

FEB 1989

# THE POINTER



# Easter

*U.S. Naval Armed Guard Center  
South Brooklyn, New York*



# THE POINTER

## Officers for 1989

Charles A. Lloyd, Chairman & Secretary  
5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, N.C. 27609  
1 (919) 876-5537

Madelyn Rigg, Co-Chairwoman  
1989 Reunion Hostess  
1623 S.W. 166th  
Seattle, Wa. 98166  
1 (206) 242-9293

Lonnie D. Lloyd, Treasurer  
4832 North Hills Drive  
Raleigh, N.C. 27612

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## ATTENTION

You know where you are.  
You know where we are.  
We know where we are.  
But we don't always know where you are.

Please notify us when you move.

Non-Profit Organization  
Tax Exempt No. 74-2316668

AND

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 Everyone of Y'all:

Feb. 8, 1989

Well, the 1988 Holidays are over, the 1989 New Year is in and by the time you receive this "POINTER", Cupid will have shot his arrow on Valentine's Day. We all had some trying times during 1988 with the fires out West, the drought in the midwest and tornados touching down all over; one just 2 miles North of where I sit here in Raleigh, N.C. and it was a miracle that only 4 people were killed in it's 65 miles long path. We started 1989 with approximately 5700 on the mailing list after starting out in June of 1982 with 52 names. My guess is that there are some 50,000 surviving Armed Guard still around that we need to locate out of the original 144,970 who served. Have you sent in someone's name you know? Leonard Carlson, of Shoreview, Minn. sent about 250 of the last 1000 placed on the mailing list. Leonard and I have a system!! He finds them and I send them Armed Guard information, etc. Of course, I do the same for all.

The Volume III Armed Guard History Book is still in the preparation stage and is still open for you to send in your 350 words, pictures and check for \$49.95, until notified otherwise, TO: "U.S.N. ARMED GUARD VOL.III, C/O Susan McDonald, 104 Bolton Place, Chapel Hill, N.C. 27516." An ordering brochure has been prepared and you will have it before you receive this "POINTER". I urge you to go ahead and send your info on in to Susan. They are processing each as they come in. Let's make this a book to be proud of by being a part of it!! The only way you can get pictures and stories in it is to--PARTICIPATE.

Progress on the restoring of the LIBERTY SHIP, S.S. JOHN W. BROWN is encouraging. The \$86,000 cost owed of drydocking, towing, etc., has been whittled down to less than \$20,000 according to Andy and Madelyn Knapp from nearby, Glen Burnie, Maryland who keeps me advised. Thanks Y'All. The "SCUTTLEBUTT" now is the "NORTHEAST REUNION" (NJ ORIGINAL) will be held in Baltimore and the BROWN will be towed to INNER HARBOR BALTIMORE especially for this REUNION. Merchant Marine WW II Veterans will be cordially invited to hold their reunion at the same time since the Historical Ship S.S. John W. Brown is a JOINT PROJECT.

The yearly "ARMED GUARD REUNION BOOK" from REUNIONS, INC., P.O. Box 876 Orlando, Fla. informed me that you should have your book before you get this copy of the "POINTER". If you have any problems with it, don't contact me. Contact them, or brother L.D. Lloyd at their addresses. I understand there were 242 who ordered the book with the pictures taken by Larry French, Photographer at the Toledo Reunion. In this book will be the names of all the Armed Guard Crew listed in the computer as of 10/24/88. If any Armed Guard uses this list to sell his wares to his fellow shipmates, locally or Nationally, he will be dropped from the mailing indefinitely. As always, beware of from whom and what you buy.

continued to Page 2

Officers - Gunners - Signalmen - Radiomen - Medics - Waves - Boatswains - Coxswains - Ship's Company - Radarmen



Mike Molinari, Al Lowe and Lou Ritter informs me that the BROOKLYN, N.Y. ARMED GUARD CENTER PLAQUE will be hung inside the Sanitation Building which now stand at the 1st Ave 52nd St. Site sometimes after the weather breaks. You will be informed in time to take part if you so desire if possible and a exact date is set. Send him a self addressed envelope where it can mailed back to you as soon as the date is set. Address to: Mike Molinari, 1422 East 54th St., Brooklyn, N.Y. 11234. 1-(718)-444-8449. It will not be a large Plaque, but it will be a symbol of all 144,970 who served. It's would be a gratifying to know that in the future, the City of Brooklyn would place a Plaque there to the thousands of British, Canadian, French and other Nationalities that used the "OLD ARMOY", which was later turned into our Armed Guard East Coast Headquarters.

"FATE" has it's way of entering into the picture and since I had typed all of the above paragraphs, Lo and Behold, I locate Joseph Lafferty, age 90, of 374 San Jose Ave., San Francisco, California 94110, who was an Armed Guard of WW I and has sent to me a lot of History of that era and I hope to put it all in the future "POINTER" if it takes two issues. In behalf of all the Armed Guard Crew, I want to express to him our thanks for sharing this part of his life with us and I will do all I can to have his story told in Vol.III of the Armed Guard History Book for "OUR" and the next generation to read. I immediately sent Joe the address of Sylvan "Jed" J. Jedell, 2540 W. 63rd St. Shawnee Mission, Kansas 66208, who is our other WW I Armed Guard Veteran we have listed with us now. I hope they will combine a World War I and World War II Reunion into one and be with us at Seattle, Wa., come June 21-25, 1989.

Then I get this letter below: (Rewritten by permission.) (Quote)

Mr. Lloyd: 17 January 1989  
Let me introduce myself. I am Alcester R. Colella and I answer to "Chet", a former U.S. Navy Armed Guard of World War II and I recently recieved a clipping from a relative who was in the Navy during that era, but attached to Destroyer Escort duty. It is nice to know that we, of that particular branch, have been recognized. I was assigned to the Armed Guard after not being too successful in the Radio School in Norton Heights, Conn. I was shipped directly from there to the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, New York and after a few hours, I was in a boat, out to a ship in New York Harbor. The ship was the S.S. Chester D. Swain, a Texaco tanker. During the course of the war I was on other merchant ships. The last was a coal Collier named the S.S. Black Point. I was aboard her until we were torpedoed on May 5, 1945, 5 miles off Port Judith, Rhode Island.

After at a 2 week Rest Camp in Deland, Florida and 2 weeks of gunnery school at Little Creek, Virginia, I took a slow troop train to Treasure Island, Calif. Enroute, V-J Day was declared and I was assigned to a "U.S. Navy Patrol Craft". After a short stay, I was returned to Boston for separation. Please forward any information you have on the Association to me at this address. Thank You, Alcester R. Colella 16824 Chesterfield Airport Road, Chesterfield, Mo. 63005.

(unquote)

Needless to say, I was elated to locate one of the 5 surviving Armed Guard Gun Crew, of which, our brother, L. Whitson Lloyd BM2/C 656 20 68 was in charge of and the only Armed Guard aboard to be killed. I had been in contact with May Vogelbacher of Hewlet, N.Y. whose husband, Gun, (now deceased) was an Armed Guard Survivor on the Black Point. She mentioned, Steve Svartz also (Whereabouts-unknown). The locating of "Chet" Colella was made possible by sending a "POINTER" to the DESA and Small Crafts Assc. and they placing a reunion notice.

Any of you that has lost a relative in WW II may obtain a Photo and Lithograph of the Memorial if one is erected in their honor by writing for Form-49 to: AMERICAN BATTLE MONUMENTS COMMISSION, ROOM 5127, PULASKI BUILDING, 20 MASSACHUSETTS AVE. N.W., WASHINGTON, D.C. 20314. ATTN: OPERATION DIVISION. I am sure it applies to other Wars also, but not sure. (This service is free) Our brother, Whitson, is listed on the Memorial at Battery Park in New York City.

#### MINI-REUNIONS—TRI-STATE-LOCAL—NATIONAL—ASSOCIATE REUNIONS—EXTRAS

From our Canadian DEMS friend Tom Anderson, 302 Catherine St., Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada P7E 1K6 was a Holiday Greeting to all and these words:

My Fellow Shipmates of the American Armed Guards:

The Seattle Committee has offered a trip on the Princess Margerite to the City of Victoria, British Columbia. I strongly recommend this trip because the City is built on the Line of Alde England. There are lots of things to see. One attraction to see is the Museum which is at the end of the Quay, where the boats docks. You will never regret the visit there. If all goes well, I will be there to welcome all my American Shipmates. Tom Anderson-RONA DEMS. 302 Catherine St., Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada P7E 1K6. (Tom has been at all our Armed Guard National Reunions since 1985 at Norfolk, Va.) Tom, you're welcomed!!

D.E.M.S. 35TH R.C.N.A. ANNUAL REUNION May 19-22, 1989 P.O. BOX 265, THUNDER BAY, ONTARIO, CANADA P7C 4V8 (807) 623-5032. MAKE RESERVATIONS BEFORE 4/15/89 TO GET CONFIRMATIONS. All Armed Guard are invited to attend this beautiful ceremony.

And from Saway Strange of Portland, Oregon comes these words from the past:  
"All AIR RAIDS shall henceforth be held between the hours of 10 P.M. and Midnight due to the protest by those members of the ship's personnel that desire to repose in healthy slumber between the hours of Midnight and 7 A.M."  
"It shall henceforth be prohibited to indulge in the Sport of Air Raids between the hours of Midnight and 7 A.M."

\* ALL VIOLATORS SHALL BE SEVERELY PUNISHED \*

S.S. Cushman K. Davis

#### REUNIONS

SHIPMATES AWAY (whatever that means)

#### REUNIONS

Kansas Mini-Reunion April 8th, 1989 at the Topeka, Ks. American Legion Post. Contact Hosts Don and Henrietta Gleason, 227 North Knox, Topeka, Kansas 66606 Tel. (913) 234-6087 for more info. They welcome all the Old Salts and Ladies.

Texas Mini-Reunion May 4-7, 1989 at the Rodeway Inn, 6201 Gateway West, El Paso, Texas 79925 1-800-228-2000. Contact Hosts Herb and Mary Norch, 74 Sutton Place, El Paso, Tx. 79912 (915) 581-1553. (Walk the Beaches of El Paso!!) Open to all!

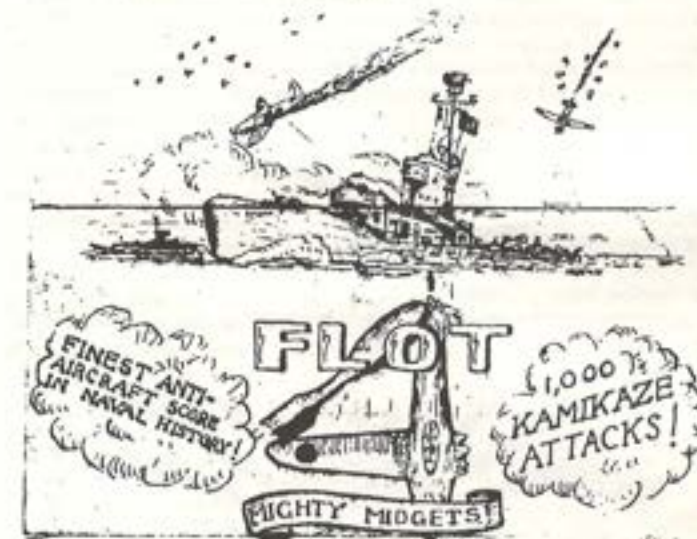
USS Providence (CL-82) and Staff of COMCRU Div. (10) 1st Reunion Virginia Beach, Va. 4/29-30/89 Contact BMC O.C. Ayers, USN (Ret) 424-Ridgeland Ave., Elmhurst, Illinois 60126 312-832-2387. Armed Guards in this Unit are welcomed.

San Diego, Ca. Area Mini-Bit-together 3/10-12/89 Contact Hal and Sally Grant, 912 Rutgers Ave., Chula Vista, Ca. 92010 619-421-0522 (All are welcomed)

Sacramento, Ca. Area-Calvin & Jackie Fisher 8047 Westboro Way, Sacramento, Ca. 95823 Tel. 916-682-8009 Hosts to a Sunday Brunch Sunday 4/2/89 10:00 A.M. Holiday Inn, 300 "J" Street, Sac., Ca. \$11. per and prepaid. Let these know ahead

Arizona Mini-Reunion Raymond and Norma Barba, Hosts 1461 W. Kilburn St, Tucson, Az. 85705-9231 is proposed 9/19-21/89. Site and info in future "POINTER".

New Jersey-Northeast Annual Reunion with Alex and Edith Lombardi 14 Brookfield Road, Montclair, N.J. 07043 201-746-6361. Possible-Baltimore, Maryland and a TDW around the Harbor on the S.S. John W. Brown with Brian Hope and Mike Gillen at the wheel. Malt Magalis will "TOOT" the fog horn!!



Served on the LCS... during the capture and the occupation of OKINAWA

Handwritten signatures and names at the bottom of the page, including "Robert F. Foy" and "Malt Magalis".



Brian Hope, S.S. John M. Brown Liberty Project has asked that members of U.S.N. Armed Guard write or call their local Congressman and ask them to support Bill HR-4987 by Helen Bentley (R-Md) who has introduced this Bill which is called "THE MERCHANT Mariner's Memorial Act of 1988". It allows money gained from the sale of surplus ships in mothball fleet to be used towards restoring and upkeep of the S.S. John M. Brown and other MEMORIAL SHIPS like her.

These are a few addresses that I would like to place here for you to KEEP!!

1. S.S. John M. Brown Liberty Ship, P.O. Box 8, Long Green, Md. 21092 301-558-0646
2. S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien, Ft. Mason Center Bldg A, San Fran., Ca. 94123 415-441-3101 (Either ship above will take a TAX DEDUCTIBLE Donation for their upkeep)
3. The Mariner's Museum, Newport News, Va 23606 1-(804)-595-0368- Ship Pictures (FOR SHIP PHOTOS-SEND \$10.00 CHECK OR MONEY ORDER)
4. Susan McDonald, Taylor Publishing Co. Rep., 104 Bolton Pl., Chapel Hill, N.C. 27514 1-(919)-929-1694 to order Vol. II and Vol. III Armed Guard History Book. Vol. II has been printed and they are \$29.95 each from her. Vol. III is in the printing stage and you are asked to get your 350 words, Picture "ONLY" of you then and now, any group or action pictures clear enough to print and your check or money order for \$49.95 which includes tax, shipping, etc. The reason I put this in again is that I will have 500 "POINTERS" printed over our sailing list for the "NEW OL' SALTS" til Reunion time.

5. RALPH W. LUCAS, 1220 HAWTHORNE RD., HAWAIIAN, S.C. 29406 1-(803)-747-2031. I ASK YOU TO SEND TO RALPH A--SELF-ADDRESSED--STAMPED--ENVELOPE--to obtain a printout of any of your shipmates, if any be listed. BE SURE THAT you have sent in the ship names to me one week before so I can enter into computer, do a backup on disks, send to Ralph by UPS for him to update changes in his Computer which is set up identical to the National Computer that I have. He has many for the writing!! He's waiting and enjoys letting you know!! When he sends to you a name of a shipmate, write the shipmate or call him. You may not remember him but a two minute conversation will make a friend again for the rest of your life. "TRY IT!!!"

I have been asked why I place some other outfit's reunion in the "POINTER". It is simple. Many of the Armed Guard served with them and they may have the time to attend them. Don Glaser and others forwards known Armed Guard names on to me and they also place our reunion notices in their publications. By cooperating together, we accomplish more!! If three lines in the "POINTER" finds either of us one of our crew, it's worth it. (See Colella Story)

Ernest Price of Riverside, Ca. just called to say he had recieved his Purple Heart after nearly 46 years from injuries in the sinking of the S.S. Richard D. Spaight on 3/10/43. He was vouched for by his shipmate, Cledis L. Mortimer of Accokeek, Maryland. I informed him of another shipmate, Victor Nagel of Eldon, Missouri. (He should have written Ralph Lucas). Price informed me that Michigan State issues license plates with a "PURPLE HEART" if earned and notified. The State of California will take applications on March 1, 1989 to be issued on July 1, 1989 according to Price. If you know of other States, drop me a card. Price also gave me the address of: MILITARY ORDER OF THE PURPLE HEART, NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS, 5413-B BACKLICK ROAD, SPRINGFIELD, VIRGINIA 22151 703-642-5360 as a place to get help in obtaining the Heart if earned.

Dear Charlie: Would you print this poem in the "POINTER" and send a copy to Dan Kozak, P.O. Box 893, Riverhead, N.Y. 11901. He wrote the poem and gave it to me at the Merchant Marine Academy 1988 Reunion. Your "Yankee" Buddy, Alex Lombardi



This is to certify that \_\_\_\_\_  
served on the LES \_\_\_\_\_ during the occupation  
of Japan \_\_\_\_\_  
N. P. Price, Jr. Commander Feb. 4.

The LIBERTY SHIP so proud and staunch  
more than twenty seven hundred were launched--

Manned by brave American Mariners  
who sailed them with pride--  
Upon the Atlantic, Pacific and Indian  
Oceans-- the Seven Seas-- they plied.

The gunners of those lumbering Libertys  
warded off many air and sub attack--  
airborne raiders found it difficult  
to penetrate their flak.

Our Armies and Air Forces never  
could have survived--  
without those brave American Mariners  
and those LIBERTYs they sailed with pride.

The world's greatest Armada  
of ships ever known--  
was led by those lumbering LIBERTYs  
who finally brought our guys home.

Some two hundred ten of those gallant LIBERTYs  
and the sailors on board, never made it back to port--  
They will live forevermore as symbols of freedom....  
pillars of courage....consorts of the Reale in--  
-King Neptune's Court.

-Daniel Kozak

##Dedicated to every Merchantman to ever sail in the  
defense of Freedom--and the U.S.N. Armed Guard Crew  
and others who courageously manned the guns.##

FORM-180 FOR YOUR SERVICE RECORDS CAN BE OBTAINED FROM YOUR LOCAL V.A. OFFICE. The V.A. listed in the the telephone book and are willing to help you in your veteran's problems. You can tell your friends of other branches of service of it too. Be sure to read and fill out the Form 180 at all places that pertain to you and DON'T FORGET TO SIGN IT. There's no need to send it to me either.

I sent approx. 30 of the last "POINTER" to England and I know of two that was timed right. They arrived on December 7, 1988 and THEY LET ME KNOW!!! They had not forgotten nor should we or the World. Our ARMED GUARD BUMPER STICKER hangs in their Royal Navy Association Hall and they are proud of it. So as I, for we have located over 500 with them and the caps and decals. If I failed to send you cap, book, decal, etc. that you sent your money in for, do not hesitate to remind me. It is easy to make a mistake for I sent wrong caps to some.

As of Jan. 1, 1989, we would have to pay State Tax on caps and I do not have time to keep up with it. They cost \$2.95 each and \$.85 to mail. A donation for this amount or any donation above this amount, will have a cap sent to you. The small profits so far had been used to buy stamps, paper, printer's ink and all the other expenses incurred and donations will still do the same. I have time to deposit checks and see that the caps go out. I have too much to do now but we end up doing enough to keep it going. Thanks for all of you that supported the Armed Guard cause so far and we'll make it some how. A few extra bucks to Madelyn Rigg may help buy that extra something, like decorations, etc. to put on a BETTER REUNION. It may be that you can not go but want to help her. THANKS

Was great to start having our "LAST SATURDAY IN THE NORTH BREAKFAST" again and hear Peter L. Price from Goodview, Virginia, who sailed on the S.S. Dunboyne and Robert Hallisey from Fayetteville, N.C. (originally-YANKEE) and Paul Watson of Raleigh, N.C. (originally Florida) tell of their episode to Murmansk, Russia in early, 1942 when things were rough. Watson presented the "BREAKFAST CLUB" with a new, larger "WELCOME" Armed Guard Banner for display. I will purchase 2 more and place one onboard the S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien at San Francisco and on the S.S. John M. Brown at Baltimore, Maryland with their O.K. If you're passing Raleigh, N.C., plan ahead to come by on the last Saturday for a visit. "ALL Y'ALL" stay healthy and let's go to Seattle for a wonderful Armed Guard Reunion.

CALLLOYD



American Merchant Marine Veterans will sail the cruise ship-"MAOI GRAS" from Ft. Lauderdale, Fla. Thursday May 11, 1989 and return on May 14. Contact: The National Convention, AMMV Gulfstream Chapter, Box 23972, Oakland Park, Florida 33307 (305)-776-0284. The Armed Guard are welcomed. Alex Lombardi will vouch for their overwhelming pleasure for you to attend. The AMMV and I work together in sending each other names to increase crew listing. They have Chapters all over the U.S.A. and we are on each other's mailing.

Pittsburgh, Pa. Area Hosts-Jack and Sally Cross 119 Lycoming Dr., Corapolis, Pa 15108 1-(412)-264-8058 Breakfast on the 3rd Saturday of each month. Assisted by Hilary and Dot Makowski 416 Arabella St. Pittsburgh, Pa. 15210. (ND GRITS)

Michigan-Indiana-Ohio Tri-State Reunion Hosts-Bob and Dorothy Ober, 7115 Dunn Rd., Cincinnati, Oh. 45230 513-231-3181 to be held in Cincy. Sept.16-18,1989. This should be another wonderful Reunion onboard the PADDLE BOATS.

Wisconsin-Illinois Mini-Reunion date has not been set as of 2/1/89. Contact Bob and Dot Wolf, 9837 S. Warren Ave. Oak Lawn, Il. 60453 312-425-5512 or Robert J. Grossman 10333 S. Campbell Ave., Chicago, Il 60655 312-779-1102 if you would like to step forward and "VOLUNTEER" to host it next fall. Whoever volunteer to step forward, you will get a fine crew back together again. Enjoyed last year!!

Destroyer Escorts Sailors Assoc. Natl. Reunion 9/19/89 Charleston,S.C. Contact Don Glaser, DESA P.O.Box 31572 Orlando, Fl.32862-1572 (407)-290-3594.

Patrol Crafts Sailors Assoc. Joseph F.Kelliher, P.O. Box 232, Cambridge, N.Y. 12812-0232 1-518-677-3808 April 1989 in San Diego, Ca.

Washington-Oregon State Mini-Reunion Hosts Billie and Dick Kohse, 2304 Lister Rd. Olympia, Wa. 98506 206-456-1946 Mar.31-April 2, 1989 at the Tyee Hotel, 500 Tyee Dr., Tumwater 98502. (Finalizing the National Reunion 6/21-25/89-Seattle.

California Hosts Carl and Thelma Winder 1734 Pilgrim Ave., Mountain View, Ca. 94040 1-415-967-6493 will hold a Memorial Plaque Ceremony at the Port Chicago, Ca. site where the ships S.S. E.A.Bryan and the S.S.Quinault Victory blew up on July 17, 1944, killing all but 12 crewmen on Liberty. Date is July 16, 1989. We have located George Diller, 948 Shaffer Rd., Newfield, N.Y. 14867 (607)564-7462 and Gordon Koller, 1564 Provincetown Dr.,San Jose, Ca. 95129 (408)1-253-4570. If anyone knows of the whereabouts of the other 10, please contact Carl Winder so they can attend this Memorial Dedication set for July 16, 1989. Further details will be in future "POINTER". Carl had put out a "WEST COAST MAILOUT" asking for a \$20.00.donation; 5 for West Coast expenses, 5 for the Memorial Plaque and 10 to the National. I would like to report that Carl has forwarded \$2600. so far and it has been deposited to the Armed Guard Account. We have enough now for a back to back "POINTER" and I will see that another will follow this one.

Michigan Ironwood A/G Reunion 8/19/89 Host-Ray Didur, P.O.Box 282, Cement City, Mich. 49233-0282 (517) 592-6941.

Tin Can Sailors Reunion April 1,1989 in N.J. Contact: Ken Williams 12 John St., Rockaway, N.J. 07866 1-(201)-627-5656.

Farragut, Idaho "BOOT CAMP" Reunion will be held again and you may contact Doug Dugger 1332 South 1st W., Missoula, Montana 59801 406-721-4107

"KOREAN" War Veterans REUNION 8/25-27/89 at Grand Island Riverside Inn, Grand Rapid, Nebraska. Contact: Deborah S. Brandt 2620 Boyce, Hastings, Ne. 68901; or, William Reilly, 5320 Wilshire Blvd.,Lincoln, Nebr. 68504.

Last Name	First	Middle	City	State	Wife	Date
Arend	Duane		Buchanan	MI	Edna	3/86
Bala	Ernie		San Francisco	Ca	ICaren	12/88
Boyer	Everette	A.	Red Bluff	Ca	?	11/88
Brooks	Dale		Southgate	MI	Anna Marie	11/88
Brander	Edward	H.	Hamilton	Oh	Juanita	9/88
Caton	Winifred	D.	Alherton	Ca	Marguerite	12/88
Cook	Myron		Shutesbury	Ma	?	88
Covey	Harold		Feura Bush	NY		
Davis	Jesse	Phillip	Richland	Ne	?	7/92
Dixon	James	R.	Durham	NC	Marie	10/88
Dysart	Lee	A.	Lincolnton	NC	?	88
Dubose	Selba	Lee	Wilder	Tx	?	70s
Eck	Joseph	S.	Nesa	Az	?	10/88
Egbert	William	Lester	Sawson Sprgs.	Ky	?	5/82
Gracoffa	Patrick	J.	Raynard	Ma	?	84
Hinkley	Philip		Embley	Ne	?	83
Holmes	Harold	Lloyd	Mannington	Ky	Killed at Sea	2/43
Johnson	Dorothea	B.	Malnut Creek	Ca	MWE	11/88
Katz	Ernest		Freemont	MI	Alice	88
Miles	Howard		Elizabeth	Tulsa	Elizabeth	12/88

# U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WORLD WAR I AND II VETERANS INCOME AND EXPENSE REPORT 1988

Bal. 12/31/87 Armed Guard Checking	Total	\$ 6,935.
Deposits- Armed Guard Donation 1988		\$28,874.
Total Interest Earned 1988		\$ 229.
Total Income U.S.N. Armed Guard 1988		\$36,038.
Includes reimbursement for caps, decals, etc.		

## Expenses Incurred 1988

Bank Service Charges	\$ 167.60	
Check Order	8.32	
Taylor Publishing Company, Dallas, Texas	6,707.25	
Supplies (Paper, Disk, Toner, Ribbons, Etc.)	1,335.16	
Equipment (Computer, Printer, Etc.)	3,108.16	
Printing "POINTER"	8,343.36	
Embossing Service (Labeling and Mailing "POINTER")	387.98	
Postage	4,368.87	
Caps, Decals, Bumper Stickers, Etc.	3,241.12	
Telephone, United Parcel Post, Etc.	1,013.77	
S.S. John M. Brown Liberty Ship Donation	500.00	
Plaque (Brooklyn, N.Y. Armed Guard Center)	450.00	
Miscellaneous (Reimbursement, Etc.)	434.58	
Total Expenses incurred in 1988	\$30,065.87	\$30,066.
Balance beginning 1989 in Armed Guard Checking Account	\$ 5.97	

## Total Income and Expenses for the:

U.S.N. Armed Guard WW I and WW II Veterans  
Charles A. Lloyd 1988-89 Chairman  
5712 Partridge Lane  
Raleigh, North Carolina 27609-4126  
1-919-876-5537

NON-PROFIT Organization  
Tax Exempt No.74-2316668

Prepared by Mary Frances Ham, and submitted by Charles A. Lloyd, 1989 Chairman as a true and accurate account to the best of my knowledge on this day, January 29, 1989.

Signed: Charles A. Lloyd  
1989 Chairman

## FUNDS COLLECTED BY OTHER PEOPLE NOT INCLUDED IN THIS REPORT

Novak	Ed	Pittsburgh	Pa	88
Olson		Sibraltar	MI	Stephanie ?
Olay	Clarence	Dania	FL	? 88
Palmer	Cecil	Lucian	Carolina	WV Mary Lou ?
Poska	Otto	William	Evanson	In Jeanette 8/88
Roy	Thomas	D.	Saginaw	MI 12/79
Rutemuller	Walter	T.	Cincinnati	Oh Edna 12/88
Sayre	Tommy	Lee	Caruthersville	Mo ? 4/88
Scalise	William	D.	Berlin	Ct Catherine 10/88
Seifert	Al		So. Osha	Ne ? 88
Strange	Lannie	E.	Eldon	Mo ? 7/84
Taylor	Graydon	Edward	Albany	NY KIA
Thornton	Marren		Sacramento	Ca Shirley 10/88
Vogelbacher	Gus		Hewlett	NY Ray 74
Walden	William	G.	Westboro	Ma Rita 3/88
Wiles	William	C.	Landis	NC 10/88
Yungberg	Gilbert		Washington	Ks 12/88

\* Holmes was lost when ship was rammed in the mouth of the Mississippi River.  
\* Both names sent in by Clifton Jones, Dawson Springs, Ky. in their Honor.

Bala Ernie San Francisco Ca ICaren 12/88  
Ernie and Caren were very active in West Coast organizing and as all, they will miss by Carl Winder and their Breakfast Club.  
An asterisk \* \* will signify deceased also if both departs us.

Compiled by Charles A. Lloyd, sent in to him from 11/4/88 till 2/3/89. Please notify if any in error and any other known Armed Guard deceased.



# UNITED AIRWAYS TO OFFER REDUCED RATES FOR ARMED GUARD REUNION ATTENDEES #

From its many departure points throughout all the UNITED STATES, the frequent flight convenience and fine services of UNITED AIRWAYS will be available for ALL REUNION ATTENDEES at an appealing reduced rate.

In an effort for the REUNION COMMITTEE to help you keep expenses to a minimum so that you can further enjoy the planned festivities planned for your Reunion in Seattle, flight reservations can be made at the lowest possible rate.

UNITED AIRWAYS will discount their regular "ROUND-TRIP" coach fares to all the U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD WWII VETERAN Reunion Attendees by 40 Per cent. Should UNITED be offering their SUPER-SAVER rates, you can still purchase your ROUND-TRIP tickets at 5 per cent below these rates.

To take advantage of these rates (For attendees-spouse-children-grand children, etc.) BELWOOD TRAVEL and their Ernie Cullum offers a free phone number to their office located in Woodinville, Washington. Just dial 1-800-284-6366. Identify yourself as an ARMED GUARD REUNION ATTENDEE. VISA and MASTERCARD are accepted.

Reservations are subject to availability at time of your reservation. A minimum of 30 days in advance of your flight is recommended. These SPECIAL RATES can apply only for travel commenced and completed during the meeting travel period which is 6/18/89 thru 6/28/89.

-----NOTICE-----  
This arrangement was worked out through Armed Guard-Robert Heitzinger 15924 NE 139th Place, Woodinville, Wa. 98072 206-486-5932 with BELWOOD TRAVEL and CRUISE SERVICE, 13120 N.E. 177 Pl., Woodinville, Wa. 98072 1-800-284-6366.

You may find rates with other Airlines as cheap or cheaper. Take what you are satisfied with. I know that DELTA offers a SENIOR CITIZENS RATE and you can call them or others for prices. Those taking the ALASKAN CRUISE should check to see if an extension will be granted with UNITED. I CAN NOT BE RESPONSIBLE. (CALLOYD)

John W. Brown Liberty Ship  
P.O. Box 8  
Long Green, Md. 21092

Gentlemen:

I am enclosing a check for the amount of \$40.00 in honor of my father, C. A. Lloyd. He has become involved in the restoration of the John W. Brown Liberty Ship and it is a cause dear to his heart. He requested a donation in his honor in lieu of a Christmas gift.

Truly yours,  
Carolyn L. Williams

6  
**Delta's Young At Heart Fares Are  
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4501 W. Cascade Road  
Wilmington, N.C. 28403  
December 18, 1988



# Explosive memories

George Diller seeks survivors of 1944 ship blast.

By LYNN M. FONDY  
Journal Staff

**N**EWFIELD — George Diller Sr. is looking for 11 men.

He hasn't seen them since World War II and at 61 he doesn't remember all their names, but he's sure he would still recognize them.

Diller's search is spurred on by the memory of many young comrades, including his closest friend, who died July 17, 1944 in the blast that killed all but 11 of his shipmates.

Now death is creeping closer to Diller and he wants to pass on the memories of these young lives before they die with him.

"They was just kids and they never had an opportunity, just out of school and right in uniform. Really they didn't have a life and that's why I was so interested. Hey, we got to say something for these people," he said.

Only 11 other men — men he hasn't been able to find — can help him keep the memories alive. He doesn't even know if his shipmates survived the rest of the war.

In his box of newspaper clippings and mementos from the war is a little picture of the gun crew of his ship, the S.S. E.A. Bryan, taken with a camera he hid under his shirt. The men in the picture wear matching navy uniforms but many of their white caps have been checked with a little black "X" that shows they have gone "to the higher ship to sail."

Diller also keeps a picture of his once-inseparable childhood friend, Lloyd Quick. "He was just like a brother to me," Diller said. They went to gunnery school together, volunteered for the Armed Guard at the same time and stayed with each other until the day of the blast.

That day, July 17, 1944, still haunts him. Diller was dragged away from his friend Quick by another shipmate who wanted to go to town. "I often sit back and wonder in my mind. . . " he said, staring out of his blue eyes, bright as the sky above his blue shirt.

All that day Quick, then 18, had complained of a headache and soft voices calling his name. Quick thought Diller was playing tricks on him — but Diller wasn't.

They started talking about what it meant. "Was the ship gonna blow up or what?" When one of the other gunners heard them talking about the voices, he said it was a bad omen and they'd better stop discussing it. They stopped.

Soon Howard Smith from Binghamton started to pester Diller about going into town with him. "I said, 'If Quick's not going, I'm not going,'" Diller said. But Smith ignored his protests and got Diller's uniform out of his locker.



LEUE HATCH/Journal Staff

**A DAY OF INFAMY:** George Diller's memories are close at hand — and close to heart — as he looks back to July 1944 when his ship, the S.S. E.A. Bryan, exploded killing hundreds of sailors.

Finally I went to suit him up, Diller said. First they went to the town of Port Chicago, Calif., a town that would be destroyed by the blast. Then they decided to go farther down the road to the town of Martinez.

They had just started back when "Wham, she went!"

In two explosions, as they were knocked to the ground amid flying glass, 350 people died, two ships and a town were destroyed.

"It's quite a feeling though to get up off the ground and realize that your buddies and your friends and whatnot. . . " Diller's voice trailed off.

His wife-to-be "just knew" he was dead and there was no way for him to let her know he wasn't, Diller said. He was "more or less engaged" to her during the war, but really didn't expect to survive. That didn't scare Diller though.

"At that time, you didn't think of that. You had it in your mind, 'I'm gonna show them Japs what I can do.'"

He's also made it, through four children and eight grandchildren, to sit down one day at his electric synthesizer with hands that took up music to help his arthritis.

"Git up quick and stand at attention! Hurry up, the ship's leaving!" he recalls telling his wife that day.

She jumped as he started playing "Anchors Away" one finger at a time.

It was the same spirited man who dropped out of school at 17 years and insisted on joining the Navy, even after his brother was killed in the war. It was the same man who didn't tell his parents when he left gunnery school to join the Armed Guard.

The armed guard started having reunions in 1982, but Diller, who had a sudden unexplained attack that left him in a wheelchair for several years and on disability from his construction job, couldn't go. This year's reunion was on the West Coast again and Diller couldn't attend. "It made me mad," he said.

But Diller keeps searching and trying to pass on his memories whenever and however he can. He calls and writes letters and even wrote an essay, "Life and Death of the S.S. E.A. Bryan," for a book that was published in all 50 states.

Diller's Story  
WAS IN Vol. I



# JOIN US

as a guest aboard the newly refurbished  
Liberty Ship, S.S. John W. Brown.



## Her "Matron" Voyage is now scheduled for the summer of 1990. Space is limited!

We urge you to respond promptly and mail your reservation within 30 days from postmark. After this date the cruise will be offered to the general public on a first come, first served basis.

Confirmation of your reservation will be in the form of a handsome numbered certificate, suitable for framing. You will be notified of the sailing date at least 45 days in advance. Should you be unable to make the voyage, your certificate is fully transferable.

YES! I want to make this historic voyage. Donation for one guest..\$150, for two guests..\$250, for three guests..\$330, for four guests..\$400, additional guests at \$100 each.

name \_\_\_\_\_ address \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ zip \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Check enclosed in the amount of \_\_\_\_\_ for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations. Make checks payable to "Project Liberty Ship".

☐ Charge \_\_\_\_\_ VISA \_\_\_\_\_ MASTERCARD for \_\_\_\_\_ reservations.

Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. date \_\_\_\_\_ Signature \_\_\_\_\_

If the voyage is fully booked when my reservation is received, place me on the standby list \_\_\_\_\_ or, sign me up for the second voyage \_\_\_\_\_.

MAIL TO: PROJECT LIBERTY SHIP, P.O. BOX 8, LONG GREEN, MARYLAND 21092





# PROJECT LIBERTY SHIP

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Dennis A. Zembala  
Baltimore Museum of Industry

December 7, 1988

Dear Fellow Armed Guard Veteran:

I am working hard, along with a number of Armed Guard Veterans from the Baltimore area, on the restoration of the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN. The Armed Guard is playing an important role in the saving of this fine old ship, working side by side with old sailors and people with no sea experience at all. Our volunteers range in age from the 80's to as young as 11. The important thing that we all share is a desire to preserve this last East Coast Liberty Ship as a memorial, not just to the Armed Guard and Merchant Marine, but to all the men and women of American industry that built the Liberty Fleet. When the museum is established aboard the BROWN, the Armed Guard story will be a prominent feature. What better way to tell our story than with an Armed Guard Museum aboard a real Liberty Ship! This is the only chance we on the East Coast have to preserve such a ship in our own backyard. If we fail, there will never be another Liberty!

Many of you live too far away to come aboard regularly to work with us, but we still need your help. It would be great to have a large turnout of Armed Guard Veterans on our first Bay cruise, scheduled, as you can see from the brochure, in 1990. No need to pay \$150 for a single ticket. Get together with some friends and buy as a group. If you all chip in together the cost of the ticket comes down to \$100. Those of you who sailed aboard the O'BRIEN remember what a great time was had by all.

If you can't make the cruise, sign on as a member of Project Liberty Ship. We also have a number of goodies for sale in the ship's store, and we sure can use your dollars! If you can get to Baltimore, come and see us! We have twelve empty gun tubs that we're working hard trying to fill and the Armed Guard quarters aft are really shaping up! If you have any leads on guns, drop me a line in care of the Project. We don't want to have to go to sea with telephone poles this time around!

Smooth Sailing!

*Walter L. Magalis*

Walter L. Magalis

Vice Chairman,

Project Liberty Ship Baltimore

BALTIMORE COMMITTEE

P.O. Box 8 • Long Green, Maryland 21092 • Staff office: (301) 661-1550 • Ship: (301) 558-0646



This is to remind all of the "ARMED GUARD OF WWI and WWII" of the 8th ANNUAL REUNION TO BE HELD IN SEATTLE, WASHINGTON, June 21-25, 1989 at the RED LION INN, SEA TAC, 18740 Pacific Highway South, is only FIVE MONTHS AWAY. The "TOLL FREE" number is 1-800-547-8010, and the Direct Line is 1-206-246-8600 for your convenience. "BE SURE TO TELL THEM YOU ARE WITH THE ARMED GUARD" and "ASK FOR A CONFIRMATION!!!" The RED LION has "500 ROOMS RESERVED" for us. The rate is \$60.00 a night. Also, bring your "AARP CARD" for 10 percent discount in their "COFFEE SHOP". This HOPEFULLY will be the best attended Reunion yet with over 5,800 on the mailing list, and C.A. Lloyd informs me, "THE LIST IS GROWING"!

"ANOTHER IMPORTANT ITEM"

"FOR THOSE FLYING IN"

Upon arriving at "SEA TAC AIRPORT", and "AFTER YOU HAVE CLAIMED YOUR LUGGAGE", the RED LION INN WILL PICK YOU UP, if you go in the vicinity of the car rentals and use "TELEPHONE #1".

If you are driving, there will be no charge for parking at the Red Lion parking lot. Recreational vehicles can use the Red Lion's parking facilities but NOT FOR LIVING PURPOSES. Campers and motor homes can go to the KOA campground (5801 S. 212th, Kent, WA. 98032-telephone 206-872-8652) which is about 4 miles away. We would suggest you contact them as soon as possible because they fill real fast.

We all have to make DECISIONS so which events are you going to select? ONE or ALL?!

Wed. 6/21 - AN EVENING OF HORSE RACING AT LONGACRES TRACK

- Roundtrip motorcoach transportation from your hotel (leaves Red Lion at 3:30p.m.)
- Club House admission
- Reserved group seating in the Paddock Club
- A complete chicken and roast dinner
- Program recognition
- First-timer's kit

Paddock Club will only hold a maximum 450. So those of you who are interested send your money in first.

Thurs. 6/22 VICTORIA, B.C. CRUISE--THIS IS AN ALL DAYTRIP! Sailing time will be early morning (7:00 am). There will be a "brunch" on the ship with plenty time to SWAP TALES!! We will be in VICTORIA approximately 3 hours. Places to see in VICTORIA, and all sights are in walking distance, except the "Bchart Gardens." 1. CRYSTLE PLACE. 2. Wax Museum. 3. Bchart Gardens. On the return trip, there will be a "Buffet Dinner."

Fri. 6/23 am DELUXE EMERAL CITY TOUR--Historical and modern architecture exist side-by-side in Seattle and you will see it all on this tour, from towering SKYSCRAPERS to carefully preserved buildings of brick. We will travel down FIFTH AVENUE to the Historical Pioneer Square and Pike Place Market. You will see the University of Washington Campus, the Arboretum (Seattle's Premier Park for Floral Display), and the beautiful waterfront homes along Lake Washington Blvd. Our next stop is the Hiram Chittenden Locks. The Locks separate saltwater Puget Sound from fresh water Lake Washington. It is a fascinating viewing destination at any time of the year, complete with stops at lookout points where the views of Puget Sound and Seattle stretch as far as the eye can see. You'll love it!!

Fri. 6/23 pm TILlicum VILLAGE-SALMON DINNER--After a short cruise, you arrive at Tillicum Village on Blake Island where you will be greeted with steamed clam and nectar. Buffet of Alder smoke Salmon and Indian Bread is the main course, plus dessert. A live show of native Northwest Indian Dancers will acquaint you with their ancient culture as they interpret traditional folklore through a series of costume dancers. After the show, you can walk along the nature trails on Blake Island.



Even if you don't or can't take the planned events, come and relax and enjoy the company of your Armed Guard shipmates and maybe find one of your shipmates that you haven't seen in a FEW years. Try to get a "BUDDIE" to come and join in the fun!! We will have a real treat for you on Saturday night with DOUG DUGGER, from Monana who will be there to give a "LITTLE MINI-GRAND OL'OPRY". You don't want to miss "Minnie Pearl's boyfriend, do you? He's also the Farragut BOOT CAMP organizer.

If there are any questions, you can contact me, Madelen Rigg, your Host, on my U.S.N. ARMED GUARD Telephone No. 1-206-242-9293.

God Bless and keep all of you till we meet in SEATTLE, JUNE 1989.

Sincerely,

*Madelen Rigg*  
 Madelen Rigg  
 1623 S.W. 166th  
 Seattle, WA 98166  
 1-206-242-9293

TEAR OFF HERE AND MAIL RIGHT AWAY

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ STATE \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE \_\_\_\_\_

Wednesday, June 21, 1989. Longacre Race Track \$29.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Thursday, June 22, 1989. Victoria , B.C. Cruise \$60.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Friday, June 23, 1989 A.M. Emerald City Tour \$14.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Friday, June 23, 1989 P.M. Indian Salmon Dinner \$32.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Saturday, June 24, 1989. Banquet (Chicken Seattle) \$25.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Sunday, June 25, 1989. Brunch \$13.00 per person \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_ Check Number \_\_\_\_\_

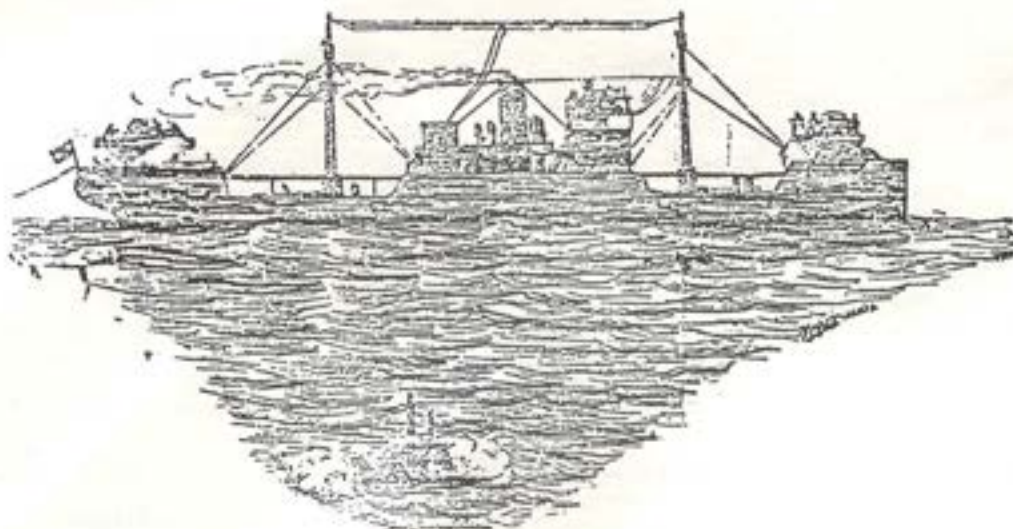
You cancelled check will be your receipt. Bring it with you uphold the fact that you have already paid. Dismissal will be right after the brunch on Sunday morning and BON VOYAGE until CHICAGO 1990!

Tear off and mail to: Madelen R. Rigg, 1623 S.W. 166th, Seattle, WA 98166

If you do not want to cut out and remove from the "POINTER", have a copy made or just write down the events that you are interested in and send check or money order with your name, address, tele. No. etc. It will make our work a little easier. We will have to have a cutoff date, which will be announced later. If you have any questions, please call me before the "RUSH"! We have planned a wonderful reunion and many have made their reservations and many are coming in early to see all the Seattle Area. As C.A.Lloyd would say--Y'all come on and enjoy yourselves!! You'll be at home!! In Seattle.



MEMORIES OF THE U.S. NAVAL  
ARMED GUARD SERVICE  
DURING WORLD WAR I  
FROM APRIL 6, 1917 TO NOVEMBER 11, 1918



BY

*Joseph Lafferty*  
JOSEPH LAFFERTY

### *DAVer Begins 40th Consecutive Year as Letterman Volunteer*

Joseph Lafferty, a life member of San Francisco DAV Chapter 3, made his first visit to patients at San Francisco's Letterman Army Medical Center on Christmas Day 1948. Then, half the patients were still recovering from lingering World War II wounds.

Lafferty, a construction foreman and World War I Navy veteran, was inspired to make weekly visits to the hospital. He showed up each Wednesday with a cart full of doughnuts, boxes of candy, fruit, magazines, playing cards, and pen and

pencil sets. Some of it was donated, but most of it was paid for out of his own pocket.

When sickness forced Lafferty to slow down, he cut his visits to his present every second Wednesday. This year, Lafferty, now 89, is in his 40th consecutive year of handing out gifts, treats, a smile, and a word of encouragement to patients at Letterman.

He was recently honored by the Department of the Army when Col. Paul L. Shetler, Letterman's commander, presented him with the Commander's Award for Public Service "for his 40 years of volunteer service to Letterman Army Medical Center."

The award cites Lafferty for "unselfishly giving his time to better the

services provided to Letterman's patient population. He has volunteered his services not only on the inpatient wards, but also in the outpatient departments.

"His keen wit and kind heart are evident in all his contacts with patients and staff alike. His willingness to work anywhere and to assist at anytime have made his services invaluable."

Now, Lafferty is asking fellow DAVers to help him gather used postage stamps for patients who are starting stamp collections. Anyone who has extra stamps from their collections can send them to: Joseph Lafferty, 374 San Jose Ave., San Francisco, Calif. 94110. You can be sure he'll pass them on to those who will be delighted to get them.



YESTERDAY'S MEMORIES OF THE ARMED GUARD SERVICE  
DURING WORLD WAR I

The Armed Guard Service was a very important part of the U. S. Navy during World War I and this is a true story of the experiences and happenings of one of the first crews to leave the U. S. S. Pennsylvania as witnessed by the writer who was one of that crew, some things serious, others laughable, but all true.

Not long after W. W. I was declared on Germany because of the roughness of her submarine warfare on defenseless merchant ships, guns were placed on all such ships and the word went out that volunteers were needed to man these guns, and as our ship had 22 five-inch guns with well trained crews having been training on them for about a year they were ready for this kind of service.

And in spite of the fact that most service men were warned never to volunteer for anything, I was one of the first to put my name in for this service, not that I wanted to be a hero but I had become so tired of doing the same thing over every day, day after day: get up at six scrub the decks, wash the paint work, polish the brass, the same kind of drill and unending weekly inspections where you had to lay all your possessions in little piles on the deck. The Captain and his aides would go through them and if he found anything against regulations over the side it would go. You were probably put on report, so after a year of this it seemed that anything would be better; however, I realized with a crew of 1800 the ship had to be kept clean but it had become a drag so to speak for even on the farm that I had left a year and a half before there was something different to do each day.

So it was about May 12, 1917 I bid farewell to what had been home and friends and with twelve others went down the gangway at Norfolk, Virginia and boarded a truck with bag and baggage that took us to the train station and there boarded a train for New Orleans as a ship was supposed to be waiting for us to become her gun crew in the Armed Guard Service.

We finally arrived at New Orleans after an overnight ride on the train and had to take the street car to the ferry building; so entering the car with my heavy bag took the first seat that I found empty and was busy taking in the new sights and sounds when an old lady came down the aisle and tapped me on the shoulder and said "Young man do you realize where you are sitting?" to which I replied I was quite comfortable and then she told me I was in the colored section, and I noticed the sign "colored only" so I moved forward which was lesson number one in the South of which others were to follow.

The ferry took us across to Algiers and there we took another street car to the station just south of the town. It was a small town as was the Naval Station which contained the emigration station on one end.

When we arrived we were welcomed and told there would be a little wait as it seemed that our ship was an old one and needed some parts for the engines that were hard to get and so the delay.

We were assigned to a couple of tents and told to make ourselves at home. Well, we waited and waited with nothing to do but play cards and read. In the meantime hundreds of new recruits were coming in daily and more tents were put up for them. As soon as enough arrived they were sent to various training stations but there were always a large number present with few officers to take



care of them so someone got the idea of making us training instructors while we were waiting and from then on for six hours a day we taught the manual of arms, marching formation and various other things that we learned in boot camp.

I might state here that the Armed Guard crew consisted of a Chief Petty Officer, two rated men, a Boatswain's Mate First Class and a Gunner's Mate and ten Seamen, five for each gun. Now it was the ten Seamen that got the job of training instructors. The Petty Officers just saw that we were doing as we were told. The Chief Petty Officer had his quarters up in the barracks some way from our tents and we hardly ever saw him which was just as well as he had been Chief Master of Arms, a rating they no longer have in the service, a sort of Chief of Police in charge of the brig or jail as some would call it. Overbearing and not too well liked, one day he asked me a question and I could not answer it and ask him the answer to which he replied, "What the h--- are you doing trying to find out what I know?" which will give you some idea of what he was like. It was rumored that they sent him with our crew to get rid of him but enough of that.

The two rated men had a tent to themselves and it was not long until they were making friends with the new recruits that had money. They had dug a hole in the floor of their tent, lined it with saw dust and ice and cases of beer and who knows what else and every night there were card games going on there until it seemed like a little Las Vegas where the owners never lose.

In the meantime a couple of families of the little town of Algiers that had grown daughters took it upon themselves to make our stay as pleasant as possible as part of the war effort and there was hardly a weekend when some of us were not invited out to a chicken dinner. I have forgotten the names of these good people but remember a very good looking girl who I took to a show a couple of times who was supposed to be engaged to a service man overseas. He was sending her an allotment check each month that she was putting in the bank in her name. She told me she sent him a letter every day and as she seemed to go to a dance or party every night I got to thinking about it and ask her when she found time to write. She told me that they had very little to do where she worked in New Orleans on Saturday mornings so wrote seven letters dated for each day she mailed one. I did not trust her too much but as Kipling's poem, The Ladies goes "I learned about women from her."

Now the summer days and pleasant evenings were slipping by as we had become to know them as it had been over three months since we had arrived and finally one day the Chief came to inform us that at last our ship was ready and the next day we were taken to our new home.

At first glance there seemed to be much to be desired, as it was an old rusty tramp steamer that formerly had been under the Austrian flag but had been interned and now was being put into government service for the war. They had lined the lower after deck both walls and ceilings with two inch planks for our quarters and put in double bunks for the crew and the Chief Petty Officer had his quarters below the bridge amidship with the civilian officers.

There had been placed aboard two guns, a four-inch one forward and a three-inch one on the after deck above our quarters. They also had a machine gun on the bridge and each of us was issued a long barrel forty-five colt pistol with lots of ammunition. This of course was the beginning of the Armed Guard Service and not planned as well as later.



And so at last we were on our way down the Mississippi River and across the Gulf of Mexico to Tampa, Florida where we took on a cargo of rock phosphate to be used as fertilizer on the farms of France and headed across the Atlantic to La Rochelle, France.

The Chief now felt that this was a good time to try out our guns which were very old and proudly taken off of one of Admiral Dewey's old gun boats. We no sooner fired a few shots than the recoil spring broke on the forward gun and firing pin gave away on the after one, so there we were like sitting ducks with nothing but a machine gun and side arms to defend ourselves against the enemy. Needless to say it did not give us a very good feeling.

And by now we found out that the Stewart of the ship was promised a bonus for all he could save on the trip and though he had supplies for three months put out as little as he could get by with, the result being that most of us were more or less hungry most of the time.

Now we could not do anything about the worthless guns but getting food was a different matter and it was not long until someone found that by filing the bottom of the bolt that held the hasp under the padlock it could be slid up and the door opened without any trouble, nearly as good as having a key so every now and then someone would slip in, get a case of peaches or something else and slip the empty case under the bottom of the pile and in this way most of the crew both civilian and Naval that were in on it kept their hunger pains from bothering them. This I might say continued until we were nearly home when the Stewart was taking inventory with a picture of a big bonus in his mind and found twenty-five or more empty cases behind and under the rest of the supplies. There was quite a kado about it but I don't think it was ever proven who was in on it.

The weather continued to be nice and we kept our watches at the worthless guns thinking we might have a chance to turn the ship in time if we saw a torpedo coming our way and we finally arrived at La Rochelle, France with our convoy. I guess good fortune was with us for we saw nothing of the enemy and felt quite good about it, more so when the Captain of the port told us that just the day before a life boat had been picked up with only two men alive after a sub sank their ship and then machine gunned the life boat.

On this, our first trip, it seemed fate was good to us but the endless expectation of waiting for the enemy to strike was nerve wracking to say the least and if it weren't for the every day things that took our minds off of the business of war no doubt some of us would have cracked up so to speak.

As I have said we were all issued long barreled colts and from time to time used them not only for target practice but in play as well and it was nothing to see some of us playing cards like crazy cowboys, have the guns out on the table before us or have some call us in the morning as they shot in the planks overhead.

During this time I had a couple of run ins with the Chief Petty Officer through no fault of mine but enough to say we for some reason never got along. By now we had all found another part of the Navy that we were never told about at the training station or on board the Pennsylvania.

We enjoyed our stay at La Rochelle and found it to be a very old town partly surrounded by a medieval wall. There were many things of interest to see and the French girls saw that we were not lonely and we were sorry when it came time to say goodbye. There is an old saying that every man has two countries, his own and France. We were sorry that we could not stay longer and see if it were so.



With our guns repaired, which made us feel a bit safer, we headed home without seeing any sign of the enemy and entered New York harbor about November 1, 1917. As I look back to that old rusty tramp steamer I wonder if the Germans thought it was worth wasting a shot on if they did see it. So ended our first trip in the Armed Guard Service.

And not long after we were all transferred to the Armed Guard barracks in Brooklyn and given twenty days leave that most of us had extended to thirty after we got home.

In the few short months that we had been at war the Armed Guard Service had become a very important part of the Navy. The city park several blocks long across from the Brooklyn Navy Yard had been taken over by the government and filled with wooden barracks that were now headquarters with offices, living space and other facilities for hundreds of men no longer as volunteers but assigned from various ships as needed to man the guns; also some were signalmen and radio operators as well on all merchant ships.

This branch of the service was now in command of regular Naval officers with the same rules and regulations as on ship board. We now had nearly two thousand merchant vessels of all conditions and sizes with cruiser and destroyer escorts and one hundred subchasers and five hundred airplanes that worked spotting the enemy U boats for the greater part of the service was in the campaign against the enemy submarines.

Life was not the same as we found it in New Orleans, but there were still ways of getting by with things if you knew how, for instance shore leave was not until four-thirty when the day's work was done as on ship board but someone found a couple of pickets loose in the iron fence that surrounded the barracks that could be pushed up and used as a gate in back of one of the buildings and in the early afternoon if you knew where to look you would see one or two dressed for liberty going out this way and then replacing the pickets. As the saying went it was not what you did but what you got caught doing.

In a week or so after our leaves were up and a few changes made in the crew including a new Chief Petty Officer, we were ready for another ship and were assigned to the S. S. Paulsboro, an oil tanker owned by the Sun Oil Company of Bayonne, New Jersey. She was a nice ship with late model guns and good quarters so we thought we had a good home but it was not long after we sailed for Bristol, England with a cargo of oil that we found trouble not with the enemy but we had hitch hikers in the form of roaches. There were roaches everywhere you looked, on the walls, on the ceiling. It was nothing to see fifteen or twenty running across the mess hall ceiling as you were eating and have a couple drop down on your food and for once I realized why we were forced to keep things so clean on the Pennsylvania, our old home, and before the trip was over there were times when we wished we were on it. They no doubt got started on the trip before because of unsanitary conditions in the galley and spread all through the after part of the ship where our quarters were and in spite of all everyone tried to do they kept increasing so we had to make the best of it until we got back to the States and they fumigated the ship and repainted everything and that got rid of them to our great relief.

By now it was December and the nice weather was a thing of the past. We ran into howling gales that the North Atlantic is known for in winter as anyone who has been there will remember. At times it was so rough that the seas as high as forty feet would break over the bow of the ship making it impossible to stand watch on the forward gun station so at such times we watched from the bridge and there was always a lookout high up in the mast in what they call the crow's nest, the



roughest and coldest place to be at such times. It is said that nothing is so bad but what it could be worse and we thought it was when we got into what they called the war zone where we were met by a convoy of Naval ships who had thirty or forty merchant ships to protect for the last seven or eight hundred miles into port. Then you had to stand watches of four hours on and four hours off during which you ate and got what sleep you could and it seemed you no more than came off duty, took off your oilskins better known as rain clothes and dropped into your bunk wet or not as we never took off our clothes at this time and someone would be calling you to go back on watch again. To say the least it was a good place to lose weight. Fact of the matter I lost eighteen pounds on one trip.

We spotted one or two subs that the Naval subchasers took out after and every now and then you would get word that some ship had gone down as the German subs were now traveling in packs and like a wolf pack would wait for stragglers or some ship that got behind because of engine trouble or something.

Our ship being fairly new could make good speed and kept her position well in the formation. Once we sighted the wake of a torpedo in time to turn and have it miss us by a ship's length which was even too close.

We finally arrived in Bristol, England on December 23, 1917 and the next day all but two of us took shore leave as two men always had to stay aboard for guard duty. None of us had ever been to England and so it was a grand adventure. Bristol is an old historic town from which John Cabot sailed in 1497 to discover the mainland of North America and not long after we found ourselves in an old two-story house which was used as a U.S. Club house. There were a number of men there from the various forces and we were soon made to feel at home by the English girls who were in charge and joined in singing songs and playing games, etc. There was little food but what they had they shared with us, and that night we had fish and chips and a little fruit for supper. It being Christmas Eve we stayed up quite late and I spent the rest of the night sleeping on a pool table there being not enough cots to go around. Some slept on the floor which I am sure was no harder than where I slept. They might have gone back to the ship but it was too far to walk and the bus did not run at night.

Christmas morning it was quite late until everyone was up and around and about one o'clock we had Christmas dinner which consisted of potatoes, sausages, gravy and plum pudding. We knew we would have had a lot more if we had stayed on board ship but I don't think we would have enjoyed it any better than we did with our new found friends that Christmas Day so long ago.

The next day we saw some of the most interesting part of the city with some of the girls as guides and not long after found ourselves homeward bound again as it took only a short time to empty our cargo of oil.

We started out with the convoy but not long after headed for New York alone without any trouble except for bad weather and the never ending watching for the enemy. We got back to New York safely thus ending our second trip in the Armed Guard Service.

Sometime about the middle of February we again headed out to sea for Bristol and it was the same thing all over again--cold wet weather, unending watches and this time bad food as the civilian crew of the trip before had all quit including the stewards department and the new bunch in the Stewart's department was not what they signed up for. The so called cooks could not cook or the bakers bake, the result being the food was not fit to eat sometimes and the bread was like bricks. We complained to the Captain but it did little good as he was putting up with the same thing. Now and then one of our crew would take it upon themselves to cook something when the so called cooks were not in the galley.



We kept some of the bread and showed it to the Naval inspectors that came aboard to investigate our complaints and agreed as we did that it was not fit to eat and needless to say the food was much better next trip.

On this trip several of our men had been replaced for one reason or another and one of the replacements was an alcoholic and at times a problem. After drinking all the liquor he managed to bring aboard he thought nothing of drinking flavor extracts or anything that had alcohol in it but somehow he was always able to stand his watches. However, the Captain of the ship with whom he had several run ins called him crazy, so he said, "If the Captain thinks I am crazy I will show him that I am." and he took an old white uniform and painted it up and down with different color paint, sort of camouflage, and would then zigzag up to his post on the forward gun with the Captain watching him from the bridge above. The Captain not having any control over any of the gun crew could only express his feeling; such were some of the memories of those days gone by.

On ending the second trip on the Paulsboro she had to be laid up for repairs, etc., for about three weeks and we got a short leave of two weeks which slipped by all too quickly and not long after were on our way again with a new civilian crew including the steward's department and so things were very much improved along that line. The boys who waited on our table were from Holland and went out of their way to please us and were rewarded with a nice tip at the end of the trip.

The weather continued to be rough more or less on this, the start of our third trip. This time the convoy met us soon after leaving New York and stayed with us until we arrived in the Bristol Channel as the enemy subs were now venturing farther out in the Atlantic and there was no letting up on the everlasting search for the telltale periscope or silver streak of a torpedo that might be heading our way.

We were going to be in Bristol a little longer this time and a couple of us got four days leave from the chief to go to London which was about 118 miles east so we boarded the train about four-thirty in the afternoon and some time later as the sun was going down just before we arrived the train stopped and we watched out the window at the German planes bombing the city, a not too pleasant sight, and later on arriving got to see the results and can only repeat Sherman's remarks that war was h--- even at a distance.

On arriving at the station we were directed to the Salvation Army Doughnut Hut near Picadilly Square and there made to feel at home by new found friends who did all they could to make our visit a pleasant one. The following day I was invited to one of the young lady's homes for dinner. I had met her at the club and her family did all they could to make me welcome and after dinner we went on a sight seeing trip visiting a number of old buildings including the Tower of London and watching the changing of the palace guards and saw me to the train that I boarded soon after with memories of seeing things that I had only read about in books.

But like everything else this too had to end and we were on our way back to the States. The weather was improving somewhat and we had not heard of any ships going down lately so about half way home we again left the convoy as before thinking it was safe as we could make better time and then lo and behold a shell came streaking across our bow from a German submarine that had gotten between us and the sun so we could not see it; however, in quick order both guns were in action and our only thought was to stop it. A couple of holes were put in the ship above water line and one man who was on the fore and aft bridge from the black gang getting some fresh air was injured real bad and I heard died later. Then about that time something



hit me and down I went with a small dent in my skull and leg. How much later I came to I don't know but the guns were silent and the sub was not in sight, although I was told they saw it turn up and go down stern first. Luckily, I did not bleed too much and by the time we got in port a week later, while it hurt I did not feel like going to the Naval hospital but went to see a civilian doctor whose son was a friend of mine. I had been hit by shrapnel from their guns. We thought they were either out of torpedoes or did not think an empty ship was worth wasting one on.

We were told not to say anything about it when we went ashore, but the first thing that met our eyes was the newspaper with big headlines, "American Gun Crew Sinks German Sub."

I had been losing weight and with the head injury still bothering me it was decided that I should stay ashore for awhile and was put in charge of a barracks that contained special details such as the Armed Guard ball team and all those in the messenger service not only at the barracks but at the Navy yard and the offices in New York City, also the cooks<sup>and</sup> messmen, in all about ninety men. As I was now Boatswain's Mate Second Class, having gotten two promotions since I left the Pennsylvania, it was my job to see that these men kept the barracks clean, got up on time and at their stations when required as well as being ready for weekly inspections as on board ship.

This soon became monotonous and at times I wished I were back on board ship again, but I carried on for three or four months then the flu bug struck and about every day someone was taken to the hospital and I laughed and called them old women until one Friday I fell on my face and for over a week did not know what hit me and by the time I got out of the hospital I did not think it was so funny. Feeling worse than when I first arrived, I continued on my old job until November 11, 1918 when it seemed the whole world went crazy for joy as we got the news that the war was over.

So ended my memories of the Armed Guard Service. I know there were others that suffered a lot more than I did and went through a lot more, but as I said in the beginning I did not want to be a hero but as with the rest of the crew did what we were supposed to do and went where told.

And as I look back I feel that fate was good to me to let me live to enjoy these memories.

#### THE PROGRESS, DECEMBER 14, 1988

★ ★ ★

JOE LAFFERTY celebrated his 90th birthday a few days ago with relatives and San Jose Avenue neighbors. When the party ended he returned to his interrupted task — preparing for his 41st straight Christmas visit to Letterman Army Hospital with 150 boxes of candy, doughnuts, magazines, playing cards, pens. Some donated, but mostly paid by Lafferty himself.

But wait, you ain't heard nuthin' yet. Since his first visit to Letterman at Christmas 1948, when most of the patients were recovering from WW II wounds, Lafferty was so touched he began going to Letterman EVERY Wednesday

Signed



Joseph Lafferty

Joseph Lafferty

374 San Jose Avenue

San Francisco, CA

94110

with goodies. Then sickness and an ailing wife forced him to slow down to "only" every two weeks.

The retired construction foreman and WW I vet may not qualify for the Guinness Book of Records but he'd make any All-Year Santa list.

★ ★ ★





Lone Sailor

U.S. NAVY MEMORIAL  
Washington, D.C.



## 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.

THE U.S.N. ARMED GUARD WW II VETERANS 8TH NATIONAL REUNION WILL BE HELD JUNE 21-25, 1989 AT THE RED LION "SEATACINN", 18740 PACIFIC HIGHWAY SOUTH, SEATTLE, WA. 98188, LOCAL TELEPHONE 206-246-8600, OTHER 1-800-547-8010. PLEASE LET THEM KNOW IT'S FOR THE ARMED GUARD REUNION WHEN MAKING RESERVATIONS. YOUR HOSTESS: MADELYN RIGG, 1623 S.W. 166TH, SEATTLE, WA. 98166, 1-206-242-9293.



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