



# USS Seattle AOE-3

## Veteran's Association Newsletter



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**TIME to Think About our Next Reunion**

Reunion # 8 is in the books – now we're preparing for reunion # 9 in San Francisco, CA (setting selected in hopes that Doc Townsend, our ship's second Captain will also be able to attend, or that many will have the opportunity to see Doc once more) – hope to see you all there. Anyone with ideas is welcome to submit them to the board.

**Your Officers:**

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A very few pictures from this year's reunion are included in the recap starting on page 2. To see many more pictures taken during the reunion, please visit the website.

There are a lot of pictures and great memories from the reunion. As your editor, I wish I had been there myself to witness the laying of the wreath, to tour the White House and the museums and more than all else, to spend time visiting with all that made it to the reunion.

Looking forward to next year and hoping to see all of you then. Dale

## RECAP of the 8<sup>th</sup> REUNION OF USS SEATTLE (AOE-3) WASHINGTON, DC. 2016

The 8<sup>th</sup> reunion was an outstanding success. It was our largest attendance! There were 50 Seattle sailors and 48 family and friends, for a total of 98. We have steadily grown each year since 2009, when we had 20 in attendance. This growth speaks to the fact that if someone comes once, they want to come back again. For those who were unable to make it we missed you, but here is a recap of our events!

### Wednesday: Arrival

The Hospitality room welcomed all as they arrived. Old Cruise books appeared and the stories started flowing. Pizza was served and lights out was well after midnight.

### Thursday: Meetings, Bus Trips and Dinner

Sailors met for a time of story sharing. It was an open floor and we heard stories from all 5 decades Seattle was in service. Some brought memorabilia to pass around.

In our business meeting, David Holton was voted President, replacing Bill Norris, whose term expired. Rich Toma was voted Vice President, replacing Holton. The membership voted to go to San Francisco next year at about the same time frame as this year's event.



Over 90 people got on two busses to go to Arlington National Cemetery for the Changing of the Guard. We had the special honor to lay a wreath at the tomb in a full ceremony with the Guard. It was an outstanding, sunny day and everyone felt a special pride to see the beautiful wreath with USS SEATTLE (AOE-3) ribbon on display in front of the tomb and the landscape of DC in the background. A 2 ½ hour guided, private tram tour of Arlington followed. Next was a bus tour around DC to see some of the monuments, stopping at the Marine, Air force and Navy monuments. On to dinner at a family style Italian restaurant where NO ONE left hungry! A night tour of the lighted monuments followed. Even though it was a long day, the Hospitality room stayed open late again!

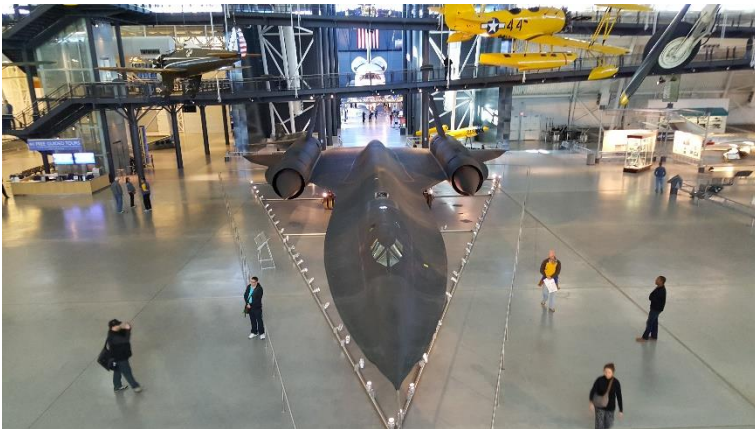
## Friday: White House & Congress



An early morning bus ride took us to the White House. Security was very tight (wished our country's borders were managed as well—writer's personal comment!). Lunch was at the Congressional cafeteria, then a guided tour of Congress. Because of major renovations going on for the past few years, the tour was shortened, but still amazing to see and “feel” the history of our country. Back to the hotel and after dinner, our guest speaker was Francis Gary Powers, Jr. His father was a U-2 pilot. For those under 50, he was a CIA pilot for the U-2 spy plane, not the pilot for Bono's Irish rock band U-2. Gary told about his father's job, being shot down and his difficult escape at 70,000 feet. We learned about his capture, torture and the prisoner exchange that led to his coming home. The movie, *Bridge of Spies*, with Tom Hanks, is his story. By now you should not be surprised that the Hospitality room was opened!

## Saturday: The Navy Yard and the Air & Space Museum

The Navy Yard is a historic place and on site is a museum of Naval ship history with lots to see and learn.



You could actually sit on and move the mounts of WWII ships to have a firsthand experience. The Air & Space Museum is part of the Smithsonian and houses hundreds of planes covering private, commercial and military. Highlights to see are US war planes from every generation, Discovery, spy planes, the Concorde, helicopters and much more.

One of the hall marks of our association is our Saturday night dinner and featured speaker. It begins with the sailors meeting in a room where the senior officer pours a cognac toast to our fallen shipmates. We then formally open with a Color Guard. Sometimes they are ROTC or from the American Legion. This year, being in DC, we filled out DD forms (yes they still exist) and requested the Color Guard and singer.



When the Color Guard exited, Admiral Mazach, our guest speaker asked, “How did you get that Color Guard to come here?” Turns out they were the President's Own!!! And the singer, a Chief Petty Officer with over 20 years, performs regularly at the White House. Next we honored the Missing Service members with an explanation of the table set in their honor. That was followed by the reading of names and bell ringing for the \_\_\_ Seattle men and women whom we know have died. Our speaker was retired Admiral John Mazach, the 12<sup>th</sup> CO of USS Seattle. He entertained us with his memories as Captain and some “Flag stories” most of us would never have been privy to hear or know. With no room for storage, the Supply folks opened the Hospitality room to dispense with the remaining liquid cargo!

**Sunday: Farewell Breakfast:**

A come and go breakfast and last chance to say goodbye until next year! **See you in San Francisco in 2017.**

**Ship's Store: USSS SEATTLE Book and Pens**

Vic reported that at the reunion the 50/50 brought in \$461.00, the raffles brought in \$1095.00 and the ships store \$1150.50 before costs, for a total of \$2706.50.

Once again the Ship's store, with 60 items, was busy. This year we introduced 2 items. Shipmate Rich Toma spent several years researching and writing the history of USS Seattle. Orders were taken for this 200-page book that will be published this month. This is a book every Seattle sailor will want to have. Those who were not at the reunion, watch the web site for how to order your book. Vic reported that some of the books have arrived and he'll be shipping out to fill orders ASAP.

Also, Captain Craig Honour donated some old wood from the handrail of the Seattle when it was refurbished. Shipmate Bill Norris, a great woodworker, turned that wood into pens. A total of 29 pens were made and were sold out in 10 minutes. Sorry, it was a limited supply of pens based on the amount of wood, so there will be no more of these pens made.

## Message from Shipmate Bob Miller

Fellow shipmates,

A message about Veterans Helping Veterans - USS Seattle Veterans Association & American Legion Riders, Post 46

On August 8th fellow shipmate Earl Boutell & wife Freida were leaving the USS Seattle AOE-3 Veterans Association Reunion in Washington, DC when Earl was notified that his condo in KC, MO was on fire. They arrived at home to discover they had lost all personal items, such as their clothes, computers and furniture. They will be displaced approximately 4 months while they rebuild or find another condo. The association immediately set up a relief fund for Earl and Freida. There have been many donations and they continue to pour in from fellow USS Seattle shipmates.

The American Legion Riders President in Marshalltown IA was contacted about Earl & Freida and that he is a Veteran in Need with local ties as there are 3 fellow shipmates in Marshalltown. The American Legion Riders board immediately decided on a \$500.00 donation and wanted to know what else they can do to help Earl and Freida. Also donated were Freedom Rock t-shirts and a ALR/Navy medallion. Again we were asked to check on the needs of Earl & Freida when we got to Kansas City. Another American Legion Rider heard of a veteran in need and donated another \$100.00. He just wanted to "help anyway I can" he said. What a wonderful organization to belong to! Veterans helping Veterans in a time of need!

Before leaving for Kansas City to personally deliver the American Legion Riders donations we were asked to stop by Hellberg's Jewelers. As you know Vic Hellberg is a fellow shipmate and Ship's Store keeper for the USS Seattle Veterans Association. Vic handed us a personal donation, plus two USS Seattle coats stating that the association wanted Earl and Freida to have these.

Earl & Freida were speechless at the moment we personally handed them the coats, t-shirts, \$600.00 and other donations. They said they cannot thank everybody enough. "Thank you, thank you" Earl and Freida said! They were going to look at another place today, hopefully it will work for them. I am sure they will still need continued support as they try to get back to everyday life as they knew it.

Thank You Everyone!



## Message from Bill Norris

Fellow shipmates,

It is both sad and good that I step down as President of the USSSVA. Since the inception of our association I have been the president or Vice President and heavily involved in the daily operation of the association and hope I've made a positive impression. It will be hard to step back, but the association is in good hands with David Holton and Rich Toma going forward. Rich is very compassionate about the USSSVA and will work hard to keep us moving in a positive direction along with David.

Going forward, I plan to focus in two directions for the association: first Vic Hellberg and I will continue to plan and execute the future reunions as we have in the past and second, I plan to focus my efforts on trying to find other shipmates and encourage them to join us.

I can serenity use you help with the second activity. Any one you know that served on the Seattle is a potential and I would like to contact them and explain our mission and goals and encourage them to join us. So I need your help finding previous Seattle shipmates.

Information I will need to find someone:

First Name, Last Name

City lived in (and/or last known)

State

Bill Norris  
19399 Xingo Ct  
Porter, TX 77365  
Bnorris5248@gmail.com  
281 785-6415

## Letter from a Shipmate

Shipmates,

Frieda and I have just experienced the most devastating event that could befall anyone, that being a house fire. Since the fire occurred during the Seattle reunion, the only clothing saved was what we had in our suitcases. All other clothing, pictures, and personal effects were burned. Bill and others went to work right in Washington to start a donation fund to help us.

Although we had insurance, the insurance company has been dragging their feet coming up with our funds to replace everything we owned.

However, right away, the USS Seattle Association came to the rescue with much needed donation checks.

Some other groups have also stepped up to help, such as Bob Miller's Legion Riders and his American Legion chapter in Iowa. And my Vietnam Veterans chapter here in Kansas City. We would have been totally out in the cold if it weren't for all of the most generous donations.

Just today we got another check from the Seattle Association which was from a close friend and shipmate.

I don't have a clue how to thank or repay everyone who cared enough to donate in our desperate time of need. I swell with pride thinking that I'm a member of the Seattle Veterans Association!

We are overwhelmed with gratitude for all of you!

Earl and Freida Boutell, Plankowner

## REUNION 9

*Any Volunteers ? – we can always use help planning activities and researching the area.*

The location is San Francisco, CA..

The dates haven't been set but time frame will be similar to this year with target dates from late in July to mid-August so that we can get attendance equal to or greater than the DC reunion.

Anyone that knows anything about the area, your input would be appreciated. We'll want to arrange tours, transportation, possible meal outings and/or shopping outings just to name a few things to be considered.

Locating a good hotel within the area of activities that can provide excellent pricing and amenities is critical to making the event a good one as well.

### **SHIPS STORE**

*On another note, Vic wanted to remind everyone to check out the ships store with over 60 items for sale, there is bound to be at least one you don't have and would like. Maybe a Christmas present for yourself.*

[http://www.ussseattleaoe-3.org/class\\_custom.cfm?page\\_id=241509](http://www.ussseattleaoe-3.org/class_custom.cfm?page_id=241509) ← here is a link directly to the store.



## Letter from the new Vice President

Shipmates,

During this past reunion in Washington DC, Bill Norris resigned as president so he could concentrate on the recruitment of new shipmates. Dave Holton was nominated and voted in as our new president leaving the vice president position open. I was nominated and voted in to fill that position.

My name is Rich Toma. I was born in Cleveland, OH and raised in a small community on the near eastside. I served on Seattle from March of 1971 until July of 1974. I was a SK-3 in S-1 division. While in port I could be found in GSK main issue storeroom and while deployed I worked in the fleet storerooms. After my discharge I attended Lakeland Community College near my home town. In 1975 I was hired as a letter carrier and spent the next 35 years delivering the mail in almost any weather condition you can think of until my retirement on 01/01/10.

Last year I volunteered myself to Bill Norris to help with the planning of our 8<sup>th</sup> reunion in any capacity. My project was to set up a tour of The Navy Yard Museum. This is how I got involved with and eventually elected vice president of the USSSVA.

During the next two years, I will uphold this position, according to the USSSVA by-laws, to the best of my ability. My e-mail and phone number are listed on the first page of this newsletter. Feel free to contact me about any comments, suggestions or concerns.

Thank you,  
Rich Toma

**Fair Winds & Following Seas**