

# CAMBRIA PRESS NEWS

Volume 13 Issue 1

January 2010

## OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF USS CAMBRIA



### Special Points of Interest

- See what some of your shipmates had to say about hitchhiking. Read the cover story.
- Your Coordinator's Message is on page two.
- Dates for the 2010 reunion are announced on page two. Plan your spring vacation and be part of the reunion.
- A letter from Frederick Smith on page 3 reminds us of just how long-lasting a Navy friendship can be.
- Ramon Stafford gives the Treasurer's Report on page three. He also has some sad news to share.
- Larry Eckard has a suggestion to consider for your 2011 reunion. See page four.

## ADVENTURES IN HITCHHIKING

*Editor's Note: In an e-mail to everyone I asked for stories about hitchhiking while in the Navy. Here are the responses:*

### Frank Keifer:

Here is a story from the time my brother (John Keifer) and I served aboard Cambria. We were authorized leave to go to Adrian, Michigan from Norfolk, Virginia, and we had purchased tickets via rail for the trip. Can't recall the exact dates now, but do recall it was during the winter months, no holidays involved. We got home alright; enjoyed our stay with the folks and come time to make our train south for our return, we were late in arriving at the Toledo, Ohio train depot by about a half hour. Our options just wouldn't get us back to the ship in time prior to our leave expiration, so we got some road maps of the area and proceeded southeast down through Ohio to West Virginia and Virginia. Recall there wasn't much road traffic at this time of the evening, so we got a ride out of Toledo, luckily headed toward Charleston, WV. Not much open to warm our bones, so we headed for the local post office, and fortunately they had the steam type radiators in the lobby, which we enjoyed immensely. Once we got warm

again, we headed out in a direct line for Norfolk and got a ride to Beckley, Virginia, arriving in the wee hours of the a.m., no money, not much open in the small community. We found one hotel that was open. The woman manager took pity on both of us and let us spend the night in her facility free, which we greatly appreciated. Next morning, of course, we were up early and back on the road en route to Norfolk. I do believe we made it back aboard a day late in the p.m. The executive officer, of course, was ticked as we had no means of communicating with the ship while on the road. The ship was not scheduled for any trips out to sea, but we hurried back as quickly as we could, cold weather being the main drawback in the mountains about 85% of the time on the back roads. Fortunately, we didn't run into any moonshine stands alongside the road for a "warmer-upper," but we were a day late when we were both interviewed by the then Exec Officer John Philbin Conway, Commander. He was nice enough to excuse both of us for our tardy return and ordered us back to work. At the time I was working for the Commanding Officer, Captain Edwin Stanisbury Schanze, in his office. He too

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asked us about our odyssey for our return and lectured us on the term "allowing time" for meeting one's commitments when traveling.

Being both lower pay grade, there wasn't an overabundance of greenbacks at one's finger tips to utilize for whatever one might have wanted, so the entire experience of meeting kindly residents along the return leg sure came in handy in guaranteeing our safe return to the Cambria and our duty stations.

We remained aboard the Cambria until its decommissioning on June 30, 1949 at which time we were reassigned to new ships on the East Coast, USS Furse (DDR-882) and USS Macon (CA-32).

### Frederick (Smitty) Smith, RM3:

It was Halloween, 31 Oct '69. Three of us sailors, John Arsenault (Ozzie), Jack Norton, and myself, Frederick Smith, were hitchhiking from Norfolk, VA and heading to Jack Norton's parent's house in Somerville, MA near Boston for a weekend liberty.

We were picked up by some nice pipe-smoking guy in a large, old station wagon. I believe he was a former serviceman, so he probably wanted to help us out. He had a young son with him, maybe around 8 years old. The son sat in the backseat with the three of us. We didn't have seat belts in those days. And all I remember was how the three of us sailors felt so sorry for the son who was spending his Halloween in his dad's car en route to NY.

It's just a vague memory now, as it was over 40 years ago. We were wearing our peacoats and white hats. People were just more trusting back in the good old days.

*Editor's Note: We'd love to hear more of your hitchhiking stories for the next issue. Please send them to ML&RS at the address to the right.*

## COORDINATOR'S MESSAGE

### NEW YEAR'S GREETING TO ALL:

We will soon be seeing each other in Boston and speaking for Donna and myself, we are both looking forward to being with everyone again.

I'm sorry to report that we've lost two of our members since the reunion in Virginia. Mary Ellen Burris and John Vorhees, both lost loved ones and our thoughts and prayers go out to them and to any other member of our group that I may not know about.

The reunion in Boston sounds like it is going to be most entertaining and historical. Donna and I would like to again encourage anyone who is coming to our area to please let us know and we will welcome you with open arms, as we enjoy seeing everyone that we've met over the years. I've been receiving letters and phone calls from former crew members and marines who were stationed aboard and have high hopes that we will see them in Boston. So, in closing, we'll see you all in Boston and stay safe and well.

Your shipmate and his first mate,  
Hank and Donna

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Our Reunions Work So You Don't Have To

### FINANCIAL REPORT FROM ML&RS, INC

The cost of this issue of Cambria Press News is \$419.76.



## WELCOME MAT

We are proud to announce that the following USS CAMBRIA shipmate has recently been located. Welcome Aboard and we hope to see you at the next reunion. Also, you are invited to become an active member of the Association.

**Richard Guild**  
(1966-69) ETN 2 CE Div  
21 Allen Rd  
Tewksbury, MA 01876  
978-658-6454



## TAPS

The Association was saddened to learn of the following shipmates' deaths. The entire membership extends our deepest sympathy to the families and friends of the deceased.

**Burke Kennedy**  
Died October 17, 2009

**Romeo Donofrio**  
Died November 2002

**Anthony Shonis**  
(1943-45) SC1/c Bakery  
Died July 2, 2009

**Eugene Mahoney (1947)**  
Died December 2008

**Oscar Burris (1953-57) BT2 B Div**  
Died December 17, 2009

**USS CAMBRIA  
2010 REUNION  
APRIL 15-18  
MARLBOROUGH, MA**

**BW ROYAL PLAZA HOTEL**



## MAIL CALL

Hi Karen,

I just wanted to tell you a story that may be of interest for the next USS Cambria newsletter.

My wife and I went out for lunch today and when we got back I had a message on my phone recorder. It was from my shipmate John Carlton. He's a trucker who lives in Wichita Falls, TX. He said he's in his truck and heading for Boston, MA to South Hadley, MA. And he left his cell phone number.

So I called him back and told him to stick around for awhile and I'll come visit him, as it was only 15 miles from my house here in Palmer, MA.

I found him. He had his 53-foot truck pulled up to the loading docks and was standing there with a USS Cambria ballcap that I had sent him some time ago. We've been e-

mailing each other ever since we found out each other's e-mail addresses from the USS Cambria newsletters.

I also wore a USS Cambria hat that I had ordered from the Cambria reunions. He took some photos on his cell phone. *(See photo below.)*

One guy at the loading docks noticed that we both were wearing the hats with the insignia USS Cambria (APA-36) on them. He was very inquisitive about it and thought it was so cool that the two of us could get together after 40 years since 1969 and were stationed on the ship.

We met for about 45 minutes, shook hands again and then I had to let him go as his next truck stop was in Denver, Colorado.

I've been so excited since the get together that I'm in the process of e-mailing all of my shipmate friends on-line.

Frederick "Smitty" Smith

## TREASURER'S REPORT

From the desk of treasurer  
USS Cambria APA-36

Money at the beginning of Reunion April 2009.....\$3,597.96

Money received Hats.....\$135.00

Money received for Newsletter .....\$575.00

**TOTAL.....\$4,307.96**

Money Expended  
Paid for Newsletter  
7/15/09.....\$740.16

Paid for Postage.....\$8.36

**TOTAL.....\$748.52**

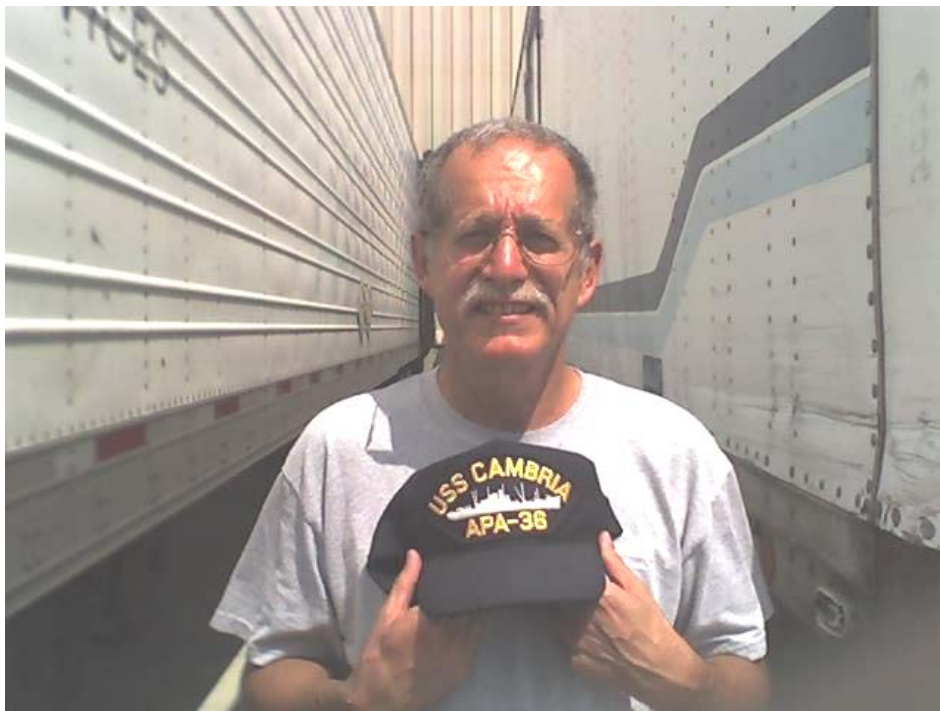
**Money on hand as of 1/6/2010  
.....\$3559.44**

It saddens me to inform you that we lost 2 of our dedicated members. Mary Vorhees passed away since the last reunion. She and John were among the first to join our reunion group in 1993. The other member of our group was Oscar Burris. He was the one that talked me into getting the reunion started. I can talk more about Oscar as he has been my friend for over 55 years. He also was my best man when Phyllis and I got married 54 years ago. It saddens me that he passed away on my anniversary, December 17.

If you have an e-mail address, please send it to me and MLRS. If you wish to have the newsletter sent to you by e-mail, please let Karen at MLRS know and that will get the cost of our newsletter down. My e-mail address is rstaford@kinex.net and Karen, who writes the newsletter, is Karen@mlrsinc.com.

At our meeting in Philadelphia, it was decided to increase our hats to \$15.00 if they are to be mailed. That includes the postage. At the reunion

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**Frederick Smith with his USS Cambria ball cap. Photo taken by shipmate John Charlton during a brief reunion.**

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the hats will stay at \$10.00. If you want a USS Cambria cap, please send a check for \$15.00 to Ramon Stafford, 5324 Tower Hill Rd, Gladstone, VA 24553.

Treasurer,  
Ramon Stafford

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## STATEMENT OF PUBLICATION

The CAMBRIA PRESS NEWS is the official publication of the USS CAMBRIA Association.

From now on it will be published twice a year, in July and January, *subject to receiving sufficient funding*. The Newsletter is funded by voluntary contributions from the membership. All members are encouraged to support the voice of the PRESS NEWS. If the newsletter funds custodian provides the information, a financial statement will appear in each issue of the newsletter. Contributions to the newsletter fund should be sent directly to: Ramon Stafford, 5324 Tower Hill Rd, Gladstone, VA 24553. The editors will bill the custodian after each issue is published.

The Press News is intended to be a vehicle for the members to express opinions, make suggestions and especially share experiences.

Unless otherwise stated, the views and opinions printed in the newsletter are those of the article's writer, and do not necessarily represent the opinion of the Association leadership or the Editor.

All letters and stories submitted will be considered for publication, except unsigned letters will not be published. Letters requesting the writer's name be withheld will be honored, but published on a space available basis. Signed letters with no restrictions will be given priority.

Letters demeaning to another shipmate will not be printed; letters espousing a political position will not be printed.

The editor reserves the right to edit letters to conform to grammar, and/or space limitations.

You are encouraged to actively participate in the newsletter family, by submitting your articles and stories directly to the editor.

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## FROM ML&RS, INC

OK Guys, here it is! We have found an outstanding reunion site for you – Plano, Texas! Your first question is probably “Where the heck is Plano, Texas”? It is a suburb of Dallas in proximity to all of the major Dallas-Ft Worth attractions. Historic downtown Plano holds something for everyone....shopping, dining, nightlife, culture, etc. Unique and one-of-a-kind of stores and boutiques line the brick street. In addition to shopping you can stop for a bite to eat and one of the many eateries located downtown or a drink after a hard days touring or shopping.

You owe it to yourself to consider Plano for your next reunion; you'll never regret the decision to allow Plano to host your 2011 reunion. We here at ML & RS, Inc heartily endorse Plano!

As your reunion planner for many years, you know we have never so enthusiastically endorsed any reunion site. Since this is an endorsement of Plano, not of a specific hotel, all we'll say about accommodations you will be more than pleased.

Some groups have actually extended their reunion by a day just to take advantage of everything that is available. Let me tell you, in no particular order, just a few of the things that are waiting for you in and around Plano; how much you do depends on how long you stay in Plano.

Southfork Ranch, home to the Ewings is probably the most famous place in Plano and no visit to the area would be complete without Southfork on your agenda. You can tour the famed Ewing Mansion and re-live exciting moments from the series in the "Dallas Legends" exhibit, featuring an exciting array of memorabilia from the series. See the gun that shot J.R., Lucy's Wedding Dress, the "Dallas" Family Tree, and Jock's Lincoln Continental. Relax on a guided tour of the ranch grounds. Eat at Miss Ellie's Deli and shop in two themed retail

stores, offering a diverse selection of clothing, accessories, gifts, and collectibles. You will want to plan in advance for the famous South Fork Chuck Wagon-style buffet followed by some cowboy music. This is a special event for groups, not to be confused with the dinner that is open to the public. Anyone who doesn't love a Southfork evening is unTexan!

For a taste of Texas night-life there is “Billy Bob's Texas” the world's largest “Country Music Honky-Tonk” where you ride and shoot the bull. Food is excellent, and there really is live bull riding right in the club – and be sure to take advantage of the photo bull. Did I forget to mention the live entertainment?

For the cowboys in the group a visit to the Ft Worth Stockyard Historic District is a must. Here you can see a real cattle drive. For the drovers heading longhorn cattle up the Chisholm Trail to the railheads, Fort Worth was the last major stop for rest and supplies. Beyond Fort Worth they would have to deal with crossing the Red River into Indian Territory. Between 1866 and 1890 more than four million head of cattle were trailed through Fort Worth which was soon known as “Cowtown” and had its own disreputable entertainment district several blocks south of the Courthouse area that was known all over the West as “Hell's Half Acre”, now the beautiful Fort Worth Water Gardens.

For the more serious minded, you'll want see Dealey Square, the site of President Kennedy's assassination. See where the President was gunned down, visit the building the fatal shots were fired from, see the Courthouse where Jack Ruby shot Lee Harvey Oswald. All things and more are awaiting you and the cost is no more than you've been paying. Give it a try!

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