

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 9, No. 2

May, 1998



### Committee:

*John Reynolds, President; Dudley E. Cass, Secretary/Treasurer;  
Al Jefferis, Assistant Secretary; Jack Kehoe, Reunion 98 Chairman;  
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor.*

### FROM THE PRESIDENT

From San Diego to Boston . . .

Eight years ago we dreamed of having a Baka Hachi reunion. San Diego was targeted as the spot for the first get-together. It was such a success that we took it on the road, and within the next seven years, have covered Long Beach, Washington, D.C., Nashville, back to San Diego, Topeka, Seattle and now it's on to Boston.

As we move around we are enjoying good times together, remembering old times, looking forward to better times, and having a good look at this great country of ours.

Each time we meet it gets better and we look forward to a great time together. August is fast approaching and Boston is the target for this year's bash. I hope you will grab the phone, as soon as you complete the registration form herein, and make plans to join us in Bean Town for another great party.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all the shipmates and their families for all the work and sacrifice they have made to make the Topeka Reunion Association the wonderful organization it is. As you read this newsletter, thank Jack Connery for all the work he puts into keeping us up to date on everything that goes on, and for his dedication to the association.

When you register for this year's reunion, thank Dudley Cass for the work he does all year keeping up with all of us and making sure everything is organized. As you enjoy the food at the banquet, thank Ruth Cass for all her work in making sure everything is just right. She is always on top of everything and it shows up on banquet night and we all just think it automatically happened, but believe me, it would never happen without her dedication to her task.

These are just a few of the people who keep the screws turning. There are others like Jerry Judge who does such a great job a emcee of our Saturday program, Don Nellis, who from the beginning, provided great leadership as chairman of the Advisory Committee and has set the course for us from the get-go.

Thanks to all the reunion committees and chairpersons that have worked each year to set up and provide direction for us to have the great times we have always had. Thanks to Jill Connery who keeps the ship's store stocked and ready for each yearly meeting.

Thanks to all of you who attend and support the reunions. Without you we would be out of business. I hope to see everyone on Dudley's data base in Boston this summer. If you know shipmates that we don't, or one who is not on the list of those coming to Boston, give them a call and invite them to this year's affair. I guarantee they won't be sorry they came.

John Reynolds

### TAPS

Keith L. Camp, BT2, 61-65, February 24, 1998, Placerville, Cal., Cancer.

In our continuing search for more former shipmates, we have found the following to be deceased:

Edmund Pipho, CDR (60-62), Flemington, NJ

James Smith, BMC (60-61)

Jim Krutsinger, SN, Joplin, MO

Norman R. Stiman, LTJG (60-62)

The Library had Baka Hachi cruise books for the 1961, 1962, 1965-66 Westpac cruises as well as the 1967-68 Med cruise. Missing are the 1964 Westpac cruise and the last Med cruise. If anyone wants to help make Topeka the first ship to have a complete set on file, they can donate a copy by sending it to the Navy Department Library, Naval Historical Center, Attn: Ms. Jean Hart, Washington Navy Yard, Washington, D.C. 20374-5060.

Pat Roth (65-68)

*Ed note: It is my understanding that no cruise book was produced for the last Med cruise (just prior to decommissioning). I tried to find one when producing Baka Hachi. If this is not correct, and somebody has one, I would surely like to use it for the revision of Baka Hachi.*

## CRUISER MEMORIAL

Ernie Villamil (63-65), Annapolis, Md., represented the Association April 25 at a living memorial dedication to Cruiser Sailors at Arlington National Cemetery.

Sponsored by the U.S. Navy Cruiser Sailors Association, a tree was planted and a plaque dedicated. Highlight of the program was a tribute to "Cruisers Still on Station," honoring the ten cruisers sunk during WWII. Survivors of three of these cruisers, USS Houston (CA-30), USS Vincennes (CA-44), and USS Indianapolis (CA-35), participated in the program.

Villamil was appointed by President Reynolds to represent the Association.



Memorial to Cruiser Sailors at Arlington National Cemetery

## LOCATING SHIPMATES ON THE I-NET

Dick Walker (66-68), Mendon, MI, has been very successful in locating 'lost shipmates' on the internet. He offers the following to other members on the I-net, that they may too find a shipmate:

"Over the last few years I have eagerly waited for every newsletter, hoping that in the new member section I would find a missing shipmate from the Navigation Department. It didn't happen often, so this spring I decided to search myself.

"Using the internet, I began a search for a shipmate I haven't seen since the first Med cruise. The net gave me a list of about 50 names, which I narrowed to 30, and sent to each a search letter. About a week later, I got a "you found me" letter, and talked to him later that day, 30 years after last seeing him. Since that time I have located several other shipmates from mine and other divisions. Here's how I do it.

- "Go to your home page.
- Click on the search engine 'Excite.'
- Click on the 'people' search section.
- Enter the information requested.

"The net will provide you a list of names, addresses and phone numbers. Based on the information you have, pick the most likely names. Drop them a letter, postcard or telephone them. The postcard is the most economical. Hopefully, you will get some replies, including a 'you found me' letter.

"It takes a little time, a little effort, and costs a little money. For about \$10, you can send 30 letters. But isn't it worth it to find an old friend?"

*Ed Note: Thanks Dick for your efforts. And I know the ones you found thank you too. I have done this same sort of thing, and have received some very interesting replies from non-shipmates.*

## THE BRICK WALL IS UP

Last year, we solicited money to have the ship's name inscribed on a brick in a memorial wall at the Iowa Gold Star Museum for military memorabilia, located at the Camp Dodge National Guard Training Center near Des Moines.

Bill Carver (60-63) reports that the wall is complete and we are duly recognized. Pictures of the wall will be contained in the July newsletter.

## NEW MEMBERS (SINCE JANUARY)

Bob Krisko, AG2 (67-68), Westerville, OH  
Andy Andrae, LT (63-64), San Angelo, TX  
Ronald Jacobsen, LTJG (62-64), Verdale, WA  
Fred Jenkins, SH3 (60-63), Union City, MI  
David Remenar, AG2 (67-68), Placentia, CA  
James Sundo, SN (59-63), Cheswick, PA  
Roy Grisewood, RD2 (64-66), Wayland, NY  
John Brown, SM3 (64-68), Granbury, TX  
Charles Aycock, AG2 (67-68), APO AA

## ADVISORY BOARD MEETING

The Advisory Board met April 4 at the home of Dudley Cass in Bonita, Ca. Primary purpose of the meeting was to review and approve plans for the August 19-23 reunion in Boston. Approved plans and registration form are included elsewhere in this newsletter.

The reunion fee of \$95 per person is based on estimated attendance of 150 (including spouses and friends). Attendance indicated thus far is about 125.

The board approved the purchase of a piece of carry-on luggage for transporting association material to/from reunions. Quantity of material has outgrown the large briefcase currently used.

The board approved expenditure of up to \$100 for use in converting slides to photographs for use in the 2000 revision of Baka Hachi.

Present at the meeting were John and Mary Reynolds, Jim Ownby, Al and Louise Jefferis, Irad and Betty Parkhurst, Don Nellis, Egon and Helen Werdelman, Jerry and Ruth Judge, and Dudley and Ruth Cass. Reunion Coordinator Jack Kehoe "attended" by telephone from Boston.

## LETTERS

Dear Ed:

I am finally back on my feet and I truly appreciate you guys carrying me for the last four years and sending me the newsletter while I was out of work and unable to contribute.

I was a Fire Control Technician (1963-67) and made two cruises to WestPac. I left Topeka as FTM3 for a destroyer on the east coast, and made another 8-month deployment to the South China Sea on that ship. So much for coast to coast transfer.

I consider my time on Topeka as the formative years of my life. When I first reported, I was without direction, confused and totally lost. After a couple of

years, it hit me. I could gain control of my life by being a sailor instead of going through the motions. I retired from the Navy in 1982 as a FTMC.

Thanks again for your patience. It means a lot to me that you cared enough to keep in touch with the crewmembers of the finest cruiser in the Pacific. Having said that, a ship is only as good as her crew. I will never forget the wonderful folks on Topeka with whom I had the honor to serve.

Jack Clements (63-67)

Dear Ed:

Was reading the February newsletter and do recall Typhoon Nancy. I took 8 mm movies of this happening. Wasn't supposed to be where I took the film.

The typhoon is quite an impressive site on the screen. I would be willing to bring it to the reunion in Boston. Do not have a projector as mine is broken. It is possible that the film could be transferred to a video.

Fred Howes (59-63)

Dear Ed:

I read in the last newsletter that some of our members meet once a year in Laughlin, Nevada. Two years ago, I bought a home in Lake Havasu City, Ariz, and I will be moving there in four months. On March 18, my best friend, Sherry, and I got married in Laughlin, only 50 minutes from Lake Havasu. We go to the Riverside Hotel all the time to dance to country and western music. Next year, we'll be there.

I read that Abel Flores is looking for a model of the Topeka class cruiser. I have been involved in building models for 35 years and have written several model companies looking for the same thing. They say that "there's just no demand for them." I have drawn plans for a six-foot model and will build it after moving.

I have often wondered where my leading PO is now. Jack Hughes was a tough Boatswain's Mate, but I had a lot of respect for him. Does anybody have a handle on him?

Chuck Beardsley (62-65)

Dear Ed:

When I recently visited the Navy Library at the Naval Historical Society in Washington, D.C., I discovered that it has the largest collection of cruise books in the world. Searching the catalog, and later in the stacks, I realized that no ship seems to have a complete set of cruisebooks in the library.

## NAMES/TELEPHONE NUMBERS

The following are names, addresses and phone numbers of various people in the association.

### Chairman, Board of Advisors

Don Nellis, 12735 Abra Dr., San Diego, Cal., 92128; Telephone 619-487-4595.

### President

John Reynolds, 916 Esplanade, # 177, Redondo Beach, Cal., 90266; Telephone 310-540-7817.

### Secretary-Treasurer

Dudley Cass, 3028 Bonita Woods Dr., Bonita, Cal., 91902; 619-267-3123.

### 1998 Reunion Coordinator

John Kehoc, 162 Washington St., Wellesley, Mass., 02181; 617-235-0885.

### Newsletter Editor

Jack Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok., 74008; 918-366-4581; Fax 918-366-6368; E-mail JJConn@AOL.com.

### Ship's Store

Jill Connery, 16334 South Lewis, Bixby, Ok., 74008; 918-366-4581; Fax 918-366-6368; E-mail JJConn@AOL.com.

1998 Annual Dues \$15

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



## ON A COLLISION COURSE WITH A . . . ?

The following is stated to be a true transcript of an actual radio conversation between a U.S. Navy carrier and Canadian authorities off the coast of Newfoundland in October, 1995. Released by the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (Op 10):

**Carrier:** Please divert your course 15 degrees to the north to avoid a collision.

**Canadians:** Recommend you divert your course 15 degrees to the south to avoid a collision.

**Carrier:** This is the Captain of a U.S. Navy ship. I say again, divert your course.

**Canadians:** No! I say again. You divert your course.

**Carrier:** This is the aircraft carrier USS Missouri, we are a large warship of the U.S. Navy. Divert your course now!

**Canadians:** This is a lighthouse. Your call.

**USS TOPEKA CLG-8 Reunion 98**  
**Boston, Massachusetts, August 19-23**  
**Reunion Schedule**

**Wednesday, August 19**

- 1200 Hospitality Room opens. Check-in/Registration.  
Pick up name tags; information on tours in Boston Area.  
Ship-store Sales
- 1600 Advisory Board Meeting

**Thursday, August 20**

- 0730 Hospitality Room Opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.  
Tour on your own.  
Registration continues.
- 1100 Harvard Lunch/Tour departs.
- 1800 Buses depart for Evening Cruise of Boston Inner and Outer Harbors, Hot  
Dinner Buffet, DJ and Dancing.

**Friday, August 21**

- 0730 Hospitality Room Opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.
- 0800 Golfer's tee time.
- 0800 Buses depart for Tour of Boston Historical Sights (7 hours), or tour  
Boston on your own.
- 1800 Hospitality room closes.
- 1800 Welcome Aboard Reception and Cocktail Party.
- 2000 Hospitality room reopens.

**Saturday, August 22**

- 0730 Hospitality Room Opens. Coffee and Doughnuts.
- 0800 Business Meeting
- 0930 Buses depart for USS Constitution. Tour followed by group picture.
- 1230 Buses depart USS Constitution for tour of USS Salem at the  
U.S. Shipbuilding Museum Quincy MA, and the USS Massachusetts,  
USS Joseph P. Kennedy and a Fleet Submarine at Fall River, MA.
- 1800 Cocktail Party
- 1900 Banquet and Program.
- After Banquet and Program, Dancing with live music at the Sheraton  
Needham Hotel.

**Sunday, August 23**

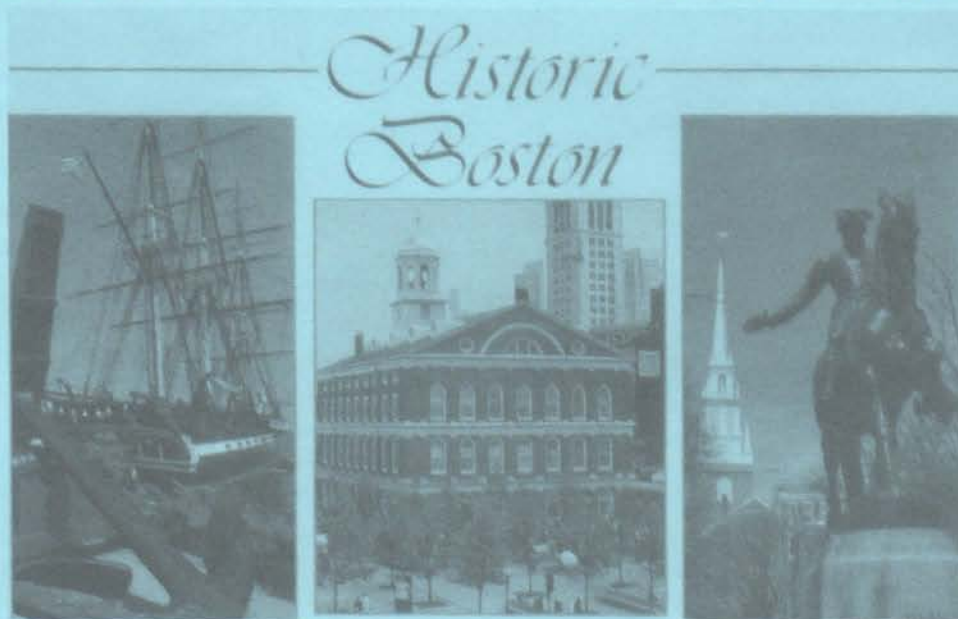
- 0730 Hospitality Room Opens  
Say Good byes - God Speed.

## COMING TO BOSTON

If your best shipmate friend is not on this list, why not call him and say, "Let's get together in Boston in August and talk about old times."

Don Anderson, Woodbridge, VA  
Mike Angulo, Spring Valley, CA  
Jesse Aragon, Anaheim, CA  
Steve Archbold, Dix Hills, NY  
Phillip Brooks, Cloverdale, CA  
Freddy Bruce, Burton, MI  
Parker Butcher, Shenandoah, IA  
Bill Carver, Des Moines, IA.  
Dudley Cass, Bonita, CA  
Don Cates, Ocala, FL  
Jack Connery, Bixby, OK  
Tom Eagling, Tucson, AZ.  
Erin Endicott, Cove, OR  
Donald Everitt, Pittsburgh, PA  
Mike Faber, Centralia, WA  
Donald Grady, Mechanicsville, VA  
George Grupe, Marlboro, NJ  
Joe Heeney, Torrance, CA  
Edward Hewitt, Brigantine, NJ  
Tom Hoard, Ithaca, NY  
Norbert Howe, Lakewood, CA  
Fred Howes, Scarborough, ME  
Jerry Judge, Chula Vista, CA  
John Keepper, Lake Bluff, IL  
Virgil Kefauver, Myersville, MD  
Ernie Kershaw, Melrose, NY.  
Calvin Ladd, Minnetonka, MN  
Mike Leahy, Fraser, MI  
Norm Malmberg, Fort Jones, CA  
Donald McFarland, Winchester, VA  
Don Nellis, San Diego, CA

Loy Nix, Flowery Branch, GA  
Ken Noble, Louisville, CO  
Arthur Nolan, Cumming, GA  
Charles Northrup, Palm Harbor, FL  
Richard Olsen, Los Altos, CA  
Jim Ownby, El Cajon, CA  
Irad Parkhurst, Granada Hills, CA  
Jerry Pennington, Fallbrook, CA  
Joe Peragine, San Diego, CA  
Jim Pflieger, Ft. London, PA  
Gale Pfund, San Francisco, CA  
John Reynolds, Redondo Beach, CA  
Patsy Richardi, Randolph, MA  
Russ Richards, Apple Valley, CA  
Paul Ruby, San Francisco, CA  
Bill Ruhe, McLean, VA  
William Sache, Watertown, MA  
Richard Sampson, Plymouth, MA  
Robert Schramm, Orange, CA  
Austin Schroder, Smith, NV  
LeRoy Servin, Apache Junction, AZ  
Alonzo Simmerman, Lodi, CA  
Ron Smart, Turlock, CA  
Raymond Spatz, South Hempstead, NY  
Jimmy Starr, Topeka, KS  
Leonard Van Germert, Bradenton, FL  
Ernie Villamil, Annapolis, MD  
Dick Walker, Mendon, MI  
Richard Wallace, Halifax, MA  
Egon Werdelman, San Diego, CA  
Dillon Wooten, Goldsboro, NC



## **Sheraton Needham Hotel Accommodations**

Located just off I-95 in Needham, MA - about twelve miles from Logan International Airport and about five miles from AMTRAK (128 Station). The hotel offers an indoor pool, fitness center, whirlpool and sauna. Room rates are \$89 (plus 9.7% tax) per night for a single or double. Rooms have coffeepots, hairdryers, iron and ironing board. Rates are good from Aug 16-25 for those who come early and/or stay later. Reservation deadline for these rates is July 17. Toll-free number for reservations is 800-274-3728. If the "800 number" doesn't know about the reunion, call the hotel direct at 781-444-1110. Be sure to tell them you are with the TOPEKA Reunion. Transportation from Logan Airport is available at \$16 per person from U.S. Shuttle 781-894-3100. The hotel restaurant Bullards is available with a Senior's Discount for those 55 and older. Numerous restaurants are nearby. Trophy's Sports Bar features both live and recorded music, dancing and large screen TV's to view videos and sports. Complementary shuttle service is provided to commuter rail public transportation into Boston.

## **RV Accommodations**

Available at Normandy Farms Campground 508 543-7600, 20 miles/20 minutes from the hotel; Plymouth Rock Campground, Middleboro, MA 508 947-6435; 45 minutes from the hotel; or call AAA 800- 222-4357 for Cape Cod. The Normandy and Plymouth Rock are the nearest.

## **Wednesday Noon thru Sunday Morning: Hospitality Room**

Our large Hospitality Room will open daily at 0730 with a fresh pot of coffee, doughnuts, bagels and muffins. The Hospitality Room will be open until midnight, except where indicated in the schedule. Snacks (such as peanuts, chips, pretzels, etc.) and beverages (alcoholic and non-alcoholic) will be available at no additional cost to you. (Paid for from the reunion fee). This is where we gather to relax, visit, swap sea-stories and brag (or complain) about the kids. Registration desk and the Ship's Store will be there.

## **Thursday; Tour "A" - Harvard Lunch/Tour.**

Jack Kehoe will conduct a short (about 2 hours) informal tour of his alma mater, Harvard, which will include lunch at the Harvard Faculty Club. Lunch ranges from \$10 to \$15. Transportation will be arranged. Please indicate your interest on the Registration Form.

## **Thursday; Tour "B" - Dinner Cruise In Boston Inner And Outer Harbor. \$40/Person; Children 12 and under \$32.**

This 3-hour excursion boat cruise will include the sunset cannon salute by USS Constitution and a narrated tour of the historic sites visible from the harbor including Bunker Hill monument and Old North Church, where the lantern signal one if by land, two if by sea was displayed in the steeple. The British came by sea and you'll see where they landed. There will be a cash bar, buffet dinner and a DJ. We will have sole use of the boat so we won't be "blasted out" by our own DJ's music. The tour bus departs the hotel at 6 p.m. Thursday. Cruise is 7 to 10. Buses will be back to the hotel by 11 p.m.

## **Friday; Tour "C" - Historical Boston Tour. \$25/Person (Does Not Include Lunch).**

We'll leave at 8 a.m. on a Gray Line narrated tour of the Boston Area including Lexington and Concord where the United States was born at Concord Bridge. We'll see Harvard yard, the scenic towns of Concord and Lexington. We'll return to Dorchester Heights where General Knox placed cannon captured at Ticonderoga, 350 miles away. The British evacuated Boston without a shot on March 17, 1775. We'll go to Quincy Market, the 90's universal tourist destination and see churches built in the 1700's, townhouses of

# Highlights

the 1800's, the glass towers of the new Boston, and the Swan Boats in the public garden. We'll see where Sam Adams led the Boston Tea Party tax protest. For those who saw the movie "Good Will Hunting," we'll see the contrast between M.I.T., Harvard, and South Boston ("Southie").

## **Friday; Welcome Aboard Reception And Cocktail Party (6 P.M. - 8 P.M.)**

This is your opportunity to visit with shipmates and their spouses or friends. Plenty of delicious heavy hors d'oeuvres will be provided, and there will be a cash bar.

## **Saturday; Tour "D" USS Constitution Tour, Followed By Optional Tour, Tour "E" of USS Salem, USS Massachusetts, USS Joseph P. Kennedy, and a Fleet Submarine.**

After the Business Meeting (about 0930) we'll leave for a tour of the USS CONSTITUTION, led by TOPEKA shipmate Dick Wallace who served aboard her many years as a Navy civilian employee until his recent retirement. Following the tour, we will have our group pictures made onboard or alongside the CONSTITUTION. There is no charge for the tour to the CONSTITUTION.

For those who choose the optional tour (at \$20 per person), buses will leave from "Old Ironsides" at 1230 for the U.S. Shipbuilding Museum at Quincy to see the USS Salem, then on to Battleship Cove in Fall River, (about 45 minutes from Boston) for a visit to the World War II Battleship Massachusetts, the Destroyer Joseph P. Kennedy, and a Fleet Submarine for those of us who never get enough of the Navy.

Complimentary buses will return to the hotel from Quincy Market at 4:30 p.m. for those who do not go on the optional tour of the Salem and Massachusetts.

## **Saturday; Banquet (Cash Bar 6 P.M. - Banquet At 7 P.M.)**

Following a "Happy Hour" at the cash bar, the banquet will feature entree choices of Roasted Prime Rib of Beef, au jus, Baked Boston Scrod (a filet of Haddock or Cod with Ritz Cracker Crust), or by special request, a Vegetarian plate. For children 12 years and younger, a choice of Hamburger, Cheeseburger, or Chicken Tenders w/fries is available. Four wines will be available. The presentation of Colors will precede the meal. After the banquet and short program, dancing to live music will be available at Trophy's Sports Bar, and the Hospitality room will be reopened.

## **Other Boston Tours Available.**

Some of the "on-your-own" tours available include the DUKW amphibious tour of Boston - about 1 1/2 hours with a short cruise on the Charles River, the self guided walking tour of the Freedom Trail - approximately 4 1/2 miles. It includes Paul Revere's house (built 1676), Old North Church, the English Colonial Governor's mansion (in the middle of skyscrapers), Fanueil Hall, called the "Cradle of Liberty." Trips are available to see the replica of the Mayflower at Plymouth Rock. Trips can be made to the legendary Newport, R.I. mansions of the Vanderbilts and others. There are day cruises to Provincetown, the tip of Cape Cod. There is a Boston trolley tour that is an "on and off" type (unlimited reboarding). Complete tour information will be available when you arrive.