

USS TOPEKA CLG-8

Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 11, No. 2

May 2000

Committee:

*John Reynolds, President; Jack Timmons, Secretary/Treasurer;
Al Jefferis, Assistant Secretary; Dudley Cass, Reunion 00 Chairman;
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor; Ken Noble, Web Master*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

It seems as if we just got back from Branson, and it's time to have another family gathering. This will be our third trip to SD, and everything is looking great. Ruth and Dudley have all things in place and we will be kicking off another great reunion in just three more months.

One of the things we will do is honor our plankowners, since this is the 40th anniversary of Topeka's re-commissioning. It's also our 10th anniversary as a reunion association.

It's hard to believe that this will be our 11th reunion and the third for SD, but time flies when you are having fun. We are all a little older and wiser since we began all this, but getting older has some advantages, so they tell me. It's like the lady who was celebrating her 101st birthday and someone asked her if there was any advantage to being 101 and she quickly answered "no peer pressure". So hang in there and enjoy all your advantages.

John Reynolds

TAPS

Dennis Vignapiano, EM2, 1960-63; July, 1999, Carlisle, PA.

BINNACLE LIST

James Bond, YN3 (64-67), recovering from a severe auto-pedestrian accident.

Don Cameron, LT (60-62), San Diego.

Carol Buse, LTJG (64-66), Reedsport, OR

John Campbell, LT (61-63), Waco, TX

COLD WAR CERTIFICATE

Want something else suitable for framing that you can hang on the wall of your den? You are now eligible for a Cold War Certificate.

To obtain this certificate, write to Cold War Recognition, 4035 Ridge Top Road, Fairfax Va, 22030-7445.

Include your name, service number, dates of service and a copy of your DD-214 (do not send original).

BAKA HACHI REVISION DELAYED

Jack Connery has asked for an extension in completing the revision to Baka Hachi. He wanted to have it available at the August reunion, but there is just too much material. To do it right will take longer than August. It will be ready by Christmas.

Since we will have to pay for them at delivery, we would like to take paid orders in advance so funds will be available. It is estimated that the revision will cost \$20.00 (including shipping), and may end up to be less, depending on quantity ordered.

Should you like to order in advance, please mark check "Baka Hachi revision," and send to Jack Timmons. Your early orders will be appreciated.

If you are still thinking about writing your favorite story for inclusion, you'd better get with it. Absolute deadline is September 1. There are still a lot of stories yet untold about life on Topeka. If you know one (and you all do), put it on paper and send it to Jack Connery. If you have pictures to go along with it, even better.

Jack would also like to include stories from the wives and kids who were left behind when we went off on long deployments.

Don't worry about not being a good writer. Jack will edit and rewrite as necessary. If it is a true story (and they all are), and you don't want to put your name on it, let Jack know.

NEW MEMBERS (SINCE MAY 2000)

"Bill" William Hight LTJG (67-68) Seattle, WA
Dennis Ryan SM3 (66-69) Wynantskill, NY
Charles Monroe II GMG3 (65-68) Glendale, AZ
Douglas "Doug" Olson MM2 (63-66) Sioux Falls, SD
Marshall Gleisten RD3 (63-65) San Rafael, CA
Dwight Reid EM2 (60-62) Des Moines, IA
Arthur Taft SN (67-69) Great Falls, MT
Wayne Lee MMI (62-67) Pasadena, TX
Jack Hufty LTJG (67-69) Williamstown, NJ
Keith Meyer ETR3 (66-69) Rahway, NJ
Ray Bradbury SH3 (63-67) Reno, NV
"Don" (Donald) Habener RD1 (59-62) Lompoc, CA
Dale Tripp ET1 (59-62) Las Vegas, NV
Ronald Farney, FT2, St. Louis, MO
James Gavin, YN2 (63-64), Lodi, CA.

LETTERS

Dear Ed:

I've received a USS TOPEKA (CLG-8) Reunion Newsletter for my husband, Dennis Vignapiano, 60, who died as a result of heart bypass surgery in July, 99.

Denny, EM2, served on the Topeka 1960-1963. He talked about his shipmates a lot and wanted to attend a reunion when one came closer to the East coast, upon retirement, but as life is always throwing you a curve ball, he won't make it now. Hopefully, he'll make it in spirit. I just wanted to pass the word along in case one of his shipmates may remember him.

If anyone would care to write for any information about Denny or has some stories to share please feel free to write and I will answer. My email address at home is: <c0100lv@netzero.net> and my mailing address is: 85 Zion Road, Carlisle, Pa.

Regards,
Carol L. Vignapiano

Dear Ed:

Thanks for the email. I was just speaking with a fellow shipmate, John Wiggins, he and I served together on CCDF Three as radarmen. He made two cruises, I only one. I got out August, 1965, he a year later. Last week was the first time he and I communicated with each other since 1977, if you can imagine that. We had a lot of catching up to do. Funny, our not communicating was for no reason other than he lived in SoCal and I in the San Francisco area. Anyway, as best friends are, the element of time has no bearing on where we left off. It was as if yesterday was 1977. I was his best man too! I told him it would be nice to have a real reunion in August in San Diego. Chuck Duffy lives in San Diego too. He was on our staff too as a RD2, I believe.

It's fun looking at my cruise book. I'll play the record which came with it to hear the sounds of the Topeka!

Regards,
Marshall Gleisten

EdNote: Marshall, you, John Wiggins, and Chuck Duffy are most welcome to join us in our San Diego reunion. We are always glad to have more radarmen. We may have enough this year (some of whom you may remember) that we'll have to take two group pictures.

Dear Ed:

My father attracted people to him who understood and shared his devotion to our nation, the Navy, family and community. Your thoughtful card is a kind reminder of his positive effect on all of us who knew him.

My most sincere thanks and good wishes.

Frank L. Pinney III

Dear Ed:

Has anybody dropped by to see the Topeka bell in Topeka, Kansas, lately? I have polished her to a golden brass. She looks better than ever since she was last on our old ship.



Thanks for giving me the job of upkeep on the bell. I hope to meet up to your expectations of the bell's upkeep. I do pay homage to our ship every time I shine her. Besides that, I

am also having fun in this venture.

John DeFord (64-67)
Keeper of the Bell

SHIP'S STORE REPORT

The following items are available. Please add \$5.00 for shipping. If you are on the internet, there is an order form on the Topeka web site.

We now have in stock new polo shirts of upgraded quality, 100% cotton, and also a better quality jacket. We have also made a change to the emblem. We think you will like them

The license plate covers are a great way to let people know you were on Topeka and will help in finding "lost" shipmates.

Old Style Shirts:

Adult shirts, green, M, XXL	\$22.00
Adult shirts, blue, 2XL	22.00
Adult shirts, red, XL, 2XL	22.00

Old style Jackets

Navy, M, L,	35.00
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New Style Polo Shirts

White, or, Gray w/Navy Trim, Beige w/Black Trim; Sizes , L, XL, 2XL	28.00
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New Style Nylon Jackets

Hunter Green or Royal Blue, both w/Navy trim Sizes L, XL, 2XL	46.00
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Ball caps	10.00
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Key Chains	3.00
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Ship's Plaque (new design, w/name)	30.00
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Cold drink holders	5.00
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Topeka note pads (5 pack)	5.00
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License Plate Holders	4.00
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What We Do at Reunions



We visit. We renew old friendships and make new ones. We get into serious discussions. We tell and listen to humorous stories. We remember old times. We reminisce. We relive memories, some good, some not so good. We talk about our kids and grandkids. Many bring them.

We splice the mainbrace, and, we take pictures.

We tour -- either as individuals, or in groups. We've been to Concord, where it all started. We've been to Harvard. Other places include Williamsburg, the Grand Ole Opry, the Space Needle in Seattle; We've seen the Vietnam Wall in Washington. We saw the Eisenhower Museum in Kansas; we've seen old ships, we've seen new ones. We've been on submarines, cruisers, battleships, destroyers. We've been on the Queen Mary, and to the San Diego Zoo.



We look at pictures, ship's newspapers, and cruise books.

"See, there I am. See how young I look. See how young we all look. We were just kids."

"Let's see if we can find you in this book."

We get on boats, either to cruise, or to go someplace. We've cruised the harbors of San Diego, Seattle, Norfolk, Boston, and even Table Rock Lake at Branson, Mo.

We take the wives with us. And we go with them. They have a great time, and most have made long-lasting friendship, just like we have. .



We Have a Great Time!! Come Join Us in San Diego!!

WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

FORECASTLE

The appropriate pronunciation for this word is *fo'ksul*. The forecastle is the forward part of the main deck. It derives its name from the days of Viking galleys when wooden castles were built on the forward and after parts of the main deck from which archers and other fighting men could shoot arrows and throw spears, rocks, etc.

Courtesy, Navy Public Affairs Library

MOVING? MOVED? WAS YOUR NEWSLETTER FORWARDED?

Then drop a card to Jack Timmons and let him know your new address.

NAMES/TELEPHONE NUMBERS

Chairman, Board of Advisors

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Web Master

Ken Noble, 613 Fairfield Ln., Louisville, Co., 80027. 303-665-7468. Topeka@usstopekacgl8.org

USS Topeka Website

<http://www.usstopekacgl8.org>

USS TOPEKA (CLG-8)
Reunion Association Newsletter
c/o Jack Connery
9814 E. 83rd Pl.
Tulsa, Ok74133



San Diego 2000 Reunion 1

- **Reunion Date:** Wed., Aug 16 to Sun. Aug 20. This year is the 40th anniversary of the Re-commissioning of TOPEKA. Let's dedicate this reunion to the Plankowners onboard TOPEKA at her Re-commissioning!

Hotel: Town and Country Resort and Convention Center, 500 Hotel Circle North, San Diego, CA 92186. Rates: \$89/night (single or double occupancy- additional children are free, but additional adults are \$20 each)(plus ~10% room tax)- rates good Sunday Aug 13 through Tuesday Aug 22 for those who want to come early or stay longer. Rooms have 1 king-size, or 2 queen-size beds. Advise hotel of handicap requirements on reservation. Parking at the hotel is \$1/day (unrestricted in and out). **Deadline for reservations: July 23, 2000.** **Toll-free phone for reservations: 1-800-772-8527.** **Be sure to say your reservation is for the USS Topeka Reunion.** Internet information on the Hotel may be found at www.towncountry.com.

The hotel is 6 miles from the airport (\$8.50 per person airport shuttle, or \$12-\$15 taxi fare for 2-4 people); 3 miles from Sea World, 3 miles from Zoo. The hotel is adjacent to the Riverwalk Golf Course, and also adjacent to Fashion Valley Mall, one of San Diego's premier shopping malls. The San Diego Trolley and Bus terminal is adjacent to the hotel grounds. The major attractions in San Diego are easily accessible by Trolley/Bus, and the fares are extremely economical, especially for Seniors. **Trolley/Bus information** is available on the internet: www.sdcommute.com.

Reunion Schedule. We recommend you plan on arriving Tuesday, because there will be plenty of things you will want to do Wednesday through Saturday. There are plenty of easily accessible shopping malls. Golfers, bring your clubs - we have many golf courses, including the one adjacent to the hotel and the nearby Navy golf course at Admiral Baker Field. The world-famous Balboa Park, the San Diego Zoo, Sea World, The Fleet Aerospace Museum, The automotive museum, are all a short trolley/bus ride away. For the international experience, take the trolley to Tijuana, Mexico, and try the shopping and bar hopping on Revolucion Ave. See the Navy "grays" from the Harbor Cruise, or by a visit to the 32nd St. Naval Station. We are getting discount tickets for the popular attractions through the Navy Base for your use, and we will provide details on how to get there, using the public transportation, or driving your own vehicle.

- **Wednesday.** Open day for check-in, golfing, doing the attractions on your own. For the evening; Visit Historic Old Town, the original "downtown" of San Diego offering tours of historic homes and buildings, arts and crafts shops; dinner at the Casa de Bandini Mexican Restaurant (voted San Diego's best Mexican Restaurant) or one of the other fine restaurants in Old Town, followed by a great musical comedy "Forever Plaid" in the Old Town Theater. "Forever Plaid" is in it's third year at the Old Town Theater, and still "packs them in". (We have seen it 3 times, enjoyed it every time, and are looking forward to seeing it again.) It's a fast paced musical comedy about four irresistible harmony singers who finally realize their dream. Includes 29 hits from the '50s and '60s. Showtime 8 p.m. Wednesday. Tickets at our group rate of \$24. Check "Event A" on the registration form.

Thursday. Open day for **Golfing (am tee times TBD)**, doing the attractions on your own. An Advisory Board Meeting at 3 p.m. For the evening, a Harbor Dinner Cruise on San Diego Bay.

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"Navy Gray" Tour. Bus pick-up at the hotel at 9am- narrated tour of the 32nd Street Naval Base and piers, and the carrier piers at North Island. Lunch at the "Island Club" (formerly the Officer's Club) at North Island. Close-up viewing of and informative narration about the Navy's surface ships and carriers. Plus, we are working to arrange a onboard visit to one of the Navy's modern cruisers to include in this tour. Return to the hotel by 3 pm. \$23 per person (includes tax and gratuity, but does not include lunch). Check "Event B" on the Registration Form.

The **Harbor Dinner Cruise** is a 2 1/2 hour evening cruise of the beautiful San Diego Bay on a luxury boat with a full service "white-linen" sit-down dinner. This dinner cruise is highly recommended by friends and other reunion groups (USS Tucson) who have taken it. The dinner entree is Grilled Tenderloin Filet AND Boneless Breast of Chicken with Vegetable and Garlic Whipped Potato, preceded by Caesar Salad, and followed by Cookies and Cream Cheesecake. (Vegetarian Plate is also available) . Coffee, tea, or soda are included with the meal. A Boarding glass of Champagne is offered, and a Full Service No-host Bar is available. Music by DJ, and dancing, available. Bus provided, leaves hotel at 6:30 p.m. Boarding at 7:00 p.m. Cruise 7:30 p.m. to 10 p.m. Bus returns to hotel. Price: \$56 adult, \$30 children 14 and younger. Check "Event C" on the Registration Form.

- **Friday.** Open day for **Golfing(am tee times TBD)** and doing attractions on your own.

Visit the **Viejas Casino and shopping outlet mall.** On an Indian reservation, it offers gambling, restaurants, bars, "Dancing Waters" for the kids to play in, a unique outlet mall with 50+ shops, set in a valley surrounded by mountains. About 30 miles east, free bus transportation is available if we have at least 35 going (otherwise a "nominal" charge for the bus transport). Plan depart the hotel at 9am, return to the hotel by 3pm. Check Event "D" on the Registration Form.

For the evening, a **Cocktail Hour at 6 p.m., followed by a "Picnic Buffet" at 7 p.m.** (at the Hotel). The menu will include Western Chili, Salads, Hamburgers and Hot Dogs, BBQ Chicken, Corn on the Cob, Fries, Fresh Rolls, Dessert, and Coffee or Tea. Full service No-host Bar available.

- **Saturday. Reunion Business Meeting at 9 a.m., followed by Group Pictures.** "on your own" the rest of the day. **For the evening, Cocktail hour at 6 p.m., followed by a sit-down banquet and short program at 7 p.m.**

The Banquet menu: Salad, Choice of Roast Prime Rib, or Herb Crusted Halibut, or Vegetarian Plate for the entree, Baked Potato, Vegetable. Dessert. Coffee or Tea. Choice of Wine served at Table. No-host Full Service Bar available. Child's (12 and younger) menu: Chicken Strips, fries, fruit cup, milk, cookie.

Mark your choices for the entrees on the Registration Form.

The banquet will be preceded by Presentation of Colors, and the Pledge of Allegiance. The short program, MC-ed by Jerry Judge, will include remarks by our President, recognition of the Plankowners present, and an exhibition of competition-class Western Swing Dancing.

- **Sunday.** Check out and “Aloha” until next year.

Hospitality Room - Focal point of the Reunion. Our Hospitality Room, on the top floor of the East Tower, was formerly one of the hotel’s bars/lounges. Large, light and airy, it’s surrounded by glass on 3 sides, and doors we can open for fresh air ventilation. The full bar, with all it’s stools, and behind the bar storage, etc., is still there. It is well-decorated and furnished, making for a very comfortable and relaxing room. It will be open at 7 a.m. every morning with fresh coffee, donuts, bagels, juice, milk, and toast. Will be open every day until midnite except during the hours of the Friday nite mixer/buffet, and the Saturday nite cocktail hour/banquet. Alcoholic, non-alcoholic beverages, coffee, and snacks will be provided.

Registration will be there; the “Ship’s store” will be set up, and tables will be available for display of TOPEKA memorabilia, photos, cruise books, etc.

Information on San Diego attractions, and “how-to-get-there” will be available.

Golfing. Ron Smart, our golf “gourmet”, will select one of San Diego’s fine golf courses and arrange tee-times . For those who “just want to golf” inexpensively, Jerry Judge will arrange tee-times at the Admiral Baker Field golf course, which is just “down the road” from the hotel. Indicate your golf preference on the Registration Form.

Tickets for Selected San Diego Attractions.

- **Sea World.** Our last San Diego Reunion was in ‘94. Several attractions/rides have been added since then. The Shamu show (killer whales) is still one of my favorite shows. The shows are scheduled such that if you get there early, you can see all the shows in a day - and you will enjoy them all! The Budweiser horses (Clydesdales) are pretty, and impressive. And Budweiser has a “beer-tasting” set up where you can sample all their brews. If you haven’t been to a Sea World, don’t miss this opportunity. A city bus from the stop right behind our hotel will take you directly to Sea World. Our discount ticket prices: \$35 for adults, \$25 for children 3-11. Check Tickets “E” on the Registration Form.
- **San Diego Zoo.** A world-famous, and world-class zoo. Most of the creatures are exhibited in natural-habitat surroundings. You can walk, take narrated bus tours, or get an “overview” from the overhead tram ride. All you kids, no matter your age, will enjoy a day spent at the zoo! Discount Adult tickets \$21, children (3-11) \$11. Check Tickets “F” on the Registration Form. Take the Trolley downtown then take the city bus to the Zoo. (Trolley/bus detailed information will be available in the Hospitality Room.)
- **2 Hour Daylight Harbor Cruise.** A narrated tour of San Diego Bay . See downtown San Diego, Coronado, 32nd Street Naval Station, and all the way out to the entrance of the Bay at Point Loma. Great for photographers, and those who want to see more of the “Navy Grays” (including Carriers and Submarines). Don’t forget a light jacket for those cool breezes, and hats and sunscreen for sunburn protection. Discount tickets: \$9. Check Tickets “G” on the Registration Form. Take the Trolley downtown to the Santa Fe station - then walk 1 block.

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- **Old Town Trolley Tour.** A fully narrated tour that combines colorful anecdotes, humorous stories and historical facts about San Diego, past and present. Has 8 stops, including the Cruise Ship Terminal, Seaport Village, the Hotel Del Coronado in Coronado, the San Diego Zoo, and Balboa Park. Get off at any stop, see what you want and board a later Trolley to continue the Tour. Or stay on the Trolley and do the entire tour in 2 hours. The trolleys run every 15 minutes, from 9 am until 5 p.m. Take the San Diego trolley from our hotel to the Old Town Station, Walk over to the "Forever Plaid" theater- board the Old Town Trolley there. Discount prices: \$22 adult, \$13 children 6-12. Check Tickets "H" on the Registration Form.

RV Parks. If you want space in a RV park, make your reservations early! Some of those available include:

Admiral Baker Field (Navy retired with ID card). \$17 per day. 2-3 miles east of the reunion hotel. Phone (619) 556-5525.

KOA Chula Vista. \$37.50/day. About 10 miles south of the reunion hotel. Phone (619) 427-3601.

C. V. J St. Marina. On the bay. About 10 miles south of the reunion hotel. \$38-\$53 per day depending on space. (619) 422-0111.

DeAnza Cove. On Mission Bay. About 3-4 miles west of the reunion hotel. \$40 weekdays, \$54 weekends. Phone (858) 273-3211.

- **San Diego Weather in August.** Dry. Temperature 70s-80s daytime - 60s at night. 10 degrees warmer inland. Although cool, the sun is fierce. Wear sun protection if you plan on being out in the sun - touring, Sea World, the zoo, etc. A light jacket or sweater may be needed at night.
- **Need more information? Have Questions?** Email or phone us. Any suggestions/recommendations for the reunion are welcomed. See you in San Diego!!

Dudley/Ruth Cass.

USS TOPEKA CLG-8 Reunion Registration

San Diego, CA, August 16-19, 2000

Name _____ Plankowner? ___ Number in party _____
 Staying at the Town and Country Hotel? _____

Emergency Contact: Name _____ Phone (____) _____
 Any Handicap and/or Special Dietary Requirements? _____

Names for nametag(s) (if you haven't previously received permanent nametag):

Reunion Fee: The Reunion Fee includes the cost of the Hospitality Room, the Friday nite Picnic Buffet, the Saturday nite Banquet, and other fixed costs of the Reunion. Reunion Fee for adults attending all four days: \$80. For those not attending all four days: No charge for Wed.; \$15 for Thu., \$15 for Fri., \$50 for Saturday. For children attending the banquet: \$18 12 years and younger; \$35 for teenagers. No reunion fee for children not attending the banquet.

<u>Days Attending</u>	<u>Number Attending</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Cost</u>
All four days	_____	\$80	_____
Not all four days			
Wednesday	_____	\$0	
Thursday	_____	\$15	_____
Friday	_____	\$15	_____
Saturday	_____	\$50	_____
Children at Banquet	_____	\$18	_____
Teenagers at Banquet	_____	\$35	_____
Reunion Fee Total			_____

Banquet Entree Choices (give number)

Prime Rib _____ Halibut _____ Vegetarian _____

Child's Plate (12 and younger) _____

(Chicken strips/fries/fruit cup/milk/cookie)

Golf

Thursday AM (tee-time, cost TBD) ADM Baker _____

"Gourmet" _____

Friday AM (tee-time, cost TBD) ADM Baker _____

"Gourmet" _____

(Continued on Reverse Side)

TOPEKA Reunion Registration (continued)

Group Events

<u>Event</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Event "A" - "Forever Plaid" Wed. pm	_____	\$24	_____
Event "B" - "Navy Gray" Tour Thu. am	_____	\$23	_____
Event "C" - Harbor Dinner Cruise Thu pm	_____	\$56	_____
Children 14 and younger	_____	\$30	_____
Event "D" - Viejas Casino/Outlet Fri am	_____	\$00*	_____

Events Costs Total _____

Tickets

<u>Event</u>	<u>Number</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Cost</u>
Ticket "E" - Sea World (adult)	_____	\$35	_____
(children 3-11)	_____	\$25	_____
Ticket "F" - San Diego Zoo (adult)	_____	\$21	_____
(Children 3-11)	_____	\$11	_____
Ticket "G" - 2 Hr. Harbor Cruise (Day)	_____	\$9	_____
Ticket "H" - Old Town Trolley Tour	_____	\$22	_____
(Children 6-12)	_____	\$13	_____

Tickets Cost Total _____

Reunion Fee, Events, and Ticket Costs: Total: _____

Deadline for Payment of above costs is July 10, 2000

Make checks payable to TOPEKA Reunion Assn., and mail to:

Jack Timmons, 2661 Poinsettia Dr. , San Diego, CA 92106-1121.