

USS ATKA Association

19th ANNUAL REUNION

JULY 12, 13, 14, 2021

This year we are visiting Grand Rapids, Michigan and staying at The Double Tree Suites located near the Grand Rapids Airport. The phone number to make reservations is (616) 957-9072. Note that the reunion will be Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday. All family and friends are welcome to attend; no one is required to be a USS ATKA crew member to be part of our reunion. All are welcome.

Room rates are \$125.00 per night and include a cooked-to-order breakfast. We are committed to 20 rooms at this rate. The rate is good for three days before and after the reunion. All rooms are suites and the hotel is pet-friendly, with a one-time \$50 fee. Most major airlines fly into Grand Rapids (GRR), and it is also serviced by Amtrak. There is a free airport shuttle service. Make room reservations directly with the hotel. Be sure to mention that you are with the USS ATKA group. Credit cards will not be charged until check in. You will be billed 1 night for no show.

The total meal cost for all three days will be \$150.00 per person including taxes & gratuities. Meal cost is \$25 each day for kids 12 and under. At this time, we are still working on tours and expect the cost to be about \$50 per person. We will send more information as soon as tours are finalized.

We will also have our usual hospitality suite with beverages, snacks, the ship's store & memorabilia.

The meal and tour money must be sent to Mike Kovacs no later than June 1st. If you will not be able to send money by that time, **PLEASE, PLEASE** phone or e-mail Mike to let him know that you will be attending. He will not be available to receive money after June 1. Both meal and tour costs are based on a 40-person minimum, so we need as much participation as possible. As our group gets smaller each year, our power of negotiating becomes less effective. We have done the best we could, hoping we can fulfill our contract obligations with the hotel; now we need and are counting on your support. See our urgent message on the reverse side.

If there are any questions or special needs, call Mike at (609) 506-7981.

2021 DUES ARE DUE! Please send your \$10.00 to:

**Mike Kovacs, Treasurer
USS ATKA Association
9274 County Road 99
Lillian, AL 36549**

**Make checks payable to USS ATKA ASSOCIATION
Thanks for your continued support.**

AN IMPORTANT REQUEST FROM THE REUNION COMMITTEE

We have reached a decision-making point in our planned reunion. Because of the COVID, we had to cancel the 2020 reunion but were able to secure the same location & approximate time for 2021. If we do not meet our minimums, our cash reserve will be severely depleted though penalties. *This is why we need to hear from you!* We need a definite commitment about whether you will be attending this year. You must respond to one of us by December 15th in order for us to continue with the reunion or to cancel it. This is a hard decision, but necessary to make. Please call or e-mail us.

Carl Brown
browncarlione@aol.com (preferred)
(616) 308-4846

Mike Kovacs
mikeakovacs@hotmail.com
(609) 506-7981

Because the attendance at our yearly reunions have diminished greatly over the last 20 years, due mainly to illness and departed members, we always have an open invitation to all family and friends to join us for these festivities. We are always glad to see new faces and share our stories.

If any members have a picture of themselves while they were on the ATKA please send an electronic version to Carl Brown so it can be added to the members page when it is updated.

Check out The USS ATKA Association's website:
www.ussatka.com

Shipmates' Updates

Please keep in your thoughts and prayers the families of our Shipmates who have crossed the bar or have health issues.

It is with great sadness that we report the passing of Tony Coppola and Mel Blaquiére.

If you know of any others of our family in duress, please let Carl or Mike know, so we can keep everyone informed.

USS ATKA Timeline

- 1942 – Laid down: July 20th
- 1943 – Launched March 8th
- 1944 – Commissioned "USCGC Southwind"
- 1945 – After seeing service on the Greenland Patrol, Southwind was transferred to the Soviet Union on March 23rd, after assisting the Eastwind in capturing the German trawler Externsteine.
- 1946 – Our Soviet allies renamed her Admiral Makarov ("The father of the modern icebreaker").
- 1947-1949 – Russian service as Admiral Makarov, then returned to the US Navy.
- 1950 – The Navy renamed her USS ATKA AGB 3.
- 1951-1965 – US Navy service.
- 1966 – All Navy icebreakers were transferred to the Coast Guard. On October 31st, ATKA was transferred and rechristened as USCGC Southwind. Leaving Boston, she was moved to her new homeport of Baltimore (Curtis Bay), MD. After a shakedown cruise to Bermuda, she embarked on her first operational cruise north to Thule, Greenland.
- 1967-1969 – Service as USCGC Southwind – Operation Deep Freeze, Antarctica.
- 1970-1975 – Service as USCGC Southwind.
- 1976 – Decommissioned and sold.

Why Do We Pay Dues?

Membership dues for the USS ATKA Association are \$10 per year. We are proud to be members, but with the rising costs of everything around us, it's hard not to wonder whether dues are necessary.

So, what are my dues used for?

1. Your dues card.
2. The Newsletter – our main source of communication among members.
3. Sympathy & Get-Well cards to any known shipmates who have suffered illness or loss.
4. Printing & postage.
5. Maintenance of website.
6. To keep down the cost of reunion expenses.

Hopefully the snow will be gone & it will be warm enough to gather around the pool to renew old friendships. There are many things to see in and around "Beer City". Of special interest is space capsule BP 1227 which was picked up by the Russians and returned to the United States. The USCG Southwind went to Murmansk to pick it up in 1970. It is now a time capsule and will be opened in 2076.

It is becoming increasingly difficult to find reasonably priced hotels to suit our needs. Hopefully with the transportation options you will be able to join the other sailors that will be coming. **Hope to see you there.**