dinner & Choir Practice	\$40	x	=
Friday - City Tour	\$27	x	=
Saturday - Copper Mine Tour	\$17	x	=
Saturday Night Banquet & entertainment	Mark your choice(s)		
Roast Prime Rib of Beef	\$33	x	=
Garlic Herb Roasted Chicken Breast	\$31	x	=
Sunday Breakfast Buffet	\$14	x	=
Registration fee which covers administrative and hospitality room expenses.	\$20	x	=

TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE TO ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

Please do not staple or tape payment.

PLEASE PRINT NAME (for nametags) _____

DIVISION _____ YEARS ON BOARD 19 ____ - 19 ____

SPOUSE NAME _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

ARE YOU STAYING AT THE HOTEL? YES _____ NO _____

ARE YOU FLYING? _____ DRIVING? _____ RV? _____

Full refunds will be sent for the above mentioned activities if cancellation is received by 8/18/99 (less a \$3 processing fee). After that date, refund amount will depend on vendor policies. CANCELLATIONS WILL ONLY BE TAKEN MONDAY-FRIDAY 9am-5pm eastern time (excluding holidays), CALL (757) 625-6401 to obtain your cancellation code.

***** CUT HERE AND MAIL BOTTOM PORTION TO HOTEL *****

USS WEST VIRGINIA RESERVATION FORM - AUGUST 25-29, 1999

NAME (last, first) _____

ADDRESS _____ ZIP _____

PHONE (____) _____ SHARING ROOM WITH _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ TIME _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

___ ONE PERSON ___ TWO PERSONS/1BED ___ 2 PERSONS/2BEDS ___ ADDITIONAL PERSONS

SPECIAL REQUESTS _____
Specific room type and special requests are not guaranteed.

RATE: \$85 + tax (currently 10.95%) for up to 2 people in the room. Additional people are billed at \$20 per person per night. Rate good 1 day prior and 1 day after reunion dates, based on availability.
CUT OFF DATE: 7/25/99. Reservations received after this date will be processed on space & rate availability.
CANCELLATION POLICY: Deposit is refundable if reservation is canceled 24 hours prior to scheduled arrival. All reservations must be guaranteed by credit card or first night's deposit, enclosed.

___ MC ___ VISA ___ AM EX ___ DINERS ___ DISCOVER ___ CARTE BLANCHE

CREDIT CARD NUMBER _____ EXP. DATE _____

SIGNATURE (regardless of payment method) _____

MAIL TO: WYNDHAM HOTEL / 215 WEST SOUTH TEMPLE / SALT LAKE CITY, UT 84101

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Armed Forces Reunions, Inc.
P.O. Box 11327
Norfolk, VA 23517
ATTN: USS WEST VIRGINIA

OFFICE USE ONLY

Check Number _____

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CUT-OFF DATE IS JULY 26, 1999

	PRICE PER	x	NO. OF PEOPLE	=	AMOUNT
Thursday - Hill AFB Tour & Lunch	\$26	x	_____	=	_____
Thursday - Dinner & Choir Practice	\$40	x	_____	=	_____
Friday - City Tour	\$27	x	_____	=	_____
Saturday - Copper Mine Tour	\$17	x	_____	=	_____
Saturday Night Banquet & entertainment					
Roast Prime Rib of Beef	\$33	x	_____	=	_____
Garlic Herb Roasted Chicken Breast	\$31	x	_____	=	_____
Sunday Breakfast Buffet	\$14	x	_____	=	_____
Registration fee which covers administrative and hospitality room expenses.	\$20	x	_____	=	_____

TOTAL AMOUNT PAYABLE TO ARMED FORCES REUNIONS, INC.

PLEASE PRINT

NAME (for nametags) _____

Please do not staple or tape payment.

DIVISION _____ YEARS ON BOARD 19 _____ - 19 _____

SPOUSE NAME _____

GUEST NAMES _____

STREET ADDRESS _____

CITY, ST, ZIP _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____

DISABILITY/DIETARY RESTRICTIONS _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT _____ PH. NUMBER (____) _____

ARRIVAL DATE _____ DEPARTURE DATE _____

ARE YOU STAYING AT THE HOTEL? YES _____ NO _____

ARE YOU FLYING? _____ DRIVING? _____ RV? _____

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USS WEST VIRGINIA BB-48
WYNDHAM HOTEL - SALT LAKE CITY
AUGUST 25 - 29, 1999

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 25

- 1200 Arrival and registration until 1800. Hospitality opens for the duration of the reunion.
Evening on your own.

THURSDAY, AUGUST 26

- 0930 Registration continues until 1030 and again from 1600-1730.
1100 Board bus for Hill Air Force Base Officers Club.
1200 Enjoy lunch which consists of a deli sandwich, with pasta salad, fruit, dessert, and a beverage.
1315 Tour the Hill Air Force Base Aerospace Museum, home to one of the finest collections of old and current military aircraft in America. You will see over fifty aircraft including the B-17G "Flying Fortress," C-47 "Sky Train," P-51D "Mustang," and many more. Also included at the 40-acre museum is a film and gift shop.
1445 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 1530.
\$26/Person includes bus, escort, and lunch.
- 1800 Board bus for the Lion House, historic home of Brigham Young. Enjoy a chicken dinner and a hear from a choir member. After dinner, walk through the garden on your way to Temple Square.
2000 Enjoy special seating to see the world famous Mormon Tabernacle Choir at their weekly rehearsal.
2100 Reboard bus for return to hotel by 2115.
\$40/Person includes bus, escort, and dinner.

FRIDAY, AUGUST 27

- 0900 Board the bus for a tour that will include stops at some of Salt Lake City's most famous sites. You will see Brigham Young's homes, the historic Union Pacific Railroad Depot, and the Utah State Capitol. Visit Temple Square, the symbolic heart of the world-wide Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, the Mormons. The Square includes the six-spired Temple Tabernacle, Assembly Hall, monuments and the elegant gardens for which the area is known. You'll also see the Governor's Mansion and some of Utah's most opulent homes, built nearly a century ago. Visit the military museum located at Fort Douglas. There you will see displays tracing the history of the military in Utah. Drive through the University of Utah campus, home of Olympic Village and the ceremonies for the 2002 Winter Olympics. Enjoy the spectacular views of the city, valley, and lake.
1200 Lunch on your own at Trolley Square, a high-fashion shopping, restaurant, and entertainment complex located in buildings that once housed the city's trolley transit system.
1345 Reboard bus Gardner Historic Village, a nostalgic cluster of old-time stores and a museum. From sofas to souvenirs, Primitive Country to Victorian, you'll find the goods to be of excellent quality and reasonably priced. The original mill is listed on the National Historic Register.
1515 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 1545.
\$27/Person includes bus and guide. Lunch is not included.

SATURDAY, AUGUST 28

- 0900 Board bus for a trip to Kennecott Copper Mine, man's largest excavation. One-half mile from top to bottom, this magnificent expanse could easily shelter two Empire State Buildings stacked one on another. Observe an operation whose cumulative sales from extracted ore exceed, eightfold, the yields of the Comstock Lode, the Klondike, and the California gold rush combined. On the way learn about the Great Salt Lake, the Dead Sea of the Americas, and the explorers who discovered it. You'll also stop at the House of Copper Gift Shop.
1145 Reboard bus to return to the hotel by 1230 for lunch on your own.
\$17/Person includes bus, guide, and admission.
- 1500 Memorial Service at the hotel.
1800 Cash Bar.
1900 Banquet begins, followed by entertainment.

SUNDAY, AUGUST 29

- 0800 Informal Church Service.
0830 Farewell Breakfast Buffet, followed by a business meeting.

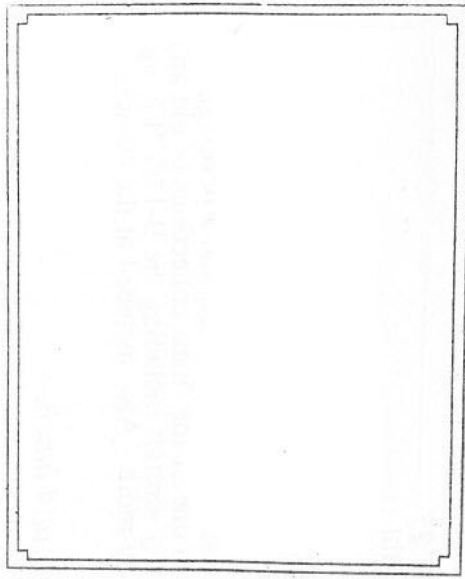
Wyndham Hotel

DOWNTOWN



215 West South Temple • Salt Lake City, UT 84101
1.800.WYNDHAM E-MAIL: G.MANAGE@HOTEL
PHONE: 801.531.7500 INTERNET: WWW.HOTEL.COM
FAX: 801.328.1289

REUNION DATES
August 25-29



USS WEST VIRGINIA BB-48

Reunion Association
C/O Robert S. Kronberger
Post Office Box 442
Big Bear City, CA 92314-0442

FIRST CLASS MAIL

Time Orientated Material

