

# USS TOPEKA CLG-8

## Reunion Association Newsletter

Volume 3, No.5

December, 1992



### Committee:

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

### REUNION '92 (A HUGE SUCCESS)



Captain Bill Montgomery, Commanding Officer of TOPEKA in 1966-67 during the ship's first MED deployment, and guest speaker at the Reunion Banquet, reminisces about his experiences aboard. Fifty-three TOPEKAMen, families and friends attended the reunion. Pictures inside are an indication of it's success.

### FROM THE PRESIDENT (OUTGOING)

First off: Thanks and congratulations to Jim Carey, '92 Reunion Chairman and his fine committee of John Bianco, Gerry Dunne, Jim Howard, Bill Montgomery, Pat Roth and Dick Slye. It was an outstanding affair and the reception aboard U.S.S. John Barry was definitely the icing on the cake.

Secondly: I still remember having lunch with Jim Ownby in November, 1989, and attentively listening to his ideas on forming a TOPEKA Reunion Association. Here we are in November, 1992, with 326 TOPEKAMen in the association data base, 269 active members and 150 dues paying members. Quite a success story, isn't it? Nuff said.

Thirdly: As I leave the Presidency, I want to publicly thank all the people who gave time, energy and money to get us where we are. Thanks to Jim Ownby, Dudley Cass, Irad Parkhurst, Jerry Judge, Dick Jol-

liffe, Joe Ripley, Bill Largent, John Reynolds, Ruth Cass, Jack Bock, Joe Heeney, and Jack Connery. Special thanks to John Reynolds, '91 Reunion Chairman, and Jim Carey, '92 Reunion Chairman. Finally, thanks to you, the Reunion Association members for your great support and wonderful encouragement, which made my job as President so much fun.

Let's all support the new President, Jack Connery. Jack is a hard working innovator and he'll do a great job.

Sincerely,  
Don Nellis

### (INCOMING)

We owe thanks to Don Nellis for many things. In 1989 and 1990, Don's leadership was instrumental in getting the Reunion Association "underway." Once established, his leadership provided the impetus for steady and continued growth along with three successful reunions. Now, he will head up the newly-created advisory board, which will be a strong resource to us as we continue to grow. Thanks Don.

Thanks to the membership for having the confidence in Ike, Dudley and me to let us take the helm in 1993. Our goal is continued growth into a bigger and stronger organization. Thanks to Jim Carey and his group for a super reunion in Washington. The pictures herein are evident of the good time we had.

I am sad to report the sudden and untimely deaths of Marie Mansfield and Jackie Ownby. Marie died suddenly at home October 29 while talking on the phone. Jackie passed away December 1 at Balboa Naval hospital after a short illness. My sincere condolences to Jack Mansfield and Jim Ownby.

Sincerely,  
Jack Connery

## FROM THE EDITOR

Since you have elected me President, and since I will continue to do the newsletter, you'll get to hear from me twice in most issues during the next year.

This issue is a first--the fifth issue this year. In the past, there have been only four. We wanted to get another out this year to report on Reunion '92, and report on the business meeting and election of officers. We had hoped to announce the dates for Reunion '93 in Nashville, but we have only been able to narrow the timeframe a bit. Also, we wanted to extend timely Holiday Greetings. Our first issue in 1993 will be in February.

I need your help in making these issues worthy of your attention. We need your letters; we need "Remember When . . .?" contributions. Note also that I have started a new column this issue, titled "FYI." If you have something to contribute, please send it. We'll continue with "Meet Your Shipmate" and I would appreciate submission of entries for that.

Jack Connery

## IN MEMORIAM

Marie Mansfield (wife of Jack, CO, 62-63), October 29, 1992, Silverdale, Wash.

Jackie Ownby (wife of Jim, 63-65) December 1, 1992, San Diego.

## TOPEKA DEPLOYS

Our namesake, USS TOPEKA (SSN 754) has entered the Persian Gulf on "Maintenance Patrol," and will probably be there through the holidays. She is awaiting the arrival of the first of several former Russian submarines, which have been sold to Iran.

Let us keep her crew and dependents at home in mind over this Christmas holiday, remembering those times when we were far away during Christmas.

*(Ed. Note: Five of you guys sent me clippings on this from various newspapers around the country. Another called on the phone. And I saw it in the Tulsa World. Keep this kind of information coming).*

## FYI . . .

A newly formed Cruiserman Association is looking for USN and USMC personnel who served on board U.S. Navy Cruisers. Contact Anthony Totilo, Cruisermans Assn., P.O. Box 8296, Cranston, RI 02920-9998. (Naval Institute Proceedings, Nov. 92).

## MEET YOUR SHIPMATE

Chief Gunners Mate Tom Eagling reported on board TOPEKA in 1961. He had heard of a shortage of turret gunners in Cruisers, selected TOPEKA and was assigned. "That was the only time in my naval career that I actually had a choice," he recalls.

Tom comes by the navy tradition honestly. His grandfather was a medical officer who sailed with Admiral Dewey in the Great White Fleet. He ended his Naval Career at the Naval Hospital in Yokohama Japan in the 1800's, where Tom's father was born. His father joined the Asiatic Fleet when he was 16. He came up through the ranks to Chief Yeoman, then was commissioned and reached the rank of LCDR in Naval Intelligence. He was at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

Tom's career began after graduation from high school in Tacoma in 1942, and ended when he was piped over the side from TOPEKA in September, 1963, in Long Beach.

"I enjoyed my time on board Baka Hachi. After my time in charge of the turrets, the XO, Commander Ansoerge picked me to be his CMAA. I held that job until retirement."



"With a good navy wife and four children to support, I looked for a job in the Tacoma area. I soon went to work for Occidental Chemical Co., where I worked for over 23 years."

When his wife of 37 years passed away six years ago, he found himself single, alone, and having to do all those things he had taken for granted. After retirement from Occidental, he found that he had lots of time and little to do. He started to run competitively, play golf and travel.

While visiting a childhood friend and retired sailor in Galveston, he was introduced to the 115-year-old sailing vessel Elissa. "I fell in love with a ship again. Now, I travel 3,000 miles one way for the privilege of doing volunteer work on this beautiful sailing ship. My reward is to be allowed to help sail her."

His training on Elissa motivated him to get involved with a second sailing ship, Lady Washington. She is 3 1/2 years old, and is a replica of the ship Captain Gray sailed in when he discovered the Columbia River in the 1700's. "I'm going to sea once again and literally setting sail on a good ship with a good crew, - - half of which I might add are female."



## Season's Greetings to you and yours



### ASSOCIATION BUSINESS MEETING

The Association held its annual business meeting October 17 at the reunion hotel. Important business items covered include:

- A joint '93 reunion with the CL-67 Association was discussed. It was decided by vote not to join them.
- Cincinnati, Topeka, Kansas City, San Antonio, Chicago, and Nashville were proposed as possible 1993 reunion sites. Nashville was selected by vote.
- Dudley Cass, Tom Victory, and Tom Eagling volunteered and were selected to recommend a West Coast site for the 1994 reunion.
- Slate of officers for 1993 was presented and included Jack Connery, President, Ike Roberts, Vice-President, and Dudley Cass, Secretary-Treasurer. Nominations were closed and the slate elected.
- It was moved and approved that former association officers be appointed to an Advisory Board for the Association.
- It was moved and approved that only one signature, of any of the elected officers, be required on Association checks. This was presented because of the geographic separation of the new officers.

### REUNION ATTENDEES

Fifty-three TOPEKAMen, wives, friends and family members attended the '92 Reunion in Washington, D.C. Ninety-three people attended the reunion banquet on Saturday night. Seventeen states were represented, with California having the most, 24. Virginia followed with eight.

If you weren't there, here's who you missed:

- Don Anderson, ET2, 62-65, Woodbridge, Va.
- Jesse Aragon, BM1, 59-62, Anaheim, Cal.
- George Badger, LCDR, 66-67, Alameda, Cal.
- Roger Beukema, RM3, 60-63, Davisburg, Mi.
- Jack Bock, LTJG, 62-65, Rancho Palos Verdes, Cal.
- Tom Butler, SKC, 62-64, Redwood City, Cal.
- Don Cameron, LT, 60-62, San Diego, Cal.
- Jim Carey, LTJG, 62-65, Alexandria, Va.
- Dudley Cass, LTJG, 61-64, Bonita, Cal.
- David Channell, MM2, 65-68, Woodbridge, Va.
- Jack Connery, LCDR, 64-66, Bixby, Ok.
- Jerry Craig, FTM2, 66-69, Cartersville, Ga.
- Walter Davidovich, GMC, 59-63, Poway, Cal.
- Gerry Dunn, LTJG, 63-65, Oakton, Va.
- Tom Eagling, GMC, 60-63, Shelton, Wash.
- Erin Endicott, RD3, 61-63, Cove, Ore.
- Mrs. Donna Glenn, (Gene) LT, 62-64, San Diego, Cal.
- George Grupe, LTJG, 62-65, Marlboro, NJ.
- Joe Heeney, CWO4, 63-66, Torrance, Cal.
- Roger Heron, SN, 62-66, Cypress, Cal.
- Tom Hoard, LTJG, 64-67, Ithaca, NY.
- Dick Jolliffe, LT, 64-66, San Diego, Cal.
- Gerald Judge, FTCS, 63-66, Chula Vista, Cal.
- John Keith, RD1, 59-60, Portland, Ore.
- Ernie Kershaw, BT2, 59-63, Melrose, NY.
- Bob Kershner, LCDR, 63-66, Southern Pines, NC.
- Mrs. Betty McGirr (Frank) LT, 62-64, Seattle, Wash.
- Bill Montgomery, CAPT, 66-67, Alexandria, Va.
- Don Nellis, CDR, 63-65, San Diego, Cal.
- Don Nelson, BT2, 64-66, Brooklyn Park, Minn.
- Richard Olsen, CDR, 60-61, Los Altos, Cal.
- Jim Ownby, LT, 62-65, El Cajon, Cal.
- Irad Parkhurst, FTCS, 63-66, Granada Hills, Cal.
- Joe Peragine, CWO3, 59-66, San Diego, Cal.
- Gale Pfund, LTJG, 62-64, San Francisco, Cal.
- Frank Pinney, Jr., CAPT, 59-60, Kilmarnock, Va.
- Ira Price, LTJG, 64-66, San Diego, Cal.
- Bernado Pulido, SDCS, 63-66, Long Beach, Cal.
- Ron Reigel, FN, 60-63, East Bernstadt, Ky.
- John Reynolds, MT1, 61-64, Redondo Beach, Cal.
- Isaac Roberts, IC3, 65-68, Hixson, Tenn.
- Pat Roth, LTJG, 65-68, Burke, Va.
- Paul Ruby, LTJG, 62-65, San Francisco, Cal.
- William C. Sache, SF1, 60-63, Watertown, Mass.
- Dick Slye, LT, 64-66, McLean, Va.
- Ron Smart, RD3, 59-62, Turlock, Cal.
- Tom Stumpf, CAPT, USMC, 64-66, Mechanicsburg, Pa.
- Tom Victory, SFCS, 60-64, Port Orchard, Wash.
- Ernesto Villamil, DKCM, 63-65, Annapolis, Md.
- Doug Weeks, RD2, 60-63, Canastota, NY.
- Egon Werdelman, CDR, 60-61, San Diego, Cal.
- Ronald Zuccaro, SN, 67-68, Rio Rancho, NM
- Weldon Zimmerman, GMT1, 59-62, Bremerton, Wash.

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For the past 16 years, Tom has lived on Hartstene Island, located in Puget Sound about 40 miles south of Bremerton. "I extend a welcome to all of you shipmates if you are ever in this area. You'll just have to catch me at home."

### 1993 DUES

1993 dues will be due on January 1. Please send them to Dudley Cass at 3028 Bonita Woods Drive, Bonita, Ca., 91902. Make checks payable to TOPEKA Reunion Association for \$15. Last year, someone sent in dues for himself and his wife. Dues aren't required for the wife, but if you would like to make contributions in addition to the dues, that is great!

Dues are used to cover the operating expenses of the association -- dollars required to prepare, print and mail newsletters, publish directories, and mail reunion notices to newspapers.

The directory has just been updated, and it will be mailed on receipt of your dues. The new directory contains about 30 new names and several address changes/corrections.

*(Ed. and Pres. Note: Seems like in 1992, we had to ask for dues in every newsletter. A waste of good space*

*which could be used for news about your shipmates. Made Dudley look "dues hungry." He's really not. He just likes to have money in the bank to pay the bills. In 1993, let's get them in during the first quarter, and the subject of dues will not be mentioned during the rest of the year.)*

### REUNION '93

Dates for Reunion '93 have been narrowed down somewhat. We'll go to Nashville either the last weekend in September or the first or second weekend in October. More to come in future issues.

### NEW MEMBER CONTEST FOR '93

Send in a new name/address of a TOPEKA shipmate not on our rolls. You may win a cash price equal to the cost of the '93 reunion fee for two, plus the cost of a room for two at the reunion hotel. You'll get one chance to win for every new name and address you provide. The winner will be determined by a drawing at the '93 reunion in Nashville. Tom Hoard (64-67) was the '92 winner. He received a check for \$325. Twelve people were in the drawing.

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



# Reunion '92

We visited . . .



The White House . . .



The Lone Sailor . . .



. . . and Read the Navy Memorial Tableaux



The Vietnam Memorial . . .



. . . and Took a Somber Walk Along the Wall



Jim Carey Welcomed Us . . .



These Sailors Hosted Us . . .



The Washington Monument



We Saw a Demonstration



We Had Tour Guides



Aboard a Navy Ship . . .



We ate . . .



We Sat in the Mess Deck





# More Reunion '92



