



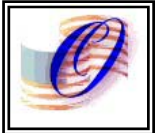
January
February
March
2005

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

THE JERSEYMAN



WORLD WAR TWO...



On October 11, 2004, a number of **USS NEW JERSEY** crewmen and ship's volunteer/veterans of World War 2, gathered at the ship for a commemoration group photo.

We know that if you asked these men today, they would all remember songs like...: **"Praise the Lord and Pass the Ammunition," "The White Cliffs of Dover," "Mairsey Doats and dozy doats and little lambs eat ivy..."** (don't even try to sing that one to your grandkids today....) and of course **Irving Berlin's "God Bless America,"** sung by **Kate Smith**. But if you can also remember back to when radios sat on the living room floor, and were too big and heavy to carry home in your **"rumble seat"**... and listening each evening to **Edward R. Murrow** start his World War 2 broadcast with **"This..... is London..."** then we hope that you might also have a WW2 story to tell. We cordially invite you to forward that story to us at **The Jerseyman** anytime during this coming year.

We Thank You all for your World War 2 service and for your sacrifice...



**WW2 USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62) CREWMEN
AND
BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VETERANS AND VOLUNTEERS**

THE JERSEYMAN

WORLD WAR TWO...

(1943 World War 2 photo of **USS NEW JERSEY** provided courtesy of WW2 crewman **Bob LaVine EM3/c.**)

Twin 20mm tubs are seen at the bow... rangefinder hoods on Turret #1... and although the nests of 20mm guns are not installed on deck at both sides of Turret #2, the 40mm gun tub on top of Turret 2 is ready for action.

Below, the electrical panel that led to this 40mm Quad is still seen today on the inside rear bulkhead of Turret #2. It reads:

**“POWER 40 M/M GUN #3
TURRET P.P. 1-74-4”**



WW2 crew photo shown below donated to **USS NEW JERSEY** archives by **Plankowner/Crewman**

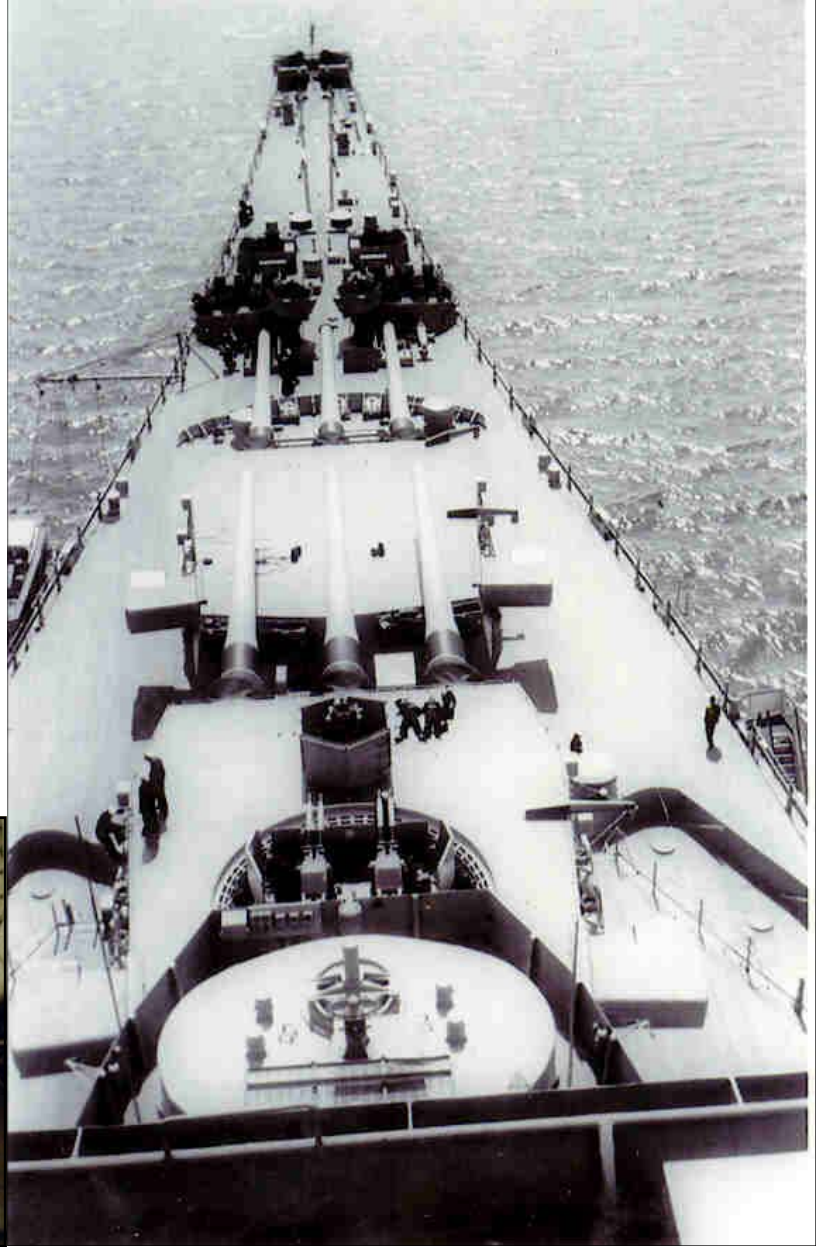
Herbert E. Penn of Irving, Texas

S-Div. (Disbursing) 1943-1945

(shown in the photo at center...)

Can anyone ID the others?

(Note life rafts w/water barrels, cups, tarps...)



ALL HANDS

We sincerely thank all who have participated with their personal stories and photos of WW2.

With more of the **“Old Navy,”** soon on the way in ***The Jerseyman*,** we ask for contributed stories/photos on these... :

“Remembering the IOWA’s and earlier battleships,” “Marine/Army memories of naval gunfire support,”

“More from our WW2 Veterans,” “Midshipman BB cruises,” “Battleship gunnery,” “Battleship Helo Ops.,”

“Battleship Engine Room duty,” “Battleship Sickbay,” “Battleship Korean War Veterans,”

“Vietnam War Veterans of USS NEW JERSEY,” “Battleship Lebanon/Beirut/Gulf War Veterans,”

“My most remembered Boot Camp Story,” and more...

We are asking to hear from you... those submitting stories published in ***The Jerseyman*** are sent an archival color copy as a keepsake ... (and someday the Great-Grandkids will thank you for it.) - Thanks... Ed.

THE JERSEYMAN

Veteran's Day - 2004

WASHINGTON (NNS) --

This Veterans Day, we pause to honor and thank our veterans, past and present - those who have served and those who are serving today around the world, advancing freedom and the cause of liberty.

Since the colonial Minutemen first stood shoulder-to-shoulder, countless Americans have answered our nation's call to serve and defend liberty. They are true heroes. In the past century alone, they fixed bayonets at the Battle of the Marne, they stormed the beaches at Normandy and Omaha, assaulted Heartbreak Ridge, patrolled the Ia Drang Valley and stared down our adversaries on the plains of Europe. They stood as shining examples of ordinary citizens doing the extraordinary to defend a grateful nation.

Like those who wore the uniform before them, today's armed forces continue this proud legacy. At this very moment, American service men and women - active and Reserve - from every walk of life and from every ethnic, religious and racial background, serve in harm's way. From the mountains in Afghanistan to the sands of Iraq, from the jungles of Colombia to the shores of the Philippines, they are giving hope to millions that liberty, justice and a lasting peace are within their reach.

Today, the proud men and women of our armed forces are once again engaged in a global struggle against those who threaten our way of life. At every turn, they demonstrate our firm resolve and serve notice to terrorists that we will succeed. We are proud of their commitment, dedication and accomplishments.

The Joint Chiefs of Staff and I thank our veterans for their selfless service and for ensuring the continued security of our nation.



May God bless you and God bless America.

Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff
Air Force Gen. Richard B. Myers

U.S. Navy photo by
Photographer's Mate 3rd Class Craig R. Spiering
(RELEASED)

WW2 USS NEW JERSEY CREWMEN... / THE JERSEYMAN



WW2 USS NEW JERSEY crewman EM3/c Bob LaVine
Gyroscope Electrician
Aft I/C spaces 1943-1945
Warren, NEW JERSEY

"The ship's gyro was my job. These gyros spin at 11,000 RPM in a total vacuum..."



WW2 USS NEW JERSEY Plankowner/crewman SN John H. Truman
Scotch Plains, New Jersey

N- Division Quartermaster
X-Division Photography
K-Division Radar
1943 - 1946



WW2 USS NEW JERSEY crewman Robert Ross
Ringoos, New Jersey
7th Division, Quad #19

WW2 USS NEW JERSEY Plankowner/crewman EM 2/c J. Charles Miller
Media, Pennsylvania
"My E-Div. GQ was the #1 Engine Room Generators"
May 1943—Sept 1945



Signalman 2/c John Horan
USS NEW JERSEY 1943 - 1945
Cherry Hill, New Jersey

WW2 USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62) Plankowner/crewman John Horan

"I reported aboard USS NEW JERSEY in March, two months before the ship's commissioning on May 23, 1943. I was a signalman, and had the assignment of raising the ship's first commissioning pennant. My job was operating the signal lights and flags, and my GQ station was manning the signal light that was near the top of the aft stack. There were signal lights on platforms up there and located on both sides of the stack. To reach these lights, you had to climb up an outside vertical ladder, from about the 04 to the 09 level. With GQ sounding so often, I started to take my life jacket up there with me, and just sleep there to avoid going up and down..."



WW2 USS NEW JERSEY Plankowner/crewman Russ Collins

"During battles I was the second loader of 20mm guns, mid-ship on the Port side. When we were in a battle zone, we would always have GQ at 0500, and also at Sunset every day. Both GQ's would last at least for an hour, and sometimes the whole day.

During the famous air battle of the Marianas on June 16, 1944, a few Jap zero's got through our AA fire, and I saw a lot of dog fighting. Down the starboard side, came a Corsair right on top of a Jap zero. Without firing a shot, he drove him right into the drink. We all cheered."

MM 3/c Russ Collins
USS NEW JERSEY 1943-1946
Palmyra, New Jersey



BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



Battleship New Jersey volunteer Anthony J. Altadonna

"I served in the US Army Air Corps from 1943 to 1945 as an aircraft mechanic on the B-24, B-25, B-26, P-40, P-47 and A-26's.

The photo on the left shows me on the left with my brother Jacob. In 1944, and on his first mission flying in a British Beaufighter, Jacob and his pilot were shot down by Anti-Aircraft fire, and killed over the Poe Valley in Italy. After the war, we brought my brother home and he was reburied at Calvary Cemetery in Cherry Hill, New Jersey."

Anthony J. Altadonna
US Army Air Force WW2
Pennsauken, New Jersey



Battleship New Jersey volunteer
Walter G. Ribeiro, Sr., age 88
Pennsauken, N.J.



Enlisted:
 USAAF Jan. 8, 1942 as Private
 Discharged:
 Jan. 31, 1946 as 1st Lt.
 Volunteer on BB-62
 since Feb. 2001.

Battleship New Jersey
volunteer
Chester W. Klabe
Riverton, New Jersey
US Coast Guard 1944-1949



"After basic at Curtis Bay, Md. I was sent to Argentina, Newfoundland and assigned to **USCGC DUANE** (WPG-33) escorting convoys to Reykjavic, Iceland under the Commander North Atlantic Patrol."

Battleship New Jersey volunteer Richard Palazzo

"On 11 October 2004 I had the honor of being photographed with fellow WW2 veterans, and I was impressed that volunteer Bob Cassel was soon going to celebrate his 90th birthday! I guess I was one of the youngest WW2 veterans in that group. I enlisted in the regular Navy at the age of 17, and when the war ended, I was in Millington, Tennessee and wrapped up in the USN Combat Air Crew boot camp—the only one in the Navy at the time.

Since President Truman declared the war officially over on 31 December 1946, I came under the umbrella labeled "Vet" but in fact I have no war stories to tell of WW2. But to interject a bit of patriotism, I would like to relate an incident from boot camp that I will always remember.

Midway through my boot training, I was selected to march in a parade, and march I did. The line of march was along the Mississippi River in the City of Memphis, and the occasion was the celebration of Navy Day, 13 October 1945. The world was finally at peace, the spectators were overly enthusiastic, and a few of the Navy "top guns" flew under the bridge that spanned the river.

At the end of the march, I was not allowed to join the flag waving festivities. This boot was ordered to board the bus and return to Millington Naval Air Technical Training Center—wearing my patriotic goose bumps."

CMSGT Richard Palazzo, USAF (Ret.)
Flight Engineer, VPB-208
Medford, New Jersey



***"You cannot invade the mainland United States.
 There would be a rifle behind each blade of grass."***
 ~ Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto ~

THE JERSEYMAN

USS NEW JERSEY 60 years ago... a look back



Chief Machinists Mate Victor P. Feltes, rode **USS NEW JERSEY** every day during World War 2, and from the day he made Chief Petty Officer on January 1, 1944, engine room #4 was his responsibility... (It is with sincere thanks to the family of the late Chief Feltes, and to the Battleship New Jersey Office of Curatorial Affairs, that Chief Feltes' hand written daily record covering each day from the 26th of November 1942 to the final "**Homeward Bound!**" dated 29 January, 1946 is made available to *The Jerseyman*.)

~~~~~

**"December 19, 1944** - Typhoon (Cobra) has passed us. We fuel DD's in Morn. The **USS HULL** a DD capsized yesterday with only 10-15 saved. 2 more DD's haven't been heard from. Our CVL's took a terrific beating in the storm. We have some topside out of order as well as ventilation systems making it hard on the mess halls. 2 DD's, 2 DE's and a tanker haven't been heard from yet.

**December 20 -**

**Admiral Nimitz** communiqué of results of 3 day strike on Luzon is Destroyed or damaged 461 planes. Sunk 94 ships. 1 large transport, 3 oilers, 45 cargo ships of all sizes, 2 landing craft, 12 small vessels, 4 DD's, 2 DE's and 25 landing barges. (Our Tanker and 2 DE's found 100 mi. away. The **DD's Spence** and **Monaghan** are presumed to be lost due to the storm. The **DD Dewey**, **CVL's Cabot, Monterey, Cowpens** and **San Jacinto** left for Ulithi for repairs. We are supposed to make a strike on Luzon tomorrow. Due back Ulithi for Xmas. **Adm. Nimitz** is expected aboard at anchor.

**December 21 -**

We did not strike Luzon today, due to heavy seas. Ship rolled 20° at times. Word from below at 0200 we were turning back. 1030 - GQ

1035 - Secured. C.A.P. shot down 2 Jap Bombers. DE picked up 40 survivors from the **DD's Monaghan, Hull** and **Spence** all lost in the storm. **DD Dewey** had 1 stack and most of superstructure torn off. DE's lost part of their topside superstructures. More damage from storm than if the Japs had hit us!

**December 22 -**

Fueled DD's and from Tanker. Left task force to proceed to Ulithi to await **Adm Nimitz's** arrival with 3 DD's other task groups to follow.

**December 24 -**

(Editor's Note on what follows: See "Friendly Fire"- *The Jerseyman* Issue #24- 2002.)

Anchored at Ulithi at 0740. At 1040 a 5" shell hit the ship forward of starboard plane catapult and went through to the 3rd deck to a washroom. It did not explode, but 1 man was hit in leg and will probably lose it. Figured it was fired by a DD practicing AA fire. At 1350 **Adm. Nimitz** came aboard and raised his flag.



**December 30 -**

**Adm. Nimitz** left last nite - We also had a Happy hour at 1800. Underway at 0920. Our task group 38.2 consists of **NJ, Wisconsin**, Carriers **Hornet, Hancock, Lexington** and **Independence**. 3 Cruisers, **Pasadena, Wilkes Barre, and Miami** and 15 DD's. The **IOWA** came into Ulithi with shaft out of commission. She left same day to go into dry dock at Manus for repairs. Supposed to have been sent to U.S. for repairs if it couldn't be fixed there. Carriers **Monterey** and **Alhambra** also left for states. Dope is we hit Formosa on 3-4, then Luzon which will be invaded the 9th. We are supposed to leave the task group on the 15th for Ulithi where **Adm. Spruance** will relieve Halsey and then take Flag back to P.H., and go to Bremerton for our overhaul..."

**"January 1, 1945 - We steamed over  
103,000 miles last year and were  
underway at least 243 days  
out of the year.  
140,000 miles since we have  
been in commission.**

**Our position at 0030 was  
17° Lat. 133° Long.  
Saw the New Year in..."**

From the WW2 diary of  
**USS NEW JERSEY** Plankowner/Crewman  
Chief Petty Officer Victor P. Feltes

## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN

**Battleship New Jersey volunteer Bob Whomsley...** "Portions following are as they appeared in the rough log of the **USS David W Taylor** for 4 July 1944..."

"On 4 July 1944, destroyer **USS David W Taylor (DD-551)**, my ship, was part of a screen protecting a formation of escort carriers (CVEs) and fleet oilers (AOs) comprising Task Group 50.17 in waters near Saipan. These ships were participating in operations involving the seizing of Guam, Saipan, Tinian and lesser islands in the Mariana Islands. Also assigned to the screen was the destroyer escort **USS Riddle (DE-185)**. At 17:07 the Riddle reported a confirmed sound contact by sonar of an enemy submarine. As the Task Group executed an emergency turn, the Taylor was ordered to remain with the Riddle and assist in attacking the sub.



The Riddle fired a pattern of hedgehogs at 17:32 and two additional patterns at 17:44 and 17:55, all without noticeable effect. At 18:12 she dropped a pattern of depth charges with no noticeable effect. At 18:22 the Taylor established sound contact with the sub and commenced tracking maneuvers. At 18:26 the Taylor launched a pattern of 11 depth charges consisting of five charges weighing 600 pounds apiece released from the stern racks and three charges weighing 300 pounds apiece fired from both the starboard and port "K" gun launchers which propelled them through the air and away from the ship. These charges were set at medium depth and noted in the ship's log as all having exploded. Sonar contact was lost due to water turbulence caused by the explosions of the depth charges.

At 18:28 an intense implosion (of the sub) was both heard and felt by all hands aboard both ships. Almost immediately a huge bubble broke the surface of the water between the ships. Its center burst and oil and debris spewed forth. Cargo nets were rigged on both sides of the Taylor and deck hands, including yours truly, retrieved sundry bits of debris while hanging onto the nets. Debris collected was subsequently provided to the appropriate naval authorities to be evaluated for possible intelligence data and to confirm the sinking of an enemy submarine by coordinated actions of the Riddle and Taylor. On the following day, a pilot from one of the carriers reported an oil slick about 10 miles long and eight miles wide at its base. Oil was observed to continue bubbling to the surface.

A bonafide sinking of the submarine was subsequently credited to the Riddle and the Taylor by a submarine assessment board. Additionally, utilization of captured Japanese documents upon cessation of hostilities enabled the Navy Department to identify the victim sub as having been the I-10. The I-10 was sunk and likely still rests on the bottom of the Pacific Ocean at coordinates 15°26'N, 147°48'E.

As an aside, destroyer **John D Henley (DD-553)** was also assigned to the screen of TG 50.17 on that July afternoon. The Henley was a sister ship to the Taylor, both of which were built at the Gulf Shipbuilding Corporation at Chickasaw, Alabama. Serving aboard the Henley at the time was a **Motor Machinist's Mate Second Class (MM 2/C) named Martin Waltemyer**. He is the same "Marty" Waltemyer who is, like the writer, a volunteer aboard the Battleship New Jersey and our "go-to guy" in matters concerning the 16" main battery guns and the five inch secondary guns.

I have experienced 60 Independence Days since that never-to-be-forgotten day in 1944. Nary a one has left me with such vivid recollections as did the one described. I am grateful to still be able to share these remembrances."

**Coxswain Bob Whomsley**  
**USS David W Taylor (DD-551)**

**(Bob Whomsley also served in USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57) from March of 1942 to June 1943)**

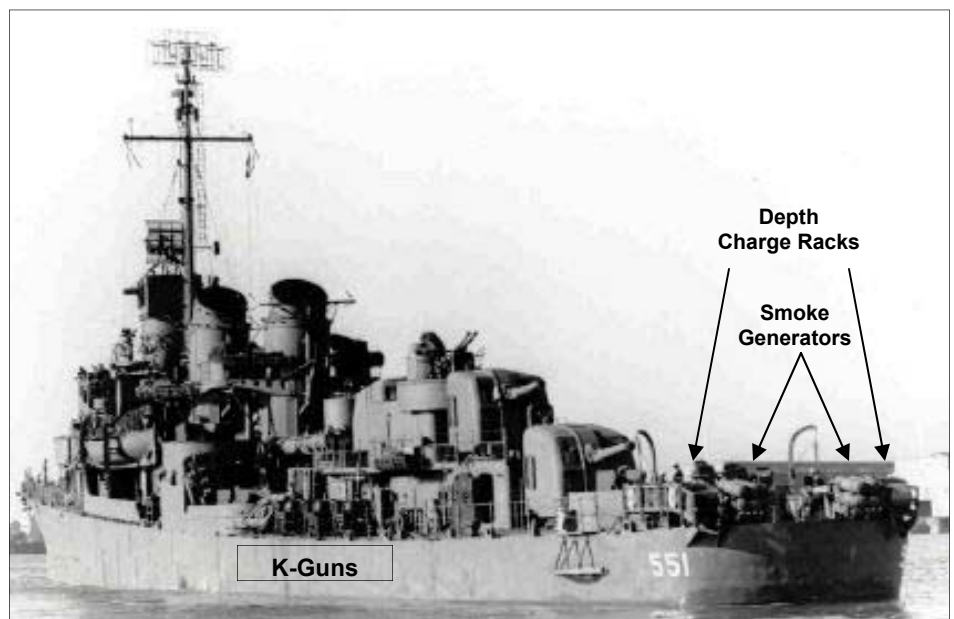
**Cherry Hill, New Jersey**

(Released US Navy photo. Courtesy of Bob Whomsley)

("In the attached photo of my ship, **USS DAVID W. TAYLOR (DD-551)**, two stern depth charge racks are seen, from which 600 pound depth charges were dropped into the water astern. Each rack held 8 depth charges when fully loaded. Explosive power was that of TNT...

Also seen are three K-Gun depth charge projectors arrayed on the port side, main deck. There were also three such weapons on the starboard side. These K-Guns propelled 300 pound depth charges upward and outward to land in the water and enlarge the pattern. Explosive power was also that of TNT...

Two smoke generators (cylindrical) can be seen between the depth charge racks.")





## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Don Walker

"I officially entered the Navy on 9 March 1943... and served as an apprentice seaman for one month before being sworn in as a midshipman, and then accepted for Bomb Disposal school. On 1 July 1943 I received my commission as an Ensign, and began 3 months of Bomb Disposal School - no mistakes allowed. After acceptance for Naval Combat Demolition training at Fort Pierce, Florida, we trained for pre-invasion beach reconnaissance and demolition with explosives. I was part of Naval Combat Demolition Unit (NCDU) #13 (one officer and five enlisted men.) NCDU's were later formed into Underwater Demolition teams (UDT's) during WW2 and Korea, and then in 1962 they became the Navy SEALs.



We arrived at Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands on 28 January 1944 and camped across "the slot" from Tulagi. From Tulagi we trained with Marines and the Bureau of Ordnance to utilize rockets with solid fuel for pre-invasion beach saturation. I then participated in the pre-invasion landings at Saipan and Guam in June and July 1944 as a member of UDT #4... it was UDT #4 that posted the legendary sign that said: **"WELCOME MARINES, USO 2 BLOCKS TO RIGHT, COURTESY UDT #4."**

Back in the Solomons, we then re-grouped as UDT-ABLE in preparation for the occupation of Peleliu. Our ship **USS NOA** (APD-24) - High Speed Transport) was sunk at Peleliu after a collision with **USS FULLAM** (DD474,) on 12 September 1944. We then received "survivors leave" orders for the states, but were instead ordered to pearl for transfer the Advance Training Base on Maui, where I became XO of UDT #13. UDT#13 trained for the invasions of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. I was also a witness to the now famous Mt. Suribachi flag raising on 23 February 1945. Shortly after participating in these two invasions I was detached as XO of UDT #13 for duty with the Experimental Division at Fort. Pierce, Florida. There I received the Silver Star Medal for action at Iwo Jima. This award allowed me to apply for release from active duty in October 1945, and return to civilian life as a pharmacist. I continued in the Naval Reserve as an inactive member until October 1959."

**LCDR Don Walker, (WW2 March 1943 to October 1945)**

**UDT #4 and UDT #13**

**Cherry Hill, New Jersey**

**(There were two Destroyers named USS NOA...)**

The first **USS NOA** (DD-343,) a **Clemson Class**, and converted to (APD24) in the story by **Don Walker** above, is not to be confused with the second **USS NOA** (DD-841,) a **Gearing Class**. (See **USS NOA** story by Volunteer **Art Ziemer** on page 12...)

### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Robert U. Cassel

"As war clouds thickened in 1941, I was drafted on April 4, 1941. The training camp at Fort Jackson, South Carolina introduced me to the US Army, and Company "B" of the 8th Infantry Division, 13th Infantry Regiment. I married a great lady, Eva Perian, just before Pearl Harbor. At that time, the 8th patrolled the entire Florida Coast, as German subs attacked our ships off shore. As Private, the pay was \$21.00 a month. I passed OCS at Ft. Benning, and as a 2nd Lieutenant, was assigned to



the 94th Infantry Division at Fort Custer, Michigan. Our troops were delayed in the election year of 1942, and the 94th finally got our troops at Camp Phillips, Kansas. We trained in blizzard conditions during the winter of 1942-1943. My Weapons Platoon consisted

of men from 18, and on up to 40. I found the older men at the time made excellent soldiers... After advanced maneuvers in Tennessee, Kentucky and Mississippi, we prepared to move overseas. At the time, our Battalion Operations Officer came down with appendicitis. The Battalion Commander called me up to HQ, and I took over the job of S-3. We shipped out on the Queen Elizabeth, and arrived in Greenoch, Scotland. After three weeks in England, we crossed the channel to Utah Beach on D-plus 94. We held off 60,000 Germans bottled up in the submarine ports of Lorient and St. Nazaire after being driven inland by the 6th armored Division.

The 94th was ordered to the Ardennes (Battle of the Bulge,) in early January 1945. I survived France, Ardennes, Rhineland, and Central Europe Campaigns. Then back to the U.S.A., on the last convoy. I was assigned to training men for the Japanese invasion. That ended when the BOMB was dropped. I was then assigned to the New Jersey National Guard, and the Army reserves. I was released in 1950. I have edited Volumes 1 and 2 of the 94th Commemorative histories, and edit the "Hoodlum News", for the 301st Infantry Association. I also do a newsletter column for the 94th called the "ATTACK."

**Robert U. Cassel**  
**94th Infantry Division**  
**Sewell, New Jersey**

**(Note: After some research, we're sure that Bob Cassel is our most "Senior" volunteer aboard Battleship New Jersey, and also our most "Senior" WW2 veteran. Here he even showed up at his recent 90th Birthday party in his WW2 uniform! You know, when we grow up Bob, we want to be just like you... Happy Birthday shipmate, and many more!)**



## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



### Battleship New Jersey Volunteer Al Saggese...

"I enlisted in the regular Army in 1946, and was sent to Japan as a member of the Army of Occupation. I served with "G" Troop, 12th Regiment, 1st Cavalry Division in the Tokyo area. Our mission was to assume control of Tokyo and Central Japan. Because of the devastation caused by our B-29's during the last days of the war, the infrastructure in Japan was almost completely demolished. Some of our responsibilities included destroying the war machine left on Japanese soil, restoring communications and patrolling the cities and towns to maintain law and order.

In May 1947, to counter Communist pressure, General MacArthur ordered troops from all over Japan and the Pacific Theater to hold a massive World War 2 victory parade on the Emperor's Palace Grounds in Tokyo. It was the largest military parade in American History. The display was meant to impress the Japanese as to who was in control, and to project American authority under General MacArthur, Supreme Commander of the Allied Forces in the Pacific. It succeeded. A full description of this event was covered in the January 1998 copy of the "SABER," the 1st Cavalry Division Association's newsletter.

One of the recollections that I remember, was when a few of the troopers from "G" Troop were selected to convoy Emperor Hirohito's son, crown Prince Akihito and his brother, Prince Masahito to their summer residence in Hayama, Japan. This was quite an experience for an eighteen-year-old kid from Philadelphia in 1946!"

**Al Saggese**  
1st Cavalry Division  
Havertwon, Pennsylvania



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Don Beck

"I was in the 25th Infantry Division, 35th Regiment, and assigned to Cannon Company, consisting of six (M-7) 105MM self-propelled howitzers. We were stationed at Shinodayama, Japan until June 1947 when our company was de-activated. Our equipment was then shipped to Korea in anticipation of a possible conflict. I was then reassigned to HQ Company (Military Police) of the 35th Regiment, and stationed in Otsu, Japan until my tour of duty was completed.

**PFC Don Beck**  
25th Infantry Division, 1946-1948



### Battleship New Jersey Volunteer William Lutz

"I joined the US Coast Guard in 1945 and was discharged in 1946. I served as a cook, and we served good food... no one got sick or died from it that I know of. You know, even today, I still eat SOS and SPAM. When we were discharged, we were issued a lapel pin for our coat, and a cloth patch for our uniforms (I have one enclosed.) It was called the "Ruptured Duck."

"P.S. I also served in the US Army as a combat cook during the Korean War, but that's another story for another time. If I am still alive, and still a ship's volunteer, I will definitely be there for *The Jerseyman* group photo of our Korean War Veteran's..."

**William Lutz**  
US Coast Guard 1945-1946  
Collingswood, New Jersey



**"And when he gets to Heaven To St. Peter he will tell:  
'One more Marine reporting, Sir - I've served my time in Hell.'"**

~ Sgt. James A. Donahue, First Marine Division ~

## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer George Hunt

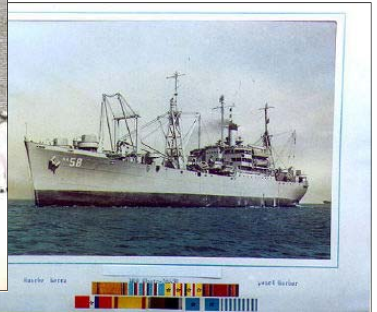
"It was October 20, 1944 and it was D-Day at Leyte in the Philippines. This was the first amphibious assault landing for the crew of **USS CHARA (AKA-58)**, and for my LCC (Landing Craft Control) boat. The LCC crew consisted of two officers, both Ensigns at the time, and 12 enlisted men. I was the ranking enlisted, being a Radio Technician 2/c. The LCC was hooked to the forward 50-ton boom and lowered to within a couple of feet of the water as the ship slowed and approached its designated anchorage spot. A moment before the ship came to a full stop, "**Away All Boats**" was ordered on the 1MC and the boats that were hanging on the booms hit the water. The LCC had to be first off because we had several miles to go to our rendezvous point, the line of departure 4000 yards off our designated beach, Yellow Beach 1. Our job on my LCC was to guide the first assault wave to its designated spot on the left flank

of Yellow Beach 1, and precisely at 1030, H-Hour. Incidentally, the left flank of Yellow Beach 1 was the left flank of the beach-head. Nothing to our left but Japs.

Now the fun started... we had two mechanics, both MoM 3/c who got our 2 big Gray Marine Diesel engines going and we were off to our rendezvous point. Next the motor mags got the two auxiliary generators started... we turned on all the electrical and electronic radio and navigation equipment... and **NOTHING!** The equipment would not turn on! I went back to the engine room, straddling four engines and two generators with my feet in bilge water, and saw the generators were turning, but no output. The boat is lurching, I am getting sea sick, and as emotionally sick as you can get. I remembered from school hearing about "crocus" cloth, and I had some in my tool box. I tried running it between the commutators and the brushes.

**SUCCESS**, and not too soon! We were circling the Patrol Craft that designated the line of departure. The Navigation Officer told me to "**take a few breaths of air before you relieve Ollie.**" Ollie was the Radar Op and he was about ready to heave, and I was his back-up. No one could be at that boat's radar, with the way it rolled, for more than 30 minutes without throwing up, and I was next! This was a hell of a long time ago, and yes, war is hell!

**ET 1/c George Hunt**  
**USS CHARA (AKA-58)**  
**Maple Shade, New Jersey**



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Dave Cunningham

"I was in the navy on active duty prior to WW2. From April 10/41 to 8/31/45, and mostly aboard USS Vulcan (AR-5.) The Atlantic ocean at that time was very much a place where we were in an undeclared war, and running convoys to Russia and England before Pearl Harbor.

At one time when the Vulcan was in Iceland before Pearl, the first U S casualties of the non-declared war occurred aboard the destroyer USS KIRNEY. She came along side and had suffered a torpedo hit at the Nr 1 engine room, and fire room. All sailors in those compartments were killed. The hole was below the water line, and we built a caisson out of wood with enough room for our men to pump out the water and work to fasten new plating over the hole. This allowed the ship to go back to the states under it's own power. (On the internet's history of the ship, they indicated that the ship had changed ballast to expose the hole. That is totally wrong!)

Our ship was awarded only one battle star - lucky in that respect. I am enclosing a photo of me showing a news paper declaring the **War Is Over!** My last duty was rotation shore duty at Frontier Base in Cape May where I was awarded Chief petty Officer at the same time that I was awarded a Captain's mast for not returning to base on time (**not guilty!**) Then the Captain told me that my Chief's advancement had been received!"

**CMC Dave Cunningham**  
**USS VULCAN (AR-5)**  
**Thorofare, New Jersey**

(Chief Dave Cunningham is a volunteer in the "Radio Gang" aboard Battleship New Jersey)



***"It is the soldier, not the reporter, who has given us the freedom of the press.  
 It is the soldier, not the poet, who has given us the freedom of speech.  
 It is the soldier, not the campus organizer, who give us the freedom to demonstrate.  
 It is the soldier who salutes the flag, who serves beneath the flag,  
 and whose coffin is draped by the flag, who allows the protestor to burn the flag."***

Attributed to

~ Father Dennis Edward O'Brien, Sergeant, USMC ~



## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



**Battleship New Jersey volunteer Jim Ramentol**  
**USS NORTH CAROLINA - September 15, 1942...**

"As a member of the Marine detachment aboard **NORTH CAROLINA**, I was privy to information on which direction the ship was heading... It was obvious that we were heading North from the Solomon Islands, and were heading for the large Japanese Naval Base at Truk. By morning of the 2nd day of steaming, and right after noon chow, secondary battle stations was called. My station was the Marine 5"38 mount on the port-side, and I was the pointer. As I was looking through the view finder, I picked up the carrier **USS WASP**. There was black smoke on her deck and I mentioned this to the Gun Captain. A few minutes later, I noticed the WASP was now engulfed in very heavy black smoke. Only seconds



later, a deck hand hollered out "**Torpedo Wake, Torpedo Wake...!**" It was too late to duck—"BOOM," "**BOOM**" was the next sound. GQ was then immediately sounded. I jumped out of the turret to head for my main battle station, a 20mm mount on the starboard side. By now, the ship was listing approximately 5 degrees, and it was like running uphill. As I was on my way, I remember seeing men coming out of the lower decks. One of the men had been shaving, and he looked to me like he was foaming at the mouth.

To me, the ship felt like it had jumped several feet out of the water when it was hit. I think the hero of the day was the damage control officer, a LT(jg.) By his actions, he corrected our list by counter flooding the ship. We lost a total of nine men. Five were trapped in the compartment flooded by the explosion, and three were killed by the hit. One man had also been washed over the side. Two men were later recovered from the flooded compartment and buried at sea. Because of the damage to our port-side (just forward of turret one,) the turret had been flooded up to covering the powder and shell areas. We later learned that the #1 also had a crack.

On September 16th, we broke away from the task force escorted by two destroyers. Later we found out that the two destroyers had used up all their depth charges the day before! We also heard that WASP had sunk. Our course was set for Tongatapu Island, US Naval Base in the Christmas Islands. When we arrived after 3 days, we welcomed the site of US soil! A damage crew immediately boarded the ship for temporary repairs, and we retrieved the bodies of our crewmen trapped in the lower compartments. On the 3rd day, we pulled up anchor and headed East. Everyone thought it was back to the states for repairs, but on the third morning we woke up to see Diamond Head at a distance... Hello Pearl Harbor.

Entering, we went directly into drydock. The next morning, the crew was sent over the side with chipping hammers, and on the dock was a huge steel section making up ship's compartments. Little did we know that the construction of this section was started only one day after we were hit by the torpedoes. A part of our hull was cut away, and the huge section fitted into the damaged area. Within 30 days from the time we were hit, to the time we were back with the fleet, we were fully repaired and she was ready to fight again!"

**Sgt. Jim Ramentol, USMC 1941-1946.**

**Marine Detachment and Plankowner/crewman**

**USS NORTH CAROLINA (BB-55), 2nd Division , Fleet Marine Force, 1941-1944.**

**Mount Laurel, New Jersey**



**Battleship New Jersey volunteer Richard Silvers**

"In early May of 1944, and during the Marianas Campaign, we had just secured from GQ at about 0945. Just as I was leaving the Mark 37 Director, I glanced up and saw a single Jap dive bomber heading straight down toward us. He dropped his bomb and it hit on the port side of #2 turret. Sadly it killed twenty five of our crew, and wounded several others. Some of the shrapnel hit our director, but none of the six of us inside were injured.

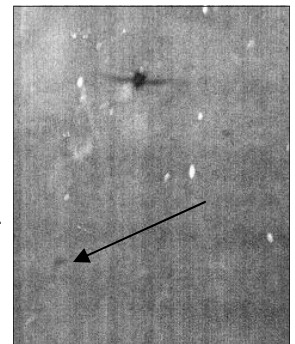
This kind of blurry photo copy was recently made available to me by J.C. Walker in Kansas. He apparently got the original from Lonnie Roberts who I remember was one of our photographers in **USS SOUTH DAKOTA**. The dark blur (arrow) is quite possibly the bomb that hit us that day. I also have

photo copies of the damage done to the Admiral's cabin, and the Captain's pantry... a lot of damage from that one bomb."

**FC3 Richard Silvers**

**USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57)**

**King of Prussia, Pennsylvania**



***"I hate war as only a soldier who has lived it can,  
 only as one who has seen its brutality, its futility, its stupidity."***

**~ General Dwight D. Eisenhower ~**

## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN

### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Arthur Ziemer

"I entered the US Navy in March of 1945 at the ripe old age of 17—the youngest of the five Ziemer brothers from Toms River New Jersey, and who all served in the Navy during WW2. After boot camp and radar school, I was assigned to new construction—destroyers. I became a "plank owner" on board **USS NOA (DD-841)** when it was placed in commission on Nov 2, 1945. I served aboard the NOA for the next five years, up and down the east coast and in the Mediterranean, and left her as a Radarman 1/c. I next served aboard two aircraft carriers—the **USS ESSEX (CV-9)**, and the **USS ANTIETAM (CV-36)** on the west coast. I left the navy in September of 1951 after six and a half years service - all sea duty!

**Arthur R. Ziemer**

**USS NOA (DD-841)**

**Merion Station, Pennsylvania**

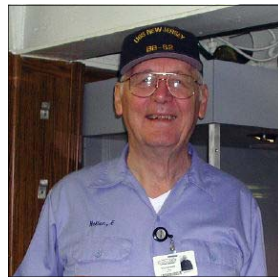


### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Richard Edwards

**Haddonfield, New Jersey**  
Seaman/US Coast Guard  
CG Stations at  
Manhattan Beach, NY and  
Boston, MA.  
May 1945-August 1947

### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Tec5 Charles H. Weiss

**Pennsauken, New Jersey**  
Third Army  
420th Ordnance Evacuation Co.  
Feb 1943—March 1946  
"I drove a 40 ton tank  
transporter to haul tanks and  
anti-aircraft guns."



**Battleship New Jersey volunteer  
ETM 3/c Eugene F. Holben**  
**Haddonfield, New Jersey**  
Sept 1942 - April 1946  
"My last station was  
Wake Island Naval Base."

### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Joe Donnelly

"The war had lots of hard times, but there was some humor in it too. I was attached to the Naval Amphibious Forces in 1944 as a Radioman 3/c. After finishing our amphibious training at Oceanside, and Camp Pendleton in California, we headed to Washington State for a shake down of our new ship **USS PICKAWAY (APA-222)** out of Puget Sound. It also gave me the worst case of seasickness the Navy has ever known.

After taking part in the liberation of the Philippines, our Skipper decided we should have a practice landing exercise on one of the islands near Hawaii. We had reveille at 0400, chow down at 0415, and at 0430 we headed down into the equipment hold. Four of us were radiomen, and we each carried parts of our TBS (Talk Between Ships,) a low frequency radio that the Japanese did not have, plus our regular gear and carbines. Then at 0500, we headed down the rope nets into LCVP's. The fog was so thick we could hardly see the boats. We headed out to the rendezvous point, and we could hear the other boats in the wave circling as we were supposed to do. It was still very foggy, and then after a long time, we realized that the sound of the other boats had faded! By the time the sun started to burn off the fog, it became fairly clear to see. But we could not see any of the other boats, the beach, or even our ship! After a while, the Coxswain got his bearings and we finally completed our part of the landing. It wasn't long after that we were at Iwo Jima, and doing it all for real... but this time we had a new Coxswain."

**Joseph E. Donnelly, RM 3/c**

**USS PICKAWAY (APA-222), Naval Amphibious Forces, Pacific Theater 1943-1946.**

**Willingboro, New Jersey**



**"Among the men who fought on Iwo Jima, uncommon valor was a common virtue."**

~ Fleet Admiral Chester W. Nimitz, USN ~



## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Peter Fantacone

"I served in USS LCI 492, and USS COLUMBUS (CA-74.) It was in the end of May 1944 that I reported aboard LCI 492, just a couple of weeks prior to D-Day, June 6, 1944.

We landed on Omaha beach approximately 0730 about one hour after the first wave. I remember when looking at the beach, the wreckage of equipment burning and the smoke that was on the beach. Then we backed off the beach and proceeded to waters just off of Omaha. The LCI 492 was lucky. Of the 12 LCI's in our Flotilla that landed at Omaha, four were lost due to heavy artillery, machine gun fire and mines. The four we lost were the LCI's 91, 92, 93 and 85. Two others, the 83 and 88 were severely damaged. All suffered casualties of both crew and troops. The 85 capsized and sunk. We saw her floating bottom up. She had tried twice to land her

troops under heavy fire and hit a mine. It was hard to believe that a little more than 12 hours earlier, I had attended Mass and received General Absolution with the troops and crews of these LCI's on the pier in Weymouth. We came back off the beach a few hundred yards and performed other duties off of Omaha for the rest of the day.

One sight that all tin can sailors can take pride in, was the way the destroyers swept in close to Omaha beach and delivered gunfire into the German positions, from late morning and into the afternoon. These destroyers were called in to furnish the only direct artillery support the infantry had on Omaha beach. Sometime during the day two German planes came out of nowhere and flew so close over us you could almost touch them. They did not fire or drop anything on us and were gone in an instant. Also, as the day progressed we start seeing the results of the battle on the beach. The rescue and recovery of the wounded and the dead was assigned to the Coast Guard, who manned their 83 footers. These small wooden craft were all over in these rough seas doing their work. We also picked up survivors and dead in a life raft from a British destroyer that had hit a mine. We also circled an LST floating bow up, that had also hit a mine. Survivors were probably picked up by another ship.

As for myself and USS LCI 492, we stayed off Omaha beach for the next two months, performing duties from rescues to directing men and materials into Omaha and riding out the worst storm in a hundred years. This great storm occurred only about 10 days after the invasion."

**Radioman 2/c Peter Fantacone 1943-1946**

**USS LCI 492**

**Mays Landing, New Jersey**



### Battleship New Jersey volunteer Marty Waltemyer

"On 3 May 1944, my ship, the **USS JOHN D. HENLEY (DD-553)**, left Pearl Harbor for Majuro, and remained on duty for 18 months. Our baptism of fire came on June 17-18 off Saipan. Two tankers, the **USS NESHANIC**, and **USS SARANAC** were strafed and damaged by bombs. We stayed with the tankers all night, until repairs were made to get underway. During this period, we were at sea for 70 days straight until August 15, 1944, and traveled 20,000 miles. The HENLEY was also at Iwo Jima and we bombarded with our 5"/38 guns for 23 hours before the Marines landed ashore on Feb 19, 1944.

When at Iwo Jima on Feb 20-21, 1944 and on fire support station, HENLEY gunners were very accurate and the spotter could hardly locate targets on the beach fast enough. His comments were **"target well beaten up," "Target wiped out," "Very good shooting."** I remember we had sandwiches and coffee at battle stations for supper that night as the HENLEY poured 5" salvo after salvo into Jap positions without let-up. The HENLEY fire was so damaging that the Japs went to considerable length to jam the ship to shore communication. At one time, a high, frantic voice kept yelling **"Thoroughbred, Thoroughbred"** (our voice call) **"Cease fire, Cease Fire!"** The Jap's diction wasn't fooling anyone, and we kept on shooting. At about 2000, we were shooting star shells to illuminate Japanese troops trying to counter-attack the Marines. At 2049 the enemy began a heavy counter-attack and the HENLEY plastered their positions with rapid, 20 second 5" gun salvos for 10 minutes, and probably saved the day for the forward position Marines. Later on it was reported from the beach that nearly 800 dead Japs were counted. It was the first of 2 "Banzai" attacks the HENLEY was credited with thwarting.

In August of 1945, we were anchored at Buckner Bay, Okinawa when the Atomic Bomb was dropped, and some ship crews fired star shells which lit up the bay area. The Admiral in charge passed the word to **"Stop all activity. Remain alert. Japanese subs in the area."**

**MM/2 Martin Waltemyer**

**USS JOHN D. HENLEY (DD-553)**

**Williamstown, New Jersey**



**"When I said that fighter-bombers had shot up my tanks with 40mm shells, the Reichsmarschall who felt himself touched by this, said:**

**"That's completely impossible. The Americans only know how to make razor blades." I replied: We could do with some of those razor blades, Herr Reichsmarschall."**

~ Field Marshall Erwin Rommel ~

## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY WW2 VOLUNTEERS... / THE JERSEYMAN

### New Exhibit Honors America's Veterans

(Highly recommended... Ed.)

"A new Smithsonian Institution exhibit that pays tribute to the service and sacrifice of the nation's battle-worn men and women opened on Thursday (Veterans Day). The exhibit (<http://americanhistory.si.edu>) includes more than 800 artifacts, from the 18th-century's French and Indian War to the current global fight against terrorism and the conflict in Iraq. The war relics on display include the sword George Washington wore while reviewing troops before the Whiskey Rebellion in 1794 and Colin Powell's Army fatigues from Operation Desert Storm. An .80 caliber British Tower musket recovered from a dead British soldier during the Battle of Bennington in 1777 and a U.S. M16A1 automatic rifle used by soldiers and Marines during Vietnam are among the many weapons on view. Other items include MIA bracelets, a Silver Star awarded to a Marine during the Persian Gulf War and a piece of the twisted steel from the World Trade Center."

<http://americanhistory.si.edu>



**Battleship New Jersey volunteer Harry Frank**

"I served in the Navy from April 1943 to May of 1946 as an Aviation Storekeeper 2/c (Payroll,) and was assigned with HEDRON 8, and CASU 6 (Carrier Aircraft Service Unit,) in Alameda, California. We were a PBY Catalina Flying Boat unit, and involved with ocean reconnaissance. HEDRON 8's surveillance area covered the ocean patrol from California to Hawaii.

The one story that I will never forget during World War 2, happened during September of 1943. I had just completed service school in Toledo, Ohio and on the spur of the moment at the start of my 10 day leave, I decided to visit my brother Joe who was an infantry Sergeant with the 30th "Old Hickory" Infantry Division at Fort Jackson in Columbia, S.C. But when I arrived in Columbia, I discovered that Joe and his wife Helen had moved!

The next morning, I went to the post office and tried to find their address, but with no forwarding address, I had no luck. At the time, I simply did not even think to visit the army base, and just as unexplained, I simply decided to walk the short distance from the hotel where I had spent the night, and begin to knock on the doors of every other house looking for Joe and Helen. After three blocks, and with pure luck, I found them at their new place as they were having breakfast! It was the first Monday that Joe had been off, so Helen had taken off from her job at the Dr. Pepper Company. We had a very enjoyable day together. I then left the next morning to visit my parents in New Jersey.

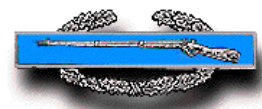


Just a few months later, in February of 1944, the 30th Infantry Division and my brother Joe, left Boston Harbor bound for England. Somewhere between June 14-17, 1944, his unit of the 30th Division landed in France. Joe was

killed on July 16, 1944 at St. Lo. Except for his wife Helen, I was the last family member to see my brother alive.

The family brought Joe's remains home in 1947, and he was buried at our family plot in Bridgeport, New Jersey. Joe was only 24 years old when he died."

**SKD/2 Harry T. Frank  
HEDRON 8, CASU 6, 1943-1946  
Swedesboro, New Jersey**





## THE JERSEYMAN

**(Editor's Note... A few months ago, Battleship New Jersey Volunteer Harry Frank (preceding page...) told us the WW2 story of locating his brother Joe, visiting with him for a final time in late 1943, and the loss of his brother when Killed in Action at St. Lo, France - 1944. It was a story that prompted the telling of my Uncle Norman Olsen, killed in Action within one day of Harry Frank's brother at St. Lo. They were both attached to the same 30th Infantry Division, named "Old Hickory...") - Master Chief Tom Helvig, USN (Ret.)**

### World War 2 remembered...

Just prior to the December 7, 1941 Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, my parents and I had moved in with my grandparents and 3 Uncles (Mom's brothers,) in Bay Ridge, Brooklyn. Both sides of my family are Norwegian as far back as we can trace, and along with my Uncles Ernie, Norman, and myself, we were the first of the Olsen/Helvig families born in the United States. Uncle Berger Olsen and my mother Gudny, were both born in Norway, and they had immigrated to the US as children along with my grandmother in September of 1919.

Throughout World War 2, Mom had worked for the US Army at the New York Port of Embarkation, and told of watching the steady stream of troop ships and merchant ships leave New York harbor bound for Europe.

Mom's two brothers, Berger and Norman, both served in the infantry, and our home displayed the familiar blue star "Sons In Service" banner in the front window, as did millions of other homes.



Berger (seen in this 1944 photo wearing his bullet-holed helmet,) was the oldest of the Olsen sons, and was drafted in February of 1941. Along with 1,000 other first and second generation Norwegian speaking soldiers from across the country, he volunteered for a newly forming outfit of Norwegian - American ski-troops. This unit was designated the spearhead unit for the future liberation of Norway, and was called the "99th Infantry Battalion (Separate), 474th Infantry Regiment ("Devils Brigade,") 1st Special Forces." They formed at Camp Ripley in Minnesota, and trained in the 9,300 foot level thin-air mountains of Camp Hale in Colorado. Berger also told of being sworn in as a US citizen along with several truck loads of 99th Battalion Norwegians while undergoing their training in 1943. He told stories of grueling ski and snow shoe training exercises, 3 day high altitude mountain marches at 10,000 to 12,000 foot levels, wearing white camouflage, and "timed" 3-day mountain climbs carrying 20 kilo (44 pound) custom framed backpacks- plus their weapons.

Sergeant Berger Olsen went ashore at Normandy on D-Day plus 15, and along with his squad, saw their first action in the taking of Cherbourg, France. It was later on in Belgium "it was about 2 in the afternoon on 19 September 1944," that a German sniper hit him through his helmet as he was asleep and sitting back against a tree. His forehead was deeply

grazed and it knocked him out. He continued to wear his "lucky helmet" throughout the war, and at the end he brought it back home with him. Berger had recorded 150 combat days including 32 in the Ardennes, and the "Battle of the Bulge." He was awarded a Purple Heart with oak leaf cluster, and Bronze Star. The 99th was also the U.S. Honor Guard for King Haakon of Norway at the end of World War 2.

Berger also told of the last letter he had written to his brother Norman Olsen in June of 1944. In August of 1944 the letter was returned to him while he was on the front lines with the words "Deceased - KIA" hand written on the envelope.

Norman was the youngest of the Olsen sons, and followed his older brother Berger by enlisting in the US Army in Sept of 1942 at age 18. He was attached to the 30th Infantry Division, 117th Regiment, Company "I," and trained as a mortar-man at Fort Benning, Georgia, with advanced training at Camp Blanding, Florida. On February 12, 1944, all regiments of the 30th "Old Hickory" Division left the Boston Port of Embarkation bound for England and Scotland aboard 3 transports, the S/S's *John Ericsson*, *Brazil*, and *Argentina*. It was recorded that the first unit of the 30th Division landed in France on June the 10th, D-Day+4.

Many years later, and from comparing the two unit source books listed below, we determined that Berger's 99th Infantry Battalion, and Norman's 117th Regiment of the 30th Division were separated by about 40 miles on the day Norman was killed - 5 months after his 20th birthday on 15 July 1944. Along with so many others of World War 2, Norman's remains were later brought home, and in April of 1948 he was buried with full military honors in the Olsen family gravesite in Brooklyn, New York.

It was a long time before Berger spoke about the war, but in the 1970's, he began to share details for our family records. He was very proud of the fact that even though most of the men in his squad were wounded, they all survived the war and returned home. In 1997, Sgt. Nils Berger Olsen passed away in Brooklyn at the age of 83.

**CTRCM Tom Helvig, USN (Ret. 1953-1975)**

**Volunteer Writer/Editor *The Jerseyman***

**U.S. Naval Security Group (NSG)**

**Mt. Laurel, New Jersey**

Sources: The World War 2 oral history of Platoon Sergeant Nils Berger Olsen, 99th Infantry Battalion (Separate.)

Unit histories: "*99th Infantry Battalion (Separate)*" by Gerd Nyquist, H. Aschehoug & Co., Oslo, Norway - 1981, and

"*Work Horse of the Western Front. The Story of the 30th Infantry Division*" by Robert L. Hewitt, Washington Infantry Journal Press - August 1946.



## WW2 STORY CONTRIBUTORS.../ THE JERSEYMAN

### Battle of Leyte Gulf issue - (Correction...)

"I received my copy of *The Jerseyman* and I enjoyed every part of it! I will make copies of it for all my children and grandchildren. The stories in it brought back a lot of memories of that day at Leyte Gulf. But in one part LCDR Cooper (**USS FRANKS (DD-554)**,) incorrectly stated names of the commanders of the Taffy units. Our commander of **Taffy 3** was **RADM Clifton A. F. Sprague**, better known as "ZIGGY." **Taffy 1** was **RADM Thomas Sprague**, and no relation to "ZIGGY." The **Taffy 2** Commander was **RADM Felix B. Stump**.

I have a book written by C. Vann Woodward called "**THE BATTLE FOR LEYTE GULF**" printed by the "Battery Press," and a real good rendition of the battle, I also have "**THE LAST STAND OF THE TIN-CAN SAILORS**," that you spoke about, but this rendition had a lot of flaws in it, and did not tell the full story. The other two books you listed in *The Jerseyman* I will look for in the book store and see what they read like. But again, the stories in *The Jerseyman* are just great and thanks again for sending it to me."

**MaM3/c Charles W. Touzell**  
**USS DENNIS (DE-405)**  
 Philadelphia, Pennsylvania



### USS DENNIS (DE-405)

"My shipmate Charlie Touzell did a good job highlighting our part in the Leyte Gulf battle but he missed a part of the story that I think was very important. After the Jap fleet turned away and departed, a lone Zero Kamikaze dived into the **USS St. LO (CVE-63)** and exploded inside her hanger deck nearly blowing her in half... she sank within minutes. We happened to be the closest ship to her and we rescued 434 of her crew from the water, many of which were stretcher cases. I just thought the mention of saving these lives was just as important as shooting at the Japs.

For what it's worth, I had a birds eye view of the battle as I was the Gunnery Officer's talker on the open bridge through the whole time. And, I sincerely believe that if it wasn't for the grace of God, none of Taffy III would be here today to tell about it. I shall keep this issue of *The Jerseyman* with the other mementos of my Navy career."

**YNC John R. Hines, USN (Ret.)**  
**USS DENNIS (DE-405)**  
 Cadillac, Michigan

### Battle of Leyte Gulf Memorial Located on Harbor Drive in San Diego, California

Dedicated to the memory of  
**VADM Clifton A. F. Sprague**,  
 the 13 ships and  
 7,300 men of Task Unit 77.4.3, known as  
 "Taffy 3."

This monument commemorates the naval  
 action fought off Samar Island  
 October 25, 1944,  
 and during the

#### Battle for Leyte Gulf

There is a granite column for each of the  
 ships in "Taffy 3"



**"...destroyermen have always been a proud people. They have been the elite. They have to be proud people and they have to be specially selected, for destroyer life is a rugged one. It takes physical stamina to stand up under the rigors of a tossing DD. It takes even more spiritual stamina to keep going with enthusiasm when you are tired and feel that you and your ship are being used as a workhorse. It is true that many people take destroyers for granted and that is all the more reason why destroyermen can be proud of their accomplishments."**

~ Admiral Arleigh Burke ~



## THE JERSEYMAN



### More from USS NEW JERSEY... December 24, 1944

"...**Chester Nimitz**, recently promoted to the rank of five-star fleet admiral, flew in to Ulithi for a conference with Admiral Halsey. When Nimitz came aboard the **NEW JERSEY**, a five-star flag was flown aloft, the first such occasion in a Pacific Fleet warship. With him, Nimitz brought a decorated Christmas tree for the **NEW JERSEY's** wardroom. Nimitz's biographer, Professor E. B. Potter, noted that the admiral was disappointed because the battleship's officers preferred an artificial tree the crew had made from nuts, bolts, and scrap metal. **Ensign Allen Tre-cartin**, one of the **NEW JERSEY's** scout plane pilots, had duty as in-port officer of the deck at Ulithi. He recalls that the total number of stars from all the flag officers on board the ship during Nimitz's visit was forty-five."

Source: "**BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY An Illustrated History**" (Page 72) by Paul Stillwell, US Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Maryland. 1986

### SHIP'S BELLS/STORIES Thanks!

#### USS JOHN C. BUTLER (DE-339)

Plankowner  
**F.F. Jeff Conley**  
Bella Vista, Arizona

#### USS KIDD (DD-661)

USS NEW ORLEANS (CA-32)  
USS BATON ROUGE (SSN-689)  
**Tim NesSmith**

Admin. Assistant  
USS KIDD Veterans Memorial  
Baton Rouge, Louisiana

#### USS LAKE CHAMPLAIN (CV/CVA/CVS-39)

BM1 (SW) **Charles Brown,**  
USN/Ret.  
St. Louis, Missouri

#### USS MISSOURI (BB-63)

**Edward K. "Ned" Conklin**  
President Battleship Missouri  
Amateur Radio Club  
Honolulu, Hawaii

~ ~ ~

Please keep those US Navy  
ship's bell photos coming.  
All photos will be returned.  
**Thanks!!**



**"It's extremely difficult to second guess the American Navy,  
because the Americans rarely read their doctrine,  
and don't feel compelled to follow it when they do."**

~ Attributed to Admiral of the Soviet Fleet, Sergei Gorshkov ~

## USS NEW JERSEY HISTORY...



## THE JERSEYMAN

### DROPPED 16" PROJECTILE! - USS NEW JERSEY...

In 1947, Robert C Peniston was a new Ensign assigned to **USS NEW JERSEY**. Twenty-two years later, he would assume command of the ship, and in December of 1969, preside over her de-commissioning. Recently, Captain Peniston related this story to *The Jerseyman*, of when a 2,700 pound Armored Piercing shell got away from the loading crew, and dropped 6 decks through the hatches of **USS NEW JERSEY**.

"I can tell you exactly the spot where the 16" shell hit. The ammo access hatch is located on the port side of Turret #2 on the main deck. Straight down six decks is the spot. I am sure it is still there. I just had to see it in 1969...

At the time, I was directed by the Assistant Fire Control officer to use the yard tongs to "speed up" handling. The ship did have it's own tongs, and adding one more might have helped, EXCEPT that the yard tongs had a quick release bar, and I knew that I could not make sure that the bar would not hit the sides of the hatch openings going down six decks. Handling the cable and keeping it away from the hatches was virtually impossible. Can you imagine trying to keep a 2,700 lb shell not touching the edges of a hatch as it went down? It ain't easy. The inevitable happened with the yard tongs about the third shell down. There was dye all over the place, but only LUCKILY, no one was hurt.

We hauled the shell up with the ship's tongs, and the Turret Officer used a dolly to shove it over the side. It made a huge plume of water rising about two decks high. The Captain saw it from his cabin and came out wanting to know what the hell was going on. He was not at ease with that shell being so close to the ship. It was dropped into 10 feet of mud and I imagine it is still there. Come to think of it, **USS HECTOR (AR- 7)** made the repairs."

**Captain Robert C Peniston, USN (Ret.)**  
Lexington, Virginia



### Editor's Note...

We checked the hatch area below to find exactly where this projectile hit. The deck area has been replaced with a rectangular plate, and a heavily beaded weld is clearly seen in the deck. The plate is about 30 inches long and 24 inches wide.

In Dr. Malcolm Muir's reference book: "*The Iowa Class Battleships... Weapons and Warfare*," (Pg. 34,) it provides descriptions of the dye colors used in the 16" projectiles of **USS IOWA** Class battleships.

|                       |          |
|-----------------------|----------|
| <b>USS IOWA</b>       | = Orange |
| <b>USS NEW JERSEY</b> | = Blue   |
| <b>USS MISSOURI</b>   | = Red    |
| <b>USS WISCONSIN</b>  | = Green  |

With the above story as an example, we ask all battleship sailors to keep these stories coming. If you have a first-hand account of incidents/events aboard any of our US Navy battleships, please send it on to us at *The Jerseyman*.

[THelvig@aol.com](mailto:THelvig@aol.com)

**Thanks!**



July 7, 2004 -  
Turret Captain Marty Waltemyer tests  
NEW JERSEY's ceremonial cannon...  
(Photo courtesy of Volunteer Art Lohan)

### Disclaimer:

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Volunteer Writer/Editor *The Jerseyman*  
62 Battleship Place  
Camden, NJ 08103 © 2005



## THE JERSEYMAN

### USS KENTUCKY (BB-66) and USS SACRAMENTO (AOE-1)??? (Source: US Navy website)

"USS Sacramento (AOE-1), is the third US Ship to bear the name, for both the river, and city in California. She combines the functions of three logistics ships in one hull; fleet oiler (AO), ammunition ship (AE), and refrigerated stores ship (AFS).

Admiral Arleigh Burke originated the concept of a single supply ship system. He saw the design as an answer to logistics problems he encountered during World War II. The limited speed, range, and payload of early Underway Replenishment groups prevented resupply due to bad weather and tactical demands of the war. To counter these problems, the Fast Combat Support Ship (AOE) was designed.

The keel was laid for the first, fastest, and finest AOE at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Washington on June 30, 1961. The traditional champagne bottle was broken against the bow of AOE-1 on September 14, 1963, by Mrs. Edmund Brown, ship's sponsor and wife of the Governor of California.

SACRAMENTO was commissioned on March 15, 1964. Undersecretary of the Navy, Paul B. Fay Jr., addressed the crowd, stating, "The greatest pleasure I have in being here today is ... participating in the commissioning of a vessel which will provide the Navy with a unique capability hitherto never contained in one ship." He added the ship would be able to "run in speed with a destroyer escort, thereby giving our fast attack carrier task forces a flexibility of action hitherto unknown."

SACRAMENTO is considered a benchmark in West Coast shipbuilding. The ship and two of her sister ships, SEATTLE and DETROIT, are the largest ships ever built on the West Coast. Only Iowa class battleships and aircraft carriers have greater displacements than SACRAMENTO.

The ship's main engines came from the never completed battleship KENTUCKY and deliver in excess of 100,000 shaft horsepower to two 23-foot screws, the largest on any ship in the Navy."

Submitted by:

**BM1(SW) Charles W. Brown, USN (Ret.)**  
**St. Louis, Missouri**

"Yeah... Ol' Kentucky  
 sure woulda been  
 one great ship..."

### Footnotes:

The keel for **USS KENTUCKY (BB-66)**, (the sixth authorized **USS IOWA** Class battleship along with **USS ILLINOIS (BB-65)**,) was laid on Dec 6, 1944, and scrapped at 72% of completion in October of 1958.

In 1956, the 68 foot, 120-ton bow section of **USS KENTUCKY** was removed to replace the bow of **USS WISCONSIN (BB-64)**, heavily damaged in a collision with **USS EATON (DDE-510)** on May 6, 1955.

**USS SACRAMENTO (AOE-1)** was built using one of the engines from **USS KENTUCKY**, and **USS CAMDEN (AOE-2)** was also built with an engine from **USS KENTUCKY**.

**USS SACRAMENTO (AOE-1)** was decommissioned 1 October 2004.

(Sources:

**Dictionary of American Fighting Ships (DANFS)**, and  
**"American Battleships"** by Max R. Newhart, Pictorial Histories Publishing.)



### Many thanks!

Once again we owe grateful thanks to shipmate **Hamp Law, of West Monroe, Louisiana** (WW2 Plankowner Crewman aboard **USS TENNESSEE (BB-43)**,) for his special cartoons lightening up each *Jerseyman*. We also thank **Volunteer George LoPresti** for many of the photographs in this issue (including the WW2 group photo on the front page,) and **BM1 (SW) Charles Brown, of St. Louis, Missouri** for his tireless effort to keep the history of US Navy Battleships alive. Special thanks also to **Bob Pepper of St. Louis, Mo.**, for his constant help in rounding up as many US Navy ship's bell photos as he can find. And to **Volunteer Al Saggese**, and Battleship New Jersey **Archives Manager/Volunteer Bob Walters**, for helping hands to *The Jerseyman* - anytime they are asked...

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

**"Casualties many; Percentage of dead not known; Combat efficiency; we are winning."**

~ Colonel David M. Shoup, USMC, Tarawa, (21 November 1943) ~

## THE JERSEYMAN

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### *In Remembrance...*

*Almighty God, by your word you created the universe and gave the earth its unique place in it. By your word you brought plant and animal life into being. By your word you provided all the resources to sustain life. By your word you created human life and you prospered the human family.*

*Each day, we are awestruck by the immensity of our world and the diversity of our human family. Each day, we are reminded of the gift of our lives and sanctity of our human relations. Each day, we are thankful for the land in which we live, for the freedoms that we enjoy, and for the men and women who protected us and who are protecting us now.*

*We give you thanks for all who served our nation in the armed forces, especially our shipmates in USS NEW JERSEY, and those who volunteered to maintain the ship and interpret its history. We remember our shipmates who "crossed the bar" this year and find their rest in you. By your word, give comfort and strength to their families and friends, in your holy name, we pray.*

*Amen*

James P. Nickols  
CAPT, CHC, USN (Ret.)

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**THE JERSEYMAN**

*Taps... 2004*



**Shipmate Stephen Swift**  
**Boatswain's Mate Seaman**  
**USS PLYMOUTH ROCK (LSD-29)**  
**1961-1964**

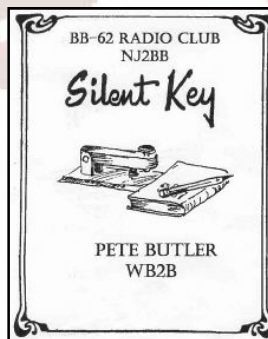
*...May 12, 2004*

**Shipmate Paul McPike**  
**Boiler Technician 2/c**  
**USS MACON (CA-132)**  
**USS ALBANY (CA-123)**  
**USS MIDWAY (CVB-41)**  
**1946-1952**

*...June 16, 2004*



**Shipmate Peter N. Butler, WB2B**  
**BNJARS**  
**Staff Sgt, US Army - World War 2**  
*"Silent Key" ...October 16, 2004*



**Shipmate Sam Kuncевич, N3QIE**  
**BNJARS**  
**USS NEW JERSEY Shipfitter 1941-1942**  
**USS NEW JERSEY 1943-1944**  
**USAAF T/Sgt., 315th Bomb Sqn., B 25's**  
**Naval Architect/Illustrator. 1948-1983**  
*"Silent Key" ...November 7, 2004*



***"We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give."***  
 ~ Winston Churchill ~

## UNITED STATES NAVY SHIP'S BELLS

A Naval Heritage Display  
of Battleship NEW JERSEY (BB-62)  
and *The Jerseyman*

### DESTROYERS



### USS NICHOLAS (DD-449)

#### USS NICHOLAS (DD-449)

Displacement: 2,050 Tons  
Length: 378' 6" Beam: 39' 8" Draft: 17' 9"  
Speed: 37 knots  
Class: *Fletcher*

**MARINE BARRACKS, Washington, DC** (USMC PAO Office 7, Oct 1971)

The bell from the Destroyer **USS *Nicholas* (DD 449)**, the oldest active destroyer in the US Navy at the time of her decommissioning, is consigned to the Marine Barracks.

The **USS *Nicholas*** was retired in January 1970 at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, terminating a career which began during the bleak days of the Navy in early 1942 and spanned three wars.

Commissioned on 4 June 1942, she was the second US warship named in honor of **Major Samuel Nicholas, the first commissioned officer in the US Marine Corps.**

Three months later, she was engaged in the Solomon Islands campaign, in the battle for Guadalcanal. For her actions during the Battle of Kula Gulf on 6 July 1943, she was awarded the Presidential Unit Citation.

One of the most decorated ships in active service, she had an outstanding combat record in WWII, earning 16 battle stars on her Asiatic-Pacific Service Ribbon; with the downing of seven enemy aircraft plus two more possible kills, shore bombardments, task force operations, landings, escort duty and surface battles all noted in her colorful war diary. She earned two more battle stars for her participation in the liberation of the Philippines.

***Nicholas*** was the last surviving link with the historic events which took place in Tokyo Bay, September 2, 1945, when she transported US and Allied representatives to the **battleship *Missouri*** for the Japanese surrender ceremony.

Deactivated in January 1947, she was converted to an escort destroyer and re-commissioned in February 1951. She played an active and significant role in the Korean Conflict, earning five more battle stars.

She also participated with the US Seventh Fleet in Vietnam action, earning 10 battle stars, giving her a total of thirty-three battle stars since her commissioning.



#### Editor's Note:

The US Marine Barracks at 8th & "I" streets in Washington, D.C., is the oldest post in the Marine Corps, the residence of the Marine Commandant, and since July 5, 1957, the home to the most dramatic military celebration in the world - the summer Evening Parade. The Evening Parade consists of a one hour and fifteen minute performance of music and precision marching by "**The President's Own**" United States Marine Band, "**The Commandant's Own**," The United States Marine Drum and Bugle Corps, and the Marine Corps Silent Drill Platoon.

Beginning in 1971 and up until 1997, the **USS SAMUEL NICHOLAS** ship's bell was rung during each performance of the summer parade held on Friday evenings from May through August. The photo above shows the bell in its former position on the USMC Barracks parade ground in Washington, DC. In the summer of 1997, the bell cracked and was then relocated to the front of Center House on the parade grounds.

"The Evening Parade's heritage is entwined with military rituals such as tattoo, retreat, and lowering of the colors ceremonies, and is offered solely to express the dignity and pride that represents more than two centuries of heritage for all Americans."

#### Sources:

United States Marine Corps Website

Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships (DANFS,) Volume V

HISTORY OF UNITED STATES NAVAL OPERATIONS IN WORLD WAR II, Volumes VI, VIII, XII, and XIII  
by Samuel Eliot Morison



***"Some people live an entire lifetime and wonder if they have made a difference in the world. Marines don't have that problem."***

~ Ronald Reagan ~