



1st Quarter
2012

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

THE JERSEYMAN

10 Years - Nr. 73



From the archives photo collection of the late **Charles Hrenchir**, World War II crewman, USS *New Jersey*.

(Courtesy of Ms. Pat Gaskill, Weston, Missouri)

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LOOKING BACK... USS New Jersey - world's only active battleship during Vietnam.

On October 22, 2011, battleship NEW JERSEY played host to a very special visitor and his family. William J. Sweet Sr., Captain USN (Ret.) was USS New Jersey's Chief Engineer from 1967 - 1969. In addition, Captain Sweet was one of three Command Watch Officers, ordering 1/3rd of the rounds fired from the ship during her Vietnam deployment 1968-1969 (Operations, Weapons and Engineering Commander department heads, were all on a one-in-three watch-standing schedule while at the gun line).

It was his first visit to the "Big J" since departing for other duty in 1969. He provided the following comments *In italics* and chronology of USS New Jersey's third major war since her first May 1943 commissioning. The comments below are taken from Wikipedia (Google "Wikipedia - USS New Jersey's Vietnam war record"), and Captain Sweet's added comments are shown in red.

"The Vietnam War (1967-1969)"

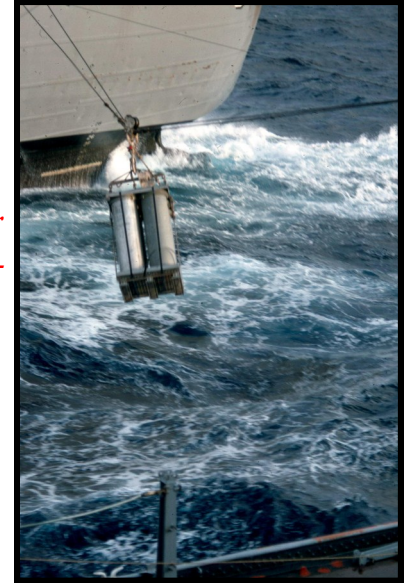
Due to heavy loss rates of U.S. aircraft (commencing with Operation Rolling Thunder in 1965), studies were conducted on ways of alleviating those air losses while at the same time delivering the ordnance payloads required by the escalation of the war. On 31 May 1967 the Secretary of Defense authorized a study aimed at determining what would be required to get New Jersey reactivated in her present condition, and when the results of the submitted study proved favorable toward the reactivation the Secretary of Defense took action.[9] *(The early officers reporting to the ship heard that the Naval Air Commanders in Washington, and in the Atlantic and Pacific fleets, were not enthusiastic about the decision to reactivate New Jersey, because its reactivation took away O & MN (Operation & Maintenance Navy) funding that would otherwise have been available for carriers in the fleet; and the BB62 could do things CVA's aircraft could not do (not good for aviation press WJS).* The early officers reporting to the ship heard these stories from the first Prospective Commanding Officer (PCO Captain Alexander assigned to the ship. WJS) In August 1967 the Secretary of Defense made the decision to recommission a battleship "for employment in the Pacific Fleet to augment the naval gunfire support force in Southeast Asia".[10] New Jersey was selected for this task because she was in better material condition than her sisters, having received an extensive overhaul prior to decommissioning. Upon her reactivation she underwent a period of modernization during which the 20 mm and 40 mm anti-aircraft guns on the battleship were removed, and she received improved electronic warfare systems and improvements to her radar. Armed as such, New Jersey was formally *recommissioned* 6 April 1968 at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard, Captain J. Edward Snyder in command.[2]

New Jersey, then the world's only active battleship, departed Philadelphia 16 May, calling at Norfolk and transiting the Panama Canal 4 June before arriving at her new home port of Long Beach, California, 11 June. *(An interesting note. Although the ship was built just wide enough for transit through the Panama canal, the Canal, since it was originally built, had had thick rubber bumpers installed on both sides of its locks to prevent paint damage to transiting ships. It was therefore actually inches too narrow for the New Jersey's passage. The solution was to use a hydraulic boost from astern to force the NJ through the locks. That*

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worked pretty well, but with much smoke and the smell of burning rubber as the NJ squeezed through the rubber bumpers. We actually had to use fire hoses to cool down the rubber bumpers and prevent complete disintegration by burning. WJS) Further training off Southern California followed. On 24 July New Jersey received 16 inch shells and powder tanks from Mount Katmai by conventional highline transfer and by helicopter lift, the first time heavy battleship ammunition had been transferred by helicopter or by highline at sea. [2]] *(During this transfer NJ lost a wood pallet of four sealed 16 inch by ~4 foot powder canisters overboard at sea. I always wondered what ship/boat might have hit those canisters floating on the water. Unpleasant , to say the least!!! WJS)*

Departing Long Beach 2 September, New Jersey touched at Pearl Harbor and Subic Bay before sailing 25 September for her first tour on the gun line[11] along the Vietnamese coast. Near the 17th parallel on 30 September, the battleship fired her first shots in battle in over sixteen years, expending a total of 29 sixteen inch rounds against Communist targets in and near the Demilitarized Zone at the 17th parallel.[10] New Jersey took up station off Tiger Island



1 October and fired at targets north of the DMZ before moving south that afternoon to engage Viet Cong targets. She accounted for six bunkers, a supply truck and an anti-aircraft site that day; additionally, *she helped rescue the crew of a Marine spotting plane forced down at sea by anti-aircraft fire damage over the beach. (I watched this plane go down and the crew eject from her just before she went down. The plane crashed just ~800 yards off our starboard side, where I was standing outside on the main deck, watching). The Marine spotter was back in the air in a spotting plane, spotting for us just two days after he had to eject at sea and be rescued by NJ. Great Marine! Great spotter! WJS).* On 3 October New Jersey fired on targets south of Tiger Island, and on 4 October the battleship fired on a Communist troop concentration and destroyed several bunkers. On the evening of 7 October New Jersey received word that a number of waterborne logistics craft were moving south near the mouth of the Song Giang River. New Jersey responded by closing on the formation, and succeeded in sinking eleven of the craft before they could beach.[10]

On 11 October New Jersey engaged a coastal installation with her guns; however, she shifted her fire when a recon plane spotting for the battleship reported an enemy truck concentration north of Nha Ky. New Jersey gunners quickly retrained the battleship's big guns and managed to inflict heavy damage on six of the vehicles.[10]

Early on the morning of 12 October New Jersey trained her guns in anticipation of shelling the heavily fortified and well protected Vinh caves. For the next three days New Jersey pounded the area with her 16 in shells in an effort to eliminate the Viet Cong presence in the region. Aided by spotter aircraft from the aircraft carrier America, New Jersey engaged enemy targets, setting several enemy positions on fire and sealing one cave. On 14 October New Jersey shifted her gunfire to the coastal artillery sites on Hon Matt Island, destroying one battery on the island.[10]

On 16 October New Jersey took up station in support of the U.S. 3rd Marine Division. Using both the

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16 in and 5 in guns New Jersey engaged and destroyed 13 structures and an artillery site, in the process halting an enemy platoon moving through the DMZ. New Jersey continued to lend firepower support on the 17th until departing to lend her gunfire to the First Field Force. Foul weather prevented spotter aircraft from flying until 20 October; however, New Jersey quickly made up for lost time on the gun line by destroying a Viet Cong command post and nine bunkers in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade, who were operating about 50 miles (80 km) north of Nha Trang. The next day New Jersey maneuvered into the waters of the Baie de Van Fong to fire at Viet Cong command posts, but poor visibility of the target area prevented any damage estimates.[10]

On the night of 23 October New Jersey steamed north to rearm before taking up position in support of the 3rd Marine Division 25 October. That day she shelled enemy troops located by a spotter plane. The next day New Jersey engaged targets of opportunity, destroying 11 structures, seven bunkers, a concrete observation tower, and an enemy trench line. She also received hostile fire when North Vietnamese gunners attempted to strike at New Jersey with artillery positioned near Cap Lay. Some ten to twelve rounds were launched at New Jersey; however, the rounds fired landed well short of the battleship. *(Not true!!! I stood in the open on the main deck on the off-shore side of the ship while they were firing at us from shore; and while most shells from the North Vietnamese gun(s) fell short, a small number went over the ship into the sea to starboard, bracketing us. [an artilleryman's dream] WJS.)* Aerial spotters were called in to look at the suspected gun position; they reported no artillery present but fresh tire tracks leading to a concealed area, suggesting that there had been artillery there earlier. Armed with this information New Jersey fired five 16 inch shells at the site, but "in the darkness spotters were unable to confirm any hits".[10] *(This last statement may not be true as the attack from the shore occurred on a broad sunlit day. However the target was in an area where friendly forces might have come under our fire so we had to hold fire and await permission from a US ground commander ashore in order to return fire; and that might have caused a long delay. Also, a spotting plane could not have seen tire tracks on the ground at night. I remember the attack as though it had happened yesterday. WJS).*

On 28 October New Jersey steamed south to engage Communist targets. During the shelling aircraft spotting for the battleship reported taking heavy anti-aircraft fire to the extreme north of the target zone; subsequently, New Jersey altered her fire to silence the site with her big guns. The next day New Jersey leveled 30 structures, destroyed three underground bunkers, and shelled a Viet Cong trench line. That afternoon an aerial observer located an enemy artillery position on a hilltop southwest of Cap Lay. New Jersey responded by firing six 16 inch rounds at the site, destroying it. Follow up assaults on 30 October destroyed a Communist resupply area and an anti-aircraft site.[10]

Upon completion of this mission New Jersey steamed south, taking a position off Da Nang and Point DeDe to lend naval gunfire support to the U.S. 1st Marine Division operating in the area. On 2 November New Jersey commenced firing operations against nine positions, but the heavy foliage in the area prevented spotters from seeing the results of the shelling.[10]

On 4 November New Jersey received orders to reinforce southern II Corps near Phan Thiet; she arrived on station later that night. The next she answered eight call fire support missions from the 173rd Airborne Brigade, in the process destroying eight Viet Cong bunkers and five structures. On 11 November New Jersey departed Vietnamese waters to replenish; she returned to the gunline 23 November and relieved Galveston, taking up position in support of the U.S. Army's Americal Division. That afternoon New Jersey's 5-inch (127 mm) guns shelled enemy buildings, destroying 15 structures and inflicted heavy damage on 29 others.[10] On 25 November New Jersey launched the most destructive shore bombardment of her Vietnam tour. For the next two days the battleship concentrated her fire at Viet Cong storage areas near Quang Ngai, destroying 182 structures and 54 bunkers, inflicting heavy damage to 93 structures, and demolishing several

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tunnel complexes before departing for Point Betsy near Hue 27 November to support the 101st Airborne Division.[10]

For the remainder of February and into March New Jersey shelled targets along the DMZ. On 13 March the battleship departed the gunline bound for Subic Bay. She returned to action on 20 March, operating near Cam Ranh Bay in support of the Republic of Korea's Ninth Infantry Division. For the next week New Jersey patrolled the waters between Phan Thiet and Tuy Hoa, shelling targets of opportunity along the coast. On 28 March New Jersey took up station south of the DMZ to aid the 3rd Marine Division, remaining there until 1 April, whereupon New Jersey departed for Japan.[12] During the battleship's tour of duty along the gunline in Vietnam, the USS New Jersey had fired 5,688 rounds of 16 inch shells, and 14,891 five inch shells.[11]

Between 2 December and 8 December New Jersey returned to aid the 3rd Marine Division, shelling Viet Cong bunker complexes for the Marines operating around the Da Nang area before departing for Singapore 9 December. On 26 December New Jersey returned to the gunline, taking up station off Tuy Hoa in support of the Republic of Vietnam's 47th Army Division. For the next three days New Jersey fired her guns to support the II Corps, in the process destroying Viet Cong bunkers and supply depots and neutralizing enemy cave posts. New Jersey would remain in the waters of the DMZ until after New Years, shelling Communist bunkers for ground troops until leaving to support the 1st Marine Division 3 January[10].

Throughout January and into February New Jersey operated in support of the Marines. On 10 February the battleship left to reinforce the 2nd ROK Marine Brigade operating near Da Nang. The battleship's target was a suspected subterranean staging area for a Viet Cong regiment. New Jersey's big guns went to work on the complex, firing 16 inch shells into tunnels and bunkers to aid the ground troops. On 14 February the battleship steamed south of the DMZ to provide support for the 3rd Marine Division, in the process destroying an anti-aircraft site with her big guns. The next day New Jersey fired on an enemy rocket site northeast of Con Thien, destroying the facility, then trained her guns on known Communist positions to harass Viet Cong forces. On 22 February New Jersey responded to an urgent request for fire support from the besieged Oceanview observation post near the DMZ. For the next six hours New Jersey fired her guns, ultimately repelling the attacking force. *(This was the night where my stateroom literally came unglued! The steel medicine cabinet and the overhead steel ventilation system duct, both broke loose and fell to the deck because of 16 inch battery shock. Second interesting note: Although New Jersey could land helos aft, we could not fire turret three with a helo or a car on board, because the turret three muzzle blast would destroy the glass/plastic wind screen of a helo or of a car on deck .*

Captain Snyder recommended the spotter (newly trained at spotter school) for a medal. Captain Snyder's request was never granted. The reason we heard was that there were no enemy casualties on the ground surrounding Ocean View to substantiate the report of Ocean View's O-in-C and his USMC Major boss, who was visiting for the night.

The spotter flawlessly called in main battery (16 inch) destruct fire, 5 inch destruct fire, and 5 inch illuminating shell fire, alternating, and at the same time, and he never made a mistake! We thought he was a major factor in NJ's gunfire support saving the day for the Ocean View post. Without it they would have been overrun WJS)

Submitted by:

William J. Sweet Sr., Captain USN (Ret.)

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Editor's Notes:

On November 13, 1982, the Vietnam Memorial War was dedicated in Washington, D.C. In a recent letter sent by the Vietnam Veterans Memorial Fund, it said:

“During that summer of 1982, a U.S. Navy officer walked up to where the concrete foundation of The Wall was being poured. He stood over the trench for a moment, tossed in his dead brother’s Purple Heart and saluted. This was the first offering.

Even before they could dedicate the Vietnam Veterans Memorial, it began to fulfill it’s destiny as a symbol of healing and a place of honor.

Now, nearly 30 years later, over 110,000 offerings have been left at The Wall.

Veterans leave dog tags, long letters to comrades lost and cigarettes to repay those borrowed decades ago. Some even leave behind poker cards for games promised but never to be played.

Widows leave graduation photos of children who grew up without their fathers and grown children leave ultrasound photos to announce the next generation of a family forever separated from their loved one.”

On May 7, 1975, President Gerald R. Ford officially ended our US involvement in Vietnam.

It is estimated that 25 million people have visited the Vietnam Memorial Wall in Washington, D.C. - TH



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Vietnam Memorial Wall

- There are 58,267 names now listed on that polished black wall, including those added in 2010.
- The names are arranged in the order in which they were taken from us by date and within each date the names are alphabetized. It is hard to believe it is 36 years since the last casualties of Vietnam.
- Beginning at the apex on panel 1E and going out to the end of the East wall, appearing to recede into the earth (numbered 70E - May 25, 1968), then resuming at the end of the West wall, as the wall emerges from the earth (numbered 70W - continuing May 25, 1968) and ending with a date in 1975. Thus the war's beginning and end meet. The war is complete, coming full circle, yet broken by the earth that bounds the angle's open side and contained within the earth itself.
- The first known casualty was Richard B. Fitzgibbon, of North Weymouth, Mass. Listed by the U.S. Department of Defense as having been killed on June 8, 1956. His name is listed on the Wall with that of his son, Marine Corps Lance Cpl. Richard B. Fitzgibbon III, who was killed on Sept. 7, 1965.
- There are three sets of fathers and sons on the Wall.
- 39,996 on the Wall were just 22 or younger.
- The largest age group, 8,283 were just 19 years old, 33,103 were 18 years old.
- 12 soldiers on the Wall were 17 years old.
- 5 soldiers on the Wall were 16 years old.
- One soldier, PFC Dan Bullock was 15 years old.
- 997 soldiers were killed on their first day in Vietnam .
- 1,448 soldiers were killed on their last day in Vietnam .
- 31 sets of brothers are on the Wall.
- Thirty one sets of parents lost two of their sons.
- 54 soldiers on the wall attended Thomas Edison High School in Philadelphia .
- 8 Women are on the Wall. Nursing the wounded.
- 244 soldiers were awarded the Medal of Honor during the Vietnam War; 153 of them are on the Wall.
- Beallsville, Ohio with a population of only 475 lost 6 of her sons.
- West Virginia had the highest casualty rate per capita in the nation with 711 West Virginians on the Wall.
- The Marines of Morenci - They led some of the scrappiest high school football and basketball teams that the little Arizona copper town of Morenci (pop. 5,058) had ever known and cheered. They enjoyed roaring beer busts. In quieter moments, they rode horses along the Coronado Trail, stalked deer in the Apache National Forest. And in the patriotic camaraderie typical of Morenci's mining families, the nine graduates of Morenci High enlisted as a group in the Marine Corps. Their service began on Independence Day, 1966. Only 3 returned home.
- The Buddies of Midvale - LeRoy Tafoya, Jimmy Martinez, Tom Gonzales were all boyhood friends and lived on three consecutive streets in Midvale, Utah on Fifth, Sixth and Seventh avenues. They lived only a few yards apart. They played ball at the adjacent sandlot ball field. And they all went to Vietnam . In a span of 16 dark days in late 1967, all three would be killed. LeRoy was killed on Wednesday, Nov. 22, the fourth anniversary of John F. Kennedy's assassination. Jimmy died less than 24 hours later on Thanksgiving Day. Tom was shot dead assaulting the enemy on Dec. 7 - Pearl Harbor Remembrance Day.
- The most casualty deaths for a single day was on January 31, 1968 ~ 245 deaths.
- The most casualty deaths for a single month was May 1968 - 2,415 casualties.

For most Americans who read this they will only see the numbers that the Vietnam War created. To those of us who survived the war, and to the families of those who did not, we see the faces, we feel the pain that these numbers created. We are, until we too pass away, haunted with these numbers, because they were our friends, fathers, husbands, wife's, sons and daughters.

There are no noble wars, just noble warriors...

"Carved on these walls is the story of America, of a continuing quest to preserve both Democracy and decency, and to protect a national treasure that we call the American dream." ~ **President George Bush**

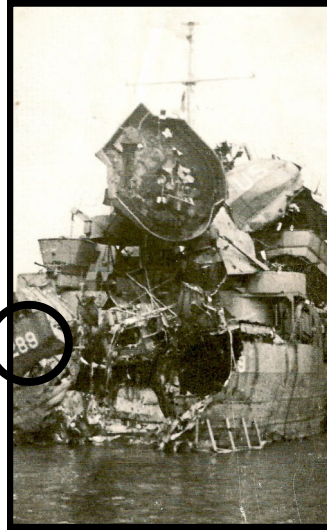
LOOKING BACK... Tom Glynn

I was 17 years old when the United States entered the war after the bombing of Pearl Harbor. I lived with my family on Beechwood Street in South Philadelphia, Pennsylvania when I enlisted in the US Navy in September of 1943. I was sent to Sampson Naval Training Base on the east shore of Seneca Lake, New York for basic training and after completion was ordered to report to Mercerville NJ. Mercerville was the home of Mercer County Airport where the Navy was testing the new TBF Bombers coming off the GM plants assembly line in Ewing Township. Shore duty was the last place I wanted to spend the war, so I approached an Ensign and explained my disappointment of not being assigned to a ship. He requested my serial number and 2 days later was ordered to report to Pier 92 in New York for sea duty.

My assignment was LST 289 and we departed shortly thereafter to join the convoy heading for England. Our route took us to Boston then Nova Scotia and finally to the staging area in , England. While docked in Brixham the crew of LST 289 spent most of the time becoming familiar with the operation of the ship. Most of this pertained to the loading of the equipment we were expected to carry and the launching and recovery of our LCVPs also known as Higgins Boats. This activity was soon to become anything but routine.

We left port on April 27, 1944 along with LST-499 and LST-507 and joined up with five other LSTs out of Plymouth. These eight ships from LST Group 32 and their lone escort HMS Azalea formed convoy T-4 and was to participate in Operation Tiger at Slapton Sands on the south coast of England. Operation Tiger was a mock landing in preparation for the Allied landings at Utah and Omaha beaches in Normandy. While maneuvering in Lyme Bay at 0135 on the morning of April 28th, 1944, convoy T-4 was attacked without warning by nine German E-Boats. LST-507 was the first hit by a torpedo and burst into flames soon followed by LST-531,

As I had no battle station my job was to be the Captain's messenger, (Harry A. Mettler, Lieutenant USNR, Commanding Officer). He ordered me to run to the sleeping quarters at the stern of the ship and wake any personnel still there. Explain that this was no drill and to get out! It was not ten minutes after reporting back to the Captain that a torpedo struck the stern of our ship, LST 289, ripping the stern apart and virtually destroying the very bunking area I had been running through only minutes before.



As the convoy maneuvered and returned fire I was sent to a lookout position in the bow. As a result of my actions I was promoted to Seaman 1st class.

The disaster which was Operation Tiger was kept under wraps due to its possible devastating consequences for the D-Day landings to take place only weeks later. Not the least of the concerns was the 10 missing special intelligence officers aboard the torpedoed LSTs, each of whom had intimate details of the upcoming invasion. It was later determined that they had all drowned. A subsequent investigation concluded that a lack of escort vessels and an error in the issuing of radio frequencies were major contributors in the tragedy.

Official Dept. of Defense records confirm 749 dead and approximately 200 wounded. Of these 551 were US Army personnel and 198 US Navy, making it the costliest battle to US forces at that point in the war after Pearl Harbor. Ironically, it was not until September 5th 2002, that this battle was formally recognized by the Navy and Combat Action Ribbons were awarded to the Officers and Enlisted men of the LSTs participating in this action.

LST-289 was assisted back to shore in Dartmouth by its LCVPs and put out of action. On D-Day + 10 the crew and its LCVPs were ordered to France to participate in Allied amphibious operations against the Germans occupying Brest. It was soon determined that these operations were fraught with unnecessary risks and cancelled. Not long after, our unit and the LCVPs on flat bed trucks were traveling through St Lo, France. We were now a Naval Unit in support of the British Third Infantry Division, US Ninth and Third Armies eventually assisting in the crossing of the Rhine into Germany on March 11th and March 23rd-March 27th 1945. My unit was ordered North to assist British and US Forces in the taking of the City of Bremen and the German Naval Base at Bremerhaven. I remained there through the German surrender on May 8th, 1945.

Submitted by:
Tom Glynn
Cape May, New Jersey

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TOM GLYNN -



***Exercise Tiger* was a dress rehearsal for the
June 1944 D-Day invasion Of France.**

On April 28, 1944, the *Exercise Tiger* American amphibious assault force was rehearsing for the D-Day invasion, when they were attacked by 9 fast German E-Boats.

The surprise German attack resulted in the death of hundreds of Allied Army and Navy men.



"Men who have offered their lives for their country know that patriotism is not *fear* of something; it is the *love* of something."

~ *Adlai Stevenson* - in a 1952 speech to the American Legion ~

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LOOKING BACK... Joe Moke remembers Iwo Jima...

I was 18 years old and lived in Philadelphia when I joined the Marines in June of 1944. Boot camp was at Parris Island, South Carolina, and we took advanced infantry training in Hawaii.

When we went into Iwo Jima, I was with the 4th Marine Division, 24th Regiment, 3rd Battalion, Company "I", and I was 19 years old. I don't remember the name of the ship that took us to Iwo, or how many days it took us to get there. But the invasion began on February 19, 1945 and our turn came to go in on February 23rd... the 5th day of the Iwo Jima invasion. I can remember going over the side and into the bobbing landing craft, and we circled offshore until the order came down to hit the beach. We then received the command 'lock and load', the ramp dropped down, and we ran out onto the beach.

I jumped into the first crater I could find and there were 3 Marines in there, all lying face down. I talked to one of them and there was no response. I rolled him over and saw he had been shot in the head. All 3 of the Marines were dead. Then another Marine jumped into the hole, a veteran of Saipan, and shouted at me that we had to get out of there - we needed to keep on moving! And we did...

I was a BAR man, and hunkered down in a foxhole with my ammo carrier when a mortar round exploded almost on top of us. My ammo carrier was killed instantly. I took heavy shrapnel in the head, and it was from the same round that killed him. I can then vaguely remember being in and out of consciousness for quite a while, but I do remember cheers going up as they raised the flag on Mount Suribachi. From what I was later told, I had come to when I got to a hospital on Guam, and then went on to Pearl Harbor, San Francisco, Charleston, South Carolina, and eventually to the Naval Hospital in Bethesda, Maryland. For days I could not see anything at all, and then my vision slowly began to return, but it was very limited.



My wounds left me partly blind, and even today, I have no peripheral vision... just straight ahead. I have never driven a car, and never even turned on a car's ignition.

Submitted by:
Joe Moke
Cape May, New Jersey



LOOKING BACK...

USS *Mission Bay* (CVE-59)...

My service was along time ago, 66 years ago to be exact. I was almost 18 when I enlisted during the last year of the war, and I am now just past 84 today.

I worked in the Engineer's log room, and my boss was Lt(jg) Edward Tishman. His father was one of the founding members of Tishman Realty & Construction, in New York City, and builders of the World Trade center, among other things. My main job was to bring the Captain, a full four stripper, the Fuel & Water report every morning (this was way before computers). Pretty cool for an 18 year old to meet the Captain every morning, and he even knew my name!

When I first enlisted in 1945, I was living on the south shore of Long Island and I served until 1946 - a little under two years. I took boot camp in Sampson New York. On the ship, I became a Fireman First Class simply because I could type and they needed someone in the Engineer's Log Room!

I served on the USS *Mission Bay* CVE 59, and read that the one of our ship's bells had been sent to the Mission Bay Yacht Club in California.

I looked them up online: *The Bell came from the U.S.S. Mission Bay, a C.V.E. "Escort"carrier commissioned in 1943, which served well during World War II. When Commodore Sterling Rounthwaite heard in 1959 that the ship was going to be scrapped, he wrote his friend, Congressman Bob Wilson, to see if our club could get one of the ship's bells. A bell was donated to the club that same year. A copy of Bob Wilson's letter and a picture of the U.S.S. Mission Bay are displayed in the main showcase. The bell is rung each Opening Day.*

The picture below is of the *Mission Bay* underway in 1945. We had a crew of about 900 and carried 20 to 25 planes.

My years in the navy put me thru 4 years of college on the GI Bill, I worked for the Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co., and then had my own tire business from which I retired in 1996...I loved my Navy years!

Submitted by:
Arnold Wolfe
Bayside, New York



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LOOKING BACK... Vincent Panzano, USS Quincy (CA-71)

I was a college freshman at West Chester Teacher's College at the beginning of World War II, and was drafted into the navy in June 1943.

What I remember very well was two events. First was when President Roosevelt came aboard my ship, USS *Quincy* (CA-71) on 23 January 1945 at Newport News, Va., for the trip to Malta. At the time, I was a Pharmacist's Mate 2/c.

The crew didn't know much about the president even being aboard, but we did know that a bathtub, and an elevator were installed aboard Quincy and wooden ramps also came aboard... that gave us some idea. The president's limousine was also lifted aboard and I know that we had it stowed in our hangar deck.

The ship arrived in Malta on 2 February, and after receiving calls from Prime Minister Winston Churchill, Emperor Haile Selassie of Ethiopia, King Ibn Saud of Saudi Arabia and others, President Roosevelt departed *Quincy* and continued on to the Crimea by air.

But as an interesting added memory, I can recall the carpets laid out on the deck of the Quincy, and they also had live sheep and goats on a destroyer tied up alongside. I can't remember the destroyer's name, but every day they would



slaughter one of these animals on deck and roasted them for dinner.

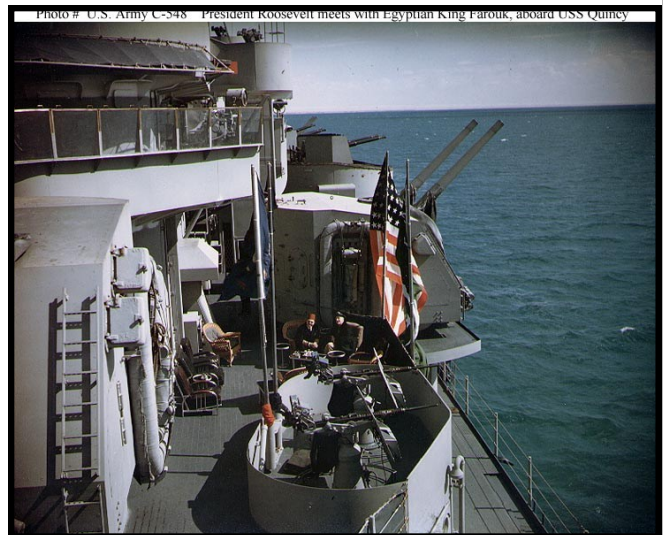
I can also remember that King Farouk came aboard and he was very interested in inspecting our 5" guns. But he was a very big man and didn't have an easy time of getting inside the mount.

There was much more in between that I can't recall, but USS Quincy later steamed for the United States, and we arrived in Newport News, Va., on 27 February.

Now let me tell you about Typhoon Cobra! I'll never forget it. The word we got was that Halsey was supposed to skirt the storm, but he sailed right into it, and I was sick as a dog.

I remember opening a door topside to get some air, and a roll suddenly took me across the deck... I was looking straight down at the sea as I grabbed the life line that saved me from going over the side. I then waited for the next roll to take me back. I crawled inside, dogged down the door, climbed into my rack and I stayed there!

**Submitted by:
Vincent Panzano
Cape May, New Jersey**



US Army photos courtesy of the
Franklin Delano Roosevelt
Presidential Library and Museum

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LOOKING BACK... Baseball in World War II

So what happened to Major League baseball during World War II? We know now, that there were over 500 major leaguers that swapped their baseball uniforms for the military, and for many, these were going to be their prime years as ball players.

Ted Williams (batted .406 in 1941), "Joltin" Joe DiMaggio (hit safely in 56 consecutive games), and Hank Greenberg... "Detroit Slugger Hank Greenberg, a celebrated star of the time and future Hall of Famer, received his draft call on May 7, 1941. "Hammerin' Hank" had played in three World Series and two all-star games - he hit 58 home runs in 1938 (just two short of Babe Ruth's 1927 record) and was the American League's Most Valuable Player in 1940. Greenberg gave up his \$55,000 yearly salary for \$21 per month Army pay and reported to Fort Custer, Michigan", and 23 year old Cleveland Indian pitching great Bob Feller served as a US Navy Chief Petty Officer aboard battleship USS *Alabama*, were just a few of the baseball greats that gave it all up - "for the duration." The minor leagues were also heavily drained, with more than 4,000 players heading for recruiting offices following December 7, 1941.

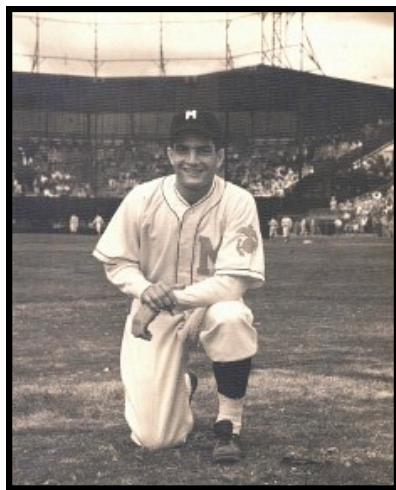
Even the front office people of baseball did their part... if you remember the name of Dan Topping, you probably know that in 1945 he became a part owner of the New York Yankees. But during World War II, Dan Topping served in the Marines and at war's end had achieved the rank of Colonel. He also organized the 14th Naval District in Pearl Harbor in 1944.



time in the Marines as a Sergeant during World War II, but in his spare time played baseball.

We asked Jim to put down on paper what he remembers of baseball back then...

Among the Marines that played in the 14 Naval District league, one of them was long time battleship New Jersey volunteer, Jim Ramentol. Jim finished his



"Dan Topping's 14th Naval District Baseball League consisted of only three teams: Army, Navy and Marines. When we first began the league, the Marines were the leaders of the group until the Army and Navy brought over a boatload of major leaguers. Names like: Joe and Dom DiMaggio, Hank Greenberg, Pee Wee Reese, Bob Feller, Lefty Gomez, the Derringer brothers, Frank and James (Cincinnati Reds), Johnny Mize and a few others I can't recall just now.

By the way, I pitched a game against the navy and Johnny Mize hit three home runs off of me. The last one is still in flight over the Pacific somewhere.

We played most of our games on Oahu (Honolulu Stadium), the Maui Marine Base, and the Kaneohe Submarine Base.

This is a picture that was taken on Maui in 1944. The Marine baseball team was in Maui playing exhibition games with the Army and Navy. We had a day off and decided to climb Hali'akala



I'm in the middle, and Sam Mele is the Marine on the left. Sam had a great history in American sports. Prior to joining the Marines, he was an All American basketball player at NYU. After World War II, he became a major league ball player. First with the Red Sox, then Washington and the Minnesota Twins. Sam also managed the Twins from 1961-1967."

Submitted by:

Jim Ramentol
Mount Laurel, New Jersey

Editor's Note:

Many thanks to **Gary Bedingfield** for his help and for the information provided with his "*Baseball in World War II*". - TH

THE JERSEYMAN 1Q-2012

LOOKING BACK... USS Monssen (DD-798)

by Jim Rodan - Cape May, New Jersey



I was an 18 year old native of Cape May New Jersey when the United States declared war on the Axis Powers. I enlisted in the US Navy on July 6th 1942 and reported to Newport,

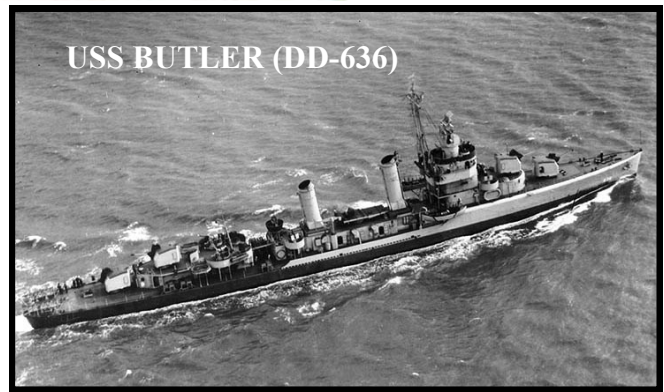
Rhode Island for

basic training. Upon completion of that training I was assigned to the USS Conway, DD 507 a Fletcher Class Destroyer. Shortly thereafter, in October 1942, the USS Conway departed for its shakedown cruise with a full compliment of untested seamen. As luck would have it the sonar operator reported a suspected German U Boat contact to the Commanding Officer. Whether we had orders not to engage a contact on the shakedown cruise or the Commanding Officer choose to fight another day I don't know, but the Conway retired from the area and returned to Newport.

As a Seaman Apprentice, I was assigned to the Destroyer USS Buck, DD 420, a Sims Class Destroyer. However I missed that assignment as the ship sailed and I was not on board. Apparently the Shore Patrol had other ideas about where I was to be assigned. The Buck was later ambushed and sunk, October 9 1943, while on patrol off the coast of Salerno, Italy by a German U-Boat, U-616.

Reassigned to USS Butler, DD-636, we engaged in escort work in the North Atlantic making three trips between the US and Ireland during the majority of 1942. Five days into the third crossing I was overcome by severe abdominal pains and transferred to a nearby tanker where I spent five days in sick bay before returning to the Butler and the return trip to Newark, New Jersey. Upon arrival in Newark it was determined that I had been suffering from appendicitis for nearly 20 days.

Returning to sea duty after my surgery and recovery, the Butler set sail from Pier 92 on June 8,



1943 for training exercises at Oran and Algiers, North Africa. Shortly after we proceeded to Bizerte and departed in July for the Allied invasion of Sicily. Taking part in the pre-invasion bombardment off Gela the Butler and the Invasion Fleet came under attack by some 30 plus JU-88 bombers



that night. The air was full of anti-aircraft fire and the attack was eventually beaten off.

The next day, July 9th, awoke to the beginning of the invasion of Sicily, a busy day at my General Quarters Station in Forward Fire Control. It was a day of intense shelling and air attacks during which an ammunition ship that had been hit the day before and had exploded nearby.

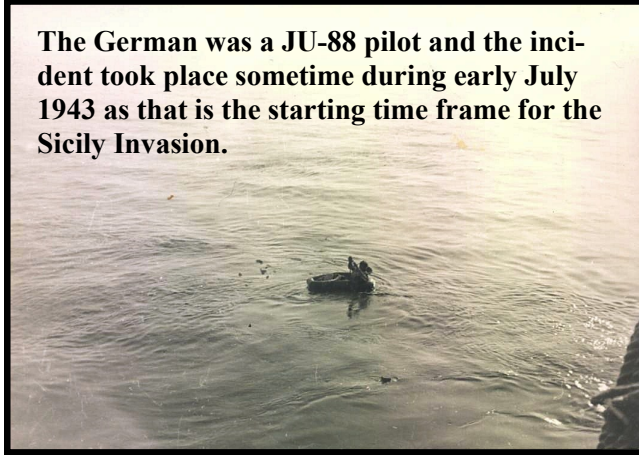
Unfortunately during the course of the events on that day one of our C-47's made the mistake of over flying our ship. Mis-identifying it for a German bomber, our gun crews opened fire. It wasn't long before one of our 20mm guns had zeroed in on him and shot him down before the Captain could call a cease fire.

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Jim Rodan - USS *Monssen* (DD-798)

During the period of July 9th through August 12th, USS *Butler* served on escort duty during the remainder of the operation. It was on the fourth day

The German was a JU-88 pilot and the incident took place sometime during early July 1943 as that is the starting time frame for the Sicily Invasion.



of the patrol that the lookouts spotted a downed German pilot afloat in his raft. His JU-88 had been shot down. After taking the German pilot aboard, it was determined this man was a Wing Commander from one of the JU-88 attacks days before. He had been afloat for far longer than he wanted to be and seemed happy to just get out of the water. During his debriefing, he implied that he had been forced into the Luftwaffe and he was not enthusiastic about the war.



We secured him below decks near the mess hall and proceeded on our patrol. It wasn't long before we came under attack again from another flight of German aircraft. Amazingly, our German pilot offered to help. Apparently he really didn't like being below deck during the action. He was given the opportunity and assisted the 40mm ammunition handlers to pass the shell clips to the gun tubs.



After returning to our staging area he was transferred to another ship and presumably spent the remainder of the war in a POW camp.

My time aboard USS *Butler* came to a close and we left the Sicily area on August 12th, steaming for New York and arriving on August 22.

We then headed to Norfolk to my next assignment, USS *Monssen*, DD 798 and to the Pacific Theater of Operations.



Submitted by:
Jim Rodan
Cape May, New Jersey

(Many thanks to Andy Roppoli for his help, and multiple trips to and from Cape May.) - TH



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LOOKING BACK...

USS New Jersey Vietnam era crewmen visiting the battleship New Jersey on Sunday, Oct 30, 2011

Jim Flood, *Maritime Artist*

Bert Trottier, *last Official US Navy Bugler*



HARD AT WORK... A few of our Battleship New Jersey volunteers in a recent Clinton Street photo... (Most are *10 year* battleship New Jersey volunteers.)

L/R: Doug Walker, Bill Lydon, Jim Maher, Jack Hoban, Harry Ruhle, Stan Pado. Chuck Davies, Russ Collins, Tom Weber, Wayne Schofield, Ed Haas and Gene Pado.

Volunteer Dave Boone took the photo.



NEW JERSEY RESTORATION VOLUNTEERS TAKING A BREAK
Ok, that's enough... *back to work!!!*

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SHIP'S BELLS...

USS Dayton (CL-105)

The USS Dayton's bell is on permanent display at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, in the Navy Health Research Center, Environmental Health Effects Laboratory, Building 837, Area B.

The USS Dayton (CL-105) was commissioned in January 1945, decommissioned in November 1948 and placed in the Philadelphia Reserve Fleet. She was later scrapped.

USS Dayton earned one Battle Star in World War II, and she was present at the Japanese surrender September 2, 1945.

Submitted by:

Robert MacDonald
Palm Coast, Florida



USS Montpelier (CL-57)

The ship's bell is displayed in the lobby of Vermont City Hall located at 39 Main Street, Montpelier, Vermont. USS Montpelier Ship's Museum is also located at Montpelier City Hall.

Shipmates shown with their ship's bell are: (L/R **Ernie Graefe, Joe Joyce, Don Ohrt, and Bert Snyder**. All are World War II former crewmen of USS Montpelier.

Commissioned in September 1942 and Decommissioned in 1947 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard, "Mighty Monty" was awarded 13 Battle Stars, participated in 26 invasions, 42 operations and 30 campaigns.



Submitted by:

Donald Ohrt
Paradise, California

THE JERSEYMAN 1Q-2012

SHIP'S BELLS...

USS *Altamaha* (CVE-18)



(October 20, 2011)

Tom - Enclosed is the rest of Lt. Orban's diary. I don't know when he passed away but it was a pleasure to meet his son and daughter when they came to one of the Altamaha reunions. They gave me a copy of their father's diary since I am the Historian for the Altamaha Association. The photograph is from National Archives 80-G-225807.

"My diary by Alexander R. Orban"

"April 3, 1944 Had the bridge watch 0800 to 1200. TBM crashed into bridge and scared the life out of all of us. Almost got Captain Olney and Commander Van Evera and several others, including yours truly. Everybody was sure jumpy after that and their nerves were all taught.

Plane was stripped and tossed overboard. Boy, that \$140,000 didn't last long. What I couldn't do with that..."

I grew up in Oakland, California, and wasn't doing very well in high school, and decided I wanted to go into the navy. With my parent's permission, enlisted ten days past my 17th birthday. I was inducted into the navy in a small ceremony by Gene Tunney on October 27, 1941. I went aboard USS Saratoga as a passenger to Pearl Harbor where I was stationed at Ewa, Oahu (Barber's Point) for one year. At that time, I went aboard the USS Altamaha for the rest of my enlistment and was discharged on October 18, 1945, one day past my 21st birthday, in Oakland, California.

Submitted by

Gordon D. McBride

Castro Valley, California

THE JERSEYMAN 1Q-2012



TAPS... 2011

***Anthony J. "Tony" Altadonna
Pennsauken, New Jersey
On March 10, 2011***



***Richard M. Kellum, Jr.
Haddonfield, New Jersey
on April 16, 2011***

***Dominador Del Rosario
Williamstown, New Jersey
on April 18, 2011***



***Joseph "Buff" Moran
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania
on July 23, 2011***

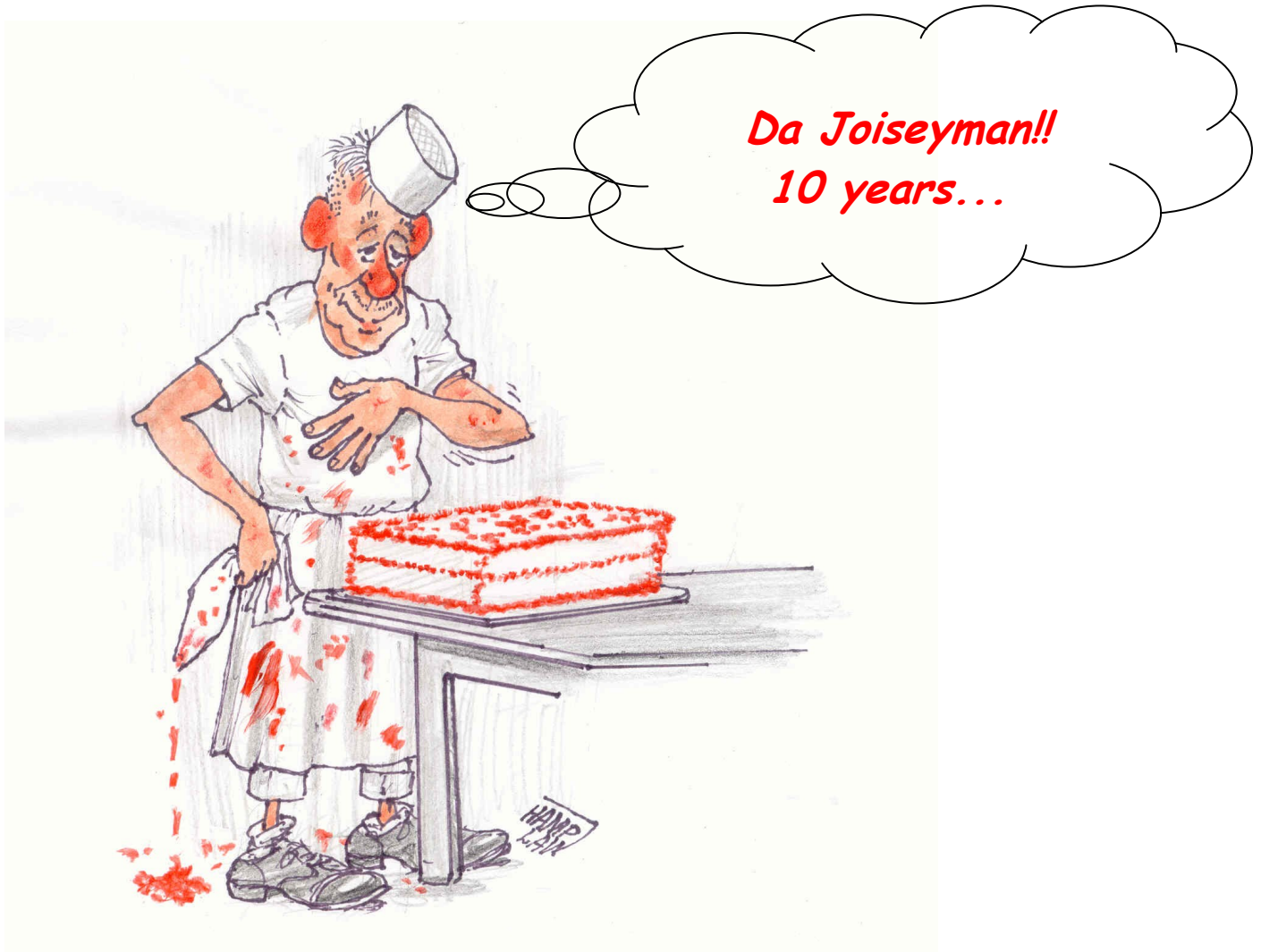


***Dr. Robert H. Brown
Elmer, New Jersey
on July 26, 2011***



THE JERSEYMAN 1Q-2012

BATTLESHIP DAYS... BY HAMP LAW (1923 - 2010)



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

Disclaimer:

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