



The Owens' Ping

SERVING THE MEN WHO SERVED ABOARD

USS ROBERT A OWENS DDK, DDE, DD 827

SUMMER 2017 EDITION

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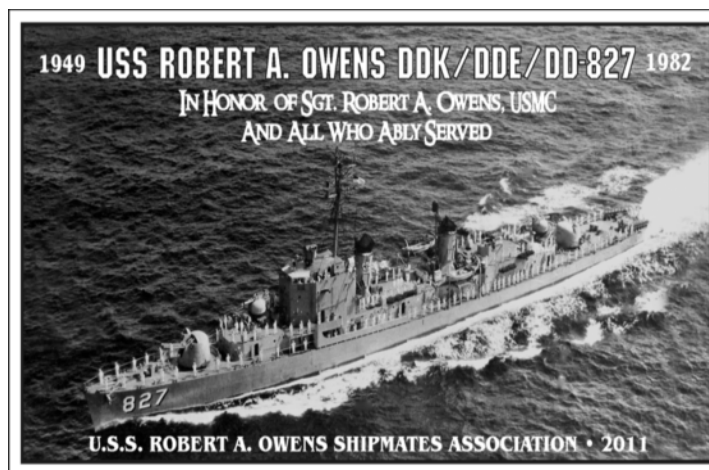
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SHIPMATE'S ASSOCIATION GOALS

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 SUMMER Message

Hello to everyone and I hope you are all looking forward to our upcoming reunion as much as Ellen and me. This will be, I believe, my 7th as it took me a good while to even discover that we had an organization. And, when I did, it was about a week after the scheduled 2001 reunion. I was reading through a stack of American Legion magazines that had amassed beside my easy chair and read an old issue and saw our reunion advertised – a week too late! But we finally made the one in 2003 and haven't missed one since. We've meet so many new friends and rekindled old friendships and now we really look forward to a true reunion with all of them – AND the new friends we are about to meet!

I'm not going into any detail about the reunion as Jack will have all that outlined further in this issue. Please be sure to get your reservations submitted as quickly as possible – it's never too late, we gladly accept last minute reservations.

I'm really curious to hear the results of the investigation being conducted regarding the destroyer that was hit by a freighter in the Pacific. I'm sure each of you have many of the same questions as me as to why something like this can happen in the first place. I stood many bridge watches while underway as a lookout on either of the wings of the bridge and I can assure you ships are quite visible miles away. The person on the status board always logged the contacts which they received from CIC and we were instructed to watch for them. Most came into view miles away; at night the lights were obvious and in the day it was easy to visually spot a freighter that large over 10 miles away. Given where the freighter hit the destroyer – on the starboard side – the destroyer had the “red light” and the freighter should have had the right-of-way. Something went horribly wrong. Seven families got the worst notification possible in the following days as their loved ones were found dead in the sealed compartments. I hope we get to know the story someday.

I recently read an article about one of our “super carriers”. It was described as 1140' long! That's almost incomprehensible for me to imagine. That's nearing ¼ of a mile long. It was said to have a compliment of 4600 crew members and carried 75 planes. I'm wondering if that compliment includes flight crews or if the number grows while underway and flight crews aboard. I understand that crews are becoming smaller even as the ships become larger. I can only assume that's because more and more tasks are now electronically performed and computer based and less people are needed. However, the skills needed for these systems must necessitate much of the crew going to schools first. I really didn't need an “A” School to teach me how to chip and paint and mop in the 1st Division!!

I'm looking forward to seeing many of you in Valley Forge in September. We've toured the area before and I can attest that it is well worth visiting to see the many things we always heard and learned in school. Bring your cameras (if anyone still uses them) because there will be many places for some great pictures. But, alas, they won't let you ring the Liberty Bell!

Larry



2017 Reunion Preview & Planning



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 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

CALENDAR YEARS YOU SERVED ABOARD _____

GRATUITIES FOR GUIDES, DRIVERS AND SERVICE PEOPLE INCLUDED

ALL ROOMS ARE SUITES \$119 PER NIGHT



The Owens' Ping

USS Robert A. Owens 1968 Gitmo



GITMO, APRIL, 1968

Picture 1: SN Steve Bowers & SN Larry McCoskey

Picture 2: SN Larry McCoskey on 0-4 level, WEPS Officer phone talker

Picture 3: Ltjg Forest Horton on the port side bridge

**Picture 4: SN Rossi and SN Bob Rozecki catching some rays
(Pictures provided by Larry McCoskey)**



The Owens' Ping

Naples, Italy, November 1968. (L/R) Bob Hoffman, Larry McCoskey, Vern Owens, Bob Kraft,
Mike Fekete, Tom Cox, Jack Burkart, Greg McDonald, Howard Hahn
(Picture provided by Larry McCoskey)





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		All Out	\$23
Shirt, Tee, w/Pocket, Blue		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		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		All Out	\$30
Cap, Baseball Style, Wool (Winter)		3	\$17
Cap, Baseball Style, Mesh (Summer)		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

Just read the April-June issue of “Tin Can Sailors” and saw our reunion announcement in it. Hope it pays dividends and gets some more shipmates interested in attending. It was also in a prior issue of the “American Legion Magazine”. If any of you belong to a veteran’s organization and they have a publication please have our information added.

Also in the past issue of “Tin Can Sailors” was a great article about the destroyer’s role in helping with the USS Forrestal (CVA-59) fire and explosions on 29 July 1967. If you still have that issue it’s worth a read. I remember when it happened as I was on active duty then and we occasionally road plane-guard for the Forrestal.

I’m actually in the process of trying to find out if it is possible to name a yet-to-be-commissioned destroyer the Robert A. Owens. The wheels of government and the military turn very slowly, but I hope to have an answer to share with everyone at the reunion. Wouldn’t that be neat?!

Anyone interested in serving on the executive board of the organization? Please contact me prior to the reunion if you are. We have a couple openings.

As a reminder, please bring your cameras to the reunion so we can send Jerry Jackson plenty of pictures to share in the December issue of the Ping. We want everyone to know how much fun we had and hopefully encourage others to attend the next reunion in 2019, wherever it may be.

I would be remiss if I didn’t mention the passing of Bob Bucettas this past year. I believe Bob was an original member of our organization, an office holder and former editor of the Ping and keeper of our web site. Bob was a tireless worker and a wealth of information and we’ll miss him. May God look after him and his remaining family in their time of mourning. Our sincere condolences go out to them.

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. 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.

Daily Giggle.....

An elderly man is stopped by the police around 2 a.m. And is asked where he is going at this time of night.

The man replies, “I am on my way to a lecture about alcohol abuse and the effects it has on the human body, as well as smoking and staying out late.”

The officer then asks, “Really? Who is giving that lecture at this time of night?”

The man replies, “That would be my wife.”



From your reunion chairman:

Our reunion is scheduled for Wednesday, September 6, 2017 to Sunday, September 10, 2017. With this in mind, time is running short to get your registration form and money to John Wanko. Remember the final cut off date for registration is August 10, 2017 and final cut off date for the hotel is August 17, 2017.

As of now we have a good attendance registered but could always use more. The more people we have the more inter action and war stories to go around.

So as of today July 14, 2017, here are those registered:

Gary Parks
Bill Miller
Larry McCoskey
Keith Totsch
Emmett Talley
Ken Talley
Robert Kopec
Pete Troll
Lowen Marschall
Bill Kellner
Roger Scherer
Ron Schwartzkopf
Ed Green
Robert Griffin
Joe Fisher
Ralph Fields
Ron Pervere
Bobby Williams
Steve Rosenthal
Jerry Butler
Joe Carlson
Woody Woodward
Jack Wanko

Including spouses, friends and family, the total is 43.

It has been my pleasure to arrange this reunion and offer my sincere thanks to all those who have assisted me and all those attending.

Jack Wanko