



USS LEXINGTON CV16

49 YEARS OF SERVICE

NOW THE USS LEXINGTON MUSEUM ON THE BAY IN CORPUS CHRISTI,

NOVEMBER 2025

Memories... *By: Greg Plante, Editor*

As we get older, we often take solace in memories of our youth. For me, one of the strongest is my time aboard the USS Lexington, AVT16.

They begin while I was stationed aboard NAS Pensacola. A friend and I went down to the Allegheny pier to see where she berthed (she was out at the time) and I remember thinking "hmmmm, I wonder to which end of this long pier she ties up." We came back after one of her returns, as I had never seen a carrier thus far, and I was gobsmacked at her immensity. She took up the whole darned thing!

Later, when it came time for my first assignment to sea duty, I like many at the mercy of Navy Detailer wisdom had put three very far flung overseas shore options, and ended up instead, on Lexington, which was really better for us financially and logistically. We didn't even have to move.

Checking aboard, I remember coming aboard at the afterbrow, paranoid that I may have forgotten the proper protocol for coming aboard a US Naval vessel, and then entering into the cavernous hangar bay. Now where do I go? I stopped someone walking by: "Excuse me, where do I find Personnel?" It was conveniently located nearby. So close, even I couldn't get lost. I entered the space, and my first observation was that my head was almost touching the overhead suspended ceiling they installed, I guess in an effort to make it more office-like. A Master Chief (cue the paranoia again) came to me at the counter, and in my nervousness I voiced my observation. "Wow... you have a really low ceiling in here!" I barely finished my statement, when I quickly received a bellowing "CEILING!? You're on a ship, airman! Get out of my office until you know what you're talking about!" Well... at least I got first impressions taken care of right from the start. Way to go, Plante... I exited back into the hangar bay looking for any passing shipmate that could possibly take pity on me and quickly bring me up to speed on just what was my great faux pas. Newly educated, I re-entered Personnel, and quizzed by the afore-

mentioned Master Chief as to whether I was any smarter, responded that I had indeed misspoke, and was just surprised at how close I was to the OVERHEAD. It was apparently deemed acceptable, I was checked in, and someone was assigned to get me to OC Division in Air Ops to finish check in.

The hangar bay; after checking in with personnel and checking my feelings of being overwhelmed at taking it all in, I would have to say that my first indelible memory would be the smell of the ship. I remember many times coming home after a deployment, I was usually greeted by a bride not as enamored by that smell telling me "Ugh, you smell like the ship... go change your clothes". The "smell". Machine oil, Marine diesel, paint, and dare I say faint undertones of over 40 years of blood, sweat and tears of former shipmates from her long and storied history, combined into a cocktail of an olfactory experience that is imprinted on my mind and memory to this day. I remember visiting her for the first time after being gone from her almost 20 years, and the first experience I had coming aboard was the still present smell that immediately transported me back in time. I found it comforting. Like coming home to the smell of mom's cooking after being a long time away. My bride? While was in an "Ahhhhh" moment, she was in an "Ughhhh" moment. She still hadn't warmed up to it thru the passing years, and we still enjoy laughing about it.

It is usually the start of a long line of memories for me. The smell as I passed the bakery in the early morning hours of my obligatory lower deck watch; the coffee urns on the mess decks, of whose elixir I often availed myself on those same watches; early morning recovery from the morning launch telling me it was time to rise and shine. It was hard to miss, as our berthing area was right next to the hydraulics for the number three arresting cable, and right under the flight deck. The phrase "rock the house" easily comes to mind.

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Sunrise Press - Triannual Publication USS LEXINGTON ASSOCIATION CV1, CVA16, CVS16, CVT16, AVT16

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USS LEXINGTON CV 16 ASSOCIATION

Executive Officers:

President: Christopher Hagger
Vice President: Alfrieda Denson
Treasurer: Eric Friedli
Secretary: Greg Plante

Appointed Positions

Chaplain: Christopher Hagger
Sunrise Press Editor, Webmaster, and
Data Base Tech: Greg Plante
Historian: (open)

WEBSITE: www.usslexingtoncv16.org



Office of the Treasurer

Treasurer: Eric Friedli

Membership Dues: \$25/year
Due by Dec. 31st.

Make checks payable to:
USS Lexington Association

Send Dues to Eric or Pay Online

MAIL to: Eric Friedli

12734 19th Ave NE Seattle, WA98125

PAY ONLINE: website: usslexingtoncv16.org

CLICK: "Dues and Donation"



A Note from the Editor:

Have you read an interesting article or story recently? Or maybe have some memorabilia from your time on the LEX?

Share it with your shipmates!

Just send them to me and I'll

print them in the Sunrise Press including a by-line to credit you with the submission.

My postal address is:

23428 College Ave. Robertsedale, AL 36567

For electronic submissions, email me at:

editor@usslexingtoncv16.org

Greg Plante, Editor of the Sunrise Press

Sunrise Press - EMAIL Version:

The email version is better than the printed, with color graphics & pictures, e-links and more.

For those receiving the email version of the Sunrise Press: You will receive an email stating that the Press is available for viewing on the website. Follow the link to the Association website where you can view or download the current issue of the Sunrise Press.

www.usslexingtoncv16.org

**2026 Reunion
USS Lexington Association
September 28th - 30th**

Corpus Christi

Continued from page 1 - Memories

The friends made, the hijinks engaged in that I won't repeat in case there are statutes of limitations not yet reached, the feel of the ocean's swells beneath my feet as we operated in the Gulf of Mexico setting record after record for launches and recoveries that likely will not be matched for a long time. The feeling that the Lady Lex was somehow a living, sentient being proving to the world that she still had a role to play in our Navy after all of these years.

After all of these years..... She turns 83 years old this year, and though she hasn't plied the waters deep for over 32 of those years, her job is still not finished as she rests pier-side in Corpus Christi, Texas, teaching and inspiring awe in the many visitors that enter her hangar deck and interior spaces for a tour, and to learn both her proud history, and that of the Navy in general, as well as that of the brave American men through the centuries that served aboard ships in all of the earth's seas to preserve our freedom. I can't wait for our reunion September 28th-30th this year, and to return "home" once again. I hope my memories jogged your own, inspiring a sentimental longing in you to want to join us, and also hope to see you there.

NOTE: I would like to encourage our fellow shipmates to share some of their own memories of the Lexington for publication in our newsletter. Are you a bad speller? Is your grammar or punctuation challenging? Do these things keep you from wanting to share? Let me help. I will gladly proof and edit your submissions to make them flow better if indeed they even need the help. None of us are Pulitzer Prize winners. But your memories preserved for posterity for others to enjoy... What a contribution you can still make to your shipmates, and enrich the quality of our community and it's newsletter.

Wait... What happened to Memphis?

You may be scratching your head and wondering what happened to Memphis. Well, the long and short of it, is that we had VERY few people signed up for it. Very few. Count them on two hands and have fingers left over, few.

Was it the venue? Dunno. The dates? Dunno, again. Loss of spirit? Still dunno....

But what we DO know, is that compared to our last two reunions that were enthusiastically attended, it was apparently of no interest to our members. So, We are now going with a tried and true venue for our next reunion, because it's almost like a homecoming.... Corpus Christi.

I'm sure we'll have plenty of fun, as well as an engaging business meeting as we attempt to get feedback from our members as to what it is they are looking for from our association.

The reunions are really very important. I dare say vitally so. We make no product (save for this newsletter), we don't really even "sell" anything except camaraderie. We exist to unite, reunite, and forge bonds with our former shipmates. There is really no real way to do this outside of holding annual reunions. Sure, if a group of you live near each other and want to get together, that's fun, but other than that, we need our reunions to accomplish this.

I'm sure that if we surveyed our members, and

asked why they joined the Association, we'd get a broad range of answers. To meet with fellow crewmates with whom we share similar experiences, out of nostalgia, even just missing having that corpus of the brotherhood that we share as members of the best darned navy in the world. But in the end, it exists to gather together and lift each other up. In our memories of former shipmates no longer with us, in our shared experiences, in our affirmations that we are part of a close knit brother (and sister) hood that are there for each other now, as much as when we were when stationed aboard Lexington.

Our very existence as an association is to associate ourselves with each other. Without reunions we cannot do that. Without reunions, even this newsletter is of no real use.

We ask that you commit, if possible, to attend with us. We also ask that those of you not paying your dues, do so. Because they, too, go towards our viability in being able to meet. Dues are so far down right now from previous years, its scary if extrapolated out to the future. It's like watching your blood steadily drip out onto the floor with no stopping in sight. Please be dedicated to your shipmates. \$25 a YEAR is not going to make you miss a meal. We lose that in our couch cushions and car consoles....

We look forward to seeing you in Corpus Christi.

Marcella Wheatley

Help us keep our "TAPS" records up to date...

We need your help. Our only way of knowing our members have passed, is if someone tells us. We ask that you please notify us of any members who are no longer with us so we can update our records and honor our deceased shipmates in the Sunrise Press.

Email notifications to: editor@usslexingtoncv16.org

Snail Mail to: Greg Plante, 23428 College Ave, Robertsedale, AL 36567



WELCOME ABOARD: NEW MEMBERS

Marshall Young

Onboard: 12/74 - 12/77

B Div #1 Boiler Room

Richard Kirvan, Jr

Onboard 4/88 - 8/90

Hab/ R

USS Lexington CV16 Association: MEMBERSHIP

The Association welcomes all shipmates, navy, marines, Ships Company, air group personnel who served at some time on a USS Lexington CV 16 (all her designations) or on the USS Lexington CV 2.

Dues are \$20/year, and due at the end of each year. Dues can be paid online at: www.usslexingtoncv16.org

Dues paid by mail: **Make checks payable to :USS Lexington Association**

Send your dues to: Eric Friedli, 12734 19th Ave NE, Seattle, WA 981125



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello my USS Lexington brothers and sisters, this morning when I opened my eyes to a brand-new day I thought for a brief moment of the magnitude of our journey as an Association. I thought of how we have been blessed through the years to have accomplished so much with the small group of men and women that served aboard. I hope down in my heart that we certainly have a turnout worthy of all the efforts that are being poured into our next reunion.

Sometimes, when I look at the condition of our Union and the direction that we seem to be going (my personal observation), I get concerned deep in my heart. I wish our younger generation understood the price that was paid and is still being paid by veterans of yesteryears. On a grand scale, this is what our reunions represent. A reminder of the reason why we gave ourselves to protect, to serve, to learn, and to grow. Protect our country from enemies foreign and domestic; to serve those less fortunate than us, giving them a leg up to accomplish the impossible and become a vital part of the fabric of this great country. To learn from each other and learn from our mistakes of yesterday. To learn that we are the same and we can grow from each other's history and the strength of our ancestor's teaching. I am reminded of a poem by Sara Teasdale that was so beautifully referenced in Ray Bradbury's writing: There will come soft rains...

**"There will come soft rains and the smell of the ground,
And swallows circling with their shimmering sound;
And frogs in the pools singing at night,
And wild plum trees in tremulous white;
Robins will wear their feathery fire,
Whistling their whims on a low fence wire;
And not one will know of the war, not one
Will care at last when it is done.
Not one would mind, neither bird nor tree,
if mankind perished utterly;
And Spring herself, when she woke at dawn
Would scarcely know that we were gone."**

Let us reach as many as we can that have served on Lady-Lex
Inviting them to their reunion, our reunion. So, we can talk, laugh, remember and love each other.

Fraternally yoursChristopher Hagger

Let's Get Together in Corpus Christi Home of the USS Lexington Museum on the Bay

The Omni Hotel will be the venue for our 2026 Reunion.

Located in the downtown Marina District, the hotel offers luxurious guestrooms with spectacular views of the Corpus Christi Bay.

HOTEL INFORMATION **OMNI, CORPUS CHRISTI**





LOCATION: 2914 North Shoreline Boulevard

LATITUDE: 27.815073

LONGITUDE: 97.388703

Attractions:
Escape Rooms
The Flight Deck
3D MEGA Theater
Pearl Harbor Exhibit
Scale Models
Flight Simulator

<https://usslexington.com/attractions/pearl-harbor-exhibit/>



Area Attraction Things to Do and See



The South Texas Botanical Gardens & Nature Center is a nonprofit, 180-acre botanical garden and nature center located at 8545 South Staples, Corpus Christi, Texas. It is open daily. Major exhibits include an arid garden; Exhibit House with bromeliads, cycads, cacti, and succulents; hibiscus garden; hummingbird garden; landscape demonstration beds; orchid house with more than 3000 orchids; a major collection of more than 100 plumeria varieties; contemporary rose garden with a large pavilion; sensory garden; and water garden. The site also contains a mesquite nature trail through 30 acres of brush. It features some 35 species of woody trees and shrubs, herbs, grasses, and cacti, as well as white-tailed deer, collared peccaries, and coyotes.



The Texas State Aquarium is a nonprofit aquarium located in Corpus Christi, Texas. It is dedicated to promoting environmental conservation and rehabilitation of the wildlife of the Gulf of Mexico. It has been accredited by the Association of Zoos and Aquariums since 1995. It is the largest aquarium in Texas and one of the largest aquariums in the United States.



The Art Museum of South Texas is celebrating 50 years on the Corpus Christi Bay. The original complex, designed by world-renowned architect Philip Johnson, opened to the public in October of 1972. To honor our past, celebrate our present, and plan for our future, we have created an exciting selection of exhibitions and educational programs. We are honored to serve as THE fine arts institution for the Coast Bend region. Welcoming over 100,00 visitors annually, we strive to provide a unique selection of cultural offerings for our guests.

HERITAGE PARK

Heritage Park is Corpus Christi's historic park which hosts and supports many art and cultural activities, as well as a variety of community events throughout the year. Come and step back in time at this historic cultural center where several Victorian-style homes now stand.

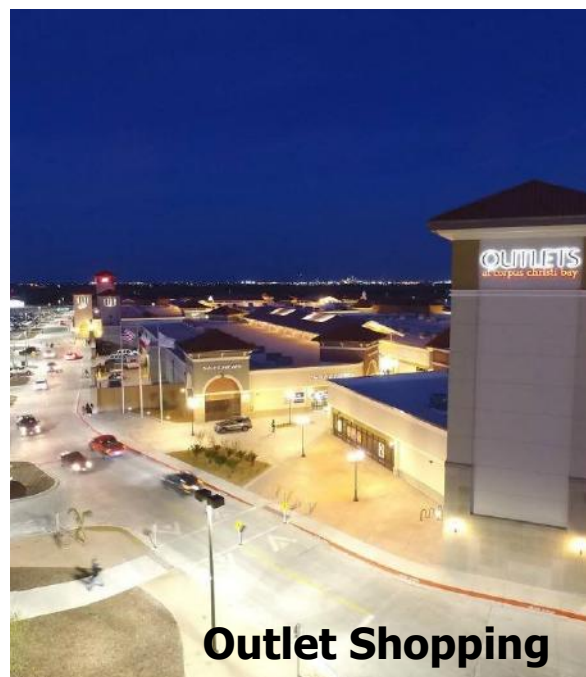
Address: 1581 N. Chaparral Street

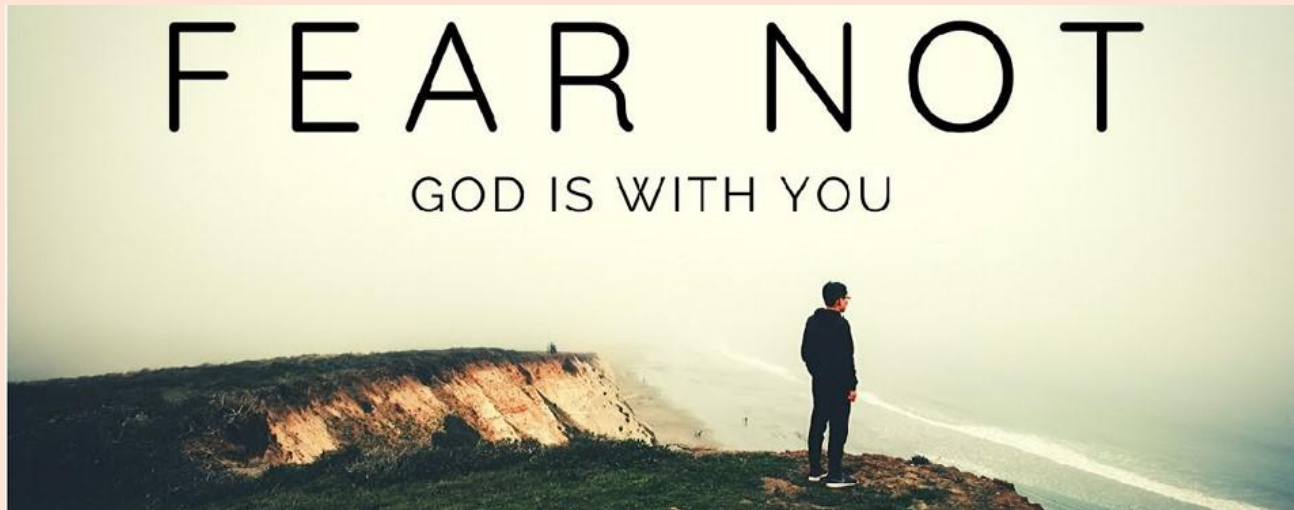
There are twelve historical Corpus Christi homes located in Heritage Park. Many of these are recorded Texas Historical Landmarks, the oldest one dating back to 1851. Each home pays tribute to the area's ethnic and cultural diversity. If you are interested in learning more about the history of Corpus Christi, visiting Heritage Park is an excellent place to begin your history lesson.

Corpus Christi Shopping

Walk through a shark's mouth to find a souvenir, or shop designers at the Outlet Stores. Or maybe a stroll through the Antiques Shops..... You'll find lots to do in the area.

Shopping





Today, I was speaking with a young lady whose husband has found out he has cancer. She shared that he has been showing some signs of being hurt, and angry, questioning why he has been struck with such a disease. As I listen to her and felt her heartfelt concern for her husband, I thought of something that I had experienced many years ago. I often tell this story to as many as want to hear it.

I told her that when I was twelve, I asked my mother to go to a friend of mine's house to play. She said I could go and so I walked to his house to enjoy things that twelve-year-old boys do; like wrestle, and play king of the mountain. As it goes, we begin to act like we knew Karate and begin kicking at each other like Kung Fu. Well, he accidentally kicked me in the stomach and knocked the wind out of me. I fell to the ground because I couldn't breathe. Was I afraid? Of course, I was afraid. Did I do anything wrong, like disobey my mother, or not take out the trash? No, it was none of these. In life things just happen, not because of something you did or have not done. But I did realize while lying on my back that I needed someone to help me breathe again. I had to trust them to help me breathe again.

In life, we go through some changes that can really take our breath away. Death, a sudden illness, or just bad news. I just want to encourage my brothers and sisters of the USS Lexington, as this country goes through its hiccups, don't lose faith in your core belief. And those around you including us as shipmates can help you breathe again.

Yours In Service, Chaplain Christopher Hagger

Chaplain Hagger pastors All People Worship Center in Odessa, Texas .

He also oversees the operation at All People Hospice and Healthcare.

Contact: Address: 4745 N. Sierra Ave, Odessa, TX 79764 — Phone: 432-258-7751 / FAX: 432-381-5272 / Cell: 832-312-0892



Word Search

The words in this puzzle are found throughout this issue of the Sunrise Press



BANQUET
BREATHE
CHAPARRAL
ENTERTAINMENT
HERITAGE
HISTORY
HOSPITALITY
INDELIBLE
MEMORIES

MUSEUM
OUTLET
PEARLHARBOR
PENSACOLA
PERSONNEL
POSTERITY
RECEPTION
SCHOFIELD
SENTIMENTAL

SEPTEMBER
SHORELINE
SIMULATOR
SWELLS
TREMULOUS
WHISTLING
WRESTLE



Arlo and Janis

BY: Jimmy Johnson



Online viewers, can't get enough of these characters? Click the Arlo and Janis logo, and it'll take you to the artists personal blog page.



'RIGHT OFF THE BAT LET ME SAY I'M A PEOPLE PERSON, I LOVE PEOPLE, AND I WILL CRUCIFY ANYONE WHO INTERFERES WITH THAT.'

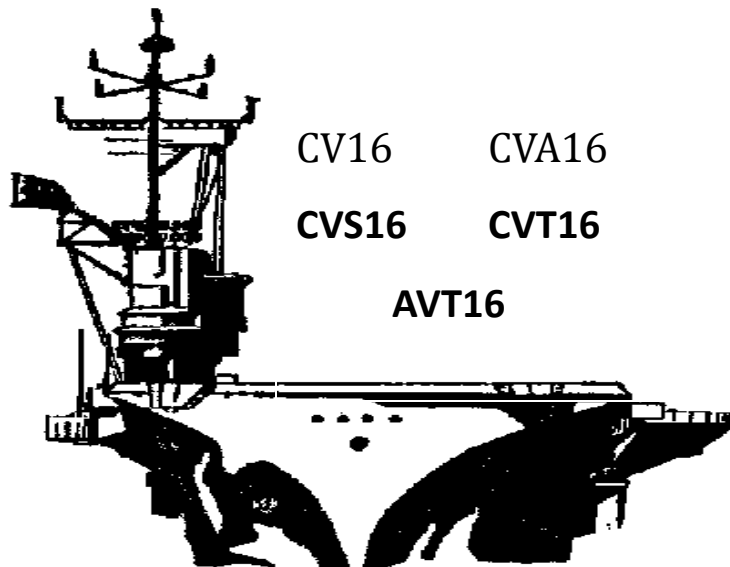


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USS LEXINGTON

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