

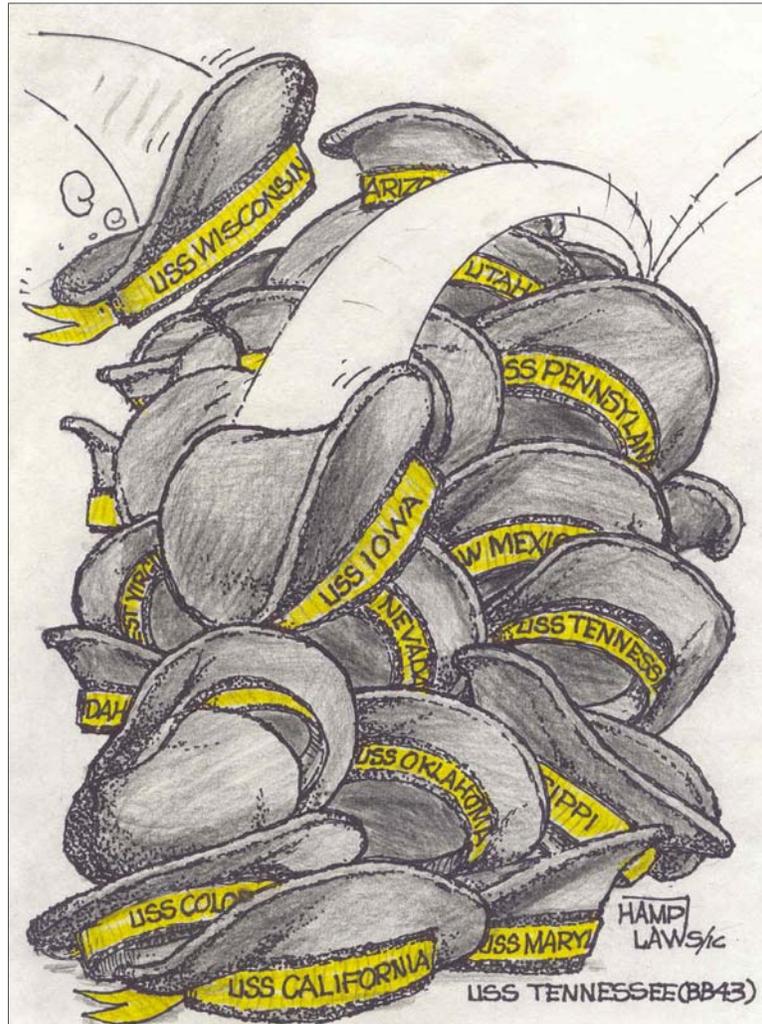


4th Quarter
2006



"Rest well, yet sleep lightly and hear the call, if again sounded, to provide firepower for freedom..."

THE JERSEYMAN



THE JERSEYMAN

The Place of the Battleship in America's Arsenal: An Overview

by Malcolm Muir, Jr., Virginia Military Institute

The battleship made the United States a world military power. While it is true that abundant natural resources and an industrious population were preconditional for growing American might in the twentieth century, the country came to international prominence with the battleship as its principal weapon. Many Americans tend to forget how weak the Army was early in the twentieth century. With troops numbering barely 100,000, a typical appraisal came from the US attaché in Russia in 1912: "There is a universal belief that our army is not worthy of serious consideration."

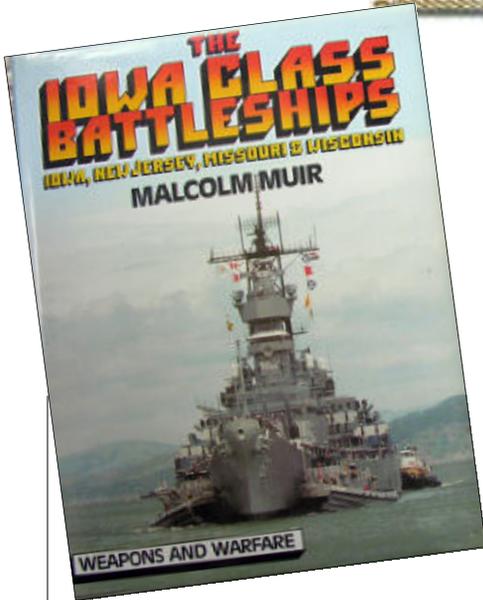
The same remark could have been made only twenty years earlier about the U.S. Navy. In the decades after the Civil War, the fleet, composed of left-over monitors useful only for coastal defense and even older wooden warships with muzzle-loading cannon, was the object of derision. A British service journal wrote in 1875: "There never was such a hapless, broken-down, tattered, forlorn apology for a navy as that possessed by the United States."

This sad situation changed quickly and dramatically due largely to the work of two men: the theorist Alfred Thayer Mahan and his disciple Theodore Roosevelt. By convincing prominent Americans through his historical works that a strong battle fleet could ensure security, empire, and trade, Mahan spurred Congress to fund a respectable navy. This new force was built around the battleship, and the U.S. Navy settled by 1890 on a recipe for warship construction that it stuck with for almost half a century. Eschewing speed for fire-power and protection, the Navy designed warships that could bull their way into enemy waters and force a climactic showdown.

When Roosevelt became president in 1901, battleship construction shifted into high gear. Less visible than the ships themselves was the supporting infrastructure: the docks; the Naval Gun Factory with its specialized equipment such as shrinking pits to allow the liners of the big guns to be swapped out; the tools to make the face-hardened armor--so expensive that it was often nicknamed "jewelry steel." Alongside this outlay went the recruitment and training of a labor force that could build the new battleships--not to mention the quadrupling of the size of the enlisted force to man them and the wholesale reconstruction of the U.S. Naval Academy to officer them.

By the time Roosevelt welcomed the Great White Fleet at the end of its cruise in 1909, the U.S. Navy has risen from an obsolete coast defense force to a position neck-and-neck for second place with that of the Kaiser's High Seas Fleet. The yardstick was the battleship. Relegated to much lower priorities were the lesser warships: the cruisers, destroyers, and the others, partly on the grounds that battleships were the warships that truly mattered and partly in the belief that those lesser vessels could be constructed more quickly in an emergency.

World War I brought the primacy of the battleship into question. The British and German fleets fought only one major action (Jutland); the American battleships did not fire a shot. Advocates of revolutionary new military technologies such as aircraft and submarines declaimed the resources "wasted" on the big gun ships. Of course, such a myopic view overlooked the fact that the Allied battleships had locked the German navy in port and, through the blockade, reduced the enemy nation to famine. American battleships reinforced the British Grand Fleet, allowing it to decommission older vessels and thereby freeing sailors for anti-submarine duty. Had the war gone into 1919, American battleships almost certainly would have assaulted directly the German submarine bases in Belgium.



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While the United States Navy was building up its force quantitatively, it also maintained the pace qualitatively. Following the commissioning of HMS Dreadnought in 1906, the U.S. Navy built ever larger all-big-gun battleships. From the 16,000-ton Michigan of 1909 mounting eight 12-inch weapons, newer ships escalated in size and power. The 26,000-ton Arkansas of 1912 mounted twelve 12-inch; the 31,400-ton Pennsylvania of 1916, twelve 14-inch; the 32,000-ton Maryland of 1921, eight 16-inch. Every increase in bore diameter brought large increases in hitting power. Projectile weights went from 870 pounds for the 12-inch to 1400 for the 14-inch to 2100 for the 16-inch. And the American dreadnoughts kept to the original formula of tough ships, being armored to resist the gunfire of comparable warships. The trade-off remained that of speed, the ships being slightly slower than their foreign contemporaries.

As World War I ended, the U.S. Navy had on order the battleships of the 1916 program that would make it “second to none”: the 43,000 ton giants of the South Dakota-class, the greatest warships ever begun to that point. But their expense for a war-wearied population was appalling; the only naval rivals now, Japan and Great Britain, had been our allies in the Great War. The Washington Naval Treaty froze battleship construction. The ships that provided the full measure of a nation’s naval strength were, for the first time, limited by international agreement. This hiatus lasted for almost fifteen years.

When the Axis began their march in the mid-1930s, the United States, snared in the Great Depression, reluctantly renewed battleship construction. It may serve as an index of the industrial strength of this country that over the next decade (1936 to 1945), the United States sent to sea more new battleships (ten) than the three Axis powers combined (nine).

And what warships these new U.S. battleships were! Their 16-inch rifles, both the 45- and 50-caliber versions, fired unusually heavy projectiles newly designed by the Bureau of Ordnance. The armored piercing round weighed 2700 pounds--only slightly lighter than the 3200-lb shell fired by the 18.1-inch guns of the IJN Yamato. Typically, the American ships were robust. Although the North Carolina-class was designed to resist 14-inch shells, both the South Dakotas and Iowas could withstand hits from 16-inch projectiles. Earlier, the trade-off had been speed. With improved engineering plants, U.S. naval architects were able to give the new battleships markedly higher speeds: 27 knots for the first six ships and an unprecedented 33 knots for the Iowa-class. The last, then, were the fastest battleships ever constructed by any navy.

Yet as the first of these new battleships commissioned in 1941 and 1942, their utility was called into question by events in the Pacific, especially the losses at Pearl Harbor, the sinking of Force Z (HMS Prince of Wales and Repulse) off Malaya by aircraft, and carrier clashes at Coral Sea and Midway. The idea that the battleship was useless gained widespread currency in the Navy itself. Admiral Herbert F. Leary remarked to a friend soon after Pearl Harbor: “This is an airpower war. There's no place for an old battleship horse like me.”

To the satisfaction of many of its defenders, the reputation of the battleship in the U.S. Navy recovered from this nadir as the new ships began proving themselves in action. In November 1942, three fought enemy big-gun ships on opposite sides of the world (Massachusetts against Jean Bart at Casablanca; Washington and South Dakota against Kirishima at Guadalcanal). Moreover, the fast battleship shouldered a number of ancillary missions--some anticipated (e.g., as force flagships), others unforeseen (for example, as “fast oilers” refueling destroyers, or sending their spotting planes to rescue downed airmen).

Certainly unexpected was the emergence of the fast battleship as an airplane killer. Equipped with the most modern radar installations, the big-gun ships were often the first to pick up incoming attackers. And as the Japanese planes closed against the thin-skinned carriers, the battleships brought their massive anti-aircraft batteries to bear. Designed with the new 5-inch/38 which by 1944 was firing proximity-fused shells, the battleships were also crowded with lighter weapons. For example, as the Pacific campaign reached its climax the Iowa-class were typically carrying eighty 40mm Bofors plus fifty 20mm Oerlikons. Combined with the twenty 5-inch, each fast battleship mounted up to 150 anti-aircraft weapons. It is instructive to note that not one U.S. aircraft carrier escorted by a fast battleship was lost to Japanese aircraft attack during the war.

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The older battleships made a more halting recovery from Pearl Harbor, but ultimately came back with a vengeance. By 1943, these World War I-era ships, too slow to act in concert with the fast carrier task groups, began rebuilding their reputations by providing gunfire support to Marines and U.S. Army soldiers assaulting Japanese-held islands. As bombardment techniques were refined, the old battleships became the navy's gunfire support champions at places like Tarawa, Kwajalein, and Saipan. As the great historian Samuel Eliot Morison remarked in his analysis of Iwo Jima, "Nobody could convince the Marines that battleships were obsolete!" The icing on the cake came when six old battleships gunned down the remnants of the Japanese battle line at Surigao Strait.

And yet in the twinkling of an eye, both old and new were gone. Following V-J Day, the drawdown of the U.S. fleet became an implosion as the A-bomb made the utility of all conventional arms suspect. In 1945, the twenty-three battleships in commission constituted the mightiest force of gunnery ships ever assembled; by 1948, one, the Missouri, remained in service as a training ship. Although the remaining nine fast battleships (and a few older ones as well) rested in mothballs, many had fallen as guinea pigs in nuclear weapons tests or to the cutter's torch.

Kim Il Sung, the North Korean dictator, revived the Iowa-class by his attack south in June 1950. With much of the Korean peninsula within range of the 16-inch/50, these, the four newest battleships, went back out to Far Eastern waters to support U.N. ground troops. They fired many more main battery rounds (20,000) than they had in World War II. But with the Eisenhower administration's stance of Massive Retaliation, conventional forces were once again cut to the bone. With the retirement of Wisconsin in 1958, for the first time since 1895 the U.S. Navy had no battleship on active duty.

Events showed again that even the sharpest minds could not foretell the future. As America's nuclear arsenal failed to deter communist aggression in Southeast Asia, the New Jersey went out, belatedly, to provide the sort of gunfire support that all four Iowas had offered so ably the preceding decade. In fact, so effective was the New Jersey in Vietnamese waters that the Nixon administration, seeking to wind down the war and seeing her as a destabilizing element, sent her back to mothballs.

Narrowly saved from the scrapyards in the early 1970s by Chief of Naval Operations Elmo Zumwalt, the Iowas then became a key element in Ronald Reagan's defense build-up. Armed with cruise missiles, they fired both guns and missiles at the Iraqis in the Gulf War--yet another example of the flexibility of major weapons systems. Like the air Force's B-52, the Iowas never carried out the principal mission for which they were designed, but rather proved themselves of the greatest utility in a host of unanticipated tasks. That these four ships with their singular capabilities have been stricken from the Navy's register in the midst of a new war may ultimately rank as one of the Navy's greatest mistakes. We shall see. But of one thing we are certain: for almost exactly one century, the battleship served this country well. Rest in peace.

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Author: Malcolm Muir, Jr., a military historian who received his degrees from Emory, Florida State, and Ohio State Universities, serves on the faculty of the Virginia Military Institute where he directs the John A. Adams '71 Center for Military History and Strategic Analysis. He has also held the Secretary of the Navy's Research Chair in Naval History and visiting positions at the U.S. Military Academy and the Air War College.

Among his publications are several books, including *Iowa-Class Battleships* (Dorset, England, 1987) and *Black Shoes and Blue Water: Surface Warfare in the U.S. Navy, 1945-1975* (Washington, 1996). The latter won the John Lyman Award given by the North American Society for Oceanic History for the best book published in 1996 on U.S. naval history.



## THE JERSEYMAN

### HOW I FOUND OUT THAT USS NEW JERSEY WOULD NOT RETURN TO VIETNAM...

Tom: This replies to yours on the subject of no return to Vietnam for USS NEW JERSEY. Let me start at the beginning. Prior to my departure from BUPERS there were rumors about a stand down in Vietnam and the name NEW JERSEY came up a few times.

On my departure from BUPERS in late July 1969, I called on the Chief of Naval Personnel, VADM C. K. Duncan, and the CMC, General Leonard Chapman and the Assistant CMC, General Lew Walt. All three said that Senator Richard Russell, the powerful Senate Armed Forces Chairman, had assured them that NEW JERSEY would remain, as had Representative Jack Brook of Texas. Thus I left in a decent frame of mind given those assurances. In addition, Senator Ted Stevens had told Admiral Weisner and me that the ship was good to go. (We had to see the Senator on some personnel business and the subject came up because Admiral Weisner had orders as COMCARDIV FIVE).

On Saturday, 16 August, Jim Elfelt, XO, called to tell me that Master Chief of the Navy Delbert Black had visited the CPO quarters that day and had told the chiefs that the ship would not go to Vietnam. On hearing that, Jim said the chiefs practically threw Black off the ship. Ed Snyder was in Washington and when we talked I do not believe that he had heard, but both of us were upset over the news.

I reported aboard for duty on 20 August to witness a critique of the weapons system inspection, and that the ship passed with ease. The next morning, 21 AUG, Ed and I were in the XO's cabin when the Captain's Office said that the Exec. Asst. to the VCNO, Captain Tyler Dedman, was on the phone and wanted to speak to the Captain. It was a heads up because they knew how Ed was - he could make a scene if he was so moved. Very simply, the word was that a message was being released saying that 100 ships, including the Battleship NEW JERSEY (the only ship named), were being inactivated because of money. Ed went to the IMC and passed the word to the crew. Believe me it was an eerie feeling. It seemed that the ship fell silent but soon there were salty expressions heard in the passageways.

I never for a moment believed that money was the reason. My reasoning was that the ship was a national symbol and what better instrument to let the world know that the US was standing down in Nam than to take out the most feared weapon. It turns out I was not too far wrong.

In the late 1990's I met Dr. Malcolm Muir at a party at the Virginia Military Institute. I had exchanged correspondence with him a few years earlier and I brought up the subject of NEW JERSEY saying I really never knew why she was taken out of service. His reply was that the answer was in his book: THE IOWA CLASS BATTLESHIPS. I was embarrassed because he had given me a copy earlier. In sum, he quoted Senator Warner who was engaging Senator John Chafee in a debate on the floor of the Senate about the ship. The ship was taken from service because it was impeding the Paris Peace Talks.

So NEW JERSEY joined her inactive sisters on 17 DEC 1969 in Bremerton, Washington, and it was my sad duty to take her out of commission...

**Captain Robert C Peniston, USN/Ret.**  
Lexington, Virginia



## Remembering the Battle of Belleau Wood...

May 28, 2006

By Staff Sgt. Will Price, Marine Barracks 8th & I, Washington Navy Yard

### BELLEAU, France (May 28, 2006) --

In June 1918, on a small stretch of land that was the scene of one of the most savage and deadly battles the United States fought during the First World War, and a pivotal chapter in Marine Corps history, was written in blood.

Eighty-eight years later, on May 28, 2006, the Battle of Belleau Wood was commemorated in Belleau, France, by the United States Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment from Marine Barracks, Washington, comprised of the United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, the United States Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon, and the United States Marine Corps Color Guard. The event was attended by the **Commandant of the Marine Corps General Michael W. Hagee**, and more than 2,000 spectators, including soldiers, statesmen, and dignitaries, from both France and the United States.

The proceedings opened with a ceremony at France's Aisne-Marne Cemetery, located near the scene of the battle. The memorial service addresses were presented by **General Hagee**, and **Chief of Staff of the French Army, Général Armée Bernard Thorette**, who also conducted a wreath-laying ceremony with other American and French dignitaries.

In honor of the fallen, both American and French colors were raised to half-mast as French soldiers, a marching band, and the Marine Corps Battle Color Detachment marched to the parade deck, centered in front of the 80-foot Memorial Chapel. A detachment of U.S. Air Force jets flew over the ceremony as the French Band played their national anthem, "The Marseillaise," and the Drum & Bugle Corps followed with, "The Star Spangled Banner." Flanking the parade deck were 2,289 tombstones, one for each U.S. service member who fell in defense of liberty at Belleau Wood.

"Being here makes you realize how tremendously important this battle was, to the Marine Corps of the time, and to America as well," said **Staff Sgt. Bryan Duprey, Silent Drill Platoon, Platoon Sergeant**. "It was a turning point for both the war and the Corps."

Continuing the program, French soldiers and Marines fired their rifles into the air, followed by **Battle Color Detachment Bugler Sgt. Clint Owens'** rendition of Taps. Owens donned a World War I Marine uniform and played while perched atop the towering Memorial Chapel as many in the audience bowed their heads in respectful silence.

Belleau Wood was a turning point in WWI as well is a landmark in the history of the Marine Corps. In mid- 1918, with the German army just 50 miles outside Paris, the Allied Second and Third Divisions mounted a counter-attack to halt the Germans dead and retake Belleau Wood -- but the only way into the woods was through an adjoining wheat field and this field was heavily protected by massive German fire-power.

As American forces arrived on the scene, **Captain Lloyd Williams of 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines Regiment** was told by the retreating French army that turning back was the best course of action. He declined, giving the now-famous reply, "**Retreat, hell! We just got here!**"

With little to no cover, Marines maneuvered through an 800-yard wide-open wheat field, trying to reach the heavily entrenched German soldiers. The Marines began their advance with unwavering courage and the use of precision long-distance marksmanship.

According to **Gilles Lagin, a Belleau Wood historian**, the Germans were familiar with British snipers, but the Marines' ability to hit a target from more than 500 yards away stunned them so badly they believed there was an entire regiment of Marine snipers attacking.

"I had read about that 800-yard advance," said General Hagee, in a speech delivered at the ceremony, "but I never fully appreciated how difficult it must have been until I walked it myself. The enemy had every square inch of that field covered with interlocking machine gun and artillery fire. The Marines paid dearly with every step they took. The enemy couldn't believe that the Marines would advance in the face of such devastation. But they did. When officers fell, sergeants led the way. When sergeants fell, corporals took the lead. And when corporals fell, the privates fought on."



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### (Remembering the Battle of Belleau Wood- -)

In the end, the Marines of the 4th Marine Brigade's 5th and 6th Regiments took the blood-soaked grounds of Belleau Wood. The battle that had begun June 1 ended June 26 when **Maj. Maurice Shearer**, Commanding Officer, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, could finally report with pride, "*Woods now U.S. Marine Corps -- entirely.*"

More than 1,800 Marines lost their lives at Belleau Wood. This was the greatest loss the Corps had sustained in a single battle at the time, and it was tragically high -- but it is estimated that a staggering 8,000 German troops were killed during the battle with another 1,600 taken prisoner. This was a huge victory for the Allies, especially as a morale booster to weary troops who had started to believe the Germans were invincible. The Marines had decisively proven otherwise.

Out-numbered, out-gunned, out-manned, and warned to retreat immediately, the United States Marine Corps defied the odds and managed to smash the superior German forces to pieces. For every fallen American, no less than five enemy troops paid the ultimate price.

Little wonder that from the time of this fierce battle to the present day, Marines are still known by the nickname given them by the awed Germans they vanquished at Belleau Wood: "Teufelhunden," which means "Hounds from Hell," or "Devil Dogs." In honor of the fallen, the area was rechristened "The Wood of the Marine Brigade."

The 2006 ceremonies commemorating the 88th anniversary of the Battle of Belleau Wood ended with a stellar performance by "The Commandant's Own" Drum and Bugle Corps, the French Marching Band, and an amazing display of precision marching and rifle maneuvering from the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon.



This concluded the remembrance of Belleau Wood, a battle that will live forever as an unforgettable chapter in the history of the United States Marine Corps.



Story and photos by  
**Staff Sgt. Will Price, USMC**  
(RELEASED)

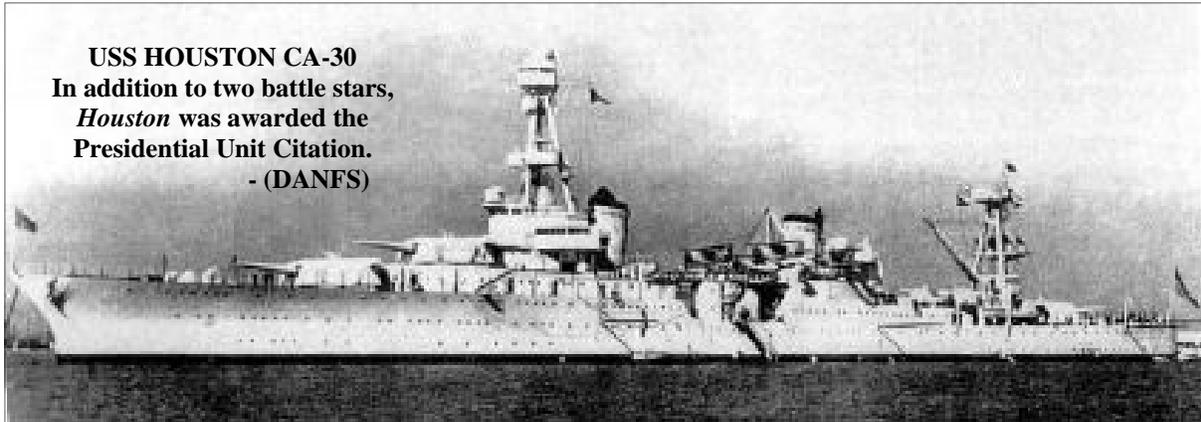
Submitted to *The Jerseyman* by:  
Former 8th & "Eye" Marine,  
**Bob Capeci**,  
1955-1958, Fairfax, VA.,

**John T. Reim**  
Franklinville, New Jersey  
and  
Battleship New Jersey Volunteer  
**Carl Williams**  
Mt. Laurel, New Jersey

**"...demonstrate to the world that there is 'No Better Friend, No Worse Enemy' than a U.S. Marine."**  
~ Lieutenant General James N. Mattis, USMC ~

**Editor's Note:** Master Chief Electrician William J. Stewart, USN/Ret., was one of 368 survivors of the Heavy Cruiser **USS HOUSTON**, sunk by an overwhelming Japanese force on March 1, 1942. Badly burned, and having to swim 4 miles to make shore, Stewart was captured the day after the sinking and spent the next 3 1/2 years as a POW in Japan.

Master Chief Stewart recently observed his 86th birthday, and shared with us that his WW2 story has not been in print before. We are privileged to be able to present his story here in *The Jerseyman*. In a late August phone call, he also said that he would try to send some more details about USS HOUSTON's WW2 cruiser flight operations, and another untold story of 1955 duty aboard USS MERRICK, AKA 97 on an Arctic Dew line run - for a future issue of *The Jerseyman*. Stay tuned... - TH



**USS HOUSTON CA-30**  
**In addition to two battle stars,**  
**Houston was awarded the**  
**Presidential Unit Citation.**  
 - (DANFS)

(Photos are courtesy of **William J. Stewart, EMCM, USN/Ret.,** and **Val Poss** of the **USS HOUSTON Survivors Association**)  
**THE US ASIATIC FLEET, AND LOSS OF USS HOUSTON (CA-30)**

On December 8, 1941, the US Asiatic Fleet consisted of one Heavy Cruiser (USS Houston CA-30,) one Light Cruiser (USS Marblehead CL-12,) thirteen World War 1 era 4-Stack Destroyers, (USS Paul Jones DD-230, USS John D. Edwards DD-216, USS Alden DD-211, USS Whipple DD-217, USS Edsall DD-219, USS Stewart DD-224, USS Barker DD-213, USS Parrott DD-218, USS Bulmer DD-222, USS John D. Ford DD-228, USS Pope DD-225, USS Peary DD-226, USS Pillsbury DD-227, 29 Submarines, 28 PBY-4 Catalina Flying boats, 6 torpedo boats of MTB 3, a few tenders and some auxiliaries...

**15 June 2006 --**

"I just received *The Jerseyman*, requesting photos of ship's bells. If you don't have the story and photo of Houston's bell, let me know. When I first got to sea duty in June 1941 aboard USS DETROIT, CL-8 in Pearl, I always enjoyed the sounds of the bells on the big battleships at Pearl. They had a beautiful deep tone... After Pearl Harbor I was assigned as a Seaman 1/c in Houston, and was in the shell deck crew of turret 2 when it was hit and set afire. I was burned black to my waist and the only one of 7 in the shell deck crew to get ashore..."

(Shortly following the note, we called and spoke with Bill Stewart and heard more of his story. He then sent to us the details of the last days of USS HOUSTON, his 41 months as a POW, and the ship's bell recovery by a group of Indonesian divers 31 years after the ship went down...)

**29 June 2006 --**

"My experiences aboard USS HOUSTON, CA 30 in WW II - -  
 Commissioned in 1930, sunk Mar 1, 1942; Armament nine 8 inch 50 cal guns in triple turrets; eight 5 inch 25 cal AA guns in open mounts; four quadruple 1.1 pom poms; numerous 50 cal machine guns. Ship had two catapults, carried four SOC aircraft. Ship's length 601 ft, beam 60 ft, draft 28 ft. Wartime crew 1100 men (officers and enlisted.) About one third survived the sinking - all survivors became prisoners of war. Most of the survivors went to Burma to build the "death" railway - where over 100 of them died. About 50 men were taken to Japan (me included) to work at an iron mine.

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I boarded Houston in Darwin 15Jan1942; we departed next day for Soerabaja (Java) where we assembled as a fleet to raid Macassar Strait. In the Flores sea, we came under heavy air attack. USS Marblehead (an old 4-stack light cruiser) took a bomb hit aft - destroyed her steering gear with rudder positioned 30° right. Another bomb exploded underneath her hull amidships caved in a large portion of her hull. She survived and returned stateside for repairs. Houston took a bomb hit aft - exploded between #3 turret and after deck house while turret was trained out. Perforated the side of the turret setting it afire. It also blew a 10 ft hole in main deck directly above a damage control party of 20 men. Casualties 30 burned to death in the turret, 18 blown to bits below deck.

Feb 16th - Admiral Hart inspected the ship - decided to keep us on station to slow the Japanese advances.

Feb 17th - We departed for Darwin to escort a convoy to Timor - 4 ships. First day out convoy was attacked by aircraft. Houston fought off the air attack successfully. One man on one ship was killed - apparently a piece of our own shrapnel - no damage to ships. Mission was cancelled and convoy returned to Darwin. We left Darwin immediately for Soerabaja. Next day Darwin was bombed and several ships sunk - including two that had been in our convoy.

Arrived Soerabaja 22 Feb (Mon) and fought off air attacks in port all day. At dusk a patrol fleet including Houston got underway to patrol all night for invasion fleet. Returned to port at dawn to continue AA defense all day. Repeated operation until Saturday morning, and we did not return to port. Meanwhile other units joined our fleet - Houston, HMAS Perth, HMS Exeter, RDN DeRuyter, RDN Tromp and about 14 English, Dutch and American destroyers. Battle of Java Sea started about 2pm - continued until nearly midnight. Houston fired 102 salvos. About 10pm Tromp was torpedoed and sank; 10 minutes later DeRuyter was torpedoed and sank. SOPA (Dutch) then ordered all units "proceed your discretion." Earlier Exeter had taken an engine room hit and had to pull out of the battle line. Houston and Perth went to Batavia (Jakarta now.)

Departed Batavia at dusk Sun 28 Feb in company with HMAS Perth. Headed for Australia via Sunda Strait. Ran into an invasion fleet about 11:30pm and commenced firing. Perth was torpedoed and sank soon. Houston continued firing until about midnight when turret 2 was hit and set afire. I was in the shell deck crew of that turret. Magazines flooded and Houston was out of action. Some 5" guns still fired manually. I was burned black to my waist in the turret fire but got clear. A few minutes later "abandon ship" was ordered. I went on deck - illuminated by enemy searchlights - and obtained a life jacket. I hesitated to leave the ship but decided to leave and go as far as I could.

Left ship and swam aft to get clear of shell fire as quickly as possible. Once clear discarded my trousers and shoes. I could see land (almost a half moon,) and started swimming toward it. Passed 2 over crowded life rafts but rejected them - I didn't want anyone to touch my burned skin. Had to swim zig-zag plan 6 through 2 lines of Japanese transports and continued toward land. Was difficult swimming with my damaged left arm. Apparently current was favorable - swells moving ashore helped a lot. A good kick of my feet would take me quite a way on each swell. After a long time (3-4 hours) I drug bottom. Crawled the last 100 feet to shore. Started hunting water to drink. About 20 minutes later (no water) the moon went down and I sat down to sleep. Woke at daylight to see one of our men perched on a rock about 100 feet out. He came to the rock in the dark, crawled up on it and went to sleep.

We started out to try to get to Batavia and get on a ship for Australia. About 1/4 mile down the road we met up with a platoon of Japanese soldiers and were taken prisoner. About mid morning we were joined by another party of about 24 (Houston) men. We were marched a while and stopped for the night. Marched next day until we arrived at Serang (Bantam,) Java and placed with about 1,000 other prisoners in Serang theater.

At Serang theater we were fed a small loaf of bread twice a day. The second day the Japs bandaged my back, left arm, and ears - changed bandages every other day for 6 days. After the last treatment, they brought in a doctor (survived off Perth.) He looked at my arm and asked "Can you move your fingers? Can you move your thumb?" I could. He says "Good, I will have you well in a week." He used cod liver oil ointment under my bandages. Ten days later skin had formed over the raw area. Three weeks later I was pretty well healed - all except my ears - they took a month longer.

Three weeks in Serang theater and I was moved to Serang prison for another 3 weeks. It was an improvement over the theater. Middle of May I was loaded on a truck and moved to Batavia Bicycle Camp - a Dutch Army base with good facilities - horrible food. Stayed there about 6 months. Was loaded aboard a ship for Singapore ( 3 days enroute,) stopped in English Camp "Changi" ten days then boarded a ship for Japan. Conditions aboard ship were horrible - almost as many rats and mice aboard as there were prisoners. Food was a small ration of rice twice a day. Stopped in Formosa for coal. They brought aboard a bunch of yellow watermelons to feed the prisoners - they were delicious. Sanitation was poor - Dutch prisoners started getting dysentery. 102 men died and were buried at sea between Formosa and Japan. Docked in Xoji - port for Nagasaki.

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At Nagasaki we boarded a passenger train for trip to O Hasi (20 miles inland from Kama Ishi.) Trip required 3 days and nights. Food was railroad box lunches and pretty good. Arrived O Hasi early December and housed in a temporary building near an iron mine. Belongings were searched the next day.

We were used for odd jobs in connection with an iron ore concentrating mill all winter and spring. Early summer a permanent camp was completed below O Hasi and we moved again - was there when the war ended. Food was sparse but mostly edible.

In O Hasi the men were assigned (about 50 men) to carpenter, machine, electrical, and welding shops according to their trade. Those left over were assigned to dig iron out of the mountain. About a year later, a cave-in in the mine killed 14 Japanese. Prisoners were removed from the mine and transferred elsewhere. I worked in the electrical shop. I learned enough electricity from our electricians and radiomen to pass all my future Navy exams for advancement with high marks.

Guards were changed every month. One month the guards would be bearable. Next month they would generate excuses to beat on people. At work we were turned over to civilians.

One of our men had a radio in camp. We knew when the atomic bombs were dropped, and also when the war ended before you did.

About the time the war ended I developed a kidney infection. Fortunately, a B-29 delivered some penicillin which started me healing. B-29s dropped food, clothing, and medicin in barrels with parachutes. About half the barrels broke loose from the parachutes. Fortunately, no one was hit by one of the barrels.

Two days after the war ended I was sent to a hospital in Marioka. Was there three days then put on a train for Sendai. Boarded one of our LSMs for lunch and transfer to hospital ship USS RESCUE. The lunch was fried chicken and it sure tasted good. An hour later, USS RESCUE was underway and I was headed home. Made a brief stop in Guam, another in Pearl Harbor. Three weeks enroute and I was in Oakland Naval Hospital.

This record is very brief. Much happened between the lines."

**William J. Stewart, EMCM, USN/Ret.**  
**Independence, Kansas**



**“Asiatic Fleet Memorial Day  
 1 March 2004.”  
 Bill and Mary Stewart  
 Independence, Kansas.**



## THE JERSEYMAN

### USS HOUSTON

#### Bell Ceremony Address

#### by Ambassador Galbraith

“For me this occasion evokes some very personal and poignant memories. I stood at the side of the Houston in Darwin Harbor in Australia on February 16, 1942 just days before she went down in the Java Sea. That night, I was aboard one of a convoy of troop transport ships that left Darwin for Kupang, Indonesia Timor, with the Houston as our primary escort. The next day, as we sailed along in the calm and quiet of the Timor Sea, we were suddenly attacked by a fleet of Japanese bombers. Fortunately for those of us on the troop transports, the bombers went after Houston. The Houston had been bombed at sea only a few days before, one of the bombs hitting the rear gun turret and killing, we are told, 45 men. By a combination of violent turns and furious shooting, the Houston survived the attack and the convoy escaped with only slight damage to one of the transports.

On February 18, the convoy returned to Darwin. The Houston sailed away that night, and we never saw her again.

The next morning, a large number of Japanese aircraft attacked Darwin, catching the convoy in the harbor. Every ship in the harbor, except the one I was on and a hospital ship, were sunk, and the ship I was on was so badly damaged that we had to abandon it in the harbor.

Thus, I went through a little of the anxiety and fear that must have been constant companion of the crew of the Houston during the previous weeks and the few days remaining.

From Darwin, the Houston returned to Indonesian waters, and took part in a number of engagements with the enemy. On February 27, 1942 the Houston and other allied ships attacked a vastly superior enemy sixty miles north of Surabaya. Many ships from each side were sunk. Once again, the Houston sailed away to do more battle.

The next day, February 28, the Houston sailed into Tanjung Priok and that night, in the company of the Australian Cruiser Perth, it attempted to run through Sunda Strait. There they ran into a huge Japanese fleet assembled to land troops in Bantam Bay. Outnumbered by more than ten to one, the two allied ships immediately opened fire and continued to fight until midnight, finally running out of ammunition. The Perth went down shortly after midnight. The Houston fought on firing signal flares at the enemy when the ammunition was gone. Finally, pierced by torpedoes and on fire, the Houston went down. More than half of her crew of over 1,000 died with her. Many others died in the water. Some 368 of the Houston’s men survived the battle and were taken prisoner. But littering the water and beaches were the remains of at least ten enemy ships destroyed by the Houston and the Perth.

I will never forget the men of the Houston as I saw them in Darwin. They were lean, stripped down to tropical fighting dress and eager for battle, even knowing that the odds were against them - for the Houston was one of only three or four units left in our Asian fleet after the attack on Pearl Harbor.

The bell, recovered at considerable risk by Indonesian divers, will ever remind us of the heroism of the men who fought and died on the decks of the USS Houston. It will serve as well to inspire in all of us some of the spirit of dedication to duty which the Houston’s men carried so proudly.

On behalf of the American people, I want to thank you for recovering and presenting to them, this symbol of American courage, and fighting spirit.

Jakarta - August 24, 1973

To learn more about USS HOUSTON’s nearly non-stop daily battles from  
December 8, 1941 to March 1, 1942,  
DVD documentaries of “*The Last Stand of USS HOUSTON,*” and “*The Battle of the Java Sea,*”  
are available at the USS HOUSTON website

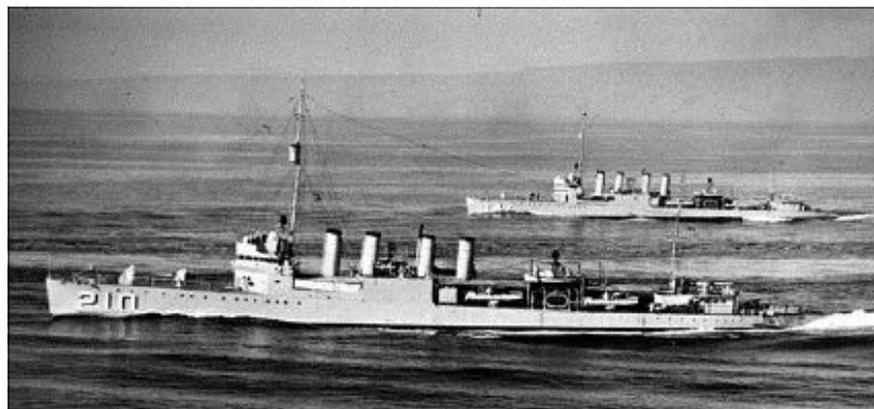
**usshouston.org**

## THE JERSEYMAN

### Remembering “4-Piper” Destroyers...

This past June, we received an email from **Basil Nickerson**, a World War 2 veteran living in Juneau, Alaska. At age 83, Nickerson says he rarely misses doing 33 push-ups each day, and talks about an impressive list of other exercises that go with it.

But from 1940 to 1944, he was serving as a Yeoman in **USS BROOME (DD-210)**, one of 273 “4-Piper” destroyers built between 1917 and 1921. These destroyers were of 3 different classes, but other than for their number of fuel tanks, and slightly different shape to their sterns, they looked much the same in configuration. The exact numbers built were; CLEMSON Class (156 ships,) WICKES Class (111 ships,) and CALDWELL Class (6 ships.) They weighed between 1,100-1,200 tons, were 315 feet in length, 32 feet across the beam, had a 9 foot draft, and carried from 100 to 150 men at speeds of up to 35 knots. To put their hull sizes in some perspective at the



beam, three of these destroyers could have nested side-by-side on the deck of battleship **NEW JERSEY** with room left over to walk around them on both sides.

*"We had some near-death experiences in them... We'd move over the crest of a 50-foot wave, the weight of the ship would shift, and we would travel to the bottom of a 50-foot trough," "And the ship just shook. It was like a depth charge went off next to your ship. We'd do that for days on end."*

According to Nickerson, the standing joke about seaworthiness for the flush-deck destroyers was that *“they will roll even if they are in dry-dock.”* None of the ships remain today, but he tries hard on his own to keep their proud history alive... and he says *“there was a lot of history to tell about them, but they are all but forgotten today. Four Piper Destroyers were the only source for staffing the new ships coming down launching ways before and after the start of the war. Every time we came into port we had twenty new recruits coming aboard and twenty more of our crew being shipped to new ships on the launch ways. My Brother in-law, a Chief Electrician's mate, was transferred in Feb. 1943 to the U.S.S. NEW JERSEY for duty. He left the ship in 1946 as a Chief Warrant Electrician Officer. By all means you will find that most of the trained recruits did come from the old four pipers.”*

Nickerson also sent to us a book titled *“A Family Saga - Flush Deck Destroyers 1917-1955,”* written, and self-published in 1999 by the late **LCDR John L. Dickey, II., USN/Ret.** From the flyer: *“This is a comprehensive study of the 273 flush deck, four stack destroyers built between 1917 and 1922. Forty of these ships, urgently needed to fight the Kaiser's U-Boats were commissioned before WW1, and 28 of them served in European waters before that war ended... By the time WWII began in Europe, only 169 of the ships had survived hard use, political idealism and accidents. In 1940, 50 of them were traded to the UK for base sites needed by the US in the Western Hemisphere. Only 37 days before the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor brought America into the war, U-562 sank USS REUBEN JAMES (DD-245.) Sixty five minutes before enemy carrier aircraft struck ships in Pearl Harbor, the USS WARD (DD-139,) sank a midget sub attempting to enter the harbor... Four of the old destroyers serving in the Asiatic Fleet gave the nation her first naval victory - the Battle of Makassar Straits on 24 January 1942 - a fact all but forgotten today. USS EDSAL (DD-219) sank the first full-sized Jap submarine (I-124,) on 20 January 1942, and USS ROPER (DD-147,) sank the first U-Boat (U-85,) in the Atlantic on 12 April 1942.”*

*“A Family Saga”* is a 279 page study exploring the 4-Stack destroyers in detail, and is carefully documented from a number of official sources. A naval history buff, or destroyer man, would find this very interesting reading. In their many different World War 2 configurations as a Destroyer (DD,) High Speed Transport (APD,) Seaplane Tender  
(Continued...)



## THE JERSEYMAN

(AVD,) Light Minelayer (DM,) or High Speed Minesweeper (DMS,) these ships earned 422 Battle stars, 21 Presidential Unit Citations, and 94 Navy Unit Commendations, plus a number of personal decorations for their crews, ranging from the Medal of Honor to the Purple Heart.

According to *"Family Saga,"* the flush-deck destroyers listed a number of famous names of WW2. Admirals Nimitz, Halsey, and Spruance were just a few that commanded the 4-stack, flush-deck destroyers in their early navy years. Lieutenant Commander William F. "Bull" Halsey, earned the Navy Cross as CO of USS SHAW (DD-68) in World War 1, and commissioned USS YARNALL (DD-143) in 1918. He once said; *"they were the best ships I ever served in."*

There was also a familiar name of an officer that served aboard USS ZANE (DD-337) in World War 2. Pulitzer prize-winning author **Herman Wouk**, served in USS ZANE as the ship's Communications Officer, and later went on to write *The Caine Mutiny*, *The Caine Mutiny Court-Martial*, and the screenplays *"Winds of War"* (1971,) & *"War and Remembrance"* (1978.) It was also said that he first had the idea for writing the story of the *Caine Mutiny* while serving aboard USS ZANE.

**"We fought the South Pacific war with this leak in the forward engine room, port side, under the main engine." - June 30, 1943**



For more information on the proud history of the 4-stack destroyers visit:

[www.fourpiperdestroyer.org](http://www.fourpiperdestroyer.org).

Photos and background histories submitted by:

**Basil Nickerson**  
**USS BROOME DD-210**  
 Juneau, Alaska



**0257, 30June1943 USS ZANE went aground off Munda, New Georgia while deploying 190 men of the US Army 169th Infantry. "This anchor was dropped over the side trying to get us off of coral reefs..."**

## The day my Marine A-4 Skyhawk ditched close to USS NEW JERSEY...

On September 28<sup>th</sup> 1968, the Battleship New Jersey joined the gun line off North Vietnam, and one of the escorts for the New Jersey was **DDG-9, the USS Towers**. Two days later on September 30<sup>th</sup>, two Marine TA-4s were launched from DaNang to provide naval gunfire spotting, and in one of these aircraft was pilot **Captain Jim "Spot" Spaith** and me, **1<sup>st</sup> Lieutenant U. S. "Sam" Grant**. The other aircraft had a gunnery sergeant in the backseat "armed" with a 16mm combat movie camera. These first few days on the gun line by the New Jersey was welcome news for our ground forces, and also important for public relations back home, so the Gunny was there to take some routine pictures of the mission. What he didn't know was that he would be filming some remarkable footage of the "shootdown" of our TA-4, our bailout, and our very fast rescue pickup by **USS TOWERS**.

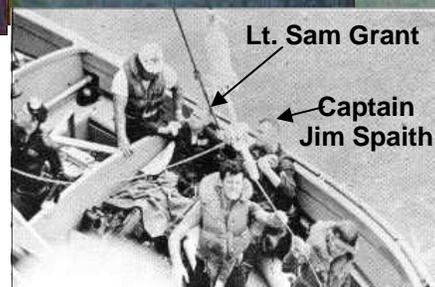
During the initial spotting for New Jersey while flying over North Vietnam, our aircraft was struck by anti-aircraft fire and severely damaged. The TA-4 was still flyable, but losing fuel rapidly. By our unanimous 2-0 vote, we decided to try to get over the water, "feet-wet," vice flying south into South Vietnam before ejecting. While Jim concentrated on flying the aircraft, I remained on the spotting frequency with the New Jersey and New Jersey initiated Search and Rescue (SAR) procedures. Once out to sea, Jim started to initiate ejection when the other TA-4 pilot reminded him that he needed to reduce his airspeed which was still well over 400 knots. Zooming the aircraft upwards reduced our airspeed to just over 200 knots and Jim pulled down the face curtain which began the ejection sequence. In this sequence, first the canopy goes, the backseater (which was me) goes and then the pilot. It was quite a kick in the butt.

The Gunny picked us up on film flying out of North Vietnam, but misses the exact moment of ejection. He does pick up the now pilot-less aircraft striking the water though, just a few hundred yards from the New Jersey. We did not find out until later that TOWERS had spotted our chutes at 3,000 feet. As we were on the way down, we concentrated on "doing the right thing" when we hit the water. I had inflated my life vest on the way down and I "cut away" my chute just as my feet hit the water. It blew to one side and I quickly hooked one arm over my life raft. I had the presence of mind to pop a red smoke, but before I could get into my raft, I realized that the boat from the Towers was already just a short distance away. Two of the men in the boat, **Seaman Robert Beede**, and **Gunnery Mate 3/C. William Ryan**, pulled me aboard and we went looking for Jim. Jim was slightly tangled in his chute, so a swimmer went in, cut him loose and they pulled him into the boat. As we sat in the boat headed back to the Towers, Ryan said that the first words out of my mouth were, "What's for chow?" I am not sure that I remember saying that, but I do remember reaching in my flight suit and asking one of them to take our picture. The picture didn't come out as the seawater ruined the camera and, by the way, dinner that afternoon in the Captain's mess was shish kebab.

We were aboard TOWERS only 22 minutes after they heard our distress call. So let me say it again, some 38 years later... **Thanks** to the men of the **USS TOWERS** for our rescue, and to **USS NEW JERSEY** for guiding us "feet-wet," and putting SAR procedures in action.

**U.S. "Sam" Grant, LtCol., USMC (Retired)**  
Georgetown, Texas

(Still photos "captured" from the original 16mm movie film, courtesy of **Bob Pepper**, House Springs, Missouri.)



### From the USS TOWERS Command History-1968

"Your expeditious approach and rescue of a downed pilot and NFGF spotter today was truly outstanding. It is comforting to note our shotgun not only has a steady eye, but also a quick steady hand under emergency conditions. Well done to all hands.

**J. Edward Snyder, Jr."**

**LEBANON****THE JERSEYMAN**

Master Chief, I have copied the Master Chief from **USS GUAM** which I served on as a member of the Air Combat Element of the Marine Amphibious Unit at that time. We went to Grenada on the way to Beirut so we weren't on station at the time of the Marine Barracks attack but relieved the **USS IWO JIMA** in Nov '83 and stayed through Apr '84.

I was always impressed by **NEW JERSEY**'s firepower and watching her shoot into the Bekka Valley at night. Since I'm a rotorhead, I remember calling the airboss aboard the **USS New Jersey** many times for fuel when mother was too far out to sea for me to make it back. Never had any trouble getting a spot especially when I had "pony" i.e. mail, on board. Beautiful ship!

One time they were working on the guns so they had them pointed toward the flight deck. When I landed I broadcast to the airboss, "**Hey, boss I'll pay for the gas, you don't have to keep the guns on me!**" I do also remember that my H-1 squadron mates never got to land on her and were never sure why? Maybe because their guns weren't big enough or was it because they didn't want those nasty skids marring the wood deck, or probably because the airboss knew that they didn't carry any "pony."

In your response, I think you were speaking of a technique called Helicopter-In-Flight-Refueling (HIFR,) but with **USS New Jersey**'s flight deck this was not usually required because we could land and unload or refuel. However, at Sea during an underway UNREP, helos would transport external loads from a supply ship and drop them off on the flight deck without landing to expedite the UNREP. Shipmate volunteers that you had mentioned, like **Chief Aviation Boatswain's Mate Joe Boyle**, would be running the flight deck trying to get the loads moved off spot so the next helo could drop another load... this was dangerous work on the back of a moving ship underway and working under a helo with a load! Those AB's were worth their weight in gold!! Then they would hurry to break down the load and bundle the retrograde i.e. cargo nets and pallets, for the helos to bring back to the supply ship. That's when Joe's static wand would be crucial... during the pick up of retro, because if someone tried to hookup a load to the helo with out grounding it they would get badly shocked, and potentially knocked overboard. I hope this hits the mark and explains the procedures that you asked about. I forwarded your request to those I still keep in touch with from that 1980's' timeframe. Good luck in your work!

Semper Fi,

**Larry King "Live," Colonel, USMC**

Director JCDE, MCWL, MCCDC and JFCOM  
Suffolk, Virginia

**Editor's Note:**

With thanks to **Mr. Ted Yaslowski, Deputy Director to the USNFSA**, *The Jerseyman* has received clarification on the transfer status of **USS IOWA** and **USS WISCONSIN**. - TH

**Battleship transfer -**

In the conference report (H. Rept. 109-360) accompanying the National Defense Authorization Act for fiscal year 2006, the committee included instructions regarding the transfer of the battleships **USS Wisconsin** and **USS Iowa** to the Commonwealth of Virginia and State of California, respectively, and the President's reversion authority pursuant to a national emergency.

**The committee seeks to clarify that the battleships USS Wisconsin and USS Iowa must be regarded as potential mobilization assets and both the recipients and the U.S. Navy are instructed to treat them as such.**

**The committee notes that the following measures should be taken: (1) The ships must not be altered in any way that would impair their military utility; (2) the ships must be preserved in their present condition through the continued use of cathodic protection and dehumidification systems and any other preservation methods as needed; (3) spare parts and unique equipment such as 16-inch gun barrels and projectiles, be preserved in adequate numbers to support the two ships, if reactivated; and (4) the Navy must prepare plans for the rapid reactivation of the two battleships should they be returned to the Navy in the event of a national emergency.**

*"What the House Armed Services Committee did, was clarify what is shown here in bold print as it pertains to a National Emergency. The 2007 language is a "sense of congress" instructing the Navy how to care for the ships, and to prepare plans for their rapid reactivation in the event of a National Emergency."*

**Ted Yadlowsky**, Deputy Director to the USNFSA  
Owings Mills, Maryland - August 2006

**BATTLESHIP FACTS - 16 INCH DELIVERY RATE:**

"Nimitz class carriers can deliver approximately 75 long tons of ordnance per strike. At an average of three strikes per day, 225 tons of ordnance can be delivered per day. Iowa Class battleships can deliver 229 long tons of high explosive and steel in a 30-minute gun strike."

"The cost to deliver ordnance on target is estimated to be \$12,000 per long ton of aviation ordnance from a Nimitz class carrier, and \$1,600 per long ton of gun ordnance from an Iowa Class battleship."

**Source:** "**IOWA CLASS BATTLESHIPS Their Design, Weapons & Equipment**" Robert F. Sumrall. (Naval Institute Press 1988, Appendix A, pp 157.)

## THE JERSEYMAN

### *Free Enrollement in the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor*

We are counting on your help to register all Purple Heart Recipients in the Roll of Honor, an interactive computer databank of all the recipients of Purple Hearts. In addition, you may have objects that help tell the personal stories of each recipient which would be appropriate for exhibit in the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.

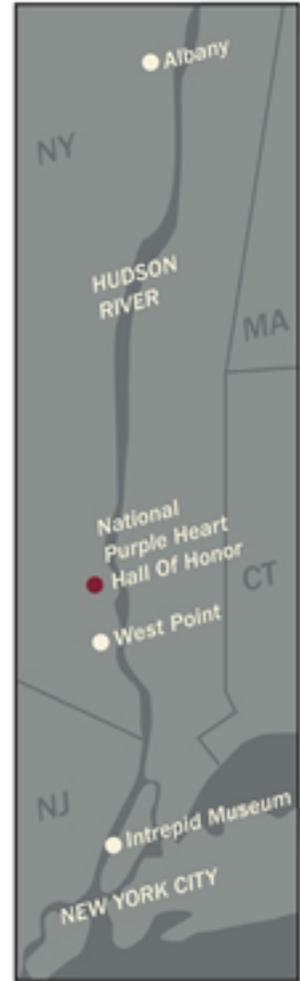
To begin your registration, please mail us the following information:

1. The name, address, and contact information of the person who will be providing information on a recipient or recipients
2. The name of the Purple Heart recipient and as much information as you can provide: the time of service, rank(s), military unit, date and location of birth, the date(s), location(s) and circumstances of being wounded, and any additional information that will help tell the story to visitors, perhaps including future generations of your own family. If you are a Purple Heart recipient submitting your own information, please include information so that we can contact you.
3. Documentation of receipt of the Purple Heart: Copies of the DD-214, WD or equivalent discharge paperwork, Certificates or other proof of receipt of the Purple Heart.
4. Copies of photographs, telegrams, newspaper, magazine or online articles about the recipient or other materials that help tell the story.
5. Materials can be mailed to:  
**ATTN: Karen Pena, National Purple Heart Hall of Honor**  
**PO Box 207**  
**Vails Gate, NY 12584**

If you have any objects you and your family are willing to donate, something that helps tell the story of service and sacrifice, please include a brief description of any objects you would like us to consider. Due to limited storage space and the amount of attention each object in the collection receives, we may not be able to accept all objects. Please keep your Purple Heart with your family or your community (if you have no relatives who wish to keep it, consider donating it for exhibition at a local museum, library, school or post office so that people across the country can see a real Purple Heart in person). Please do not send any objects before hearing from us.

*Thank you for your assistance.*

*Together we will build the National Purple Heart Hall of Honor.*



### **Death notice:**

On Monday 14 August, we received a call from RADM J. Edward Snyder, Jr. He had just received a call from the sister of Chief Quartermaster Sam Tucker, USN/Ret., to inform him that Chief Tucker had passed away on Friday, August 11th. Admiral Snyder made a request of *The Jerseyman*, asking that we place Chief Tucker's death notice in our upcoming issue, and to include the following:

“Chief Tucker was probably the only Chief Petty Officer ever assigned as *the* navigator of a US Navy battleship in the history of the navy. But that is what he was, because I personally selected him to be my Navigator, and to follow me around. I am proud to say that he never let me down. I liked what he was able to do, and I told him so. He was nothing short of superb with his accuracy, and it showed during our many firing missions.

Chief Quartermaster Sam Tucker was a credit to the U.S. Navy, and to USS NEW JERSEY.”

- RADM J. Edward Snyder, Jr., USN/Ret. - McLean, Virginia

## THE JERSEYMAN

### Beirut Remembrance Walk in Washington, D.C - 2006

. "At approximately 0622 on Sunday, 23 Oct. 1983, the Battalion Landing Team headquarters building in the Marine Amphibious Unit compound at Beirut International Airport was destroyed by a terrorist bomb. The catastrophic attack took the lives of 241 Marines, sailors and soldiers and wounded more than 100 others. The bombing was carried out by one lone terrorist driving a yellow Mercedes Benz stake-bed truck that accelerated through the public parking lot south of the BLT headquarters building, where it exploded. The truck drove over the barbed and concertina wire obstacle, passed between two Marine guard posts without being engaged by fire, entered an open gate, passed around one sewer pipe barrier and between two others, flattened the Sergeant of the Guard's sandbagged booth at the building's entrance, penetrated the lobby of the building and detonated while the majority of the occupants slept. The force of the explosion [12,000 pounds] ripped the building from its foundation. The building then imploded upon itself. Almost all the occupants were crushed or trapped inside the wreckage."

- - **From the DoD Commission Report**

#### "They Came In Peace"

On October 21-23, 2006, a group of people will walk in remembrance of those killed that fateful day. The walk will conclude at Arlington National Cemetery where 22 of those brave men are buried. The White House Commission on Remembrance will be holding a remembrance ceremony in Section 59, at 12:00 noon on October 23, 2006.

The final leg of the walk will be from the Lincoln Memorial across Memorial Bridge into Arlington arriving at Section 59 in Arlington National Cemetery, and will raise awareness about those who came back home a different person; dedicated to those living each day with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) and/or Survivors Guilt. A few Beirut Veterans having since returned home have taken their own lives as a result of their struggle with PTSD Survivors Guilt. They will be honored and acknowledged, as well.

The group encourages others to join the procession and walk a lap or two, 50 laps, or even all. Each lap is approximately 1/2 mile around the pond/gardens and takes under 10 minutes to complete. Those not walking the full distance will be given an index card before each lap with a Marine, Sailor, or Soldier's name/information, and killed while serving as a Peacekeeper. After completion of the lap, participants are asked to sign the card on the back, and return it so someone else can walk in memory of that soldier. Those 'going the distance' will receive a roster with all the names/information accordingly, and checking a name after each lap completed.

The walk is free and open to Beirut Veterans, Family Members, Veterans, Active Duty Military and the general public. Anyone that is affected by terrorism, is welcome...

#### **Bill Kibler**

(USMC Beirut Veteran)  
2005 Columbia Pike #624.,  
Arlington, VA 22201

#### Beirut Remembrance Coin...

For those that cannot make it to the remembrance walk on October 23<sup>rd</sup>, but want to participate, Beirut remembrance coins are available from [www.beirutcoin.com/](http://www.beirutcoin.com/). The coin honors the 270 Marines, Sailors, and Soldiers who lost their lives while serving as Peacekeepers of the Multi-National Peacekeeping Force, Beirut, Lebanon from 1982-1984, and the 241 Americans that died in the Beirut Barracks terrorist attack, on October 23, 1983. Proceeds of the Beirut coin sales are donated to the *American Gold Star Mothers*, (AGSM.)

<http://www.goldstarmoms.com>

~ ~ ~

**ETC Michael W. Gorchinski**, a crewman aboard **USS NEW JERSEY**, was one of the 241 casualties at the Marine Barracks on October 23, 1983. Chief Gorchinski was on temporary assignment to the Marine barracks that Sunday morning...



## THE JERSEYMAN

### USS DES MOINES (CA-134)... A LAST LOOK



USS DES MOINES (CA-134,) as seen from USS DUPONT (DD-941) in the Western Mediterranean - 1958. Photo taken and submitted by AT1 (AC) Walt Eife, USN/Ret. Westmont, New Jersey

For 45 years, beginning way back in July of 1961, **USS DES MOINES** had been held in reserve...first in Boston Harbor, and later on at the Naval Inactive Ship Maintenance Facility (NISMF) in Philadelphia. But sadly, any museum hope that was once held for her on Lake Michigan has now faded...

At times, naval ship museums, such as Battleship New Jersey and others, are permitted limited access to ships just prior to their being scrapped, for the purpose of transferring fixtures and equipment that may be of historic value. This was recently the case with **USS DES MOINES**, now designated for towing to a scrapping yard in Texas in August of 2006.

With thanks to **Rich Thrash**, one of our first battleship New Jersey volunteers, we have a few last photos he had taken of "Daisy Mae," during an equipment retrieval visit in July 2006.

More photos of **DES MOINES** can be viewed at Rich's website...

[USSNEWJERSEY.COM](http://USSNEWJERSEY.COM)



## SHIP'S BELLS



## S/S JOHN PHILIP SOUSA

This bell was taken from the Liberty Ship SS John Philip Sousa. It was found in a warehouse in Kingston, MA, in the possession of Mr. Tom Coughlin. Mr. Coughlin, a former graduate of the Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, NY, had a business collecting and selling nautical materials. The bell was spotted by the current director of the band at the Merchant Marine Academy, Captain Kenneth Force. Captain Force acquired the bell and gave it to the Marine Band in late 1983 or early 1984.

Captain Force related the following history of the SS John Philip Sousa. The ship was built in Jacksonville, Florida by the St. Johns River Shipbuilding Company and launched in August 1943. The engines were made by Filer and Stowell in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.

At the conclusion of World War II the ship was sold by the US government. The ship was renamed several times including "Erato" 1946, "Taxiachis" 1960, and "Protostatis" 1965.

In 1965 the ship went aground two miles off Point Traverse in Lake Ontario. She was refloated and towed to Kingston, Ontario.

She went aground again off Wolfe Island in the St. Lawrence Seaway in November 1965 and abandoned. In January 1966 she was then re-floated, towed to Valencia, Spain and scrapped.

Submitted by:  
**MGySgt Mike Ressler**  
 Chief Librarian  
 US Marine Band  
 Washington, DC



**USS MINNEAPOLIS (CA-36)**  
 Submitted by  
**Manuel Filreis**  
 Austin, Texas

27 June 1959 - -  
**Ens. Joseph A. Lynch**  
 striking the bell of  
**USS MINNEAPOLIS**  
 for the last time.

Photo with permission  
 from the book:

*"Faces and Phases  
 of the  
 USS MINNEAPOLIS,  
 a History in  
 Photographs"*

**USS ALABAMA  
 (BB-60)**  
 Submitted by  
**Bill Johnson**  
 Mobile, Alabama



**USS MASON (DDG-87)**  
 Submitted by  
**Bill Humienny**  
 Brooklyn, New York

## THE JERSEYMAN

### SHIP'S BELLS

#### SS AMERICA/USS WEST POINT

During World War 2, the AMERICA was quickly converted in about two weeks from a passenger ship to a troop ship. Lots of AMERICA artifacts - like murals - were never removed, and were restored after the war.

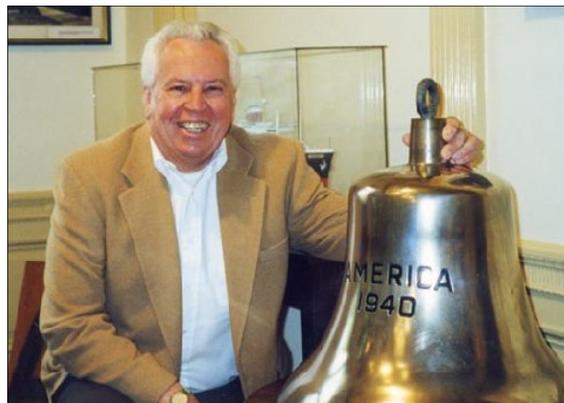
The original bell was removed in 1964 when she was sold foreign, and the bell is now on display in the American Merchant Marine Museum at Kings Point, Long Island. This is a picture of that bell... and AMERICA's Unofficial Historian, Bill Lee (circa 1994).

Submitted by

**Joe Madigan**

**Editor, "THE SEAHORSE"**

United States Seagoing Marine Association  
Wesley Chapel, Florida



#### USS MACON (CA-132)

Third Recruiting District and Navy Reserve Training Center  
Macon, Georgia

Submitted by

**Thomas A. Broadbent, Sr.**

Palm Harbor, Florida

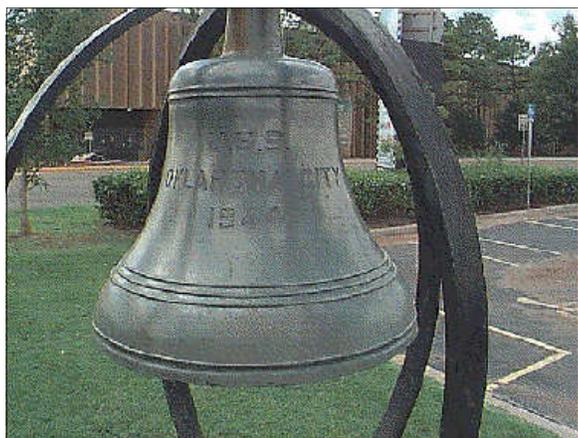
#### USCGC WESTWIND (WAGB-281)

Naval Aviation Museum - Pensacola, Florida

Submitted by:

**Volunteer Dave DiMarzio**

Pennsville, New Jersey



#### USS OKLAHOMA CITY (CLG-5)

- on the right...

#### USS OKLAHOMA CITY (CL-91)

- on the left...

Both bells are at the  
Kirkpatrick Center  
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma  
Submitted by

**Tom Lamson, Historian**  
(RM3 - CR Div 1968-1970)  
Hockley, Texas



## THE JERSEYMAN

### SHIP'S BELLS

#### Can anyone ID the origin of this ship's bell?

The Marine Barracks, Norfolk Naval Shipyard was deactivated on 30 September 1978. At the time, it was the second oldest continuous post in the U.S. Marine Corps, second only to Marine Barracks, Washington, D.C. (Commonly referred to as "8<sup>th</sup> and Eye").

Marine Corps Recruit Training was conducted at Marine Barracks, Norfolk Naval Shipyard before World War I, when it was moved to Parris Island, South Carolina. Just before the breakout of World War I, the Port Royal Navy Yard closed and the USMC took control of the base for recruit training. The Marine Barracks then had four organizational battle streamers: Civil War, Indian War, Cuba and Nicaragua.

Marine Barracks, Norfolk Naval Shipyard provided a security guard company to provide perimeter security for the yard, as well as a security guard company at nearby St. Julian's Creek Ammunition Depot. Another primary mission was formal training for Marines assigned to Sea Duty on the capital ships of the Fleet. It was known as Sea School, and had a section known as "Sea Pool" for those Marines who had completed training at Sea School and were awaiting assignment to a ship or for that ship to arrive in port. By the way, the Marine at attention by the bell is **PFC Joseph Madagan, USMC - 1958.**



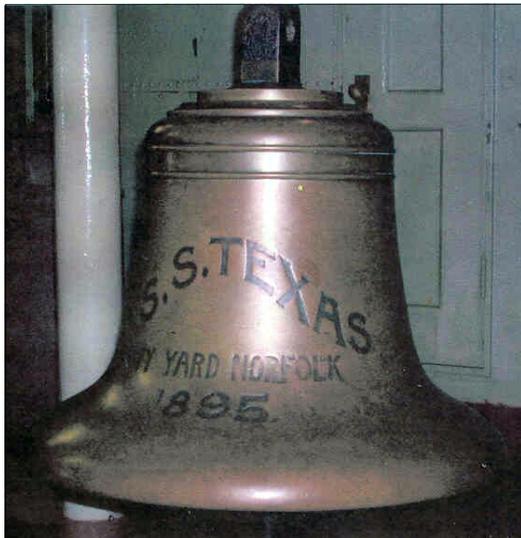
Submitted by:

**Joe Madagan**

Editor, "THE SEAHORSE"

United States Seagoing Marine Association

Wesley Chapel, Florida

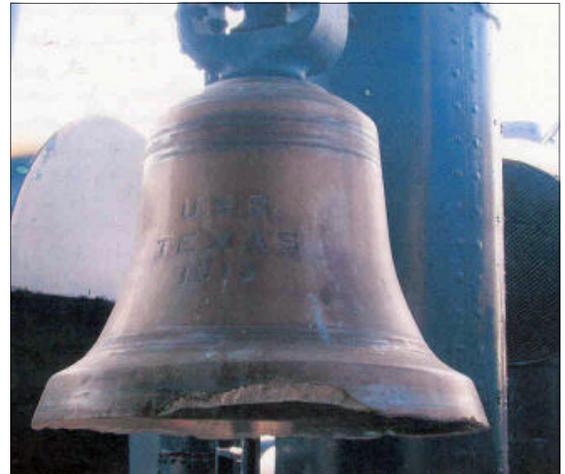


**USS TEXAS 1895**

**USS TEXAS 1915**

**(BB 35)**

Submitted by  
**Vol. Charles H. Stewart**  
Haddonfield, New Jersey



Additional ship's bell photos received this quarter with **many thanks...**

**USS SAN ANTONIO**  
**(LPD-17)**

Submitted by  
**Allen Fisher**  
West Palm Beach, Florida

**USS SALT LAKE CITY**  
**(CA-25)**

Submitted by Historian  
**Sandy Thompson-Eskew**  
Grove, Oklahoma

**USS FARRAGUT**  
**(DDG-99)**

Submitted by  
**Volunteer Dave DiMarzio**  
Pennsville, New Jersey

**USS BRANNON**  
**(DE-446)**

Submitted by  
**Richard Willard**  
Tacoma, Washington

## THE JERSEYMAN

### BATTLESHIP DAYS... BY HAMP LAW



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Logo courtesy of Maritime Artist and former USS NEW JERSEY crewman,  
**James A. Flood**

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