

USS TOPEKA CLG-8

Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 29, No. 1

March 2018

Officers:

Dan Moore, Chairman, Board of Directors; Dan Moore, President;
Gary Baker, Secretary-Treasurer;
Ray and Kathy Spatz 2018 Reunion Chairman;
Kathy Spatz, Newsletter Editor; Gary Baker, Web Master
Pat Baker, Ships Store



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello again from “fly-over” country. Our winter here was awful, but fortunately we didn’t have storms, fires, floods, and mudslides like some of you. Looking forward to spring and before we know it, August will be here and we’ll be on our way to Philadelphia.

Philly is located on the Delaware River; population 1,500,000. Philadelphia was established as a Quaker colony by William Penn and others in 1681, it was the site in 1776 of the signing of the Declaration of Independence and in 1787 of the adoption of the Constitution of the US. This will be a very good historical trip for us. Hoping for a great turnout.

A reminder to all is that we have a web-site and Face Book group. They are:

<http://www.usstopekaclg8.org/>
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/825655290949203/>

If you have dues due, please contact Gary Baker. Reminder, we’re always on the lookout for our former shipmates. I found one last month.

Hope to see you in Philadelphia.

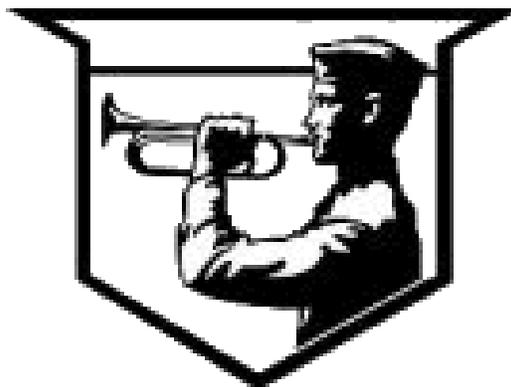
Dan

New Members (Since November 2017)

Thomas Swink EN2 67-68

Taps

Ronald S. Ostrowski IC2 60-61
Virgil L. Kefauver RDCM 60-63
Lyman C. Franklin MRC 59-60
John A. Jessup FTM2 66-69
Russel C. Lett SN 66-68
Gary L. Minnis GMSN 61-64
Robert E. Johnson QM2 67-69



USS TOPEKA 30TH ANNUAL REUNION

Reunion Dates:

**Monday, August 20, 2018 through Thursday,
August 23, 2018**

Kathy and Ray Spatz are our hosts for the 2018 reunion. Kathy and Ray may be contacted at kathleenspatz@gmail.com or 516-697-8274 for any questions or information.

Our hotel is the beautiful newly-renovated Wyndham Philadelphia Historic District, 400 Arch Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106.

The Wyndham is surrounded by all the best that Philadelphia has to offer. The Liberty Bell, National Constitution Center, Independence Hall, Ben Franklin Museum, US Mint and Betsy Ross house are within 1-2 blocks of the hotel. The Wyndham is also within blocks of numerous restaurants, from fine dining to the famous "Philly Cheesesteak".

Reservations must be made no later than July 19th, 2018. After that date the room block will be released and there is no guarantee you will be able to book a room. **Please** make your reservations as soon as you can. We have to let the hotel know 60 days before our arrival date if we can't make our room night commitment. Otherwise we'll be liable for penalties. Reservations can be made by calling the hotel reservation line at **1-877-999-3223**. Be sure to ask for the USS Topeka Reunion group rate. For early arrivals the hospitality room will be opened Sunday afternoon, August 19th, at no extra charge.

Indoor garage parking is available adjacent to the hotel at a discounted rate of \$10.00 plus 22.5% city tax per night.

How to get to Philadelphia

Philadelphia International Airport is just seven miles from Center City. SEPTA's R1 line directly links the airport to Philadelphia's downtown for a fast, hassle-free connection. Philadelphia taxis charge a flat rate of \$25 for travel between Center City and the airport. PHL is served by all major domestic carriers and is a major hub for American Airlines.

Philadelphia is served by Amtrak, which operates rail service along the Northeast Corridor stretching from Boston to Washington, and other major cities in the United States and Canada. Amtrak's 30th Street Station is minutes from the Pennsylvania Convention Center and Center City hotels.

By car, the city is just two hours from New York City, 90 minutes from Baltimore, three hours from Washington D.C. and about an hour from Lancaster County, Atlantic City and the New Jersey shore via major highways.

Philadelphia PHLASH

It's quick with service every 15 minutes.

It's easy with 22 stops in Philadelphia including stops near Penn's Landing, National Museum of Jewish American History, The Barnes Foundation, the Philadelphia Museum of Art, the Rodin Museum, the Perelman Building, Eastern State Penitentiary, The Franklin Institute, National Constitution Center, Pennsylvania Convention Center, Reading Terminal Market, the Shops at Liberty Place, the Please Touch Museum, the Philadelphia Zoo, One Liberty Observation Deck and the Museum of the American Revolution.

It's inexpensive at only \$2 per person per ride or \$5 for an all-day pass. Children 4 and under and **seniors are always FREE**.

All PHLASH vehicles are temperature-controlled and wheelchair-accessible.

Tours for Philadelphia

Independence after hours:

Monday 8/20 \$75 depart @ 5pm

Ticket prices include dinner, entertainment, exclusive tour, and gratuity.

Independence After Hours takes you on a realistic journey back to 1776. After an 18th-century-inspired dinner at historic City Tavern, and a visit by Thomas Jefferson, the group sneaks into Independence Hall where they eavesdrop on Jefferson, John Adams, and Benjamin Franklin discussing the Declaration of Independence.

First Course

- Country Salad
Julienned carrots, cucumber, tomato, field greens, raspberry shrub, and extra virgin olive oil

Choice of Entrée

- Colonial Turkey Pot Pie
Tender chunks of turkey, mushrooms, early peas, red potatoes, sherry cream sauce, and flaky pastry crust baked in a pewter casserole
- Beef Pie
Twice cooked beef, simmered with mushrooms and herbs, rich red wine sauce, baked in puff pastry
- Paillard of Salmon
Citrus marinated, pan-seared, sauce Béarnaise, mashed potatoes & vegetable of the season

Dessert

A freshly prepared dessert is created daily in City Tavern's on-premise bakery by their Pastry Chef.

Beverages

- Colonial Raspberry Shrub
- Full bar available (not included in ticket price)

Independence Seaport Museum

Tuesday 8/21 \$28 (boxed lunch from Campo's included)

Depart @ 10am to walk to Phlash stop.

Self-Guided Visit for Museum



ACCESSIBILITY

The main building of Independence Seaport Museum is wheelchair and stroller accessible, including the store and restrooms. The historic ships, Cruiser *Olympia* and Submarine *Becuna*, are not currently ADA accessible.

Guided Historic Ships Tour

Cruiser OLYMPIA

Launched in 1892, Cruiser *Olympia* (C-6) is the oldest steel warship afloat in the world.

Submarine BECUNA

Crew: 8 commissioned officers, 5 chief petty officers, 67 enlisted men

Top Speed after Guppy refit: 15 knots (17mph) submerged, 18 knots (21mph) surfaced

Launched in 1944, Submarine *Becuna* (SS-319) completed five wartime patrols in the Pacific Ocean. Submarine *Becuna* is similar to many submarines built in Philadelphia for the U.S. Navy.

Campo's

Each of our boxed lunches are prepared fresh daily, using the best local ingredients available.



Sandwich (9 inch)

Drink

Bag of Herr's Potato Chips

Freshly-baked Cookie

Pick Your Sandwich

- Philly Cheese Steak optional fried onions
- Turkey, ham, roast beef, corned beef, tuna, chicken salad
-
- Pick Your Drink
- Coke, Diet coke, Sprite, bottled water

Here in Philly, cheesesteaks are a civic icon, a tourist draw and a cultural obsession. Often imitated around the world, the cheesesteak is rarely duplicated successfully outside of Philadelphia.

A cheesesteak is a long, crusty roll filled with thinly sliced sautéed ribeye beef and melted cheese. Generally, the cheese of choice is Cheez Whiz, but American and provolone are also common choices. The art of cheesesteak preparation lies in the balance of flavors, textures and what is often referred to as the “drip” factor.

Museum of the American Revolution

Wednesday 8/22 \$12 Depart @ 9:15am

Enjoy a journey through the remarkable story of America's founding and gain a deeper understanding of the people, events, and ideals that gave birth to the nation. Located just steps from Independence Hall in the heart of Historic Philadelphia, the Museum brings the stories of our nation's founding to life in exciting and unique ways.

Lunch on your own.

Enjoy the onsite café and Museum shop during your visit! Located on the first floor of the Museum, both the café and shop are open to the public during the Museum's regular hours. Grab lunch or a snack at the [Cross Keys Café](#), which features a colonial-era inspired menu of salads, sandwiches, entrees, and desserts. Discover unique gifts, books, and artifact reproductions in the shop at the Museum or [online](#).



Additional tour option:

I was asked about the possibility of visiting the Chapel of Four Chaplains. My investigation discovered that there is the following shuttle to the Navy Yard with a stop also close to the chapel. I feel we can arrange this for possible Thursday following our business meeting.

The Navy Yard Shuttle

The Navy Yard offers two free shuttle routes that allow employees and visitors easy access to the Navy Yard from Center City, and AT&T Station on the Broad Street Subway Line.

Riders, please board the Center City Express Shuttle on the northwest corner of 10th & Filbert Streets (Greyhound Bus Station side/facing 7-Eleven).

The Chapel of Four Chaplains

1201 Constitution Avenue,

The Navy Yard – Bldg. 649

Philadelphia, PA 19112-1307

Main: 215-218-1943

Fax: 215-218-1949

Website: www.fourchaplains.org

HOURS OF OPERATION:

Monday – Friday: 9:00am-5:00pm



MEMBERSHIP AND DUES

Please help keep our association solvent. The only source of income for the operation of the USS Topeka Association is through the generosity of our dues-paying members. Your dues status is on the address page of the newsletter. Dues are \$20.00 per year, or \$80.00 for five years. Past dues are forgiven, and any dues received now will be applied to 2018 dues.

USS Topeka and Facebook

The USS Topeka Facebook page has been discontinued and has been replaced by a Facebook group. A Facebook group is more user friendly, more private, and is easier to administer than the Facebook page. So far we have 91 members in the group, and all crewmembers are urged to join. It's a great way to re-connect with your former shipmates and share memories of our travels, liberty experiences, and shipboard life.

It has been set up as a closed group, meaning that permission has to be granted by the group administrator to join. Permission will be given to all crewmembers, their families, and friends. To join enter USS Topeka CLG-8 in your Facebook search field and follow the instructions. The group is monitored several times daily by the administrator and permission is granted to those who qualify, usually within a just few hours of receipt.

Agent Orange Update

Little has changed since the November newsletter. The House version of The Blue Water Vietnam Veterans Act of 2017 (HR299) was sent to the Subcommittee on Disability Assistance and Memorial Affairs on January 19, 2017, and a hearing was held on April 5, 2017. No action since then. It now has 322 co-sponsors, up from 307 since the last newsletter. There has been no action on the Senate version (S422) since it was referred to the Committee on Veterans Affairs on February 16, 2017. It now has 45 co-sponsors, up from 42 since the last newsletter.

Navy Memorial Washington DC

All former sailors are eligible to be registered on the Navy Log at the Washington DC Navy Memorial. You can register on their website at www.navymemorial.org. Registration is free, but you must become a member in order to register. Thanks to John Stark RD2 59-62 for providing this information

USS TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION

C/O Gary Baker
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TEMP – RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED



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Ray Spatz, Jay Davis

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SHIP'S STORE

All clothing items have been discontinued. The store will continue to stock ball caps, lapel pins, jacket patches, and license plate frames.

The ship's store is managed by Pat Baker. Her contact information is on the ship's store page of the website and the address page of the newsletter.