

# THE POINTER

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THE

# PLANE SHOOTER

Our Motto: "We aim- To Deliver" and "We-Did"

USN Armed Guard World War II Veterans

"PLAIN SHOOTING FOR PLANE SHOOTERS"

Dear Armed Guard Crew and "Slipmates":

January 20, 1987

Just to let you know that we survived the holidays and hope yours were as enjoyable as ours. I guess that many of you remember how homesick we were when we could not get home for the holidays. Bing Crosby's records of a "White Christmas" is still on top of my list.

By the time you receive this, Richard and Peggy Langenderfer, 2601 Wyndale Rd., Toledo, Ohio 43613 Tel. 1-(419)-475-5400 should have everyone's name and ships listed in their computer and all you have to do to see if your shipmate has signed on is to send him a self addressed-stamped envelope and he will return them to you as soon as possible. If you have not sent in your ships and dates, please do so. You can send the form to the name listed at the top still and it will be forwarded since I will be the back-up man and will retain the title of Chairman for the time being and Dick will be the Co-Chairman. (Or mail on to Richard and Peggy)

February 28th, 1987 will be the cutoff date for you to participate and get your story and picture in the book. Many of you have written history that never would have been told if it were not for this book. Many of you are holding it inside you and needs to be told. You may not think that it is of importance but how will the next generations know without your help. If you cannot afford the book, send in your story anyway. It may be that we can use part of it to get a story across. You can tell what you saw and did at Normandy, Barie, Sicily, Antwerp, Okinawa, Leyte, Murmansk, Bone, Iraq, Iran, in the lifeboats, you were there and only you can tell it. I can assure you that I gain nothing but the satisfaction of letting the world know that the Armed Guard did a job in WW II and who they were. You fought for it, it's up to you to keep it alive. Write a story aside from the 250 words if you think it should be told. We can use it in our future "POINTER Mailouts". Another thing, the "Pointer" is not a magazine like others. This is done whenever I have had time and will continue as long as possible and funds from donations are available.

May 20-24, 1987 will soon be here!!!! Billy and Pat Hart, our Kansas City, Missouri hosts for the Armed Guard 1987 reunion will need all the help you can give them. Make your plans known to them as soon as possible and please let the Hyatt-Regency know that you're attending -"THE ARMED GUARD REUNION". TELL THEM WHEN YOU CONTACT THEM- NOT UPON ARRIVAL. Also, to help Billy the most is to get your money in for meals, etc. that he will have to keep track of. If you cannot afford the Hyatt-Regency, stay where you can afford and eat where you can afford to eat but be there. -Continued-

## Let the phone RING

It's frustrating to rush in from outside to answer a ringing telephone and have the calling party hang up just before you reach the phone.

If you're at the other end of the line, let the phone ring at least 10 times before hanging up. A few extra rings give the person you're calling time to get out of the shower and grab a towel, come in from the yard, or turn off the stove. It also may save you from having to make a second call.

MA Bell

GUNNERS-OFFICERS-SIGNALMEN-RADIOMEN-MEDICS-WAVES-SHIP'S COMPANY-



2

RV CAMPERS use Campers Inn, Kansas City, Mo. side- Exit 24 off I-40 about 22 miles east of Hyatt-Regency. Tel- 1-(816)229-CAMP for reservations. The cost \$12. per day with many attractions and 75 sites. You make own plans!!

Robert Wilcox, 257 Fendale St.Frk.S., New York, N.Y. 11010 (516)486-7991 will be holding a "GIT-TO-GETHER" at the VFW HALL in Franklin Square, N.Y. on Sunday, Feb. 15, 1987 from 1 til 5 P.M. This will be New York's first Armed Guard meeting and others are welcomed!!! But do let him know if you are interested now or possible future meetings. GOOD LUCK Y'ALL!!!

I would like to say thanks to Carlo Traficano for getting the Arizona Crew together and he has informed me that he has turned the helm over to another former "Ohioan"-- Phillip K. Goettl 8448 E. Oak St.,Scottsdale, Az. 85257 1-(602)946-2978 who will be the Skipper for that area. They will hold breakfast every other month. Also, Raymond Barba 1461 W.Kilburn St., Tucson, Az. 85705 1-(602)-887-7792 has begun another Armed Guard Breakfast Club there and those in that area or visiting that area are welcomed!!

Carl Winder 1734 Pilgrim Ave, Mountain View, Ca. 94040 1-(415)-967-6493 has informed me of an April 3-5, 1987 Armed Guard "Git-to-Gether" in Reno, Nev. Contact him for more info. Carl also informs me of the following Gits  
1. Feb. 1, 1987 10:00 A.M. Brunch at MoonRakers- Brackway Beach, Ca. and the hosts are Tony And Theresa Abela 1019 Woolsey St., San Francisco, Ca. 94134 1-(415)-584-1813 (HOPE THIS GETS THERE IN TIME TO GO!!)  
2. Mar. 1, 1987 10:00 A.M. Brunch at the "Old Sacramento Railroad Museum" Sacramento, Ca. Hosts are: Cal and Jackie Fisher 8047 Westboro Way, Sacramento, Ca. 1-(916)-682-8009 along with Norman and Madeline Bigham, 4701-22nd St.,Sacramento, Ca. 95822 1-(916)-457-6978  
3. May 3, 1987 1:00 P.M. Picnic-(\$6.50) Lake Yosemite, near Snelling, Ca. hosts- Mike and Alice Coz 1927 Bardo Lane,Visalia, Ca. 93277 (209) 734-9673  
4. June 7, 1987 10:00 Beach Brunch Santa Cruz, Ca. with Richard and Lydia O'Neil 316 Marnell Ave.,Santa Cruz, Ca. 95062 1-(408)423-7748

Richard and Billie Kohse 2304 Lister Rd.,Olympia, Wa. 98508 1-(206)-456-1946 will be getting the "NORTHWEST PASSAGE" together. Please notice the telephone correction.(HAD-1943) BOY!! It's hard to be perfect!! They will be glad to have you join in.

Lawrence and Rosemary Garvey of 6332 Edmund St., Philadelphia, Pa. 19135 tel- 215-333-8784 will be holding a "Git-to-Gether" at the "Capt. John Louainslajer" American Legion Post 366 7976 Oxford Ave., Philadelphia, Pa. 19111 on Feb. 21, 1987. They will have Buffett-Open Bar-Dancing \$20. Per person. This is their first meeting to organize and "Y'ALL" are welcomed!!

Ralph and Martha Cobaugh 664 Bamberger Rd., Etters, Pa. 17319(717)938-4535 also is interested in getting the crew in their area together for the first time. Contact them for dates, etc. You'll be glad you did.

Erle and Marie Francis 1608 High, Topeka, Ks. 66604 (913)-234-5266, and Gene and Ellen Book P.O.Box 333 823 Glick, Chapman, Ks.67431 (913)922-6003 will be holding the Topeka Area's second meeting on Mar. 31, 1987. Billy Hart informed me so contact either of them for details. I understand that everyone had a great time at the first meeting. Three articles in their papers has brought out many of the "Ol'Salts" in the area that thought we were a forgotten crew. Thanks to Gene for going to the Capital-Journal in Topeka and our thanks to Zula Greene of "Peggy of the Flint Hills" for writing the story and covering it so well with a follow up.

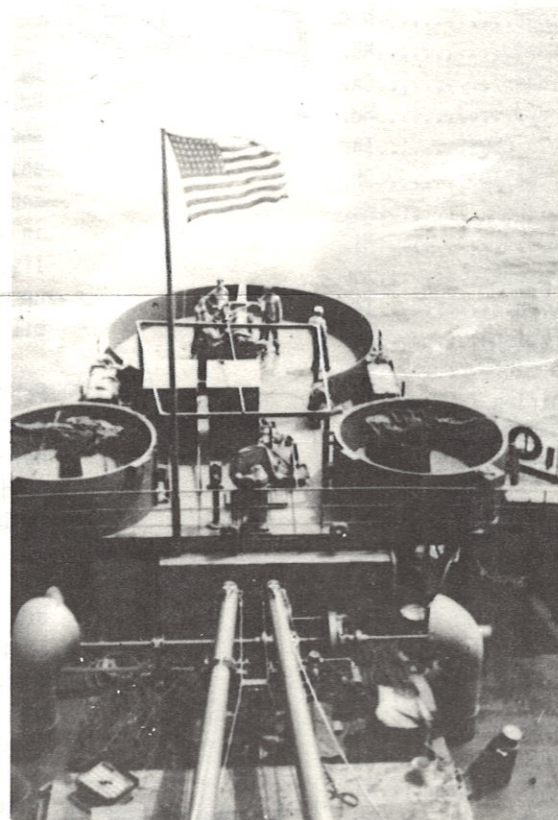
In Dick Langenderfer's letter enclosed, he is only referring to money that was sent towards hardware needed to carry on as we should. Since the last mailout, I received approx. \$1350. since 11/1/86 with \$175. designated to hardware. Balance will be almost enough for this mailout, since 11/1/86. I deposit all monies sent to me and your checks are your receipts when it clears the bank and comes back to you. Dick Langenderfer does the same. It all goes for the Armed Guard accounts. We will cross bridges as we come to them as before.

I would like to express my personal thanks to everyone for helping locate more of the crew. I always look forward to a letter from Leonard Carlson of Shoreview, Mn., Ray Didur, Cement City, Mi., Pete Del la Cruz, Indy,In. for they are regulars in sending in new names. Of course there are many more that sends them in. Ralph Homeldorf of Va. Beach, Va. sent reunion notices to many major papers. He struck a crew in every major city. This is what it takes!! Teamwork and pulling together. Others would like to be notified and the joy I receive is the thanks in those letters. It makes my day when you tell me you called your shipmate and that you'll be together for the first time in over 40 years. What makes this so special? You were like a family and you had to depend on each for survival to come home. I know many of you were together for over a year or more and you have a lot of sea stories to "hash" out. BE IN K.C.,MO.!! MAKE YOUR PLANS TODAY!!!!!!

SINCERELY

*Charles A. Lloyd*

5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609  
1-(919)-876-5537



Ernest M. Sanders  
522 S. Seminary  
Princeton, KY 42445



10/11/86

Dear Sir:

Berkley, Mo.

Let me say thanks a lot for your hard work in rounding up all former Armed Guard Men. We both have something in common, we both lost brothers in WW II. My oldest brother was a career man in the Coast Guard. He was aboard the USS Escanaba when it was sunk by an underwater explosion June 16, 1943 with only two survivors.

I will give you a rundown on the four ships I shipped out on along with some men I served with. The S.S. William Luckenbach was my first ship and our Gunnery Officer's name was Clark Webster BM2/C from Minn. After two trips to Alaska, they finally put Ensign Becker, a shepherd from Mont. Also serving was John Canon from Utah, John Cannon from Arkansas, Jones from S. Dakota, A.K. Lowery from Kentucky and J. Ingram from North Car.

The next ship was a "MULE SHIP". We had 600 mules on board when we sailed Port Moresby, New Guinea January 16, 1943. The Gunnery Officer was Robert Carpenter from Tulsa, Okla. and Jack Childs of Tuscaloosa, Alabama is the only shipmate I can remember. Was transferred to a new Liberty ship in Portland, Oregon in June, 1943 and we made several trips to the Aleutian Island Campaign with Officer John Applegate, Yakima, Wash., John Campbell SM1/C Tulsa, OK., Jack Childs, ALA., Richard Albin, Ft. Worth, Tx., Gene Dumont Idaho Falls, Idaho, J. Evans Of Waco, Tx., Mike Papish, Pueblo, Co. and Edward Govitt of South Gate, Ca. In 1944, they transferred me to the S.S. Abraham S. Hewitt and sailed for the Pacific. We landed troops from the 25th Div. in Luzon, Phillipines. My ship was in the area when the S.S. Benjamin Ide Wheeler was hit. My ship was lucky. When the war ended, I was in Okinawa.

I came out of WW II mighty lucky. The worst thing that I feared the most was rough seas!! While aboard the S.S. C.K. Davis, we were in a bad storm in the Bering Sea. We rocked and rolled in 100 mile gale winds and rolled to 45 degrees. We lost one merchant seaman over the side in Nome, Alaska. You know, it's hard to remember all the names of people I served with.

Some of the names of the S.S. Abraham S. Hewitt was John Applegate from Yakima, Wa., Bryan Kirkpatrick of Sioux City, Iowa, J.M. Thomason-Joplin, Mo., Eugene Loveall-Tulsa, Ok. and John Campbell of Okla. The city I had the most fun in was Everett, Wa. I had the best "Liberty" of my life there. The people were great and the girls weren't bad!!! You know, I can not remember the names of the island in the Pacific but I saw the S.S. Edgar Allen Poe torpedoed but did not sink. (see below-taken from Art Moore book-"A Careless Word-A Needless sinking".)

*The Liberty Ship, SS EDGAR ALLEN POE, was torpedoed by an unknown submarine at 1947 local time on November 8, 1942, 56 miles southeast of Amedee Light, Noumea New Caledonia (22-14 South/166-30 East) while en route alone, from Noumea to Espirito Santo, New Hebrides, with 2500 tons of Navy cargo. Her complement was 38 crew members, 14 Navy Armed Guard, and 20 passengers. The First Engineer and a Fireman were killed in the engine room where the torpedo exploded.*

When I went into the Armed Guard, nobody wanted it, but when things cooled off, everyone wanted in. When I went aboard the S.S. William Luckenbach, our guns consisted of one 4" 50, two 30 caliber machine guns and two 37mm army tank guns. The first time I fired the 4" 50, we had 3 misfires so you remove the shell from the breach, hoping it doesn't explode, and throw it over the side. You know, serving in the Navy was a great honor, and I will never forget it. In closing, let me say thanks and I hope to see you in Kansas City, Missouri National Reunion in May.

Sincerely,

Leonard Layton  
8920 Bessemer Ave.  
Berkley, Mo. 63134

+(help him find his Shipmates)

\*\*\*\*\* AND ANOTHER FROM THE CREW \*\*\*\*\*

Dear Sir:

Nov. 11, 1986

I started boot camp at Brooklyn, N.Y., 1st. Ave. 52nd St. I didn't learn anything there. They didn't have anything to show us in boots. I learned everything on the ships. The first, S.S. Cities Service (tanker) had two fifty caliber guns, one port-one starboard and back aft, a 4" 50. I liked the 4" 50. We had eight men and Ensign MacHoney (a good officer) from Washington, D.C. He taught me a lot!!

On the tanker, we had six B-25s on deck. Picked up a load of oil at the West Indies. Dropped off the oil at Cape Town, South Africa. From there, we went to Iran and unloaded the planes. We picked up oil again and then back to Cape Town. We made about five more trips up and down the coast, each trip approx. 32 days, each way. We then loaded with gas and took it to the Pacific theatre to fill up P.T. Boats. They took a lot of gas. Island after Island, you name them, we there. I can talk forever about my life in the Navy Armed Guard. I saw it all for "FREE"!! Was a life that I would not change for the world. They gave me a good working over crossing the equator then I had my fun!! We even moved troops from New Guinea to Hollandia and elsewhere.

Who won the war? With all the imports from Japan and Germany? I would like to know how the guy at the bottom of the sea feels. How do you forget the war life when you put forty months of sea time in serving your country. I was in the Pacific most of this time. Nice talking to you. I am a "LUCKY" guy to be here!! Found your name in the Post #93 magazine.

Yours Truly,

Vince Stillitano  
784 Village Rd. West  
Trenton, N.J. 08648

\*\*\*\* AND ANOTHER \*\*THIS ONE IS FROM MISSOURI \* I HAD TO SHOW HIM!!!! \*\*

Hi Charles:

I have been receiving mail from you for so long a time that I almost feel that I know you. I'll admit that I have been slow in responding. At first, I thought, it's over, let it be. But as I read your issues of the Pointer, I changed my mind. I, too, have a story to tell!!

I joined the Navy on January 11th, 1942 and on Jan. 26th, I reported in at Great Lakes for two months boot camp, I was put in the "SEAMAN GUARD" at Great Lakes. It was time to ship out and I was headed for the fleet but the word was out, Armed Guard got "liberty", the fleet was restricted!! Home was only 50 miles away so I applied for the Armed Guard along with about 12 others but it was filled up, however, when it was time to ship out, the whole group went to the Armed Guard. So that's how I got into the Armed Guard, I wanted to go home on "Liberty"!!

After Little Creek, Va. Gunnery School, a crew of us went aboard an old tanker, M/V Brunswick that was built in Scotland and belonged to Atlantic Refining Co., registered in Panama. So we did not sail under our flag.

We sailed from Norfolk, Va. in convoy, destination was Aruba, West Indies. Everything went smooth until we were in the windward passage with Cuba on one side and Haiti on the other. It was night and I was standing watch at the bow gun. On our starboard side was a Dutch freighter that was starting to crowd us out of position. As I watched, a torpedo hit her starboard side and it blew out in a ball of fire on the port side. At first, the ship kept pace with us and in the light of the flames, we could see the men trying to launch life boats. Three minutes and some seconds later, all was gone.

We made two trips to the Dutch Indies on the M/V Brunswick, four times we were in the windward passage. The most I ever counted was seven tankers going up at the same time. Our old ship often broke down, yet we were not hit. Lucky I thought but now I think different. That ship had been in Germany many times. They knew it because the bridge was aft, nothing was midship. It looked different than the other tankers. Why waste a torpedo on a piece of junk???



4

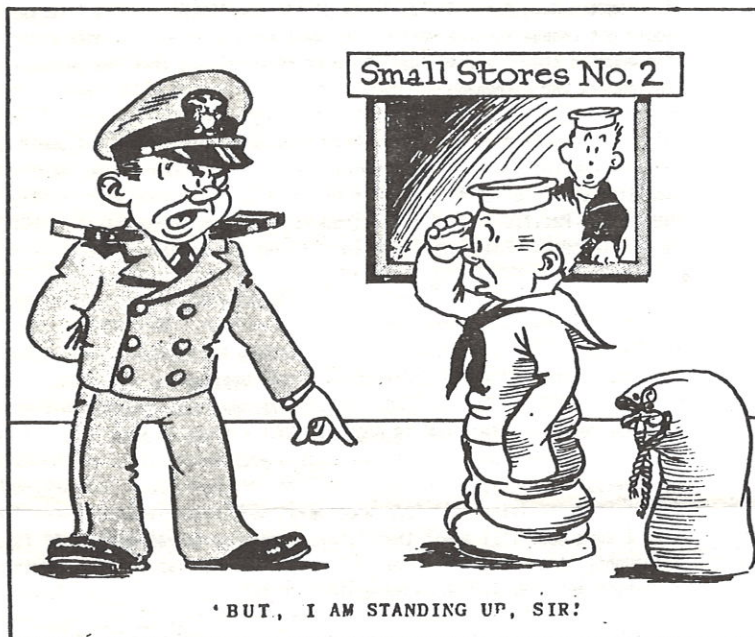
I'll write you again and tell you about some more sea stories. While in the Armed Guard, I made a trip across on the HMS Queen Mary, spent two months in Northern Ireland, went to Italy, Omaha Beach and ended up in Kentucky!!!!

Tel. 502-365-2373

Ernie (BOATS) Sanders  
522 So. Seminary St.  
Princeton, KY. 42445

\*\*\*\*\*  
These letters were picked at random by me and there are many more to pick from. I did make sure they were not from the same state. I received my "FREE" copy of "SEA History". I hope you enjoy it as I have others that I subscribed for. I get no "REBATE" whether you do or not. If you can afford to contribute to the S.S. John W. Brown, by all means do so!!! C.A. & L.D.

## GUS THE GUNNER by BOB CLARK



10 Dec 86

Lloyd:

I am submitting one of my experiences as an Armed Guard Gunner for "The Pointer" if you see fit to publish it.

I am interested in obtaining photos of some of the ships I sailed on if you know how I can go about obtaining them.

I served on the W.S. Farrish (Tanker), S.S. Tidepenn (Tanker), (C-2) S. S. Extavia, S.S. Gabriel Duval (Liberty) and the S.S.

Arthur J. Tyrer (Liberty).

Keep up the good work and until I joined this organization I thought I was one of the few to survive Armed Guard action from 1942-1945 and now I know better. I guess some of us were living on pure luck.

Sincerely,

*Sid*  
Sidney J. Domingue  
870 42nd Ave  
San Francisco, CA 94121

## "SITTING DUCKS"

The U.S. Navy Armed Guard Crew, consisting of a 19-men crew, boarded the W.S. Farrish (Standard Oil) on 29 July 1942 at Bayonne, N.J.. The W.S. Farrish had an overall length of 543 feet, 7 1/2 inches, with a capacity of 154,130 barrel capacity and considered to be the largest tanker afloat at the time. The Farrish was armed with a 5", 3" and Colt/Browning machine guns.

The W.S. Farrish departed Bayonne on 1 August 1942 for Aruba, Dutch West Indies, with a final destination of Glasgow, Scotland, to refuel the North African invasion fleet. Submarine attacks were so prevalent that we anchored every night at U.S. Eastern seaports

to depart the mine fields when it dropped depth charges on the outline of the U-Boat.

German U-Boats followed us to Aruba but did not attack our convoy since the tankers were all empty. However, as we departed Aruba and hit the Windward Passage all hell broke loose. Luckily we had been ordered to sleep on deck in order to avoid getting trapped below deck in the event we got hit. The W. S. Farrish was the third tanker on the outside port column with a foreign tanker in the lead, followed by a British tanker and bringing up the rear of the column was a Dutch tanker.

At 2200 hours, 27 August 1942, our convoy was rolling along when a German U-Boat surface within the convoy. The escorts immediately left their positions in order to capture the U-Boat (which they did) and left the convoy's left flank unprotected. That's when all hell broke loose as a wolf pack was sitting there and hit the lead tanker and caused a terrific flash. They then hit the British tanker in the midships but it failed to sink and managed to remain afloat. About this time the Dutch tanker got nervous and started to overtake us on the port side and about this time took a torpedo meant for us. The Wolf Pack then fired a torpedo at us but it missed the bow of our ship and we managed to survive this attack as the escorts hurried back to their positions.

The gun crew consisted of:

LT(JG) Lippard (NY)	Sl/c Shaw (Ark)
Cox Stalley (NC)	Sl/c Shaw (SC)
Sl/c Coleman (Fla)	Sl/c Smokeliske (WVA)
Sl/c Cox (Ohio)	Sl/c Stone (Colo)
Sl/c Crawford (WVA)	Sl/c Terrell (VA)
Sl/c Domingue (LA)	Sl/c Watson (NC)
Sl/c Johnson (NC)	Sl/c Woodall (Ark)
Sl/c Reed (NC)	Sl/c Woffard (MO)
Sl/c Roberts (Miss)	Sl/c Zilus (ILL)
Sl/c Ross (NC)	



# Peggy of the

Zula Bennington Greene



# Flint Hills

5

**C**arl Ossmann read my column Tuesday and it fit right in with a plan here in Topeka. Gene Book was alerting Navy Armed Guard veterans to contact him about the big reunion in Kansas City next May. For those who missed the column, Mr. Book can be addressed at Chapman Kansas 67431 or by telephone, 913 922-6003.

Mr. Ossmann and Erle Francis, Armed Guard veterans, are asking all who were in that service to get in touch with them for a dinner Dec. 2 at Capitol Post No. 1, American Legion. Mr. Ossmann can be reached at 233-6406 and Mr. Francis at 357-6311.

Mr. Ossmann served in World War II in both the North Atlantic and the South Pacific and, "compared to the North Atlantic, the South Pacific is a mill pond." Both men served, though not together, in the area of New Guinea and the surrounding islands.

Sometimes, he said, Armed Guard crews felt isolated, not like they were in "the real Navy" — a tanker looked pretty insignificant beside a majestic warship.

His crew, Mr. Ossmann said, took scant pleasure from a message given the nation by President Franklin Roosevelt, who, in that resonant voice, boomed out the message, "We will build ships as fast as our enemies sink them." He went into service as a lieutenant, junior grade, and was a lieutenant colonel at the end.

**THE SAME COLUMN** brought another call from a Navy Armed Guard veteran, Kenneth Hinck, who lives in Burlingame and works in Topeka.

"I couldn't imagine," he said, enthusiastically, "getting paid for traveling all around the world on merchant ships."

He served on two Liberty ships — one was the Louisa M. Alcott — and

two tankers, one of which, the Beacon Hill, was leased from Panama and had several skirmishes with the Japanese Zeros and the German submarines.

They picked up 200 young men, most of them teenagers, in Amsterdam and took them to North Carolina to be trained. They did not speak or read English and nobody on board spoke or read Dutch. All of them were seasick practically the whole trip.

He re-enlisted and later had a medical discharge. "If I was young," he said, "I would be right out there again."

**THE NAVY ARMED GUARD** was organized in World War I when German submarines made it necessary to arm supply ships. A guard crew served on 384 ships during the war and on 6,236 ships in World War II, by which time the German submarines and other weapons had been improved and the Japanese added.

Recruits were from a variety of jobs and professions and included young men not yet in any job or profession. They added up to 144,970 men. Many of them had never seen an ocean before.

The Armed Guard was disbanded after World War II, as it had been after World War I. Some of the men went over to other naval duty; others returned to their homes.

A history of the Armed Guard is being prepared and the deadline for material has been extended to Feb. 28, 1987. Those who were in the service may send a biographical sketch of their service, including where they were born. Two photographs should be sent, one taken during the service and a recent one.

The address is U.S. Navy Armed Guard WWII Veterans, History Book, 5712 Partridge Lane, Raleigh, N.C. 27609. The telephone is 919 876-5537.





Left: Michael Catrambone  
347 Houghton St.  
North Adams, MASS 01247  
Ph# 413-663-3911

Right: William Callahan- Armed Guard WWI  
42 Holbrook St.  
North Adams, MASS 01247  
Served on the S.S. Mt. Vernon

MIKE G. CATRAMBONE  
347 Houghton Street  
N. Adams, MA  
01247

2 December 1986

Charles A. Lloyd  
USN Armed Guard WW II Veterans  
5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609

Dear Charlie:

Bill Callahan was in the Armed Guard in World War I and is now 90 years old. He served on the SS Mt. Vernon Troop Transport.

Bill made 13 trips to Brest, France and Southampton, England. He tells me the guns they had were 4" 50, 5" 51, 3" 23. They didn't need anti-air craft guns in World War I.

Bill is now the only living charter member of the Dr. George L. Curran Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 996 in North Adams. He is also a Past Commander of the same.

I am also a Past Commander of Post 996 and very active in Veterans affairs.

Enclosed is a photo of Bill Callahan and myself.

Sincerely,

*Mike*  
Mike G. Catrambone

(1942)  
(July)

From The British Naval Encyclopedia  
(Russian Convoys)

Convoy P.Q. 17 Sailed With 34 Ships  
21 Were Sunk

(Date Sept. 13, 1942)

Convoy P.Q. 18 (Our Convoy)

The last Summer Convoy to Russia.  
From Halifax to Murmansk or Archangel.

Convoy attacked - downed forty  
German Aircraft. Lost two ships. Also  
the British Destroyer sunk. H.M.S. The  
Somali. We never made it.  
Awarded Bronze Star.

Gun Crew Survivors in Life Boat  
rescued by British Destroyer H.M.S. Eskimo  
location, Barents Sea, Sept. 13, 1942.

Our ship was the S.S. John Penn.  
Does anyone remember this ship?

Louis & Helen Vigh  
722 Huron St. Apr 112  
Toledo, 43604

Ph.# 419-243-4924





# TAYLOR PUBLISHING COMPANY

SUSAN Mc DONALD, Sales Representative  
109 NORTHWOOD DRIVE • CHAPEL HILL, NC 27514 • 919-929-1694

An **Insilco** Company

January 10, 1987

Dear U. S. Navy Armed Guard Veterans:

I would like to use this opportunity to update you on the progress of the U. S. Navy Armed Guard History Book.

As a representative of Taylor Publishing, we are proud to be a part of your History Book. Taylor Publishing certainly has the expertise to give you a book that will befit the honor and pride of the U. S. Navy Armed Guard and to recognize your contributions, both individually and as a group, to the war efforts.

To date we have received over 350 biographical sketches for inclusion in your Armed Guard History Book. As you probably know from the most recent brochure, the deadline to submit biographical information and photos has been extended to February 28, 1987. At the present time there are no plans to extend the deadline further. Please don't miss this opportunity to be included in the History Book. Please use the order form below to reserve your copy of the History Book.

It would be wonderful to think that by February 28, I could report to you that over 1,000 biographical sketches had been received. If this were the case we would be putting into your hands a most complete historical documentation of Armed Guard History. Help us make this happen!! Be proud of the colorful heritage of the U. S. Navy Armed Guard Veterans of WW II.

Remember the deadline is February 28. We need your biographical sketch and photographs NOW!!!

Sincerely,

*Susan C. McDonald*

Susan C. McDonald

TOTALS

Please reserve my copy of "US Navy Armed Guard  
WW II Veterans" at the special introductory  
price of just.....\$42.00  
SAVE! I also wish to order\_\_\_\_\_additional  
copies at \$37.00, a saving of \$5.00 each.....\$  
Please personalize\_\_\_\_\_books with the  
following names in bright metallic foil on the  
covers, at \$4.00 each.....\$

Name\_\_\_\_\_  
Name\_\_\_\_\_

Sub-Total\$\_\_\_\_\_

Add 5% Sales Tax.....\$\_\_\_\_\_

Postage/Package charge, \$4.50 per book.....\$\_\_\_\_\_

TOTAL DUE\$\_\_\_\_\_

Check payable to the US Navy Armed Guard WW II Veterans

Sign here to release your  
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# 8 ATLANTIC WRECK SERIES: THE U-853

by John Raguso

Last week, we read about the plight of the collier Black Point, torpedoed by the U-853 as she was steaming northeast along the Rhode Island shoreline with a cargo of coal bound for Boston. The defenseless ship didn't have a chance against the sophisticated weaponry and tactics of the German undersea raider, and the Black Point was sunk only a few hours before the final peace treaty was to be signed by the remnants of the German high command. Would the Germans slip away under the American destroyer escorts of the hunter/killer group hastily assembled to track down the grey wolf, make her pay for her sins?

Last week we left off with the U.S. Navy destroyer escorts Amick and Atherton being led by the Coast Guard frigate Moberly in their response to the attack on the Black Point. The Navy gun boats arrived on the scene at approximately 1930 hours (7:30PM) and they had set up the initial battle drill to flush out the Nazi U-Boat. As darkness settled on the Rhode Island shoreline, they took station about 3,000 yards apart on a line abreast of each other and began their methodical search with sonar equipment to pinpoint the sub's whereabouts as she tried to slip through their net.

Let's pick up from Commander L. Tollaksen's eyewitness report of the event published in the Naval Institute Proceedings to ascertain if the U-Boat got her just desserts:

"Shortly before the three ships were in position to begin their sweep, at 2014, Atherton picked up a sonar

contact right along the track laid out by the OTG (Officer Task Group) as the most likely escape route for U-853. The returning echo was unusual and unfamiliar, but Atherton became more and more confident that this contact was the submarine on or near the bottom. In order to prevent interference to Atherton, the two other ships ceased pinging and listened to Atherton's echo ranging, while the sonar operators of the three ships discussed the characteristics of the signal over the TBS voice radio. When all the operators were satisfied that they could recognize this unfamiliar type of echo, Atherton began attacking. The submarine's screws were heard by the sonar operator. It was also determined that contact was moving slowly along a course of 090 degrees true and the returning echo revealed a slight down doppler.

"At approximately 2029, Atherton dropped 13 magnetic depth charges, one of which exploded but it could not be determined at the time whether the explosion was a result of attacking the submarine, or a wreck which possibly was in the area. It was at this point that Amick received word to leave the scene and join Booth, another destroyer escort from Task Group 60.7, which had been detailed earlier to escort a merchantman from New York City to Boston via Cape Cod. This left Atherton and Moberly alone, with Ericsson not due to arrive for nearly an hour. Atherton made a second run with hedgehogs this time which resulted in a large explosion two or three seconds after the last of

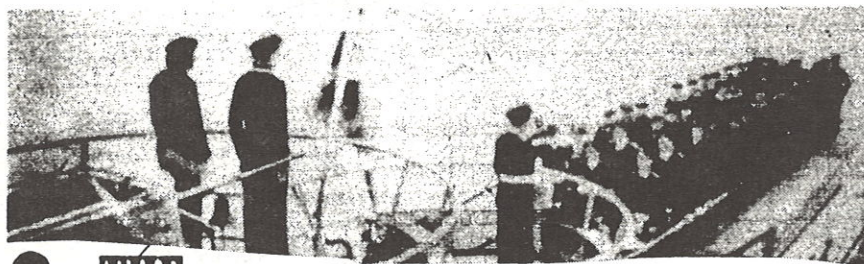
the hedgehogs was fired and about 100 feet to starboard of the pattern.

"When contact had not been regained by 2200, Moberly suggested that Atherton search an area several miles of the north of her last contact while Moberly would search an area the same distance to the south. Atherton headed north and soon picked up a radar contact which she felt could be the snorkel of the German submarine. Arriving in the vicinity about 2235, she turned on her searchlights and discovered that instead of a submarine, it was only a small unlighted buoy.

"Atherton resumed her search and on her final leg, picked up a sonar contact presumed to be the submarine, which was estimated to be lying dead in the water at a depth of some hundred feet with her propellers silent. This was about 4,000 yards to the east of the first group of attacks. Atherton fired a pattern of hedgehogs at 2343 and soon after this attack, bubbles of air, oil and pieces of broken wood rose to the surface indicating the submarine might have been hit. Atherton picked up the contact again after this attack and held it for about 20 minutes while circling the area. There was no noticeable movement of the submarine, no doppler or noise from her screws. Task Force Commander 60.7 ordered Atherton to cross over the spot with her fathometer in order to determine the exact position of the submarine. This was done at 0020 and it was decided the submarine had not moved. Officer of the Task Group ordered Atherton to make another attack in an attempt to split the submarine's pressure hull. She did so shortly thereafter, increasing her attack speed to 15 knots and dropping a pattern of depth charges which were set to explode at 75 feet. This shallow setting was used, for it was feared that if set for 100 feet, the charges might come to rest on the bottom before exploding. The water in this area was 104 to 128 feet in depth. After the attack, it was noticed that air bubbles and oil were still welling to the surface.

"Turning on their searchlights, they discovered that the water was covered with oil, bits of wood or cork, dead fish, and other miscellaneous debris. At this time, Atherton recovered a pillow, a life jacket, and a small wooden flagstaff.

"As Atherton was still in contact with the submarine, which had not moved since the midnight attacks, she



**THE**  
**Fisherman**

**LONG ISLAND, METROPOLITAN NEW YORK EDITION**

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The U-853 Commissioning Day ceremony in June, 1943. Photo courtesy of Atlantic Wreck Divers and Henry Goldfinger.



made the first run when the order was given by the Task Force Commander to resume depth charging. This attack was identical to the last one, except that this time she was not able to clear the area of the exploding depth charges without damage. She was shaken up and her dead reckoning tracer was knocked out. Moberly then picked up the contact and moved into the area while Atherton made necessary repairs which were not completed for nearly an hour. Moberly expected to find the submarine in the same place where Atherton had been attacking. However, as she closed the submarine, she estimated that it was moving across her course at a speed of four to five knots. This unexpected movement threw off Moberly's solution of the attack, but she went ahead and fired her depth charges anyway. In order to reduce the probability of damage such as Atherton had just received from the shallow-exploding depth charges, Moberly further increased her attack speed over set doctrine to 18 knots. Even with this increase, she was damaged temporarily and had to stand off to make repairs. Atherton was still having trouble with her sonar gear and so, while Moberly labored to regain her steering control, the attacks were discontinued. Moberly's repairs were completed about 0200, and she began a deliberate hedgehog attack on the submarine. A slight up doppler was noted, and the target judged to be moving about two to three knots. This run was made using only hedgehogs in order to avoid the damage mentioned above. However, a casualty nullified the attack because the firing panel came off at the last moment, strong evidence of the pounding being experienced in the shallow water. The contact which had just been evaluated at 75 feet seemed to "bottom" at the end of this run. Doppler indications disappeared and contact was lost in the reflections from the bottom and was not regained immediately.

"No further attacks were made until about 0530 that morning. It was felt that the submarine was badly damaged as she appeared to be bleeding oil and air bubbles heavily. Atherton circled the area every 20 to 30 minutes in order to keep track of the position of the contact and to hunt for more wreckage that might have come to the surface during the recent attack. At 0241 she reported that there were pools of oil coming from the submarine which were spaced about 30 feet apart. Moberly reported that an oil slick and much debris extended half a mile from the position of the last attacks. With the coming of daylight, two ZNP type blimps, K-16 and K-58 from Lakehurst, New Jersey, arrived on the scene between 0540 and 0605 and reported to the OTG. They were directed to assist in identifying the oil slicks in the area, to photograph the area and to mark the position of the submarine with smoke and dye markers. In carrying out

## THE U-853 Vital Statistics

**Date Sunk:** May 6, 1945  
**Year Built:** 1943 by Deschimag, AG, Bremen, Germany  
**Length:** 252 feet  
**Beam:** 22.7 feet  
**Displacement:** 1,120 gross tons  
**Type of Vessel:** IX-C  
**Armament:** 2x twin 20MM anti-aircraft, 1x 37MM anti-aircraft, 1x 105MM deck gun, 6 torpedo tubes.  
**Hull Construction:** Steel  
**Hull Condition:** Intact, upright on keel.  
**Hull Attitude:** Bow faces southeast, stern faces northwest.  
**Depth of Water:** 127 feet  
**Depth Over Wreck:** 105 to 115 feet  
**Lat/Lon Position:** 41-13.31 N/71-24.85 W  
**Loran C Position:** 14472.9/43894.8

### COMMUTER COURSES

Port	Distance (Nautical Miles)	Heading (Magnetic)	
		To	From
Newport (Brenton Reef)	12.0	200°	020°
Point Judith (Horn 325)	8.7	174°	354°
Watch Hill Point	20.8	117°	297°
Block Island ('IBI' bell)	7.7	119°	299°
Montauk Pt. to 'IBI' bell	16.8	063°	243°

these orders, K-16 searched the area of the oil slick and soon came up with a strong contact with her MAD gear. She marked this position on several successive sweeps and reported that the target was stationary.

"One of the blimps dropped a sonobuoy on an oil bubble which was still coming to the surface. The sonar operators in both blimps heard a sound which they described as a 'rhythmic hammering on a metal surface, which was interrupted periodically'. About ten minutes later they heard a 'long, shrill shriek and then the hammering noise was lost in the engine noise of the attacking surface ships'. The blimps were very helpful in marking the exact position of the submarine and in conning the surface vessels over this position. They photographed the area, pointed out debris to the searching whaleboats and made attacks on the submarine with their 7.2" rocket bombs. At 1045 CTG 60.7 declared that the 'submarine was sunk and on the bottom'. Both blimps left the area at this time following orders from their base.

"Later that afternoon, a diver from Penguin (ASR-12) followed a buoy line down to the battered U-Boat and landed on the conning tower. He identified the submarine as U-853 and reported that there were bodies strewn about inside. The side was split and the hull damaged from the hedgehogs and depth charges."

There is still a great deal of mystery that surrounds the U-853, 41 years

after her sinking. There are different theories as to what her "real" mission was, ranging from Hitler's private escape craft to a transport carrying millions of dollars worth of mercury, cash, gold and travelers checks. Indeed, over the years, many salvage attempts have been conducted on the sub, and always under a shroud of silence as to what was being sought.

For many years after her sinking, the U-853 did not hold an abundance of sea life like other wrecks in the area. Rumors that the ghosts of the 48 officers and crew were haunting the immediate surroundings, were popular among the locals when relating the tale to summer tourists. A more scientific explanation would attribute the absence of marine life on the wreck to the mercury-based bottom and hull paint that the Germans used on their subs and ships. That's some incredible bottom paint formula! Now that the paint is wearing a bit thin, the chain of life is taking effect on the U-853. Sea grass and crustaceans have attached themselves to the hull of the sub, and in turn, this attracts groundfish like blackfish, sea bass, bergalls, hake and others. I have seen diver's photos of the U-853 and have spotted both blackfish and sea bass in these shots, so why not give it a try if you're in the neighborhood?

Next week, we're going to steam a little south of Block Island to investigate the 1932 collision and sinking of the S.S. Grecian.





# United States Navy, WW II, Armed Guard Veterans Of Ohio

R. L. Langenderfer - Chairman  
2601 Wyndale Road  
Toledo, Ohio 48618 • (419) 475-5400

January 8, 1987

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Dear Shipmates:

Hi, to all my shipmates and good friends. Many thanks for all of your holiday greetings. Both Peggy and I appreciate your kind thoughts.

Who would have guessed, four years ago, I would be writing this letter and standing on the threshold of taking over the reins of this wonderful organization. In just a few weeks the transition will be complete. I feel proud and happy to have been selected, by C. A. Lloyd, to VOLUNTEER to fill his shoes. His act will be tough to follow. He has fought a good fight and has earned a well deserved rest. To you Charlie Lloyd, I say, a hearty well done. I feel sure, with the help of all the members, my efforts will be made very easy. C. A. stands ready to assist where he can and I would guess he will be called upon, by me, often. He will still handle all of the Historic events and special projects. That is to say, if we can get him out of his rocking chair.

The first thing that comes to my mind is just where are we going? Where will we be in ten years from now? The answer to the latter is most obvious, but what do we want now? I think all of us, with few exceptions, would like to continue, just the way we are. That is, hold our area re-unions, hold our area breakfasts, or whatever, hold our annual reunion and receive periodic mail from national, just to find out what is going on. I get a great deal of enjoys, from hearing of the gang and the goings on. I think you do also.

Now comes the subject I don't like to talk about. I don't think you have ever heard it before. As you already know, we have no dues. We rely on the generosity of our members to survive. No organization can survive by letting the other guy do it. Each must do their part. We have been lucky in the past to make every-day expenses. But, now that we are getting hugh, we are just barely breaking even. For you to be getting this mailing, it costs the national treasury over \$1400.00. That's 140 members, donating \$10.00 each. Some of you have never contributed anything, some can't, some do all the time. Please, sit down now, and send me check for \$10.00. Mark it for deposit only into Navy account # 13-93235. We must purchase this equipment and are talking about installing plaques at Treasure Island and Gulfport.

I have received some donations to date, but in no way will these stretch. Out of our membership of close to 4000 persons, would you believe \$300.00 donated so far. The Board of Directors doesn't want to revise the structure of our by-laws, but it may become necessary if we are to survive. I know you will all help.

By way of closing, I would like to wish all a very prosperous 1987. Smooth sailing and I hope to meet all of you at the National Reunion, in Kansas City in May. Until then remember, " LETS MAKE A DATE FOR 88 ".

God bless and see ya soon.

Billy Hart, good luck to you and the Mrs.

*Dick*

R. L. Langenderfer-Co Chairman

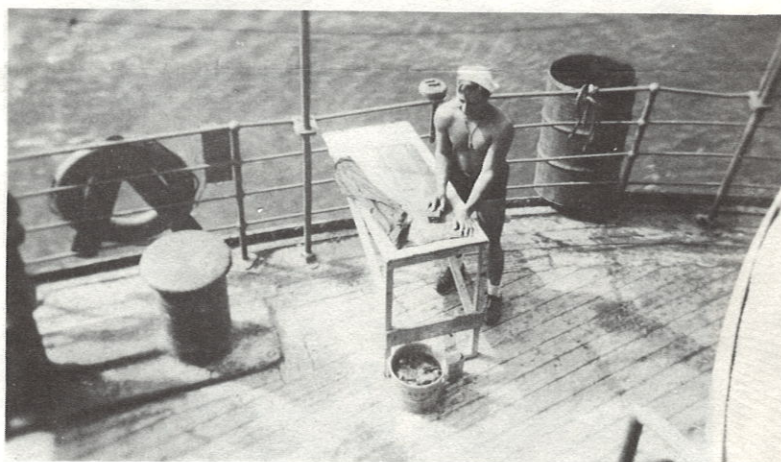




Barracks that housed the first WWII Armed Guard Crew, Sept 8, 1941. Picture taken Oct. 15, 1986 showing the West side.



Ken Cauble finally gets the job he was qualified for!!



Kenneth Cauble doing laundry.  
6800 S.W. 34th Ave  
Portland, OR 97219  
Ph# 503-246-4855





Left: Charles A. Lloyd  
Raleigh, NC

Right: Ralph Womeldorf  
Virginia Beach, VA



One of the first 4 men at Little Creek Va.  
the Armed Guard Base that helped set up gun sites.





Front view of first Armed Guard Barrack in Sept 8, 1941. Dedicated as Armed Guard Training Center by U.S. Government Oct 15, 1941. Picture taken



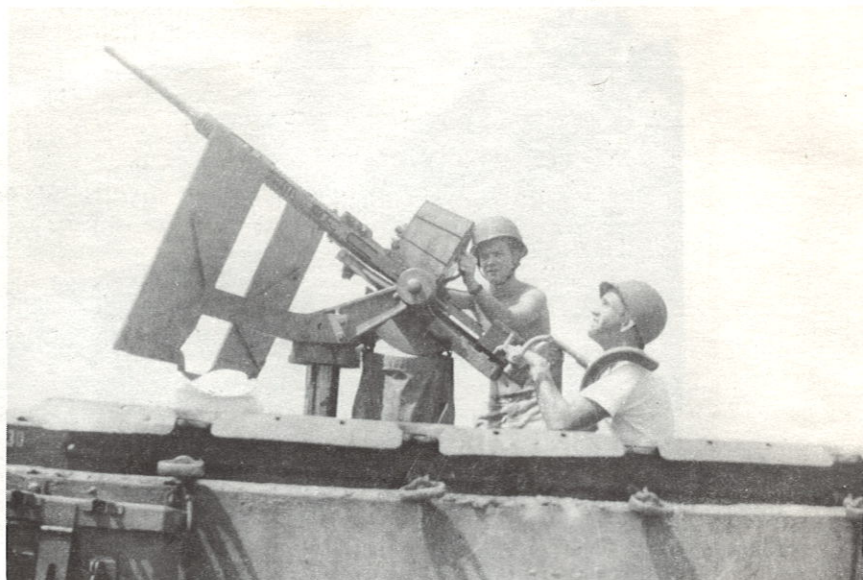
Richard Langenderfer., Toledo OH addresses WWII Armed Guards and guest at Plaque Ceremony Oct 15, 1986 in Little Creek, VA.



14

I need all the History from the forgotten  
convoy of May-Nov 1943, which includes the  
following ships:

S.S. City of Omaha  
S.S. Mobil City  
S.S. Artigus  
S.S. Israel  
S.S. Bering  
S.S. Beacon Hill  
S.S. Francis Scott Key



Lou McHugh  
Gunner on 20mm with "Flags" Connolly loader.  
On the S.S. Thaddeus Kosciusfko, 1944.



Ken Cauble, Portland, Ore.  
"Lucky Strike" goes to war.

m/v Spidolene 10/43-5/44



Taken somewhere in the Atlantic Ocean.



UNITED STATES NAVY ARMED GUARD VETERANS WW II 6TH ANNUAL REUNION  
 HYATT REGENCY HOTEL  
 2345 MCGEE STREET  
 KANSAS CITY, MO. 64108  
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## NOTICE!!

BE SURE TO TELL THEM!!!! USN ARMED GUARD WW II REUNION  
 MAY 20-24, 1987

\*\*\*\*\* NUMBER ATTENDING:

\*\*\*\*\*

YOUR NAME:

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WIFE NAME:

STREET:

P.O. BOX:

CITY

STATE:

ZIP:

\*\*\*\*\*

PICK YOUR CHOICE NOW!! BOAT AND DINNER PLAYHOUSE ON-FIRST PAY-TIL FILLED  
 450 PERSONS LIMIT ON BOAT-----374 PERSONS LIMIT ON DINNER PLAYHOUSE  
 ALL OTHERS WILL HAVE TO MAKE OWN ARRANGEMENTS

1. THURSDAY, MAY 21, 1987 3 HR. BOAT TRIP: \$25. PER PERSON---YOU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 DINNER-DANCING- ON BOARD WIFE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CUT-OFF DATE: MAR. 15, 1987 OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_
  2. FRI. NIGHT - MAY 22, 1987 DINNER PLAYHOUSE \$25. PER PERSON---YOU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 THREE MEATS (INCLUDES: ROAST BARON OF BEEF) WIFE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 CUT-OFF DATE: MAR. 15, 1987 OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_
  3. SATURDAY NIGHT BANQUET MAY 23, 1987 \$25. PER PERSON---YOU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 WIFE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_
  4. SUNDAY MORNING BREAKFAST MAY 24, 1987 \$ 7.50 PER PERSON---YOU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 WIFE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_
  5. TRANSPORTATION TO AND FROM BOAT \$ 5.00 PER PERSON---YOU: \_\_\_\_\_  
 AND DINNER PLAYHOUSE WIFE: \_\_\_\_\_  
 OTHERS: \_\_\_\_\_  
 TOTAL--TOTAL: \_\_\_\_\_
- TOTALS: 1. \_\_\_\_\_ 2. \_\_\_\_\_ 3. \_\_\_\_\_ 4. \_\_\_\_\_ 5. \_\_\_\_\_ AMOUNT PAID: \_\_\_\_\_

WE REGRET THAT THERE WILL NOT BE ENOUGH ROOM FOR EVERYONE. WE WILL HAVE  
 OTHER THINGS SUGGESTED LATER ON TO DO. PLEASE HAVE PATIENCE AND UNDERSTAND  
 THE SITUATION. THERE WILL BE PLENTY OF ROOM FOR SATURDAY NIGHT AND SUNDAY  
 MORNING. MAKE CHECKS FOR THE ABOVE TO: USN ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS  
 MAIL NOW TO: BILLY AND PAT HART 1116 SO. 36TH, KANSAS CITY, KS. 66106  
 PLEASE CALL ON ARMED GUARD PHONE: 1-(913)-384-2650 (UNLESS LOCAL)  
 YOUR CHECKS ARE YOUR RECEIPTS TO CONSERVE POSTAGE AND TIME. PLEASE BRING  
 WITH YOU AND ALSO YOUR HOTEL RESERVATION. WE STILL HAVE HOTEL ROOMS SO  
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 BY THE MOST DESERVING MEN THAT EVER WENT TO SEA WITH SO LITTLE TO FIGHT  
 WITH AGAINST TREMENDOUS ODDS BUT CAME BACK THE VICTOR! JOB WELL DONE!!!

SEA STORIES-----SEE SHIPMATES-----JOIN IN ON THE COMRADESHIP-----Y'ALL COME!!  
 BILLY AND PAT HART

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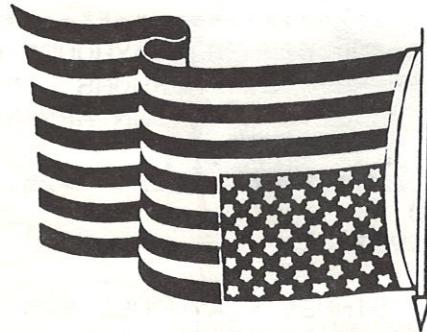


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## DEDICATION

To the Officers and Men who sailed the ships of  
World War II,  
especially to those who lost their lives, and to  
their families.



"1987" U.S.NAVY ARMED GUARD REUNION WILL BE HELD ON MAY 20-24, 1987  
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