

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 21, No. 1

March 2010

**Officers:**

**John Reynolds, Chairman, Board of Directors; John Reynolds, President;**

**Dudley Cass, Secretary-Treasurer;**

**Ruth & Dudley Cass, Reunion Chairman;**

**Kathy Spatz, Newsletter Editor; Ken Noble, Web Master**



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

San Francisco here we come!

Things are looking good. The Double Tree Hotel is at the airport and the shuttle will pick us up at no cost and take you to the hotel. The Bart is handy and will take you pretty much anywhere you want to go. Dudley and Ruth have lined up some great tours for us. Scheduling the tours has been a bit of a problem. They want their money up front so we have to guess how many will be on each tour. Please if you know which tours you will be going on sign up for them as soon as possible. It's a bit scary trying to order buses etc. and hope that it will all work out ok. Once we order the buses if they don't fill up we have to pay for them. I know it's hard sometimes to know at what point you want to order your tours, but hopefully we can work it all out before we have to lose money.

A buffet breakfast comes complimentary each morning, which helps out a little on the wallet.

It's been a while since I have hit the streets of San Francisco, but it will bring up lots of memories of the days we were at Hunters Point. I am looking forward to seeing you all again, and hope you will be able to make it to reunion #21. The trip through the wine country will make it all worth while. I have made that trip a couple of times, and its one trip you want to make when somebody else is doing the driving. Thank God for busses. See you all in Frisco.

JR

**HAPPY ST. PATRICK'S DAY TO ALL!**



### NEW MEMBERS (since November 2009)

Albert Brown SF1 65-66 Ashley, OH  
Mike C. Wallace FTM3 66-67 Black Mountain, NC  
John Mitchell LTJG 66-67 Frankfort, OH  
Philip Cinelli MR3 60-62 Marlton, NJ  
Gus Wickstrom RD3 68-69 Monroeville, PA  
Jerre Ott EM3 68-69 San Diego, CA  
Michael Crowell SN 60-63 Centuria WI  
Ken Svoboda EM3 64-66 Fairbanks, AK  
Steve Waclo FT3 63-65 Carson City, NV

### TAPS

Frank Singer CWO 60-64 San Diego, CA (2010)  
Robert Schramm GSC 61-62 Orange, CA (2009)  
Archie Staines BT3 60-63 Burbank, CA (2002)  
David Bills SN 60-63 London, OH (2009)  
James Tracy BT3 64-66 Menifee, CA (2009)





The park is cool, shaded and moist year round. Daytime temperatures at Muir Woods average between 40 and 70 degrees Fahrenheit.

Join us for this spectacular tour on Friday, September 17<sup>th</sup>.

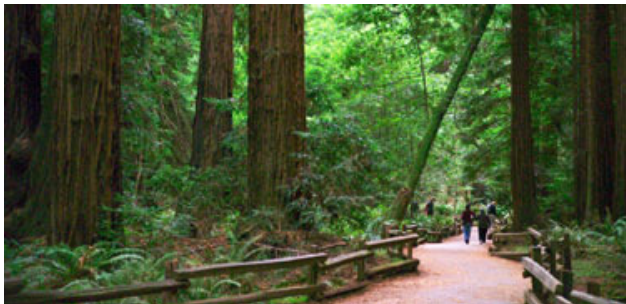


## DINNER DANCE CRUISE

### WHAT YOU GET

- 2.5-hour yacht cruise
- Three-course dinner with choice of entrée and dessert
- Wine and cocktails available for purchase on board
- Live music and dancing
- Scenic San Francisco Bay views

Join the Topeka Reunion on Thursday, September 16<sup>th</sup> for an awesome opportunity to enjoy the scenery while dining and dancing the evening away!



## MUIR WOODS NATIONAL MONUMENT

Muir Woods National Monument is a part of the Golden Gate National Recreation Area (GGNRA), one of the largest urban national parks in the world. GGNRA was established in 1972 and contains 75,398 acres extend from Tomales Bay in Marin County to San Mateo County in the south, encompassing 59 miles of shoreline - one of the nation's largest coastal preserves.

## GLORIA FERRER WINERY

During the 2010 reunion join us in a Sonoma Winery Tour on Wednesday, September 15<sup>th</sup>. We will travel through Sonoma and tour the Viansa, Jacuzzi and Gloria Ferrer wineries.

For more than 20 years, Gloria Ferrer Caves & Vineyards—the first sparkling wine house in the Sonoma Carneros region—has invited visitors to discover cool-climate wines served with warm Spanish hospitality.

Owned by the Ferrer family, whose wine experience is rooted in 19th century Spain, our winery is a vibrant blend of Catalan and California mission design. We cultivate fruit for our premium quality sparkling and still wines in our 335 acres of estate vineyards distinguished by warm days, cool nights, summer fog and a long growing season that coaxes grapes to maturity slowly and consistently, with balanced sugar and acidity. Our Vineyard Manager Mike Crumly and Winemaker Bob Iantosca, both of whom have worked for Gloria Ferrer from its inception, have devoted more than two decades to identifying the diverse soil types, microclimates and specific needs of every vine in their care.

Please email Dudley Cass, [DUDCASS@AOL.COM](mailto:DUDCASS@AOL.COM) Before April 1<sup>st</sup> and let him know which tours you will be going on. (See note “HELP” in the reunion highlights pages)

*Ed Note: Several Topeka stories from the past have been submitted to Jack Connery for inclusion in a*

*revision of The Baka Hachi, The revision was never completed. This is the first of several of these stories that will be included in future issues of this newsletter.*

### **1959: Sailors Learn to Look for Bargains**

When the first commissioning crewmembers went aboard Topeka in the Brooklyn Naval Shipyard in mid-winter, 1959-60, it was like an icebox. The ever-resourceful Chief Abernathy of the Commissary Department soon convinced the shipyard workers that the first piece of equipment installed should be a 50-gallon steam jacketed copper kettle. This was done and each day the copper was filled with hot steaming coffee or hot soup. It became the focal point for sailors and workers alike and facilitated many projects being done without benefit of official paperwork. One of the projects undertaken and completed was the construction of the Brass Rail Lounge. The lounge was located on the starboard side of the mess deck and in front of the soft ice cream (gedunk) machine. Several tables were located there, and the whole area was enclosed in 3-inch brass tubing which was mounted on 3-foot high stanchions. Red and white checkered tablecloths graced the tables as well as serving as drapes or skirts for the brass tubing. The lounge provided a comfortable area where sailors could relax and enjoy refreshments. Many visitors over the years inquired about the brass rails. The standard "sailor answer" was, "Don't know, they were here when I came aboard." Three battle cruisers, the Guam, Hawaii and Alaska, were constructed toward the end of WWII. Only one had been placed in commission. The other two, still uncompleted, were in the Reserve Fleet in Bayonne, NJ and were destined for scrap. Topeka sailors got the OK to go aboard and look for things that Topeka could use. One of the things they brought home was 150 feet of 3-inch brass voice tube. This, with a little bit of shipyard cumshaw help, became the brass rails.

Among other items removed from the battle cruisers were the barber chairs. These chairs were distinctive since they were not Navy specification, but were civilian chairs. They boasted red leather seats and backs, ivory porcelain arms and an ornate iron footrest. Because of the chairs and the expertise of Topeka barbers, we thought we had the classiest barbershop in the fleet.

It was this sailor ingenuity that made us different from the other LGs. Baka Hachi thinking was already taking over.

Vince Manion, LCDR Supply Officer (59-62)

**Topeka Today, Tomorrow, Always**

*Ed Note: Clare Smart received this letter, with a check for dues, and forwarded it to me for processing. I enjoyed the letter and want to share it with you all, Dudley Cass*

"23 Nov. '09

Dear Mrs. Smart,

Please forgive my lateness. I think of the Topeka CLG-8 all of the time but I do have poor secretarial skills. Anyway here I am, I wish you and your family and the Topeka family the very best and certainly a very happy and joyous Holiday Season.

I was a member of the Commissioning Crew in 1960 at Brooklyn Navy Yard. I was very proud to be associated with the many outstanding shipmates aboard Topeka. I was Second-in-Charge of the Signal Gang (SM1) and I certainly enjoyed my tour. Captain Pinney was the CO. Operation Officer was CDR Thompson, SMC Wilferd was in charge of the Signal Bridge.

Anyway keep up the good work that you are doing and give my best to all members of the crew that you come in contact with. I went back aboard the Topeka when she came to GTMO sometime between '67 and '70. At that time I was an instructor with the Fleet Training Group.

Yours truly,

Maurice H. Delancy, SMC Retired

"Topeka today, Topeka tomorrow, Topeka always!"

### **ARMED FORCES RETIREMENT HOME (AFRH)**

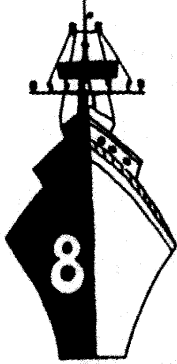
Our newer members may not be aware of our donations to AFRH. Years ago, we had a shipmate who was a resident at the AFRH in Gulfport, Mississippi. In his honor, we started an annual donation to the AFRH to be used for the Welfare/Recreation of the residents. Katrina wiped out the Gulfport AFRH, and now we contribute to the AFRH in Washington, D.C. We made a \$500 donation last year. You can donate to the AFRH when you pay your dues – just add a few dollars to the dues check and it will go the AFRH fund.



**Campus Grounds**

**USS TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION**  
**C/O KATHY SPATZ**  
**503 OLIVE BLVD.**  
**SOUTH HEMPSTEAD, NY 11550-8012**

First Class Prst.  
 U.S. Postage Paid  
 Tulsa, OK  
 Permit # 2146



**NAMES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS**

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 John Reynolds, 916 Esplanade #107, Redondo Beach, CA 90277; 310-540-7817; Email [canrc@verizon.net](mailto:canrc@verizon.net)

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**President**  
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**Ships Store**  
 Linda Roberts, 7315 Valley Lane, Hixson, TN 37343-2207; 423-842-5147; Email [ijlrob@aol.com](mailto:ijlrob@aol.com)

**SHIPS STORE**

Most of the merchandise will be available in San Francisco. All orders should be sent to Linda Roberts at 7315 Valley Lane, Hixson, TN 37343-2207. Linda's phone number is 423-842-5147. Include \$5.00 shipping with each order and make checks or money order payable to the Reunion Association and send to Linda with your order. (Items subject to change)

<b>Ladies Shirts</b>	
White	\$19.00
Cardigan Baby Blue	\$20.00
Scoop Neck Blue	\$16.00
V-Neck L. Pink & Pistachio	\$16.00
<b>Polo 2003</b>	
Navy/White XL, XXL	\$20.00
White/Navy XL, XXL	20.00
Navy w/pocket XXL	20.00
<b>Polo 2005</b>	
Navy M, L	\$19.00
Med Blue L	19.00
Red w/pocket M	21.00
<b>Men's Shirts</b>	
Dessert Moon	34.00
Nike Blue	31.00
<b>Jackets</b>	
Red Jackets	\$36.00
Ping-Canvas	\$48.00
<b>Assorted items available</b>	
Ball Caps	\$12.00
Cold Drink Holders	4.00
Coffee mugs w/Topeka emblem	5.00
Topeka Note pads (5 pack)	4.00
License Plate Holder	3.00