

USS TOPEKA CLG-8 Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 4-3

August 1993

Committee:

Jack Connery, President; Isaac Roberts, Vice President;
Dudley E. Cass, Secretary/Treasurer; Isaac Roberts, Reunion '93 Chairman
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor



The arrow points to the Music City Sheraton in Nashville, TN, and the dates are October 14-16. Parky Parkinson is getting ready early. Rumor has it that he has blown up several hundred of these and is packing them in the car already.

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Reunion 93; October 14-16, Nashville

No, it will not be in September, as indicated in the TROA magazine, Naval Institute Proceedings, and now, the latest, *Shift Colors*.

Some of these publications require dates as much as nine months ahead of time before they will publish reunion announcements. In January, we had to tell them something. We didn't know then. We picked something that was obviously wrong just to get it announced. Dudley tried to get it changed when the date was set, to no avail. Hopefully, this hasn't caused too much confusion. Next year, we'll have to do it differently.

Let's get those registrations in. At last year's general meeting, you took Kansas City and Chicago away from me as possible 1993 reunion sites, and voted almost unanimously for Nashville. Now, the work is done, and it's your turn. Get those

registrations in. Deadline is September 1 for registrations and Grand Ole Opry ticket purchases. Send them to Dudley Cass. And hotel registration forms should be in to the Music City Sheraton by September 14. Registrations received after that date will be confirmed only on a space available basis.

This reunion has a lot to offer. First, the good feelings one has in re-uniting with old friends and shipmates from the past, and meeting new shipmates who did the job in another time, and perhaps another ocean. Second, the fun of Nashville - - the home of country/western music, the Grand Ole Opry, a tour of the old south; a fantastic guest banquet speaker who has, in the Navy, been where most of us have not. His name is not listed as we are still making final arrangements. And some extras in the hospitality suite that you haven't seen in past reunions.

Let's go to Nashville.

Best regards, and I'll see there.

Jack Connery



ASSOCIATION BYLAWS

The Board of Advisors, created at the Business Meeting last year, has developed a proposed set of Association Bylaws, which will be presented for a vote by the membership at the meeting this year in Nashville.

Proposed bylaws will be distributed by mail, prior to the reunion, so that members can be prepared to vote on them.

REMEMBER WHEN . . . ?

Got a good story about life on TOPEKA? One your shipmates would want to read? Put it on paper

in 100 words or less and send it to Jack Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok., 74008. If selected for use in this column, Dudley Cass will send you a check for \$25. Jack will be the judge and his decision final. The only ground rules are that it doesn't start with, "Now this is N.S.;" it must be suitable for publication, and should not be offensive to any one. If not used in the newsletter, it will be held on file to use in Revision One to The BAKA HACHI, 1960-1969.

IN MEMORIAM

Herb Francis, QMC (62-64), June 12, Shelton, Wash.

Tom Woodward, SN (60-64). Pensacola, Fla.



WELCOME ABOARD (SINCE MARCH 1, 1993)

Allen Beach, STG3 (63-66), Billings, MT
 Ted Cheney, LT (60-62), Oconomowoc, WI
 William Brickman, LT (67-68), Chula Vista, CA
 Bob Munich, RD3 (67-68), Elkton, SD
 Frank Mecham, GM3 (66-69), Paso Robles, CA
 Harold Haley, STG2 (63-65), Broken Arrow, OK
 John Remarke, EMC (65-66), Dayton, NV
 John Nowinowski, BM3 (59-62), Lake Station, IN
 Billy Murray, EN3 (67-68) Comanche, OK
 James Oehler, CWO2 (66-68), Las Vegas, NV
 Thomas Bresadola, LTJG, (66-68), Littleton, CO
 Lee Sears, LTJG (67-68), Lubbock, TX
 Alan (Dave) Mail, LTJG (66-68), Severna Park, MD
 Paul Hulette, LT (66-68), Novato, CA
 Allen Boston, LTJG (66-69), St. Louis, MO
 Carl Dreyer, LTJG (64-65), North Riverside, IL
 Irye Couch, BM1 (60-65), Grand Junction, CO
 Tom Lee, GMT3 (60-62) Cassopolis, MI
 Bill Maloney, FTGC (67-69), Imperial Beach CA
 Edward King, CS2, (60-62), Boston, MA
 Jerry Boggess, ICFN (67-69), Goddard, KS
 John Gordhamer, EM3 (65-68), Minneapolis, MN
 Ed Russell, EMFN (60-62), Plainfield, IL
 Bill Gardiner, LTJG (62-64), Lake Charles, LA
 Henry Fisher, SF1 (60-62), Memphis, TN
 Mike Ryman, CAPT (MarDet), (67-68), Rockville, MD
 Jerry Franz, SHSN (59-61), Jacksonville, FL
 Jerry Pennington, RD3 (63-64), Temple City, CA
 Carlos Soler, CWO (62-63), Altamonte Springs, FL
 Jack Priesmeyer, LTJG (64-66), Fenton, MO
 Richard Sarafian, Safety Harbor, FL
 Tom Harris, CSCM (66-67), Tallahassee, FL
 Tom Bussell, RD2 (64-66), Mogadore, OH
 Tom Busse, PC2 (59-62), Winter Park, FL.



Do you know these Chief's? This and some other pictures were provided by Lena Pavlicik of Grants Pass OR. She believes that they were assigned to TOPEKA.



LETTERS

Dear Ed:

Can't wait to receive the directory and *Baka Hachi*. What a great job you guys have done.

I would like to locate the following: Lee S. Iles (wife Claire), last living in the Long Beach area; Lee is from Florida, and his wife from Mass.: Michael Perkins, last living on San Clemente; and Reading Hall, from Derby, Vt.

Looking forward to meeting you at the reunion.

Ed King

Dear Ed:

Betty and I just returned from a couple of days in Laughlin, Nev. - - visiting our money, and contributing a bit more.

Was wearing my TOPEKA hat, as I always do, when I walked out of the Flamingo Hilton. A couple stopped us and asked when I was on board. Found another one. Seemed like a very nice couple. I hope they follow up.

But I digress. The main purpose of this letter is to point out the importance (I believe) of wearing the cap when it is appropriate. We can find other shipmates that way.

I wonder if you agree, or is it just the old "get in uniform" CMAA in me? See you in Nashville if not before.

Parky Parkhurst

ED NOTE: Parky, the proof is in the puddin. See below.

Dear Ed.

I recently ran into a former TOPEKA shipmate in Laughlin, Nev. He was wearing a ship's ballcap. I gave him my name and address and just received the last reunion newsletter.

THIS IS GREAT. I've thought about the ship many times over the years (I was on board 1963 and 64 as a Radarman in OI Division) and have wondered what happened to the guys I knew and worked with. Well, now I'll be able to find out, as my wife and I are planning to attend the reunion in Nashville.

Looking forward to this reunion and seeing some old friends. It will be a lot of fun.

Jerry Pennington

Ed NOTE: Welcome aboard Jerry. Jerry has already found another shipmate, by accident through his job. Jim Parker, another radarman who served after him. See what a ball cap will do.

Dear Ed. (Dudley)

Thanks for the opportunity to join the Reunion Association. Enclosed are dues and a check for the **BAKA HACHI**.

As soon as I received your information, I called some of my shipmates. Hopefully, you will soon be hearing from Bob Bond, LTJG (SC), and LT John McCabe. We have several more that we are contacting.

I remained on board until she was decommissioned in Boston in the Spring of 1969. I may have some documents from that period. So that you may eat your heart out, however, I will also tell you that I have a coffee table created from a bridge window taken from the ship when it sold for scrap some years after decommissioning.

Thank you for all you're doing. I look forward to meeting you in October in Nashville.

Allen S. Boston



ASSOCIATION HISTORY

The Reunion Association and Committee were formed in late 1989 with the objectives of locating and organizing a reunion for the crewmembers, Navy and Marine, serving on board TOPEKA during the period 1959-69. The first reunion was held in San Diego in August, 1990; the second in Long

Beach in August, 1991; the third in Washington, D.C., in October, 1992. We have a growing membership, over 400 in our data base now, and we send a directory of members to those who submit the annual dues of \$15. Widows of deceased members are welcome to participate in the association, and are exempt from the annual dues.



FROM THE EDITOR

HELP: I am looking for help with two things:

- **"Sounds of TOPEKA."** Am looking for someone directly involved with the production of "Sounds of TOPEKA," produced in the Spring of 1964, and distributed with the 1964 Cruisebook. Especially want someone who will be attending the reunion in Nashville. Please contact me. Thanks.
- **PHOTOGRAPHER:** If you recall, the first two newsletters after each reunion thus far have had two pages of pictures. Except for the first, I have taken those pictures. Would like some help with that in Nashville. There will be many opportunities for pictures, ie Grand Ole Opry, tours, etc. As president, there will be things I will be involved with where I won't be able to take pictures. So, bring your cameras. We will reimburse you for film and development charges, or you can just leave the exposed film with me in Nashville and I will send you a set of prints and negatives.

WANT YOUR REUNION FEES PAID?

Send Dudley the name and address of a shipmate not already in our data base, and your name will go in the hopper (once for each name). A drawing will be held at the reunion and the winner receives the cash equivalent to the Reunion Fee for two, and Hotel lodging for two for three nights.

You can also participate using Dudley's electronic phone book. You send him a name and location, he sends you a list of possibles and you check them out and find a shipmate.

We did this last year for the first time, and Tom Hoard (64-67) won \$325.



REMEMBER WHEN . . . ?

I was with our XO, CDR Perkins, in the wardroom in Yokosuka one day in early 1964 when a brand new ensign reported for duty. At this period of the WESTPAC cruise, the XO had probably been driven to the limit by the TOPEKA (under Captain

the new officer to the XO, who was sitting at the table, practicing his uke, and the conversation went something like this:

"Ensign _____, do you play the ukelele?"

"No Sir."

"Do you play any musical instrument?"

"No Sir."

"Do you play baseball, volleyball, softball, bowl, swim, football, golf or ping pong?"

"No Sir."

"Have you ever given speeches on America or the Navy to any group?"

"No Sir."

"Have you ever been on a debate team?"

Still strumming on the uke, CDR Perkins then said to the young man, "Well, if you can't do any of these things, I'm sorry, but we just don't need you on TOPEKA."

I don't remember which ensign this was (he will), but this was a typical situation for CDR Perkins, and it allowed him to relieve the tensions of his job. Oh yes, we did put the ensign at ease, explain the situation, and convinced him that the XO really hadn't lost it.

Paul Wuorenmaa, Operations
BAKA HACHI, 1959-69

USS TOPEKA (CLG-8)
REUNION ASSOCIATION NEWSLETTER
c/o JACK CONNERY
16334 SOUTH LEWIS
BIXBY, OK 74008



Reunion Information

Date/Location: October 14-16, Nashville, TN. Nashville is the home of the world-famous Grand Ole Opry, Opryland USA, the Country Music Hall of Fame, the only full-size replica of The Parthenon, and the Hermitage Mansion, home of President Andrew Jackson.

Reunion Hotel: Sheraton Music City Hotel. A class site for the reunion. It is an elegant Southern Manor set atop 23 beautifully landscaped acres. Located only two miles from the airport (free transportation provided). The hotel is also near downtown Nashville and the city's most famous attractions, the Grand Ole Opry and Opryland USA. Each guest room has a private balcony (or patio) with a view of the pool courtyard or rolling hills. Free continental Breakfast will be provided.

Single and double rooms are \$89 per night (plus 12.5% tax). This newsletter contains a reservation form. Complete all information and send direct to the hotel. Complete the form and return it even though you may have already made reservations. Just indicate that this form is confirmation of previous reservations. Make reservations no later than September 13. Rooms will be released after that date.

Grand Ole Opry: The Grand Ole Opry put Nashville on the map. We have a block of 200 seats for the Matinee performance, 3-5 p.m. on Saturday, October 16. Tickets are \$18.00 and that includes chartered bus transportation. Be sure and indicate the number of tickets you need on the Registration form (reverse side) and make checks payable to the Reunion Association.

Reunion Schedule:

Thursday P.M.: Check in, put your feet up, get re-acquainted, and tell and listen to sea stories. Hospitality Suite will be open.

Friday: 9 a.m.-noon. Music City Swing Tour (see below). Hospitality Suite open. 6 p.m. Country and Western Barbeque followed by dancing (Tennessee Style). Western wear appropriate.

Saturday: 9 a.m.-noon: Historic Franklin Tour (see below); 10:30 Business Meeting: election of 1994 Officers, selection of 1994 reunion site, discussion and vote on bylaws; 3-5 p.m. Grand Ole Opry; 6:30-7:30 Cocktail hour; 7:30 Banquet.

Other Tours will be available Friday and Saturday.

Sunday: For those interested, let's try the fantastic brunch at the Opryland Hotel. Ike says it will be one of the best brunches you have had. Try it just to see this hotel.

Tentative Tours: The following two tours have been suggested to us. Whether we will use them will depend on amount of interest. Please read the description and indicate your interest by checking the appropriate box on the registration form. Tickets would be purchased in Nashville.

Music City Swing Tour: Cost \$21.75. Through historic downtown Nashville, including Ryman Auditorium, former Grand Ole Opry home, State Capitol, Riverfront Park and newly restored Second Street. Visit to the Country Music Hall of Fame. Drive through Music Row, home of recording studios. Centennial Park, address of the Parthenon, only full scale replica of the original. Drive down Millionaire's Row to see the homes of such stars as Minnie Pearl, Webb Pierce and Ronnie Milsap.

Historic Franklin Tour: Cost \$13.75. Seventeen miles and 100 years from Nashville. Slip back into the times of the Civil War and Plantation Days. A local historian recounts the tales of the bloodiest battle of the Civil War, the Battle of Franklin, and tells about the generals laid out on the porch of the McGavock family home. Lunch on your own and shop in the tiny boutiques on Main Street.