

**Grey Eagles & TWA 2016 Convention
New Orleans, LA**

**Convention Report
TWA Retired Pilots Association - Captain Dusty West
Grey Eagles President - Captain Melanie Jarvi**

The first joint land based convention with the TWA Retired Pilots Association and the retired pilots from American Airlines "The Grey Eagles" was held in New Orleans from October 28th through November 4, 2016. The headquarters hotel was the Hotel Monteleone on Royal Street with a contracted room rate was \$149 for the major convention nights. The US Air Soaring Eagles were also invited and 12 guests attended from this association of retired pilots.

The location of the hotel was ideal. Centered on Royal Street allowed easy access to all the restaurants, specialty shopping, live music, coffee & beignets, and of course the novelty of Bourbon Street was just around the corner.

A total of 294 guests registered and attended the event.

233 Grey Eagles - 79%

49 TWA - 17%

12 Soaring Eagles - 4%

The group picked up a total of 690 room nights over 7 days. We had quite a few terrific events that will be highlighted below.

City & Cemetery Tour - 138 guests on Monday & Thursday

Cajun Encounters of New Orleans provided this private tour including all the highlights of the city. Our guests visited Jackson Square, St. Louis Cathedral, the Garden District with the beautiful architecture of the Antebellum Era and the above ground cemeteries. In addition the tragedy of Hurricane Katrina was addressed with a visit to the 9th Ward. The tour concluded with a scrumptious lunch at Huck Finn's Café.

Steamboat Natchez - 227 guests

Cruising down the Mississippi River Boat, listening to live jazz, and enjoying a Mint Julep is certainly the best way to spend a day in New Orleans. The majority of our guests included the Steamboat Natchez on their visit to the "Big Easy". The cruise with a delicious buffet of local cuisine was thoroughly enjoyed by all.

Auxiliary Members Tea - 40 guests

This event is a special opportunity for us to welcome and get to know our widows. Their lives were forever intertwined with the airline and they are always welcome at the convention. The hotel served scrumptious beignets and coffee at the one hour hosted event. The ladies always seem to enjoy this opportunity to get to know one another.

Welcome Reception - 272 guests

What a terrific “Mardi Gras” themed party we had for our Welcome Reception! Greeted by two beautiful showgirls, entertained by strolling magicians, intriguing tarot card reader and palm readers, add unlimited cocktails and a vast array of amazing food and we started our convention out in style! Special thanks to all of the volunteers that made the evening so special. Especially the bartenders who worked tirelessly for the entire evening....Ilse & Bob Dedman, Gene York, Ed & Stephanie Cook and J.C. Farrell....our thanks!

Oak Alley Plantation- 64 guests

This historic mansion is representative of the grandeur and privilege of living on a southern plantation in the 1800’s. The tour included a guided tour of the mansion and grounds and a special buffet lunch of local fare.

National WWII Museum - 241 guests

Considered one of the highlights of the week was our day and evening at the National WWII Museum. Guests were invited to tour the myriad of exhibits, galleries, and experiences throughout the day. We were treated to a private showing of the 4D movies “Beyond All Boundaries” (produced and narrated by Tom Hanks) then escorted to the Freedom Pavilion for our private event. We were greeted by 3 lovely USO ladies “The Liberty Bells” singing patriotic music from the 1940’s. A special presentation was provided by the museum collections manager followed with a delightful buffet dinner. Many guests have said this event was one of their favorites of the week.

Honey Island Swamp Tour - 126 guests

No doubt this tour is truly unique to the southern bayou. Visiting alligators and learning how the people living the Cajun country was an experience enjoyed by many. The event was topped off with a Muffaletta sandwich at the Southside Café in Slidell, Louisiana. You won’t find an event like this anywhere except the south!

Banquet dinner - 230 guests

Entertained by Dr. Jazz and his six piece live band made the evening very special. We had a full ballroom with dinner, dancing and a special presentation by the new President of the Allied Pilots Association, Captain Dan Carey. The evening wouldn’t have been as beautiful or fun without the amazing centerpieces designed and created by Susy Madigan (Captain Ed Madigan’s lovely wife). The hats and saxophones were all over including everyone on the dance floor. It was a great evening enjoyed by all.

Special Mention - Joint Hospitality Suite - Riverview Room

2016 was the first year the hotel allowed us to bring in our own beverages into a public meeting room. The hotel provided the Riverview Room on the 16th floor with a beautiful view of the Mississippi River. This joint hospitality suite was a great success. Almost everyone commented that having the entire group together was a great idea. It allowed for the Grey Eagles from every domicile to spend time together and guests to mingle with the “other” groups and created a great opportunity to meet new friends. The

Grey Eagles, TWA and Soaring Eagles all enjoyed being together every evening together and certainly many new friendships were formed. Again, there is no doubt the success was due primarily to the hosts including Bob & Ilse Dedman, Stephanie & Ed Cook, and J.C. Farrell.

Special Thanks to the Registration Room Volunteers -

Many wives of the Grey Eagles and TWA work for weeks in advance and during the entire convention to prepare, organize and greet our guests in the Registration Room. Special thanks to Lee West, Gail York, Helen Wilder, Carolyn Landbeck, and Connie Brooks for their time and efforts.

Congratulations to President Dusty West for a tremendously successful convention. Captain Dusty West and his lovely wife Lee worked for a year planning, organizing, and promoting the 2016 convention in New Orleans. Job well done!

See you all in San Diego in 2017!

Submitted by: Vicki McGowen, Meeting Planner