

February 17, 1995

Dear Friends,

Sorry it has taken so long to get this letter out. Seems like we put the reunion behind us just in time to gear up for Thanksgiving and Christmas. I hope everyone enjoyed the holidays.

For those of you who attended the reunion, thanks for coming. I hope you had as good a time as we did. For those of you who didn't make it, you sure missed out on a really good time. Hope you make it to the next reunion in Boston.

Let me give you a brief run down on the 1994 reunion.

Good ol' Mother Nature came through for us. The weather was terrific! Indian summer in San Francisco. No fog to speak of, warm weather and clear skies. Thursday was a day to get checked in, pick up the tickets to the dinners and activities that were offered and roaming around the city. I saw a lot of the ladies carrying shopping bags but I was proud of us men, hardly a tear was shed (probably hadn't seen the bills yet).

Friday was spent touring the Old Mint and taking the Greyline tour of the city. Many people commented on the quality and quantity of the dinner Friday night in Chinatown at the Cathay House. It sure seemed to be enjoyed by all.

Saturday morning it was off to wharf to board our sightseeing boat for the Blue Angels Air Show. They cancelled the tour we were originally scheduled to attend (be still my heart) but offered us a cruise a half hour later that proved to be even better. We were out on the bay for the whole show. What a sight!! The planes often flew over so close that you could see the pilots. The sun was shining, the bay was full of boats of all descriptions and the show our Navy put on sure made you proud to be an American, not to mention a Sailor, former or otherwise. To say the waterfront was a little crowded would be a bit of an understatement. Crowds or not, it seemed that everyone was having a good time and that was the whole point, right?

Saturday night was the night for our banquet. The facilities were very nice but I think the food left a little to be desired. I was very pleased to have Captain Clint Coneway and his lovely wife Greta join us. He was kind enough to address the group and fill us in on the happenings of our ship after most of us had long since left it. Thank you Captain and Mrs. Coneway for joining us. I'm sure that I speak for all when I say what a pleasure it was to meet you both! I hope we see you again at future reunions

We had to leave on Sunday morning and I've heard since that we missed out on more fun as the group headed back down to the waterfront and a tour of Alcatraz as well as all the Navy ships that were open to the public. It's a good thing that San Francisco has so much to offer. Energy was high and our group seemed ready for anything. You're a terrific bunch of folks. The enthusiasm made me wish that we had planned the reunion for a few extra days.

We had several new shipmates and their wives join us this year. I apologize for not having all the names at hand to share with those of you who weren't able to attend. I'll see if we can't come up with a roster of attendees.

Before I close this letter I want to be sure to thank some very special people who helped make this all possible. Pat Duncan, Don Whitworth and Danny Rizzolo you were all great! I owe thanks to many of you but these poor folks got the brunt of it. I can't begin to tell you how much we (my daughter Linda and her husband Gary wanted to be sure to include their thanks as well) appreciated all that you did to make this easier on us. We would have been lost without you. Thanks again to Captain and Mrs. Coneway. It was sure nice to have you join us.

I hope everyone who can will plan on attending the next reunion in Boston. I'm sure it will be terrific! Stay healthy and happy and I hope to see you all again real soon.

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Bill Estes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Bill Estes