

Fred T. Berry Reunion 2014

By Meg Peeler
Wife of "Doc" Peeler

Smiles and hugs were shared...old friends were catching up on others' lives...new friends were welcomed...sea stories were even bigger this year. Though many of us had not seen our Fred T. Berry family for a while, most caught up as easily as if we had just talked yesterday.

Virginia Beach was the setting for the Fred T. Berry's 29th reunion and the day of registration was balmy and sunny. Many of us visited into the night with shipmates and spouses enjoying the hospitality room provided for just that purpose.

On Friday morning after a very early breakfast, we loaded the buses and enjoyed a visit to Fort Story. Cape Henry is where the first English settlers landed before beginning their lives in Jamestown. The walk to the beach was invigorating and the lighthouses, both old and new, were very picturesque.

Next was a visit to Naval Air Station Oceana. The jets were deafening, but it was interesting watching and hearing them take off. And then it was lunch on our own. Bravo's was our choice and we ate outside enjoying the beautiful weather and the ambiance.

The afternoon was spent at a Military Air Museum that was amazing. We saw US planes from World Wars I and II as well as planes from Germany, Russia and Japan to name a few. All the planes were in running order and many were part of air shows that were held there. Our guide was very enthusiastic and informative and the time flew by.

Traffic was slow on the return trip to our hotel, and John Titsworth started our meeting as soon as we returned. The two issues discussed were 1) keeping the cost of the reunions down and 2) where to have the next reunion. Our reunions have been very inexpensive because of the work that has been done for the past fifteen years by John and Toni Titsworth and their wonderful volunteers. The group seemed to agree that if an increase is needed, that is certainly not a problem. We realize that many ships reunions are being handled outside by professionals (who I might add don't do as good a job as our two "volunteer professionals and their team,") and the costs are really high. John also asked that everyone email or write him concerning where they would like to go for the next reunion. Please do this ASAP.

We all enjoyed our evening meal and the camaraderie, and missed our shipmates who have passed on and their families. Our shipmates who were unable to be there whether it was health problems, conflicts, or other issues were also missed and we hope that we can all be together next year.

Saturday's adventures included more touring. The Mariners Museum, lunch at McArthurs Square and Norfolk Botanical Gardens was the plan of the day and then it was picture taking time (handled very nicely by the Greenburg's who were so kind to help us out again this year. Ed and Norma Teagle were recognized for running our ship's store. (Dick and Donna Enright's flight was cancelled and they were unable to come.)

Elaine Brothers resumed her "volunteer?" ticket selling for the drawings of fun prizes which provided over \$2,000 in revenue for the next FTB reunion. Norma Teagle and Val Patti and a group of young people helped in calling numbers and distributing the winnings as the numbers were drawn. The evening was not over and many of the attendees shared goodbyes in the hospitality room as well as at breakfast the next morning.

Thank you all for wonderful memories. Don't forget to send your thoughts concerning the location of our 30th reunion to John and Toni.

See ya' next year!