



SUMMER 2013

USS WEST VIRGINIA ASSOCIATION

Join us in San Diego for the 2013 Reunion

There is still time to register for the 2013 reunion in San Diego, California. As many of you know, for all of the last several years we've thought that every reunion could be our last. We're happy to be hosting another reunion this year and it's good to get back to California after many years. We need to receive the registrations by September 1, 2013 so we can get the attendee count to the various venues that we'll be visiting. Hotel reservations must be made by August 20, 2013 in order to get the group rate. Call 888-233-9527 to make hotel reservations.

Getting from the airport to the Crowne Plaza Hotel

Getting from the San Diego Airport to the Crowne Plaza Hotel - a distance of about 7 miles - is easy and convenient. After you have collected your luggage simply follow the signs to the TRANSPORTATION PLAZA where a uniformed transportation coordinator will assist you. A taxi cab ride from the airport to the Crowne Plaza Hotel will cost about \$25. Up to 4 people are allowed in one taxi cab.

Shuttle van service is also available at the TRANSPORTATION PLAZA. Super Shuttle charges \$12 per person for a ride from the airport to the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Advanced reservations are preferred. For a shuttle reservation call: 1-800-974-8885. Note that shuttle vans may make several stops to drop off other passengers along the way to the Crowne Plaza Hotel. Both shuttle and taxis services have ADA compliant vehicles.

Meet the reunion planners

The reunion planning committee this year includes two sons and a grandson of crew member Tony Reiter. The group took a planning trip to San Diego in March to check out hotel options and possible sites to visit. The reunion planners hope they laid the groundwork for a comfortable stay, good food and interesting activities and sites to see while in the San Diego area for the reunion.

Tom Reiter is an attorney and travel photographer. After attending his first ship's reunion in Galveston TX with his Dad a few years ago Tom became very interested in the history of the USS West Virginia. He looks forward to the reunion and hearing the veterans recount their WWII recollections. Tom is an avid runner, back-country skier and lives in Afton, MN with his wife Sharon.

Joe Reiter retired after 31 years with AT&T. As a Call Center Manager he traveled to many locations to set up and train satellite offices. Since his retirement in 2006 he has enjoyed traveling the US on his Harley. When not riding, he spends his time in his gardens or volunteering at the Science Museum of Minnesota working with school groups. Joe enjoys his fishing and camping trips to the BWCA and has been seen visiting Las Vegas now and then. Joe is married and lives in St. Paul, MN with his wife Barb.

Tim Dege, Tony Rieter's grandson, resides in Inver Grove Heights, Minnesota. He has been in the technology industry for 25 years and currently works for Target Corporation at headquarters in Minneapolis. He enjoys travel and has made many trips to Europe and Asia in the past. He has two daughters; the oldest is receiving her Doctorate in Immunology from University of Colorado in Denver and the youngest is an 8th grader. He enjoys fishing, gardening, and World War II history. He has always been interested in the "Ship's Reunion" that his grandfather has been talking about for years.

2013 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, 2933 Cottonwood Lane, Chester Springs, PA 19425. Your canceled check will serve as your confirmation. All registration forms and payments must be received by mail on or before **September 1, 2013**.

DATE	PRICE (\$/PP)	NUMBER	TOTAL (\$)
09/19/2013 Thursday Welcome Aboard! Pizza Party in the Hospitality Room 6PM	\$ FREE		
09/20/2013 Friday City Tour and Luncheon Load bus at 9:30AM, Return at 2:30PM Hospitality Room open on return	\$49.00 pp		
09/21/2013 Saturday Tour USS Midway and Harbor Cruise Lunch included Load bus at 9:30AM, Return at 3:30PM Hospitality Room open on return	\$49.00 pp		
09/21/2013 Saturday Banquet Dinner at 6:30PM Hospitality Room open on return	\$39.00 pp		
Registration	\$25.00 pp		
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For hotel reservations at the Crowne Plaza - Mission Valley , call 888-233-9527. The special group rate is \$101.00 per night. This rate is good for three (3) nights before and three (3) nights after the reunion events. In order to obtain your special group rate, guests need to identify themselves as being associated with USS West Virginia and if asked, provide the three digit code UVA. **The deadline for hotel registration is August 20, 2013.**

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 Crowne Plaza - Mission Valley , 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 _____

That Night at Surigao

This is a new book release by author M. Ernest Marshall, M.D. that features prominently the history of the *U. S. S. West Virginia* (BB-48) during World War II. This book is the result of extensive, multi-year research. The theme of the book is to tell the story of the naval war in the Pacific Theater as it was experienced by a number of individuals and highlights what life was like for those serving on a battleship. Lt. Thomas Lombardi was serving on the *West Virginia* at the time of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor. Within a few days after the attack, while memory was sharp, he wrote a detailed after-action memoir of his experiences aboard the ship that day. This memoir was combined with several other after-action reports that were submitted to the Navy Department within days of the attack and with oral histories given by surviving veterans of the “Wee Vee” to tell the stories of the individuals who survived that experience. After being graduated from Dartmouth College, Lt. Robert O. Baumrucker was serving in the Navy Reserve until called to active duty. Although it was expressly against Navy regulations to do so – a court martial offense – he maintained a diary for three years while serving on three different battleships. He served on the *U. S. S. Mississippi*, the *U. S. S. Tennessee*, and the *U. S. S. West Virginia*. While assigned to the *Tennessee*, he participated in the Battle of Tarawa and the Battle of Kwajalein before being transferred to the *West Virginia* while she was still in Bremerton, Washington undergoing repairs and modernization. He served on the *West Virginia* until the war was nearly over. During the Battle of Surigao Strait, Baumrucker was in charge of the 16” guns for the ship and was the first to spot the Japanese fleet on radar and formulate a firing solution that was so accurate that the ship’s first salvo struck the lead Japanese battleship. Details of this battle are explored in such a way that the reader has an excellent idea of what it was like to be on the ship as the enemy fleet approached.

The *West Virginia* was struck by a kamikaze plane on the opening day of the battle for Okinawa. Fortunately, the bomb the plane carried did not explode. Details of this strike, damages done, sailors killed, and the fate of the dead Japanese pilot are revealed.

Thousands of pages of Deck Logs, Action Reports, and War Diaries from three battleships, acquired from the National Archives, were explored in support of this book. The intent of the book was to combine the written memoirs, oral histories, and ship’s records to paint a picture of what it was like for the men serving on a battleship during WWII in the Pacific Theater. Details of daily life aboard ship are described. The book even explores interpersonal conflicts that arose among various officers on the ship.

Baumrucker wrote a line-crossing book titled, “The USS West Virginia Crosses the Equator – Again.” The text of this book explores how he achieved this while performing his other duties as Intelligence Officer and the officer in charge of Main Battery Fire Control for the ship’s big guns. A copy of this out-of-print, rare book is included in this text. The book contains many previously unknown details of life aboard ship and a number of previously unpublished photographs.

“That Night at Surigao” is being published by Sunbury Press, Pennsylvania, and will be in print within two weeks. At the 2013 reunion of the USS West Virginia Association, the author will be present with a limited number of books to be sold and to do an author signing. Interested persons can place an advanced order for this book by contacting the author at emarshallmd@comcast.net or calling (434)-386-7778. Orders can be placed directly from Sunbury Press by “Googling” Sunbury Press. On the cover page, click on “our books,” and the image of “That Night at Surigao” will appear and on-line orders can be made.

I look forward to seeing many of you in San Diego, California in September.

Best regards to all,

M. Ernest Marshall, M. D.
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Lynchburg, Virginia 24503
(434)-386-7778
emarshallmd@comcast.net

All hands on deck for the 2013 reunion in San Diego

Have you been on an Honor Flight?

The Honor Flight Network is a group that puts together free trips to Washington, DC for veterans. Many of our members have taken one of these trips and the reviews are quite positive.

Here is a blurb from their web site:

Honor Flight Network is a non-profit organization created solely to honor America's veterans for all their sacrifices. We transport our heroes to Washington, D.C. to visit and reflect at **their** memorials. Top priority is given to the senior veterans – World War II survivors, along with those other veterans who may be terminally ill.

Of all of the wars in recent memory, it was World War II that truly threatened our very existence as a nation—and as a culturally diverse, free society. According to the Department of Veterans Affairs, an estimated 640 WWII veterans die each day. Our time to express our thanks to these brave men and women is running out.

If you haven't taken an Honor Flight, reach out to them and get on the list. Their web site is <http://www.honorflight.org>. Be careful, because there are other sites that have similar names, but they charge for their trips. They can be contacted at:

937-521-2400 - Main Office

Applications: applications@honorflight.org



USS West Virginia Association

Mike Mullins – Curator

2933 Cottonwood Lane
Chester Springs, PA 19425

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.



THAT NIGHT AT SURIGAO



The cover of Ernie Marshall's new book