



# The Owens' Ping

SERVING THE MEN WHO SERVED ABOARD

**USS ROBERT A OWENS DDK, DDE, DD 827**

## **SPRING 2017 EDITION**

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*Larrymc3140@gmail.com*

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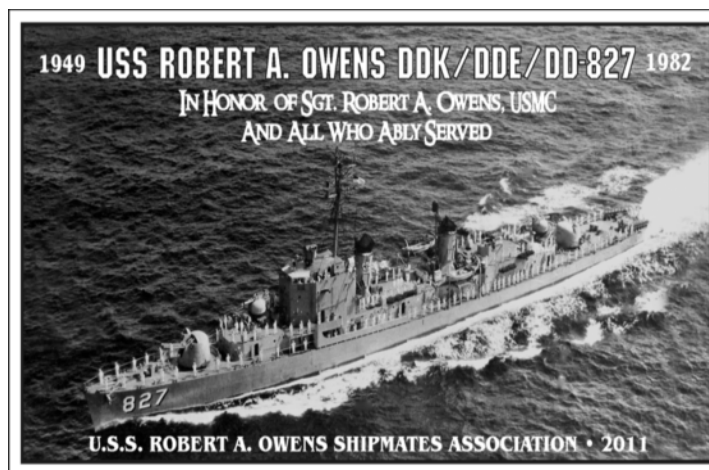
**Jerry Jackson**

*jerryjackson@ussrobertaowens.827.org*

## **SHIPMATE'S ASSOCIATION GOALS**

SECTION 1: To further the remembrance of the deeds of the USS Robert A. Owens (DDK/DDE/DD-827), and all of the officers and enlisted crew members who served in her during the vessels thirty-two years of U.S. Navy service.

SECTION 2: To promote the bond of friendship between all of the crew members who served in her during the years of commissioned service through newsletters, web site, Internet, and reunions..



**Commissioned  
1949**

**Decommissioned  
1982**



# The Owens' Ping

## The Presidents 2017 SPRING Message

Good day and I hope you're looking forward to the Spring season like I am. The older I get the harder it is to tolerate all the cold weather and the bleak, overcast days that accompany it. This is the time of year when the flowers begin to bloom, the birds begin to sing loudly in the morning, the sun shines and all of us old guys dust our golf clubs in hopes of playing better than we did last year. The grass seems greener, the trees are budding, pollen is in the air and we remember our school days when we looked so forward to spring break. So break out the lawn mowers and the Ben Gay and get to work!

This is also our reunion year in Valley Forge, PA, and I'm really looking forward to seeing everyone again. Jack has great week planned for us and now all we need is everyone's participation. Please read all the reunion information in the following pages and submit your reservations as quickly as possible. Jack has made commitments to the hotel, transportation company, food preparers, and many venues that all need our participation in specific numbers in order to get the cheapest prices. So please submit your reservations in a timely manner – we need everyone to be there, it's OUR reunion.

During these past few months, thanks mostly to our web site manager and Ping editor Jerry Jackson, we have tried to keep lines of communications open through mailings, cards, mass emails, etc., to keep the membership informed of plans and updates regarding the organization. Each time we do this we get letters and emails returned undeliverable. If anyone has changed addresses – physical or electronically – please notify Jerry so we can keep the membership roster list up to date and so we can continue to include everyone in the information loop.

I hope everyone enjoys the Spring and Summer seasons that are around the corner. Travel safely, stay well and Ellen and I look forward to seeing you all in Valley Forge in September

Larry



**Because of a minor infraction, a sailor aboard the USS Reeves, bound for Japan, was busted one rank, fined and given extra duty for three weeks. Looking forward to celebrating his 21st birthday on July 22, he consoled himself every night during his extra duty by reciting, *"They can bust me, they can fine me -- but they can't take away my birthday."***

**As July 22 approached, his excitement increased. When he went to bed on July 21, he happily repeated, *"They can bust me, they can fine me -- but they can't take away my birthday."***

**The next morning, he found out that the ship had crossed the international date line -- and it was July 23.**



## *2017 Reunion Preview & Planning*

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### **INFORMATION FROM YOUR REUNION CHAIRMAN**

**Welcome to Philadelphia, the birthplace of our nation and I hope you have a pleasant and informative reunion. This will be a great trip for everyone; those who have been here before and those who have not. It will also be wonderful for children or grandchildren because it will reinforce their love for their country.**

First of all, if you ever stayed at an Embassy Suites, I think you will be impressed. Every room has a suite with a separate sitting room for you to relax by yourself or with shipmates. We are outside the city in the rolling hills of Chester County but close to interesting things such as Valley Forge Park, King of Prussia Mall, which after its expansion could be the largest in the country. The Valley Forge Casino, located in the Radisson Hotel is just 15 minutes away.

Our three tours will be historical and interesting.

- Thursday we will visit the National Constitution Center, Liberty Bell, and Independence Hall. Also included is a drive by of many other sites and concludes with lunch on your own at the World famous Reading Terminal Market.
- Friday we drive a short distance to the Valley Forge Encampment and the Freedoms Foundation. Included is lunch at the Freedoms Foundation and a tour of the Medal of Honor Grove where we will see the plaque dedicated to Robert A. Owens USMC.
- Saturday the ladies will visit QVC and shop (Guys watch those credit cards). They will be taken to the Black Powder Tavern for lunch on their own. Us men will have our business meeting in the morning and then a buffet lunch at the hotel. That evening we will have our banquet, and based on the feedback from St. Louis, it will be a buffet.

I have tried my best to minimize our financial commitment but you cannot get away from minimum amount of people needed for tours and meals. I tried to stick to a number between 40-80 people.

You can begin to call the hotel for room reservations at 1-800-embassy (1-800-362-2779) and mention **USS Robert A. Owens Reunion**. Our final cutoff date is August 17, 2017. After that date, the hotel does not guarantee our special rate. I must have the confirmation form and check by August 10, 2017. Mail it to: John Wanko, 71 South Traymore Ave., Ivyland, PA. 18974. Email [johnwanko71@msn.com](mailto:johnwanko71@msn.com) or phone 215-355-3982 or text to 215-850-1756.

***Only your participation will make a successful reunion.***

REGISTRATION FORM REUNION SEPTEMBER 6-10 2017

NAME/

NAMES \_\_\_\_\_

PLEASE PRINT

WEDNESDAY SEPTEMBER 6, 2017

CHECK IN AT EMBASSY SUITES, 888 CHESTERBROOK BLVD., WAYNE, PA 19087  
(1-610-647-6700)

OUR REGISTRATION TABLE WILL BE NEAR OUR HOSPITALITY ROOM WHICH IS THE  
DEVON ROOM. HOTEL PROVIDES COCKTAILS AND SNACKS FROM 5:30 to 7:30.

THURSDAY SEPTEMBER 7, 2017

TOUR CONSTITUTION CENTER, LIBERTY BELL AND INDEPENDENCE HALL

\$46 PER PERSON NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (WE NEED 40)

LUNCH ON YOUR OWN AT READING TERMINAL MARKET

FRIDAY SEPTEMBER 8, 2017

TOUR OF VALLEY FORGE ENCAMPMENT AND FREEDOM'S FOUNDATION INCLUDING  
LUNCH

\$49 PER PERSON NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (WE NEED 40)

SATURDAY SEPTEMBER 9, 2017

MEMBERS LUNCH AFTER OUR MEETING AT HOTEL "A TASTE OF PHILLY"

\$22 PER PERSON NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

LADIES TRIP TO QVC

\$45 PER PERSON NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (WE NEED 25)

LUNCH ON THEIR OWN AT BLACK POWDER TAVERN.

"PENN'S LANDING BUFFET" BANQUET WITHERSPOON ROOM 6:30.

\$50 PER PERSON NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

SPEAKER CORY ETCHBERGER SON OF MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT.

REUNION FEE (FOR SNACKS, BEER, WINE ETC AND MY MISTAKES \$25 PER PERSON

NUMBER ATTENDING \_\_\_\_\_ TOTAL \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

FULLY COOKED BREAKFAST PROVIDED BY HOTEL ALSO FROM 5:30 TO 7:30 EACH  
NIGHT HOTEL PROVIDES COCKTAILS AND SNACKS.

TOTAL COST \_\_\_\_\_ MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO ED GREEN, TREASURER

MAIL FORM AND CHECK TO JOHN WANKO 71 SOUTH TRAYMORE AVE., IVYLAND, PA  
18974, PHONE 215-355-3982, CELL OR TEXT 215-850-1756, [JOHNWANKO71@MSN.COM](mailto:JOHNWANKO71@MSN.COM)

CALENDAR YEARS YOU SERVED ABOARD \_\_\_\_\_

GRATUITIES FOR GUIDES, DRIVERS AND SERVICE PEOPLE INCLUDED

ALL ROOMS ARE SUITES \$119 PER NIGHT





# The Owens' Ping

## *The Embassy Suites*







# The Owens' Ping





# The Owens' Ping

## USS ROBERT A. OWENS DDK/DDE/DD-827 SHIPS STORE INVENTORY EFFECTIVE 13 MARCH 2017

ITEM		ON HAND	UNIT COST
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Blue	(Medium)	5	\$28
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Blue	(Large)	22	\$28
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Blue	(XL)	2	\$28
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Blue	(XXL)	8	\$28
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Blue	(XXXL)	8	\$28
Shirt, Polo, Golf, Gray	(Medium)	All Out	\$23
Shirt, Tee, w/Pocket, Blue	(Small)	21	\$18
Shirt, Tee, w/Pocket, Blue	(Medium)	12	\$18
Shirt, Tee, w/Pocket, Blue	(Large)	4	\$18
Shirt, Tee, w/Pocket, Blue	(XL)	3	\$18
Shirt, Tee, Long Sleeve, Blue	(Large)	All Out	\$19
Shirt, Tee, Long Sleeve, Blue	(XL)	All Out	\$19
Shirt, Tee, Long Sleeve, Blue	(XXL)	All Out	\$19
Sweat Shirt, Hooded, Zip-Up, Blue	(XXL)	All Out	\$30
Cap, Baseball Style, Wool (Winter)	(Adjustable)	3	\$17
Cap, Baseball Style, Mesh (Summer)	(Adjustable)	15	\$17
Ships Patch, 1949-1964		16	\$3.50
Ships Patch, 1964-1982		All Out	\$3.50
Patch, Plank Owner		1	\$3
Pin, US Navy/Flag		1	\$3
Ships Magnet		31	\$2
Book, "Owens Saga"		101	\$15
Book, "Sea Tales" (Initial Edition)		3	\$7
Book, "Sea Tales" (Second Edition)		7	\$7

As always, to place an order for items; please list the items by name, quantity desired, and price with a total. Make your check payable to: Robert Owens Shipmates Association.

Mail your order and payment to:

**Mr. Keith Totsch**  
**200 Sheridan Ct.**  
**Waukegan, IL 60085**

**Ktotsch@comcast.net**





## **Presidential Snippets**

I suppose by the time this Ping hits the press and is delivered to each of you the NCAA March Madness will be history. But as I write this there are 68 teams still sitting there with high hopes! I completed my brackets and submitted same with my opinion on how I think the games will go. I actually won our company pool last year; hope it goes the same way this year! Hope your team did well and even more hope my team did the best.

On March 11, Ellen and I attended a birthday party. So what, you say, we all do that. However, this was a birthday party at my American Legion Post 180 held for one of our WWII vets who turned 101 that day. Bill Wester is a Navy vet who was on board a cruiser outside Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941, on their way into port to moor in the spot where the Arizona was located. He told me when they were out, the Arizona was in and when they came into port, the Arizona went out. A day or two later his ship would have been sitting where the Arizona was. Still sharp as a tack, a little more feeble on his feet, Bill had on his suit and his dancing shoes that Saturday and we had a huge turnout for his birthday. Many more, Bill!

I sat at the American Legion and had a beer with another WWII vet the other day who was in an Army Engineers battalion in France. He said they mostly repaired roads and reinforced bridges ahead of the coming supplies and heavy equipment. He also told me that when entering the small towns in France it wasn't always a happy welcoming. Sometimes (and we don't see this on TV) the towns people booed the troops because we entered town after bombing and shelling the town mercilessly trying to dislodge the Germans. He said when they entered on some occasions they were not welcomed with flowers and kisses because the people blamed them for destroying their town and all their belongings.

As a reminder, please contact me or Jerry Jackson if you know of an illness or death of a former shipmate. I usually try to send a card on behalf of the organization to the member or member's family. Jerry also tries to maintain an up-to-date memoriam page on the web site, so it's important that we get this information.

Also as a reminder, please visit the organization's web page at [www.ussrobertaowens827.org](http://www.ussrobertaowens827.org). Jerry is constantly updating it with lots of information, ship's store offerings and reunion information. There is a crew's page that contains the organization roster.

If you're looking for a gift for that former OWENS sailor, visit the ship's store and send an order to Chief Keith Totsch, our Ship's Store Proprietor. He has plenty of items and will ship them to you quickly.

If any member has a story, information, historical data or anything that would be of interest to the organization please submit it to Jerry Jackson to be included in the Ping. This is OUR newsletter and the more of us who submit articles the better it is. Maybe a good story from your days on the ship would be appropriate and very interesting.





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## **From your reunion chairman:**

I realize now how difficult a task of running a reunion is. The major problem, that keeps me awake at night, is having to make a numbers commitment far in advance and then not getting the results. As I write this it is March 27, 2017 and having made a commitment of 40 for tours we only have 24 registered. We also committed to 40 hotel rooms but our contract allows us to reduce this and not pay for the rooms not used.

I know we can do better so please register as soon as possible. Please advise if you will attend.

The following have registered and paid as of March 27th:

Gary Parks	Joe Fisher
Bill Miller	Jack Wanko
Larry McCoskey	Mac Shipman
Keith Totsch	Ron Schwartzkopf
Emmett Talley	Roger Scherer
Ken Talley	Bill Kellner
Bob Kopec	Lowen Marshall
Peter Troll	

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## **WELCOME NEW MEMBERS TO THE ASSOCIATION:**

James Gottsch 6/68-8/71

Don Tiemeier 3/68-2/70

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## **Stand In Line**

"Well," snarled the tough old Navy Chief to the bewildered Seaman. "I suppose after you get discharged from the Navy, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can come and dance on my grave."

"Not me, Chief!" the Seaman replied. "Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in line again!"