



SPRING 2015

USS WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION

Join us in New Orleans for the 2015 Reunion November 5-8

We are going to have a great time in New Orleans in November! Our planning committee has done a great job organizing trips and accommodations. We had hoped to reach out to the crewmembers of the USS Colorado and USS Maryland, but haven't had any luck in getting any mailing lists. Please spread the word as we'd like to get as many attendees to the reunion as possible.

HOTEL: We will stay at the Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans located at 739 Canal Street, New Orleans, LA 70130. The daily room rate is \$145 plus tax. This special room rate is available for two days before and two days after the reunion. The hotel is in the heart of the French Quarter, with views of Bourbon Street and all of the action. The Astor Crowne Plaza is 15 miles from the New Orleans Airport. A cab ride costs \$33.00 from the airport to the Central Business District for one person and \$14.00 (per passenger) for three or more passengers. Pick-up is on the lower level, outside the baggage claim area. To make hotel reservations simply call (877) 408-9661 and ask for the USS WEST VIRGINIA REUNION GROUP RATE. Please make reservations early so that we can plan on the group size.

THURSDAY: The Tony Reiter clan will again sponsor a happy hour and pizza party in the hospitality room, allowing travelers to relax and socialize.

FRIDAY: Steamboat Natchez River Cruise. A luxury motor coach will pick us up at the Hotel at 10:30 AM for a 5 minute ride to New Orleans's last authentic steam paddlewheel boat. We will take an approximately 2 hour harbor cruise of America's second busiest port while viewing the "Crescent City" skyline from the decks or air conditioned comfort of the historic Steamer Natchez. Includes a delicious Southern buffet. Cost: \$34.00 Includes transportation and lunch.

SATURDAY: The National WWII War Museum. A luxury motor coach will pick us up at the Hotel at 9:30 AM for a 10 minute ride to the National WWII Museum. We will attend the 30 minute film Beyond All Boundaries in the 4-D Victory Theater, and then see first hand the work it takes to preserve and restore some of the treasures of WWII. In one convenient space is the epic story of the warfronts from North Africa to the South Pacific, honoring the 16 million Americans who served in the war. This museum has been designated by the U.S. Congress as America's official WWII museum. Lunch will be on-your-own at one of the two onsite restaurants. We will return back to the hotel about 1:30PM. Admission is \$22, FREE for WWII veterans. Includes transportation.

We will have our memorial service at the hotel at 4:00 PM After the service we will have an "open bar" at 5:00 PM in the reception lounge. Our banquet will be at 6:00 PM This sit down, plated dinner will include your choice of lemon chicken breast with rice and vegetable or 6 oz Ribeye with potato au gratin. Dinner includes all the fixings, beverages, and dessert for \$35 per person.

SUNDAY: This will be a leisurely day. Those not traveling on Sunday can take advantage of many nearby attractions, restaurants and strolling through the French Quarter.

Your Reunion Committee (Tom Reiter, Joe Reiter, and Tim Dege)

The National WWII Museum

We will be visiting the National WWII Museum in New Orleans during our reunion. Here is some information about the museum from the museum's web site.

Originally founded in 2000 as the D-Day Museum, The National WWII Museum is now the top-rated tourist destination in New Orleans and an unforgettable way to experience World War II—from industrial efforts on the Home Front to the combat experience of the American soldier abroad—and honor the generation that sacrificed so much to secure our freedom. Offering an impactful blend of sweeping narrative and poignant personal detail, the Museum features immersive exhibits, state-of-the-art multimedia experiences, and an expansive collection of artifacts and first-person oral histories to take visitors inside the story of the war: *why it was fought, how it was won, and what it means today*. Beyond the galleries, the Museum's online digital collections, virtual field trips and webinars, exclusive travel programs, and renowned International Conference promote continuing scholarship and offer patrons new ways to connect to history.

Designated by Congress as the official WWII museum of the United States, The National WWII Museum is located in downtown New Orleans on a six-acre campus, where five soaring pavilions house historical exhibits, on-site restoration work, a period dinner theater, and restaurants. A capital expansion program includes the construction of two additional pavilions in coming years, cementing the institution as a state-of-the-art educational institution and a premiere destination for travelers from around the world.

Steamboat Natchez

During our visit to New Orleans, we will have the opportunity to sail on the Steamboat Natchez. Here is some information from the steamboat's web site.

"She's the ninth steamer to bear the name NATCHEZ. It was her predecessor, NATCHEZ VI, that raced the ROBERT E. LEE in the most famous steamboat race of all time. Even today, the NATCHEZ is proudly the undisputed champion of the Mississippi, never having been beaten in a race. In many ways, she's the best of her line.

It's a line that follows the course of river history, from the placid antebellum plantation era through the turbulence of the Civil War to the Gay Nineties, and, ultimately, the new millennium.

When the New Orleans Steamboat Company launched the NATCHEZ in 1975, they revived more than a famous name. They created one of only two true steam powered sternwheelers plying the Mississippi today. The NATCHEZ combines the best of contemporary construction, safety, and comfort standards with all the authenticity and style of her classic steamboat gothic predecessors.

The NATCHEZ resembles the old sternwheelers VIRGINIA and HUDSON in her profile and layout. Her powerful steam engines were built for U.S. Steel Corporation's sternwheeler CLAIRTON in 1925. Her genuine copper and steel steam whistle is a treasured antique. Her copper bell, smelted from 250 silver dollars to produce a purer tone, once graced the S.S. J.D. AYRES. Her 32 note steam calliope was custom crafted and modeled after the music makers of the Gilded Age.

True to tradition in every detail, boarding the NATCHEZ makes you feel as if you have entered another era. The captain barks his orders through an old-time hand-held megaphone. The calliope trills a melody into the air while the great wheel, 25 tons of white oak, churns the heavy waters of the Mississippi. You soon find yourself slipping into a sense of the old, vast and timeless river.

As the NATCHEZ glides past the French Quarter and through one of the world's most active ports, you begin to understand the magic of the experience. For all its history and romance, the excitement of riding a steamboat is as real and rich and genuine now as it was a century ago."

2015 Reunion Activity Registration Form

Listed below are all registration, tour, and meal costs for the reunion. Please enter how many people will be participating in each event and the total amount. Send that amount payable to **USS West Virginia Association** in the form of a **check or money order** (no credit cards or phone reservations) to: USS West Virginia Association, c/o Mike Mullins, 21397 Springwell Drive, Ashburn, VA 20148. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before **October 1, 2015**.

DATE	PRICE (\$/PP)	NUMBER	TOTAL (\$)
11/5/2015 Thursday Welcome Aboard! Pizza Party in the Hospitality Room at 6:00PM	\$ FREE		
11/6/2015 Friday Steamboat Natchez River Cruise, lunch included Load bus at 10:30AM, Return at 2:00PM Hospitality Room open on return	\$ 34.00 pp		
11/7/2015 Saturday National WWII War Museum, lunch on your own Load bus at 9:30AM, Return at 1:30PM Hospitality Room open on return	\$22.00 pp WWII Veterans Free	Veteran / Guest /	
11/8/2015 Saturday Banquet Dinner at 6:00PM Hospitality Room open following the banquet	\$35.00 pp	Chicken / Beef /	
Registration	\$25.00 pp		
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For hotel reservations at the Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans, call (877) 408-9661 . The special group rate is \$145 per night. This rate is good for two (2) nights before and two (2) nights after the reunion events. In order to obtain your special group rate, guests need to ask for the USS WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION GROUP RATE .

ATTENDEES (For name tags)

NAME _____

DIVISION _____ YEARS ABOARD 19 ____ to 19 ____

GUEST NAME(S) _____

EMERGENCY CONTACT NAME & PHONE _____

INDEMNITY CLAUSE (Must be signed regardless of payment method)

I, the undersigned, hereby assume liability for and shall indemnify, defend, protect, save and hold harmless the USS West Virginia Association and the Astor Crowne Plaza New Orleans, its parent, subsidiaries and affiliates, and their officers, agents, subcontractors, and employees, from and against any and all liabilities, claims, judgments, damages, losses, including all costs, fees, and expenses incidental there to caused by or arising out of the gross negligence or willful misconduct on my behalf and which are in any way related to the services or goods contemplated by this agreement.

SIGNATURE _____ DATE _____

PRINTED NAME _____ PHONE _____

Join us in New Orleans!

2015 USS West Virginia (BB-48) Reunion - November 5-8, 2015



USS West Virginia Association

Mike Mullins – Curator

21397 Springwell Drive
Ashburn, VA 20148

Phone: 610-952-3542

We're on the Web!
www.usswestvirginia.org

The USS West Virginia Association's collection of information and artifacts is kept in the care of Mike Mullins, Curator. Our web site is one of the largest online collections of information about a battleship that you will see anywhere.



The River Steamboat Natchez (*above*) and National WWII Museum (*below*), two attractions that will be enjoyed during the 2015 reunion in New Orleans, Louisiana.