

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 8, No. 2

May, 1997

### Committee:

*John Reynolds, President; Dudley E. Cass, Secretary/Treasurer;  
Al Jefferis, Assistant Secretary; Tom Victory, Bud Zimmerman,  
Reunion '97 Chairmen; Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor*



### FROM THE PRESIDENT

#### Reunion 97 a Must

It seems like just a short time ago since a few of us met at Jim Ownby's house to try and put a reunion together. Now, we are getting ready to launch number eight in Seattle, Washington.

The data base continues to grow and we find more shipmates each year as we meet to tell a few sea stories and straighten out some of the world's problems.

The crew in Seattle has been on the job and things are going great. Everything is in place and the state of Washington can hardly wait for the Topeka sailors to arrive. I hope you are all as anxious to get there as I am. If you have never been to one of these reunions you don't know what you are missing. It is truly a great time to get in touch with your memories and just "let it all hang out."

Tom Victory and Bud Zimmerman have been reporting back and there are a lot of great places to "let the good times roll." So I suggest you make Seattle a must on your things to do this summer. Don't let anything steer you in the wrong direction. Set sail for Reunion 97 and stay on course.

See you there.

John Reynolds

#### NEW MEMBERS (SINCE NOV. 1996)

Fred Florian LCPL (60-62) Philadelphia, PA  
Ed Hammann CPL (60-62) West Caldwell, NJ  
Danny Williams BT3 (68-69) Pearl River, LA  
Curtis Krause SA (60-62) Allentown, PA  
Ronald McPhail RDC (67-68) Winter Park, FL

### TAPS

Dick Wemette, Ensign, (60-62), March 14, 1997, Chula Vista, Cal.

Lewis Washington Galloway (59-65), May 31, 1995, Oklahoma City, Okla.

### BINNACLE LIST

Jim Ownby, El Cajon, CA

### LAUGHLIN WAS A SUCCESS

Dudley Cass reports that the Laughlin Bash, held March 4-8, was a success again this year, except it was a little too windy to play golf.

"We saw two shows, had 'happy hours,' gambled a little but not too much, had good meals together, told and listened to good sea stories, and renewed friendships," says Dudley.

The crowd joining Dudley and Ruth (61-64) in Laughlin included Everett and Colleen Siler (63-65) (first timers), Mike Angulo (65-67), John Hojaboom (60-68), Jim Ownby (62-65), Egon and Helen Werdelman (60-61), Joe and Rose Ripley (59-63), Don and Pat Nellis (64-66), Jerry and Leanne Pennington (63-64), and Tom and Jutta Eagling (60-63).

### WHERE DID IT COME FROM?

#### HOLYSTONE

The last Navy ships with teak decks were the battleships, now since decommissioned (that's not really true since we had partial teak decks—even though over steel). Teak, and other wooden decks, were scrubbed with a piece of sandstone, nicknamed at one time by an anonymous witty sailor as the "holystone." It was so named because since its use always brought a man to his knees, it must be holy!

## ARE YOU READY FOR SEATTLE? ARE YOU READY TO GO TO SEA?

Come about August 12, we will set the Special Sea and Anchor Detail and go to sea, arriving in Seattle for Reunion 97, August 13-16.

Are you ready?

It's been so long since we've been to sea, that most of us sailors, who prided ourselves on the way we walked on a rolling and pitching deck, have become landlubbers of a sort, and the mere breath of salt air and a gentle rolling sea makes us a little queasy.

Here are some things you can do this summer to help you overcome this syndrome and get ready to be a full-fledged sailor again:

- Have a fluorescent lamp installed on the bottom of your coffee table and lie under it to read books.
- Raise the thresholds and lower the top sills on your front and back doors so that you either trip over the threshold or hit your head on the sill every time you pass through one of them.
- (For engineering types) Leave the lawnmower running in your living room six hours a day to get accustomed to proper noise level. (For non-engineering types, a vacuum cleaner will do).
- Put on the headphones from your stereo (don't plug them in.) Go stand in front of the kitchen stove. Say (to nobody in particular), "Stove manned and ready." Stand there 3 or 4 hours. Say (to nobody in particular) "Stove secured." Roll up the head phones cord and put them away.
- If none of these work, call a shipmate.

After accomplishing all of these things, you'll be partially ready for the blast in Seattle. If not, watch for more helpful hints in the next newsletter.

Courtesy, Jim Carey (62-65)

## SHIP'S STORE REPORT

The following items are available in the ships store. Most of them will be available in Seattle.

- Adult shirts, pink, green, white \$22.00
- Ball caps 8.00
- Key Chains 3.00
- Baka Hachi Book 7.00

- Wine glasses/tumblers 4@ 12.00
- Topeka Jackets, Navy 35.00
- Ship's Plaque 22.00  
(Personalized) 27.00

Like everything else, our costs have gone up. Please include \$5.00 for shipping any order. Send requests to Jill Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, OK 74008.

## LETTERS

Dear Ed:

It's about time I pay up as a member of the Association. I served in the Marine Detachment from January, 1963 to July, 1965, when I was discharged as a Corporal. I have many memories of our trips up and down the coast, to Hawaii, and Westpac in 1994.

After more than 17 years, I re-started my hobby of competitive shooting, both pistol and rifle, in 1981. This has led to a Distinguished award for both, only the 30<sup>th</sup> civilian to earn both.

My wife and I have been in Tucson since 1985. We have one child, Emma Louise, age 7, a thrill for both of us.

In the early 80's, we saw Bob Diaz, now retired and former Detachment Gunnery Sergeant in Oceanside and San Diego. He helped me re-start my shooting hobby.

Mike Orr (63-65)

Dear Ed:

Although I don't attend the annual reunions, I am still very fond of my experiences aboard Topeka.

I want to help with annual dues. I think you fellows are doing a super job.

Sorry to hear of Herb Hedge passing away. Will always remember him.

Cliff Calais (64-66)

Dear Ed:

About Herb Hedge. He was the kind of doc that really cared. I had broken my jaw shortly after the man jumped overboard on a bet, but we didn't know for sure it was broken.

It was hard to believe that Dr. Hedge would show up on the bridge for a BM3 to take care of the pain while I was on watch. Only on Topeka.

Jon R. Sorensen (63-65)

Dear Ed:

We are still waiting approval for Bob to get leave during reunion time. August is hunting season here; however we think he will get it and three of us (including our daughter Tara) will probably come to Seattle.

Bob and Joyce Gilliam (63-67)

Dear Ed:

If any of you shipmates would like to receive a free copy of JUNO, I would be more than happy to request it for them.

JUNO is a neat computer program. Basically, you get free E-mail, anywhere in the world. It does not require an online service, such as AOL, Prodigy or whatever. The JUNO people access the internet so you get that free. The only requirement is to watch a few "banner ads" from time to time.

Computer requirements are at least a 14,800 or above modem, 486, 8K RAM and they can come on board. If interested, contact me.

Bob Bond (63-65)

## MEET YOUR SHIPMATE

Had it not been for the lessons he learned on the Topeka from its many shipmates - especially BOSN Heeney, Jon Sorensen probably would not have gone on to a successful career in the Navy.

He had spent his first years on the USS Jenkins, DDE-447 out of Pearl Harbor before reporting to the Topeka as a fresh and very young BM3. His first assignment was the Officers' Motor Boat and then moved up the Captain's Gig. Two years later with a crash course in the real Navy he was ordered to DaNang, Vietnam.

"After the Turner Joy incident in the Gulf of Tonkin I thought I had seen the last of Vietnam. Little did I know that the next 11 years would be spent mostly in or around that war."

In addition to these two ships, he served on board the USS R.K. Huntington, DD-781; USS Kansas City, AOR-3; USS Truxtun, and USS Roanoke, AOR-7. He also spent a tour as a Recruit Company Commander, UNREP Instructor and Recruiter. Along the way he progressed through the ranks, reaching E-9 - BMCM(SW) and worked for and qualified as Officer of the Deck Underway (formation steaming) of a deep draft ship.

"It was a very rewarding career and when I visit memory lane I always go back to those things I learned while on the Topeka. That one ship set the stage for my success."

After being a recruiter for Nuclear Officers out of NRD Omaha, he retired with 25 years under his belt. He moved back home to Arvada, CO and became a Deputy Sheriff for Jefferson County. After losing his partner in a gun battle with a triple murder suspect he thought he should try something else. "Because most of my naval career was as a stevedore I went into the warehouse business where I currently am working for Caterpillar at the distribution center in Denver."

Being an eight-tour veteran of Vietnam, "the POW issue has always burned at my soul, and several years after I retired from the Navy I got involved as an activist and am currently the National Secretary of S.E.A.R.C.H. Inc (Search Efforts And Recovery from Communist Hands)." This organization deals strictly with the issue of Live POWs.

"It's like Topeka shipmates all over again. I cannot forget. I will not forget. I must do all that I can to bring our brothers home."

For information about the current status of POWS, contact Jon or the following e-mail addresses: for general information, perry@fidnet.com and for specific information, Powseeker@aol.com

## LOOK WHO'S COMING

The following shipmates have thus far indicated they are coming to the reunion. Looks like a good bunch. Come and join us.

Paul F. Abrahams, Punta Gorda, FL  
Don C. Anderson, Woodbridge, VA  
Mike Angulo, Spring Valley, CA  
Steve F. Archbold, Dix Hills, NY  
Charles T. Armstrong, Seattle, WA  
John F. Bailey, Blue Springs, MO  
Rendall Bess, Dundee, OR  
Bill Bundy, Oxnard, CA  
Dudley E. Cass, Bonita, CA  
Jack Connery, Bixby, OK  
Irye L. Couch, Grand Junction, CO  
Jerry D. Craig, Cartersville, GA  
Tom E. Eagling, Tucson, AZ  
Erin L. Endicott, Cove, OR  
Don E. Ervin, Chula Vista, CA  
Richard W. Fladmark, Fredericksburg, VA  
Eston L. Fritz, Winfield, PA  
George W. Grupe, Marlboro, NJ  
Steven D. Hall, Toledo, OH

Carl Hemenway, Centralia, WA  
Ted R. Hendershot, Mendocino, CA  
Gerald Judge, Chula Vista, CA  
Paul W. Ladd, Vallejo, CA  
Calvin E. Ladd, Hopkins, MN  
Mike Leahy, Fraser, MI  
Lewis Louden, Omaha, NE  
Norm R. Malmberg, Fort Jones, CA  
Vince Manion, Eugene, OR  
Jack E. Mansfield, Silverdale, WA  
Don Nellis, San Diego, CA  
Harvey G. Nelson, Ridgecrest, CA  
Loy V. Nix, Flowery Branch, GA  
Arthur Nolan, Cumming, GA  
Gary M. Noland, Fair Oaks, CA  
Robert "Bob" J. Odman, Kent, WA  
Irad J. Parkhurst, Granada Hills, CA  
Larry Patriquin, Barrington, NH  
Jerome Pennington, Temple City, CA  
Joseph V. Peragine, San Diego, CA  
Gale A. Pfund, San Francisco, CA  
John D. Reynolds, Redondo Beach, CA  
Paul J. Ruby, San Francisco, CA

Robert Schramm, Orange, CA  
LeRoy H. Servin, Apache Junction, AZ  
Jimmy L. Starr, Topeka, KS  
Eugene Tabor, Burlington, WA  
Paul Velasco, San Mateo, CA  
Thomas J. Victory, Port Orchard, WA  
Ernesto S. Villamil, Annapolis, MD  
Bernard Visser, Ventura, CA  
John "Jack" L. Walkin, Reno, NV  
Ben A. Wheatley, Fairland, IN  
James D. Whisennand, Elkhart, KS  
Doyne R. Wills, Jr., Panama City, FL  
Weldon K. (Bud) Zimmerman, Bremerton, WA  
Ronald A. Zuccaro, Rio Rancho, NM

#### **LAST MINUTE NOTE**

Please note that the registration deadline has been changed to July 10, instead of July 14, as shown on the calendar. This is because of tour contract requirements.

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



*Seattle, August 13-16 - -*

*Come Join Us*



**Reunion Registration**  
**Reunion 97, August 13-17, 1997**  
**Doubletree Inn at Southcenter Mall**  
**Seattle, Washington**

Please fill in this registration form and mail with check by July 5, 1997.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Number in your Party \_\_\_\_\_  
 Will you be staying at the Doubletree Inn? \_\_\_\_\_

NAME TAG INFORMATION. First name (or nickname) and last name will be printed on name tags for you. Please print names below.

First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 First Name \_\_\_\_\_ Last Name \_\_\_\_\_

GOLFERS: Tee time 1100 Saturday. Cost to be determined. Number \_\_\_\_\_

REUNION FEE: The Reunion Fee will be \$85 per person for the four days, which includes the cost of the Hospitality Room, the Friday night Cocktail party, and the Saturday night banquet. For those not attending all four days - No charge for Wednesday, \$10 for Thursday, \$30 for Friday, \$45 for Saturday. For children 12 years and younger - \$9 if they attend the banquet, otherwise, no charge.

Days Attending	Number Attending	Price	Cost
All Four Days	_____	\$85	_____
Not all Four Days			
Wednesday	_____	\$0	_____
Thursday	_____	\$10	_____
Friday	_____	\$30	_____
Saturday	_____	\$45	_____

Children at Banquet \_\_\_\_\_ \$9 \_\_\_\_\_  
 Reunion Fee Total \_\_\_\_\_

BANQUET ENTREE CHOICES (give number): Prime Rib\_\_\_ Prawns\_\_\_ Vegetarian\_\_\_  
 for Children: Cheeseburger/fries\_\_\_ Chicken strips/fries\_\_\_

**TOURS: (NOTE: MUST HAVE YOUR TOUR RESERVATIONS NO LATER THAN 10 JULY!)**

**TILlicum VILLAGE SALMON DINNER CRUISE.** Bus to Seattle Pier 56. Cruise Elliot Bay to Blake Island. Tour Tillicum Indian Village - see ceremonial longhouses, war canoes, Indian art. All-you-can-eat buffet featuring alder-smoked salmon and Indian bread, followed by entertainment of music and costumed dancing.

30 Minimum. Cost \$60 per person  
 Thursday evening Time TBA (Approx. 5 hours)  
 Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$60 Total \$\_\_\_\_\_

**BANGOR, WA SUBMARINE BASE TOUR - TOUR OF BASE, TRAINING FACILITY and TRIDENT SUBMARINE.** Buffet Lunch at Base Consolidated Mess.

Tour requirements: American citizen, no cameras, minimum age 11, Ladies wear slacks, wear comfortable shoes, be able to climb 30' vertical ladder. **MUST** have names for this tour by July 14, 1997.

35 Maximum, 30 Minimum Cost \$30 per person (for bus and lunch)  
 Friday. Bus pickup at hotel at 0730 - return to hotel about 1630.  
 Number attending \_\_\_\_\_ x \$30 Total \$\_\_\_\_\_

Names of those taking the tour: \_\_\_\_\_

\*\*\*\*\* TOTAL REUNION FEE AND TOURS \$\_\_\_\_\_

RECEIPT OF PAYMENT DEADLINE FOR REUNION FEE AND TOURS IS 10 JULY 1997.  
 Make checks payable to TOPEKA Reunion Assn.  
 Mail to: Dudley Cass, 3028 Bonita Woods Drive, Bonita, CA 91902

**USS Topeka Reunion Association**  
**Reunion Schedule 1997**  
**Seattle, Washington, August 13-17**

Wednesday, August 13

1200 Hospitality Room opens. Check-in/Registration.  
Pick up name tags.  
Info on tours in Seattle  
Ship Store Sales

Thursday, August 14

0730 Hospitality Room opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.  
Tour on your own.  
Registration continues.  
1730 Bus departs for Evening Dinner Tour - Tillicum Village

Friday, August 15

0730 Hospitality Room opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.  
Submarine Base Bangor Tour departs.  
Tour Seattle on your own.  
1800 Hospitality Room closes  
1800 Welcome Aboard Reception and Cocktail Party  
2000 Hospitality Room reopens.

Saturday, August 16

0730 Hospitality Room opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.  
0900 Business Meeting, Followed by Group Pictures  
1100 Golfers Tee Time  
1700 Hospitality Room closes for Banquet set-up  
1800 Cocktail Party  
1900 Banquet and Program  
After Banquet and Program, Dancing with live music at Double Tree Suites, Hospitality Room reopens.

Sunday, August 17

0730 Hospitality Room opens.  
Say Good byes - God speed.

REUNION HIGHLIGHTS

Accommodations.

The Doubletree Inn, located at the Southcenter Mall which is about 1 mile from the Seattle/Tacoma airport. The hotel offers garden view and poolside rooms, has the Boojum Tree Restaurant and Lounge, and has an indoor heated pool, racquetball courts, fully equipped fitness center, a whirlpool, and sauna. The room rates are \$89 (plus 11% tax) per nite for a single or double. These rates are good from August 10 through August 20 for those who would like to come early or stay a few days longer. Be sure to ask for the TOPEKA Reunion rates when you make reservations. The reservation deadline for these rates is July 13, 1997. Toll-free phone number for reservations is 1-800-222-8733. However, you may find the 800 number doesn't know about our reunion. If this happens to you, call the hotel direct at 1-206-246-8220. Free transportation to and from the Seattle/Tacoma airport is available. The Southcenter Mall offers 150 fine department stores and specialty shops. More than 20 restaurants are nearby.

RV Accommodations.

Seattle/Tacoma KOA, 5801 South 212th Street, Kent, WA 98032. Phone 1-800-562-1892 offers full hookup for \$27.95 plus tax, with 10% discount to KOA cardholders. Kent is about 6 miles southeast of the airport.

Golf Outing. (Tee-time approx. 11 a.m. Saturday)

Golf will be arranged for Saturday. Be sure to indicate on the registration form that you want to be included.

Tillicum Village Salmon Dinner Cruise. (Tour bus departs hotel 5:30 p.m. Thursday)  
This is a unique experience. Several people who have been there say "Don't miss it! It's worth every penny you pay for it!" You will be bused to Pier 56 in Seattle, taken on a narrated cruise of Elliot Bay and Puget Sound to Blake Island, then see Tillicum Village where you are taken back in time to the birthplace of Chief Sealth who was honored by naming Seattle after him. You'll see how the Native Americans lived in the Northwest in pioneering days, and feast on a buffet featuring alder-smoked salmon and Indian bread. After the buffet, sit back and enjoy narration of Indian folklore, with music and a series of costumed dances. Don't miss it.

TRIDENT Submarine Base Tour.

This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to tour a TRIDENT submarine, the Submarine Base and Training Facility at Bangor, Washington, and enjoy a special buffet lunch at the Base Consolidated Mess. This tour departs the hotel at 0730 Friday morning and return you to the hotel at about 1630. For security reasons, we have to provide the Base a list of people who will take the tour by 15 July, so be sure to include on the registration form the name(s) of those going. There is a maximum of 35 people, the first 35 who sign up for it and send in their registration form will get to go. Please note the tour restrictions and requirements listed on the registration form.

Hospitality Room.

We will have a large hospitality room this year - 900 sq. ft. and no beds to take up room! Tom Victory says the Hospitality Room will be open every morning at 0730 with a fresh pot of coffee and fresh doughnuts to start the day off right. The Hospitality room will be open, except for the time we are at the Friday nite Cocktail party and at the Banquet Saturday nite, until midnite each evening. Snacks (such as peanuts, chips, pretzels, etc.) and beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) will be available. This is where we gather to relax, visit, swap sea-stories, and maybe have a cool one, or a good cup of coffee. Registration will be there, and the Ship's Store will do it's business there.

Welcome Aboard Reception and Cocktail Party. (6 p.m. Friday)

This is your opportunity to meet and mingle with all the TOPEKA men and their spouses or friends. Plenty of delicious finger-food will be provided, and there will be a cash bar. Herb Hedge, who attended last years reunion, has since died and left \$500 to the Association to "buy the first round of drinks". We will observe his wishes and drink the first round in his memory.

Banquet. (6 p.m. Cash Bar, 7 p.m. Banquet Saturday)

Following a one hour "attitude adjustment" period at the cash bar, there will be a sit-down banquet featuring entree choice of Herb Roasted Prime Rib of Beef, au jus style, with Creamed Horseradish, or Saute of Prawns Provencale with White Wine, Shallots, Garlic and fresh Herbs, or by special request, a Vegetarian plate. For children 12 years and younger, a choice of Cheeseburger w/fries, or Chicken Strips w/fries is available. A bottle each of Merlot and Riesling wine will be provided at each table. The presentation of Colors will precede the meal. After the meal a short program will be presented. After the Program, Dancing to live music will be available at the Doubletree Suites, and the Hospitality room will be reopened.

Seattle Tours Available.

Some of the "on-your-own" tours available include the Pike Place Market Tour, Historic Pioneer Square and the Underground Seattle Tour, Boeing 747/767/777 Plant Tour, Northwest Wine Tasting, Spirit of Washington Dinner Train, Microbrewery Tour, and the Space Needle/Seattle Center Tour. Complete tour information will be available when you arrive.