

USS TOPEKA CLG-8 Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 6, No. 4

November, 1995

Committee:

*John Reynolds, President; Dudley E. Cass, Secretary/Treasurer;
Dick Jolliffe, Assistant Secretary, Jack Connery, Reunion '96 Chairman
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Dear Shipmates:

I wish to express my thanks to the Association for placing your confidence in me and electing me as your new President.

As I look back to our humble beginnings and reflect on our past Presidents, Don Nellis and Jack Connery, I am struck by the fabulous job each one of them has done in moving us along to this point. I am sure you are all as proud as I am to be part of such an organization. Their leadership has developed such a positive image of the Association that as I look forward to our future, I realize the great responsibility I have in preserving such an image. I am sure you all join with me in saying "thank you" to a couple of 4.0 sailors.

It will be hard to improve on our past reunions. Each one has been unique in its own special way. That's what makes our association so special. We are faced each year with the challenge of making the next one a little better. This can only happen because we all enjoy that very special relationship we have with each other. Thomas Wolfe said, "You can't go home again," but memories are a wonderful thing, and we have that common bond that was developed because we all love our country, and we chose to serve her by being part of the greatest Navy in the world.

So it is with great pride that we meet together once a year to remember those great days we had aboard Baka Hachi. Our next reunion will be a very special one as we assemble together in the city of our namesake. I hope you will all join with me next year as we take our places in the hospitality room to "splice the mainbrace."

Sincerely,
John Reynolds

TAPS

Don A. Schott, 1st Sgt. MARDET, 63-64, Medford, Oregon, July 2, 1994.

Marguerite Dykeman, wife of Chuck, 65-66, El Cajon, Cal., October, 1995.

Ray "Chips" Kraft, LTJG, 1959-62, Madisonville, LA., October, 1995.

REUNION 95 A SUCCESS

In spite of Hurricane Felix, Reunion 95 in Norfolk, Va., was a success. The weather was a little shaky on Thursday with clouds, wind and rain; and for awhile, the Norfolk airport was closed. Friday, Saturday and Sunday were beautiful.

A few, fearful that the storm would come ashore, understandably canceled out. Others had trouble getting into Norfolk on that first day. Another Cruiser reunion, scheduled in the same Marriott Hotel, was canceled completely. Most of Norfolk based ships were at sea.

Fifty seven crewmembers from 23 states turned out while Felix stood at parade rest 60 miles off the coast. Sixteen were from California. A total of 75 people were there Thursday, 98 on Friday and 105 at the Saturday night banquet. See pictures in this newsletter.

Highlights included a tour to Colonial Williamsburg and Jamestown where we saw what life was like for both the Colonists and Indians in the 1700's. On Thursday night, we had a "Southern Cook-in."

Newly elected President John Reynolds was welcomed at the Saturday night banquet, at which 105 attended. A special attendee at the banquet was Captain W. J. Ruhe, fifth Commanding Officer, 1963-64.

Following the "good-byes" on Sunday morning was, "Seeya in Topeka."

NOTES FROM THE EDITOR

- Dudley Cass reports that he has talked with Captain Pinney and Captain Paine since the Norfolk reunion. Both are doing well.
- Remember John DeFord (64-67)? He's the OTR trucker who wrote to the newsletter about passing through Topeka and polishing the bell. Well, he called me during the reunion to wish all Shipmates well, and to say that he was in Topeka at the time, and had given the bell a complete shine. He says his route takes him through Topeka often.

One of my last acts as President was to appoint him "Keeper of the Bell."

BUSINESS MEETING REPORT

The annual Business Meeting of the Association was held Saturday, August 19, in Norfolk, Va. Below are the highlights of that meeting.

Membership

Total in Database	768
Active	719
Paid Dues	287
New Members this year	63
Members at Reunion	57

Scholarship

The Advisory Board recommended the scholarship proposal be abandoned because of insufficient funds to maintain a program, and difficulty in administering a program. A total of \$1,267 is in the fund. It was recommended to the membership and approved that funds collected thus far be donated to the Naval Home in Gulfport, MS. (A Topeka Shipmate, --ETC Victor Hammond--is a resident there).

Election of Officers

Nominations made by the Advisory Board included John Reynolds, President; Dudley Cass, Secretary/Treasurer; Dick Jolliffe, Assistant Secretary. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were seconded and approved.

Nominated to the Advisory Board were Jack Connery, Jim Ownby, Don Nellis, Irad Parkhurst, Don Anderson, Tom Victory, Jerry Pennington, and Egon Werdelman. There were no nominations from the floor. Nominations were seconded and approved.

Reunion 96

Cities proposed for consideration were Albuquerque, NM; Kansas City, MO; San Antonio, TX; St. Louis, MO; and Topeka, KS. Topeka, Kansas, was selected on the second ballot. Dates selected were August 14-18, 1996. Note that this reunion starts on Wednesday. Jack Connery was selected as Reunion Coordinator.

Reunion 97 Site Selection Committee

The Reunion 97 Site Selection Committee (Western U.S.) is composed of John Keith, Tom Victory, Irad Parkhurst, John Reynolds, and Dudley Cass. Cities they propose will be voted on at the 1996 Business Meeting.

1996 TOPEKA CALENDAR

1996 Topeka Calendars will be mailed in late November to all Association Members who have paid 1995 dues. This will be at no charge. Any one else desiring a calendar should order now from Jack Connery, 16334 South Lewis,

Bixby, Ok. Send a check, payable to the Reunion Association for \$6.00. This includes postage.

The calendar will open with the traditional January 1 mid-watch Deck Log entry for one of the years the ship was in commission. Each month will feature a different picture of the ship. Significant dates in the life of Topeka will be highlighted.

Only a limited supply in excess of those required for dues-paying members will be printed. Other members desiring one should get their order in early.

MEET YOUR NEW PRESIDENT

John Reynolds reported aboard TOPEKA in July, 1961, as an MT1. He served aboard almost five years, leaving in June, 1966. While aboard, his time was divided between the Missile House and the Master At Arms Force.

John was recognized in 1963 when he was presented the Navy Commendation Medal for saving the life of a crewman.



John Reynolds, his wife Mary, and their daughter Mary Kay at Reunion 95 in Norfolk.

Shortly after leaving TOPEKA, he retired from the Navy. He took advantage of the GI Bill and continued his education. Upon completion, he launched another career as a high school teacher. He is now a high school principal in Los Angeles and has been for 12 years.

"My years spent aboard Baka Hachi were the most memorable of my 24 years in the Navy. The officers and men were the finest in the Navy. The WESTPAC cruises, happy hours, fantail frolics, etc., are times to be cherished for life.

"Although I enjoy my second career, I still long for those 'good ole days' aboard Baka Hachi, and the great times we had in the Orient."

Since Day One, John has been very active in the Reunion Association. He and his wife Mary have attended all past reunions. Reunion 91 was his. The Queen Mary in Long Beach was his idea, and he engineered the reunion, adding another Bravo Zulu to his credits.

John and Mary have five children, John Jr., Patrick, Mary Kay, Grant, and Diane; 10 grandchildren and three great-grandchildren.

IT'S TOPEKA, KANSAS IN 96

We are going back to our namesake, Topeka, Kansas, for our 1996 reunion. August 14-18 are the dates. Looks like the Downtown Ramada Inn will be the reunion site. Jack Connery was selected Reunion Coordinator.

This reunion starts on Wednesday, a day earlier than past reunions. There have been complaints that reunions were too short. In addition, since reunion fees are assessed on a daily basis, one unable to stay for the whole reunion will have more time options to choose from.

Topeka will certainly be a "midwest" reunion. It's very close to the geographic center of the Continental U.S. There are over 100 of our members in states surrounding Kansas who have not been to a reunion. This will give them a chance. "Because Topeka is our namesake, I've wanted to come here since the first reunion," says Connery. Some of the things being considered for the program include:

- A trip back 150 years to the place where frontiersmen, pioneers and emigrants embarked on the greatest journey of their lives--the Oregon Trail.
- A tea for the ladies with an 1860's fashion show at the Governor's mansion.
- A side trip to the Dwight D. Eisenhower Museum.
- Saturday night banquet.
- Golf tournament.
- Visit to the Ship's Bell

For planning purposes in determining various events and numbers of people attending, please complete the questionnaire on the picture page of this newsletter and return it to Jack Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok., 74008. The information will be used for planning only, and is not binding.

LETTERS

Dear "You know who you are . . ."

Despite reminders, old cocktail napkins, etc., you missed Norfolk. . . Well, don't worry! We volunteered you, in absentia, and you were assigned to the "Polish the Ship's bell" Detail in Topeka, Kansas, 1996. We hope to see you there!

We know who we are

Ed Note: I heard some rumblings of this in Norfolk. Can't remember who "we know who we are" are, but I think "you know who you are's" name starts with Ed.

Dear Dudley:

Enclosed is my check for \$25 to cover 1995 dues and international air mail for any mailings. Nothing less will reach me here in Saudi Arabia.

Remember me? I joined the Pre-commissioning detail in Norfolk as a LTJG in January, 1960, moved to Brooklyn Navy Yard for commissioning as the First Division Officer, then was detached during the first WestPac cruise in Sasebo in June, 1961 for transfer to the Civil Engineer Corps, where I spent the next 23 years.

Dan Leonard

Dear President Reynolds:

I am pleased to acknowledge the check in the amount of \$1267 from the USS Topeka Reunion Association members in honor of ETC Victor N. Hammond, USN (Ret), a resident of the Naval Home. This contribution has been placed in the U.S. Naval Home Residents' Fund to be used for the benefit of fellow shipmates.

Thank you and the association members, once again, for the kind and thoughtful support of our Home.

F. M. Fox
Director

Dear Ed:

I was interested in purchasing a copy of the Baka Hachi, 1960-69. I was a crew member in 62 and 63 as a PN3. I served under Captains Paine and Mansfield. Also served with Dudley Cass.

I spoke with Dudley a few years back when I was in San Diego, but have since lost track. I have been wanting to attend one of the reunions, but it seems that while I'm on the west coast they're back east, and vice versa. These last few years I don't even know.

If you could send me any info regarding Baka Hachi and future reunions, I would greatly appreciate it.

Michael Sitnic

Ed. Note: Questions answered. That's what happens when you move and don't give us a new address. Your last known address was in San Diego. Glad to have you back in the fold again.

MINI REUNION IN LAUGHLIN

We plan a mini-reunion in Laughlin, Nev., in late March or early April of 1996. The Riverside Hotel offers a great deal for a 3-day/2-night package with a show thrown in. For example, depending on the entertainer, the package for two people currently ranges from \$52 to \$72 total, when arrival is on Sunday, Monday or Tuesday. We are waiting to see what shows are offered in March and April.

Let Dudley/Ruth Cass know by mid-January if you are interested. With a larger group, we may get a better deal and a larger room for a hospitality suite. If interested, we will keep you informed by separate mail.

HOLIDAY GREETINGS

Since this is the last newsletter of 1995, the President, Members of the Board of Advisors, and the Editor take this opportunity to wish each of you joy and happiness during the Holiday Season and a New Year filled with prosperity and good health. Remember in your prayers our Shipmates at sea.

SHIP'S STORE INFORMATION



Ship's Store operations have moved to Oklahoma, and have been taken over by Jill Connery, wife of Jack. The store

does not have a great deal of merchandise, but what we do have is high quality, and will make nice Christmas gifts.

Jill says she'll even mail your selections to your gift recipient. Just let her know the details. Here's what we have.

Topeka Shirts, pale blue, sizes XL and XXL	\$15.00
Topeka Shirts, white, size Medium	15.00
Children's T-shirts, Small (6-8); Large (14-16)	6.00
Topeka Ball Caps	7.00
Glasses	
Wine (Qty of 4)	12.00
Old Fashioned (Qty of 4)	12.00
Baka Hachi (1960-1969)	7.00

Send your order to Jill Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok. Make checks payable to the Reunion Association. Include \$3.00 postage for each order.

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



**Important
 Questionnaire
 Inside**

WHO YOU MISSED AT THE REUNION

Don Anderson, ET2 (62-64), Woodbridge VA
 Al Ansonge, CDR (61-63), Mt. Vernon, IL
 Jesse Aragon, BM1 (59-62), Anaheim, CA
 Ben Billings, SFM2 (64-66), Darlington, MD
 Phillip Brooks, MR2 (63-65), Cloverdale, CA
 Dudley Cass, LTJG (61-64), Bonita, CA
 Jack Connery, LCDR (64-66), Bixby, OK
 Lloyd Couch, BM1 (60-65), Grand Junction, CO
 Jerry Craig, FTM2 (66-69), Cartersville, GA
 Vern Davis, LT (64-66), Marshall, VA
 Patrick Doyle, SN (60-62), Lowell, MI
 Tom Eagling, GMC (60-63), Tucson, AZ
 Lyman Franklin, MSC (59-60), Wake Forest, NC
 Eston Fritz, DC3 (62-65), Winfield, PA
 Donald Grady, MR2 (60-62), Mechanicsville, VA
 George Grupe, LTJG (62-65), Marlboro, NJ
 Bill Harris, QMSN (59-61), Pascagoula, MS
 William Hawkins, LCDR (61-63), Virginia Beach, VA
 William Herring, CSC (61-64), Calvary, GA
 Tom Hoard, LTJG (64-67), Ithaca, NY
 Norbert Howe, SDC (60-60), Lakewood, CA
 Allen Jefferis, CDR (67-69), San Diego, CA
 John Keith, RD1 (59-60), Portland, OR
 Ernie Kershaw, BT2 (59-63), Melrose, NY
 Bob Kershner, (63-66), Southern Pines, NC
 Claude Kinder, RD2 (59-64), Shipshewana, IN
 Daniel Knight, BM3 (60-62) Chesapeake, VA
 John Mobley, CS2 (59-61), San Diego, CA
 Don Nellis, CDR (63-65), San Diego, CA
 Don Nelson, BT2 (64-66), Minneapolis, MN
 Loy Nix, GMM1 (59-62), Flowery Branch, GA
 Art Nolan, SMC (64-66), Cumming, GA
 Irad Parkhurst, FTCM (63-66), Granada Hills, CA
 Jerry Pennington, RD3 (63-64), Temple City, CA
 Joe Péragine, CWO3 (60-66), San Diego, CA
 Gale Pfund, LTJG (62-64), San Francisco, CA
 Andy Puller, SM3 (59-62), Ridgefield, NJ
 Richard Ramsey, GMCM (62-64), Lutz, FL
 Ron Reigel, FN (60-63), East Bernstadt, KY
 John Reynolds, FTM1 (61-66), Redondo Beach, CA
 Paul Ruby, LTJG (62-65), San Francisco, CA
 William Ruhe, CAPT. (63-64), Mclean, VA
 B.R. (Bo) Schexnayder, LT (66-67), Cary, NC
 Andre Seaton, RD2 (59-62), Reseda, CA
 Ron Smart, RD3 (59-62), Turlock, CA
 Raymond Spatz, CS3 (68-69), Long Island, NY
 Jimmy Starr, GS2 (60-61), Topeka, KS
 Tom Stumpf, CAPT. USMC (64-66), Mechanicsburg, PA
 Leonard Van Gemert, ET1 (63-65), Bradenton, FL
 Tom Victory, SFCS (60-64), Port Orchard, WA
 Ernesto Villamil, DKCM (63-65), Annapolis, MD
 Dick Walker, AG2 (66-68), Mendon, MI
 Doug Weeks, RD2 (60-63), Canastota, NY
 Egon Werdelman, CDR (60-61), San Diego, CA
 Robert Westlake, MR3 (59-62), De Graff, OH
 Ben Wheatley, SN (59-61), Fairland, IN
 Ron Zucarro, SN (67-68), Rio Rancho, NM



Reunion





95, Norfolk, Va.



Are you coming to Reunion 96? Topeka, Kansas, August 14-18, 1996

Based on the information you have now, please complete this questionnaire.

Detach and return to Jack Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok., 74008. Use the reverse side for comments. Note that this does not constitute registration for the reunion; nor is it a commitment. This is just for planning purposes. A reunion registration form will be provided later.

Name: _____

Are you coming to Topeka? Yes _____. No _____.

How many will coming with you? _____.

Check appropriate blanks concerning when you think you will attend Wednesday through Saturday:

- All four days. _____.
- Three days. ____ (Which ones? _____).
- Two days. ____ (Which ones? _____).
- One day. ____ (Which one? _____)

Will you play golf ____? If so, would you be interested in a two-day tournament _____?

Would you be interested in an additional group tour, starting Sunday after the reunion, to Branson, MO (Nashville of the Midwest), and returning to Topeka or Kansas City either Tuesday or Wednesday? This would be about a six-hour bus trip. _____.

Comments _____.

Topeka is served by AMTRAK, USAir Express from Kansas City International Airport, and by van shuttle (approx. 1 hr) from KCI. How will you be arriving? AMTRAK ____; Air ____; KCI Shuttle ____; POV ____; Rental Car ____? (Hotel parking free).

Below are five reasons to go to a reunion. So that we may better plan reunion, please rank these five 1 through 5, with 1 being the most important. Add others and rank them if you desire.

____ Seeing and visiting with old friends. Making new ones.

____ Geographic location of reunion.

____ Combine with other vacation plans before/after reunion.

____ Reunion Events.

____ Activities for wife.

____ Other _____.

____ Other _____.

If you have been to past reunions, what kind of events/activities would you add to future reunions.

