



**REUNION 2014 BRANSON, MO Oct 2- 6 2014**

**Stone Castle Hotel Telephone** 417-335-4700. Be sure and mention The USS Mills reunion. Rate is \$83.70 per night inclusive

VENUE \$155.00 PER PERSON

**THE STONE CASTLE INN** is beautifully decorated world Renaissance theme with modern amenities; it is conveniently located in the heart of Branson's theater and attraction district. We are minutes from award-winning golf and mini-golf courses, water parks, live shows, sports complexes, restaurants and other unique family fun experiences and destinations. It is pet friendly as well.



**THINGS WE ARE SCHEDULED TO DO IN BRANSON**

- **Ralph Foster Museum** "The Smithsonian of the Ozarks"
- **Titanic Museum** A celebration of the ship, passengers and crew! It is said that the best way to respect and honor those who gave their lives is to simply tell their stories.
- **Clay Cooper Show** Clay Cooper has been performing for Branson audiences since the age of 16, originally coming to Branson to perform with a kid's band known as the Texas Goldminors. Clay loved country music, loved singing and playing bass, and loved meeting new people.
- **Award winning BBQ** by Passions of the Pit BBQ Team

**THINGS TO DO IN BRANSON**

Branson has 2 outlet malls all conveniently located with easy access from the major roadways. Combined these Branson malls contain over 120 name brand outlet stores sure to please a wide range of taste.

**Tanger Outlet Branson**

The Tanger Outlet in Branson has over 65 Branson name outlets in the heart of Branson.

**The Shoppes at Branson Meadows**

This outlet mall contains over 21 stores and includes an 11 screen cinema complex. One of the many reasons to come to Branson is our shopping. It is so much fun! We have those unique areas that have all the Ozark-flavor shops, and of course, we have outlets for those that are always looking for bargains. Our historic downtown shopping is delightful, and we have even added a new shopping area, Branson Landing, on the waterfront. There are many nooks and crannies around town where you will find an unexpected treasure, so keep your eyes open for that one unique item you want to take home

**Branson Landing**

Uncharted waterfront shopping, dining and entertainment adventures at Branson Landing, located on the waterfront of beautiful Lake Taneycomo in downtown Branson. At Branson Landing, you will have a whole new world to explore, with Belk Department Store, Bass Pro Shops and over 100 specialty stores and restaurants, PLUS... the Hilton Promenade!

Actor Jason Robards, US Navy. was aboard heavy cruiser USS Northampton when it was sunk off Guadalcanal. Also served on the USS Nashville during the invasion of the Philippines, surviving a kamikaze hit that caused 223 casualties..



**Do not miss the magnificent \$7.5 million water fountain spectacular, synchronized to light, sound, music and fire!**



Branson Landing features a scenic boardwalk along the 1.5-mile Taneycomo Lakefront. At the heart of the Landing is a vibrant town square terracing down to the \$7.5 million spectacular water attraction that features the first-ever merging of water, fire, light and music. You will be amazed by the dazzling interplay of water Fountains shooting 120-foot geysers and fire cannons blasting, all choreographed to light and music.

The water and fire spectacle is a creation of internationally renowned Wet Design, the producers of world-class shows for Downtown Disney marketplace in Orlando, Universal City Walk in California and the Bellagio in Las Vegas. Enjoy spectacular performances of the Branson Landing Fountains starting at Noon daily.

The "Street Entertainers" at Branson Landing play a very important part of the Landing experience. Branson, of course, is home to thousands of performers - big time, small time, young and old and we've put together a team of performers that shows off the talent that lives right here!



**Ronzo & Lollygags**

Ronzo and Lollygags can be found clowning around in the Wharf District. If you see them, make sure to say hello. Ask them to make you one of their amazing balloon creations, too!

**Clayton**



Clayton can be found awing audiences in Town Square with his piano. Be sure to stop by and see **him for yourself!**



**Buckets N Boards**

Buckets N Boards, a duo comprised of Matt Levingston and Gareth Sever, have handcrafted a high energy show full of rhythmic and musical comedy that has captivated audiences from wee little children to Great Grandmothers. Their fast paced percussion, spectacular tap dancing, hilarious songs, and music from the most unexpected objects collectively create one of the most exciting and innovative shows to hit Branson...and it's free to you here at the Branson Landing!

# Danny



Be sure to stop by the Downtown District and say hello to Danny the Clown as he produce amazing magical creations with balloons and more!



# Sonshine

Sonshine as "The Airbender" Come by and challenge The Airbender in the Station District. She will surely wow everyone with her unique and powerful ability to manipulate air.

## **PLEASE HELP**

**Does anyone have information regarding crewmember Seaton who was serving on the ship in the late 1960's when it was based in Dunedin, New Zealand. I have something that belongs to him and wish to return it. Please contact Jim if you have any infomation.**

**djthomson746@gmail.com**

**Jim Thomson**

**P O Box 280**

**Eaglehawk 3556**

**Victoria**

**Australia**

## **BIRTHDAYS**

**January** Patty Griffith, Lindsay Schriever, Pat Bass, Tom Grey, Larry Bartmess, Lisa Brandenburg, Myron Drinkwater

**February** Josh Nichols, Lynn Casarini, Bob Gaboury, Phil Fogle

**March** Dan Murray, Michael Russo, Roger Dereske, Ron Donato, Laverne Miltzow

## **FACEBOOK**

Bob Gaboury has built the USS MILLS group site. We have 81 members at this writing. The address is facebook.com. Put MILLS DER 383 in the search box. Ask to be a friend to have all access to the postings.

## **DUES please send to Ben**

Thank you you for sending in your dues. For those going to the reunion you can send the dues payment with your reunion reservations. As you know, it is \$20.00 a year and defrays the cost of this newsletter.

## **DONATIONS please send Ben**

Several of you also send in donations that go into the benevolent fund. This fund pays for our family members that are unable to pay for the reunions. We thank you, as well, for these donations.

## **SICK BAY**

Tom Link has been in the hospital, but is recovering. Judy Dyer fell at work and is still at home recovering.

## **CHAT ROOM**

Bob Gaboury hosts a chat room every Wednesday evening. There are several regulars and their stories are getting stale. We need new folks to join the group. They talk about any and everything. Chat room meetings are P.M. pacific, P.M. Mountain, P.M. Central and P.M. Eastern every Wednesday.

[http://live.vircast.com:8081/default/visitor/participa nt-enter/webinar\\_id/88/](http://live.vircast.com:8081/default/visitor/participa nt-enter/webinar_id/88/)



## WHO ARE WE?

MILLS Crews were Coast Guardsmen (WWII) and U.S. Navy sailors for the balance of Mills commissioned service. We share the proud heritage of a ship that accomplished all asked of her and her crew. Some of her most difficult assignments occurred after she was considered obsolete. Our crew still meets annually to share the camaraderie and nostalgia of our youthful years. Everyone who ever served on MILLS is represented and welcomed. We range in age from early 60s to over 90 years. We served from WWII through the Vietnam War. Mills was active for 18 years. There are approximately 1200 MILLS sailors. The Nation was a war 66% {10 years} of her active service. Most of MILLS crew are Viet Nam Era veterans. Many served in the Vietnam War zone after MILLS assignment.

## WE ARE VETERANS

There are 21,972,964 of us alive today. 85,582,330 are between the ages of 50 and 84

Veterans make up only 7% of the U.S. population. Today 10.1% of active duty personnel are female.

## BREAKDOWN BY BRANCH OF SERVICE

ARMY	9,325,802
NAVY	4,923,984
AIR FORCE	4,022,747
MARINES	2,237,135

16,475,283 WARTIME VETERANS

5,622,055 PEACETIME

1,245,660 WWII - 2,073,580 KOREAN CONFLICT –

7,489,353 VIET NAM – GULF WAR TO PRESENT

6,240,055

Now after 24 years of continuous bloodletting since Dessert Storm, our nation is appreciating our military and honors the service of all Veterans. It is particularly gratifying to see civilian understanding for the sacrifices made by our Gulf Era veterans.

Due to technological "Advances," these kids face a higher likelihood of being maimed or killed than at any time in history. Many of them have families and still are being rotated back as many as 4 times.

We watched the parades and hysteria of VE and VJ days. We shared in the disappointment at the stalemate of the Korean War.

We were torn by the politically charged atmosphere the Viet Nam era veterans found as they returned from wartime duty. Many still bear the scars of "homecoming" in the 60's and early 70's.

Every one of us who served gave up a portion of our young lives to serve our nation. We did so to ensure the continuation of American freedom. We served

to protect our population and homeland from foreign attack, and to uphold the constitution, law and tradition of America. We can be proud of our service and honor those who served before and after we did.

IF YOU ENJOY FREEDOM BY LIVING IN AMERICA,  
THANK EVERY VETERAN YOU SEE.

God Bless us all.

## OBITUARY

### William A. Schmidt

Schmidt William A. Schmidt, of Columbus Ohio 89, passed away on Wednesday, February 12, 2014 at Emeritus of Lakeview. He was born on May 26, 1924 in Columbus. He is survived by his son, William (Lorraine) Schmidt; and daughters, Corinne (Don) Walker of Batavia, Ohio, Ruth (Tom) Frazee of Albuquerque, NM, Diana Gifford of Sevierville, TN, and Karen (George) Boule' of Massachusetts. He is also survived by his 11 grandchildren, 22 great-grandchildren and his longtime friend, Dorothy Hamler. He proudly served in the Navy in World War II and Korea. He was a member of the St. Mary Church in Groveport, Ohio. Plank owner on the USS Mills and member of the VFW. .



DE-383



DER-383

Skipper: The Late Tommy Nichols –  
Founder and Skipper forever

Reunion Planner: Ben Laurens – 192  
Highway 70 East Bettie, Beaufort, NC  
28516

Ph: 252-504-3733, Email:  
nriver@ec.rr.com

Administrative Secretary: Pat  
Bridgford- 14321 S. Locust St., Olathe, KS 66062

Ph: 913-764-1198, Email: pat.usmills@gmail.com

## **USS MILLS ANNUAL RAFFLE**

The painting of the USS MILLS underway that was obtained by Tom Link many years ago and subsequently donated to the Reunion. After the 2012 reunion, Ben realized the transportation back and forth to the reunions had taken its toll and it was in poor condition. The original frame was in pieces and there was no glass to protect the painting. Something needed to be done to preserve our iconic one of a kind painting. Ben with a friend made a new frame out of solid Walnut. In the course of this project, it struck Ben that many shipmates would want to have a painting of Mills for their homes. After much contemplation, he came up with the one pictured below. A graphic artist in Roanoke Va. copied the painting on Parchment and did a beautiful job. The frames for the copies are made of clear pine molding painted black to enhance the color of the ship and sky.

We are going to auction off one reproduction and are offering a buy it now option. The price is \$150.00 plus shipping.



### **BUY IT NOW OPTION**

**Contact Ben**

**Ben Laurens – 192 Highway 70 East  
Bettie, Beaufort, NC 28516**

**Phone 252-504-3733,**

**Email [nriver@ec.rr.com](mailto:nriver@ec.rr.com)**

### **TO ENTER THE RAFFLE**

**SEND IN THE COUPONS ON  
THE BACK OF THIS PAGE**

**\$5.00 PER ENTRY OR 5 ENTRIES FOR  
\$20.00**

**Do not need to be present to win. We will ship to the winner at no cost to you.**

**\$5.00 PER ENTRY OR 5 ENTRIES FOR \$20.00**

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

**Please make checks payable to**

**Gary Bridgford**

**14321 S LOCUST ST**

**OLATHE, KS 66062**



Please send  
Pics to add  
To this page  
Pat.usmills  
@gmail.com

