



4th Quarter
2008

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

THE JERSEYMAN

6 Years - Nr. 60

"Remember Pearl Harbor--Keep America Alert. Eternal Vigilance is the Price of Liberty."

(Motto: Pearl Harbor Survivors)

"Can you believe the date of August 2008? Time does fly-by, and the older that we Pearl Harbor Survivors get. An important date for me will be on August 4th, when this writer of sorts hits that 89 mark, and hopefully reaches 90 in August of next year..."

Before you know it, December 7th will again be here and another reminder of that day of infamy on December 7, 1941. We PHS and WWII veterans have kept alive the many deeds and sacrifices we gave to win World War II. We have kept faith with all those many buried in remote islands all across the South Pacific, as they died by the thousands to take those islands in the Pacific, and the battles in the Atlantic and on other seas. Those bodies are still there, encased in tombs inside of sunken ships all over the world. We also remember the many still in their submarines, and sunken Merchant Marine ships. The many flyers whose final resting place was in the deep ocean, as their flaming planes crashed into the seas and remote jungles all over the world. And last, but not least, approximately 2,400 killed in the sneak attack on Pearl Harbor December 7, 1941, with hundreds of their bodies still in their ships sunk at Pearl.

A sacred place to visit and to leave with a thought or a prayer of your choice - for those still entombed.

Our membership is dwindling fast as we now approach that 90 age mark, and even older in some cases. It seems that only a couple of years ago, the Pearl Harbor Survivor chapters had over 10,000 members in the U.S. with 5,000 of them in the State of California. We now have only 4,000 left in the U.S., and less than 900 in California. We are losing 3 or 4 members each week, and many PHS chapters are folding as time continues to take it's toll, and as our membership dwindles.

May the many history books written about the great deeds and sacrifices of all WWII veterans keep those memories alive, and that such information be passed down through the ages of time.

That they may all be remembered..."

Martin C. Hoopes

**World War II Historian/Writer Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, Chapter #2
Danville, California - August 2008**

THE JERSEYMAN

Editor's Note:

Retired Chief Yeoman Martin Hoopes has written the Pearl Harbor Survivor's History newsletter for about seven years, and we have been exchanging the PHS newsletters and *The Jerseyman* as they are published. But when we received his August 2008 newsletter, (Prologue on the front page,) we asked Martin if he would allow us to reprint it. His typical upbeat comments are below, and he has also permitted us to reprint his response. I once joked with Martin, and said that when I grow up I want to be just like him. After reading his note below, you might think the same... - TH

"Hi Tom -

Thanks for the kind words. However, you must be really hard up for things to say if you want to put my ramblings in that great publication of The Jerseyman. Please use however you like.

Yep, I retired as a Chief Yeoman, and spent 5 years on USS Pennsylvania (BB-38,) all through World War II. I was also recalled from the reserves for another two years during the Korean War.

As I mentioned in the Prologue of my August issue for the Pearl Harbor Survivors, I hit another birthday mark on August 4th. My guardian angel sure deserves special prayers now and then, not only for keeping me alive during those combat actions in the South Pacific, but for the many additional years that followed, as I am now 89 years old.

I told her in my last communication, that her efforts were certainly beyond what is expected of a normal guardian angel, but to please keep over-working herself, so that next year, in August, I can make that magic number of 90. Time will tell, and she has also delayed my senility from setting in for a while, to enable me to keep writing these war histories for the Pearl Harbor Survivor monthly newsletters over the past seven years.

In the meantime, and as you asked about in your note, I do still dance once or twice a week, and keeping up my West Coast Swing, Cha-Cha, Rumba, Fox-Trot etc... yes, I have been a dancer for many years. So she has really taken good care of me. The enclosed photo is my dancing partner Patty, and me.

My favorite is the West Coast Swing that I have been doing now for about 25 years. The big thing during the war, and for a short time after that, was the well known Jitterbug and its wild antics. The dancers in California then developed what is known as the West Coast Swing, composed of many sophisticated patterns that both parties have to know. It is very professional, and a lot of fun to watch.

Incidentally, the West Coast Swing moved from California and out to all dance studios, and it is now taught in most states. Over the years I have worn out 6 new pair of dancing shoes. I have been thinking of getting a new pair but I hesitate, because my guardian angel might think I am getting a bit too presumptuous on my life expectancy, and call an end to her many efforts.

Enough ramblings Tom, and it is after 2:30 AM., the time I usually close my pursuits of various endeavors. Of course my usual time for getting up is 11 AM. Being a dancer for many years, I am still a late night person."

Martin Hoopes
Danville, California



THE JERSEYMAN

REAR ADMIRAL ED SNYDER...



Editor's Note: In addition to many slides, photos, and other artifacts Admiral Ed Snyder made available to *The Jerseyman*, he was available to talk with us on the phone at anytime, and that was what he preferred. But once in a while he would send us a letter, or an email, with comments on a subject we had talked about, or something he may have just remembered. We kept all of them, and here are just a few. - TH

The retired WWII Admiral sitting next to them said: "My, they make them young today..."

October 5, 2002 - -

"... the flail I had with a retired four-star who had us put into the town where the lumber giant lives (near Seattle, Wash,) I believe Tacoma, for the 4th of July 1969, was over the draft of BB-62. I refused to go alongside the pier since the draft was less than 41 feet..."

"Here are some of the answers, plus, from the last time. I ordered the number painted on top of turret two because I knew the air force could not tell the difference between a sampan and a battleship."

February 5, 2003 - -

"The First Division job in my career was as Signal Officer on USS *Pennsylvania* BB-38 (A sister ship of the Arizona), as well as Communications Watch Officer, and I broke the double-encrypted famous message about "Where is Task Force 38 etc..."

(Same note of 5 Feb 2003)

Don't remember if I told you about my ordering a message sent out by 24 inch searchlight one night, in response to a small US naval ship sending us a message "Unidentified ship identify yourself or we will open fire." My message reply was "Open fire when ready. Fear God dread-nought".

October 9, 2002 - -

From an ongoing discussion of when the Japanese torpedo hit USS *Pennsylvania*, just three days before the end of the war. (12 Aug, 1945 at Buckner Bay, Okinawa.)

"When I came aboard, the cage had been replaced by the tripod mast... When it (torpedo) hit, the movie had started on the fantail, and I was asleep. I was thrown from my upper bunk to the deck of my stateroom..."

October 28, 2002 - -

"I can not remember the total of visitors per day (Long Beach), but do remember a message at the end of the day when I added: "...for example, three dogs, ten babies etc..." for which I would catch the devil by some of our superiors."

January 10, 2003 - -

"I did not know that Captain Peniston was at the 1980's re-commissioning. I think I told you the story of how my son, daughter in law and grandchild attended in the front row, and directly below the President in seats marked for ADM. SNYDER etc..."

Vietnam...

In 1969, and in the midst of a very unpopular Vietnam war, the USS New Jersey's re-enlistment rate was over 80%.

If you ask Vietnam-era crewmen, much of this high level of re-enlistments was attributed to serving with Captain J. Edward Snyder, Jr., USN

THE JERSEYMAN

Helping build the ships of World War II...



H e n r y “Hank” Braverman has seen quite a bit during his 90 years, and he has the stories to prove it. I recently had the privilege of interviewing Hank at his home in Mt. Laurel, New Jersey shortly after we had been

connected by Carol Comegno, a military reporter for South Jersey’s Courier Post. As Hank began, he said that he had been a yard worker and shipfitter almost all of his life, and had helped build USS *Iowa*, USS *Missouri*, USS *Constellation*, USS *Bon Homme Richard*, and many other ships at the Brooklyn Navy Yard during and after World War II.

As we talked and he described the details about working at the Brooklyn Navy Yard, he brought out some periodicals that had been printed up at the Brooklyn Navy Yard (“The Shipworker”) and at the Philadelphia Navy Yard (“Beacon”), that he would point to as he spoke.

Hank worked mostly at Shop 11 as a shipfitter during the war, but said “after the war, when money and shop budgets were tight, we would be loaned out to other shops and that happened a lot. We worked as pipefitters, pipe wrappers (asbestos wrapping), painters, and whatever other jobs they needed for us to do. If you didn’t take what they offered, then you were laid off.



And now I will tell you something about launching the *Iowa* and *Missouri* that you probably never knew....

When they let the *Iowa* go for launching, she was only about 50% completed, and when she started down the ways, the stern buried deep into the East River and she came up fully just before going under the Williamsburg Bridge. But the *Missouri* was even less completed at only about 40%, and when she was launched into the East River, she stayed under until she was *underneath* the Williamsburg Bridge - so go figure that one out” he said, and smiled.

We then looked at the old shipyard papers, and of the one showing scenes of the fire aboard USS *Constellation* in December of 1960. Hank said... “I was working aboard the *Connstellation* with a lot of other men from Shop 11, and we were just below the hangar deck. The welding smoke smell was really getting to me, and so I told the guys I was going up to the hangar deck for some fresh air. While I was up there, I suddenly noticed that the deck around me was wet and I was standing in it. Just then, I looked up and heard a loud “Whoomph” over by the tool shed and saw a huge flame. It didn’t take long before that fire began to spread and I headed down the gangway as fast as I could go. I heard later that a forklift had backed into a gas storage tank.

A lot of insulation was also burning and put out lots of heavy smoke, so some of the yard workers couldn’t see enough to get off. They were hoisted off the ship standing on a gangway as a crane lifted them up and placed them back down on the pier. It was just chaos. It

was also at that time that TV was very big, and I thought my wife was going to see all of this and get worried, so I looked for a phone. There must have been 50 men in line for that one phone on the pier... I finally got on and told her that I was ok, and was on my way home.



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I stayed home for about 2 days, and found out that many of the men that I had been working with below decks had died. They had been trapped and couldn't get out. Here they are, all of them, they're pictures are here... 49 of them. I would say that I knew more than half of them." (shaking his head and pointing.)

In the early 1960's, the Brooklyn Navy Yard was phasing out, and yardworkers were given the option of relocating to other shipyards at Long Beach, or Philadelphia. It was then that Hank brought his wife and children to South Jersey and began looking for a home, while he signed on at the Philly Shipyard - again with Shop 11 as a shipfitter. They had bought a Levitt Home in Willingboro for "\$14,000, with storm windows included", and he remembers working on the USS *New Jersey* for Vietnam... "There were thousands of us coming aboard every day and getting that ship ready to go."



During the visit, I had with me, 50 or so photos selected from over two thousand slides from the collection of the late Rear Admiral Ed Snyder, and now donated to Battleship New Jersey.



These prints showed Philly yard workers aboard *New Jersey* in 1967, and I had hopes that Hank would find himself among some of them. We weren't that lucky, but he easily remembered the names of the shops each of these workers were from by the numbers painted on their hard hats.



Shop 72 - Laborers and Riggers



Shop 56 - Pipefitters and Wrappers

As our interview ended, and I was preparing to leave, Hank gave me the four old shipyard newsletters as a donation to send to USS *Iowa* (BB-61) archives.

After more than 30 years with the shipyards, Hank Braverman left shipyard work in 1972, and was hired by the State of New Jersey as a Highway Inspector. Hank will be celebrating his 91st birthday this coming December. We wish you a very Happy Birthday Hank, with many more to come, and **many thanks...** - TH

Editor's Note: In 1960, Battleship New Jersey volunteer, **Martin C. Mooney, Sr.**, was part of the pre-commissioning crew for USS *Constellation*. "There were about 2 dozen of us at Norfolk Fire Fighting school from the Pre-Comm crew, and a BM1 was the highest ranking PO. I was MM3 at the time, and actually that is how I ended up. We were billeted together and were to spend a few months in Norfolk before going to Brooklyn to board *Constellation* for the first time. We were just about to complete the school, when our lead instructor called us all in after chow and told us of the fire. I never did get aboard."

THE JERSEYMAN

“Man the ship and bring her to life!”

At the recommissioning ceremony for the USS *New Jersey* in April of 1968, I was there in the crowd, and proud to have been a part of it when they gave the order: “Man the ship and bring her to life!”

But for me and many skilled tradesmen, engineers, technicians, and support personnel watching at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, that order was only possible because more than a thousand yardworkers, began their specialized work almost a year earlier.

As a young marine electrician in the Shop 51 Test Gang, I had worked on USS *Okinawa* LPH-3, USS *Guadalcanal* LPH-7, USS *Newport* LST-1179...and others before *New Jersey*, but when stepping aboard *this* ship I was in total awe of the giant guns and the size of the machinery spaces. After descending below, I made my first entrance into “Broadway,” that long passageway giving access to the engine rooms and fire rooms. The size of it seemed almost surreal. I could only imagine the thousands of crew members who had poured through those spaces, and I wondered about the stories that could be told by those men, and of the history they had seen.

The riggers began breathing life into her by first removing the heavy lines that had been keeping *New Jersey* moored to her sister ships, *Wisconsin* and *Iowa*, along the shipyard’s seawall on the Delaware River. First moved to a berth and then to a dry-dock, and looking like the hospital patient hooked up to tubes and wires. She was soon covered with air hoses, welder’s cables, tool boxes, and all manner of equipment gearing up to reactivate dormant equipment and especially, to bring the mighty guns and propulsion machinery back to life.

Machinists, pipe fitters, welders, shipfitters, electricians and other trades swarmed aboard and began the modifications to restore the fighting capability of this awesome ship. They worked hard to improve living conditions for the crew; air conditioning and upgraded lighting was added in the berthing spaces; new galley equipment was installed for the men who would soon call this ship home, and I was in awe of it all.

Over the course of several months I was able to work on a wide variety of *New Jersey*’s WWII era electrical components as well as the newly installed equipment. I was particularly fortunate to work with **Matt Cook, a retired Senior Chief Electrician’s Mate** who had served aboard USS *Missouri*. Matt’s knowledge of the battleship’s electrical systems and his willingness to share that knowledge with the rest of our Test Gang was instrumental in helping us accomplish our work of activating, and

testing, the ship’s many electrical mechanisms. We were tasked with testing the usual array of marine electrical equipment, including pumps, winches, and so on, but one of our primary responsibilities was to test the ship’s service turbine generators. Working with the yard’s marine machinists and boiler makers, we brought them to life so that they could provide the enormous power for the ship, and especially for the three 16 inch turrets, the primary reason for bringing *New Jersey* back to the Fleet.

When the time came for the first “River Run,” Sea Trials, it was a thrill to help put her through the paces of a full power machinery trial and I was amazed at how far over she heeled to port or starboard during full speed, full rudder turns. We tested all of her mechanical and electrical systems and new electronics equipment, but the biggest kick of all was still to come.

After some tune-ups and final outfitting, it was time to take *New Jersey* out to sea for one final test of all of her parts. This was to be the INSURV inspection, personally led by none other than **Admiral John Bulkeley**, the recipient of the Medal of Honor for his exploits in the Philippines, and Normandy. He was the one directly responsible to the CNO to make sure that all of the reactivated battleship’s equipment was functioning to the highest standards. And that included the 16 inch guns – all nine of them.

When the time came to fire them, several people were allowed to watch from safe spots on deck and I was one of them. Once again, Matt Cook guided me and made me aware of what was about to take place. Standing about mid-ship with him, he told me to listen for three “beeps” and hearing the third, make sure that I held my ears and ducked behind the now-removed anti-aircraft gun’s barbette. I did as he said, but I had no idea of what would erupt from just one gun in Number 1 Turret, nor the amount of powder that would be expelled from it. After recovering somewhat from the sound, and blast, I stood up and saw a large plume of water shoot into the air about 5 miles away. This was repeated for each gun, and then it came time for full turret salvos. But this time the splash was seen 15 miles away. These scenes are still vivid in my memory.

After she returned to the shipyard, her paint was touched up and she was cleaned bow to stern for her commissioning. That’s when the command was given to “...bring the ship to life,” and I was privileged to have been a part of it. - - **Ed Worff, Arnold, Maryland**



THE JERSEYMAN

The Last of the Iowas

by Gordon E. Hogg, Lexington, Kentucky

By late 1944, the fast battleships *Iowa*, *New Jersey*, *Missouri*, and *Wisconsin* had all entered the fleet, but the construction of their two “kid sisters” *Illinois* and *Kentucky* was far behind schedule. In July 1945 the U.S. Navy estimated that *Kentucky*, because of a period of suspended construction, would be ready for service no sooner than September 1946. *Illinois*, on the other hand, got such a late start that she would not approach completion until June 1947. These two vessels differed from their older sister ships in incorporating better underwater protection and all-welded construction: measures which, ironically, served to slow their delayed building progress even more.

Illinois (BB-65) had been scheduled to begin construction in late 1942 at Philadelphia Naval Shipyard (PNSY), but lack of an available shipway prevented any building start until January 1945. *Kentucky* (BB-66), on the other hand, was begun as planned at Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) in March 1942, but an acute need for landing ships and amphibious craft interrupted progress on the battleship after only three months. *Kentucky*’s barge-like bottom section was sealed for flotation, skidded into the water in an unceremonious first launching on 10 June 1942, and towed off to wait more than two years for another round of construction.

After *Kentucky* was retrieved from a shallow holding area at NNSY known by then as “Kentucky Flats,” the battleship was laid down a second time, on 6 December 1944, in a drydock. Construction now resumed in earnest, claiming materials earmarked for *Kentucky* from storage in warehouses around the yard. During the 30-month hiatus in building, components such as turbines, propellers, turret training pinions, anchor windlasses, pumps, movie projectors, mess furniture, and even radio transmitters with spare vacuum tubes kept flowing into Norfolk to be stored for their eventual use. Two kinds of decking wood were set aside, because *Kentucky* was to be a test bed for African iroko, to be installed alongside the traditional teak.

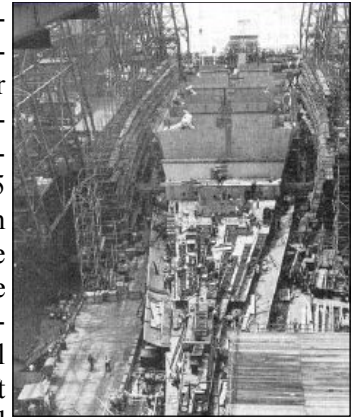


Photo # 80-G-413972 Hull of battleship Kentucky floated out of dock, January 1950

In a similar scenario, materials were collected in Philadelphia for *Illinois*, whose construction at PNSY finally began on 15 January 1945 but was halted seven months later with the Japanese surrender. She was only about 22% complete, so her skeletal framework was simply left on the now-unneeded building ways since it would not float if launched. By early October 1945 some of her stockpiled armor was transferred to hasten the construction of the somewhat more complete *Kentucky* at NNSY, and on 20 August 1946 a joint communication from the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) and the Chief of the U.S. Navy Bureau of Ships (BuShips), brought the kiss of death, declaring “hull BB-65 surplus to the needs of the Bureau,” and recommending it for scrapping. Any ordnance and armor assembled at PSNY for *Illinois* was to be redistributed.

By the time of the August 1946 work suspension on *Kentucky*, her hull stretched some 875 feet in length, amassing about 25,000 tons of steel, components, and fittings. The boilers and turbines were in place, as was much of the armor, and the internal compartmentation reached up to the second deck; there was as yet no main deck. No 16-inch turrets would ever arrive, but the three barbettes were ready and waiting.

Over the next dozen years a number of plans were proposed to convert *Kentucky* into, variously, an anti-aircraft battleship, an all-missile arsenal ship, or a hybrid battleship with missiles and big guns, but none of these would ever materialize. Even the little which did happen in or around the huge hull revealed how the planning and execution of a large naval building project could become, in unexpected circumstances, a gigantic storage problem. The correspondence about *Kentucky* between principals at NNSY and BuShips yielded a conclusion in September 1947, that “possibly the skeleton in the dry dock will be less of a headache if the slightly more closed skeleton is removed and placed in the reserve ship pile.” By late 1949 many of *Kentucky*’s components and spares stored around the shipyard and elsewhere, including four 16-inch rifles held at the Naval Weapons Center (NWC) in Dahlgren VA, had been distributed for other use in order to free up warehouse space at NNSY.



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Likewise, materiel gathered at PNSY for *Illinois* had begun as early as October 1945 to be put to better use. More armor to complete *Kentucky* was shipped to NNSY in January 1947, as well as to NWC Dahlgren and the Naval Ordnance Plant, Charleston, WV for research. Boilers and turbine components were sent to General Electric in Scotia NY for evaluation in 1948, and the Ins-mach Essington Westinghouse plant near PNSY tested and re-tooled turbines meant for *Illinois* delivered there during 1949. In November 1951, 24 cartons of BB-65 instruction manuals were transferred from PNSY to the Naval Supply Depot at Mechanicsburg PA.

NNSY wished to reclaim *Kentucky's* home (Drydock No. 8) by the middle of 1950, and the work to tighten ship for that operation was kicked into overdrive in January 1950, when her sister ship USS *Missouri* ran hard aground on nearby Thimble Shoal, off Fort Monroe, and was in urgent need of inspection and repair when towed free. In an exercise that combined the expedient relocation of a stalled capital ship project with the navy's face-saving zeal in treating the injured *Missouri*, *Kentucky* was hurriedly buttoned up and eased out to a temporary berth in the shipyard on 20 January 1950. The *Norfolk Virginian-Pilot*, forgetting her first "launching" in 1942, noted: "The Battleship Kentucky, or what there is of her, was floated out of drydock today in what was probably the first premature launching of a battleship in naval history."

Afloat at last, *Kentucky* was towed across Hampton Roads in late 1950 and laid up at Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock, where the huge, clipper-bowed hull passed several years in relative obscurity until October 1954, when Hurricane Hazel's winds blew *Kentucky* nearly perpendicular to the pier, and into the exaggerated headlines of the *Washington Post* for 16 October 1954: "Battleship Cast Aground at Norfolk."

With the navy's conversion proposals came a need to assess *Kentucky's* level of completion. Estimates from 50% to 80% in the press and U.S. Navy sources had given rise to some confusion over the years. The most-repeated estimate of 73.1% had been set forth as early as 1947 by the Bureau of Ships, but that figure represented the accumulation in the hull and around the shipyard of materiel meant for the construction of *Kentucky*--whether or not it was actually fitted. BuShips and NNSY principals in 1955 declared that BB-66 was 45% complete.

Also in 1955, the navy's Long-Range Objectives Group study proposed a \$115 million missile battleship (BBG) conversion of *Kentucky*, to be armed with Redstone or Jupiter ballistic missiles in teetering vertical launching contraptions. The Regulus II cruise missile

would provide for pinpoint surface-to-surface attack, and the anti-aircraft battery would include Talos, Terrier, or Tartar missiles. The navy's surface warfare investments held their own for a time in rallying some respectable support for the conversions of *Kentucky* and the unfinished large cruiser *Hawaii* (CB-3) into capital missile ships of great power and speed. No less an advocate than CNO Admiral Arleigh Burke declared in March 1956 that funding these conversion projects would be a priority in the FY 1958 budget.

1956 brought another sister ship looking for a favor: in May, USS *Wisconsin* rammed her escorting destroyer *Eaton* (DDE-510) in the fog off Norfolk, mangling her bow. *Eaton* survived, but *Wisconsin* was due in July to host a midshipman cruise, so a quick repair was urgently needed. BuShips turned to *Kentucky*: a "nose" transplant made use of a 68-foot section of *Kentucky's* bow to restore *Wisconsin's* fine lines. In addition to carrying a ragtag cargo of her own five-inch gun-houses, rudders, propeller shafts and struts, turret pinions and armor components on her flat deck, *Kentucky* now sported *Wisconsin's* undamaged bow remnant, giving her the look of a huge floating surplus sale.

The Long-Range Objectives Group in 1956 expanded its 1955 proposal to include the existing *Iowa*-class ships and *Kentucky* in plans to develop all-missile or hybrid gun-and-missile BBGs, armed with Polaris missiles, at a conversion cost of \$160 million each. Along with attack carriers, missile cruisers, destroyers, and fast support ships, each BBG would operate in one of the five U.S. Navy "striking forces" projected for the 1960s and 1970s. Further refinements of the *Iowa*-class Polaris BBG concept in 1959, however, would leave *Kentucky* behind: the ballooning cost estimates for her conversion and completion--by now more than \$200 million--balanced against the millions already spent on a still-incomplete ship had ultimately eroded Congressional support, prompting *Kentucky's* disposal, and what interest could be drummed up for converting even the nearly-complete *Hawaii* similarly faded, consigning her, also, to the scrapyard. Giving weight to these decisions was the already ongoing conversion program that included cruisers *Boston* (CAG-1) and *Little Rock* (CLG-4), which by the early 1960s would yield eleven missile ships--some wielding nearly the same anti-aircraft missile payload as projected for either *Kentucky* or *Hawaii*.

Ballistic missiles would become the sole province of the Polaris-armed submarines of the then-building *George Washington* class and their successors.

THE JERSEYMAN

By 1958, naval planners realized that the window of opportunity for developing *Kentucky* into a dramatic new warship had closed, and on 9 June her name was stricken from the Naval Register. Congress had acted just months before to authorize her scrapping, despite the obstacles set out by Representative William H. Natcher of Kentucky, a World War II navy veteran who championed the rescue of *Kentucky*. During 1957 and 1958 Congressman Natcher, who never missed a session or a vote, procedurally prevented moves by his colleagues that would have scuttled his prize, but in the end he could not prevail against the persuasive House Armed Services Committee chair, Carl Vinson of Georgia. He accepted the defeat gracefully, hoping that a future combatant “like a nuclear-powered aircraft carrier or submarine” would be named for his state: a wish he would eventually see fulfilled by the *Ohio*-class submarine USS *Kentucky* (SSBN-737).

The state of Illinois, through the persons of Senators Scott M. Lucas and C. Wayland Brooks, had made its attempt in fall 1945 to reverse BuShips’ decision to discontinue *Illinois*’s construction, though they had much less compelling evidence to work with than would Kentucky congressman Natcher some years later. Letters from concerned citizens were also forwarded to Secretary of the Navy James V. Forrestal by the senators, but to no avail: the postwar drawdown would not allow the Prairie State its naval namesake in that round. Curiously, the namesake forebears of BB-65 and BB-66 also had sequential hull numbers: USS *Kentucky* (BB-6) and USS *Illinois* (BB-7).

In late June 1958 *Kentucky* was towed for the last time from Newport News, where a German freighter crew manned the rail to render honors as she slid past along the James River, bound for Portsmouth. At NNSY the ship’s still-new propulsion machinery--eight Babcock & Wilcox boilers and four General Electric turbines--was removed and stored. One of the boiler sets was put to unusual use at Newport News in the custom-built Shore Test Steam Generating Plant, which evaluated the main machinery of new nuclear vessels prior to their reactors’ activation.

At PNSY in September 1958, after years of piecemeal apportionments, the final scrapping of *Illinois* got underway with the demolition of her relicts on the shipway. Like *Kentucky*, what there was of her had served the navy as a colossal and valuable organ donor for well over a decade.

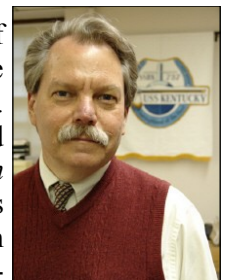
In early November 1958 Boston Metals Company of Baltimore obtained a contract with the U.S. Navy through which *Kentucky*--by this time representing a total expenditure of \$40 to \$55 million -- was purchased as scrap for less than \$1.2 million.

While she waited in Portsmouth for delivery to the breakers’ torches, the CNO’s office in Washington received a bizarre eleventh-hour alternate commercial bid proposing to convert *Kentucky* into a fast passenger ship. Seeking to purchase the hull from Boston Metals, Ocean Shipping and Trading Corporation and its proposal instead piled up on the rocks of U.S. Navy disposal procedures requiring “effective demilitarization” prior to commercial use: in the case of a recently designed warship like *Kentucky*, this would have called for dismantling the entire hull! Ocean Shipping and Trading quickly lost interest. In February 1959 several tugs came to usher the empty hull up the Chesapeake Bay to the Boston Metals Company scrapyards in Baltimore, and oblivion.

One of the conversion plans for the *Iowa* class examined by the navy in the late 1950s would have transformed the battleships into a fast underway replenishment ships. The armored and densely compartmented battleship hulls, however, were incompatible with the requirements, so four new ships were designed instead. In a fitting irony, *Kentucky*’s preserved turbine set was divided in two, shipped off to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and New York Shipbuilding, and used as the main machinery of both USS *Sacramento* (AOE-1) and USS *Camden* (AOE-2). Entering the fleet from 1964, they dwarfed all other replenishment vessels, and in addition to their usual fleet roles they were also cast as seagoing classrooms in the 1980s for new engineering crews bound for the reactivated battleships of the *Iowa* class, who learned the ropes on *Kentucky*’s engines.

Iowa, *New Jersey*, *Missouri*, and *Wisconsin* have all again left active service behind them, and though neither *Illinois* nor *Kentucky* ever joined them, they contributed much in their own hidden ways.

Gordon Hogg is director of the Special Collections Library at the University of Kentucky in Lexington. His article on ship preservation and BB-62 appeared in *The Jerseyman* 2Q 2007, and the present piece draws on material previously published in his article “From Shipyard to Scrapyard” in U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings* (October 2001), the permission for which he thanks Senior Editor Fred Schultz. He credits a visit aboard the unfinished hull of the *Iowa*-class battleship *Kentucky* in 1958 with planting the seeds of his life-long curiosity about naval design and construction.



Iowa-Class Battleships

Myths and other stuff...

Richard Alfred Landgraff, a.k.a. Dick Landgraff or “Rusty Battleship”, had a long career with naval engineering, and especially with the Iowa-class battleships. As an engineering technician in the Fittings and Rigging design section, he was tapped to design the final outfitting items needed for the USS *New Jersey* (BB-62) for her deployment to Viet Nam.

In 1979 he also designed armor (which was called “fragmentation protection” by NAVSEA) for the ammunition magazines on the *Tarawa* class LHAs. In 1980 he also designed the appliqué armor for the *Spruance* class DDs.

In 1981, he was again assigned as overall project leader for structural, fittings and equipment foundations for the fourth reactivation and modernization of USS *New Jersey*.

In 1984 he was also temporarily promoted as the Configuration Manager for all structural, hull, armor and compartmentation modifications to the *Missouri*, *Iowa* and *Wisconsin*.

“This photo below was taken in mid-1987 when we had to do extensive hull welding of corrosion pits and rivet tightening due to the *New Jersey* being five years at sea between dry dockings instead of three as had been originally planned. (The situation in Lebanon sort of screwed up our schedule...) The photo shows yours truly standing on the barrel strut of #4 (port outboard) propeller shaft. I was inspecting the weld repairs, especially that of a crack we found in the top of the barrel itself just behind my left foot. The crack was at the edge of the lip and after removing the shaft had to be ground out, welded, X-rayed, and re-machined before we could reinstall the shaft. A few weeks later I got a letter from a former MPA of the ship who said they had the same problem during the Korean War with the same shaft and had it welded up in Japan. But it is not an Iowa-class problem as none of the outboard barrel struts on any of the other ships had cracks in them.



I submitted the picture as an interesting consideration for *The Jerseyman* because I'm 5'-11" in my stocking feet, and with my high arched safety boots and hard hat, it put me well over 6 feet. Yet I'm still dwarfed by that single casting.”

Richard Landgraff was also the primary Point of Contact for the installation of a Stealth system on the *Oliver Hazard Perry* class Frigates, writing the Shipalt and installation manuals.

He retired from the Naval Civil Service in February of 1994 with over 39 years service, and in 1997, formed his own consulting business known as



Dreadnaught Consulting. Together with assistance of former co-workers and the Iowa-class Preservation Association (ICPA) they inspected the *Missouri* for the Pearl Harbor group that was awarded the ship for a museum/memorial. In 2006 Richard led two similar inspections of the *Iowa* for the Historic Ship Memorial of Pacific Square (HSMPS).

Editor's Notes:

Over the past few months, we have had a number of exchanges with Dick Landgraff, and most of them were about general battleship questions. Dick has been gracious enough to answer each of them, and he also contributed more than a few battleship thoughts and comments on his own. Many were questions (and myths), about the Iowa-class ships that have long been asked, such as; “Do the Iowa-Class battleships move sideways when firing a nine gun salvo? We also have an explanation of “slender-built” Gunner's Mates as the best method for inspecting the 16” gun barrels. We are grateful to Dick for his help, and for lending his extensive Iowa-class expertise to *The Jerseyman*.

If there are other battleship questions that readers might want to ask, please let us know and we will forward them on. Any answers received back from “Rusty Battleship”, will be included in our future *Jerseyman* issues. - TH

THE JERSEYMAN

STAND BY FOR A FULL BROADSIDE...

I was asked by *The Jerseyman*, to comment about the ongoing myth that a battleship moves several feet to one side or rolls up to X-number of degrees during a full broadside. I have even debated with BB crewmen who claimed that they do move, because they "saw lots of stuff fall off shelves and locker tops."

To begin with, let me bust that myth right now. A 57,360 *Iowa* class Battleship doesn't move an inch, or roll even a tenth of a degree, during a full broadside. Even with all nine 16-inch guns and all six 5-inch secondaries going off at once.

When I was on *New Jersey's* gunnery trial in early 1983 and the Captain announced on the IMC that we were going to have a full 3 turret broadside, several crewmen ran for handrails to hang on. They saw me standing in the middle of 03 level with notebook in hand to record any parts of the ship that became victims of the overpressure (muzzle blast). When they asked me how far does the ship move, I answered not an inch.

You see, that myth goes back to WW II when the ships were built at breakneck speed and headed for Tokyo Bay at full flank - with little need to measure such insignificant items. It wasn't until the Korean War that some serious study was done of ship movement from cameras mounted in helicopters.

Mathematically it all boils down to the fact that even with 6-bag full service charges, the recoil (also taken up in 4-feet of barrel recoil) it cannot produce enough energy to effectively move the mass of a 57,000 ton ship. Remember it is mass, not just weight.

Perhaps the most definitive photo I can show is this air view shot of *New Jersey* firing a full 9 gun broadside. If you look closely at the disturbance of the water, it's all under the muzzle blast of the guns. There is no disturbance on the port side. Those guns deliver an awful lot of air displacement. What causes items to fall off of shelves and lockers is air displacement inside the ship.



Huh? Yep. The non-armored bulkheads are only 3/8 of an inch thick. The muzzle blast temporarily dishes in the bulkheads between frames (that are 4-feet apart) like drum heads. That tiny fraction of an inch displacement, multiplied by the number of square feet of bulkhead plating, pops a quick breeze through the compartments.

The only explosive shock that I know of (and that we have to design resistance to,) is Grade A shock that is a near miss of a nuclear warhead delivering a shock wave over the entire length of a ship almost instantly. Films I have seen of the Bikini Atoll tests Able and Baker show equipment as big as diesel generators being torn loose from their mounts.

CLOSE THE BARN DOORS!

While we're at myth busting, let's talk about "full crash back." That's where the ship is going full flank forward and then reverses it's propellers for full aft. A full crash back still takes the ship about a mile before it comes to a stop and then goes in reverse. It is a very smooth, and a very quiet event.

However, then there is the "Close the Barn Doors" stop. To my knowledge, only *Wisconsin* has done this (more than once unfortunately, as Philadelphia had to tighten up her rudders). That is where you not only reverse propellers, but you also turn the helm over to local control (in the steering gear rooms) so both rudders are turned inboard toward each other. On the *Iowa* class, the rudders are just aft of shafts 2 and 3 that are housed in the twin keels. The twin keels form the sides of a very large tunnel. When the rudders are closed over the end of that tunnel, you come to a stop. Real quick. One test had a crewman throw a piece of wood off the bow of the ship as soon as "Barn Door Stop" commenced. That piece of wood was no further aft than turret

III when the ship came to a full stop. Stopping a Battleship within 600 feet will cause a lot of loose items to wind up against the forward bulkheads.

- Dick Landgraaf, Long Beach, California

THE JERSEYMAN

CARRYING THE TORCH (OR IN THIS CASE, THE SLEDGEHAMMER) by Dick Landgraff

This is another of the articles I was asked to write for *The Jerseyman*, and I am highly honored to do so. I was also asked if I would specifically comment on Battleship New Jersey Volunteer Art Hill's nostalgic article describing what it was like to help build Iowa Class Battleships during WWII. (*The Jerseyman* - 4Q-2007)

Art Hill and I ran some parallel courses. I also went through the apprenticeship and graduated as a journeyman shipfitter with an AA degree as well while at the Long Beach Naval Shipyard. I was a little later at it than Art though, as I started (right out of high school, again like Art) in 1954 and graduated in 1958.

First, allow me to introduce myself. As noted above I started at Long Beach NSY in 1954 as an apprentice. I worked as a journeyman shipfitter for another six years before transferring up into the design division as an engineering draftsman. In 1968, as a GS-9, I was then authorized to act as project leader for the final fitting out of antennas, foundations, and rigging equipment on USS *New Jersey* when she was here prior to her WESTPAC deployment.

In 1976 I was assigned project leader status, and in 1981 was given technical (not supervisory) command of the entire structural design section to reactivate and modernize the *New Jersey* one more time. In 1983 I was promoted as the Hull, Structural, Arrangements, Fittings and Armor Configuration Manager for the modifications to the USS *Missouri* and to oversee/review the reactivations of the *Iowa* and *Wisconsin*.

I must have been destined for the Battleships as in 1953 (while still in



High School) my step-father, who was an engineering technician at the shipyard, took the family down to the yard during an open house day. The very first fully active Navy warship I ever boarded was the USS *Wisconsin*. If you want to sway a young man's direction for a career, just take him aboard a Battleship.

Now, back to Art Hill's article from *Jerseyman* issue No. 56. He was so right about the evolution of ship hull construction going from riveted to welded connections of structural members. As weld filler rod and welding procedures were improved, we were eventually able to do away with almost all riveted seams and control the weld shrinkage. But up until even the 1960's, some ship hull designs included at least one or two rivet seams on each side. The seam at the top of the shear strake (at the gunwale) secured the plating to the stringer strake of the main deck and allowed flexibility for hog and sag in high seas as well as serve as a crack arrestor in the plating. Some ships also had a rivet seam about half way up and just above waterline to serve only as a crack arrestor.

But even these damage safeguards were no longer necessary with the improvement in welding and very strict quality control through the way weld butts met weld seams and critical strength areas were thoroughly X-rayed for hidden flaws.

For many years stainless steel rivets were used to join aluminum bulkheads to a steel combing strip for attachment to a steel deck. It was a messy and smelly way of doing it. Even after "Huck" bolts were approved, you had to coat both contacting surfaces of the aluminum and steel with 117 primer (I can still smell it) then two coats of yellow chromate (now banned) and two layers of vinyl tape to insulate the metals from any cathodic action.

Then Dupont came out with a Bi-metallic joint which is where an aluminum plate is bonded to a steel plate with ammonium nitrate high explosives. It is cut into 1-inch to 1 1/2-inch wide strips with the steel side welded to the steel coaming and the aluminum bulkhead above could then be welded directly to the joint. Other manufacturers also make this Bi-metallic joint using other metals for special applications. But riveting was now considered obsolete.

Perhaps the most remarkable example of the different methods of joining metal plates together was on the USS *Proteus* (AS-19). She was originally built as an all riveted hull ship. Years later she was jumboized with an all welded 44-foot long mid-section. At least one aluminum deckhouse added on was with stainless steel rivets. Another aluminum deckhouse was attached with stainless steel "Huck" bolts. I personally designed her last aluminum deckhouse attached to the steel deck with bi-metallic joints.

Last time I saw her was last October tied alongside the *Iowa* in Benicia, California. I was leading a materiel inspection of *Iowa* and barely recognized the old ship except for an exterior bulkhead that had a door

THE JERSEYMAN

at the 03 level but no ladder down to the main deck. "Watch that first step!"

The last time we thought we would ever have to resurrect old-time riveters for hot steel hull rivets was in 1980 when the USS *Brooke* (FFG-2) caved in over 100 feet of her starboard hull against a concrete pier at Seal Beach NWS during a strong Santana wind storm. Brooke's hull design was where the upper strake of shell plating was riveted to the outer stringer of the main deck. We had to replace about 110 feet of shell plating from the main deck to about a foot below the 2nd deck. A double row of rivets is about 12 rivets per foot so over 1,300 rivets had to be driven. - **Dick Landgraff**

Iowa-Class question for Dick Landgraff...

Q. Can you describe why sailors are used to inspect the inside of 16" gun barrels?

A. I sure can. It was common practice to get "slender built" gunners mates to crawl through the gun barrels, and inspect for erosion pits, copper build up, excessive wear, etc... Of course, they usually ran a rope down to help him along.

A lot of people may not know that when we reactivated the *New Jersey*, a large erosion pit was in the center barrel of Turret II (strange, but it's ALWAYS that barrel, and *that* turret; (*Mississippi, Newport News, Iowa...*). The gun captain for that barrel, Jim Mitchell, lived across the street from me and was disappointed that for five years he couldn't fire that gun. Yes, he was slender enough to crawl all the way through that tube (and by the way, on an Army tank, the gun barrel is called a "tube").

We did give an estimate that she could probably fire about 20 to 30 rounds of *reduced* service charges before the pit eroded deep enough to go past the thickness of the liner and into the barrel housing itself.

However, when the "Big J" got back from Lebanon, we had a brand new barrel sitting on the pier for her and changed it out. The barrel and special lifting gear was brought down from a Naval Supply Center in Hawthorne, Nevada. But they used the wrong kind of flat car for the barrel and before taking the old one back they had to replace all the bearings in the trucks of that flat car.

After barrel change-out, she was finally able to fire full 9-gun salvos. But by that time, Mitchell was transferred up to a base in northern California. Instead of putting it in storage, the base commander had it shipped up so they could use it in their Christmas Parade.

Our Weapons division determined that the reason for the erosion pit was that when she served in Viet Nam in 1968, that barrel was always used for the first round for sighting-in and coordinate correction. Sometimes a second shot wasn't necessary. Sometimes a second shot was necessary to zero in on the coordinates for the rest of the guns. So it got used 2 to 3 times more than the other 8 barrels.

If it wasn't for slender and agile gunners mates like Jim Mitchell, who didn't mind ruining a full set of coveralls with gun barrel oil, we had no other way of closely inspecting for excessive wear or pitting. Only human eyes close-up could do that.

By the way, please wish us luck. We're going to try to get the USS *Ranger* down to Long Beach as a Museum ship. But first we need a couple of 30 ton anchors. Hers were taken off and installed on the USS *Ronald Reagan*. - **Dick Landgraff**

Battleship Deck Planking...

In another of our email exchanges with Dick Landgraff, and from several "BUSHIPS Planking" references he had sent to *The Jerseyman*, readers may find this battleship planking information of interest...

"During World War II, Burmese Teak was unavailable as the forests were in enemy territory. For decking installation on battleships, cruisers and other ships requiring a water-resistant wood, so called "American Teak" (Plantation Teak) was used. It is grown in Central and South America and is a fast growing wood. However, because of its rapid growth factor, it has a hardness rating of only 1,000 though its oily resistance to water inclusion is superb. For consideration of other western hemisphere hardwoods that would be acceptable replacements of Burmese Teak, the following list (based upon the JANKA hardness scale) is provided:

Douglas Fir.....	660 (Should not be used)
Plantation Teak.....	1,000
Burmese Teak.....	1,150
Locust Wood.....	1,700
Jatoba.....	2,350 (aka Brazilian Cherry)
Courbaril.....	2,820
Brazilian Teak.....	3,540 (aka Cumaru)

The last three types of wood are too hard for machine tools. Therefore it is recommended that the wood(s) to be used are Plantation Teak, Burmese Teak or Locust Wood. (Plantation Teak is closer in color to Burmese Teak.)"

THE JERSEYMAN

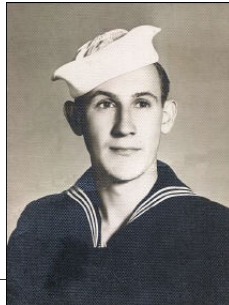


Frank Newcomer USS *New Jersey* Plankowner, WWII

I served aboard destroyer USS LUCE (DLG-7 / DDG-38) as a firecontrol radar operator for the Terrier Missile system. We are having our ship's reunion next month in Annapolis, MD and will be visiting the USNA. On the USNA grounds is LUCE Hall where our ship's sternplate and ship's bell are displayed. I would be happy to snap a picture of the bell to send your way if you would like to have it for *The Jerseyman*.

I remember when I first reported to the LUCE in May of '77. The ship was in the yards there in Philly and just one pier down from us was the USS *Iowa*, USS *Wisconsin*, and USS *Shangri-La* in mothball status. It was a sight to see, and sad, but awe inspiring all the same.

I've been aboard the New Jersey before with my family and we had a great time walking all around the ship. It is truly an immense ship and a wonder in naval engineering. While aboard, we called a dear friend of ours who served in the New Jersey during WWII to let him know we were there. He got a real kick out of that. We took a number of pictures to bring back to him. I offered to bring him back to see the New Jersey but his health would not allow him to do so. He passed away just over a year ago, but before he did, I had entered his name and info into the Navy Memorial. He was very happy about that. His name was Frank Newcomer...



Submitted by
Rob Thacker

THE JERSEYMAN 3Q-2008...

I was sorry to note the passing of Captain Snyder. I thought the tributes and reminiscences as told by the former crew members of USS *New Jersey* warmly reflected their respect and honor of having served with him...

Also, the amazing photo of USS *Missouri* during the Korean War, and imitating a crash diving sub, that was sent in by Chuck Davis was just spectacular. What a great shot! I wish Chuck could have kept clicking them off. Especially for what would have been the bow rising back up with that load of water roaring down the foc'sle - it would probably have made another jaw-dropping winner. But I was just glad that he sent it in! Great...

John Hastings
(USS *New Jersey* ship's photographer-Korean war)
Appleton, Wisconsin

The Bugler - USS *Mississippi* (BB-41)

I enjoyed the last issue... but the BUGLER on Page 5 left out what I felt was my best call when I bugled on the USS *Mississippi* (BB-41) 1941-1945, and that was PAY CALL!! I also wanted you to know that I did order our favorite cartoonist's (Hamp Law) booklet about his old ship... the USS *Tennessee* (BB-43).

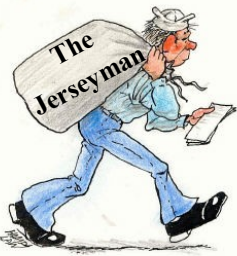
Ed Tucker
Editor "HORIZON"
USS *Shangri-La* (CV-38)
Lake Worth, Florida

Remembering Captain Ed Snyder...

I always enjoy reading "*The Jerseyman*" but the last issue was particularly special. A great job compiling the recollections of former crewmembers who had the privilege to serve with the legendary J. Edward Snyder, Jr. A sailor's sailor, and one who earned the respect of officers and enlisted men alike. He will be sorely missed.

Captain Walter J. Urban, Jr., USNR (Retired)
Medford, New Jersey

THE JERSEYMAN



Bell mystery at Marine Barracks Norfolk Naval Base is solved...

Some months ago, I provided a photo of the bell (that's me standing at attention), that was once used to signal the seafaring time at Marine Barracks, Norfolk Naval Shipyard. You even published it in *The Jerseyman*! Now, to borrow a popular phrase from Paul Harvey, we have "The rest of the story" after a visit to Trophy Park, Norfolk Naval Shipyard, Portsmouth, Virginia, and during a Reunion of Marine Barracks, Norfolk Naval Shipyard.



We were concerned because the bell used to signal the seafaring time from the Quarter Deck of Marine Barracks had been moved since the barracks was deactivated on 30 September 1978. The upright stanchions are still in place, but there was no bell!

Our Reunion group of Marine Veterans visited the Barracks and also Trophy Park at the shipyard, and doing so, we found a bell that was "unidentified" on display in Trophy Park. After careful examination of this bell, we found it was struck in 1905, the same year the Marine Barracks Headquarters building was built. The name of the technician is also embedded along with the date it was struck.

We owe a lot of thanks to fellow Marine Joe Monday, who did some real detective work identifying the bell on display at Trophy Park. According to Joe... "I spoke with Carlton English, a retired Shipyard employee of some 40 years, about the bell... and about the inscription inside the bell:

**WLM Portsmouth VA USA
EW Leigh 1905
JAMCD**

Carlton said that bells were cast in Shop 81 at the Shipyard and since the bell did not have a ship name on it, it would have been cast for use at a shore installation, and said that: "EW Leigh would have cast the bell in 1905." Ten of us "old Marines" agreed that this was the same bell that we all rang seven days a week while we served at the shipyard. Further evidence is that the bell is worn only in one small section, and that would indicate it was rung from basically the same position each time. That would have been from the concrete pad by the bell, on the side facing the Quarter Deck. The Marine Guard Supernumerary on duty would ring the bell every half hour to sound the time of day, and weather permitting, he would polish this brass bell with Brass-o. She would need a lot of Brass-o and elbow grease to bring it to Marine Corps standards today, but we are glad we found her and helped to identify the bell, and even more excited that it is still on display. We also gave her a good ring and she still sounds great.

Here's another one that you might like to have for *The Jerseyman*. This "Soldiers Of The Sea" monument is on display at the National Museum of the Marine Corps in Quantico, VA., and it sits on what is called "Semper Fidelis Trail." The monument was paid for by member contributions, and no corporate contributions were permitted by the United States Seagoing Marine Association. The USSMA is also the first veteran's organization permitted to place a monument at this site. The year 1998 represents the year in which the US Navy removed the Marine Detachments from the capital ships of the fleet, and who were serving Sea Duty in those ships. The last Marine Detachment actually stood down on USS *George Washington* in 1998. It was one of the primary missions of the USMC from our inception in 1775.

**Semper Fidelis,
Joseph Madagan,
Former Editor, "The Seahorse"
Wesley Chapel, Florida**



THE JERSEYMAN

SHIP'S BELLS...



USS Norfolk (EDL-1)

Only five US Navy ships were designated as Destroyer Leaders.

**USS Norfolk (DL-1), USS Mitscher (DL-2/DDG-35),
USS John S. McCain (DL-3/DDG-36), USS Willis A. Lee (DL-4)
and USS Wilkinson (DL-5)**

Class-Norfolk (as built)

Laid down by New York Shipbuilding, Camden, NJ in September 1949

Displacement 8315 Tons, Length 540', Beam 53' 6"

Destroyer Leader 1, was designed as a Fast Hunter-Killer based on an Atlanta (CL-51) Hull, and was the first major warship built after World War II. She was financed by proceeds from a war bond campaign by the City of Norfolk. Her keel was laid in Camden, New Jersey on 1 September 1949, and commissioned 4 March 1953. She was assigned to the Atlantic Fleet and later (1968) to the Commander Middle East Forces as a flagship. She was decommissioned on 15 January 1970 and scrapped in the early 1970's.

The bell from USS *Norfolk* was displayed on the downtown waterfront esplanade until being put into storage in 1987.

On 4 March 2003, exactly 50 years after the USS *Norfolk* was commissioned at the Philadelphia Naval Yard, the bell was unveiled in its current location with 25 of the ship's original crew members in attendance.

USS *Norfolk's* guns are on display today at the Boca Raton, Florida Community High School.

Semper Fidelis,

Joseph Madagan, Former Editor, "The Seahorse"

Wesley Chapel, Florida

(Sources: Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships (DANFS,) and the Destroyer Leader Association.)



USS *Mitscher* (DL-2) Ca. 1957/1958



USS Mitscher (DL-2/DDG-35)

Class-Mitscher (as built)

Laid down at Bath Iron Works October 3, 1949. Commissioned May 15, 1953.

Decommissioned Stricken June 1, 1978

Displacement 4855 Tons.

Length 490', Beam 47' 6".

Sold for scrap August 1980.

"I could not provide a ship's bell photo for the Mitscher, but I do have information on USS *Mitscher* and photos...

DL-2, 3, 4 and 5 were all built on the Mitscher-Class hull. USS *Norfolk* (DL-1) was built on a light cruiser hull.

As you can see, we were long and narrow but with the high raked bow we ride right nice for a Destroyer."

Photos and comments contributed by: **GMG1 Bob Lange, USN (Retired)**

Glen Burnie, Maryland

THE JERSEYMAN

VOLUNTEERS - BRASS TEAM...

Our Battleship New Jersey Brass team...

by Vol. Rich Thrash

On just about any Saturday aboard Battleship New Jersey, the volunteer

Brass Team can be found polishing brightwork throughout the ship and doing other restoration

activities. If you talk to these team members, they will say they do it to honor the distinguished record of the ship and the thousands of crewmen who served aboard since May of 1943. Shined brightwork is their main goal, and they take it seriously, doing what they can to present the ship in the best light for touring visitors.

Most of the brass team began volunteering in early 2001 when the ship was still at the Broadway Terminal. Then, as we prepared for opening day, the challenge was getting tough with the weatherdeck brass, much of which had been painted over with numerous coats of haze gray paint. We started at the main deck and worked our way up, systematically removing, stripping, polishing and lacquering brass



Richard Thrash

Reston, Virginia
US Army M.P. 1975-1983
Battleship New Jersey Vol.- 7

plates, and other fixtures as we went. Areas like the magnetic compass deck, the open control station on the O5 and inside the 16-inch turrets were particularly challenging, but we were finally able to put a shine on most of the brass along the tour routes in time for opening day. Included with this article, and along with photos of the team, are several pairs of “before” and “after” photos of some of our most challenging brightwork areas. Later, in the fall of 2001, and after the ship first opened to the public, our team focus shifted to other areas of the ship that were planned be opened in the future, such as Broadway. The team



Broadway...



O5 Before...



O5 After...



Frank O'Keefe

Hamilton Square, New Jersey
USS Constellation-Plankowner
Volunteer—7 years

spent many months polishing the multiple brass fixtures not only along Broadway, but inside Emergency Steering, and in Sick Bay. Work in these future tour areas was taken on by a few on the team while the others maintained the areas already open to the public.



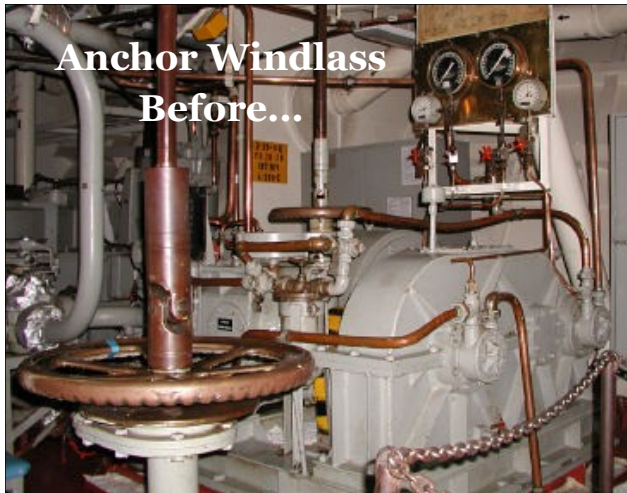
Richard Valenzuela

Hamilton Square, New Jersey
US Marine Corps 1990-1992
Volunteer 4—years

After finishing these below decks brass fixtures on Broadway, we took on the Anchor Windlass area. There is a tremendous amount of brass in that area as can be seen in below photos, as well as a other heavy machinery that needed to be painted and detailed. Today the restored Anchor Windlass compartment can be viewed by visitors

THE JERSEYMAN

VOLUNTEERS - BRASS TEAM...



touring the ship.

The next big project we undertook was the complete restoration and opening to the public of the ships original Main Fire Control area on O5 at the top of the armored conning tower. This area was not open to the public at the time so the team volunteered to do a complete restoration of the space. Once the curator approved the plan, the team set to work polishing and painting the entire space. There

are only two ways into this space, one is to climb a ladder up from inside the armored conning station, the other is through a heavy armored door on the O5 level. To allow the public to view this area

the team cut a piece of plexiglass to fit into the opening for the armored door on the O5 level. Today this completely detailed space can be viewed by visitors when they reach the O5 level.

In another ongoing project the team stripped, polished and applied lacquer to the brass trim rings that are seen around every porthole on the superstructure. If anybody is counting, that's over

100 portholes! This was a long running project with about six to eight portholes worked on each Saturday.

Most recently, the Brass Team was heavily involved in preparing for the opening of many spaces along the new "City at Sea" Tour Route which opened this past May. Once again the team spent months polishing and detailing items along that popular new tour route.

The ships curatorial office also sends the team donated artifacts to clean up for display within the museum spaces. These items have included pieces from the antique silver service presented in 1904 to the first USS *New Jersey* (BB-16), several brass 5" practice shells (55 lbs each), a .30 cal., machine gun, a 20 mm gun and magazines, a belt of CIWS Phalanx brass shell casings, several vintage 1940's telephones etc...



Ed Hamilton
Williamstown, New Jersey
US Navy 1965-69 USS Coral Sea
Volunteer—7 years



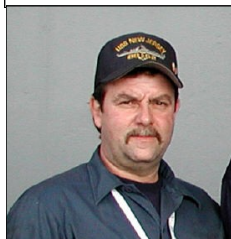
Nan LaCorte
Cape May, New Jersey
Music Teacher
R.M. Teitelman School
Volunteer—7 years



Lew Murchison
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Weapons Restoration Spec.
Volunteer—5 years



Matthew Cummings
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
Industrial Mechanic
Volunteer—1 year



Mike Cauto
Levittown, Pennsylvania
Ship unloading foreman
Volunteer—4 years

THE JERSEYMAN

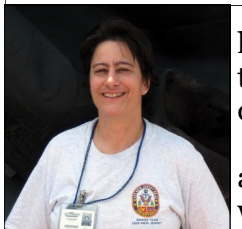
VOLUNTEERS - BRASS TEAM...



Bruce Frey
John's Island, South Carolina
Former team vol.- 6 years
Often visits ship/Brass team...



Tom Kowszun
Moorestown, New Jersey
Senior Software Developer
Volunteer—2 years



Vera Tierno
Brooklyn, New York
"I just wanted to give back..."
Volunteer—7 years



Charlie Spinetta
Gloucester, New Jersey
New York Ship - Iron Worker
Volunteer—7 years

As we mentioned at the beginning of this article, our Brass Team is a small group, presently with only about 14 members. Some members arrive as early as 7:30 a.m., and are working long

before the ship opens. While others, some of which travel a long way, filter in over the next couple of hours.

In order to accomplish as much as possible with the available resources, the team usually breaks into small groups to tackle the most heavily traveled areas like the Flag Bridge, the Navigation Bridge and inside the 16-inch

turrets. Others walk the tour routes cleaning up items that need it and move on. Since the team works along the tour routes they

have a lot of interaction with visitors and are often asked to answer questions about the ship.

When docent led tours pass areas where team members are working, they sometimes stop and point out the team's efforts to visitors who often express their thanks for the team's dedication, and we all appreciate those kind

comments.

At lunchtime the members of the onboard team meet in the Chief's Lounge for lunch, probably the only time the

group onboard that day is in one place together. By 4p.m. or so, most of the early risers are now headed back home, and one or two members remain to put finishing touches on the day's

projects and to close up shop until next week.

After lunch it's back to work finishing up the days projects, followed by a few other tasks that present themselves as they walk around the ship, and there are always plenty of projects.

Aside from all the great work the team has done over

the last 7+ years, maybe just as amazing is the long-term dedication of our members. There are some on the team that are aboard every Saturday. Charlie Spinetta for instance has missed only one Saturday in the last three years. The team also has three

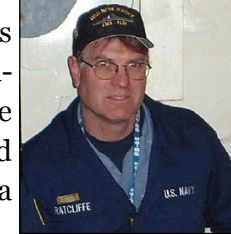
ladies, two of which drive long distances to spend the day volunteering onboard. One lives and works in Brooklyn, New York (Vera Tierno), and Nan LaCorte is a music teacher who lives in Cape May County, New Jersey. Then there's me (Rich Thrash), I live in Reston, VA, and a 320 mile roundtrip from the ship. To date I've spent over 215 days aboard as a volunteer, the vast majority of them polishing brass. If readers want to do the math, I've driven nearly 70,000 miles to volunteer, and in my view life's too short to not do what we enjoy and volunteer while we are at it. Like all Brass Team members, we celebrate this ship, and want to continue with her story and proud history.

- **Rich Thrash - Reston, Virginia**

Editor's Note: Besides the extensive traveling and hard work that Rich Thrash has put in for the Battleship New Jersey, he's also the webmaster of www.ussnewjersey.com. In addition to his hundreds of ship photos, Rich has also archived on the web, all issues of *The Jerseyman* since we first began publishing in Jan 2002. - TH



Sue Ratcliffe
Bristol, Pennsylvania
Mechanical Tech. Zober Ind.
Volunteer—7 years



Dave Ratcliffe
Bristol, Pennsylvania
Maint. Supv'r. Zober Ind.
Volunteer—7 years

THE JERSEYMAN

Battleship days... by Hamp Law



"Fifty ways they been feedin' us SPAM and it ain't enough... now they put it in my S.O.S.!!!"



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

Disclaimer:

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