

USS TOPEKA (CLG-8)

Reunion Association Newsletter

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Committee:

*Don Nellis, President; Dick Jolliffe, Vice President;
Dudley E. Cass, Secretary/Treasurer; Jim Carey, Reunion '92 Chairman
Jack Connery, Newsletter Editor*



FROM THE PRESIDENT

Belated Xmas and New Year Greetings. Hope you all had a great holiday season.

Now is the time for all good TOPEKAMEN to come to the aid of their Reunion Association -- DUES DUES. PLEASE SEND DUES (See information elsewhere in this newsletter).

A few of us from San Diego attended the USS TOPEKA (SSN 754) Change of Command November 21 at the Sub Base on Point Loma. It certainly was an impressive ceremony. The Submariners know how to put on a first class show. Commander Wil Cooke was relieved by Commander Ed Jablonski. Our Association was represented by John Hojaboom, Will Hays, Ruth Cass, and Pat and me.

I've been in contact with Jim Carey about the '92 D.C. Reunion. He's working on it and is planning a real classy bash. Washington will be at its best (or worst) in Oct. 92 as it is an election year and Congress will be in session. Make your plans early. Jim will finalize hotels, etc., as soon as he can, and his 3-day scenario looks 4.0.

By the way, this is my third year as President, and I don't see my relief on the horizon. If anyone would like to inherit this job, please contact me and I will put your name in nomination at our Reunion business meeting. Since we went national for reunions, we certainly can go national for Reunion officers and break the San Diego lock on positions.

Sincerely,
Don Nellis



IF IT'S JANUARY, IT'S DUES TIME

The annual dues for calendar year 1992 are \$15. (Widows of deceased crew members are exempt from these dues). Some members have included contributions in addition to their dues, and we certainly appreciate that. Please use the form included in this newsletter for sub-

mission of your dues. Information from the form is used to update the Association database.

A copy of the latest directory is sent to each member on receipt of dues.

Dues take care of the annual operating costs of the Reunion Association. The largest part of these expenses are preparing and mailing this newsletter and directories to you guys, and the cost of reunion notices to newspapers and periodicals.



1992 MEMBERSHIP DRIVE

The 1992 membership drive will soon be underway. Dick Jolliffe has been appointed by President Don to take charge and run with it. Dick wants your help. Remember that WW II poster of Uncle Sam pointing his finger directly at you. Well, just imagine that it is Dick's finger, pointing at you.

The drive will be a very aggressive one—looking for former TOPEKA shipmates, and will use a massive newspaper campaign, throughout the United States. This is where you come in, and here's what you can do:

- Tell Dick you want to help.
- Get the names and addressees of several (at least 5) newspapers around your state. (You can get names and addresses at the Public Library from the Standard Periodical Directory, or the Gale Directory of Publications and Broadcast Media.
- Dick will send you tailor made press releases for you to send to those newspapers. Your name and address will be used as a point of contact. Newspapers are more likely to publish if the contact is local, at least within the same state.
- When a shipmate contacts you, drop him a note and send his name and address to Dudley Cass so we can get him on the mailing list.

Sounds simple doesn't it. In the next three months, if we all pitch in, we ought to get publicity in 500 different

newspapers. That should find some of our shipmates, perhaps your best liberty buddy from days of yore.

When the Association was getting off the ground three years ago, the committee, from San Diego, conducted a massive program similar to this. They wrote to about 350 newspapers in the Western States. We haven't hit much in the Midwest and East yet, except for the service-related publications.

Let's help Dick get this in automatic. Contact Dick at 7453 Golfcrest Drive, San Diego, Ca., 92119, (619) 287-3630.



MORE REUNION 91 NEWS

Commander Wil Cooke, Commanding Officer of the USS TOPEKA (SSN 754), his Exec, LCDR Claude Baron, and several of the Chiefs and POs were our guests aboard the Queen Mary. Reunion attendees were delighted to meet and talk with the TOPEKA-MEN, who were splendid representatives of today's Navy.

TOPEKA very generously arranged to take reunion attendees on a short cruise, including a brief dive. However, electrical problems the evening before the scheduled cruise forced cancellation. Although we were disappointed, we were certainly appreciative of the effort expended in arranging the cruise, and the willingness of the crew to go to sea on Saturday.

We hope to continue this association with the new TOPEKA.



IN MEMORIAM

Ada (Jerry) Carver, July 20, 1991, DeMoines, Ia.; wife of William Carver, BMSN (60-63)



REUNION 92

Chairman Jim Carey is working hard to put together a good package for our reunion this fall in Washington, D.C. "I'm staying flexible on timeframe and place right now, keeping in mind that 1992 is an election year, and Congress will be in session, making things expensive in Washington. We want to get the best deal we can," says Jim.

For those of you in the Washington D.C. area, Jim could really use some help. Except for help provided by Dick Slye, there has been no response to a call for help in the last newsletter. Call him at (703) 971-3220. If he is not home, leave a message. Jim will get back with you.

The schedule will probably be firmed up before the next quarterly newsletter. If so, we'll put out a special flyer. Keep September-October open. For now, just think about seeing old shipmates, the fellowship, sea stories, and tours of Washington historical sights.



FROM THE EDITOR

Here are some more interesting statistics about Reunion 91:

Shipmates came from 17 States: 52 from California, four from Florida, two each from Mass., Virginia, Oregon and Washington, and one each from 11 states. I hope all of those from California will come to Washington in '92.

I divided the life of the ship into three periods to see if the total TOPEKA was represented. Arbitrarily, these periods were 1960-63; 1964-66; and 1967-69. The life of the ship was represented, but we certainly need to work on the last period for next year. Fifty eight came from the first period, 43 from the second, and 12 from the last. (Figures add up to more than total attendance because some tours overlapped two periods and they were counted in both).



LETTERS

Ed Note: I didn't want to use these first few letters. I didn't want to be accused of honking my horn. I decided to go ahead because it's the best way I can think of to let those of you who don't have Baka Hachi know what you are missing.

I had occasion to re-read The Baka Hachi a few days ago and I want to say that it portrays well a very diverse group of navy men, engaged in a complex activity.

I was quite surprised to discover that our shipmates, including myself, see the human and humorous side of the effort to keep a U.S. Navy ship ready to perform her mission, and would like to thank you and the contributors to the book. I thoroughly enjoyed the articles and I hope you will consider doing an addendum in the near future. Again, many many thanks to everyone.

Jim Ownby

I wish to thank Jack for the beautiful job he did in editing the 1960-69 Baka Hachi book for Reunion '91. Thanks also to all those who were so helpful in providing pictures and personal experiences which helped to make this book so great.

John Hojaboom

Just a short note to formally thank you for your 4.0 + job on the Baka Hachi book. It's truly an epic and all of us who have it will certainly treasure it.

Don Nellis

After the reunion and things settled down, I got a chance to study your edition of the Baka Hachi. You did a hell of a job on it and I feel you rate a 4.0 on your next fitness report.

Joe Heeney

I want to congratulate you on a superb job in the writing and publishing of the Baka Hachi. I know that a lot of hard work went into collecting, assembling, editing and publishing. I think the book hits just the right tone, and I was quite impressed at the high quality of paper, printing and photographic reproduction. It is a most professional effort for which you and those who helped deserve much credit.

Bill Montgomery

I was in our "Hospitality Room" on the Queen Mary, shooting the bull, when suddenly, I heard the laugh. I didn't have to turn around to know that Ed Moran just walked in. Hadn't seen, or heard from Ed since 1964 — 27 years ago. Funny how just one exuberant laugh can bring back such vivid, and pleasant memories of TOPEKA. Thanks, Ed.

Dudley Cass



MEET YOUR SHIPMATE

Steve Manley reported to TOPEKA in August, 1966 as a Fireman Apprentice, just out of boot camp in San Diego. He had been in college a couple of semesters and was looking for something more exciting.

Soon after entering boot camp he discovered that it wasn't nearly as exciting as his '53 Chevy and his girlfriend, in that order.



Steve was assigned to A Division, Reefer Gang. Soon after reporting aboard, he found himself with the duty the first night in Hunters Point Shipyard, where he spent a good part of the night fighting an electrical fire, and the rest of it in Sick Bay.

After completing the first Med Cruise, Steve left the ship in February, 1968, as an MM3. His next assignment was aboard USS HENRY W. TUCKER (DD 875). Soon after reporting aboard, TUCKER's home port was

changed to Yokosuka, Japan. "Not only was the Navy exciting, it was full of surprises," says Steve.

Aboard TUCKER, followed by a transfer to PROVIDENCE (CLG-6), Steve got in his share of NGFS in Vietnam. On the way back home, PROVIDENCE visited Australia, and when crossing the Equator, Steve found himself to be one of the very few Polywogs among a ship-full of "hungry for blood" Shellbacks. "This experience stacked right up there with an earlier short tour on Shore Patrol in Yokosuka, as it had similar occupational hazards: you got your ___ whipped a lot."

In November, 1969, he joined the re-commissioning crew of the USS JOHN MCCAIN (DD-36) in Philadelphia. With the MCCAIN about ready for a Seventh Fleet deployment, the Navy gave Steve another surprise—a 3-month early out.

Back in San Diego as a civilian, Steve called on his old TOPEKA shipmate, Mike Giampietro, looking for a job in Mike's father's pneumatic construction tool company, and was hired as a machinist. "Mike helped me a lot but we soon learned that I would probably never be a good tool and die man. I decided to pursue the trade I had learned in the Navy — air conditioning and refrigeration."

In March, 1971, Steve was hired as a heating and air conditioning technician by Pacific Bell Telephone Company, starting in Van Nuys, Calif. Twenty years later, he is now Facility Manager for the largest PacBell Data Center in southern California, located in San Diego. Steve credits the Navy and his job aboard TOPEKA with helping to point his way forward.

When not occupied by PacBell, or his girlfriend, in that order, Steve likes fishing, black powder rifle shooting, camping, numismatics, American history, and antique hunting. He recently purchased a townhome in the San Diego area, and is finding that it occupies a good bit of his spare time.



TOPEKA MEMORABILIA

The following memorabilia is available:

- The Baka Hachi, 1960–1969; the story of TOPEKA, as told through the experiences of the men who sailed and fought her. Edited by Jack Connery. \$13.00. A must for all former TOPEKAMEN.
- TOPEKA Ballcaps: \$12.00.
- TOPEKA Shirts (Navy Blue Pullovers): \$15.00.
- TOPEKA Coffee Mugs: \$8.00.

Order The Baka Hachi from either Jack Connery or "Parky" Parkhurst. Order other items from "Parky." Check the directory for addresses. Make checks payable to the Reunion Association.

REMEMBER WHEN . . . ?



It was in the fall of 1964. We were in Yokosuka, and were ready to go home. We had been extended once because of the Gulf of Tonkin incident.

Remember how, when sitting in a bar late at night - didn't want another drink, but just didn't want to go back to the ship either.

Soon, the bar hostesses would tire of our hanging around without buying a drink for ourselves or them. They would start. "Yankee, go home." "Come on, Yankee, go home."

In a salute and spoof to these ladies, Paul Ruby and his Signal Gang had this "goin' home" pennant made and flew it from the yard arm as we left Yokosuka for the last time, headed for Long Beach.

Paul brought this same pennant to Reunion 91. It brought back a lot of memories.



1992 ANNUAL DUES/PERSONAL INFORMATION FORM

Please make checks payable to TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION. Mail this form and check to TOPEKA REUNION ASSOCIATION, c/o Dudley Cass, 3028 Bonita Woods Dr., Bonita, Ca 91902

Name _____ Spouse _____ Date _____ '92 Dues enclosed (yes/no)
Address _____ Phone _____ Coming to Reunion '92? (yes/no)
Served on TOPEKA _____ (year) to _____ (year) Div/Dept _____ Rank/Rate _____ Rank/Rate on release from Navy _____

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

