



*"Rest well, yet sleep lightly and hear the call, if again sounded, to provide Firepower for Freedom..."*

# The Jerseyman

4<sup>th</sup> Quarter 2012  
Number 76

## A Change at the Helm of The Jerseyman

*Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer*

Well, as I'm sure you know by now, Tom Helvig has relinquished the reins of *The Jerseyman* and passed it on to a group of volunteers on the Battleship. I'm sure I speak for all of us when I say ***Bravo Zulu*** Tom for a job well done! Having published 75 issues in the past 10+ years Tom has set the bar high for the new gang, but we're feeling up to the challenge and hope to prove ourselves worthy in the coming issues.

*The Jerseyman* will still be published four times a year, and we plan to continue to bring you the same kind of firsthand accounts and historical stories that Tom delivered over the years. At the same time we'll also be introducing some new features centering around daily life on the ship today. When it comes to the historical sea stories I've got to be honest, I served in the Army in the late 70s and early 80s, so I don't have many sea stories to share, but I encourage you, our readers, to continue to send in your stories and share history.

In addition to the historical stories, we plan to include articles about what's happening on the ship today, about the battles we continue to fight, and about the volunteers and staff that are working hard to get the job done. *The Jerseyman* will now also feature regular articles from Phil Rowan, the ships Executive Director, and Jason Hall, our Curator, talking about things they are working on. Much of our new content will be written by our volunteers and staff, there's a lot happening on the ship, and you'll be able to read all about it right here.

For those of you who don't know me, my name is Rich Thrash and I've been a volunteer on the ship since April of 2001. On most Saturdays you'll find me onboard, working with a small group of dedicated volunteers keeping the ships bright work shining. In my spare time I also run the website [www.ussnewjersey.com](http://www.ussnewjersey.com) which I started in 1999 and have used to chronicle the ships ongoing restoration and her continuing mission as a museum and memorial to educate her visitors about the exploits of the ship and her crew. Some of you may also know of my ships calendars, which I have been producing and giving out for Christmas since 2005.

Working with me will be Rich Zimmermann, another long time volunteer who is involved with the ships award-winning Overnight Encampment Program. Rich is an avid shutterbug and will be the source of many of the photos you'll see in coming issues. Supporting the Rich & Rich duo will be an extensive cast of volunteers and staff members, and as mentioned above, you our readers, who I'm hoping will continue to share the history and send us your stories.

It's hard to believe, but our next issue won't come out until 2013, so let me be the first to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. To help with your holiday shopping we've included information on items available from the [Ships Store](#) that will make great gifts for all of those friends of the Battleship on your list. Remember, a portion of anything you buy goes toward the ongoing maintenance and restoration of the Battleship, plus a Commemorative Brick or Teak Plaque will make a great stocking stuffer!

***Please note this issue is being distributed using Tom's e-mail database. That database will be destroyed at the end of the year, so if you want to continue receiving future issues of The Jerseyman make sure you send us an e-mail so we get you into the new database. Send your name, e-mail address and any other details you wish to include to [rich@ussnewjersey.com](mailto:rich@ussnewjersey.com).***

The next chapter of *The Jerseyman* begins now, fasten your seat belts it might be a little bumpy in the beginning. If you have any comments or suggestions, please send them to us via the e-mail address above.



VOL. 2 NO. 13

U. S. S. NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER 3, 1944

# HALSEY

## ON THE JERSEY

ADMIRAL WILLIAM FREDERICK HALSEY Jr.



Admiral William F. Halsey is one of the few military leaders of this war who has become a legend in his own time. And today the U.S.S. NEW JERSEY has the lucky prospect of becoming a part of that aura of legend and history which will surround the name of Halsey as long as American naval traditions are remembered.

When the history of the war against Japan is written, it will be in part the story of the achievements of Admiral Halsey, America's "fightinest Admiral" since David Farragut of the Civil War. The famous Civil War Admiral ordered, "Damn the torpedoes and full speed ahead." It is hard to say which of the many Halsey sayings will be remembered. It might be "The only good Jap is a dead Jap;" it might be one of half a hundred other gutty remarks he has made at high moments of our recent naval history. Or it might be some order he will give on board the NEW JERSEY in the months ahead.

ADMIRAL HALSEY has long been one of the legitimate heroes of the NEW JERSEY. Reason: he is a native-born JERSEYMAN. He was born at Elizabeth, N.J., and lived there for five years. The state of New Jersey claims him as its own, although his legal residence is California. When the NEW JERSEY was searching for a tradition to live up to, the state of New Jersey proudly handed over Admiral Halsey, lock, stock and barrel as the state's Number One naval product.

Admiral Halsey has the priceless genius of being able to put into cold and chiselled words the burning emotions men feel in war-----their



VOL. 2 NO. 14

U. S. S. NEW JERSEY

30 NOVEMBER 1944

# BB-62 ELECTS PIN-UP

## YEAR-OLD BABE FROM NEWARK, NEW JERSEY SWEEPS FIELD OF OLDER CONTESTANTS

Amidst all the enthusiasm and bally-hoo of a national election the officers and enlisted men of the U.S.S. NEW JERSEY, voted their Pin-Up Girl, Miss Harolyn Cheryl Meyer. Seventy-five pictures of "New Jersey Misses" graced the bulkhead of the wardroom and messing compartment as a majority of ship's company struggled to cast a look and a vote for the

### WAR CORRESPONDENTS: A NEWSMAN'S LAMENT

Who are these war correspondents?

Some may wear glasses, some have middle-age spread...but some of them are husky ex-college athletes, too...they are on easy speaking terms with admirals and generals, but they'd rather write about the second looys and the seamen-second...and the brass hats want it that way...uh,huh, war correspondents get around but they'd be the first to deny the oft-repeated remark, "You fellows must lead an interesting life"...fact is, their chores become routine, but seldom boring...communications with the outside world are cockeyed in the wide Pacific, and they have to work too fast to bathe themselves in thrills and glamour...it might look picturesque, but a correspondent isn't thinking of his appearance when he's sitting on a beach writing his first story an hour after landing with assault troops...

Every newsman the world over is acquainted with certain stock inquiries: "How do you get your copy out?" (Answer: Put it in a bottle and toss it overboard, eyes closed in silent prayer)... "Who do you work for - the army or the navy?" (Answer: When a guy goes seven weeks without mail

from his home office, he begins to wonder, too)... "How much of the truth do they let you write about what's going on out here?" (Answer: We write the truth as we see it - omitting mention of obvious security matter such as a little gadget whose name begins with "R" - and let the censor do the worrying; he's not a bad guy, incidentally - loves his mother-in-law, pays his taxes and goes to church every Easter Sunday)... "Can you go where you want to go?" (Answer: If you mean where we really want to go, no, we don't expect to see San Francisco for quite awhile; out here, we make known our desires to Admiral Nimitz' public relations officer, and manage to wind up at our proper destination - army, navy or marines, all of whom we think are nice guys)...

"What rank do they give you fellows?" (Answer: We don't know, either; we're civilians, but we're very fond of Vice Admiral Richmond Kelly Turner, who tells his men to treat us as lieutenant commanders, even though we are not officially gentlemen by act of Congress)... "Are you from Time or Life?" (Answer: Look, sonny, long before Henry R. Luce's goose began to lay golden

(Continued on Page 8)

"lady" who caught their fancy.

The contest started several months ago when two of our Jerseymen were bitten by the "pin-up" bug. James Russo, SC3c and Wesley Kristich, SC3c, put their heads together and wrote a letter to the Chamber of Commerce of New Jersey, pleading for pictures of Jersey Maidens. The CoFC gave the story to the newspapers and soon pictures began to reach the cooks.

Among the pictures submitted was that of Harolyn Cheryl Meyer, lovely eleven months old native of Newark. She captured the hearts, and votes, of man after man; and when all the votes had been tallied, it was discovered that she had a four-to-one majority over her nearest competitor. 1376 votes were cast, of which Harolyn captured 555. Now that the voting is all over we can reveal that Harolyn has never seen her daddy - he is a prisoner of war in Germany. All hands join in hoping for his safe return to his beautiful little daughter.

Pin-up contests, we know, are not new or unusual, but there is an element of the "new" and "unusual" in our ship's contest. There was no age limit and we believe that we are the first ship to have a year-old-pin-up... a compliment to all babies!

Pictures of Harolyn, our winner and the runners up will be found on pages two and three.

## From the Office of the Executive Director

*Phil Rowan, Executive Director, Battleship New Jersey*

I'm writing from the Captain's office of the USS New Jersey. Although I'm not a Navy veteran, having served in the Air Force, I have a tremendous respect and appreciation for the Captains and crews that guided this ship through war and peace from this office. As the new Executive Director of the Battleship New Jersey Museum & Memorial, I hold this position as a sacred trust. I want to thank the Board of Trustees for asking me to step in and take the helm of the Battleship New Jersey Museum & Memorial.

I had been a Founding Member of the Board of Trustees of The Home Port Alliance for the USS New Jersey, Inc., the private non-profit organization that raised the money and worked on bringing the USS New Jersey back to the State of New Jersey and the river of her birth - The Delaware River. I first saw the ship in October of 1999, when I was aboard her as she entered the Panama Canal on her return home for her final mission. We brought her to her new duty station - the newly constructed pier and visitors' center at Battleship Place in Camden, NJ, in October of 2001, just after the terrorist attacks of September 11<sup>th</sup>. The Board, staff and volunteers have done an amazing job of breathing new life back into the ship. It seems like every week, I receive a report that we have gotten something new on the ship working again. If you have not been to the ship lately, I encourage you to visit the ship and see our progress.

I look forward to keeping you apprised of the goings-on on the ship and our continuing work on keeping the World's Greatest Battleship operating as an educational resource for young and old alike. We have a small full-time staff and a limited number of part-time dedicated staff members at the ship. We are blessed with an amazing crew of over 300 active volunteers that keep the New Jersey working and looking sharp.

It takes over \$3M a year to maintain the Battleship New Jersey on the Delaware. Neither the Government nor the Navy provides any funding for our ship. So we need your financial and volunteer support to keep her on the water for generations to come. There are many ways that you can help preserve the New Jersey. Please visit our website and consider becoming a member, making a donation or purchasing one on the various commemorative items that we have for sale. We have a new "Support the Big J" t-shirt for a \$25 donation. Our new made in the USA BB-62 ball caps are flying off the racks. If you have questions or comments, please contact me at the address below. If you want to help us in anyway, just pick up the phone and let me know your interest.

### **OUR HEROES RETURNED**

We were busy throughout the summer readying the ship for the return of our ship's veterans on August 10<sup>th</sup>. We worked on sanding and repainting the forward ship's bell, purchased a new Quarterdeck entrance mat and even erected a Tiki Bar on the pier for our vets to hang out and swap stories before they returned to the buses.

Although thunderstorms were threatening the event, we caught a break when the skies opened up when we were all under the cover of the tents on the fantail. When the ceremonies concluded, Mother Nature heard our plea and the clouds parted and the sun dried out the decks. We had a great turnout of staff and volunteers to insure that all the ship's veteran got to go where they wanted to go. Some areas required an escort due to safety and insurance reasons.

I spoke to the veterans at the business meeting on Saturday morning and had a great time learning about the ship and sailor stories during the dinner held at the Crown Plaza Hotel in Cherry Hill. We have some great photos of the veterans grouped into the four commissionings.

### **A PERMANENT MONUMENT TO THE CREWMEMBERS**

One of the most significant projects we are currently in the planning and budgeting stage for is the construction of engraved polished granite monuments on Memorial Pier. The monuments, which will be installed on the ends of the "T-shaped" pier, will include the names of all of the 55,000 plus sailors and



## Curator's Corner

*Jason Hall, Curator, Battleship New Jersey*

It is with great pleasure, and pride, that I write this first inaugural "Curator's Corner" piece for *The Jerseyman*. First, I must applaud the outstanding efforts of Master Chief Tom Helvig whose tireless efforts produced over a decade's worth of amazing publications of *The Jerseyman*. Thanks to volunteers such as Rich Thrash, Rich Zimmermann, and others, *The Jerseyman* will live on in its new form. The new format of *The Jerseyman* will help communicate to our volunteers, staff, vendors, and the general public as to the great activities, and achievements, happening onboard the Battleship New Jersey.

Many of you may have noticed that the ship recently played host to U.S. Naval Sea Cadets from around the country for a special weeklong Shipboard Training Exercise. In fact, this program would not have been possible without the Herculean efforts of the volunteer officers of the BB-62 Sea Cadet Division, as well as Battleship volunteers such as Ken Kersch, Paul Neissner, and the Radio Club, just to name a few.

In total, sixty Sea Cadets called the Battleship New Jersey home from Tuesday, August 21<sup>st</sup> to Sunday, August 26<sup>th</sup>, with forty-eight of them coming from twelve different states from California to Florida. The days began early for the Sea Cadets with reveille at 0530, and training sessions all day long till Taps at 2230 at night. On Tuesday, after being processed upon arrival, the Sea Cadets were given a tour of the ship by me and Paul Neissner. This was followed by Wardroom Etiquette presented by our volunteer Military Liaison Officer, CAPT Walt Urban. After evening chow the Sea Cadets learned about the importance of utilizing Bull's-eyes to find your way around the ship, as well as how to properly board a U.S. Navy ship.



*Sea Cadets drilling on ship's Memorial Pier.*



*Knot tying instruction on the Mess Deck.*



*Graduation Ceremony on the Focs'le.*



*Sea Cadets striking a pose in front of Turret 1.*

During Wednesday the Sea Cadets alternated between different parts of the ship, and the pier, participating in man overboard drills, knot tying, procedures for docking a ship, as well as visiting the engineering spaces and medical spaces of the Battleship. On Thursday I led the Sea Cadets on a trip to Philadelphia. We took the ferry across the Delaware River, with the Sea Cadets lining the rails of the ferry as we passed the New Jersey. Once at Penn's Landing we made our way to the Independence Seaport Museum where the Sea Cadets explored the submarine Becuna and Cruiser Olympia. Following a box lunch, the Sea Cadets marched to the Philadelphia Vietnam Memorial, Beirut Memorial, Korean War memorial, and site of Tun Tavern, birthplace of the U.S. Marine Corps. As we walked through the city we were greeted by many people who complimented us on how good the Sea Cadets looked. It should be noted that the BB-62 Sea Cadets all wear USS New Jersey rocker tabs on their uniforms which provided for great publicity for the Battleship.

When we toured Carpenter's Hall, the New Hall Military Museum, Benjamin Franklin's Print Shop, and the Liberty Bell Pavilion, I was amazed at the interest level shown by the Sea Cadets which was marked by the multitude of questions they had for the Park Rangers. The highlight of the day was a guided tour of Independence Hall, as well as Congress Hall where the U.S. Navy was first authorized. We ended our day in Philadelphia by paying respects at the American Revolution Tomb of the Unknown Soldier in Washington Square. Re-boarding the ferry we returned to Camden where the Sea Cadets marched to Campbell's Field where the day of learning was capped off by a night of fun watching a Riversharks game. A contingent of BB-62 Sea Cadets acted as Color Guard during the playing of the National Anthem prior to the start of the game.

The Sea Cadets were busy all day Friday and Saturday involved in more training sessions. These included going on a tour of the new Turret II Experience. Learning how the 5" guns operate, practicing military drill, navigation bridge watch standing, etc. I must thank the volunteer Radio Club for their presentations on Saturday of the Radio Room, the Mark 8 Range Keeper, and shipboard communications. One of the activities that the Sea Cadets definitely enjoyed was learning about the SITE System from Al Alkins.

All of the efforts made by staff and volunteers over the course of the week culminated in a graduation ceremony on Sunday where the Sea Cadets received a certificate, and anchor ribbon device, acknowledging their completion of a shipboard training exercise. I want to thank all of the volunteers who helped make this training exercise a HUGE SUCCESS!



*Ken Kersch teaching class near Mount 52.*



*Sea Cadets learning about 40mm shell.*



*Sea Cadet fires Portside 40mm Salute Gun.*

## Battleship Crew Members Return for a Reunion Onboard

*Ken Kersch, Former Crewmen (Vietnam Cruise), Encampment Supervisor*

The USS New Jersey Veterans Organization held its 26<sup>th</sup> annual reunion in Cherry Hill, NJ this year. The reunion brought together veterans and their families from WW II, Korea, Vietnam, and the Lebanon/Gulf War periods. The reunion ran from August 8<sup>th</sup> to August 12<sup>th</sup>.

The reunion included tours of Gettysburg and Philadelphia, and on Friday, August 10<sup>th</sup>, the veterans and their families came aboard the USS New Jersey for a visit. The former crew members were able to show their spouses, children and grandchildren where they worked and slept. There was also a Memorial Service held on board for our departed members. The reunion ended with a banquet at the Cherry Hill Plaza where there was time to chat and enjoy a good meal and a good time with old and new friends.

Below, and on the following page, are numerous photos taken when the crew visited the ship. On the next two pages are group photos of crew members by period of service. I apologize for the quality of the group photos; unfortunately they weren't taken with a very high resolution camera.









*World War II Era Crew Members*



*Korean War Era Crew Members*





*Vietnam War Era Crew Members*



*1980s Era Crew Members and Spouses*



## Discussions from the Past: The Battleship New Jersey Oral History Project

*Tom Banit, Director, Battleship New Jersey Oral History Project*

How did Fleet Admiral William “Bull” Halsey react aboard the Battleship *New Jersey* to the message from Chester Nimitz during the World War II Battle of Leyte Gulf when he chased the decoy Japanese carriers? What makes the boilers work aboard BB-62? Why did the crew love Vietnam era Captain J. Edward Snyder so much? These questions touch on several key areas of military history, including command decision-making, technology and leadership. Answers to these and many other questions are uncovered through the ship’s oral history project with over three hundred interviews completed over the last twelve years.

Before answering these three questions however, the origin, operation and application of the oral history program will be examined for the reader.

### ORIGINS

A representative of the Home Port Alliance approached Kean University in New Jersey to help BB-62 establish an oral history and education program after another university attempted and failed to move a program ahead. As a Marine Corps veteran (1967 - 70), and professor of American history and education at Kean who used oral history in my research in the past, I was asked to assume the task. Moreover, it had to be done quickly to prepare for the ship’s opening as a museum and memorial in Camden, NJ - an “order” common to all who served in the military.

The oral history part of the project was important to me as research reveals the common misperceptions of the military among the American public and, sadly, even in the popular media and academic publishing. For example, Lawrence Suid’s book, *Sailing on the Silver Screen: Hollywood and the U.S. Navy* (1996) showed how Navy skippers were often portrayed as demanding leaders while the crewmen were “happy go lucky” types requiring their guidance. The 1952 movie, *A Girl in Every Port*, starring the Marx brothers typified this approach.

Vietnam War reporting further confused the public impressions of the military especially following the 1968 TET offensive, which often portrayed our Army and Marine fighters as cowering in the face of an aggressive enemy. My personal experiences as a Marine lieutenant with the 5<sup>th</sup> Marine Regiment in Vietnam during 1969 proved just the opposite situation - totally dedicated “grunts” in the face of an enemy that greatly feared opposing us in open battle.

Today, textbooks continue this popular confusion over the military. For example, one college level text provides a special feature on the few prisoners who decided to remain with their North Korean captors in 1953, but totally neglects to analyze military tactics or the often-heroic actions of American troops during that conflict. Secondary school texts often provide similar impressions. In one secondary history book, only a short, lone paragraph is offered on the entire complex Pacific Theater during WW II.

When one ties these situations to the fact that only a small percentage of Americans ever serve in our now all-volunteer military, the need for an oral history program aboard BB-62 becomes obvious. The stories of the “participants” in history must be told in an as unbiased manner as possible.

### THE OPERATION

Any serious oral history program must have a solid research and operational structure supporting it. Otherwise, it will simply fall into a series of “old boy” stories tossed into some cabinet only to be lost years later.

The initial research basis came from Oral History Association studies and, from the many published works, the “dean” of oral historians Dr. Donald A. Ritchie’s work, *Doing Oral History* (2003). The practical side of creating a military oral history program came from Kean University historian James Jandrowitz who previously led a Vietnam veterans interview program at the university. A former Vietnam 3<sup>rd</sup> Marine Division infantry officer, Jandrowitz advised and supported BB-62’s early efforts.

Effective oral history programs also cost money as the old days of a ten-dollar tape recorder are gone. Funding for the work was provided by Homeport Alliance grants to create a studio and purchase equipment - including cameras, lighting and sound gear - conduct a week-long research study accompanied by then curator Scott Kodger on BB-62 in the Library of Congress archives, and initially operate the program for some years.

The program currently functions with three volunteers besides myself. Ron Gottardi, the Assistant Director, is a former IT professional, ship docent, trained weatherman, adjunct professor and our specialist in technology and World War II/Korean War interviews. He has also analyzed and cataloged the entire Stillwell collection of cassettes

and transcripts used by naval historian Paul Stillwell to write *The Battleship New Jersey - An Illustrated History* (1989). Ron is currently researching the typhoon of 1944 and Admiral Halsey's role in it. Brian Houghwout is a graduate student in museum science at Rutgers University - Camden and serves as an analyst and coordinates the transfer of interview copies to the Veteran's History Project in the Library of Congress via U.S. Senator Frank Lautenberg's office. Don Surowich serves as an analyst in his spare time and is a graduate of Kean University (BA / MA) who helped create the initial program while a graduate assistant at Kean. He is a current Teacher / History Department Chairperson at the Piscataway, NJ campus of the Middlesex County Vocational and Technical High School. Finally, the program has also benefited from over fifteen Kean University history undergraduate interns who completed much of the data entry and some interview analysis work. Many of them have since become history teachers in various school districts.

The program conducts interviews in varied settings including our shipboard studio using digital video cameras, via the telephone, and most recently, using computers and Skype software (thanks to Ron Gottardi!). The Oral History office can also transfer copies of crewmen donated old VHS tapes and government produced WW II vintage 16mm films to DVD. All of these materials are then analyzed for key words (i.e., Admiral Halsey, Admiral Spruance, etc.), which are stored in the computer using a searchable database developed by our office. Multiple backup storage media are used including Digital Tape, DVDs and CDs to ensure longevity of the collection.

Interviews aboard ship often involve two phases. First, the so-called "sit-down" part is completed in the studio. Three general questions form the basis of discussion normally lasting an hour. These include the person's initial involvement with the ship, their experiences aboard the ship and the impact of these experiences on their life. The questions are modified for men/women of other services who did not serve on the ship. Next, the interviewer often takes the interviewee to his/her (for female WW II shipyard workers!) former duty station to explain their specific task in order to help preserve the ship's technology history.

### **APPLICATION**

The Oral History Project, based on thirteen years of operation, offers an array of information and material for the ship and public. Walking about the vessel, interview clips are found in both audio and video format in various exhibits including New Jerseyans on the New Jersey, Admiral Halsey, Ship's History, Machine Shop, Dental Area, and Medical Area.

Several usages of oral history are offered for educational purposes. The 141-page *The Official Battleship New Jersey Teacher's Handbook* (T. Banit and Douglas Buchanan, 2003) contains numerous sections from the Oral History Project to help explain the ship to students and teachers, grades 6-12. A section is even offered on methods for oral history to be used in the classroom. Several thousand copies of the handbook were distributed to teachers in both printed and CD form based on the initial project grant funds. Second, the ship's Distance Learning Project receives interview clips from the Oral History Project. Based on specific requests from the Director of Education, pertinent clips were researched through the database and used in teaching students in distant classrooms via computer linkups.

Finally, the Oral History collection is being extended to other institutions for research purposes. Many interviewees have granted permission to have copies of their interviews sent to the Veterans History Project at the Library of Congress for storage and research. Currently, we are working with the project's initiating institution - Kean University - to send copies of all interviews to their library system for storage and research access to the larger student and national / international academic community. Of course, the ship will maintain the original interview collection in several digital formats and the Stillwell Collection, which lacks interviewee release forms, will remain aboard ship with possible research access granted based on permission of the ship's Curator.

And, oh yes - the answers to the three questions still need to be answered based on interviewees who were "there". Admiral Halsey received the message from Admiral Nimitz and quickly tore it up and threw it on the deck in deep hurt and anger knowing that he had chased the wrong enemy force. The boilers - I too am still amazed at the crew's ability to operate them under any conditions based on a number of hours listening to several interviewees explain their complex operation. As for Captain Snyder - he inspired and gained the crew's respect by both commanding and listening to them as he moved about the ship in a near 24-hour schedule while at sea.

Crew members who want to be interviewed should contact either Tom Banit [tbanit@kean.edu](mailto:tbanit@kean.edu) or Ron Gottardi at [rongo620@yahoo.com](mailto:rongo620@yahoo.com).

## Museum Ships Weekend 2012

Dave Burgess, WA2TVS, Chief Engineer, NJ2BB, Battleship Amateur Radio Station

### CANADA INVADES NEW JERSEY

Just after morning colors on Saturday June 2, 2012 a team from our neighbors to the North boarded the Battleship New Jersey with what appeared to be suspicious intentions. One of the team members was observed moving about the Main Deck waiving a medium size aluminum structure towards the sky while talking to himself. But it turned out to be a test of the Battleship New Jersey's communication systems.

Kevin Clements (Petty Officer, Second Class, Regulating Petty Officer (RPO), HMCS STAR), and his wife Donna had driven from their home in Welland, Ontario to participate in the weekend long Amateur Radio Event known as the Museum Ships Weekend. For the past 15-years museum ships from around the world have activated the hobby of Amateur Radio from their decks in an effort to communicate with other museum ships and Amateur Radio operators far and near.

The aluminum that PO Clements (VE3RCN) was waving was a portable antenna system used to make contacts via Amateur Radio earth orbiting satellites. He managed to talk with Hams in 15 states and the island country of Cuba. The waving motion was needed to keep the antenna aimed at the satellites that are traveling at speeds of 14,000 miles per hour.

Back in 1997 the Ham Radio operators onboard the former USS Salem CA-139, berthed in Boston, formulated the idea of trying to have as many museum ships activate their radio rooms for a weekend and talk, via radio, with as many other ships and operators as possible. That first event managed a roster of 10 ships. Over the years the event grew in popularity not only with museum ships around the world but also with the general population of licensed operators. This year, 2012, the number of registered ships was 99, located in 14 countries. They ranged from Battleships, Aircraft Carriers, Tugboats, Great Lake Steamers, Submarines, Destroyers and Fire Boats to memorials for ships on eternal patrol. This radio event now has operators from almost every country of the world. Since 2006 the Museum Ships Weekend has been sponsored and organized by our own group of Hams, the Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station (BNJARS).



Gift exchange between Kevin Clements (center), Phil Rowan (left) and Jason Hall (right)



Kevin Clements talking to someone via an earth orbiting amateur designed satellite.

While at the BB-62 on Sunday PO Clements, BB-62 CEO Phil Rowan and BB-62 Curator Jason Hall exchanged gifts to mark the occasion. From Canada and the "Friends of HMCS Haida", came a plaque of the HMCS Haida, a museum ship moored in Hamilton, Ontario and part of the Museum Ships Weekend Event. Mr. Rowan presented an engraved crystal paperweight followed by Mr. Hall presenting a piece of the Jersey's teak deck, referred to as a Challenge Coin.



*Kevin doing his antenna thing while talking to Cuba.*

With help from the Clements family, BNJARS members made contact with 1,106 Hams in 44 states, 34 countries and 24 other Museum Ships. All of our operations took place in the BNJARS radio shack located in the aft section of the BB-62 Radio Central on the Main Deck.

In some past years we have also powered up the ship's 1980 vintage equipment located in the Transmitter Room (Radio 2) off Broadway but the compartment temperatures were too extreme this year. Maybe next year.

The BNJARS radio shack is open to all visitors and crewmembers during our weekly Saturday work parties. Should you have trouble finding the shack dial 7778 or 7779 for help.

For more information concerning Museum Ships Weekend 2012 or Amateur Radio on the BB-62 please visit [www.nj2bb.org](http://www.nj2bb.org). Questions regarding BNJARS can be directed to Harry Bryant [aa2wn@arrl.net](mailto:aa2wn@arrl.net).



*A view inside the shack during the weekend, Dave Burgess is in the foreground and Vinnie Sallustio is on the air.*

# Post World War II Crew Member Returns to Big J

*Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer*

On August 25<sup>th</sup> a former crewmember, Richard Donnelly, returned to the ship for the first time since leaving it in 1946. His son David arranged for this trip and surprised his dad with a special tour of the ship followed by having him fire Mount 52. Richard Donnelly just celebrated his birthday the day before, he told me he was 86, and he looked great!

One of my fellow Brass Team volunteers, Frank O’Keefe, agreed to accompany Richard Donnelly and his son on their tour and take photos of their visit. The photos you see with this article were taken by Frank. As David Donnelly was leaving the ship for the day I mentioned to him that I would like to put an article in *The Jerseyman* about his dad’s visit and asked if he could send me some information about his time on the ship. The story he provided is below.

*As I was about to get drafted, I joined the Navy on August 13, 1945, a day before the Japanese war ended. (I guess when the Japanese learned I joined the Navy; they gave up - just kidding.) I was attending the University of Texas when, in October of 1945, I was called up for service. I attended boot camp at San Diego and “graduated” on November 19, 1945, Class 498.*

*After a short furlough I returned to the San Diego Naval Training School (boot camp). Then I was sent to Camp Schumaker near Oakland, CA. After several days I was assigned to the USS New Jersey and sent to Treasure Island. The next day, February 10, 1946, I boarded the New Jersey in San Francisco Bay. I transferred from a smaller ship to the New Jersey on a narrow gangplank*



*Richard Donnelly - 1946*



*Phil Rowan, Executive Director of the Battleship (right), welcomes David (left) and Richard (center) Donnelly on the pier.*



*Arriving, Seaman Second Class Richard Donnelly, accompanied by his tour guide for the day, volunteer Dave DiMarzio.*



*Father and son pose under those 16-inchers.*



without guardrails. As I was carrying my seabag on my shoulder it really got my attention, for I sure didn't want to fall between the two ships.

I was assigned to the Second Deck Division. The next day I was assigned to mess cook duty. I didn't even know what a mess cook was, but I sure found out. As I remember mess cook duty was supposed to be for a limited time, as the duty was rotated. I quickly discovered if you have anything to do with food on a ship you were in a pretty good position. I continued to volunteer for the duty because we did not have to stand watches. I later joined the crew serving in the CPO gallery, which was good duty as we had a lot of time off. Then I became Assistant Master-at-Arms on the mess deck even though I was only a Seaman Second Class. The ship was very short of personnel because many crewmen were being discharged.

After boarding the New Jersey we sailed to Long Beach, CA and anchored in the Bay. After several months we sailed for Bremerton, WA where the ship was to be decommissioned. At Bremerton we were docked nearby to the captured German Cruiser, Prinz Eugene, which was later used as one of the target ships on a nuclear bomb test on Bikini Atoll in the South Pacific.

I left the ship in August of 1946 and was sent to Norman, OK for discharge. Unfortunately, the only fellow crewman I remember is Chuck Van Ashe of Dearborn, MI. My time on the ship was enjoyable and a great experience.



Richard Donnelly adding his signature to the crew member Memorial Wall down on Deck 2, starboard side of the Turret 2 Barbette.



Volunteer John Alberta gives Richard Donnelly a quick briefing prior to letting him fire Mount 52, that's the trigger to fire the gun in his hand.



Frank was a little slow on the shutter finger on this one, but that wisp of smoke is evidence of the firing of Mount 52.



To cap off his day Richard Donnelly is presented a flag which had flown over the ship during the past week.

## Scuttlebutt

### **BATTLESHIP NAMED BEST OF PHILLY HISTORIC ATTRACTION BY PHILADELPHIA MAGAZINE**

*Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)*

The Battleship New Jersey was named the Best Historic Attraction in Philadelphia Magazine's "Best of Philly" 2012 edition this month! For more information, pick up a Philadelphia Magazine at a newstand near you, or visit them online at [www.phillymag.com/philly/best-of/historic-attraction-2012](http://www.phillymag.com/philly/best-of/historic-attraction-2012).

### **BATTLESHIP AWARDS TEN CAMDEN STUDENTS WITH COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS**

*Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)*

The Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial hosted her first annual Camden Resident Student Scholarship Awards dinner on Friday, June 22<sup>nd</sup> onboard the historic Battleship's wardroom, awarding ten students from Camden each with a \$1,000 scholarship.

State Senator Donald Norcross greeted and awarded each scholarship. The Honorable Dana L. Redd, Mayor of Camden, also attended the ceremony. Each of these students, all Camden residents, were selected by their respective schools; one from each of the eight secondary schools in Camden, plus one student from Camden County College and one student from Rutgers University, Camden.

The students receiving the initial scholarships from the Battleship include:

- ★ Adeima Ibanga, Brimm Medical High School
- ★ Nyazia Coney, Camden High School
- ★ Mariah N. Martines, Camden Academy
- ★ Victor Truong, Camden Catholic High School
- ★ Angelica Santiago, Camden County College
- ★ Richelle Ran, Creative and Performing Arts High School
- ★ Gregoria M. Lora, Leap Academy
- ★ Angel Rodrigues, MetEast High School
- ★ Augustin E. Bruno, Rutgers Camden
- ★ Donte Muse, Woodrow Wilson High School

As a Camden, New Jersey-based institution, the Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial is committed to furthering the educational aspirations of Camden resident students. A key part of the Battleship's mission is to provide positive benefits and educate students and residents of her homeport of Camden.

### **TOM CLANCY VISITS THE BATTLESHIP AND RECEIVES A BEHIND THE SCENES TOUR**

*Larry Hennessy, Docent Supervisor, Encampment Watch Officer*

Tom Clancy, internationally known author, came aboard the Battleship on a Sunday afternoon in May. With him were his wife and her mother. Tom and the rest of his entourage joined us on a very pleasant tour of the Battleship New Jersey. This was his second tour of the ship; a couple years ago he was onboard for his birthday party.

Thanks to my partner Frank Chiacchio I got to give Tom and his folks a very comprehensive tour. Tom was very knowledgeable and it gave me a real kick when a couple of times I could show him something that was new to him. Frank and I purchased BB-62 hats for Tom and his wife. My partner expressed the hope that we might see a picture of him on the back flap of his next book wearing the hat we gave him. My impression of Tom Clancy was that he is just a regular guy, very engaging very pleasant without a desire to be treated in any special way. It was also a once in a lifetime experience for the both of us.

**BATTLESHIP ADDS JOSEPH AZZOLINA, JR. TO BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

*Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)*

Following their June 27<sup>th</sup> Board Meeting, the Home Port Alliance for the USS New Jersey, America's most decorated battleship, together with Phil Rowan, Executive Director, Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial, announced the appointment of Joseph Azzolina, Jr. as a new member of the Board of Trustees.

*"Today is truly a historic day for the Home Port Alliance and the Battleship New Jersey" said Rodney Sadler, Chairman of the Board of Trustees for the Battleship. "We have added an outstanding Trustee, who will carry on the legacy of his father, Captain Joseph Azzolina, former State Senator/Assemblyman who served on the New Jersey and was a key player in the effort to bring her back to her home state. Joe wants to continue the preservation and maintenance of the Battleship New Jersey as a legacy to his father's relentless efforts on her behalf."*

*"To follow in the footsteps of my father on the Board of Trustees for this great battleship is truly an honor" explained Mr. Azzolina. "I look forward to continue the work that the Board, staff and volunteers of the Battleship have accomplished and to further expand the mission of this museum and memorial."*

Mr. Azzolina, currently Vice-President of Food Circus Super Markets, based in Middletown, NJ, formerly served as a Board Member of the Battleship New Jersey Foundation. *"Joe brings strong business and strategic planning experience, strengthens our relationship with the State and opens some important doors for partners and supporters in Central and Northern New Jersey"* said Rowan.

**NEW OVERNIGHT ENCAMPMENT PROGRAM MANAGER APPOINTED**

*Rich Zimmermann, Overnight Encampment Volunteer*

Al Alkins, former Docent and Watch Officer has been appointed Manager of the Battleship New Jersey Encampment Program. This program is the largest ship based encampment program in North America. Most years we run 13,000 to 15,000 overnight campers. Two years ago we topped 17,000 campers when the Boy Scouts ran a Jamboree in Virginia. That summer we had about 1,500 campers from as far north as Canada. On a camp night it is not unusual to have campers, young and old from New Jersey, Pennsylvania, New York, Connecticut, Virginia and Ohio. Our long distance award went to a family from Australia who was touring the U.S.



**NEW JERSEY DRIVERS: SHOW YOUR SUPPORT OF THE BIG J**

*Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)*

Drivers in New Jersey can show your support of the Big J by purchasing and displaying a Battleship New Jersey license plate. Money for the plates goes to the ongoing restoration and maintenance of the Battleship. Visit [www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicle/order\\_specialty.htm](http://www.nj.gov/mvc/vehicle/order_specialty.htm) and click USS New Jersey, or visit your local New Jersey Motor Vehicle Commission facility.

**ENJOY A COCKTAIL AT THE BATTLESHIP TIKI BAR!**

*Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)*

Now visitors can end their tour of the Big J with a cocktail... or a beer, glass of wine or soft drink! The Battleships new Tiki Bar will be open from noon to 4 pm on Saturdays and Sundays in October. Guests can enjoy a cool cocktail, cold beer or even Battleship wine, soft drink or water at the Tiki Bar, located on the pier next to the South Elevator Tower.



**BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY SPEAKER'S BUREAU**

*Brian Callahan, Battleship New Jersey Speakers Bureau*

Our Speaker's Bureau began with George LoPresti and George Fore setting up a slide presentation with appropriate script ... their effort was aided by many others too numerous to mention. The talk covers a brief history of battleships, significant events in U.S. battleship history, and highlights of the tour and museum that is BB-62. The program can take one hour with the full script or can be reduced to accommodate local needs of different audiences.

Church groups, Rotary Clubs, retirement villages, school groups, and social organizations have regularly requested presentations. Our object is twofold: get the message out about the NJ Battleship Memorial and Museum, also, simply encourage folks to visit The Battleship... again and again.

Presently, speakers include Arlene Baker, Bob Catando, Rich Castro, Bob Morris, Rich Zimmermann, and any others willing to give of their time. Both Jack Willard and the Volunteer Affairs Office receive speaking requests that are passed to Brian Callahan for scheduling. Let Jack Willard or Brian Callahan know if you want to volunteer as a speaker for the ship.

Currently, engagements are scheduled for the Medford Sunrise Rotary, Moorestown Presbyterian Church, and Merchantville Women's Club... all in the coming months.

In the future we are looking for a PC-adaptable projector to make PowerPoint presentations of the slides; the 70 slides with appropriate captions have been converted to PowerPoint format.

**WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA EVENT ON THE BIG J**

*Rich Zimmermann, Overnight Encampment Volunteer*

One nice summer day, a special project took place on the Battleship. Wreaths Across America filmed a commercial on board for their project. The project started several years ago when a wreath maker in Presque Isle, ME had a surplus of wreaths at Christmas time. He loaded them in a truck and took them to Arlington National Cemetery where he placed them on several thousand military graves. The project was so well received he decided to do this each year. The project has grown over the years and now encompasses all of the major national cemeteries.

Wal-Mart came on board as a major sponsor and they decided to make a commercial about the project. They were looking for a good venue to host the commercial shoot. They selected the Battleship New Jersey. It was quite a gala production; they invited hundreds of military families to be part of the day, even provided free lunches. They had two bands, a country singer and a full TV team. As we approach the holidays, watch for the commercial, you might recognize the location, some of the crew and the Battleship New Jersey.



**CAPTAIN ROBINSON RETIREMENT CEREMONY HELD ONBOARD**

*Rolland Garber, Docent Supervisor, Encampment Watch Officer (Source: U.S. Navy Website)*



CAPT. Robinson was a Surface Warfare Officer from Omaha, NE. In 1976 he enlisted and began boot camp at Great Lakes, IL in June 1977. Following Personnelman "A" school and submarine training, he served in USS Casimir Pulaski and qualified in submarines during his first patrol. Selected for an NROTC scholarship, he graduated in 1982 from the University of Wisconsin with a B.S. in Economics (Math Emphasis). In his senior year, Captain Robinson was a Secretary of the Navy Distinguished Midshipman Graduate and received the Economics Department Senior Thesis and Honors Graduate awards. In



1986 CAPT. Robinson was selected as a COMNAVSURFPAC "Shiphandler of the Year." Sea tours included division officer assignments in battleship USS New Jersey, department head tours as Chief Engineer in USS John A. Moore and as an inspector with CINCLANTFLT Propulsion Examining Board, and Executive Officer of USS John S. McCain. CAPT. Robinson then commanded USS Spruance from January 2001 to September 2002. During his command USS Spruance completed deployment workups with the USS John F. Kennedy Battle Group, a Mediterranean deployment, and received the CINCLANTFLT Golden Anchor Award for 2001 and 2002. He commanded USS ANZIO from July 2007 until March 2009.

CAPT. Robinson held his retirement service onboard the Battleship New Jersey on Friday, July 13, 2012. There were 8 active duty Captains as side boys. The reception was held in the Wardroom.

**CAPTAIN ARMSTRONG RETIREMENT CEREMONY HELD ONBOARD**

*Rich Zimmermann, Overnight Encampment Volunteer (Source: U.S. Navy Website)*



CAPT. Armstrong first entered the U.S. Marine Corps in 1968. Tours included Vietnam 1969 - 1970, aide to Commander U.S. 7<sup>th</sup> Fleet, Aide to Commander U.S. 6<sup>th</sup> Fleet, Marine Barracks, Charleston SC, and the Drill Field, Parris Island, SC. CAPT. Armstrong was meritoriously promoted to Corporal and eventually earned the rank of SGT, USMC. He then left the Marine Corps in 1974 on pursuing an Education and a Nursing degree. CAPT. Armstrong returned to the service in the U.S. Naval Reserve in 1989 assigned to Fleet Hospital 20, Philadelphia Naval Hospital. He then served in Operations Desert Shield and Desert Storm



with Fleet Hospital 15, Al Jubail, Saudi Arabia 1990 - 1991. He then saw service as OIC, Det. 7 Fleet Hospital, Fort Dix, OIC, Troop Medical Clinic, Camp Behring, Kuwait during Operation Iraqi Freedom 2005; OIC, Det. W OSHU Portsmouth, VA, Division Officer Emergency Trauma 2004; Department Head Emergency Trauma 2010 -2012 PSHU Portsmouth, VA; and recently Trauma Team Leader, NATO Role 3 MMU, Operation Enduring Freedom, Kandahar, Afghanistan 2011 -2011.

Captain Armstrong held his retirement service onboard the Battleship New Jersey on Saturday, September 8, 2012. The reception was held on the O1 level outside the Admirals Cabin.

## Scout Refurbishes Battleship Model and Trailer for Eagle Scout Project

Reprinted from the Battleship's Official Website [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org)

Blake Burnett took on a task as big as a battleship! Well, at least as big as the Battleship New Jersey 30-foot model and trailer! The model, which had been out in the elements for years, was in major need of a restoration. Blake took this challenge on for his Eagle Scout project. Once completed, he has taken the Battleship model to local parades and events throughout New Jersey and the Delaware Valley.

Below are some photos of the restoration project. If you would like to reserve the Battleship model at your event or business, please email [j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org](mailto:j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org) or call (866) 877-6262 Ext. 144.



## Turret 2 Experience Update

*Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer*

This is an update to an article Tom wrote for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2011 issue. The photos in that piece showed this area under construction, now the work is complete and the lower levels of Turret 2 look awesome! The ships painter, the Brass Team and the Radio Club have spent a lot of time over the last year getting these areas ready to open to the public, and we're very proud of the results! According to the ships curator, all of the required permits to open this area have been submitted, and we anxiously await their approval. Visitors to this area will be in for a treat, but for now here's a selection of photos giving you a sneak peek. To see more photos visit my website at [www.usnewjersey.com/picsrect.htm](http://www.usnewjersey.com/picsrect.htm).



3. View looking down into the powder handling area.



1. Load a shell into a hoist and send it up to the gun.



4. Powder passing scuttles and immersion tank.



2. Down a brand new ladder to the third shell deck.



5. Firing triggers for 16-inchers in Main Battery Plot.

## The Quest to Fire Mount 52

*Ken Kersch, Former Crewmen (Vietnam Cruise), Encampment Supervisor*

I'm not sure how many of you know that we've been firing Mount 52 on the Battleship since June 27, 2009, which was the ship's 7<sup>th</sup> Battleship Blast, our annual fund raiser. I thought you might be interested to hear what it took to get to be able to fire one of the ship's 5-inch mounts again.

The quest to fire the 5-inch gun started with a discussion between Marty Waltemyer, who is the New Jersey's resident gun expert, and me about the possibility of getting one of the guns working again. We talked about what would be needed as far as parts and what work would be required. Marty said there were no parts needed as the guns already had the firing pins in place. Marty was a great teacher and taught me a lot about the 5-inch guns. Some of the instruction from Marty included how to manually load the guns, an overview of the equipment and procedures for loading and firing of the guns.

The next step in the process was a discussion with Troy Collins, the CEO at the time, about the possibility of firing the 5-inch gun. He required us to submit a proposal on safety and procedures for firing the gun. I prepared these documents for him and after numerous meetings and revisions we were getting closer to receiving authorization for this endeavor, but then Troy Collins left the Battleship for another position.

It was then that I entered into discussions with the new CEO, Jim Shuck, about firing the gun. Eventually authorization was granted and I began preparing to do an after-hours test firing of the gun. Paul Neissner volunteered to help with the project and was a great asset in preparing the gun. Paul worked in the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard in the late 60s and worked on the refit of the New Jersey. He had experience working on the guns and getting them ready for Vietnam. We searched the ship for all the 5" short powder cases we could find. There were about 8 of them. I had several discussions with the staff of the USS Massachusetts on the firing of their 5-inch guns. They provided helpful information along with where to obtain primers that fit the short powder cases.

Just as we were approaching a time when we were ready to test fire the gun, Jim revoked the previous authorization, based on a conversation he had with the USS Cod. On the Cod, there is a 200 foot safety zone around the gun. Jim stated that we did not have the area to do that on the New Jersey. After a strong discussion, it was pointed out that there was a 40mm gun tub right by the 5-inch gun and during World War II and Korea, when both the 5-inch and 40mm guns were firing, no sailors were killed. It was then that Jim agreed to a test-fire of the gun. Jim preferred to use acetylene gas as the accelerant as opposed to black powder. We honored his request, but the resulting discharge resulted in only a small "pop" sound. I had two powder casings loaded with 1 pound of black powder each. At the time of firing there was a tug and barge anchored



*Firing Mount 52, in a tribute to Buff Moran.*



*Paul and Ken load a shell in Mount 52.*



*The "Gun Crew", Paul Neissner (left), John Alberta (center) and Ken Kersch (right).*



off the port side of the ship, so an advisory radio message was sent to the crew, notifying them that the New Jersey would be test-firing the 5-inch gun. After the discharge of the second black powder shell, the crew from the tug responded with "we surrender" over their loud speakers, which not only gave us a great laugh, but confirmed that using black powder was the better accelerant. At this time, Jim realized it would be safe to fire the 5-inch guns, and gave authorization for the continuation of this endeavor.

The gun crew, as we call ourselves, consists of Paul Neissner, John Alberta, and myself. We began regularly firing the gun with the foot manual foot pedal inside the mount. However this posed a few challenges. First, this did not allow the person firing the gun to see what it looked like and second, it was a tight spot to get into in the mount. Paul and I discussed various methods to remotely fire the gun from outside the mount. We took the electric firing trigger out of the mount for the shooter to use. On the foot pedal we attached an air cylinder operated by an electric solenoid valve connected to a small air compressor. When the shooter pulls the trigger the solenoid allows air from the compressor storage tank into the cylinder pushing the pedal down and firing the gun. There is a key switch in the circuit that acts as a safety switch, which is controlled by one of the gun crew members. The trigger outside allows the shooter to be outside the mount and see the effect as well as keeps their clothes from getting dirty.

One day while we were loading the powder cases with 2 pounds of powder, which only fills a small portion of the powder case, Paul said "I wish I had some popcorn." I told him there was some in the First Class Mess. He was off like a flash and that began the tradition of using popcorn to fill the void in the powder cases. Not only is it a great way to recycle what would be thrown out, it also creates a great illumination at night.

We are also firing the 40mm saluting guns on both the port and starboard side. This is also done for special events and saluting warships that come up the river. One thing that has really enhanced our overnight encampment program is the firing of the saluting gun at each encampment. This has been very well received by the campers and is the highlight of the night. We hold a raffle to see who will be the person to fire it that night. Everyone gets to see the gun fired but one lucky camper gets to fire it.

**EDITORS NOTE**

As mentioned above in Ken's article the gun was indeed fired for the first time on June 27<sup>th</sup> and I had the honor of sitting in the gunner's seat and stomping on the pedal to fire it. That night we had an auction for the privilege to fire the gun and myself and Ken Hoffman from Dietz and Watson had the bid up to \$1,000. At that point I had reached my limit and let the bidding continue without me, with Ken finally winning at \$1,600. After the close of the auction I talked to Ken about the things I do on the battleship as a volunteer and as the time to fire the gun approached Ken offered me the opportunity to fire the gun, even though he had the highest bid. It turns out Ken was an old Army guy like me, he fired 155mm howitzers. So, when the fireworks ended I climbed in the gunner's seat, and Ken participated in the loading, and two Army guys fired Mount 52 for the first time in close to twenty years, and it was awesome! The next year I fired the gun again, this time I stood on the deck with trigger in hand and got to watch the shot. Both times I had a BLAST! You can see a video of Mount 52 firing on my website, [Click Here](#).



*Ken Kersch (left) and Ken Hoffman (right) going over the operations of the gun prior to firing it that first night, June 27, 2009.*



*A frame from a video of the gun being fired by me that first night. To see the entire video follow the link provided.*

## Looking Back... USS New Jersey (2001) and USS Iowa (2012)

Tom Helvig, Command Master Chief (Ret), Former Writer/Editor of The Jerseyman



Eleven years ago, on September 23, 2001, ex-USS New Jersey was towed up the Delaware River and eased into her new pier in Camden, NJ. This pier is about 2 miles from where she was built, at the now long gone Philadelphia Navy Yard, and she was then commissioned on May 23, 1943. The long-awaited tow was only going to take the ship about 2 miles or so up river, and not the four hundred miles that ex-USS Iowa was towed by Seagoing Tug “Warrior“ from Richmond, CA South to San Pedro, CA. The excitement though, was very high for both ships. Battleship New Jersey in September of 2001, and the Iowa in May of 2012.

A sad memory about the ex-USS New Jersey tow is that there were no crowds of thousands lining the Delaware River shoreline as she made her short journey up-river. Not that the crowds in Philadelphia and South Jersey weren't ready and hadn't planned for it, and the volunteers that had worked aboard the New Jersey for so many months were also very ready to “Man The Rails”. But the ship's move was made secretly, in the middle of the night, and nobody knew about it...

The Coast Guard ran this show and permitted only a very few civilian line handlers aboard the ship. To say that the Volunteers were angry does not describe both the tragedy of 9/11 and the related injustice that was felt by this secret move event with the Battleship New Jersey. To a man, the disbelief of being cut out of this move, and missing their pride of being aboard New Jersey for the move and taking part as members of the volunteer crew that helped bring the “Big J” to life, lingers to this day.

World War II Veteran and long-time restoration volunteer George Hunt, summed up his disappointment and what was felt by most volunteers in the 3Q-2010 issue of *The Jerseyman*...

*“I began volunteering aboard in January of 2001. Then, I think we all remember how the tragedy of September 11, 2001 also screwed the volunteers out of riding the ship (in the middle of the night) just 2 miles north, as the Coast Guard monitored the tow from Broad-way Terminal to her new permanent pier on September 23, 2001. Yeah, as I remember it all of the volunteers were excited in anticipation, to ride aboard the Big J as she was to be towed from the southern Broadway Terminal, 2 miles upriver, to the northern Terminal. Tell me if I am wrong on the dates, but I think we all planned to be aboard for the tow early Sunday, September 16<sup>th</sup>, and we were all looking forward to it. But then the horrific World Trade Center sneak attack happened on Tuesday, September 11, 2001!*

*We were told on September 12<sup>th</sup> that the tow was to be postponed for about 2 months because the Coast Guard was too busy chasing terrorists, etc... So we were very surprised, and ticked off as hell, when we heard on Sunday, September 23<sup>rd</sup> that the ship had been stealthily towed to her permanent pier under the cover of darkness early that morning! Then when we heard they had paid civilian line handlers for the tow, we were ticked off again! During World War II we were handling mooring lines before these paid line handlers were even born!*





*Less than a month later, on Sunday, October 14, 2001, we had the ship's grand opening ceremonies on the Focs'le in front of turret number one, and volunteers who had taken training to be tour guide docents took the first visitors on tours of the greatest battleship in the history of the world, the USS New Jersey (BB-62). I'm glad I could be part of it!*

**George Hunt, Battleship New Jersey Volunteer  
USS Chara (AKA-58) - World War II  
Maple Shade, New Jersey**

**BATTLESHIP IOWA TO SAN PEDRO, CA, SATURDAY, MAY 26, 2012**

Excitement for Iowa's tow to San Pedro began with watching the website ([www.pacificbattleship.com](http://www.pacificbattleship.com)) as streaming images of the ship and tugs began pushing Iowa away from the pier... however the live streaming images had early transmission problems, and so we relied heavily on many incoming emails, all with attached high resolution photos from at least 30 to 35 observers at the shoreline and also on the Golden Gate Bridge. These digital images, in most cases, were not more than an hour old and so we then turned them around and sent them back out to several thousand readers and viewers that were included with our USS Iowa and USS New Jersey internet database listings. It was a busy Saturday...



In addition to the towing of Battleship Iowa, we had also received images taken of the USS Potomac, Presidential Yacht of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. USS Potomac was used to ferry President Roosevelt out to USS Iowa which carried his party to the Tehran Conference held in 1943.

The USS Potomac photos were provided to us about a week earlier, and before Iowa's tow to San Pedro. The Potomac photos were included in *The Iowan History Letter* for 3Q-2012 archived at [www.uss Iowa.org](http://www.uss Iowa.org).

On the following page are a few additional photos of USS Iowa, the first shows the ship at her pier just prior to the tow, and the other two were taken while she was under tow to San Pedro.







View looking forward at the freshly painted Focs'le.



RADM Jerry Gneckow, USN (Ret.), former Commanding Officer of USS Iowa and President of USS Iowa Veterans, addressing the crowd on opening day. (Photo by Bobbi Sutton)



USS Iowa at her new permanent berth in San Pedro, CA. (Photo by Bobbi Sutton)

# Battleship New Jersey Overnight Encampment Program

*Rich Zimmermann, Overnight Encampment Volunteer*

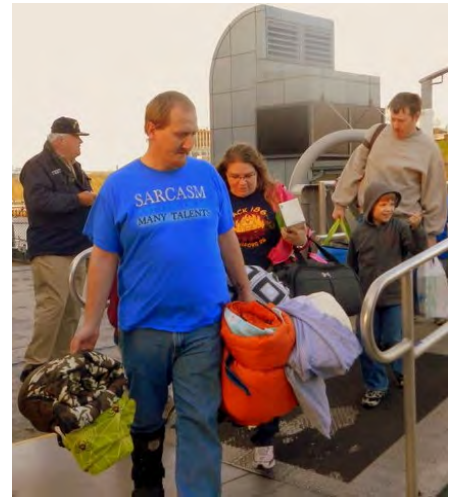
It all started with about 35 campers in 2001. The ship was looking for ways to expand our appeal to new people. The idea was to bring the kids and their parents aboard for an overnight experience. The program was successful from the start because of the interest and the enthusiasm of the docents and watch officers who met the campers, helped feed them and took them on a night time tour.

Boy has the concept grown. We are now the largest ship encampment program in North America and maybe beyond. In 2009, under the direction and salesmanship of Tom Jaskel, the camp program served 16,300, in 2010, under the direction of Joe Moran, we did over 17,000 campers. Unfortunately, both directors have passed on.

Why is our program so successful? It comes down to the dedication of the camp crew, about 20 docents who give up their Friday and Saturday nights on a regular basis. Creative leadership under the direction of Tom, Joe and now a committee headed by Paul Neissner, Ken Kersch and Bill Leibfrid and the involvement of a large group of support people, the Security Staff, Food Service, the Camp Store, Marketing/Sales and the Simulator jockeys. We all work together to give the campers a special feeling about their overnight experience. This is why many of the same troops and families come back every year and we are already taking bookings for 2013.

Some of the original docents who helped start the program are still on hand each weekend and look forward to their tours.

The real growth of the program came with the appointment of Tom Jaskel as Encampment 1, that's not a title, but a radio call sign. He was a natural leader and could work with everyone. The program grew from one person to a working team. New ideas were tried and evaluated; he initiated an outreach program to the scout troops in the greater north east. Because of this program on an average camp night we will have groups from New York State to southern Virginia. It is not unusual to have campers from Ohio, even Missouri and other more distant states. We are international with campers from Canada, Australia and Puerto Rico. They located us on the Battleship's website.



*Campers arriving onboard.*



*Dinner served from the chow line.*

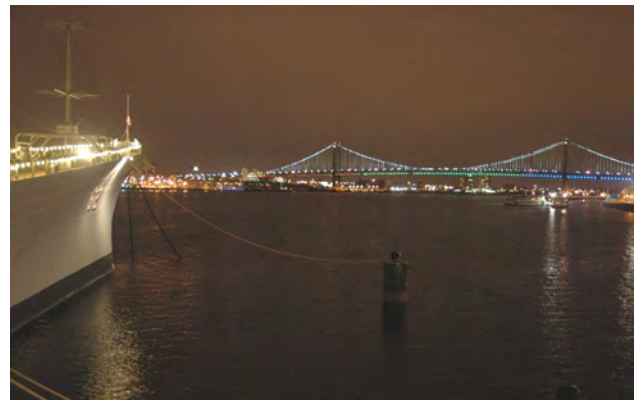


*Campers lining up to get their Dog Tags which have become popular souvenirs.*

Why is the program successful, of course, first it's the Battleship, then it's the Crew. From the moment a group of campers get on the Shuttle, they are greeted and educated.

They usually start their experience with the simulator. They ride a scout plane that was launched from the stern of the New Jersey. The volunteers and employees are positive and upbeat. They are knowledgeable and want to meet and talk with the campers. Campers are boarded and meet the Watch Officer or Camp OD who checks them in; they go to birthing and settle in for the overnight. The Camp Store is open and the sale of Dog Tags and other souvenirs is brisk. They go through a safety drill, fire drill, muster and colors. Then they go to the galley for chow - Pasta, Chicken Parmesan, with Bug Juice - yellow.

After chow comes the biggest thrill for the kids and adults, yes we get lots of adults onboard. We do a 2-hour night tour, led by experienced docents and watch officers. The tours end with a big bang. The Gun Crew selects a drawing winner to fire one of the 40mm saluting guns. That gets everyone's attention around the port. We end the evening with a movie or free time and of course the Geedunk.



*A view of the Ben Franklin Bridge from the pier.*

The next morning campers roll out early; have breakfast and the raising of colors. Then they have several hours to take a self-guided tour of the Battleship.

We ask for feedback from each troop, pack or family. The program gets rave reviews. Our best feedback is that people continue to come back year after year. Under Tom's direction we experimented with two of our most successful concepts - Girls Night and New Years Eve Camping on the Battleship. Both started slow and both have grown. We do several girls only nights each year, and each year more people join us for New Years Eve fireworks. If you are in the area, we invite you to either join the overnight New Years Eve or come on board to see the fireworks on the Delaware. It is a grand night on board the ship.

Who makes this program go? Our Camp Crew. Dedicated Men and Women who have a good knowledge of the ship and who like to work with families, and scouts.



*Campers line the rails to watch a firing of the ships starboard side 40mm salute gun.*



*USO Show under the tent on the fantail during a Girls Night Encampment.*

**ADULT ENCAMPMENTS ARE HERE**

VFW, military reunions and other adult groups, why just visit the Battleship when you can spend the night! Re-live life aboard our nation's largest battleship. We also offer menu upgrades, team-building programs, entertainment and more. Encampments are for groups only.

**CALL TODAY FOR MORE INFORMATION**

The price per person for an encampment is \$54.95. For more information contact the Battleship New Jersey's Encampment Department at (866) 877-6262 Ext. 203 or e-mail [overnights@battleshipnewjersey.org](mailto:overnights@battleshipnewjersey.org).

***Did You Know?***

***In September we had a mid-week encampment with 100 Middle School Students from Connecticut. At this point we've had over 11,000 campers registered for 2012.***

## Who Said a Woman Can't Keep a Secret?

*Arlene Baker, Overnight Encampment Volunteer*

This is something my aunt likes to say and she should know, she kept a top secret for over 35 years. Bonalyn Wiedrich Selb was a Navy code breaker and a part of Project Ultra. Her father was a merchant sailor during WW I and Bonnie dreamed of growing up and joining the Navy. But of course that couldn't be since with the exception of nurses there were no women in the Navy. Then in 1942 the Navy created the WAVES (Women Accepted for Voluntary Emergency Service). The day after she turned 20 (the minimum age of enlistment for women at that time) she and a girl friend went down to the recruiting office and signed up. There was only one problem - women under the age of 21 needed parental permission and Bonnie hadn't told her father. He wasn't too happy about women being in the Navy but the night before she was to leave he gave in and signed her permission form.



*Bonalyn Wiedrich Selb*

She went to basic training at Hunter College in the Bronx which the Navy was using for WAVE training. Upon graduation she was told that she was selected for a top secret project and that those selected could not say what they did. The officer also said that just because they were women don't think they wouldn't be shot if they did talk because they would be. Her training for this assignment was at the National Cash Register Company in Dayton, OH. It was there that they learned to assemble and operate the "Bombe", an early computer. This whole project had been developed by the English at Bletchley Park. They invented the "Bombe" to decode messages made on the Nazi Enigma machine.

After training Bonnie and the other WAVES, along with their computers, went to Washington D.C. There they worked in shifts around the clock in a facility guarded by Marines. Bonnie worked on Project Ultra which was decoding German intercepts; the other part was Project Purple which was decoding Japanese intercepts. The process was divided into several parts so that no one person knew the entire process so that it couldn't be breached. When people asked what she did she would tell them she was just a pencil pusher. Having a top secret clearance had some advantages. She was often invited to embassy parties. Mrs. Eleanor Roosevelt was interested in integration and was curious if the WAVES would be open to this option. Bonnie and others were invited to tea with Mrs. Roosevelt to discuss the possibility. While the girls from the North were open to this the Southern girls were definitely opposed.

Some of the main intelligence the project gathered concerned the location of German U-boats. U.S. merchant ships were targets of those U-boats. Leo "Fritz" Selb was a sailor on one of those merchant ships.



*Bonalyn today with Arlene Baker.*

Bonnie and he were in the same class at Gloucester City High School. After the war he asked her to marry him. They eventually moved to Mullica Hill, NJ and raised three children. She went to work for the post office. Meanwhile the military kept Project Ultra and Purple top secret. They made sure third world countries got their hands on the Enigma machines and unbeknownst to them the U.S. could keep tabs on their communications.

Then in 1980 the National Security Council lifted the top secret and Bonnie could finally tell her family what she did during WW II. This is when she likes to use the line "Who Said a Woman Can't Keep a Secret". She told Fritz she was saving her a man for after the war and he was it. His reply was now you tell me thirty-five years too late to get away. Today Bonnie lives in Mantua, NJ and speaks about her experiences at various locations including to the girls' encampments on the Battleship. She is active with WAVES National, an organization for women who have served in the Navy, Marines and Coast Guard. She is also a member of the only all women American Legion Post in NJ.



## A visit to USS Alabama

*John Makara, Overnight Encampment Volunteer*

I visited the USS Alabama in July 2011. It was totally awesome to see a battleship with a full complement of 20mm and 40mm guns. The AA guns on the main deck were in pristine shape, much better than her 16" turrets and most other parts of the ship. Only one 5" gun was open but you were allowed inside, it was in good condition. Once you got above the 02 level, a lot of scraping and painting was needed. You could go as high as the secondary con on the 08 level. She still has one catapult and her aft crane.

Her tour routes were marked with arrows, instead of lines, so as you walked thru you could easily miss an arrow and get off track. I gave many people directions and several mini-tours as well. The ship was ungodly hot with very few spaces air conditioned.

Many of the displays focused on folks from Alabama, including Admirals Moorer (first CNO) and Denton (POW pilot in Vietnam). Below decks she had a nicely lighted roster of all of her crewman, a tribute room to USS Evans (built in Alabama), a diorama of TF 38.3, a Navy League display, a display on USS Mobile CL-63, etc. You were able to see the machine shop, barber shop, brig and laundry services. Her medical facilities were forward, similar to ours but like everything else much smaller as we are 200 feet longer.

You could look in the Captain's at sea cabin but not actually go in it. She had a similar sized officer's wardroom with fancy silver like New Jersey, and a CPO wardroom along with a warrant officers wardroom that would seat about 24.

You were able to see CIC but not go in; it was plexiglassed off. The plot rooms were open but the machines were not accessible, you were caged into a narrow passageway between them. One engine room was open, you got to go into it, it was pretty wide open but there was no access to her Broadway equivalent. You come up into the lower handling room that had 4 hoists; next to it is the magazine that you get to go into a little way but it was caged off.

She had a barbette open for tours as well. They had a fancy sign stating they were the only ship to have such a space available and what an accomplishment it was. Which was true - in 1984 - when the barbette was opened. That will soon change when ours is completed. You enter from deck 3 where there is a 16" shell that you can raise/lower with a switch - its movement is visible thru plexiglass. They had numerous shells on the deck; you walk down a tight spiral staircase onto deck 4. You walk around that with a good view of the bottom of the turret. Like the superstructure, it is in dire need of a scrape & paint job as well.

The museum included the submarine USS Drum (SS-228) which was in excellent condition; as well as two dozen airplanes and a dozen armor pieces. The grounds also had nice tributes to the Korean and Vietnam Wars. She opened as a museum in 1965, and although some of the displays are a bit dated, it is a well done museum with the only downside being there was no one around to ask questions.



*View of the ship from the shore.*



*A beautifully detailed quad 40mm mount.*



*Row of three 20mm guns on deck.*

## They Ask Me Why I Do This...

Bob Day, Volunteer Docent

I'm often asked why I have been giving guided tours of the Battleship New Jersey for over ten years. There are many reasons - meeting a lot of interesting people from all over the nation and all over the world - getting to convey what went on on a typical day aboard the nation's most highly decorated battleship - learning something new about her almost every time I come aboard - and many more.

But the following recollection of one particular experience, kind of sums it all up.

Bancroft School and Neuro-Center, in nearby Haddonfield, NJ, is a leading provider of programs and support for children and adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities, autism and acquired brain injuries. One day, during my second year as a Docent, one of the Bancroft Teachers came aboard about a group of boys and girls about age 12, for a tour of the ship. The youngsters were all obviously dealing with some disabilities.

Having never faced a situation like that before, I got the Teacher aside to ask about what I should expect. She assured me that all the youngsters were just like any kids their age group, as far as understanding my presentation. They just had limits to their communication skills and in some cases motor skills that required a little patience.

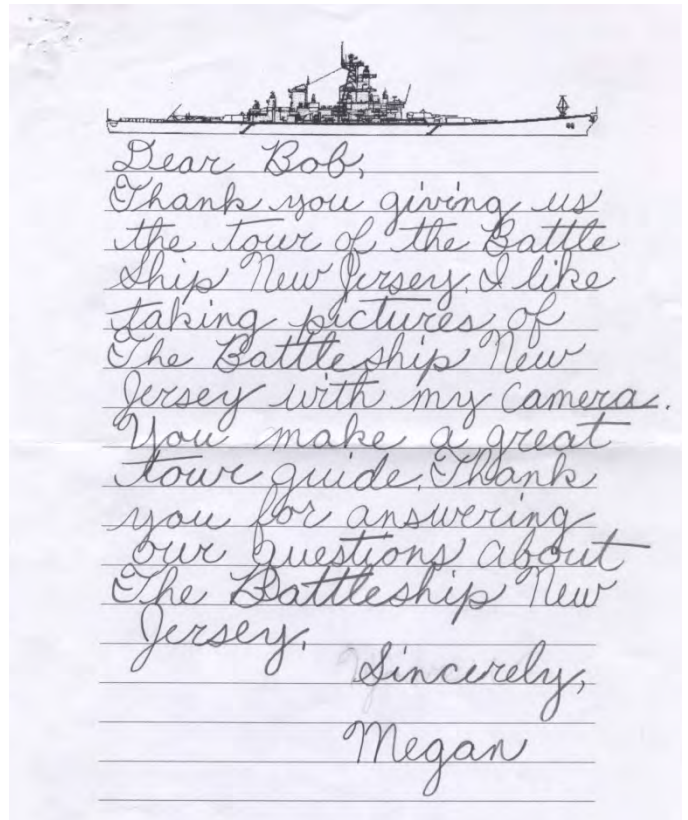
We set off and all had a wonderful time with many good questions and lots of interest.

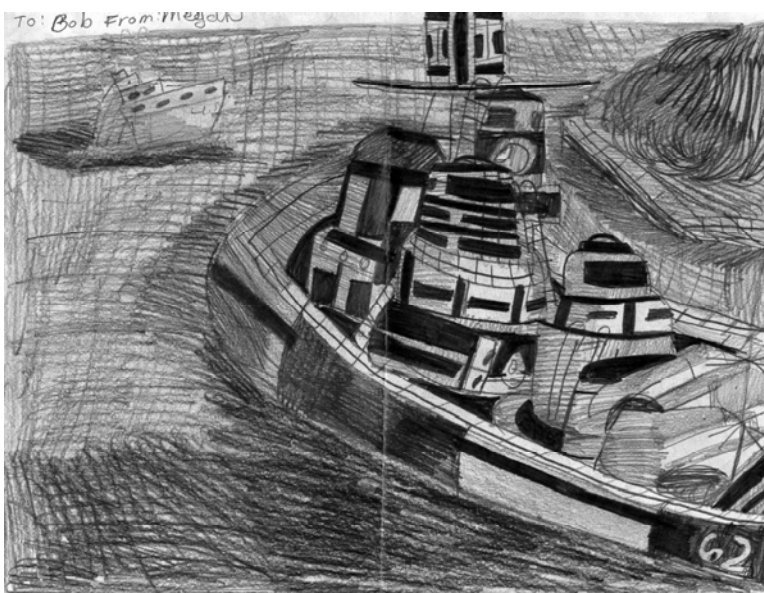
Normally with a group of young people, I would figure out who the "trouble maker" was as we proceeded, and by the time we reached the Bridge I would get his name (almost always a boy). At the Bridge I would quietly ask "Fred" to sit in the chair on the wing of the Bridge, and I'd go on to explain to the group that only the Captain sat in any of the three chairs on the Bridge, and that anyone else would be in trouble. Then I would add "so I'm going to have to put "Fred" here on report". This usually got a laugh from his peers, and the trouble maker was usually pretty quiet for the rest of the tour.

With these Bancroft youngsters, I did not want to embarrass anyone, and there was really no "trouble maker" in the group, so I selected one gal, named Lori, who seemed to be a little better off than some of the others, and asked her to sit in the chair. When I got to the explanation of the chairs I said "so this must be "Captain Lori". They all enjoyed that and had a good laugh.

A few days after the tour, I got a batch of wonderful letters from these youngsters, some of them with artwork, thanking me for the tour. I'm sure it was a project directed by the Teacher, but the messages were personalized and sincere. Both Lori and one of the others mentioned the "Captain Lori" scenario. Some of the letters and artwork are included here and on the following page. Obviously these kids had a great time, and I am glad I was able to handle their situation with the appropriate respect.

As a docent, and in life in general, it doesn't get much better than this.






Dear Bob,  
 Hi!! How are you doing today? It's Captain Lori. Thanks a lot for giving us a wonderful, excellent, nice tour. Thank you for answering a lot of my questions that I asked you. I really liked sitting in the Captain's chair 😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊😊!!!!!! I hope to see you again. Thanks !☺!☺!☺!

Sincerely,

Lori Ann Russo



Dear Bob,  
 Thanks a lot for giving us a tour of the U.S.S. Battleship New Jersey. You were funny, bringing up stuff like Captain Lori, and having me calling myself Head Captain Kyle. The tour was great, thanks again.  
 your friend  
 Kyle.



## Looking Back... The Jerseyman 4Q-2006 - USS Houston and HMAS Perth...

Tom Helvig, Command Master Chief (Ret), Former Writer/Editor of The Jerseyman

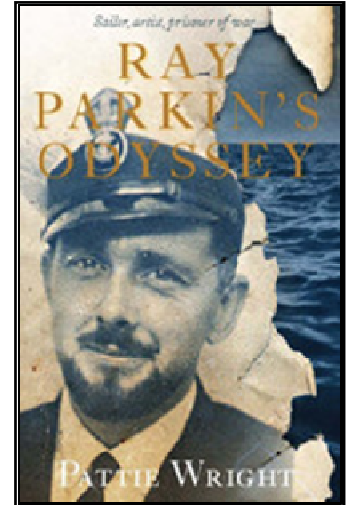


If readers can locate a copy of the 4Q-2006 issue of *The Jerseyman*, it contains an article about **Master Chief Bill Stewart, USN/Retired**, a **USS Houston** survivor and held as a POW by the Japanese for 42 months during WW II.

The article below is also a story about the loss of USS Houston and HMAS Perth on March 1, 1942. But particularly about a Perth survivor, **Chief Petty Officer Ray Parkin, RAN** (Royal Australian Navy).

Recently, we were introduced to **Pattie Wright**, the Author of "**Ray Parkin's Odyssey**". And, at our request, Pattie has provided us an article about her book that will appear concurrently in the October 1, 2012 issues of *The Jerseyman* and *The Iowan History Letter*.

Pattie's first book was '**The Men of the Line**' (Melbourne University Press/Miegunyah Press, 2008) an oral history of the Thai Burma Railway. And after four years work, '**Ray Parkin's Odyssey**' is now being published by Pan Macmillan, Sydney, Australia and will be available in bookstores on 18 September 2012. It can also be purchased from the author, or online by Pan Macmillan. For further information on how to get a copy of Pattie Wright's book, including for the iPhone, iPad, or iPod touch, please let me know... - **Tom Helvig**



### CHIEF PETTY OFFICER RAY PARKIN, AM, RAN, HMAS PERTH 1 - 'AN AUTHOR'S VIEW'

Over the years, since my first reading of Ray Parkin's extraordinary wartime trilogy, '**Out of the Smoke**', '**Into the Smother**' and '**The Sword and the Blossom**', (The Hogarth Press 1960-68) I have felt there is a 'Secret Ray Parkin Society' out there in the ether. Perhaps it's something I want to be true. But, surely it exists? Having just written '**Ray Parkin's Odyssey**', the biography of this artist and author, this POW and sailor, and receiving enormous interest from across the globe, I feel 'the Society' might just be real. The continuing real life connections first forged in battle between HMAS *Perth* and USS *Houston* only confirm my wonder at the interest in this Royal Australian Navy Chief Petty Officer and what he wrote. And, if one is watching the clock, these connections only flourish some seventy years after the Battle of the Sunda Strait where the two ships were both lost in a heroic battle.

Ray's story is long, with rather an unexpected, literary finale. The biography recounts his eighteen years in the RAN, beginning in Australia's young navy in 1928 and onto his time as part of the commissioning crew of the Modified *Leander* light cruiser, HMAS *Perth* - his favorite ship - and her first outing at the 1939 New York World Fair. World War 2 interrupted many a life, as it did the ship's journey home and *Perth* found herself on Kingston Station in the oil protection business at the outbreak of war. The horror months of the Mediterranean campaign ensued, first fighting the Italians and then fending off multiples of German dive-bombing Stukas in and around Alexandria and Malta and the battles for Greece and Crete. But *Perth* was a lucky ship in those days. Through all those torrid early times at war until her end, PO Ray Parkin was *Perth's* helmsman, and after she sank, he then became her unofficial chronicler.

In the fight for Java, Ray was one of the lucky ones to make it into the water alive on the night of 1 March 1942 and even luckier to have swum onto the coral edge of Sangieng Island in the Sunda Strait. From there, he and nine others rigged a derelict lifeboat to sail home to Australia. The attempt was valiant, but the inevitable turned to reality when the lifeboat '*Anzac*' and her crew surrendered in Tjilatjap on the

southern shore of Java only eleven days later. Three and a half years as a POW followed in Java and Thailand on the death railway in Dunlop Force.

What stands Ray Parkin out from the many thousands of British, Australian, American and Dutch POW's up on the Thai Burma Railway is that he kept a diary - each day - and he drew, sketched and water colored everything he could from Japanese guards to the purple 'elephant hills' around Hintok, to the Thai river barges, the mushrooms, the orchids, their rotten canvas huts and the decline of the men around him. Ray's iconic imagine, entitled *'Two Malarias and a Cholera'* is now the emblem of the Changi Museum in Singapore.

Ray Parkin readied all of his papers, his meticulous diaries and his artwork to be considered and read, and this biographer is more than grateful. He left the world a mighty account of one man's life lived through a time of great turmoil. At times it is told with bitterness and confusion at man's weaknesses, but using his great talent as a writer with a love of words, the world, nature and the belief in the final strength of man, Ray Parkin has bequeathed an extraordinary account for all to remember not just him, but all of them: all of

those men who perished in the seas and later in the mud and disease of Thailand. Ray Parkin was a self-taught artist, author and philosopher... a perplexing and fascinating man, who, if you asked him what he was, he would call himself a sailor first and foremost.

Ray Parkin died in 2005, acclaimed not only for his art and his wartime trilogy, but also for his prize-winning masterpiece, **H. M. Bark Endeavour**, an extraordinary evocation of Captain Cook's ship and the voyage up the east coast of Australia in 1770.

*Ray Parkin's Odyssey'* is an extensively researched biography. It is illustrated by 100 paintings, photographs and sketches, and it is the first full and comprehensive account of Ray's life and wartime experiences. This author was fortunate enough to be able to use firsthand accounts from filmed interviews with Ray himself as well as personal accounts from other *Perth and Houston* men and the too few surviving ex-POW's of the Thai Burma and Japan. Other contributions to the biography came from access to Ray's letters, diaries and unpublished memories. I am looking up at Ray as I write this and praying that his biography is as powerful, moving and compelling as the publishers contend, but consider it quite a considerable story of a lad from an inner city Melbourne suburb who went to sea.



*This drawing is under the copyright of the Parkin Family and is presented here, with our thanks, through the courtesy of the Parkin family...*

My introduction to *'The Jerseyman'* came through the good work of Val Poss, recent office holder in the *USS Houston* Association, who introduced me to Bruce DeWald and then further contact was made with Command Master Chief Tom Helvig, USN (Ret.) and to his previous *Jerseyman* articles on *Perth and Houston*. So yes, once again, I feel the 'Secret Ray Parkin Society' is out there and flourishing, helping to weld the link and camaraderie between the two ships as strong and unfailing.

**Pattie Wright**  
**Blackburn, Victoria, Australia**

**EDITOR'S NOTE**

I called Master Chief Bill Stewart at his home in Kansas, on September 12 and passed on a "**Gedday**" to him from Pattie Wright, which he returned with a chuckle... Bill Stewart said that he knew two Australian sailors from HMAS Perth, **Petty Officer Freddie Parker**, and a **Petty Officer Lasslett**. "They were good people and we got along really well with the Australians." Bill Stewart spent 42 1/2 months as a POW, and most of it working as an electrician at the Ohasi mines at the Northern end of Honshu. Bill remembers that they were about 25km from Kamaishi where the huge Japanese steel works were located. Bill celebrated his 92 birthday this past July... - **Tom Helvig**

## Ships Bell Restoration Project

*Rich Thrash, Brass Team Volunteer*

Shortly after taking over his new position, Phil Rowan talked to me about several projects he had that were high on his “To Do List” to see how the Brass Team might be able to help.

One of those projects was to do something about the large steel bell that is mounted on the forward side of the base of our Discone Cage antenna on the bow. Phil and I walked up on the bow one day to look at the bell and it looked horrible. I had been aware of the deteriorating condition of the bell, but to be honest I didn’t know what to do to fix it. This bell had been restored by a local company and put back in place in February 2002. I originally thought it was replated, but as it turns out what they did was buff it to a high shine and applied a thick clear protective coating. Given the harsh marine environment it was exposed to it was only a matter of time until the coating was compromised and the bare metal it was protecting began to rust.

We talked about the feasibility of lowering it from its mount and working on it on the deck, but that solution posed a tough set of challenges given the weight of the bell and the steep upward slope of the deck below it. I could tell getting this project done would mean a lot to Phil so I talked to Dave Ratcliffe, another Brass Team member, and we came up with a plan.

The plan involved setting up some scaffolding under the bell to work from. We proposed to strip the failing clear coating off the bell, sand the surface to remove rust and then prime and paint the bell. We pitched this plan to the ships Curator and with his approval work began on June 9<sup>th</sup>. It didn’t take long for us to discover that the failed coating was almost impossible to remove with power tools; it seemed to melt and become gooey and even harder to get off. So, we broke out the hand scrappers and removed the coating the hard way, it took two consecutive Saturdays to get it all off.

On the morning of June 23<sup>rd</sup> we did some final sanding and prep before applying a coat of primer. In the afternoon the first coat of primer was lightly sanded and a second coat of primer was applied. When we left that day the bell was ready to be painted and lettered by the ships painter. When I returned on Saturday June 30<sup>th</sup> the painter had worked his magic and all that was left for us to do was replace the clapper.

In the span of just three weeks, and with a lot of hard work by the Brass Team on some of the hottest days of the summer, we were able to complete this project and have a finished product we could all be proud of. With all the rust removed from the bell it sounds a lot sweeter now too!

Another successful project completed by the Brass Team, a group I’m proud to have been a part of since 2001.



*The project begins what a mess...*



*Sporting a fresh coat of primer just two weeks later, what a turnaround!*



*Phil and I checked out the finished product just three weeks later. It turned out great, and sounded good when we rang it!*

## Upcoming Events on the Battleship New Jersey

### **OCTOBER 8, 2012 | THIRD ANNUAL BB-62 GOLF OUTING**

Sea Oaks Golf Course and Country Club is hosting our third golf tournament to benefit BB-62; Sea Oaks is situated in Little Egg Harbor Township off Route 539 in Ocean County, NJ. The events in 2010 and 2011 were very successful, and the ship is expecting even greater success this year. Golfers will start at 12:30 following a box lunch; there will be prize holes announced at the starting time; at day's end golfers and staff will enjoy dinner in the club's dining room overlooking the course.

Sea Oaks has a small hotel across from the course for folks wanting to stay over rather than drive home... after a grueling day of 18 holes. (humor on 'grueling') The tariff to play is \$175 per golfer, and numerous opportunities exist for partnerships and sponsorships of individual holes and the hospitality cart. For more information on this event see the flyer on the following page.

### **OCTOBER 27, 2012 | RUN FOR THE BATTLESHIP**

Experience a 5K fun run, beginning and ending at the Battleship. You'll run along the Camden Waterfront - past Campbell's Field, around the Adventure Aquarium, past the Susquehanna Bank Center and along the Delaware River Promenade. Throughout your run, you'll encounter fun obstacles - many inspired by military training. After you complete your run we'll celebrate a job well done with live music, refreshments, goodies and more! Adult tickets are \$39.95, under age 14, \$24.95. For more information, or to register online, visit the Battleship online at [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org).

### **NOVEMBER 22, 2012 | BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY THANKSGIVING MEAL FOR HOMELESS VETERANS**

The Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial will host a Thanksgiving Meal for Camden County homeless veterans. The Battleship is normally closed on Thanksgiving but some 25 ship's volunteers have agreed to be aboard on Thanksgiving Day so the ship could remain open to host a Thanksgiving Meal. In addition the ship's caterer Andreottis has agreed to cater a traditional Thanksgiving meal for some 150 veterans and is a sponsor of the event. Perry Levine, the Camden County appointed Veteran Trustee to the Battleship, is coordinating this event and can be reached at (609) 238-1242. Also giving support to this event is the Camden County Veterans Affairs office and VA Director Reverend Floyd White.

### **DECEMBER 8, 2012 | BREAKFAST WITH SANTA**

A Battleship tradition, families, including many families from military bases who come as our guests, enjoy a hot breakfast served chowline-style, meet mascots from the area, get a chance to win prizes, get a tour of the ship, and of course, get their photos taken with Santa Claus! Tickets for this event are: \$20 for adults, \$16 for children, and \$7.50 for military personnel. To reserve your breakfast call (866) 877-6262 Ext. 144.

### **DECEMBER 31, 2012 | NEW YEARS EVE FIREWORKS CELEBRATION**

The Battleship is currently accepting reservations for overnight guests to experience the best view of the fireworks over the Delaware River at midnight on December 31<sup>st</sup>. Families can spend the night, or guests can come and experience the best view of the 6 pm and Midnight fireworks from the decks of the Battleship New Jersey! The price per person is \$64.95. Groups and families must include at least one child between the ages of 6 - 18. To reserve your bunk, call (866) 877-6262 Ext. 203.

### **ONGOING OFFER | BEHIND-THE-SCENES TOUR WITH THE CURATOR**

We've declassified some areas of the Battleship not currently on the public tour routes. Now groups of up to 10 people can experience a special tour of these areas with the most knowledgeable tour guide we have - the Curator of the Battleship. The price for this new and specialized tour is \$500 for a group. These special Behind-the-Scenes Tours must be scheduled at least two weeks in advance. To schedule a tour, call (866) 877-6262 Ext. 144.





# SINK SOME FOR THE BATTLESHIP!

**MONDAY, OCTOBER 8 - 12:30PM**



Join us by playing, sponsoring or supporting the Battleship New Jersey Golf Tournament at beautiful Sea Oaks Country Club in Little Egg Harbor Township, NJ. This best ball tournament will be preceded by lunch, and followed by cocktails and an Awards Dinner. Don't miss your chance to golf at this magnificent course, enjoy delicious dining, win fantastic prizes - and contribute to the cause!

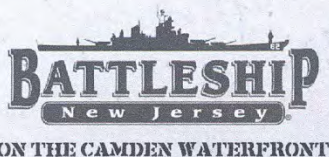
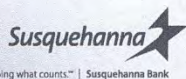
**Donation to play \$175 per golfer**

**Sponsorships now available.**

For details, contact Jack Willard at [j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org](mailto:j.willard@battleshipnewjersey.org) or 1.856.966.1652 x144.

All proceeds go towards Battleship preservation, along with education programs teaching about her legacy and crew.

**[For more tournament info, visit [BattleshipNewJersey.org](http://BattleshipNewJersey.org) or call 1.866.877.6262.]**







**Monday, October 8, 2012**  
**Sea Oaks Country Club**  
**Little Egg Harbor Township, New Jersey**

Support our nation's largest and most decorated ship - the Battleship New Jersey - by playing, sponsoring or supporting the Third Annual Battleship New Jersey Golf Tournament at beautiful Sea Oaks Country Club.

There will be lots of prizes, lunch and dinner, cocktails and, of course, golf!

Proceeds from this event benefit the on-going maintenance, restoration, preservation and educational program of the Battleship new Jersey Museum and Memorial.

**Schedule**

Registration: 10:00 am - 11:30 am

Lunch: 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

Shot Gun Start: 12:30 pm

Cocktails: 5:30 pm - 6:00 pm

Awards Dinner: 6:00 pm

## **Ships Store and Commemorative Items**

On this page is information on items available in the Ships Store. On the next several pages I've included information on several commemorative items being offered to raise funds to support the ongoing operations and maintenance of the Battleship New Jersey. *Let me be the first to tell you that Christmas is a mere 12 weeks away.* On these pages are some great gifts for that certain someone on your list that loves the Big J. Place a Commemorative Brick in our Memorial Pier and it will be there forever, or get a piece of history when you choose the Commemorative Plaque. Thanks in advance for your support!

### **USS NEW JERSEY HAT**

The perfect accessory for all fans of the Big J! This navy blue cap proudly displays USS New Jersey on the front and features an adjustable rear strap for perfect sizing. 100% polyester; made in the USA. A portion of sales goes to the ongoing preservation of the Battleship. **Cost \$20**



### **USS NEW JERSEY HAT WITH EMBROIDERED GOLD OAK LEAF (SCRAMBLED EGGS)**

Look like an officer with this navy blue cap that proudly displays USS New Jersey on the front, has gold oak leaf on the brim and features an adjustable rear strap for perfect sizing. 100% polyester; made in the USA. A portion of sales goes to the ongoing preservation of the Battleship. **Cost \$25**

Front Image

Back Image

### **KEEP THE LEGACY ALIVE T-SHIRT**

This Battleship Supporter T-Shirt features an image of the ship underway, superimposed on the stars and stripes (front), and the “Ten Commandments of Damage Control” (back). T-Shirts are white, made in the USA, and available in adult sizes S, M, L, XL, XXL, and XXXL. **Cost \$25**

*Keep the Legacy Alive*



- Ten Commandments of Damage Control**
1. KEEP YOUR SHIP WATERTIGHT.
  2. DO NOT VIOLATE MATERIAL CONDITIONS.
  3. HAVE CONFIDENCE IN YOUR SHIP'S ABILITY TO WITHSTAND SEVERE DAMAGE.
  4. KNOW YOUR WAY AROUND -- EVEN IN THE DARK!
  5. KNOW HOW TO USE AND MAINTAIN DAMAGE CONTROL EQUIPMENT.
  6. REPORT DAMAGE TO THE NEAREST DAMAGE CONTROL STATION.
  7. KEEP PERSONAL ARTICLES PROPERLY SECURED AT ALL TIMES.
  8. PRACTICE PERSONAL DAMAGE CONTROL. PROTECT YOURSELF SO YOU CAN PROTECT YOUR SHIP!
  9. TAKE EVERY POSSIBLE STEP TO SAVE THE SHIP AS LONG AS A BIT OF HOPE REMAINS.
  10. KEEP COOL; DON'T GIVE UP THE SHIP!
- © 1977 14-125 00001

*Support the Big J!*

### **10<sup>TH</sup> YEAR ANNIVERSARY CHALLENGE COINS**

This collector's item was created specifically to commemorate the Battleship's 10<sup>th</sup> year anniversary as a museum and memorial. This coin, which comes in a protective plastic casing, features four-color ship graphic on one side, and a list of all her campaigns on the reverse. **Cost \$5**



### **ORDERING INFORMATION**

All of the above items can be purchased on the ships website - [www.battleshipnewjersey.org/shop.php](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org/shop.php). If you prefer, you can send your check or money order to the address listed below. Be sure to provide a complete list of the items you would like and an address where they should be sent. If you have questions about these fund raising efforts please call or send an e-mail using the contact information provided below.

#### **Address to send Checks or Money Orders for your Support**

Battleship New Jersey  
Development Department  
62 Battleship Place  
Camden, NJ 08103

#### **Contact Information if you have Questions or need Additional Information on a specific item**

Phone: (856) 966-1652 Ext. 211  
E-mail: [p.rowan@battleshipnewjersey.org](mailto:p.rowan@battleshipnewjersey.org)

Another way you can directly impact our mission to continue the "Big J's" ongoing maintenance, restoration and public education programs is by becoming a "Crew Member" of the Battleship New Jersey. You can join as an Individual Member for just \$40. All new members receive:

- ★ Free admission to the Battleship for one year (Member may upgrade to premium tour by paying price difference)
- ★ Use of the Museum's Library (by appointment only)
- ★ Behind the scenes access on annual Crew Members Day
- ★ 15% discount in the Battleship Museum Shop
- ★ 15% discount on overnight encampments on Battleship
- ★ Invitations to exclusive special events, including exhibit sneak peaks
- ★ Joining at higher levels will entitle you to additional benefits.

**ADMIRAL'S CIRCLE ANNUAL GIVING PROGRAM**

The Admiral's Circle Annual Giving Program provides exclusive benefits while helping the Battleship fulfill its mission of meeting the educational needs of thousands of students, educators and visitors. Membership in the Admiral's Circle Annual Giving Program starts at \$1,000. All new members receive:

- ★ Free admission for two adults and children under age 18 for one year
- ★ Battleship New Jersey Crewmember car decal, hat, and hardback copy of the full color book "From Birth to Berth", chronicling the USS New Jersey
- ★ Use of the Museum's Library (by appointment only)
- ★ Behind the Scenes access on annual Crew Members Day
- ★ 15% discount in the Battleship Museum Shop
- ★ 15% discount on overnight encampments on Battleship New Jersey
- ★ Invitations to exclusive special events, including exhibit sneak peaks
- ★ Recognition on the annual Battleship Wall of Honor

Joining at higher levels will entitle you to additional benefits.

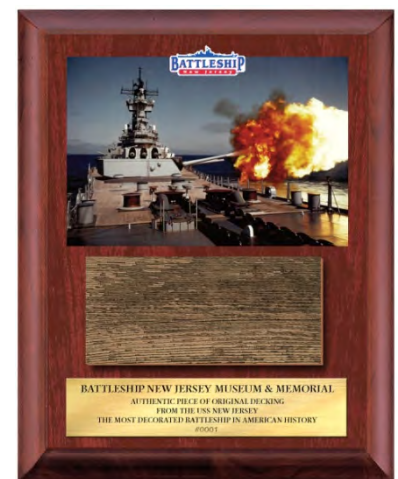
**COMMEMORATIVE BRICKS**

For a \$100 donation a customized Commemorative Brick will be placed on the ship's Memorial Pier for you. Each brick can be imprinted with up to 3 lines of text, each line containing a maximum of 15 characters (spaces count). This is a great way to show your support for the ship or honor a family member. To purchase one of these bricks complete and return the order form that can be found on **Page 44**.



**COMMEMORATIVE WALL PLAQUE**

For a \$100 donation you will receive an individually numbered wall plaque featuring an actual piece of teak decking from the ship with a brass plate attesting to the authenticity of the teak. The teak on these plaques was removed from an area just aft of Turret #3 during a restoration project several years ago. To purchase one of these plaques complete and return the order form that can be found on **Page 45**.



The Home Port Alliance for the USS New Jersey, Inc. is a non-profit 501c3 organization so a portion of all donations are tax deductible and a letter will be provided from the ship acknowledging your donation and indicating the portion that is deductible. For more information on any of these items, or on becoming a member, visit the ships website at: [www.battleshipnewjersey.org](http://www.battleshipnewjersey.org).



**Become a part of the history of the USS New Jersey!**

Buy a commemorative brick to honor or memorialize family or friends, as a gift, or for yourself. The brick(s) you purchase will become a permanent part of the Ship's pier.

Name(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ (please provide, in case we have questions about your order)

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I/we wish to order: \_\_\_\_\_ one commemorative brick at \$100 each (if you wish to order more than one brick, please reproduce this form)  
\_\_\_\_\_ replica bricks at \$50 each

for a total contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_.

Enclosed is a check made payable to the Battleship New Jersey for \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Charge my credit card in the amount of \$ \_\_\_\_\_  Visa  Mastercard  American Express

\_\_\_\_\_  
Credit Card Number

\_\_\_\_\_  
Expiration Date

Type or print carefully the text that you would like to be engraved on your commemorative brick. Your message must fit within the spaces provided and will appear on the bricks and pavers exactly as shown. Punctuation and spaces count as characters. All text will be a standardized size, font and style using upper case letters. Messages will be automatically centered. The battleship reserves the right to approve all inscriptions. Please use appropriate language. Any character on a standard keyboard can be used. If you wish to have bricks placed next to each other, please indicate this when you place your order.

**4" x 8" Standard Brick (\$100 per brick)**


**4" x 8" Replica Brick (\$50 per brick)**

Comes with Brass Plaque and felt bottom for table top display  
May only be ordered with the purchase of a standard brick  
Text will be duplicated exactly how it appears on your standard brick

Please mail form and payment to: Battleship New Jersey, Development Department, 62 Battleship Place, Camden, NJ 08103.

**If you have any questions, please call 1-866-877-6262 ext. 102**





### Battleship Flag Program

You can own an American Flag flown that has flown over the Battleship New Jersey! For a donation of just \$62 you will receive a 4' x 6' flag, made in the USA, and a Certificate of Authenticity. To order your flag, call (866) 877-6262 Ext. 144.

### Battleship Red and White Wines

You can also support the ship by purchasing a bottle of Battleship red or white wine, both of which are receiving rave reviews! The grapes for these wines were locally grown, produced and bottled at Auburn Road Vineyards. They both compliment any meal, plus a portion of the price for each bottle goes directly to support the ongoing maintenance and preservation of the Battleship! These wines can be purchased at Joe Canal's on Route 45 in West Deptford, NJ; Canal's in Mt. Ephraim, NJ; and Hops and Grapes in Glassboro, NJ, or online at [www.auburnroadvineyards.com](http://www.auburnroadvineyards.com).



### "The Battleship USS New Jersey: From Birth to Berth," by Carol Comegno

This beautiful commemorative book celebrates the history of the nation's most decorated battleship - the USS New Jersey. It features hundreds of photos and chronicles her remarkable history from WW II to her place now as a floating museum and memorial. **Cost \$25**

#### *Kudos*

***On behalf of the Battleship New Jersey, I would like to thank Carol Comegno, staff writer for the Courier-Post newspaper, for her continued outstanding news coverage of the Battleship's events that date back to before the ship's arrival here in Camden. She covered the ongoing tug-of-war to determine which of two competing locations would be the ship's final destination and was onboard the Big J as the ship made her final journey through the Panama Canal. Thank you Carol for your dedication to informing the public about our magnificent ship!***

***Maria Basara, Battleship Volunteer***



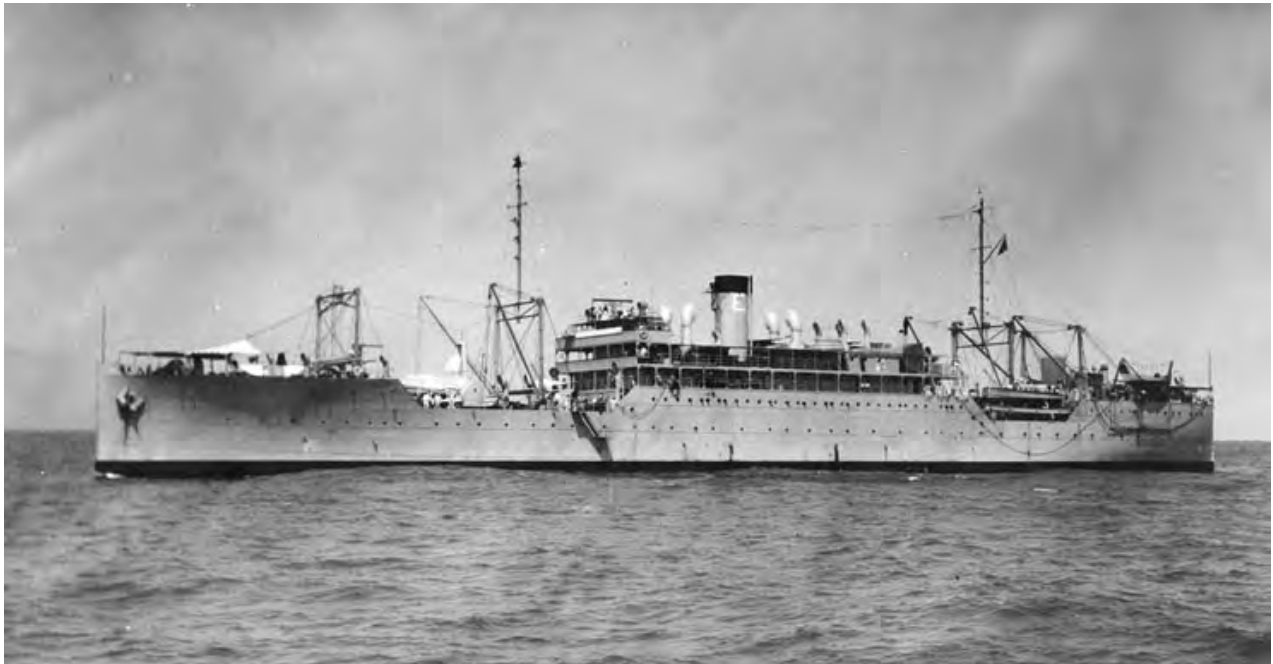
## Correction on 3<sup>rd</sup> Quarter 2012 Issue of The Jerseyman

The company that we contracted to transcribe the conversion of speech to text for Warren "Red" Upton, and John B. Vaessen of USS Utah, misunderstood when Warren "Red" Upton said on Page 6, in the 5<sup>th</sup> paragraph said: "... USS Oregon which was the flagship..."

The ship mentioned by "Red" was actually *USS ARGONNE* (Which does sound a lot like Oregon).

We regret the error, and ask those that keep their issues of *The Jerseyman* to please make the correction. The photo of USS ARGONNE (AS-10) below, can also be added by right clicking to copy and paste the image onto a page for *The Jerseyman* 3Q - 2012.

Thanks... - **Tom Helvig**



**Photo # NH 58034 USS Argonne in the 1920s or 1930s showing battle efficiency E on stack**

***Did You Know?***

***Blueprint drawings for the Battleship New Jersey required 3,432,000 man-hours to produce, or 206 years of work for one draftsman!***

***175 tons of blueprints were produced to build the Battleship New Jersey, equaling a single strip of paper 30" wide and 1,100 miles long!***

## Back Page

I'd like to use the back page of each issue to feature a short bio and photos of one of the ships volunteers in action. In this inaugural issue I'd like to introduce you to Marty Waltemyer, a very familiar face onboard the Battleship. Marty has been a volunteer on the ship since 2001, and it was primarily because of his extensive experience with lowa-class weapons systems, that restoration of the New Jersey's main and secondary batteries was completed so quickly and safely.

During the early 80s when President Ronald Reagan was asking for a 600 ship Navy, all four lowa-class battleships were taken out of mothballs and re-activated for duty. During this restoration time, and for the next 7 years, Marty was employed as a weapons technician, and helped return all of the lowa-class main battery turrets, back to full operation. Over this long period, Marty performed the job aboard USS Iowa, USS New Jersey, USS Missouri and USS Wisconsin in Long Beach, CA, and in Pascagoula, MI.

Marty is a great guy and has been a tremendous asset to the ship over the years. Several years ago when the ships curator wanted to elevate the barrels of turrets 1 and 2 from 5 degrees to 30 degrees, it was Marty who knew how to manually raise each rifle by using 2 large wrenches. He took me on a personal guided tour of Turret 2 from top to bottom and all points in between, it was amazing. His knowledge about the workings of our 16-inch turrets is unsurpassed, and I'm proud to have him as a friend. Below on the left we see Marty firing the portside 40mm salute gun ending a 4<sup>th</sup> of July celebration, on the right, we see him in a place where he is right at home, the gun house of Turret 2.



**Disclaimer:** *The Jerseyman* is an independent ships newspaper, written and produced solely for the enjoyment of the Battleship's current volunteer crew and staff, former crewmembers, and other readers. *The Jerseyman* is not sold, subscriptions are not offered, and all credited photos and stories are the sole property of their authors. Wherever possible, *The Jerseyman* requests permission, properly credits, and identifies the source of photographs, stories, or quotations. If crediting errors, or any possible copyright infringements are found, please let us know and corrections will be made. If you need to reach *The Jerseyman* please use the contact information below.

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Logo courtesy of Maritime Artist and former USS New Jersey crewman, James A. Flood