



**February
2004**

THE JERSEYMAN



**USS NEW JERSEY
Artwork and Signage**

THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

USS NEW JERSEY - SHIP'S ARTWORK AND SIGNAGE...



Thanks to the effort and talents of professional maritime artist, and Battleship New Jersey Volunteer **Dave Boone**, a large part of the original artwork seen aboard **USS NEW JERSEY** today, is now restored much as it was at decommissioning in February of 1991. This ship's signage and colorful artwork can be found on bulkheads, doors, hatches and turrets throughout the ship.

Volunteer **Dave Boone** has spent the better part of 39 years on the Delaware River, and rode most of it

in the **Tug REEDY POINT**. While we asked him for a run-down on what artwork he has completed, we also asked if he could send along the photo of a favorite painting to include with the story. Dave sent his painting of **Tug REEDY POINT**...



"I replaced most of the signage on main deck, and Bill Stroup (at left) did most of the port side aft of the ward room. All the signage on the decks above the main deck are complete, and also most of the second deck with the berthing areas below that. I'll be moving to "Broadway" soon. The first restoration completed was the ship's seal on the main deck in officer's country, starboard side. Then Turret #1 bulkheads, the 3rd Division Office door main deck, radio room on the main deck, Battleship artwork in sick bay, the 1st Class lounge door, and my favorite - the 3rd Division berthing area below the mess deck. Their division insignia was half gone, down to the red lead primer. It

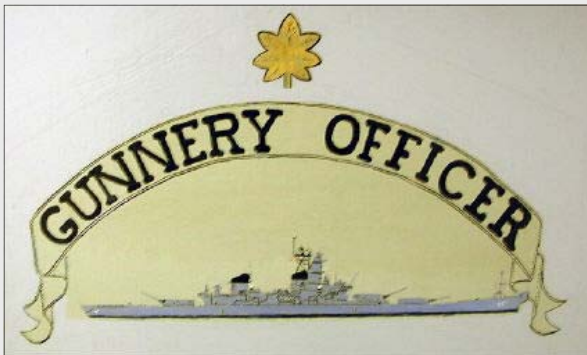
was circular, (photo) and I replaced the entire right side. You can't tell it was ever missing! Now this is pure fun!

I did some other small touch ups, and there is an awful lot more to do. I can't wait to get going again!"



THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

USS NEW JERSEY - SHIP'S ARTWORK AND SIGNAGE...



THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004



THE JERSEYMAN - AN UPDATE:

Our December issue on *Typhoon Cobra* prompted many comments, and we thank All Hands for their encouragement. We'll do what we can to provide more interesting history of **USS NEW JERSEY** and other battleships during 2004.

With this issue, we also begin a distribution change to *The Jerseyman*. The new Quarterly publication change will begin with the April 2004 issue, and be followed again in July, October and January. We hope this change will provide the time to produce a better *Jerseyman*, expand our focus on the US Battleships of the 20th Century, and try to generate more stories from the crews that manned them. For those lucky enough to have ridden one of these great US Navy dreadnoughts, we ask you to share your stories with us. Judging from the large number of emails received about the *Typhoon Cobra* issue, and specific mention of appreciation about the details that were shared by the sailors that lived through it - these are the kind of stories that our readers are asking for... please continue to send them on to *The Jerseyman*!

You will also notice that beginning with this issue, we are reaching back for photos of volunteers that helped restore **USS NEW JERSEY** from the very first cold, unheated days of January 2001. Some of these volunteers are also aboard only on weekends, and may not be known to shipmates in the weekday crews. We also have a number of former-volunteers no longer doing active volunteer work, but if their photographs are in our *Jerseyman* files, these shipmates will be included in future issues, along with the active volunteers of today.

Also with this February 2004 issue, we will no longer forward new issues of *The Jerseyman* as email attachments! Readers of *The Jerseyman* will be notified when each new quarterly issue is available for downloading, and they can be retrieved directly from the websites located at:

www.ussnewjersey.com
www.ussnewjersey.org



Disclaimer:

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Master Chief Tom Helvig, USN (Ret.) - Volunteer Writer/Editor *The Jerseyman*

THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

MAIL CALL...

USS SPENCE (DD-512)...

"The remembrances of USS Spence families were refreshed through the December 2003 Issue of The Jerseyman. With a brother who was lost aboard USS SPENCE in Typhoon Cobra, I was personally struck with the heartfelt personal stories related to failed efforts of USS New Jersey to refuel USS Spence on December 17, 1944. During 1943-44, there were approximately 450 seamen who served aboard SPENCE with 314 lost when the ship capsized. About 110 seamen had been transferred to other duty stations before the tragedy occurred, but did serve aboard SPENCE when she earned the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) for actions in the Solomon Islands in 1943.

If any of the 450 USS SPENCE families would like to receive a free document that plots all the 1943-1944 sea journeys of SPENCE, and provides brief statements of her daily activities, write to Richard Strand, 341 Sunset Key, Plant City FL 33565 or e-mail your request to graceras@earthlink.net. The information about USS SPENCE was obtained from official records now available to the general public at the National Archives in College Park, MD. A few sample pages of the document are on display at the USS SPENCE website under the entry "Destroyer Photo Index". If any of The Jerseyman readers know a USS SPENCE family, please forward this on to them, and if they are interested, to please forward their current mailing address to the address above. Thanks!"

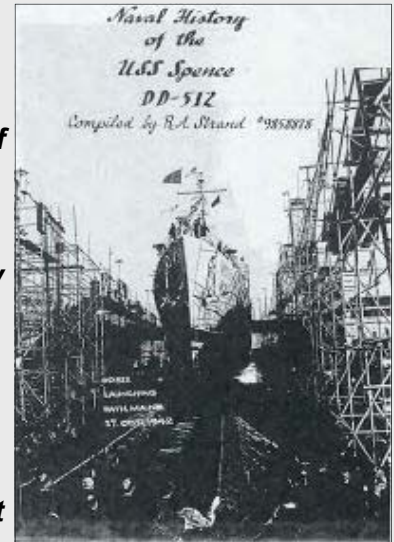
Dick Strand

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"Just a quick note to wish a Happy New Year, and to thank you for sending on the January issue of The Jerseyman. I have just received my 241st inquiry about my USS Spence document, and next week I will be sending out the 162nd copy over these last five years. That keeps me kind of busy as well but I know from the Spence muster rolls that there still are over 200 families of those who served on the Spence that I have yet to reach. I keep looking for new ways to reach out. Over these last five years, I have received on the average of one inquiry a week over that time period. My latest effort was in the mail call section of the fall edition of the WW II Memorial newsletter. I have made my reservations to attend the Dedication ceremony next May in Washington DC."

Dick Strand

Plant City, Florida



Visitor aboard ship:

"My good man, can you please direct me to a place on this boat where I can obtain a drink of water?"

Old Salt:

"Be glad ter, sir. Just drop down this hatch, lay aft 'til yer come to the bull ring; take the first athwartships passage to starboard, past the lucky bag 'til yer come to the hammock nettings; then turn to left, and right there next to the bulkhead ye'll see the scuttlebutt."

(Extracted from the United States Naval Academy Yearbook, Class of 1926.)

With thanks to shipmate Dick Sylvester, USN, (Ret.) - Ellicott City, Maryland

THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

“They’re Taking Your Ship, but Don’t Cry Captain...”

Written and submitted by Helen Lou Ross
(Tacoma News Tribune, dated December 17, 1969)

Ed. Note: Helen Lou Ross is the proud sponsor of **USS ROSS** (DDG-71), named in honor of her husband Donald Ross. On December 7, 1941, then Warrant Officer Ross, became one of two Medal of Honor recipients, awarded for heroic action aboard **USS NEVADA (BB-36)**. We sincerely thank Helen Ross for sending her story for reprinting in *The Jerseyman*... Ms. Ross resides today in Burley, Washington.

“To Captain Robert C Peniston, who faced the decommissioning of his ship, the USS NEW JERSEY, today: “Don’t cry, Captain—please don’t cry.”

If it will make it any easier, listen to a story of another battleship, one which was dealt a crueler fate, one that would have preferred moth-balling to utter extinction. A ship that sailed proudly, fought gallantly and died hard, a great ship, the USS NEVADA.

Unlike your New Jersey, still sleek, young and beautiful as she is laid away for a rest, the Nevada was bowed and bent, battered and beaten as she went to her watery grave. No enemy put her there. She was towed by the U.S. Navy to a spot in the Pacific Ocean, given a fitting burial ceremony and dispatched.

All who have ever sailed on a battleship, met one in a harbor, trod the decks with the crew, dined aboard, or watched a movie on its decks while holding warm hands in the gentle chill of darkness—all of us will weep with you.

Think, if you can, of a grand old lady of the sea who, in her middle age, was the only battleship to get underway at the melee of the Pearl Harbor attack. Think of the pride her crew felt as she served them well in Arctic waters, on Atlantic convoy runs and as the lead ship in the Utah beach-head of the Normandy invasion. The ship held a charmed life those June 1944 days when the German shells strad-



dled her incessantly hour after hour. Consider how the ship and the men were welded together after a kamikaze attack at Okinawa, and how the men loved and cheered her on VE Day and again on VJ Day.

And what then, after the Nevada brought troops back from Asiatic waters to California? Was she to rest peacefully? She was chosen as a target ship at the Bikini A-bomb tests in the spring of 1946. Painted a bright orange, she was placed in the very center of conglomeration of ships. She was to draw the aerial bomb which missed its mark and landed beside the ship. Though blown clear of the water, she settled back into the radio-active ocean with less damage than sustained from Japanese torpedoes and bombs.

Her crew repaired her boilers and she proceeded under her own power to an outer circle for the second test, two weeks later. This time, an underwater A-bomb peeled paint from her bulkheads, battered up small superstructures and made her intensely radioactive.



THE JERSEYMAN

FEBRUARY 2004

She was towed to Kwajalein. The crew of approximately 400 lived on another ship but the Nevada's colors were raised and lowered daily. After three weeks, orders came to decommission the ship. The crew went aboard for the last time. On the wooden afterdeck which had been hosed won repeatedly to wash away radioactivity, the captain read the orders and the colors were struck for the last time. No band, no camera, no wives to help say goodbye.

The NEVADA stayed at anchor at Kwajalein until the following year when it was determined she had lost enough radioactivity to make her safe to be towed to Pearl Harbor.

There I saw the once beautiful Nevada looking like a derelict ship in contrast to the mighty and young MISSOURI, which was tied up nearby. No one said, "Don't cry." No one said anything.

Weeks later, some ventured to ask what was to become of her? Months rolled by, a year or better. In the spring of 1948, we heard the final verdict.

"The USS NEVADA shall be towed out into the Pacific Ocean, 100 miles south and west of Oahu and sunk by aerial bombardment."

That day, huge flower leis were dropped in a circle around the orange hulk floating in an azure sea. Navy chaplains read the burial services and planes roared in to sink the ship. Torpedoes and bombs rained down upon her. But she would not give up. She bounced and tossed, fought and struggled. She would not die.

I'm glad I was not there. I'm glad the TV cameras could not record her death throes. KGU, Honolulu's radio station, did broadcast the final rites which were recorded for us... the saddest record anyone could own.

Finally, in desperation, the ocean-going Navy itself had to sink the battleship. That evening, gasping and struggling, with a might sigh she slipped beneath the waters.

Captain, I begged you not to cry, but I know you will and I will and everywhere men have sailed on ships and women have loved these men, hearts will be heavy and eyes will mist. Just remember, if it will help, you are not alone.

Neither is the NEW JERSEY alone. She can look across the docks at the Missouri. The two great ladies can sigh together, perhaps talk about the TEXAS surrounded by concrete in Galveston, the WEST VIRGINIA, sold for scrap, the NEW YORK sunk at Bikini.... and the NEVADA."



Two men were awarded the Medal of Honor for heroism aboard **USS NEVADA** on December 7, 1941. They were Warrant Officer Donald Kirby, and Chief Boatswain's Mate E. J. Hill. Chief Bos'n Hill was killed in action aboard **NEVADA** on December 7, 1941. Both Medal of Honor winners have US Navy ships named in their honor, they are **USS ROSS (DDG-71)**, and **USS HILL (DE-141)**.

"I thought The Jerseyman would like to know, that in the book "USS New Jersey: An Illustrated History, by Paul Stillwell", there is a photo on Page 154 taken during April of 1953 in Korea, and showing the Jersey and USS TRATHEN (DD530) side by side doing a mail transfer. The caption mentions that one member of the TRATHEN crew was MMC Jackson K. Parker, who at the time of publication was still on active duty after forty four years of service.

What the caption fails to mention was, that at the time of publication in 1986, Jackson K. Parker was then Rear Admiral Jackson K Parker, in command of N.O.B. Norfolk. Admiral Parker retired in 1987 after 45 years of service. He died in 1994 at the age of sixty eight."

Ron Keeler
USS Trathen (DD530) Ass'n
Woodstock, Virginia

THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

USS COLORADO (BB-45)

bell photo submitted by:
Andy Andresen, Sec'y Treas.
USS COLORADO Alumni Ass'n
Seattle, Washington

"The USS Colorado bell is located at the University Memorial Center in Boulder, Colorado..."



COLORADO had two bells, as did many of the older battleships, and the second one, the aft bell, is with the aft wheel in the Naval ROTC study/ready room at the University of Colorado."



The third **USS COLORADO (BB-45)**, was launched on 22 March 1921 at New York Shipbuilding Co., in Camden, N.J., and she was commissioned 30 August 1923, with Captain R. R. Belknap in command.

According to the 50 year commemorative book (1949) of New York Shipbuilding, the shipyard operation in Camden, New Jersey had employed over 30,000 workers during the 1940's. In addition to constructing 100's of merchant ships, the yard's Naval Construction record was impressive...

11 Battleships
3 Battle Cruisers
26 Light and Heavy Cruisers
12 Aircraft Carriers
43 Destroyers
6 Tenders and repair ships
100 Landing Craft, LCT
48 Landing Craft, LCI
3 Miscellaneous

The 11 Battleships built at New York Shipbuilding in Camden, NJ included:

1. **USS KANSAS (BB-21)**
2. **USS NEW HAMPSHIRE (BB-25)**
3. **USS MICHIGAN (BB-27)**
4. **USS UTAH (BB-31)**
5. **USS ARKANSAS (BB-33)**
6. **USS OKLAHOMA (BB-37)**
7. **USS IDAHO (BB-42)**
8. **USS COLORADO (BB-45)**
9. **USS WASHINGTON (BB-47) (75% completed when cancelled...)**
10. **USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57)**
11. **Battleship "MORENO" was built for Argentina**

"USS COLORADO (BB-45) nicknames included "Buckin' Bronco, and "Old Colombo"

USS COLORADO was sold for scrap on July 6, 1959

THE JERSEYMAN FEBRUARY 2004

RADIO ROOM...

Submitted by Harry Bryant, President BNJARS and ex-Navy RM1(SS)

I'm sure that as many of you have ventured near Radio Central, you've seen and heard one of the ship's ham radio operators intently listening to strange beeping noises coming from one of the radios. Well, unlike the military which stopped using Morse Code in 1996, Morse is alive and well on the amateur radio bands, including Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station (BNJARS). Many of our operators are proficient at sending and receiving at speeds of 30 words per minute or more using Morse code—technically know as CW (continuous wave) transmissions.

Morse Code is named for New York business man and early entrepreneur Samuel F. B. Morse., and the original code was first devised in 1832... a short 173 years ago. The code was transmitted via electrical impulses over wire and comprised of a series of dots, which were mechanically printed on a paper tape. The printed tape would then be translated into words using a form of dictionary, which listed commonly used words and their corresponding dot patterns. While Morse was in New York continuing his work on the word lists and look up dictionaries, his co-worker **Alfred Vail of Morristown, New Jersey**, independently created a much simpler code. Vail's 1838 code combined dots and dashes to represent letters, numbers and punctuation marks. In addition to creating a much less complex code system, Vail also was a skilled technician. He is credited with the design and construction of the first telegraph hand key and sounder system. This type system and code was referred to as the American Morse Code. The International Morse Code which is still in use today was derived from Vail's work in the early 1800's.

Now that you know a brief history of the mode; how do we actually accomplish making a contact using it? Since CW relies on only a steady (unmodulated) radio signal, it requires less complex equipment than other forms of radio communication, and it can be used in very high noise / low signal environments. By simply turning on and off the transmitter, information can be conveyed using Morse Code. This mode easily facilitates communication between amateur radio operators who do not share a common mother tongue, and would have great difficulty in communicating using voice modes. In general, English is the language of choice and most operators outside the U.S. know at least enough to exchange pleasantries and information about their radio equipment.

There are still some remnants of Morse operation on board the New Jersey. In the area just aft of Radio Central in FACCON I you will find a telegraph hand key mounted to the supervisors desk (photo). This key is linked to the Transmitter Room on Broadway and would be used to key (transmit) any of the

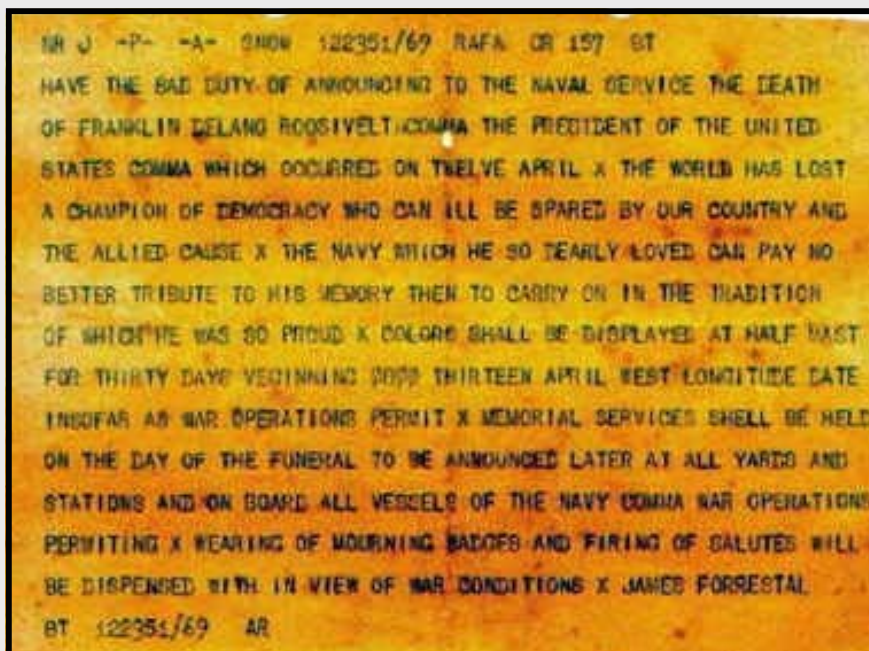


ship's transmitters. During the July 2003 Museum Ships Event Weekend we made several amateur radio contacts using this arrangement.

Bob Westcott, a BNJARS member, was a radioman and "plankowner" aboard **USS NEW JERSEY** during WW2. He served aboard from the ship's first commissioning in May of 1943 and until the end of the war. On April 12, 1945, while on radio watch, Bob copied the archives message shown here. It was originated by then Secretary of the Navy James Forrestal, sent to the US fleet as Priority traffic in Morse code, and told the loss of President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

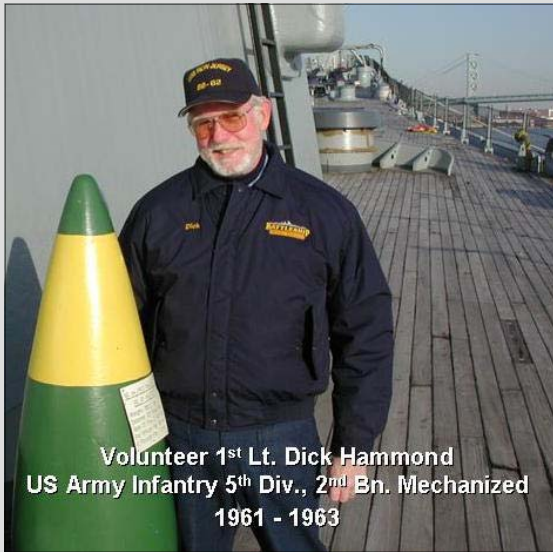
For additional information on Morse Code, and to observe CW operations aboard Battleship New Jersey, we invite our shipmate volunteers to stop by and chat with any of our operators.

All Hands are Welcome!



**THE JERSEYMAN
FEBRUARY 2004**

USS NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS - PAST TO PRESENT...



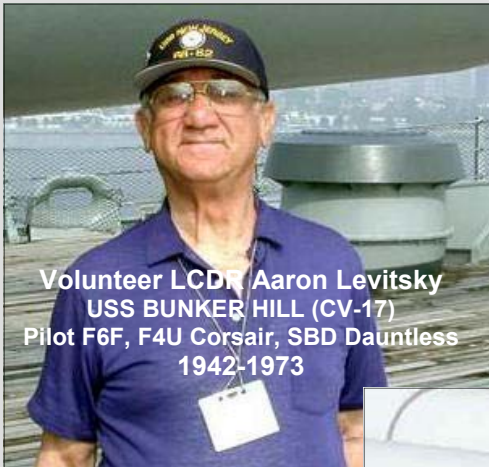
Volunteer 1st Lt. Dick Hammond
US Army Infantry 5th Div., 2nd Bn. Mechanized
1961 - 1963



Volunteer AMM2 Paul Hanstein
USS RANGER (CV-61)
USS AMERICA (CV-66)
1979—1988



Volunteer Sharlene Sullivan



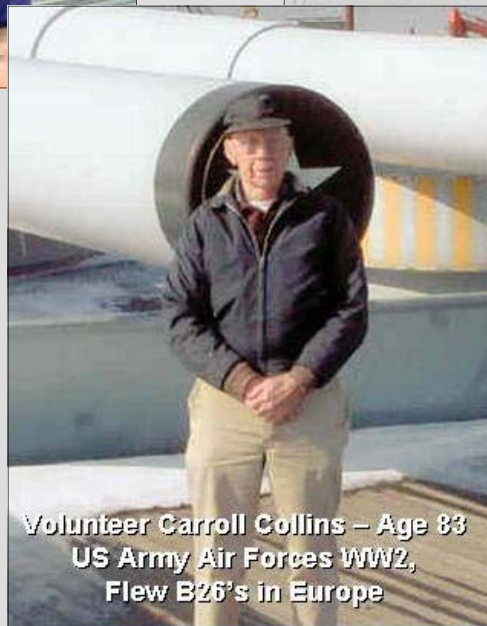
Volunteer LCDR Aaron Levitsky
USS BUNKER HILL (CV-17)
Pilot F6F, F4U Corsair, SBD Dauntless
1942-1973



Vol. EM3 (Electrician's Mate) Bill Bittner
LST 515, PCS 1386
Honorary Crew
USS NEW JERSEY—1968



Volunteer Kristine Sawaya



Volunteer Carroll Collins – Age 83
US Army Air Forces WW2,
Flew B26's in Europe



Volunteer Boatswain's Mate 2/c Al Faulkner
US Naval Armed Guard on
Merchant ships
1942 and for 3 years,
6 Months, 3 Hours and
20 minutes...

**THE JERSEYMAN
FEBRUARY 2004**

USS NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS - PAST TO PRESENT...



**Volunteer Sergeant
Richard Thrash
U.S. Army Military Police
1950-1954
Webmaster:
USSNEWJERSEY.com**



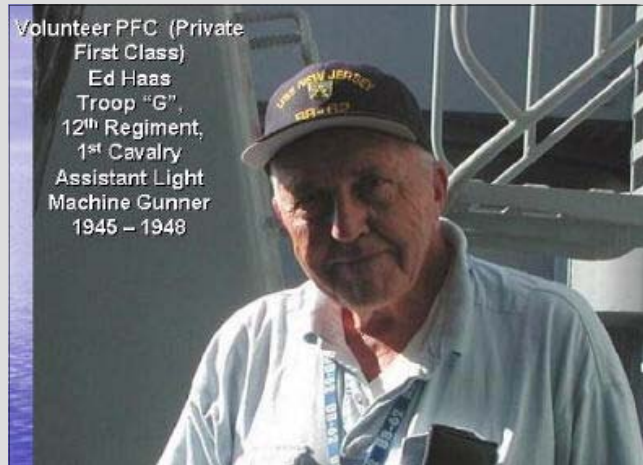
**Volunteer
Ann Dobbs**



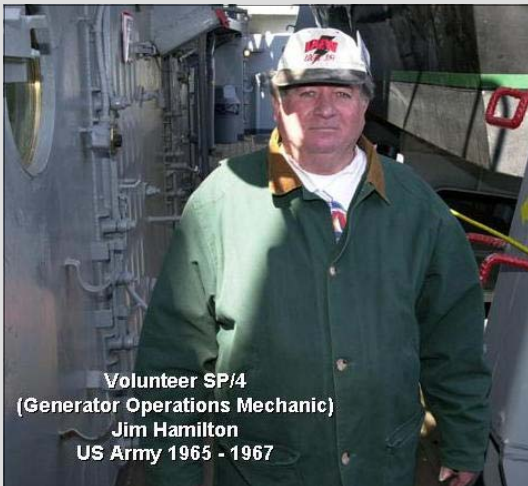
**Volunteer RD1 (Radarman 1st Class)
Walter Eife
USS Dupont (DD-941)
1956 - 1959**



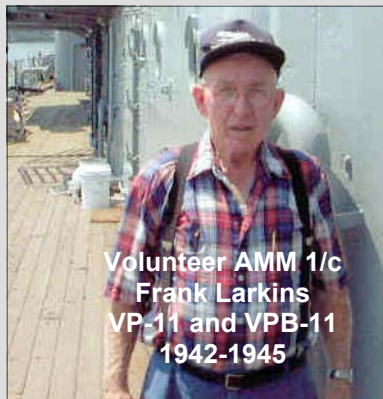
**Volunteer MM2 (Machinist's Mate 2nd Class)
Mike Timothy
USS Des Moines (CA-134) Plankowner
1948-1952**



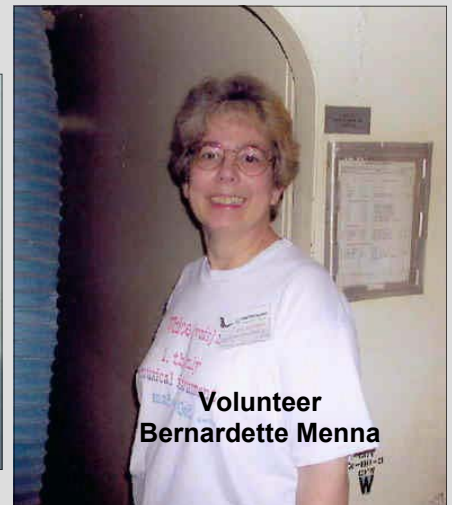
**Volunteer PFC (Private
First Class)
Ed Haas
Troop "G",
12th Regiment,
1st Cavalry
Assistant Light
Machine Gunner
1945 - 1948**



**Volunteer SP/4
(Generator Operations Mechanic)
Jim Hamilton
US Army 1965 - 1967**



**Volunteer AMM 1/c
Frank Larkins
VP-11 and VPB-11
1942-1945**



**Volunteer
Bernardette Menna**



“One Nation Under God...”