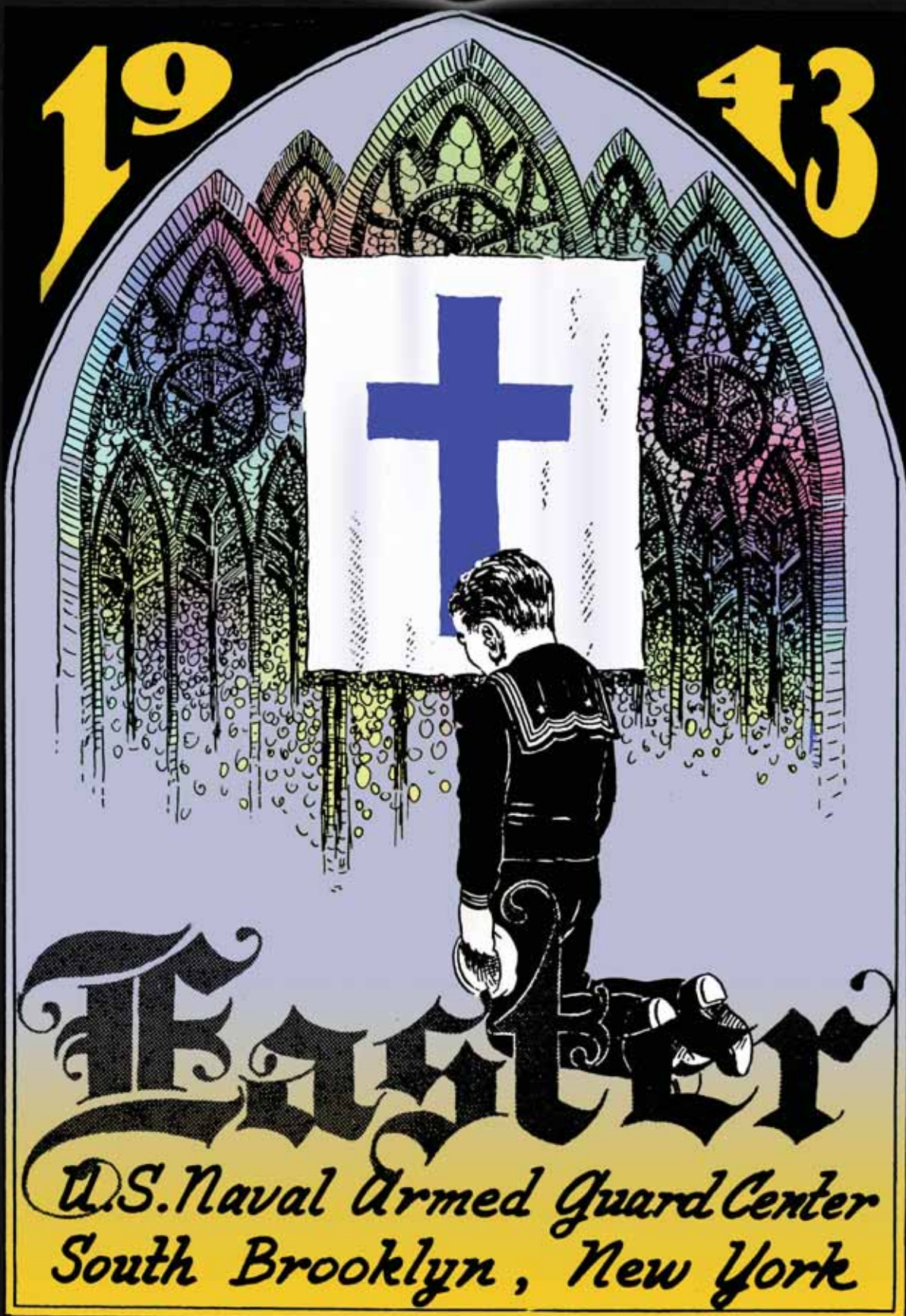


THE POINTER

19

43



FEB/APR 2009 EDITION



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10 AM - 4 PM

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Admission:

Adults \$10

Children - \$4

(3 and under) Free



****SEE FORM ON PAGE 20****



Send your donations to:

SS American Victory
705 Channelside Drive
Tampa, FL 33602

THE POINTER



Dear Armed Guard Crew,

Feb 14, 2009

I start out with this POINTER knowing you want get it before Valentine's Day. I did want to get it to you before Ground Hog Day but, it looks as if it may be Easter before it arrives. Anyway, I am glad to be around to send out another one. Good to have you, too.

First!! Corrections to Oct. 2008/Jan. 2009 POINTER. Go to Page 5 and change OHIO to KANSAS below and to the left of the photo. I knew better that Bob Dole was a former Senator from Kansas. I just didn't catch it. Page 22 story was also printed when I found out it was a hoax. Put "FICTON" under the title. I would appreciate it as it may fall into the hands of the "ENEMY"! And to those who did not get that POINTER, let me know. Thanks to all for your compliments on the POINTER and to those who donate to keep it going.

NEXT!! The REUNION IS ON!! See Page 20 for the form to fill out and send to Morris Harvey who is the Host. Send him the Check or M.O. for what you want to take part in including the bus to and from the ship if taking the cruise. Send check of \$89.00 each directly to the ship which includes Continental Breakfast and lunch plus drinks and entertainment. I do hope to sail once more with both AG and MM crew. I sailed the Lane Victory and this one is SPECIAL, too.

William Sache and Ray Didur name has been removed from the B.O.D as both have sailed on to be with those who have taken that Final Voyage. Sache was one of the first 52 in '82. He was the one who suggested that we not have dues and have strictly donations as some may not be able to pay. It is that way today.

Those of you with computers and ones with access with them through children and grand children or neighbors, go to GOOGLE and type in most anything of interest.

I heard about and typed in USS FORRESTAL CEREMONY and saw the tragedy that happened aboard ship. Type in: www.armed-guard.com and read the late Tom Bowerman's Armed Guard Web Site that is run by Ron Carlson of the Liberty Ship, the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN. Many of you said you would write your story and I never got them. Tell your experience while you can. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Officers for 2009

Charles A. Lloyd, Chairman
& Sec. Treas. 1985-2009
115 Wall Creek Drive
Rolesville, N.C. 27571
1-919-570-0909
clloyd@nc.rr.com

Ron Carlson
616 Putnam Place
Alexander, VA 22302-4018
703-549-5908

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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

*Remember, I "STILL" can't move
as fast as I did when I was in my
twenties! When you call, let the
phone ring so I can get to it! -CAL*

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

Charles,
On Page 6, Oct 2008-Jan. 2009
POINTER, top of page picturing
Myrt Van Dyke. I believe I served with
her in 1944-'46 in Ship's Company,
52nd & 2nd Ave, USN Post Office,
Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn, N.Y..
If she is the same person, her name then
was Myrtle Mae Lynch. I remember
her as being from Iowa. It would be
great if I could drop her a line for old
time's sake. Are you allowed to share
mailing addresses?

John Moulis

It all happened when I saw Myrt's
name in the POINTER. I E-Mailed
you to confirm my suspicion and I con-
tacted her and even though she did not
remember me, we were able to
exchange letters, shared photos and
briefly shared the events of our lives
during the past 64 years. Thank you
Charles for all you are doing to keep
the Armed Guard crew in touch with
each other. Myrt no longer goes by
"Stuff" anymore.

E. John Moulis
Mailman 2/C
24 Parkwood Dr., Unit 103
Augusta, Me. 04330
jjmoulis@earthlink.net

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Mr Lloyd:

I have a book contract with a major New
York publisher to write a narrative non-
fiction history on the key convoy battles
in the North Atlantic in the spring of
1943. The book is intended for both
devotees of maritime history as well as a
new generation of readers who have not
been exposed to previous historical
accounts. My goal is to locate a cross-
section of survivors and veterans from all
pertinent places in that sea fight – mer-
chant crewmen, Naval Armed Guard
personnel, officers and escort sailors, air-
men on land-based patrol aircraft and U-

PAGE 4

boat crewmen – and tell their stories. My
research to date has led me to focus on a
handful of convoys that took place on the
New York/Halifax – Liverpool route
during March-May 1943. These are:

HX229 (dep NYC March 3, arr
Liverpool March 23) • HX229A (dep
NYC March 9, arr Liverpool March 26)
• SC122 (dep NYC March 5, arr
Liverpool March 24) • HX231 (dep
NYC March 25, arr Liverpool April 10)
• ONS5 (dep Liverpool April 21, arr
Halifax May 12) • SC130 (dep NYC
May 11 arr Liverpool May 26)

Any help you could provide to inform
your fellow Merchant Marine veterans of
this project would be deeply appreciated.

Ed Offley • Military Reporter

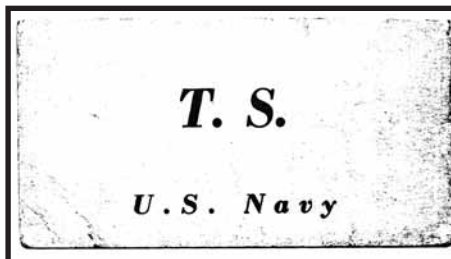
21200 S. Lakeview Dr.

Panama City Beach FL 32413-3419

Email: ed_offley@yahoo.com

850-774-6585 cell phone

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Dear C.A.,

In 1944, in a P.E. class playing football,
I broke my arm and they made a cast
for it. With my arm in a sling, I was
going through the cafeteria line at
Great Lakes and near the end of the
line; someone dropped the enclosed
card in my tray. Six weeks later, when
the cast was to come off, The "Meat
Wagon" driver drove me and another
guy to the Green Bay side of Great
Lakes. When we got to the hospital to
check in, they asked why the other guy
was there. "Scarlet Fever", was the
answer. Needless to say, I was
EXPOSED, so back in the hospital---
-----with scarlet fever.

Homer Lemke
4525 NW Kaneeta Dr.
Portland, Or. 97229-3040.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Bro Lloyd,

I haven't heard from any Armed Guard
lately except Carl Sides of Opelika,
Al.. Both, he and his wife are both in a
CARE HOME. We write to each
other about once a month. He, like
myself, was reared on a farm during the
"Depression Days" and have some
interesting tales to tell. C.A., if you
know anything about farm life, you
should know what a "SHINBUSTER"
is. It's when you trying to plow in
Georgia or N.C. in a "new ground"
with a hard headed horse or mule that
won't stop when you say "WHOA"
when you hit a deep root and the root
pops out of the ground and busts your
shin!! It hurts like heck and that's what
you call a "SHIN BUSTER" and it
hurts for months!! Lloyd, I see a lot of
things in the POINTER you send out
that brings back a lot of memories. For
instance, in one POINTER was a pic-
ture of a sailor at "PARADE REST".

My first trip overseas was on the S.S.
ALCOA PATRIOT, a 9-month
"cruise" into all 3-campaign areas.
After a Port Director 4 day pass, some
of the Armed Guard crew wanted to
ship out again together but those at the
AGC split us up. Some of us got mad
but it did no good. I was stationed on
watch and given "1903" Springfield
with a bayonet and put

at a large door in 1943 that faced the
street with a sign stating, "CLOSED"
with orders that no one enters after
1630 hours. About 1700, a big black
car with a blue flag with two white
stars stopped at the door and started
inside. He insisted to let him enter. He
went back to the car and came back and
tried to enter again. I refused to let him
in. In another POINTER showed a
Civie; a sailor and a navy officer at an

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

outdoor "Privy" known to us as the NAVY HEAD. The officer was my gunnery officer on the S.S. GLENN CURTIS from Port Said, Egypt Tinnian Island. Merry Christmas.

John T. Laster
6040 Blackhawk Trl SE
Mableton, Ga. 30126

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Lloyd,
Thank you for providing many stories of the Armed Guard to my dad, of which, I was able to read also. They have given me a chance to talk to my dad about his time and adventures in the Navy during the WW II. I always thought I appreciated the efforts and sacrifices of our servicemen of WW II, as well as the other wars, but listening to the stories first hand from my dad gave me an even greater appreciation for the sacrifices made by so many. My family and I wish you and all a MERRY CHRISTMAS and a HAPPY NEW YEAR and a BIG THANK YOU for all you and other veterans has done for us. God Bless.

Jim and Lisa Socha and family, 3055
Hidden Forest Ct. Green Bay, Wi. 54313
920-662-0075

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Charles,
Many "THANKS" for the correspondence from you. It is always heartening to hear from people who have a genuine concern for the preservation of "Historical Memory" of WW II as it is a contrast to current political and media-driven agendas. I continue to appreciate receiving copies of your POINTER magazine, as do many research visitors here who read through it on their lunch breaks! With best wishes.

Stephen Walton-(Archivist) Dept. of Documents, Imperial War Museum, Duxford, Cambridgeshire, CB22 4QR
01223-499346 swalton@iwm.org.uk

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear C.A.,
Enclosed is a picture of some of our Rudy Kozak Chapter as we placed a wreath on Rudy's grave. We participated in the program of WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA on Dec. 19, '08

At the BUSHNELL NATIONAL CEMETARY. There were 900 wreaths placed on graves there that day. Hope to see you in Tampa at the Reunion.

Richard McCamy, (MM) 26002
Zinnia Ln., Astatula, Fl. 34705

These 3 photos are in Honor of the late Rudy Kozak (AG) for his dedicated service who for years, along with Ellie, filled orders for Jackets, Caps, Etc. and organized the Florida Crews. Rudy was a great help to the Armed Guard WW II Veterans and Ellie and Rudy were the hosts for the April 1994 Orlando, Fl. reunion at the Clarion Hotel. I thought it was great to be so honored by his shipmates in Florida. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Charles, Jan.6.2009
Thank you for your phone call. I never expected to hear from you personally. I did find another copy of the POINTER from 1943 Armed Guard Center, Brooklyn, N.Y. and I found my name in it. I am sending you another copy. My wife and I are not able to attend any more reunions. So Sorry.

Enclosed is some ORIGINAL POINTERS that I promised you plus some other material I was able to locate. Since I moved from New York, I am still opening boxes. Note the original letter from Commander Coakley about the ARMED GUARD. I am 92 years old now. Again, Thank you for the phone call and I hope you can use the material.

Vincent W. Alones,
5200 Wedgewood Rd,
Lynchburg, Va. 24503-4210 Ph.
434-384-3356



LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

CHINESE LIBERTY SHIP FIRST TO DOCK HERE

Chung Shan Completes Voyage
Around the World.

Philadelphia has been visited by the Liberty ship Chung Shan, first merchant vessel carrying the Chinese Republic flag ever to stop here, the War Shipping Administration announced today.

The vessel came here after a maiden voyage around the world. She was built by the Kaiser shipyard at Richmond, Cal., and turned over to China Defense Supplies, Inc.

She has American officers and a Chinese crew. Her captain, J. F. Elb, is a veteran of the sea, according to R. W. Bruce, of the American President Lines, Inc., operators of the ship.

The Chung Shan is the first of America's wartime vessels to be assigned to the Chinese, the WSA said.

Thanks Vince. I will use as much of the POINTERS and material in future POINTERS as I can and credit will be given to you. As I read through them, I saw a lot of names of ones we had located but are now on their Final Voyage. It has been an honor to have crossed paths with such wonderful people and everyone's heroes.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Charlie,

We left Frisco on the S.S. CHUNG SHAN to New Zealand, then to India. Our cargo was 2 holds of mustard gas, mail for GIs in Europe and 24 Chinese Pilots plus other cargo in the holds with fighter planes on deck. We loaded up with ore in India and came back through the Suez Canal and then to

Baltimore. I hope you can use the picture of the crew. I am 91 years old and my health is good. Thanks.
Calvin H. Friedel

5190 Boyce Rd., Seaford, DE. 19973

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hi Charles,

I always look forward to getting the POINTER. I am 85 now and it makes me think of the days in the Armed Guard. I was taking my training at Little Creek, Va. when the war broke out. I served on 5 ships and made 3 trips to Russia, first was to Murmansk. I was 17 on my first trip. Keep up the great work. Donation enclosed.

John Savage, 296 03 09

PO Box 1485,

Smyrna, Tn. 37167-008

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

NAVY ARMED GUARD GUN CREW-S. S. CHUNG SHAN 1944



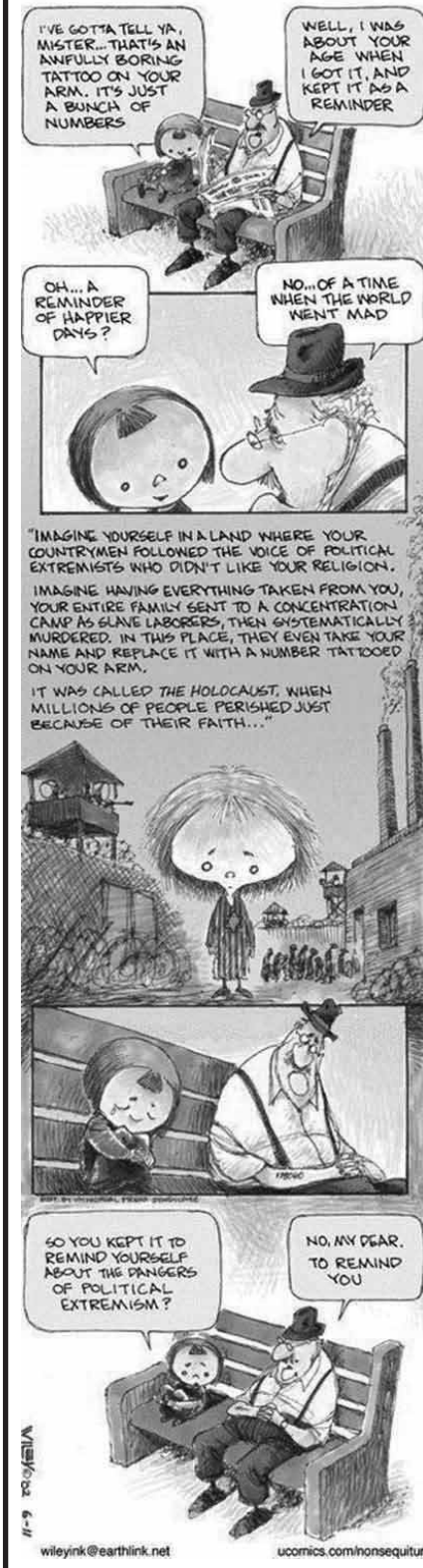
L TO R FRONT: THOMPSON; SMITH; PEDERSON; HENDRICKS; AVANT; HAY; WILCOX; HOWE.

L TO R CENTER: ERLANDSSON; ALLEN; NYSETH; VOLK; SCOTT; HOSTETTER; MULLEN; FRIEDEL

L TO R BACK: BAER; WELTMER; BATES; ZEIGLMEIR; GAMBLE; GARDNER; LIBBY; SIMS.

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

NON SEQUITUR BY WILEY



It is now more than 60 years after the Second World War in Europe ended This e-mail is being sent as a memorial chain, in memory of the six million



Jews, 20 million Russians, 10 million Christians and 1,900 Catholic priests who were murdered, massacred, raped, burned, starved and humiliated with the German and Russian Peoples looking the other way! Now, more than ever, with Iraq, Iran, and others, claiming the Holocaust to be 'a myth,' it's imperative to make sure the world never forgets, because there are others who would like to do it again.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Charles,
I have enclosed my annual donation to be used as you see fit. I enjoy the POINTER and staying up on activities. THANKS! A small favor if you will. On my recent visit to the hospital, I neglected to bring my most recent POINTER home with me Christmas Day and if you have one leftover laying around, send it to me. During WW II, I served as a SM3/C on the S/S/ APPOMATTOX 3/44-4/44; S.S WAGON BOX 4/44-8/44; S.S. DANIEL WILLARD 8/44-5/45; USS FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE 9/45-10/45 and duty in Japan 10/45-4/46. I made two trips to Russia on the S.S. DAN WILLARD, so I like to read about how lucky we were to have survived the ordeals. Thanks again to all who helps.
Albert Midgley

929 Shaker Rd. Unit D-10
Westfield, Ma. 01085 413-562-9580

(Thanks, Al. I used your short letter and ships to show how fast the crew shipped out on another run.) cal

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Cal,
Received the great POINTER today and Thanks. I will read every word. We left the big City of Grand Rapids, Mi. about 5 years ago after 38 years on the Police Force. The reunions we did attend will always be remembered. We show our video tape we made of the San Francisco, Ca. Reunion in 1986 quite often. Thank you and Hilda for what you have done for me and the rest of the Armed Guard Crew. I served on the Liberty Ship The S.S. William H. Prescott 44/45 and the USS Volans (AKS-9) in the Pacific. God Bless all.

Samuel R. Johnston 50 Powell Dr.,
Hastings Mi. 49058 269-945-1576

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Charles,
Wishing you, Hilda and the family and all the Armed Guard a good and healthy NEW YEAR. I believe the Good Lord has reasons for us still liv-

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...



ing on this earth. Of course, we will know why. Thank you for the POINT-ER. This sure keeps us united like a big family. The bond is strong. God Bless us all. Take care of yourself and Hilda. We need you. ANCHORS AWEIGH!!

Arthur Fieitas
147 Clarendon St.
N. Dartmouth, Ma. 02747

Thanks Art. I am glad to do what I do for the crew. Meeting people like you and all the others through the years at reunions has been a pleasure. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hi Charles,
I am sending you a donation plus a post card from Camp Shelton, Va. dated Jan. 18, 1944. In June of 1944, I was in Valetta, Malta with a load of wheat and flour we had loaded at Jersey City, N.J. on board the S.S. ANDREW PICKENS. It took them 2 weeks to unload the ship. Your navy friend,
Roy A. Wolfe,
1414 Peterson Ave.,
Janesville, Wi. 53548



Thanks Wolfe. See the photo similarity to the Eagle that R.E. Fitz 34 Sunnydale Ave. Bristol, Ct. 06010 carved out. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Sir -
I am a retired USN officer whose dad was an Armed Guard (OinC) during WW2. Dad "signed non" with the Navy immediately after Pearl Harbor and went to OCS for the 90-day "short course." I believe he rode about half a dozen MERSHIPS before moving to the Pacific Theater of Operations in 1944. SS ALCOA POLARIS was one of Dad's hosts and he reminisced warmly about the ship and fine crew. He sailed on T2 tankers from Texas to Aruba and in other ships between Halifax and the UK. He had reported to the master of a freighter (which name I cannot locate in Dad's records) for a trip to the Persian Gulf when his orders were changed suddenly and he was ordered to subchaser school. The vessel and Dad's replacement were lost to a U-boat in the Gulf of Aden.

I have written a novel about the Armed Guard in remembrance of my dad and the outstanding men and officers who risked everything to protect convoys. Dad never won assignment to Russia,

but I know the Barents Sea quite well, having sailed in it and the Norwegian Sea often in the course of my duties. My work describes convoy AG operations in war. "Armed Guard: War in the North Atlantic, Winter 1943" is dedicated to every brave seaman who wrote a blank check to democratic institutions, payable in full with the life of the signator.

I would be interested to know if any member of your organization would like to have a look at the manuscript? FYI, I spent almost 33 years active duty in the Navy, starting as Seaman Recruit and rising to CAPT. I was a cryptologist ("code breaker") all that time with sea duty in the Atlantic, in the Med and Black Seas, in the Baltic and Caribbean areas. I served in heavy cruisers, missile frigates, fast attack subs, and in four aircraft carriers. I also flew with a Fleet Reconnaissance Squadron and had numerous Washington DC tours. I speak German, Polish, Russian and some Spanish - and stumble along in English. On July 4, 2008 I had published a volume of patriotic and military verse; the book "To the Flag" is listed in Amazon.com. Because I know what AG did and also because I am very familiar with the geography, I respect you brave seamen - and would

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...



Crew on the S.S. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON June 4, 1943

Photo by: Tony Georginna, 1546 Williamsburg Cir. Medford, Or 97501

1.Harold R.John,Jr. Ca.; 2.Santaigo Alvarz, C.; 3.Johnnie Crandall, Unk. 4.James Haack,Il.;5.Edmond Perry,Ca.; 6.Garald Bartz, Ca.; 7.Theor Cady,Co.; 8.Robt.Gilbert,Co.; 9.Rayford Merchant,Ok.; 10.Tony Georginna,Or.; 11.Robt.Forsburg, Ca.; 12.Ralph Belcher, Ky.; 13.Adolph Agvayo, Ca.; 14.John Kozij, RI.; 15.Tom Parker, Tx.; 16. James Balwin,Ca.; 17. Frank Castaldo,Cal.

Ones underlined are only one located

Photo of S.S. WILLIAM LLOYD GARRISON June 4, 1943 in the South Pacific and sent in by Tony Georgianna, 1546 Williamsburg, St., Medford, Oregon.

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

FILIPINO VETERANS IN LINE TO EARN WWIL BENEFITS

By ELIZABETH LLORENTE MCCLATCHY NEWSPAPERS HACKENSACK, N.J.--

(From the Las Vegas Review Journal, dated 2-17-09)

President Barack Obama's signature today on the stimulus bill will grant Filipino World War II veterans long-awaited recognition and compensation for their service alongside U.S. forces against the Japanese.

The measure calls for a one-time lump sum payment of \$15,000 for Filipino veterans who are U.S. citizens and \$9,000 for non-citizens. It sets aside \$198 million for the veterans. And, in what many Filipino-American groups say is more important, it recognizes the role they played defending the U.S. flag in the war. "The recognition is the most important," said Jose Red, an 84-year-old veteran who lives in Jersey City, N.J. "We've been working for the recognition for a long, long time." Recognition as full-fledged World War II vets was promised to the Filipinos when they were conscripted into the U.S. Army, with the understanding they would receive the same benefits as U.S. veterans. After the war ended, Congress stripped them of their status and rights to many benefits.

"It felt like being told you're a nobody," Red said. "We felt insulted," he said. "We fought side by side with American soldiers."

Of the 200,000 Filipinos who fought alongside U.S. soldiers, fewer than 18,000 are alive today. Some 6,000 are thought to be living in the United States, while the rest live overseas, mostly in the Philippines. Like many measures in the stimulus bill, this one was opposed by congressional members and others who said it does nothing to create jobs or help the U.S. economy.

Sen. Daniel Inouye, a Hawaii Democrat who was the main force behind inclusion of the bid, conceded on the Senate floor that the Filipino compensation measure "doesn't create jobs." But he added, "The honor of the United States, that's what's involved."

Filipino-Americans who for years pushed for a measure that would provide both compensation and recognition argued that the provision in the stimulus bill does not allocate new money to the veterans, but rather releases funds that had been set aside in an appropriations bill last year.

"This is not new spending," said Eric Lachica, whose late father was a World War II veteran and who is a volunteer coordinator for American Coalition for Filipino Veterans Inc. "It authorizes the release of the money."

Ludi Hughes, whose father died in 1958 and fought in the war, said she was relieved to see the measure pass, though she also sympathized with those who questioned its inclusion in the stimulus bill. "It doesn't really help the U.S. economy, and as an American, I understand why people would see it as wrong to make it part of the stimulus bill," Hughes said. "But as a Filipino-American, I feel it's about time that these veterans get the compensation and recognition that they've waited so long to get. It's been more than 60 years. It's too long. There aren't even many of them left to get this help." The provision calls for benefits to be available to such veterans during a one-year period from the date of enactment.

be honored to share my draft novel with you. Warm regards. I can be reached at:

Steve Myers,
537 S. Juliana St.
Bedford, Pa. 15522-1831
Tel.814-623-8654
danzig6@comcast.net

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

WWII Filipino veterans

The article below explains how the recently signed stimulus bill will grant Filipino World War II veterans long-awaited recognition and compensation for their service. This is a nice benefit for the Filipino veterans, however it appears that we, Merchant Marine veterans of WWII, have been overlooked, again.

PAGE 10

See article ABOVE.

Mike Cangelosi
Past-president of the American
Merchant Marine Veterans
Las Vegas Hi-Rollers Chapter

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Mr. Lloyd,
Murmansk, Russia 1/20/2009

Thank you so very much for your warm Christmas greetings and a copy of the POINTER magazine. We do hope you spent a wonderful Christmas. We have heard there are unusual frosts in the European countries. In Murmansk, the temperature was +6 degree C on December 30, 2008. There was no snow at all. On New Year's Eve, the snowstorm started and lasted for a week. (Many if you who were in

Murmansk during WW II know what their winters are like. "CAL")

A local TV journalist has visited our museum and they are planning to make a documentary dedicated to the Arctic Convoy's history and people who travelled in them. They have asked us for help because in our museum, there are documents, photos, letters that can't be found in other museums. Our guides will tell viewers about the convoys, veterans and the museum activities. The film will be shown on local TV. We correspond to a Mr. Edwards who lives on the Island of Jersey. He publishes the magazine, "H.M.S. LAPWING ASSOCIATION". He is going to devote a "SPECIAL" issue to our museum and to our pupil's activities. We are sending our kindest wishes for the year 2009. We hope the New Year

LETTERS FROM THE CREW...

will bring you and the family and Armed Guard, health, happiness and all that you wish for. Take care. God Bless you.

Yekaterina and the pupils,
15 Ivchenko Str.
Murmansk, Russia 183034

Those of you who were in the area should take time to write Yekaterina and the pupils and tell your story while you can. It is one way of letting future people who visit the museum know you were there. (CAL)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hello Charles from the Armed Guard Delaware Valley Chapter.

Just a few lines to let you know that we are down to 30 members at our meetings now. Most are "OLD TIMERS" like Bob Berghaier from Philly, Clint Barr from Easton who comes a long way to be with us. Quite a few come with their wives who drive for them and many have canes, walkers—but they come to the meeting no matter how far or how bad the weather. Our Congressman, Pat Murphy, sends a speaker to our meeting each month and that is a great help. I had a call from a reporter at the Trenton Times and she wanted a story on the Armed Guard and some of us met with her and I have included the writeup from the paper as a tribute to the late Armed Guard Pete Burke, a wonderful WW II Veteran. I will continue on to the last man or woman is standing. We have one wave, Mabel Billings from Newton, Pa. who attends.

Pete Cugasi-WW II/Korean
55 Indian Red Rd.
Levittown, Pa. 19057 215-547-2450

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

CORRECTION!! From last Pointer...

ALL OLD SALTS! Now hear this: US Navy Armed Guard: You have earned an award from the USA. This award is granted to you by Congress (House and Senate) and signed by the President. It is not a Presidential Award, but it has just as much power since it is a Congressional Award. It is issued to you under Section 534 of Public Law No.105-261. To receive your award certificate, you must contact your Congressman, and he or she can get it for you. Be sure to have your Congressman put "Section 534 of Public Law No.105-261" on the bottom of your certificate.

Lyle N. Kell, Chaplain
2821-180th St NE
Marysville, Wa. 98271
360-652-1884 Home
and 425-327-0392
LNK@wavecable.com
Any Questions-Contact Kell

Sorry for the inconvenience. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Sir,

I am a Danish author, writing a book about the ship, S.S. LARS KRUSE, which was among a lot of merchant ships lost in the bombing of Bari, Italy harbor on December 2, 1943. I wonder if you have and "eyewitness-reports" from an Armed Guard on an American ship that was there at the time; or, maybe you can point me to any such reports. I have all the books about the disaster. (Henrik Kruger.)

Kruger, I have located over 20 so far on ships that were there. Most have sailed on to Eternity. It is great to know someone out there who is still interested in WW II, especially the Bari tragedy. How did you know how to contact me.(cal)

Mr. Lloyd, Thank you for your response. S.S. LARS KRUSE was hit and sunk during the bombing, and 18 members of the crew died. The 16 ships you listed were not all of them there. There were a total of 41 ships there. I found your name on the POINTER Web Site.

Henrik Kruger, hense65@msn.com

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

I was about to go to press with the POINTER when I received an E-Mail from Kelly Shute from N.J. that she had gotten word from Al McCann from Merrimack, NH that AG Joseph Byk from Manchester RI was killed when a gas explosion in his home It tore his home apart about 3 A.M on Feb. 24, 2009. Gerald Greaves E-Mailed me the TV news reported of the scene of the home. I went to his name in the computer to delete his name and I saw his daughter Judy's telephone number he had given me some years ago. I called her to extend our condolences and she was very appreciative as all was lost in the fire that followed and I have placed Judy in her dad's place in the computer to continue sending her the POINTER. I sent her many back POINTERS for her family. He served on the S.S. JOSEPH A. BROWN 43/44 and the PC 1172 in 1945. Judy said he had wanted her to make reservations for the Tampa Reunion. I know he had said he would see me there. So sad. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



REUNIONS

PLEASE NOTICE!! MANY ADDRESSES, TEL.#, E-MAILS, Etc.

may change anytime so it's up to you to find out!

REGIONAL---MINI-REUNIONS ---GET-TOGETHERS-- MEMORIALS, ETC

SUPPORT THESE LOCAL MEETINGS

NOTICE: ANY CHANGES or additionals will be in the next POINTER IF NOTIFIED.

If still holding meeting,

Write down , Or E-mail WHERE-WHEN-HOSTS as I deleted my list in error.

Include address-Tel-E-Mail if available

ANNOUNCE this Correction from Oct/Jan POINTER at Texas Reunion.

The Pittsburgh, Pa. Chapter has folded according to Hilary and Dorothy Makowski who have been the Hosts for 20 years or more. Thank you both for your dedication to the crew. You have made many happy. (calloyd)

The Armed Guard Cleveland, Ohio Chapter holds their meetings at DENNY'S W150th Exit off I-71 4331 West 150th St. Cleveland. Contact Bill Joyce. 2817 Shakespeare Ln., Avon, Oh. 44011 440-937-6487 bjjj@eeriecoast.com See their story in this POINTER. Located 4 more AG.

W.VA AG/MM Mini-Reunion will be held again Saturday Sept. 26, 2009 at the Ranch House Restaurant RT 55 Craigsville, WV. 304-742-6117 Contact: Forrest Flanagan, P.O.Box 119, Craigsville, WV. 26205 304-742-3160 or Robert Wheeler, 203 Hunt Ave., Beckley, WV. 25801 304-255-0879 They had their largest crew in 2008. Lodging will be at the Comfort Inn, Summerville 1-800-228-5150.

The NJ Pinelands Armed Guard Crew are still active and still meet at THE CAPTAINS INN Forked River, NJ. They still get about 30 at their meeting and they extend an open invitation to all AG and their ladies to have dinner at the NJ seashore where they say the food is good and reasonable. Host is Bill Wilkie, PO BOX 548, Manahawkin, NJ 08050 609-597-2946 Wilfrosty@aol.com

SUNCOAST AG/MM WW II Veterans still meet at Kally K's3383 US

19 Springhill Fl at 1130 hrs 2ND Sat of Month except Dec. when they exchange gifts at China First in Crystal River..Host: Hal Conn, 6625 W Seven Rivers Dr., Crystal River, Fl. 34429 352-795-6257 halconn@xtalwind.net

The Merchant Marine will hold their 23rd Annual Reunion at the Doubletree Hotel, Tampa Fl. May 14-18, 2009.Contact: Morris Harvey 8055 Dacca Terr., Dunellon, Fl. 34433 352-564-0267 morrisharvey27@yahoo.com They have invited all Armed Guard to attend as they have programs set up for both crews. Their Convention Fees does not apply to the AG.

AG, fill out forms or just send in the things you care to attend and send to them. I will be there. Make your own Hotel room reservations. Also pay ship directly for sailing. (cal)

11/Wi LUNCHEON for 2009 will be at NOON in the Sturtevant/Driftwood Restaurant on: Feb.10; April 21; June 9, August 11 and Nov. 17. Hosts are Jane and Jay Wilfong 13211 Durand Ave., Sturtevant, Wi., 53117 262-886-2966 WILDFONGJ@cs.com

Southwest Virginia Chapter of AG/MM plan to continue meeting in 2009 at the famous ANTHONY'S on the 2nd Friday of each month. Contact Rocky (MM) Rhodes 5390 Merriman Rd SW, Roanoke, Va. 24018 540-772-7212 rockyr2@cox.net

The Lansing, Mi. Armed Guard 2009 MEETINGS: Mar. 18 and June 17 at the OLD COUNTRY BUFFET,

Okemos and again on Sept 16 with a place to be announced later. Contact Carl Mescher 508 Wayland, East Lansing, Mi.. Their meeting at the Flegel Farm in Sept 2008 was a great success with Bob Applegate, a survivor of the S.S. JEAN NICOLE sinking and he told them of being taken prisoner by the Japanese.

The San Antonio, Tx. Chapter of the Navy Armed Guard WW II Veterans ended their meetings Feb. 21, 2009 as it now stands unless someone steps forward to be the Host. If so, it will be announced in a future POINTER. I would like to THANK Dan and Liz Mock for their dedicated service over the years in keeping them together. Age, aches and pains is taking it's toll as traveling begins to take it's toll, also.

The Victoria, Texas hold their monthly meeting at RAMSEY'S IN VICTORIA hosted by Norman Neureuther, 4507 N. John Stockbauer #13, Victoria, Tx. 77904 361-578-7900 n-jneureuther@global.net All welcomed!!

The Rochester, NY area Armed Guard/Merchant Marine meet at JAY'S DINER. 2612 W. Henrietta Rd. Rochester, NY 424-3710. Host John Shevlin 37 Winfield Rd., Rochester, NY 14622 585-467-2057 who says he is assisted by AG Walter Mace 585-394-7165; MM Frank Hutter, 585-473-8103 and Joan Lucci 585-388-0576. They are a lot of help since John's wife Mary, of 61 years, passed on to a better place, 10/29/08.

DESA (Destroyer Escort Assoc.) will hold their 2009 Convention at the

REUNIONS

Crown Plaza Hotel, Old Town, Alexandria, Va. @ \$99 Sept. 10 -14, 2009. Contact: Dori Glaser, P.O. Box 3448, Deland, Fl. 32721 386-738-6900 with a Memorial Service at the Navy Memorial on Pennsylvania Ave.. All Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen have been invited to attend and share the comradry together. Many have never been able to see the Sites such as the Navy Memorial, World War II Memorial and many other sites there. Contact Tom Kidd 3636 Chipshot Ct., N. Ft. Myers, Fl. 33917 tlk3636@juno.com if you can't get Dori.

USN CRUISER ASSOC. National Reunion will be held May 17-22, 2009 at the Millennium Airport Hotel, Buffalo, N.Y. xContact: Robt. Polanowski 5996 Country Rd. 16, Belfast, N.Y. 14711 585-365-2316 skica130@aol.com

Albany, NY Area Armed Guard and Merchant Marine meet the 4th Thursday of Month at the SCHUYLER INN, 545 Broadway, Menands, NY at 11:30 AM. Hosts are Art and Marion Fazzone, 3936 Albany St., Schenectady, N.Y. 12304-4371. 518-374-5377 Mamoon3@aol.com and Peter Falasco, 49 Monroe Ave. Latham, NY 1-512-785-7890.

THE BUCKLEY, WA. Contact: Hank and Sandy Harrison 27014 Lower Burnett Rd., E. Buckley, 98321 360-897-9381. Bng75@aol.com They still meet 2nd Wed. of each mo. at 12 noon at ELMER'S 7427 Hosmer, Tacoma, Wa. 98408-1220 253-473-0855.

LST CREW CONTACT: Linda Gunjak, 6641 Spring Beauty Ct. Curtice, Oh. 43412 1-800-228-5870 E-Mail: uslst@uslst.org Web Site. www.uslst.org Linda's husband, Mike passed away 2/13/09. He was President of the LST ASSOC.

Topeka, Ks. Area ARMED GUARD AND MERCHANT MARINE meet on the "FIRST THURSDAY" of EACH MONTH at 8:30 A.M. at the AMERICAN GRILL on Gage St. with DON

Gleason, 2405 NW CROSS ST, Topeka, Ks. 66606-2401 785-234-6087 as Host Hmgleason@aol.com Contact the following Historical Ships for sailing dates.

S.S.JEREMIAH O'BRIEN, PIER 45, Fisherman's Wharf, SAN FRANCISCO, CA 415-544-0100. www.ssjeremiaho-brien.org Mngr. Elizabeth Anderson list NEW Administrative Office address: 1275 Columbus Ave. Suite 300, San Francisco, Ca. 94133 Cruises May 23; July 18; Aug 22, 2009 \$100. ppd.

Traditional Fleet Week/Blue Angels Aerial Show with all day Cruises Oct. 10 & 11, 2009 @ \$150. ppd.

S.S. JOHN W. Brown Box 25846 Highland Station Baltimore, Md. 21224 410-558-0646 john.w.brown@usa.net

S.S.LANE VICTORY BERTH 94, P O BOX 629 SAN PEDRO, CA. 90733-0629 Tel. 310-519-9545 www.lanevictory.org . They support the ship with summer cruises off Catalina Island in memory of Merchant Marine and Naval Armed Guard lost at sea during time at war. S.S.AMERICAN VICTORY 705 Channelside Dr., Tampa, Fl. 33609 813-228-8769 (MM sailing date 5/16/09-AG welcomed)

S.S. AMERICAN Victory will hold their SPECIAL SAILING CRUISE for the MM/AG WW II in Tampa, Fl. MAY 16, 2009. Get your \$89. to them before April 1.

The "RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER" of AG will hold their next NOON luncheon meeting at BUGABOO OF WAR-

WICK, RI., 4/2/2009, at noon. Bugaboo of Warwick is next door to Bickfords; turn in the same driveway and up the hill. REASON FOR SUDDEN RESTAURANT CHANGE IS THAT BICKFORDS CLOSED COMPLETELY. Contact Gerry Greaves 1287 S. Broadway. E. Providence, R.I. 02914 401-431-0011 USNAG@aol.com They will decide then of their next meeting date.

The AMMV-WW II Mid-Columbia Chapter of MM/AG Veterans which includes the East Side of the State of Washington, Western Idaho and NE Oregon meets every Month on the 2nd Wed. at Clover Island Inn, Kennewick, Wa. at Noon. Contact Robert Caudle, 1020 S Conway St., Kennewick, Wa 99337 Ph or Fax-509-586-1418 Caubleje@charter.net

The PATROL CRAFT SAILORS 11610 Paso Robles Ave., Granada Hills, Ca. 91344 will hold their Reunion May 27-31, 2009 at the Holiday Inn Tropicana Riverwalk, Hotel, 110 Lexington Ave., San Antonio, Tx. 7805 210-223-9461, Contact: Armed Forces Reunion, Inc., 322 Madison Mews, Norfolk, Va. 23510 ATTN:PCSA (Cutoff Date 4/24/09)

The Richmond, Va. AG/MM Chapter meets the 2nd Sat. at Piccadilly Cafeteria, 8004 W. Broad St at NOON. Contact: AG Ken Yeomans 1912 Sweetwater Ln., Richmond, Va. 23229 804-270-6027 or Wayte Huffer MM 3102 Aqua Ct., Richmond 23230 804-262-6710.

**Gun Crew on the
S.S. HUGH
WILLIAMSON
October 1943 -
October 1944**



THERE ARE NO ORDINARY LIVES

Over breakfast, sailors share memories of battle Endured plane, boat, sub attacks on transport missions

Brian Albrecht Byline
Plain Dealer Reporter

"There are no ordinary lives," Ken Burns said of those who served in a global cataclysm so momentous that the filmmaker titled his 2007 documentary simply "The War." Many who served in so many different ways during World War II are gone now. Some took their stories with them. But not this one.

The Denny's banquet room should have smelled like breakfast. Instead, the aroma of cordite and canvas, wet steel and salty seas seemed to hang in the air as nearly a dozen old sailors gathered for their monthly menu of memories served over-easy, with a side of humor and horror. During World War II they were members of the Navy's Armed Guard, manning the guns on merchant ships that ferried men and supplies to battlefields abroad, often while running a gantlet of enemy airplanes, boats and submarines. By war's end, 144,900 Armed Guard sailors had served on 6,236 ships. Some 700 of those ships were sunk, and more than 3,000 Armed Guardsmen were killed or wounded. But they had helped deliver an estimated 268 million tons of cargo and more than 7 million military personnel.

They played their role long ago in far-away locales that many never would have dreamed of ever seeing before the war. But nowadays, both those distant times and places can be readily recalled with a mug of hot Joe and the right breakfast buddy. Their hats bore the names of ships or destinations such as Murmansk or Archangel - ports for the deadly Arctic convoys to Russia. A slice of toast could inspire stories of bug-riddled bread, a stained cuff evoke memories of sea-washing clothes by dragging them off the stern. And there were quiet, somber moments nestled between the

thud of mugs and clanking silverware as the old sailors remembered crippled ships and seamen left behind because the convoys couldn't stop to pick up survivors. The Armed Guard fought the extremes of weather, the boredom of long voyages and the terror of sudden enemy attacks. They were assigned in 27-man crews per ship, handling assorted anti-aircraft and anti-submarine weaponry, or communications gear.

Before they gave merchant ships a fighting chance, starting in 1941, civilian crews mounted lengths of telephone poles as ersatz deck guns in an effort to fool the enemy. Many of the Armed Guard had never sailed an ocean before. Former signalman Emery Brandich, 83, of Euclid, recalled that initially "I was up on the bridge, heaving and seasick, every day for the first six weeks. Then, it was perfect, just heaven." (So much so that he and his wife went on several cruises after the war.) When the seas got rough, so did life aboard ship. Even the basics, like eating, became a chore. "You had to hang on to your plate when the ship got to rocking and rolling," recalled Ray Hammon, 83, of Windsor. Bill Joyce, 84, of Avon, said that when war broke out, his father, a World War I Army vet, called all six of his boys together and told them to enlist in the Navy - where the food was regular and you didn't sleep in a muddy foxhole.

"Join the Navy and see the world," the recruiting posters promised. "And I really did. The Atlantic, Pacific, Mediterranean and eight countries," Joyce said. He served on four ships and participated in two invasions (Normandy and Okinawa). He weathered typhoons and the threat of kamikaze attacks. Saw the grim flash of a fuel tanker exploding just over the horizon.

But never worried. "Hey, if it's going to happen, it'll happen. I didn't see anybody concerned about it," he said. "Young and dumb, I guess." Mack Paynter, 83, of Lorain, had the same attitude right up to the day his ship was torpedoed and sunk

off the South Carolina coast. Afterward, on subsequent voyages, he looked closer at everything. "When you'd see a bird in the water, you wanted to make sure it was a bird and not a [submarine] periscope," he said. The Armed Guard had an informal, fatalistic slogan: "Sighted sub, glub, glub." "Yeah, well, why not? That's what happened if you got hit. They didn't show no mercy," said Al Borgman, 84, of Euclid.

Borgman sailed on five oceans with the Armed Guard. Endured storms that bounced his ship "like a postage stamp on a bubble." Wondered about his fate as he listened to depth charges trying to kill a sub nearby. Lasted through long periods of boredom punctuated by heart-thumping action - such as the time he was once caught showering when the general-quarters alarm sounded. He rushed to his battle station wearing only soap and pants. But all in all, "we had a lot of fun not knowing what we were basically doing," he said with a grin. "Young kids, that's all. Adventure. Every day was something new."

A nearby gunner stabbed a sausage and nodded. "Lot of memories," he said. Suggested subjects for "A World at War" can be made by contacting reporter Brian Albrecht at The Plain Dealer, 1801 Superior Ave., Cleveland, OH 44114; balbrecht@plained.com or 216-999-4853



L to R- Al Wettstein MM, Roger Siegman MM, Bob Wettstein MM, Barney Winters MM, Jackson Hamlin [Chair Oh Valley Chapter MM] Frank Corder MM C. Tree Ho Ho, Vernon Herbert AG, Harlan Ellis AG
SEATED - Bert Hinds MM, Frank Deimling MM, Bob Ober AG
God Bless All,
Jackson "Walkingstick" Hamlin

BOMBAY, INDIA EXPLOSION

"BOMBAY, INDIA EXPLOSION".

Dear C.A. In the March „43 issue of the "POINTER", you indicated that you would like to receive info available on the "BOMBAY, INDIA EXPLOSION". Here's some actual facts of that tragic event.

First, some background history. I served as an USN Armed Guard Officer from Jan. 1943 until Jan, 1945. During this time, I had gun crews under my command on the S.S.WILLIAM CUSHING and the S.S. CHUNG SHAN.

In early January, 1944, I reported on board the S.S. GHUNG SHAN with a crew of 28 Navy Armed Guard. This included 2 signalmen 3/C, 1 Gunners Mate 3/C and a Cox 3/C, a fine crew to serve with. We boarded her in Baltimore, Md. and what a surprise we got as she was flying the flag of the REPUBLIC of CHINA and had an all Chinese crew except for the Captain, 3 mates, the chief engineer and 2 assistants. The ship was well provisioned with "RICE"!! We had it 3 times a day- - BOILED, FRIED and PUFFED!! After loading our cargo, we sailed in convoy to New York and joined an Eastbound Convoy across the Atlantic Ocean, through the Mediterranean Sea to Alexandria, Egypt, through the Suez Canal and then we were on our own to India.

The Captain of the S.S. CHUNG SHAN was one of the finest men I had ever sailed with. He was German born and had served in the German Navy. His ability to size up difficult situations probably saved our lives and the ship and it's cargo in Bombay. A strict disciplinarian, an excellent seaman and he hated convoys. He preferred to sail alone and did most of the time.

I was aboard the S.S. CHUNG SHAN for eleven months with basically the same gun crew. Included in that 11

months, was two round trip voyages from the East Coast ports to Bombay, Colombo Ceylon, Calcutta and other ports in India. The Bombay explosion took place during our first voyage.

We sailed alone from Aden to Calcutta stopping only to pick up survivors from a sunken ship and took all of them to Cochin. From Calcutta, we sailed to Visakhapatnam to load copra, (the worst cargo to haul in the world) which was infested with millions of copra bugs that invaded and infested food, clothing, sleeping quarters and the entire ship. The monsoon delayed the loading and we stayed here for many days. We did finally leave and sailed alone to Bombay.

When we arrive in Bombay, there was chaos in the port. Ships waiting everywhere to load, unload, dock leave the dock, etc. Captain Wolf received orders to anchor and await further instructions. This he did but after several days of waiting, he became restless and was anxious to get out of the harbor. He seemed to have a feeling of an impending disaster.

Early the next morning of April 14th, we left the ship for the Port Directors Office (British) and requested permission to sail alone to Aden. After some discussion, permission was granted and we headed back to the ship and prepared to sail.

With the anchor up and steam ready, we were slow ahead. out of the harbor when a terrific explosion ashore rocked the ship. It felt as if we had hit a mine but several more blasts followed and the harbor was covered by dense, black smoke and a raging fire. On the bridge, I looked at the burning ships through my binoculars. A tragic sight!! Debris from the blast started to fall on the deck of the S.S. CHUNG SHAN. Capt. Wolf gave the order and we steamed away from the disaster, very lucky to be alive. We continued sailing

on to Aden and there we learned of the details of the explosions. Our report was- over 1000 killed, 4,000 injured and hundreds missing. In addition, some 20 to 30 cargo ships were crippled and many buildings destroyed.

I stayed on board the S.S. CHUNG SHAN for 6 more months with the same Armed Guard gun crew and Captain. We sailed again for ports in India, but not Bombay. In December of 1944, I received orders to a Navy Rest Camp in Deland, Florida. I had contracted Dengue Fever and was down to 140 pounds on a 6'1" frame. I had a contingent of 150 enlisted men with me and I think a few were from the S.S. CHUNG SHAN crew. Two weeks of orange juice, good American food and plenty of sunshine and I was back at the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, New York for further assignment.

During the time frame I have narrated, there were two ships flying the Chinese Flag with U.S.N. Armed Guard gun crews on board. The other was the S.S. CHUNG CHENG. She was the victim of a German Submarine on Feb. 3, 1944 while bound from Cochin to Aden. She carried a merchant crew of 39 Chinese and an Armed Guard crew of 27. There were twenty lives lost in the sinking.

J. Herbert Watson
26 Carriage Lane
Ponte Vedra
Beach, Fl. 32082
904-285-6139

Thanks Herb for this important info. I will try to find out if any of the 20 KIA on the CHUNG CHENG were A.G.s. PRINTED NOV.1993 POINTER Reprinted by request. (cal)

The Armed Guard Of Delaware Valley

BUCKS COUNTY COURIER TIMES
WWW.COURIERTIMESONLINE.COM

THURSDAY
AUGUST 28, 2008

Peter J. Cugas
Chairman:
215-547-2450

Jack Remente
Secretary
215-357-3418

Jack Harman
Treasure
215-943-2946

They Came By Land, By Air, By Sea...

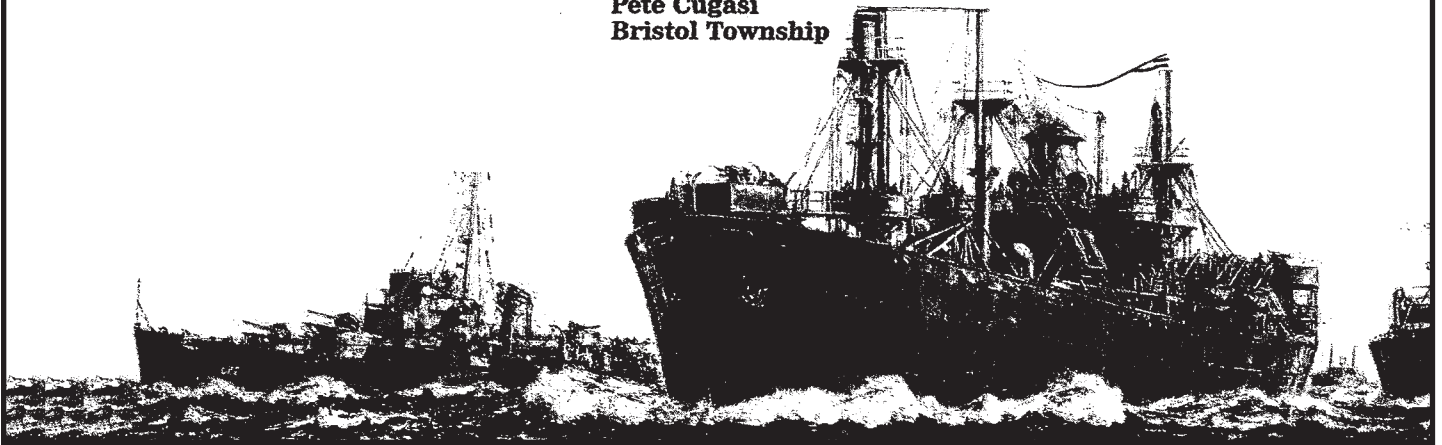


And Their Valor Set The People Free.

Armed Guards remember

As I go around Levittown on my evening walks, it gives me time to remember the WWII ships I was on, three old rust bucket Liberty ships in convoys to all the war fronts in WWII. I couldn't believe these old Liberty ships could make it across the ocean in convoys doing about 8 knots. Thank God they made it to our destination and back. There are not a lot of WWII U.S. Navy Armed Guard veterans left. There were 16 million vets in WWII and now there are less than 5 million left. They come to our meetings every month with canes and walkers, and some have their wives drive them to the meetings. We don't like to talk of our WWII duty, but the memories remain.

Pete Cugasi
Bristol Township



*The first Victory Ship built and launched was the S.S. UNITED VICTORY on January 12, 1944 by the Oregon Ship Building Corporation. There were 531 VICTORY SHIPS total built during WW II. Of these, 414 were cargo ships and 117 were transports.

*Information taken from First Edition book: THE VICTORY SHIPS FROM A to Z. by Capt. Walter W. Jaffee-Author. Published by the Glencannon Press, P.O.Box 341, Palo Alto, Ca. 94302 1-800-711-8985
www.glencannon.com <http://www.glencannon.com>
ISBN 978-1-889901-37-4

U.S. NAVAL ARMED GUARD CENTER

ROSTER

Frank Albanese	Darwin Shea
Sumner Alexander	Roy Stone
Vincent Alones	Charles Stropoli
Robert Andres	Richard Turner
Joseph Barry	John Takacs
Frank Berni	Rodman Terry
Cameron Brown	John Thomas, Jr.
O. Blakeslee	Hugh Thompson
Nick Buchholz	Louis Tobias
Percy Colley	Dennis Thomas
George Corey	Fred Van Riper
Samuel Curtis	Clarence Van Dusen
Jeremiah Doody	Joseph Varecha
William Egan	Anthony Verange
Joseph Flittner	Martin Vollmuth
Morton Foster	Stanley Wasik
Richard Hollis	William Weber
Thomas Canahan	John Whalen
George Kibbey	Robert Wheat
Joseph Kuczerds	LeRoy Wilcox
Cari Lamer	Arthur Voorhis
Leonard LePore	Thaddeus Witenberg
Jerome Magnus	John Young
Celestino Mendoza	George Ziobrowski
Edward Milacki	Emil Weideman
James Montesarchio	Vincent Wojciechowski
Edward Morris	James Michaelis
Danny Mulvena	William Such
Forrest Parmele	Joseph Witkowski
Leo Plank	John Zumbo
Ralph Ratcliffe	Carl Willets
Edward Rockefeller	Herbert Herring
John Sabine	Jerome Webster
Francis Sandford	Eli Rosenberg
Stanley Scheideier	Harold Everingham
Charles Wise	



MENU

Fruit Cup
Garden Vegetable Soup
London Broil
Rissolee Potatoes Fresh New Peas
Mixed Green Salad French Dressing
Ice Cream Bombe

COMMITTEE

Sumner E. Alexander	William G. Egan
Ralph A. Ratcliffe	Roy D. Stone
Joseph Witkowski	John Young
Vincent W. Alones	John J. Thomas, Jr.
Co-Chairman	Co-Chairman

PROGRAM

Vincent Alones, Y3c
Committee Chairman
Hiram Sherman, Cox.
Toastmaster
Chief Petty Officer Max Miller
Chief Petty Officer Alexander Gross
Poem: 'One Year Ago Today'
Rodman Terry, Y3c
Lieut. William J. Pitt
Welfare and Recreation Officer
Lieut. Bernard M. Klivans
Ass't Welfare and Rec. Officer
Commander J. Mack Young
Executive Officer
Commander William J. Coakley
Commanding Officer



CHRISTMAS

1942

Merry Christmas!

★ ★ TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF THE ARMED GUARD:

★ This Christmas time we are closer to the conclusion of the task to which we are committed—the successful end of this war. As your Commanding Officer, I wish you and your families the best of the season's happiness, health, and good cheer.

After the war, we will remember today—for this Christmas in the service will be unique,—and it will stand out in our memory. That is why we here at the Armed Guard Center have tried to make this a Christmas vibrant with the comradeship that comes more fully to men when united in danger and driven by zeal to hold for the good in life.

We, the officers and men of the Armed Guard, have the satisfaction that we have tried to the best of our ability to accomplish the task for which we have been especially selected and trained. We have further satisfaction in the fact that our efforts and deeds have been given recognition by our superiors, and are appreciated by the people of our great country.

We are dedicated to a particularly important, little known, and unadvertised duty, sparkling with excitement and the unusual, such as few men experience. The Armed Guard is charged with a mission to get through to our comrades of other services and to our allies the equipment to conquer. Thus, the Armed Guard unites both foreign and home fronts. By this union we are today all brought into closer relationship as Americans and fighters in the middle of the fight, confirming our beliefs in right and God.

May He permit us to carry on in the way in which we have begun!

WILLIAM J. COAKLEY, Commander. USNR.

Program--Christmas Eve

MUSICStation Orchestra

CANDLELIGHT SUPPER

CHRISTMAS MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

ORGAN PRELUDEOrganist

CHURCH CALL.....Non-Sectarian Services

SELECTIONS.....All Male Choir

Church of the Blessed Sacrament

Warren Foley, Director

CHRISTMAS PLAY.....Station Players

TREE PARTY.....Gift Distribution

MOVIES....."Talk of the Town"

with Jean Arthur and Cary Grant

Cartoon, Screen Songs,

Hollywood Snapshots

MIDNIGHT MASS

CENTER BROOKLYN

CHRISTMAS 1942

CHRISTMAS

Roster of Officers

1 9	William J. Cookley.....	Commander	Commanding
★ ★	Joseph M. Young.....	Commander	Executive
★	Leon J. Carro.....	Lieut. Comdr.	Personnel Office
	Chesley M. Hardison.....	Lieut. Comdr.	Armed Guard
	Adolph Hasler	Lieutenant	Gunnery Office
	Maxwell Higginbotham	Lieutenant	Armed Guard Office
	William J. Pitt.....	Lieutenant	Welfare and Recreation Office
	Bernard M. Klivans.....	Lieutenant	Welfare and Recreation Office
	Edgar P. Wardner.....	Lieutenant	Mobile Training Units
	Sydney E. Kassell.....	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Robert L. Henry.....	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	C. W. Young.....	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Renfroe Jackson	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	William M. Teem, Jr.....	Lieut. (jg)	Ship's Service Office
	Cleve W. Clark.....	Lieut. (jg)	Post Office
	Boyd Harper	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Office
	William K. Foresman.....	Lieut. (jg)	Training Office
	Leonard P. Wallace.....	Lieut. (jg)	Assisting the Commanding Off.
	George E. Biggart.....	Lieut. (jg)	Training Office
	Marvin Bremer	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Clayton B. Jones.....	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Bruce Read	Lieut. (jg)	Communications Office
	Thomas H. Shriver, II.....	Lieut. (jg)	First Lieutenant
	Wilmer E. Tolle.....	Lieut. (jg)	Communications Office
	M. A. Underhill.....	Lieut. (jg)	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Cecil A. Amdur.....	Ensign	Educational Office
	Daniel J. McElveney, Jr.....	Ensign	Detail Office
	Jarvis M. Thayer, Jr.....	Ensign	Detail Office
	Albert S. DeClue.....	Ensign	Legal Office
	Robert T. Roht.....	Ensign	Engineering Office
	Arthur J. Cummings.....	Ensign	Mobile Training Units
	Samuel M. McMurray, Jr.....	Ensign	Welfare and Recreation Office
	Howard H. Schmidt.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	William H. Charles.....	Ensign	Communications Office
	R. F. Lewine.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	E. N. Rhodes, Jr.....	Ensign	Training Office
	J. B. Weinstein.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Harmin H. Deal.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	James H. Riggs.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	J. C. Grode.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	Frederick Slocum	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	J. C. Swayze.....	Ensign	Armed Guard Operations Office
	George J. Altman.....	Machinist	First Lieut. Office
	Carl J. Nofs.....	Electrician	First Lieut. Office
	Meyer A. Halperin.....	Lieut. Comdr. MC.....	Medical Office
	Gerald R. O'Brien.....	Lieut. Comdr. MC.....	Medical Office
	Bernard L. Toothaker.....	Lieut. Comdr. MC.....	Medical Office
	Edward S. Magee.....	Lieutenant MC	Medical Office
	Ernest E. Keet, Jr.....	Lieut. (jg) MC.....	Medical Office
	Vernon J. Johntry.....	Lieutenant SC	Supply Office
	Frederick J. Scheel.....	Lieutenant SC	Disbursing Office
	Embrey J. Beasley.....	Lieut. (jg) SC.....	Disbursing Office
	Charles F. Ueltzen.....	Lieut. (jg) SC.....	Disbursing Office
	Howard G. Henry.....	Lieut. (jg) SC.....	Supply Office
	Edward P. Heath.....	Ensign SC	Disbursing Office
	Edward A. Wallace.....	Lieut. Comdr. ChC.....	Chaplain
	Max W. Kleinman.....	Lieut. Comdr. DC.....	Dental Office
	Alan Lewis Teitel.....	Lieut. (jg) DC.....	Dental Office
	William Keeshan	Ensign SC	Supply Office
	C. L. Doolittle.....	Ensign SC	Disbursing Office
	Edward McDonald.....	Ensign SC	Disbursing Office
	V. R. Spader.....	Ensign SC	Disbursing Office
	Daniel W. Green.....	Ensign SC	Disbursing Office
	Guy W. Sumrell, Jr.....	Acting Pay Clerk.....	Disbursing Office

23rd ANNUAL AMMV CONVENTION

ARMED GUARD ITINERARY

DOUBLETREE HOTEL TAMPA WESTSHORE • MAY 14-18, 2009



Name: _____ Spouse/Other: _____

Affiliation/Chapter: _____ City/State/Zip: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____ E-mail: _____

See separate sheet for Hotel and Victory Cruise reservation information.

CONVENTION FEE: (no charge for spouse/companion)

TOTALS

EARLY BIRD to February 15th: \$60.00 x _____ = \$ _____

February 16 to March 31: \$75.00 x _____ = \$ _____

April 1 to May 14: \$95.00 x _____ = \$ _____

SE REGION PRE-CONVENTION: \$28.00 x _____ = \$ _____

(Thursday May 14th at 1200 with lunch; program for SE Region but is open session)

Buffet: Soup, choice of Salads, Rolls, Dessert, tea & coffee

LADIES LUNCHEON: \$28.00 x _____ = \$ _____

(Friday noon May 15th) Preference (# of each): Salad – Caesar (chicken) ____; Cobb (Turkey, Ham, cheese) ____

Rolls, Beverages & Dessert: New York Cheesecake ____

WELCOME DINNER: \$48.00 x _____ = \$ _____

(Friday evening May 15th) Preference (# of each): Beef ____; Chicken ____; Fish ____

CONVENTION/REUNION BANQUET: \$48.00 x _____ = \$ _____

(Sunday Evening May 17th) Preference (# of each): Beef ____; Chicken ____; Fish ____

AMERICAN VICTORY CRUISE: \$18.00 x _____ = \$ _____

(Bus Transportation only – round trip- All day Saturday May 16th)

TOTAL DUE: \$ _____

(v.080929)

SPECIAL MEDICAL OR PHYSICAL CONCERNS—please detail needs request on separate sheet.

CANCELLATION NOTICE: NO REFUNDS AFTER MAY 1, 2009

SEND COMPLETED FORM WITH CHECK TO: AMMV; c/o John Reher; Box 151205; Cape Coral, FL 33915-1205

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HOTEL & HISTORIC CRUISE: INFORMATION FORM

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WHY ME, LORD?

U.S. sailor puts
WWII tales to paper
Sussex County's William A.
Carter survived convoy ship
sinking By Molly Murray,
The News Journal

With World War II raging in Europe, U.S. Navy Ensign William A. Carter set out on a convoy from Iceland on June 27, 1942.

The mission: to provide armed military guards and firepower to the unprotected merchant ship -- the Ironclad -- bound for Russia with supplies.

Of the 37 merchant ships in the convoy, only 24 reached Russia.

But Carter's most harrowing experiences came later on his return trip to Iceland on the S.S. Richard Bland -- the ship's maiden and only voyage.

Carter, of Millsboro, details his convoy experience in a new book, "Why Me, Lord?"

The book is expected to be published in March.

The Richard Bland was lost at sea after being hit three times by German torpedoes. Of the 68 people on board, 35 survived.

"My most poignant feelings were a humbled gratitude that once again, the Lord had spared me and that I was alive for the moment," Carter wrote.

He had jumped 10 feet into a lifeboat as the Richard Bland was sinking.

Carter, 88, is a long-time civic leader, having served for years as a trustee of Delaware Technical & Community College. The William A. Carter Partnership Center on the Owens Campus in Georgetown is named in his honor. He had a long-time insurance business in Millsboro.

He said he never intended to write about his war experiences but as the years went on, others convinced him that the personal story of someone who served on Convoy PQ17 and the Richard Bland would otherwise be lost.

"I hadn't wanted to write this book at all," he said. "I lost a lot of friends in that experience."

Then an old friend from the U.S. Naval Academy convinced him to write it.

"He said, 'It's your duty to preserve it for posterity,'" Carter recalled.

Sen. Tom Carper, a long-time family friend, writes in the foreword to the book what was at stake: "The Germans were winning and the Russian armed forces, at a terrible cost in human lives, were buying time for U.S. forces to get trained and equipped."

The book tells the story of soldiers and families affected by war in a heart-

warming and sometimes funny account.

The book details the experiences of Carter, a U.S. Navy armed guard officer on a convoy run to Murmansk, Russia.

Carter said he also wanted readers to know that people in the United States have a lot in common with people in Russia.

"The character of the people and the strength and courage they demonstrated during WWII never got the attention they deserved," he said.

Carter had just graduated from St. John's College in Annapolis and was in the Naval Reserve. He was tapped for training at the Naval Academy to provide guard duty on merchant ships.

Merchant ship crews weren't considered part of the military force. To protect the ships and crews, the Navy provided specially trained crews and equipment. Carter served on one of these armed guard crews.

A woman's husband had been slipping in and out of a coma for several months, yet she had stayed by his bedside every single day. One day, when he came to, he motioned for her to come nearer. As she sat by him, he whispered, eyes full of tears, 'You know what? You have been with me all through the bad times. When I got fired, you were there to support me. When my business failed, you were there. When I got shot, you were by my side. When we lost the house, you stayed right here. When my health started failing, you were still by my side... You know what?'

'What dear?' she gently asked, smiling as her heart began to fill with warmth.

'I think you're bad luck...get away from me!'

WHY ME, LORD?

Meanwhile, in Russia, everything was in short supply, so merchant ships, traveling a northern route, made often dangerous trips to Murmansk. There were ice floes to contend with, terrible weather, cold, rough seas and, most deadly, German U-boats.

Carter said Convoy PQ 17 to Murmansk had the highest ship casualties of any of the convoys bound for Russia.

The voyage was critical because "they were just about down to fighting with their bare hands," he said. "It was a difficult assignment."

Although the book is not yet available, Carter talked about it and his experience because December marks the anniversary of news in 1945 that he had been awarded a high honor by the Russian government for his service during WWII.

He also received the Silver Star for his convoy service.

"For the life of me," he wrote in his book, "I couldn't even think of anything out of the ordinary that I had done."

Besides detailing the events of the convoy and the return trip, Carter also gives readers an account of life during war.

Everything happened at a faster pace, said Carter's wife, Ann. And, she said, there was great uncertainty about the future.

The couple met on a blind date, were engaged shortly before Carter set out on convoy duty and then "we had no idea where he was," she said.

Carter's account of the sinking of the Richard Bland is the stuff of war movies.

The ship, already mortally damaged by two earlier torpedoes, has a cracked hull and no steering. The ship was pitching in enormous waves. And it was cold and snowing.

"My last thought before impact was to wonder whether anyone else had seen snowflakes fall on the surface of the torpedo that sank their ship," he wrote.

By fate, or luck or providence, Carter made it to a lifeboat and jumped for his life.

"I'm the luckiest guy in the world," he said. "My life has been a series of lucky accidents."

Contact Molly Murray at 856-7372 or mmurray@delawareonline.com.

WE REST BELOW THE WAVES

WE REST BELOW THE WAVES

Stoker 1st Class Herbert Allcorn had already served five years in the Royal Navy and was on Reserve when he was called back to duty in 13 July 1914 as there was a possibility of England going to war and drafted to the armoured cruiser HMS Good Hope. His ship carried a complement of 900 crew and was powered by 43 coal fired Belleville boilers capable of producing a maximum of 23 knots. Her armament of two 9.2 inch guns in single turrets, sixteen 6inch guns in casements along the hull, twelve 12 pounder guns, three 3 pounder guns and two 18 inch submerged torpedo tubes. HMS Good Hope was a formidable old fighting machine and had only recently been taken out of retirement. The crew at the time were mostly reservists like Stoker Allcorn.

When war was declared on 4 August, Good Hope left Plymouth on the 6th to do battle with Admiral Graf von Spee's German East Asia Squadron which was successfully disrupting trade with Australia, New Zealand and India. This was causing great problems for the British Admiralty. The British force sent to engage the enemy fleet consisted of the armoured cruisers, Good Hope and Monmouth, the light cruiser, Glasgow and the armed merchant cruiser Otranto and the worn out old pre dreadnought Canopus. The fleet was under the command of Rear Admiral Sir Christopher Cradock whose flag was aboard Good Hope.

Graf Maximilian von Spee's squadron consisted of two light cruisers, Leipzig and Dresden and two modern armoured cruisers, the Scharnhorst and the Gneisenau which

were better armed, better armoured and better equipped than anything the British fleet had. The German crews already had an advantage over the opposing force looking for them. They were expert in naval gunnery and trained regularly whereas the British were predominantly reservist crews who hadn't had much time to practice or even get to know their ship.

At 1620 on 1 November, the two fleets caught their first glimpses of each other off the coast of central Chile near the city of Coronel. Rear Admiral Cradock frantically radioed Canopus to catch up but it was a hopeless task as she was approximately 250 miles behind and was to take no part in the looming battle. Each squadron commander attempted to size up the situation and manoeuvre for the best position to

WE REST BELOW THE WAVES

engage the enemy. The British tried to open the engagement early with the sun behind them in the hope of a swift victory. The Germans would have had to look into the sun so Spee avoided battle by manoeuvring his faster vessels out of Cradock's range. However, as the day wore on; the sun began to set and presented the British fleet in sharp silhouette against the horizon. The German ships were by now, almost invisible in the gathering gloom and finally from a tactical advantage, commenced firing at about 1900.

The Scharnhorst scored a direct hit on Good Hope with her third salvo destroying the forward 9.2 inch main turret. Three minutes later, Monmouth was set on fire by Gneisenau's accurate gunnery. The British fired every available gun but with little serious effect on the Germans except for a couple of damaging hits on Gneisenau by Monmouth. Superior German gunnery and battle tactics began to shape the final outcome. By 1935 von Spee estimated that Good Hope had been hit thirty times. She was on fire in several places but still fighting. She even tried to close with Scharnhorst so as to launch a torpedo attack. The German ship kept its distance and continued shooting. As the visibility decreased, the Germans had the advantage of using the fires on the British ships as aiming points whereas the British gunners could only aim at the enemy gun flashes. Leipzig and Glasgow engaged each other whilst Dresden shelled Otrango which pulled out of the line and retired. Dresden then turned its attention to Glasgow. Monmouth was at this point, on fire and listing to port and signalled Glasgow to make its escape rather than attempt a tow. Glasgow had been hit five times and retired from the line on orders to warn Canopus to stay clear of the battle. The newly arrived Nurnberg finished

off Monmouth at point blank range. There were no survivors. At 1957 a brilliant flash of a magazine explosion came from where Good Hope had last been seen. Nothing was ever found of her and Admiral Cradock, together with the entire ships complement of 900 men, perished. Dresden and Leipzig were dispatched to hunt down Glasgow and Otrango. The British lost two cruisers and 1654 crew killed. No survivors were found. The Germans only suffered four hits and three crew wounded on the Gneisenau and two hits on Scharnhorst. Spee took the remainder his fleet to Valparaíso to restock coal and provisions. It was a great victory for Germany but the euphoria wasn't to last long.

The scale of the loss and the terrible humiliation of the first defeat of British sea power for over a century stung the British Admiralty in London into action. A huge naval force was assembled under Admiral Sir Fredrick Doveton Sturdee and his fleet eventually came to grips with Graf von Spee's force near the Falkland Islands on December 8. In the ensuing battle, the Scharnhorst, Leipzig, Gneisenau and Nurnberg were sunk. Dresden managed to escape. No British ships in the engagement were lost and British honour was restored. In a strange turn of fate, it was the Glasgow that finally found the Dresden anchored in neutral Chilean waters at Mas a Tierra. In a blatant violation of Chilean neutrality, Glasgow opened fire on Dresden. After 5 minutes Dresden surrendered but during surrender negotiations, the Germans scuttled the ship denying the British the prestige of capturing their ship and its possible use.

Stoker 1st Class Herbert Allcorn rests below the waves and has no known grave, but he and his ship mates lost on that fateful November

day are not forgotten. The Portsmouth Naval Memorial commemorates those Royal Navy ranks and ratings that have no known grave other than the sea. The names of 9,666 from the Great War and 14,922 from World War Two are arranged according to the year of death. In addition there are 75 names of those from Newfoundland who died whilst on active service with the Royal Navy.

In the case of Stoker Allcorn, his medals were sent to his widow in Ringmer who was pregnant at the time of her husband's death. At the christening, a son was named Herbert Henry Hope Allcorn on 7 February 1915 after his father and his ship.

Ken Wright. 2007.



Lone Sailor

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

THE FORGOTTEN FEW

THE FORGOTTEN FEW.

When Hitler declared war on Great Britain in 1939, he also took on the whole of the British Empire. They came from all parts of the globe to join the struggle from the beginning, and in doing so, many countries suffered great losses in human life as a result of their contribution. Supplies, troops, naval and aircrews flowed to the cause, a reflection of both the strategic importance of Britain's imperial status and the affection held in the hearts and minds of her subjects for the 'mother country' that was now in dire need.

In Australia, the Prime Minister Robert Menzies addressed the nation on 3 September 1939. 'Fellow Australians, it is my melancholy duty to inform you officially, that in consequence of a persistence by Germany in her invasion of Poland, Great Britain has declared war upon her and that as a result, Australia is also at war.' With the declaration of war upon Japan as well, it would six long years before Australia and the world was at peace again. War service would take Australians to virtually every corner of the world. Nearly one million served in the Navy, Army, Air Force or Merchant Marine otherwise known as the Merchant Navy.

Unfortunately, it is a sad fact of life that there were many individuals, organisations or groups from the Commonwealth world wide who received little or no recognition for their part in the 1939-1945 war effort. One such group that has been given only scant recognition in mainstream military histories both in Australia and in Great Britain is the Royal Australian Naval Volunteer Reserve [RANVR]

With Australia's declaration of war on Germany, the British Admiralty accepted an offer by the Australian Naval Board to provide volunteer personnel to serve with the Royal Navy. The first group of volunteers of the 'Yachtsman

Scheme' as it was termed, left Australia for Britain in January 1940 followed by another much larger group in February. A total of 500 in all arrived in England and the Royal Navy welcomed them at this most critical time in British history and of the 'free world'.

Training began at HMS Collingwood at Portsmouth prior to three months 'sea time' experience.¹ Potential officers then began an additional three month intensive course at HMS King Alfred training establishment also at Portsmouth. They became first lieutenants and above although many spent the war as ratings. After the course the men were assigned, according to strategic requirements, to operational ships throughout the RN ranging from battleships to motor launches and in some cases, to submarines. They also became instructors on navigation or anti-submarine courses as well as gunnery and salvage work. During the six years of war H.M.S. King Alfred trained a total of 22,508 Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve Officers for active sea service.² As well as the Australians, there were men from many Commonwealth and Allied countries including Canada, Belgium, China, Holland, New Zealand, Norway, South Africa and the United States. Some of the British Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve personnel went on to become well known. Alex Guinness, Laurence Oliver and Ian Fleming who, when later writing his highly successful fictional James Bond 007 book series, made his main character a Commander in the RNVR.

All of the five hundred men who voluntarily went to war as members of the RANVR have or had a tale to tell. In 2008, there are only about 50 members left. The following few stories are a token representation of all those who served with the RANVR, and an illustration of the diversity of their placements throughout the Royal Navy.

On the 23 May 1941, while the destroyers HMS Kelly and HMS Kashmir were steaming south down the coast of Crete a German reconnaissance aircraft reported the destroyer's position to Headquarters. Onboard Kashmir were eight RANVR crew which was unusual as they were generally assigned one per ship. Captain Mountbatten [later Lord Mountbatten] aboard Kelly wrote in a later account of the action to his sister Louise, Queen of Sweden; 'As the sun rose, a German Dornier 215 appeared out of the east and was engaged before she dropped five bombs which missed Kelly astern. Forty minutes later, three more Do 215s made a high level bombing attack on Kelly and Kashmir. Both ships avoided the bombs'.

The Luftwaffe returned around 0800, with twenty four Stukas from General Wolfram von Richtoven's VIII Air Corps and again attacked the retreating destroyers. The Stuka had a fearsome reputation for diving almost vertically on ships and only releasing their bombs when they were so low that they couldn't miss. Kashmir was hit amidships by two bombs, her magazine exploded and she sank within two minutes. RANVR ordinary seaman Ian Rhodes managed to shoot down a Stuka just before Kashmir had to be abandoned. He survived the war and was awarded the Conspicuous Gallantry Medal for his action that day. One Stuka came in lower than the rest over Kelly and released its bomb hitting square on X gun-deck killing the gun crew. Kelly's gunners kept up a barrage of fire against the attacking aircraft but another bomb exploded right beside the Kelly tearing a gaping hole in her side near X magazine while she was still steaming at 30 knots. The destroyer lost its stability and began rolling over at speed eventually capsizing but still continuing its forward

THE FORGOTTEN FEW

momentum. She finally stopped all movement and for a while floated upside down with the length of her keel from stem to stern exposed. The screws were still turning while several of her crew clung precariously to the keel. All around the mortally wounded ship were men struggling to survive in a sea covered in a stinking thick mixture of fuel oil and debris. Some were killed in the initial blast; some drowned when the Kelly capsized or choked to death, their lungs full of oil or were killed when the Stukas returned to machine gun the struggling survivors.³

RANVR Bob Fenwick from Kashmir was clinging to an oar for support when Captain Mountbatten swam up to the other end to hold on. Mountbatten remembered Fenwick from a previous meeting and made a remark something like, 'I suppose this is not affecting you too much. You Australians are all good swimmers.'⁴

During a withdrawal from Kithera Channel near Crete on 22 May 1941, HMS Fiji came under heavy air attacks. Fiji and HMS Gloucester had been providing anti aircraft protection for destroyers, Kandahar and Kingston while they were picking up survivors from HMS Greyhound which had been sunk. Due to the intensity of the Luftwaffe air attacks, Gloucester was hit and set on fire and had to retire from the area accompanied by the three other destroyers. A single near miss from a lone bomber started flooding in Fiji's engine room which reduced her speed and caused her to list. In another attack, Fiji was hit by three bombs increasing her list. Fiji rolled over and sank an hour later. Kandahar and Kingston were unable to pick up the surviving crew members until nightfall because of the continuing air attacks.

RANVR member, Lt John Linton aboard Fiji at a reunion dinner in 1997 recounted with some good humour his thoughts just prior to leaping into the

water from the listing ship. 'The leading seaman of our mess was a most unusual character. Not a bad sort of chap but he seemed unable to carry on a conversation that wasn't riddled with extremely rude words and obscenities of all kinds. He was certainly one the most foul mouthed fellows I had ever met. If you ever let him get close to you, he just had to fondle your buttocks or your genitals, depending on which way you were facing at the time. A lone bomber delivered the fatal blow at about 7 pm. We were told to abandon ship which was slowly rolling over. Just before I was about to jump, that leading seaman, the one with the foul mouth and wandering hands came up on deck, walked to the side of the ship, flung his arms to the heavens and cried, GOD HELP ME! I clearly remember thinking at the time that if God helps him, I've got nothing to worry about. He may have survived but I never saw him again.'

'We were finally fished out of the water by one of the fleet destroyers around midnight and taken to Alexandria. From there we made our way back to England on a passenger ship via the Cape of Good Hope. One incident in Durban that sticks in my mind. Many kind residents of Durban, alerted to the fact that a ship load of shipwrecked sailors were in port, rallied round and sent us large quantities of comforts, socks, pullovers, clothing, cigarettes, chocolates etc etc plus hundreds of second hand books. For all these gifts, we were extremely grateful. The problem was one of distributing these books having regard to the individual tastes of the readers. The problem was solved very neatly I thought. The ships company simply walked past in single file and was handed a book, any book by the petty officer in charge of the operation. He didn't ask who your favourite author was or did you like fiction or non fiction or travel. You just got a book. I got, 'One Hundred Ways to mix Concrete'.⁵

In the famous St Nazaire raid on 27 March 1942, Lieutenant William Wallach in the leading Motor Launch ML 270 managed to knock out one of the German searchlights that were illuminating the destroyer Campbeltown as she was on her run to ram the dry dock gate [caisson] and allow commandos to disembark to destroy dock installations. Two other RANVR officers and three ratings were also involved in the raid. One of the ratings managed to get ashore after his ML was sunk and spent the remainder of the war as a POW. It is interesting to note one of the reasons for the raid was the fact that the allied air force was unable to bomb the target with the precision required to hit the target and minimize civilian casualties.

Despite many difficulties, both the British and French Secret Services eventually set up a network of agents who could provide reliable information about what was going on in occupied France. These agents ran the risk of being reported, tortured and executed if caught. They needed to have the highest courage and dedication as did those who transported the British Secret Intelligence Services and the Special Operations Executives across the Channel by sea and by secret flights in Lysander or Hudson aircraft of the Royal Air Force. During 1942, the 15th Motor Gun Boat Flotilla of the Royal Navy was established and based in the River Dart at Dartmouth. Lieutenant Lloyd Bott, RANVR was one of those honoured by the Director of Naval Intelligence, who in January 1945 said, 'These officers and men were outstanding representatives of an irregular Naval Flotilla which had performed hazardous duties for all services since the fall of France.'⁶

In June, 1942, RANVR Ordinary Seaman Philip Power was aboard the tribal class destroyer HMS Somali, one of the escorting ships with convoy P.Q. 17. The men who sailed on these Arctic

HONORING THE MEN & WOMEN OF THE S



LATEST NAVY MEMORIAL NEWS

THANKS TO THOSE WHO JOINED US ON INAUGURATION DAY TO SEE PRESIDENT BARACK OBAMA AND FIRST LADY MICHELLE OBAMA WALK PAST THE NAVY MEMORIAL PLAZA IN THE PARADE

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April 2008-2009

Through historic images, videos, and uniform displays, the "Navy Medicine" exhibit presents the role of Navy doctors, dentists, nurses, Medical Service Corps officers, and hospital corpsmen. [Click here to preview the exhibit online.](#)

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The Lone Sailor® statue represents the past, present and future Navy bluejacket – adventurous, independent, courageous, self-reliant, and resourceful. His authentic image evokes the lure and romance of service at sea.

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Located at:

701 Pennsylvania Ave, NW
Washington, DC 20004

UNITED STATES NAVY MEMORIAL

SEA SERVICES - PAST, PRESENT & FUTURE



DEDICATED ON OCTOBER 13, 1987, THE UNITED STATES NAVY MEMORIAL OFFERS SEA SERVICE MEN AND WOMEN WAYS TO RECONNECT WITH EACH OTHER, CELEBRATE THEIR SHARED EXPERIENCES AND PRESERVE THE MEMORIES AND STORIES OF THEIR SERVICE. WE ALSO PROVIDE A FORUM TO EDUCATE THE PUBLIC ABOUT THE RICH MARITIME HERITAGE OF THIS NATION AND THE IMPORTANCE OF KEEPING THE SEAS OF THE WORLD FREE.



THE FORGOTTEN FEW

convoys had to endure horrendous conditions. 'Even the tiny hairs in the nostrils became needle like icicles piecing the skin at a touch. At temperatures of 35 degrees below freezing, the atmosphere in the mess decks became foetid. Inside the hull grew thick green mildew, the slightest ailment could become an epidemic'. Under these conditions and the constant stress caused high passive smoking and later in civilian life, many officers and crew were to die of smoking related causes such as emphysema.

The convoy, consisting of 35 merchant ships with an escort of cruisers and destroyers bound for Russia had a reasonable chance of success until the order came to 'scatter' when the convoy was subjected to a massive German aerial attack on 4 July 1942. Twenty four merchant ships were lost. Vice-Admiral W.D.O'Brien, C.B., D.S.C. Commander, Far East Fleet later wrote; 'I have never been able to rejoice with my American friends on Independence Day, because July 4 is, to me, a day to hang my head in grief for all the men who lost their lives on Convoy PQ17 and in shame at the recollection of one of the bleakest episodes in Royal Navy history, when the warships deserted the merchant ships and left them to their fate. For that, in simple terms, was what we were obliged to do.'

In 1942, only two Fleet Sweepers and two Motor Launches remained in Malta as part the 3rd ML Flotilla when the larger ships were driven out by the German and Italian Air Forces. It was here that the crews gained an enviable reputation for their skill and experience in the handling and fighting capabilities of their vessels. The flotilla had been assigned the dangerous job of mine clearance operations in the approaches to Malta's Grand Harbour. During 1943, RANVR Lieutenant Keith Nicol served on Motor launch 569 as part of the 3rd ML Flotilla

which by this time, had increased in size. In addition to mine sweeping, they fought furious battles with enemy aircraft, e-boats, and took part in major convoy battles as well as assisting in the landings that drove Mussolini's Italy out of the war.

Allied military supplies and food for the Maltese population of about a quarter of a million people had to be sent by convoy and it was vitally essential the harbour be kept open. Malta was the only place from which the allies could sever the axis supply line and was the key to the defence of the Middle East and all the lands beyond. The motor launches of the 3rd ML Flotilla played a major part in the allied operations in the Mediterranean and the survival of the strategic island by keeping the harbour free of mines. Allied submarines were able to operate from the island and combined with the RAF, were able to destroy approximately half a million tons of enemy supplies destined for Rommel in North Africa.

L.S.T. [Tank Landing Ship] 237 was transferred from the United States Navy to the Royal Navy 12 July 1943 and took part in the allied beach-head landing at Anzio, thirty three miles south of Rome on 22 January 1944 'I'm glad I'm in the Navy-I'd hate to be in a soldier' said a young sailor from Swansea as the L.S.T. crept into Anzio Bay. Two hospital ships were at anchor in the bay receiving stretcher cases from other L.S.T's. Some were still embarking casualties from ambulances on the beach. 'Look at that,' said the sailor 'I always think of that when I look at the boys we're carrying. One minute they're with us. The next they're ashore and lots of them are dead or wounded. Sometimes I can't believe it's true.' The spirit of the men who worked the Anzio passage supplying the frontline troops deserves an indebtedness that goes far beyond the battle field and is due from everyone on the allied side as they 'do their bit'

Lieutenant Peter Smith RANVR aboard 237 was one of several Australian present during the landings.

Of the 150,000 who took part in the D Day landings, approximately 1000 of them were Australians. On the night of 5/6 June the allied air force dropped a thousand tons of bombs onto the Longues-sur-Mer coastal battery with a high degree of accuracy but with little effect. At dawn, on 6 June during the D-Day landings, the German battery engaged in a duel with the American cruiser Arkansas and the French ships, George-Leygues and Montcalm in support. The battery stopped firing then trained its guns on the Bulolo, the headquarters ship of the US 3rd Infantry forcing the ship to retire. The British cruiser Ajax replied engaging the battery. 9 RANVR Lt John Evans Read, the Officer of the Watch aboard HMS Ajax. 'During the early hours of June 6 we were in position off the Normandy coast at 0600 to commence the initial bombardment. Our first target was a nest of heavy coastal defence guns. After an exchange of fire lasting 17 minutes, we asked for another target. We started at Gold Beach next to the American sector and during our stay off the beach, moved through June and Sword, plus a hasty trip to Portsmouth for 6" ammunition. Our last task was a bombardment near Caen, very nearly at our extreme range of 24,000 yards. After a few shots, the Army asked us to go home as our shells were falling way short into our own troops. Our guns were so badly worn you could actually hear the shells rattling as they went up the barrel, so it was back to Portsmouth to have new guns fitted to our turrets. We had fired approximately 2,587 shells' 10

At the beginning of the war, England had twenty eight coastal Force craft of which twelve were at Malta, six at Hong Kong and ten in England. By the end of the European war, 1,560 had been built. The men in those boats were involved in

THE FORGOTTEN FEW

780 separate naval actions, 464 of them in home waters. In those 464 actions, it is claimed that 269 enemy vessels were sunk or probably sunk for the loss, through enemy action, of only 76 Coastal Force craft. Lt T Scott RANVR [son of the famous Antarctic explorer Robert Scott] spent most of his time serving onboard His Majesty's Steam Gun Boat Grey Fox as the navigation officer. Lt Scott was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross. 11

Among the first RANVR Australians to train at H.M.S King Alfred in the Rendering Mines Safe section was Lieutenant Hugh Syme who became only one of eight to be awarded both the George Cross, the George Medal and Bar for his bravery in rendering mines safe. His medal citation reads; During 21 months of service in the Enemy Mining Section of H.M.S.Vernon, Lieutenant Syme carried out 19 mine recoveries or disposal operations including 5 acoustic, 8 magnetic, 2 acoustic magnetic mines and recovery of the first and only Type T sinker mine. Lieutenant John Mould was awarded the George Medal and Lieutenant L Goldsworthy the George Cross, the George Medal, Distinguished Service Cross and Mentioned in Dispatches, both for their work in the Rendering Mine Safe section. Lt George.Gosse was awarded the George Cross for defusing with improvised tools, a new 'oyster' type mine in Bremen harbour, Germany. 12

Lt Keith Hudspeth was awarded the DSC no less than three times. The first was for partition in a midjet submarine attack on the German battle ship Tirpitz hiding in a Norwegian fjord. The two additional DSC's were for actions off the Normandy coast in preparation for the D-Day invasion of 6 June 1944.

Of the five hundred men of the RANVR or Yachtsmen Scheme as some prefer it called, thirty six members paid

the ultimate price during their active service with the Royal Navy or other duties during WW2. Again, to illustrate the diversity of their placements within the RN, the following are a few brief examples of how some of the men lost their lives together with their British shipmates.

At approximately 05-49 on 24 May 1941, the pride of the British fleet, HMS Hood fired the opening salvo in the Battle of the Denmark Strait between the Hood and Prince of Wales on one side and the Bismarck and Prinz Eugen on the other. Although the Hood scored hits on the Bismarck with the second salvo, it was all over within 11 minutes. The Bismarck with her fifth salvo hit Hood which started a fire which in turn set off Hood's ready-use ammunition and this resulted in a massive explosion and she was gone in 3 minutes. It should be pointed out that in light of modern research; there is debate as to whether one 15 inch shell from the Bismarck or one or more 8 inch high explosive shells from Prinz Eugen actually caused the dramatic loss of such a famous ship. What ever the true facts may be, the loss had a great effect on British moral. Of the 1,418 crew, only three men survived and were later rescued by the destroyer HMS Electra. Four RANVR members; G.W. Hall, I.G.E.Startup, J.D.Shannon and D.G.Hall were among those who perished.

In the early hours of 19 August 1942, a fleet of two hundred and thirty nine ships arrived off the French coast at Dieppe. Operation Jubilee was in response to the fact that the Western allies were at this point in time, unable to open a second front in Europe and decided to mount a large scale raid on the French coast and take some pressure off the efforts of the Russian allies in the east. The ships carried a cargo of more than 5,000 men-tough British and Canadian troops who were determined to destroy the German coastal gun

emplacements at Dieppe. The daring raid became one of the biggest military blunders in history and a holocaust of death and destruction from which only a third of the men returned. In terms of human life, it was a tragically expensive, but important lesson learnt about the problems of landing in occupied Europe at a defended port. Acting Lieutenant- Commander H.P.Brownell, RANVR was among those killed.

The SS Ceramic, a White Star [later Shaw Savill] liner of 18,481 gross tons set sail as a troop transport from Liverpool bound for Australia on 23 November, 1942. When 1,148 kilometres west-northwest of the Azores, the ship was torpedoed three times on December 6 and sunk by U-Boat 515 commanded by Korvettenkapitan Werner Henke. A total of 655 crewmen, troops and nurses lost their lives. Only Sapper Eric Munday, Royal Engineers survived and was rescued by the U-Boat crew. Two of those who perished, A.R.Cutts and B.D. O'Donoghue were of the RANVR. 13

Just 8 miles North-east from the Kola Islet, a Flower class corvette HMS Bluebell was on duty as close escort for convoy RA 64 enroute to England from Russia, when she was hit by a torpedo from U-711 on 17 February 1945. The torpedo hit Bluebell's stern and detonated the depth charges stored there. A massive explosion tore the stern off, the ship sinking in just 30 seconds. Only 12 crew were saved. Lieutenant W.W. Twiss RANVR went to the ocean floor along with the remainder of the British crew.14

Up until July 1944 seventy two members of the RANVR had received various accolades, awards and decorations including two George Crosses, seven George Medals and three bars, three Distinguished Service Crosses and three bars, one Conspicuous Gallantry Medal as well as the Greek Cross and a Presidential Citation.

THE FORGOTTEN FEW

Some of the men of the 'Yachtsmen Scheme' seconded to the Royal Navy were among the highest decorated Australian servicemen of the war.

When they had first arrived in England they had been welcomed with open arms and when they left their contribution was greatly appreciated. In contrast, when the volunteers returned to Australia after four years with the Royal Navy, they found public and official attitudes had changed. No longer was the emphasis on the war in Europe and defeating Germany as Australia herself was now in peril of being invaded by Japan and foreign policy was, by necessity, now firmly directed towards the United States and the war in the Pacific. 15

One officer possibly summed up the frustration felt by most if not all the RANVR members when they returned to Australia. 'Naturally, we were delighted by the prospect of returning to the RAN but our homecoming was saddened and soured by the shabby treatment we were given on our return

and in later years. We volunteered to go, served in most sea actions of the Battle of the Atlantic, Mediterranean and our deeds are hidden in just eight lines in the official Australian Official War History. We didn't expect a heroes welcome when we returned but to even be denied gazetted Australian leave allowances of two days per month for overseas service was indicative of the RAN's attitude towards us and was rather demeaning to say the least.'

The Australian Government had suggested and paid for their participation during WW2 yet there are no nominal rolls of these men in Australia or the U.K. On 25 April every year when Australia holds the Australian New Zealand Army Corps [ANZAC] Day marches throughout the country, there has never been an allocated march position for the men of the RANVR. Those who wanted to march had to do so with the retired naval officers section. Sadly, the entire history of this small band of brave men who are the forgotten few lies neglected in a cardboard box waiting. 'Tell them of us and say for

your tomorrow, we gave our today for under our ships propellers, the sea boiled like green fire. For half a mile our wake stretched astern as plain as a road. Then the sea slid across and smoothed away all trace of our passage. It forgot us as it has forgotten every ship and sailor it has ever known and settled down again, an infinity of blue, to dream under the sky. 16

The dedication of the peacetime yachtsmen who voluntarily answered the call of war by joining the RANVR and serving with the Royal Navy across the oceans of the world could possibly be expressed by one surviving member when he said; 'If I had my time all over again I would go willingly'

Ken Wright. 2008.



A TRIBUTE TO MILAN "MIKE" GUNJAK BY C.A. LLOYD

The first time I met Mike was at the AG Mini-Reunion in Toledo, Ohio in 1985 along with Don Kinney, Bob Busch and Mel Barger. I encouraged them to organize the LST crew and they did and did a great job and he and Linda edited a great paper of which I have received over the years. They have entered our Reunions of the past in their paper and I did likewise It has been

my pleasure to have met and known them and many of the crew. I have located many Armed Guard who were cast out into the fleet when they needed experienced Gunners, radiomen and signalmen when the war in the east came to a close. Our condolences are extended to Linda, the family and all the crew.

****SEE PAGE 46.**

CURRENCY FROM AROUND THE WORLD



LETTERS FROM THE CREW

Dear Mr John Shirley,

We meet for the first time in this letter, as recommended by Charles Lloyd – a shipmate.

By way of introduction, I am a retired US Navy captain whose dad was an Armed Guard OIC in the Atlantic, in WWII. Dad had six or seven AG assignments before he got orders to the Pacific. He was in the Battle of the Atlantic from 1942-44. The only merchant ship I remember him naming was SS ALCOA POLARIS. I have mentioned it to Charles, who kindly found a name/address of personnel who may have sailed with LT Richard Stoler Myers, USNR in that ship.

I digress. In my almost 33 years of active Naval Service, I wrote many poems. The poem included here is

altogether new and will go into the next printing of my Jul 08 published book "To the Flag! – a Selection of Patriotic and Military Verse." I include five copies of that book at Shipmate Lloyd's recommendation. He is aware of my action, indicating the books might be used as door prizes, etc. That is fine with me.

As a related item, I have finished a fiction novel about the Armed Guard (Murmansk Run – 1943) and would be happy to seek some critical review from people who were on duty as AG men. If there are interested persons I can send sample chapters via the internet (or in hardcopy, if that is preferable. I have worked on this book for many years and hope to find a publisher soon.

Thanks for hearing me out. I hope your reunion in Fredrickburg is a lot of fun.

Seeing as how FADM Nimitz's sea-ghost is nearby, he may appear for a little instruction for the troops!

Sincerely,
Steven C. Myers
Captain, US Navy (ret.)
Bedford, PA, 2009

537 S. Juliana St.
Bedford, PA 15522

February 25th 2009



ARMED GUARD POEM

The ships were old – the men were young,
A war came in between.
With guns and grit, they proved they were The bravest
ever seen.
Their foes were tough, professionals,
But young men, just as well
A thousand U-boats sallied forth,
Three-quarters went to Hell.
As did too many Allied ships
Before the shooting ended,
Those gunners blunted Doenitz's lads,
And freedom's sake defended.
From Halifax and Liverpool –
To Murmansk or to Crete,
The Armed Guard was a shield of Hope, Defying grim
defeat.
With passing years the circle fades,
Its radius grows smaller,
But at memories of sacrifice,
You may stand a little taller.
Armed Guardsmen played a signal role
To save Red, White and Blue -
I pen these words of grateful thanks -
My dad was one of you.

ORDINARY HERO



Lt. Col. Margaret Belva Mizelle
(circa 1942) gave the United
States Army nearly three decades
of dedicated service.

This story is dedicated to all nurses in WWII.

ORDINARY HERO

Her letters home were not filled with stories of the war and its dramatic turns — that was not her style. The memories of her service to her country, now part of the military collection at the North Carolina State Archives, reflected her humor and her humility. She was Lieutenant Colonel Margaret Mizelle King of the United States Army Nurse Corps.

Born in 1918 in the town of Windsor in Bertie County, Margaret Belva Mizelle was the daughter of Charles Wesley Mizelle and Mary Ellen Asbell Mizelle. Her mother died when she was a young child, and her father married “Miss Lucille,” who raised Margaret as her own, along with a sister and a brother. Margaret was devoted to her stepmother, to whom she addressed her wartime correspondence, and to her two siblings.

After high school, Margaret attended nursing school at Presbyterian Hospital in Charlotte. “She was a good nurse,” recalls her former roommate, Ernestine Kennedy of Thomasville. “The patients loved her. You couldn’t help liking Margaret. She had a good sense of humor and was able to laugh at herself. She never got upset. She was always really modest about her abilities. She was an amazing person.”

Margaret graduated from Presbyterian in 1940 and began work as a private duty nurse in Charlotte. She might have stayed that course, but the country hovered on the brink of war, and nurses in the graduating class were recruited for the Army Nurse Corps, with a group of Charlotte medical personnel forming the U.S. Army 38th Evacuation Hospital Unit. Margaret and her friend and classmate, Polly Witherspoon, decided to join up, but Polly backed out at the last minute to marry her fiancé — too late for Margaret to rethink her own “rendezvous with destiny.” Three and a half months after the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor, the 38th Evacuation Hospital was ordered into active service.

The unit received training for battlefield operations at Fort Bragg and departed for England in August of the



During Margaret’s time in Italy, she and her tent mate, Johnnie Johnson (left), endured all-night air raids and the flooding of their hospital.

same year. “None of us are scared about leaving,” Margaret wrote her mother. “I am depending on you and Daddy not to worry about me.”

The most unlikely places

The Atlantic crossing, Margaret’s first, was thankfully uneventful, despite constant zigzagging to avoid enemy submarines. “There were two or three nurses who were dreadfully seasick, but not me — I was too curious about what was going on around me,” she wrote.

When the 38th docked at Liverpool, England, the unit saw the first hard evidence of war and witnessed its first

complete blackout. But Margaret filled her correspondence with descriptions of the beautiful countryside and friendly people and with requests for hard-to-get items, like nylon hose and cosmetics. “I am having a wonderful time and wouldn’t have missed coming, for anything,” she assured her family.

Then it was November, and the 38th set sail, destination unknown. “I always did want to see the world,” Margaret wrote en route. On November 8 and 9, 1942, the unit was part of the invasion forces going ashore at the coastal town of Arzew, Algeria. Protected by U.S. Army Rangers, medical personnel worked

ORDINARY HERO

under sporadic sniper fire, fought the cold and the dust and then the rain and the mud, too busy to dwell on the horrible realities of the war around them. "I am sure of your prayers," Margaret wrote, "and with them, I feel as safe as can be."

The 38th Evacuation Hospital served in the North African Campaign through mid-September 1943 and then went ashore with the Allied invasion forces at Blue Beach near Salerno, Italy. For the first four days, they slept under the stars in an alfalfa field where livestock roamed freely. Margaret wrote that she was awakened by people shouting her name. "I opened my eyes to find a huge bull staring me in the face. Disconcerting, to say the least!"

"We could hear the bursting of shells in the distance, and at night the sky was lighted up like a Fourth of July celebration," Margaret related in October 1943. The 38th was caring for more patients than ever before. There was hard fighting, and the Italian front shifted often, which meant the 38th

was moving at regular intervals, and mail was sometimes slow to keep up. "Don't worry when you don't hear from me; we're pretty busy these days and working 12-hour duty, so my letters won't be too frequent for awhile," she cautioned.

No time for fear

In April 1944, the 38th faced what Margaret described as one of their hardest performances, when they landed with the invasion forces at Anzio Beachhead, Italy. "I don't remember being frightened. You didn't have time to be frightened," she said. Close enough to the battle for walk-ins, they saw 400 patients a day. To provide more protection from enemy shelling and bombing raids, tents were pitched atop dugouts, two-thirds of the way underground. Margaret returned from duty to find a bullet had passed through her tent and her bed. Exhausted from hours on duty, she fell asleep while sitting up with her

patients during an all-night air raid. When she woke, one battle-weary soldier shook his head at her, saying, "Lord, nurse, I wish I didn't know no more about this war than you."

Margaret's recollections of the 38th Evacuation Hospital's stint at the base in Pisa, Italy, were dominated by a flood that occurred November 2, 1944, when the Arno River covered the city and adjacent hospital area in water as high as six feet. Hurriedly, more than 500 patients were evacuated; personal belongings and equipment were left to the rapidly rising waters. Margaret was charged with transporting the narcotics cabinet and carried it over her head in waist-high water.

The medical personnel and their patients finally moved to the second floor of a warehouse — the first floor was flooded — and got to sleep around midnight. When Margaret slipped into her sleeping bag on the floor, she felt something furry and discovered that a cat had sought



In June 1949, Margaret (left, with fellow nurse Frances Neal) was recalled into active duty to serve in Korea.

ORDINARY HERO

refuge in the bottom of her bag.

"I guess I squealed, but not too loud because people were trying to sleep."

"We are all fine," she vouched to her mother after the experience. "I don't even have a cold yet, in spite of the fact that I walked around with wet clothes on for two days and a night." Referring to the loss of her possessions, Margaret rationalized, "One good thing about our disaster is that we got rid of so much junk that we didn't need but that we just couldn't bring ourselves to throw away."

One of the most difficult things Margaret personally faced was the sudden death from hepatitis of one of her tent mates in December 1944. "We miss her terribly. ... The funeral was awful," she wrote home. "I hate funerals anyway, but military ones are unbearable."

Years of service

Was there a best memory of her wartime experience? "Yes," she would say later. "When they came out and said the war was over. All the cold feet and unappetizing food were worth it." Margaret was in the United States for some well-deserved R&R when the war in Europe ended. She was discharged in January 1946 and placed in the Army Reserve. She worked in veterans hospitals in Ohio and North Carolina until June 1949, when she was recalled to active duty.

From September 1950 until April 1952, Margaret was assigned to the 171st Evacuation Hospital in the Korean conflict. In December 1950, Margaret was put in charge of evacuating the children's ward for the withdrawal from Pyongyang, Korea, with the Eighth Army, ahead of advancing Communist forces. She was supposed to stay until all the children were safe. She barely made the last plane out. Back home, a rumor circulated rapidly among friends that her plane had crashed, and she was missing in action. Later, she joked that since people were saying such nice things about her, she felt like a heel for being alive.

In her later years of service — as head nurse, assistant chief, and finally chief of nursing service at Army hospitals in Europe, Puerto Rico, and

"THE PATIENTS LOVED HER. YOU COULDN'T HELP LIKING MARGARET. SHE HAD A GOOD SENSE OF HUMOR AND WAS ABLE TO LAUGH AT HERSELF. SHE NEVER GOT UPSET. SHE WAS ALWAYS REALLY MODEST ABOUT HER ABILITIES. SHE WAS AN AMAZING PERSON."

all over the United States, including Hawaii, Margaret was recognized repeatedly for her professional skill and leadership, improvements in the care and treatment of patients, effective personnel counseling, stability under pressure, and persistent devotion to duty. When asked the key to her much lauded personnel counseling technique, her simple reply was, "I just listened."


Lt. Col. Margaret B. Mizelle retired from the Army Nurse Corps on May 31, 1970. In her 28 years of service, she was awarded 16 service medals and overseas bars, including the European-African-Middle Eastern Service Medal with four Bronze Stars; the Army Commendation Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; the National Defense Service Medal with Oak Leaf Cluster; the United Nations Service Medal; the Korean Service Medal with three Campaign Stars; the Army of Occupation Medal (Japan); and the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with three Campaign Stars. Margaret viewed these accomplishments with typical modesty. "It was not a big deal," she said.

"I would do it over"

Margaret settled in Raleigh, near her old friend, Polly, and bought a townhouse — the first home she had ever owned. In October 1972, she surprised friends and family by marrying Truman Lewis King.

Together they traveled in the country and went abroad, revisiting some of the places where the war had taken each of them. When Truman died in August 1989, Margaret moved to Glenaire Retirement Community in Cary.

Over about a two-year period, Margaret and I pored over old photographs from World War II and Korea, identifying and organizing them. I recorded hours of interviews with Margaret about her military career for the State Archives' military collection. When we finally came to the end of "our project," as she liked to call it, I asked her if, looking back on her military career, she would do it all over again. She reflected on the question for a while. "I saw some brave little soldiers — they weren't old enough to be in the war," she began, and then her voice trailed off, tears came to her eyes, and she finished softly, "Yes, I would do it over."

Margaret died in the Glenaire Healthcare Center from complications due to Parkinson's disease August 7, 2004. She was buried in her hometown of Windsor, her country's flag draped over her coffin, with the insignia of the U.S. Army Nurse Corps, a final reminder of a quiet patriot who seemed an ordinary woman of her time but, like so many of her generation, was quite extraordinary. 

Janet Pittard is a freelance writer living in Raleigh. Her brother, David Chiswell, assisted with the research for this story. Margaret King was Janet's godmother and a longtime friend of her mother, Polly Witherspoon Chiswell.

-Story taken from magazine-

"OUR STATE Down Home
In North Carolina"

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FROM RUSSIA WITH LOVE

От кого *У. Уермолна*
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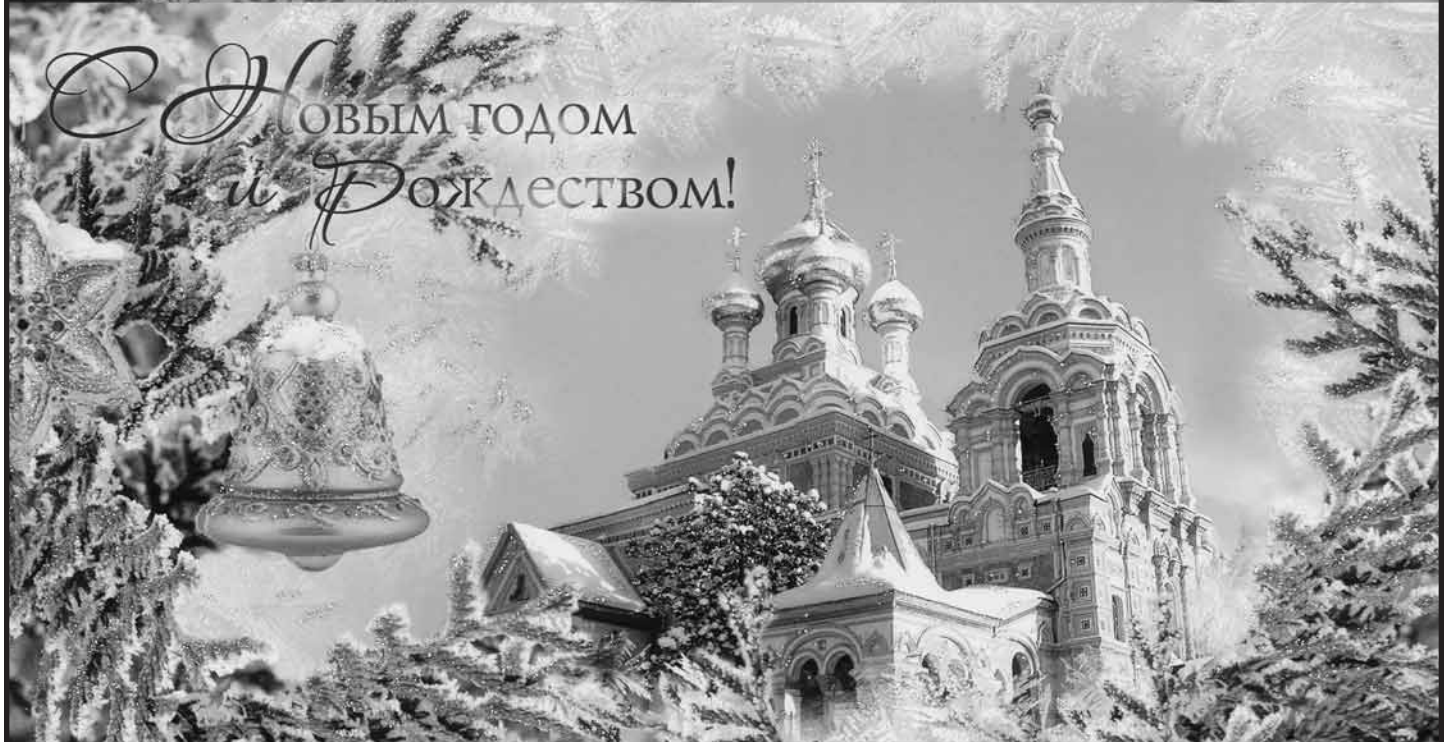
РОССИЯ
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Кому *Mr Charles Lloyd*

Куда *115 Wall Creek Drive*
Rolesville, N. C.
27571

Индекс места назначения *the USA*

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 PAY OFF



С НОВЫМ ГОДОМ
 и РОЖДЕСТВОМ!

Dear Mr. Lloyd,
 Warm Christmas greetings and
 best wishes for the New Year to you
 and American Veterans
 May joy fill your home
 When Christmas is here,
 And remain there each day
 Through a happy New Year

With best wishes,
 Yekaterina and
 the pupils

WE SENT THEM TO HELL

WE SENT THEM TO HELL.

An hour or so after the Japanese invaded Malaya at Kota Bura, their carrier based aircraft carried out an attack the American fleet in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii on 7 December 1941. In rapid succession, Malaya, Singapore and the Dutch East Indies fell to the advancing Japanese military forces. With the looming threat of the Japanese so close to Australia, the then Prime Minister of Australia, John Curtin, in the early part of 1942, ordered the battle hardened Australian Imperial Forces 6th and 7th Divisions in North Africa back home. The British Prime Minister, Winston Churchill, wasn't about to tolerate the Australian forces being redirected away from British interests so he ordered the 7th Division to assist British forces fighting the Japanese in Burma without informing the Australian government. Churchill's action had made it quite clear that British interests came first and foremost and Australia could sink or swim. Curtin diplomatically told the British PM what he could do with his changing Australian government orders and the 7th Division returned as ordered. Churchill's attempt to hijack Australian troops when they were desperately needed back home was a wake up call for Australia. No longer could Britain, the mother country, be relied upon to come to their aid so Australia turned to the United States for help. America, having been soundly defeated by the Japanese in the Philippines needed a base from which they could launch their counter offensive. It was a marriage of mutual convenience.

With both governments in agreement, the American President, Franklin D Roosevelt appointed General Douglas MacArthur as Supreme Commander of the South West Pacific Area. MacArthur and his public relations machine arrived in Australia on 18 March 1942 and found his command

was limited to a mixed air corps consisting of the Royal Australian Air Force and United States Army Air Force [5th Air Force] personnel, aircraft, service troops and no combat ready fighting units. The Japanese had by then occupied the strategically important harbour and airfield of Rabaul in New Britain and had captured the airfields of Lae and Salamaua in New Guinea. They were now very close to mainland Australia and were already dropping bombs on Darwin in the Northern Territory as well as Broome and Wyndham at the top end of Western Australia. The Imperial Japanese Navy submarine I-21 shelled the city of Newcastle and the I-24 shelled an eastern suburb of Sydney. Two midget submarines entered Sydney harbour; one submarine fired two torpedoes at the USS Chicago but missed and hit the ferry, Kuttabul. Nineteen sailors were killed and ten wounded. The other fortunately got tangled up in an anti-submarine net and was no threat. War had arrived on Australia soil.

With Rabaul firmly in their grip, the Japanese High Command now planned a two pronged attack on Port Moresby in New Guinea. The capture of Port Moresby would put their forces even closer to Australia. The first attack was to be a seaborne invasion and the second, an overland assault over the Owen Stanley Mountains and along the Kokoda Track. Admiral Inouye's plans for the seaborne invasion ended on 7-8 May 1942, at the Battle of the Coral Sea. Although the battle was a tactical draw for both sides it was a triumph of American naval air power. The overland assault continued as planned and began on 21 July when the first 2,000 Japanese troops including Major - General Tomitaro Horii's battle hardened elite South Seas Detachment and engineers began landing at Buna and Gona at the northern end of the Kokoda Track.

The Kokoda track is a rugged mountainous jungle path covered in barely penetrable rainforest and kunai, a tall bladed grass. Some of the mountain ridges soar to heights of 1,640 feet [2,500 metres] before plunging sharply back down to sea level. The humidity is extremely oppressive and sudden tropical downpours can turn jungle streams into raging torrents within a few minutes and the ground into thick glutinous mud. Dangerous animals, reptiles and insects especially the malaria carrying mosquitos teem in the lush growth of the jungle. Any one who has fought in the area would agree it is one of the most inhospitable places on earth. The actual track winds its way approximately 186 miles [300 kilometres] over the Owen Stanley Range and connects the north coast of New Guinea with Port Moresby on the south coast. If New Guinea fell, a direct invasion of Australia was possible. At the time, it was not known that the Japanese never seriously considered invading Australia but Darwin had to be neutralised as it was ringed by airfields and provided a staging point for Allied supply vessels and warships which could interfere with their ambitions elsewhere in the South Pacific area.

The defence of this nightmarish track initially fell to the poorly trained and equipped militia [part time] soldiers of the Australian 39th Battalion whose average age was 18 and had just finished basic training. They were derisively called 'chocos' by the regular soldiers meaning they were like chocolate and would melt in the sun. However, these young soldiers who, after a series of battles and through their sustained gallantry, held on long enough for units of the 7th Division just returned from the Middle East to join them. The militia had been weakened by the jungle, the Japs, malaria, hunger and depleted by casualties. Hardly out of school, many of them looked old, grey and ill as they stood

WE SENT THEM TO HELL

wearily in their stinking waterlogged foxholes, expressionless eyes deep in their sockets. They could hardly walk let alone fight but they and the 7th division took on an invading Japanese force vastly superior in both numbers and firepower.

In Australia, USAAF General George. C. Kenney had arrived on 4 August 1942 to take up his position as commander of the combined Australian and American Air Forces in the South West Pacific Area

General Kenney was the most senior Allied Air Force officer next to the overall theatre commander, General Douglas MacArthur. Kenney began to clean up the air units he had at his disposal and organise them into a force capable of going on the offensive. He had a mixed bag of aircrews as the Royal Australian Air Force supplied personnel to almost every United States Army Air Force bomber and transport unit in Australia from early 1942 until mid 1943, a fact is generally not known and sadly neglected by military historians.

While the fighting was taking place along the Kokoda Trail, a Japanese naval convoy on 25 August landed 2,700 troops supported by several tanks at Milne Bay on the northern most tip of New Guinea. Facing them were 8,824 combined Australian and American troops. This was the first time Australian militia, regular AIF and Americans fought together and after 11 days of heavy fighting, they had beaten a common enemy. On 5 September, Japanese ships evacuated what remained of their troops. They had suffered their first defeat losing 311 personnel with 700 missing. The victory bolstered the confidence of the Allies who were beginning to think the Japanese were invincible. On November 2, the Australian flag was hoisted above the Kokoda plateau but three more months of bloody fighting lay ahead before the Australians,

joined at last by American troops pushed on towards Buna and Gona. The Japanese soldiers received their last reinforcements and resupplies at Buna and they knew this was their last stand. Surrender or evacuation was out of the question and they were to either be victorious or die for the Emperor and the glory of Japan.

The Imperial Japanese forces now began to suffer more reversals starting with the Allied naval victory at Midway and Australian victories with American assistance at Milne Bay in New Guinea and by successes at Buna, Gona and Sanananda between November 1942 and January 1943. These defeats left the Japanese forces in New Guinea in desperate need of reinforcements and supplies. Japanese High Command began planning a resupply to their forces in Lae on the east coast of New Guinea by a large convoy of ships. Although Allied intelligence became aware through intercepted and translated radio messages that the Japanese planned to reinforce their garrison at Lae by ship, when was not known. The convoy left Rabaul at night under strict radio silence and an umbrella of bad weather. The Allies had been practising for an aerial attack but an Australian, Air Commodore W.H. 'Bull' Garing convinced General Kenney the need for a massive, coordinated air attack using large numbers of aircraft, striking the convoy from different altitudes and directions with precise timing. Garing appreciated inexperienced crews would find the task difficult and suggested to Kenney's forward echelon commander, General Enis. C. Whitehead, that a full scale rehearsal should be held to test the coordination of aircraft, timings and communications. It would also test General Kenney's upgrade and modifications that had been made to some B-25 Mitchell bombers to use the technique of 'skip bombing'. This innovative idea that had already been tested and used against German ships by the

British Royal Air Force. This technique involved the modified bombers flying at a height of between 100-250 feet above sea level at approximately 200 miles per hour, releasing a 'stick' of two to four bombs, usually between 500 -1000 pounds at a distance of 60-300 feet from the targeted ship. Like a stone skipping over the surface of the water, if the distance was judged correctly, the bombs equipped with a four-to five second time delay fuse would skip or bounce into the side or superstructure of the ship or submerge near the ship and detonate. Sometimes the explosion took place above the target as an air burst. Any of these methods were found to be effective. The most famous example of skip bombing was demonstrated later in May, 1943 when a raid on the Mohne, Eder and Sorpe dams in the Ruhr in Germany was carried out by nineteen specially modified Lancaster bombers of RAF 617 Squadron led by Wing Commander Guy Gibson. The raid was successful in breaching both the Mohne and Eder dams but at a cost of 53 aircrew. This amazing exploit was immortalised in the 1954 British war film, 'Dam Busters'.

The derelict ship, SS Pruth that had run aground in Port Moresby harbour in 1923 was used as the rehearsal target. After the exercise was over, it was found that potentially disastrous mistakes were made and these were subsequently rectified through debriefings and more practise. While the bombers continued to practise skip bombing, members of RAAF Number 30 Squadron honed up their flying and aerial gunnery skills.

No 30 Squadron was established at the RAAF base at Richmond in New South Wales on 9 March 1942 as a long range fighter squadron operating Bristol Beaufighters. After a brief period of training, the squadron deployed to Townsville in Queensland where it escorted anti shipping patrols.

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The squadron was then deployed to Port Moresby in New Guinea in September and although the squadron's primary mission during WW2 was attacking Japanese shipping and coastal bases, they also operated as a ground attack squadron supporting the Allied operations in New Guinea, New Britain area. The Beaufighter proved highly successful in all roles. Unfortunately, because they were required to operate at low level, Beaufighter crews had little chance to escape if their aircraft was crippled and consequently, high losses were to remain a hazard of Beaufighter operations throughout the war.

The Bristol Beaufighter was originally designed and built in England as a flow on development from the Beaufort bomber and was delivered to Australia in March 1942 for use by the RAAF with 22, 30, 31 and 93 Squadrons. As the war progressed, the Department of Aircraft Production in Australia began building a local Beaufighter. Some 365 were built with a production rate of one per day plus spares. Along with the American Kittyhawk, they were Australia's front-line attack aircraft. Beaufighter crews, both aircrews and ground crews firmly believed 'their' aircraft to be the best in the world and they did have something to be proud of. It was the fastest plane in the world at sea level and the most powerful forward armament of any plane. The 'Beau' as it was affectionately called, had a fine pilot's cockpit; two enormously powerful and extremely quiet Bristol Hercules, 14 cylinder, two row sleeve- valve radial engines and a strong purposeful looking silhouette. This aircraft was capable of delivering low level attack by torpedo, cannon or rocket and had a maximum speed of 330 miles per hour at 9,500 feet. With an all up weight of 25,000 pounds, the 'Beau' had a climb rate of 2310 feet per minute from sea level to 7,200 feet and of 1890 up to 15,000 feet. As WW2 icons, the Americans

had their Mustang, the British their Spitfire and the Australians the Beaufighter. Nicknamed the 'Whispering Death' the Beau added to its fearsome reputation at the beginning of March when 30 Squadron took part in the Battle of the Bismarck Sea.

On February 24, 1943, an unknown Japanese soldier wrote in his diary aboard the Tosei Maru, 'Last night I dreamed I saw a dragon rising out of the sea'. Early in the morning of March 1, the Imperial Japanese Navy convoy from Rabaul began streaming through the Bismarck Sea bound for Lae-Salamaua. The weather forecast of tropical storms in the Solomon and Bismarck Seas was of course, advantageous to the Japanese as Allied aircraft would find it very difficult if not impossible to see the ships. The convoy was composed of eight escort destroyers, Shikiname, Asagumo, Uranami, Arashio, Asashio, Shirayuki, Yukikaze, and Tokitsukaze plus eight transports, the 8,125 ton Nojima, the 3,800-ton Shin-ai Maru, 6,870 ton Teiyo-Maru, 6,494 ton Oigawa-Maru, 5,593 ton Kyokusei-Maru, 2,793 ton Taimei-Maru, 2,746 ton Aiyo-Maru, and the 953 ton Kembu-Maru. The transports cargo contained machine guns, trucks, cars, assorted artillery, aviation fuel, tractors, ammunition, rations and mortars. Also aboard the ships were thousands of troops assigned to the Lae-Salamaua area. Aware the convoy had finally been assembled and had departed Rabaul, General Kenney ordered an analysis of known Japanese sea routes so he could plan his attack. Fortunately, the Japanese route to Lae proved to be a regular one so air reconnaissance patrols over the route could be planned. The threat of enemy action against the convoy enroute was expected by the Japanese High Command and 50% losses were deemed acceptable as Lae had to be reinforced and defended at all costs. Air cover for the convoy was limited as fighters could

not stay on station over the ships long due to the distance of land based airfields. The Japanese very rarely operated at night.

The bad weather was, as predicted, affecting Allied air reconnaissance but in the late afternoon of March 1 at 16.00 hrs, an off course B-24 Liberator on patrol spotted the convoy through a break in the inclement weather and reported its position to HQ at Port Moresby. Kenney and Whitehead scrambled a strike force of seven B-17 long range bombers as the convoy was too far away for all the Allied aircraft to reach. Night had fallen by the time the bombers had arrived and they were unable to find their targets despite dropping flares over the convoys estimated position. The unknown Japanese who dreamed of a dragon rising from the sea had been transferred to the Teiyo Maru was soon to encounter not one, but many dragons and they breathed fire as well. They came not from the sea but from the air in the form of Allied bombers and fighters. The last entry in his diary read; 'Discovered by the enemy. At night enemy planes dropped flares and reconnoitred'

At 07-30 hrs in the morning of 2 March, another B-24 flew reconnaissance over the area where the Japanese convoy was anticipated to be but again there was still no sign of them. Around 08.15 hrs, a patrolling B-24 Liberator sighted the ships despite the bad weather and was able to stay on station over the convoy waiting for whatever forces General Kenney could send in for the attack. At 09.30 hrs, a formation of B-17's with sixteen escorting P38's approached the convoy. Three Japanese fighters were intercepted by the P-38's and shot down then at 09.50hrs, seventeen B-17's attacked from 6,500 feet and the convoy scattered. Despite heavy rain, the presence of eight more Japanese fighters and anti-aircraft fire, the bombers man-

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aged to hit the transport ship *Kyokusei Maru* setting it on fire. She sank later that morning. Another six B-17's attacked doing only moderate damage to another transport. Still they came, the Angels of Death. At 10-20 hrs, more B-17's and two B-24's attacked but there were no hits. About 11-20 the Allied aircraft decided to pack up and go back to their bases.

As soon as the Allied aircraft had left, the destroyers *Asagumo* and *Yukikaze* picked up approximately 800 survivors out of 1,500 from the *Kyokusei Maru* and departed at full speed to Lae. As night fell, the convoy, now minus one transport and with both the *Teiyo Maru* and *Nojima* damaged, continued on. The two destroyers disembarked the survivors at Lae and again at full speed, returned to the convoy and resumed escort duties. The convoy turned south to pass through the Vitiaz Strait between New Britain and New Guinea and Rear Admiral Shofuku Kimura, onboard his flag ship, the destroyer *Shirayuki*, decided to circle in the darkness and time his arrival off the coast of Lae for next morning. This decision may have been based on the assumption that the weather would continue to hide his ships but his action was an enormous strategic blunder and doomed the convoy.

At 22.00 hrs, a RAAF PBY Catalina from 11 Squadron using radar, found the enemy ships and remained nearby until approximately 02.40 in the morning of March 3. A flight of seven RAAF Beaufort torpedo bombers from 100 Squadron left their base at Milne Bay but only two arrived at the convoy's location due to rainstorms. The Beauforts attacked the convoy at approximately 06.15hrs using flares to illuminate their targets. One aircraft released two torpedoes and both ran on target but failed to explode possibly because the American torpedoes they were using were plagued with prob-

lems and may have been defective. The other Beauforts torpedoes failed to release so they both did a few strafing passes and returned to base.

Once it was firmly established the convoy was heading for Lae, the Allies could now unleash the full force of their airpower. A prelude to the attack on the convoy started with RAAF Boston's from 22 Squadron bombing the Japanese airfield at Lae to disrupt any fighter protection of the convoy then at 09-30 hrs, the fire breathing dragons of Kenney's entire strike force of 90 aircraft assembled at the rendezvous point over Cape Ward to co-ordinated the attack. This was the moment the Allied Air Force had trained so hard for, had waited so long for. It was also the last chance to inflict a mortal blow on the enemy as the convoys speed and course would have them safely in Lae harbour and unloading by mid morning or early afternoon and protected by fighters from nearby bases. The dogs of war were off the leash and thirsting for Japanese blood or perhaps it would be more appropriate to say that the 'Birds of Prey' were circling their intended victims.

The Japanese could see the approaching armada of enemy aircraft spreading out to slot into their assigned positions. With all these aircraft massed together, it was an impressive sight. The Imperial Japanese Navy anti aircraft gunners were experienced and confident. Even at a range of 6 miles, shells were bursting 100 yards in front of the approaching Beaufighters. Japanese fighters in the vicinity headed for the massed Allied formation while the P-38's dropped their long range fuel tanks and went to intercept them. It was 10.00 hrs and the game was on. The Allied operational plan called for the attack to be carried out in three waves at three levels only seconds' apart. The B-17's to go in first and bomb the convoy followed by the

RAAF Beaufighters. Somewhere something went wrong. Only seconds ahead of the B-17's, twelve Beaufighters from No 30 Squadron went in first, heading straight for the destroyers in line abreast formation and flying low. Heavy losses were expected. Fortunately, mistaking the Beaufighters for torpedo bombers, the destroyers turned towards the incoming aircraft making them a smaller target but leaving the transports exposed. Ignoring the destroyers, the Beau's went straight past and attacked the transports strafing decks, gun crews, ships bridges and cargo with 20 mm cannon, rockets and machinegun fire. It was a nightmare of epic proportions for the Japanese. Blood washed across the decks and turned the green waters of the Bismarck Sea red. The Squadrons job was to neutralise the anti aircraft guns and buy precious seconds for the following B-25's. It wasn't part of the plan but some B-25's were already in with the Beaus adding a deadly hail of lead from their .50 calibre machine guns to the slaughter below from their specially modified gun platforms. The guns were belted in the following sequence; one tracer, two armour piecing and then two incendiary rounds. When the B-25's fired, it appeared to the Japanese as if the aircraft was on fire. Then came the deadly rain of bombs when USAAF B-17 bombers began bombing the convoy from about 7000ft. With the ships scattered and no longer able to give each other covering fire, the third wave consisting of American B25 Mitchell's using the newly developed 'skip' bombing technique to inflict more heavy damage.

As the bombs crashed with deadly accuracy into one ship after another, the escorting Japanese fighters were unable to stem the carnage below as American fighters fought furiously to keep them away from the bombers. One B-17 was shot down but the crew bailed out only to be machine gunned

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in their parachutes by Japanese fighters. Any survivors of this callous attack would have been shown no mercy as the parachutes unfortunately landed in the middle of the convoy. Three P-38's made a gallant attempt to stop the Japanese aircraft from attacking the helpless B-17 crew but they themselves were shot down.

The authoritative Australian author Lex McAulay aptly describes the scene in his 1991 book, 'Battle of the Bismarck Sea.' 'No one person was able to sit and watch the entire scene. The Beaufighters and the B-25 strafers had been overtaken by the A-20 Boston's and high level B-25's. Overhead, B17's were on their bomb runs despite Japanese fighters. The ships were attacked from almost every direction, frantically trying to protect themselves as bomb after bomb struck home and the deadly whiplash of massed .50 calibre machine guns and 20 mm cannon flailed decks, superstructures, smashing deck cargo to splinters. What this type of ammunition did to human flesh is best left to the imagination. Overhead, P-38's Lightning's battled it out with the Japanese fighters. It was, despite all the meticulous planning, a free for all with everyone engrossed in their own battle.' The Allied aircraft finally began to reform and return to their bases to refuel and rearm. The first mad slaughter was over in 20 minutes. Only one ship, the Kembu Maru, loaded with aviation fuel was actually sunk during the raid but the Nojima sank just after the Allied aircraft left. To maintain pressure on the Japanese and protect the strike force that was to return to finish off the surviving ships, the airfield at Lae was attacked again this time by P-38's. Five aircraft were claimed as destroyed with three probables.

A patrolling B24 reported at 14.10 hrs seeing four destroyers speeding away from the battle area with survivors packed on their decks heading in the

direction of Rabaul. East of Long Island they met two destroyers sent from Rabaul, transferred their human cargo and refuelled. In the meantime, the second Allied attack force ran into a problem. The weather had turned foul again and many of the aircraft dispatched on the afternoon raid had to turn back to base. The assorted group of B-17's, B-25's, A-20's plus 10 P-38's that did manage to get through arrived over the remains of the convoy at 15.00 hrs that afternoon. Five transports, the Aiyo-Maru, Teiyo-Maru Shin-ai-Maru, Taimei-Maru and the Oigawa-Maru and the destroyer Arashio were stopped, damaged and on fire to varying degrees. The Shirayuki had sunk, the Tokitsukase was west of the convoy, disabled and drifting with the ocean current and the Asashio had remained behind at the original battle site to pick up survivors.

At 15.03 hrs, five A20's from RAAF 22 Squadron attacked the Tokitsukase despite the presence of 25 or 30 enemy fighters on station over the convoy. While the P-38's engaged the Japanese fighters, the other allied bombers joined in the attack on the remaining ships including the Asashio from different angles and heights. The effect of bombs, 20mm cannon and machinegun bullets on survivors packed on the decks of the Asashio was devastating. All around the burning hulks, the oceans surface was littered with wreckage, small boats, barges and several thousand Japanese soldiers and sailors of all ranks who, only that morning, had received a lesson in the use of air power. Only a year before it had been the Japanese air forces which had swept the seas, ruthlessly sinking the fleets of ships fleeing Malaya, Singapore, Java, Sumatra and the Philippines.

Gradually, the fury of battle died down and the Allied aircraft began returning to their bases. A solitary reconnaissance plane remained. As night fell, the four destroyers that had disembarked

the survivors near Long Island returned to the battle site and began the almost impossible task of trying to find people in the water, in the darkness and in a search radius of approximately 20 miles. The night was also a good chance for American PT boats to attack what remained afloat. Ten PT boats set out from their base near Tufi but two hit debris and had to return, the other eight scoured the battle area looking for targets of opportunity. At approximately 23-20 hours, two PT boats found the transport ship, Oigawa-Maru and using one torpedo each, sent the last transport afloat to the bottom. Meanwhile, the destroyers' crews were doing their best to find survivors within the vast search area but at 02.30 hrs, they slipped away leaving the remaining men to their fate. They never returned and left eight transports and three destroyers resting on the ocean floor. The destroyer Tokitsukaze was the sole ship afloat after the afternoons attack. Her abandoned hulk was found by Japanese forces and an attempt to sink her failed. She sank later that afternoon without assistance.

The sea would give the survivors no mercy nor would the Allies. During 4 and 5 March, with the convoy destroyed, orders were issued for the aircrews to strafe survivors in the water, in lifeboats, on rafts and any rescue vessels that might appear. No survivor must be allowed to reach land to fight Allied troops. Once ashore those survivors who were still armed would fight. The Japanese soldiers were tough and tenacious and would sell their lives dearly so why risk Allied lives when the enemy were already there to be killed. The word had already spread like wildfire around the base the previous day about the cold blooded machine gunning of the B-17's crew and now the Japanese in the water were going to pay. There were a good many pilots and air crew who relished the chance to 'send the Japs to hell.'

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Some would later view it as nauseating work but accept it as a reality of war and for others; the experience would affect them badly. While the planes circled looking for targets for their machine guns, sharks also circled but it's not known if they took part in the bloody smorgasbord, compliments of the Allied Air Force. With all the food in the water it would be hard to imagine they wouldn't feed. Even if they did, there would be little sympathy for those in the water as knowledge of Japanese atrocities carried out against allied POW's and civilians in occupied territories would have been well known by 1943.

During their war of conquest in Manchuria and China, an estimated 20,000 women were raped and 300,000 people were massacred by the Japanese in Nanking alone between 1937/38. This monstrous atrocity in today's Japan is called 'an incident' but was, at the time, a prelude of things to come. The enslavement of hundreds of thousands of POW's and subjecting them to a regime of terror in which tens of thousands died from abuse, disease, overwork, starvation and murder were a normal part of the Japanese military conquests and 'Bushido' tradition. An estimated 30 million civilians were killed [23 million were ethnic Chinese] during WW2. In all fairness, it has to be said that not all Japanese participated in this military encouraged mass murder but they were sadly, in the minority.

The Japanese Navy was as equally sadistic as their army counterparts. At sea Japanese surface vessels sank Allied naval, Red Cross and merchant vessels and then tried to murder any survivors who were in lifeboats or were found floating in the sea. Approximately 20,000 Allied seamen and countless civilians were fed to the sharks, killed by sledge hammers, bayoneted, beheaded, hung, drowned,

machine-gunned or crucified just to mention a few methods of execution.

After the Allied aircraft had finished their gruesome work and returned to base, an entry in one American Squadron diary was blunt; 'What we didn't get the sharks got. Every man in the squadron would have given two months pay to be in on the strafing. 'One gunner expended 1,100 rounds of ammunition and burned out two guns.' The fate of the Japanese soldier who 'dreamed of a dragon from the sea' is not known but his diary was found washed up on a beach on Goodenough Island by Allied soldiers. After the battle, Allied aircraft attacked the Japanese fighter base at Lae catching the defenders unprepared. Six Zero fighters were destroyed on the ground and the base facilities were extensively damaged.

In the following days it was fickle fortunes of fate who found who first. While Allied patrol boats and aircraft scoured the ocean looking for survivors to kill, IJN submarines were looking for survivors to save. Rear Admiral Kimura and his staff from the destroyer Shirayuki were among those fortunate enough to be rescued by submarine. Many finally made it to land but were either killed or captured by Allied troops. Of the remaining survivors not taken by sharks their fate is unknown.

General MacArthur's HQ on 7 March issued a communiqué stating the Fifth Air Force had sunk twenty-two ships and shot down 59 aircraft. Japanese losses estimated at 12,762 soldiers and sailors killed or wounded. These wildly inaccurate numbers may have been made on the basis of battle reports at the time and not everyone accepted these figures. MacArthur's already inflated ego was bruised by those who dared to question his figures and wanted action taken against them. Washington wisely declined. The

numbers were later revised and amended. In a blatant promotion of self interest, both MacArthur and Kenney sought to claim all the credit for themselves and the USAAF. Kenney's report back to Washington made no mention of the Royal Australian Air Forces participation. MacArthur was notorious for this type of self inflation and that of American military actions throughout the war. This type of insensitivity to the host country was, and is, downright insulting to the memory of all those Australians who fought in the Pacific theatre.

Nevertheless, there is no denying however Generals MacArthur and Kenney chose to present the battle at the time, the actions over the Bismarck Sea by the combined American and Australian Air Forces had achieved one of the most stunning victories in any theatre in WW2 and stopped the Japanese advance toward Australia. It was a land battle fought at sea and won from the air and proved that land based bombers were a highly effective weapon against ships. The Japanese themselves had taught the Allies in Asia and the Pacific that shipping in range of land based aircraft is at risk. The Allied victory also showed what could be achieved with sound intelligence gathering, thorough command gathering and inter-allied operational cooperation and coordination plus skilled and tenacious aircrews. Sadly, many historians writing about the Battle of the Bismarck Sea call it a 'United States' victory. It was quite clearly a combined 'Aussie' and 'Yank' effort and every single element of the Allied force was indispensable to the successful end result and it should always be historically recorded as such.

A total of eight transports and four destroyers had been sunk. With regards to Japanese army and navy personnel and aircraft losses; the final score has to be recorded as 'flexible'.

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To quote again from author Lex McAulay; 'The Japanese army stated that 4,357 men set out, and 1,760 were listed as returned to Rabaul. However, it is known that a lot of soldiers were put aboard at the last minute and not listed in the official operational orders, and some of these were lost. The navy lost a lot as well, ships' crews and navy unit people aboard Nojima, including all 240 of one navy unit. Then there are the merchant ship crews and some ships lost many, but records were destroyed in the bombing of Japan. A reasonable figure would be 3,000 lost. Aircraft losses are very flexible. Japanese army aircraft losses are not known with certainty though several dozen is reasonable; navy aircraft losses would be a couple of dozen but again records are lacking. US and Japanese historians have tried but cannot find definite figures. Any quoted would be an estimate rather than based on documentary fact. Allied losses were minimal. Four aircraft shot down and two crash-landed. Fourteen dead and twelve wounded.

The Japanese military were stunned by the disaster and would never again regain the initiative they had previously enjoyed. Their military ambitions from this point began to slowly unravel for the remainder of the war. Commodore Yasumi Doi, a member of the Japanese staff of the South Pacific Area Fleet at Rabaul stated that after the battle of the Bismarck Sea that it was realised control of the air was lost and, consequently, supplies to New Guinea were to be shipped by destroyer and submarine only. Without bulk shipping, the Japanese were unable to get large amount of supplies to their armies and air forces. Consequently, their air power decreased as fuel was in short supply which in turn gave the Allies air superiority. In a macabre footnote about two weeks after their disastrous loss, Japanese High Command issued orders that all their soldiers were to be taught to swim.

During WW2, the Beaufighter in RAAF hands accounted for well over two hundred enemy aircraft, countless tonnage of ships, barges and enemy infrastructure. This fact was, and sadly, still is neglected in both the US and UK aviation and general war histories. The Aussie 'Beau' could be described as 'the forgotten aircraft' as can be said of the aircrew who flew it [650 pilots in 30 and 31 Squadrons alone] and the ground crew who maintained it and the many thousands of people who helped to produce it in Adelaide, Melbourne and Sydney.

No 30 Squadron as part of the Australian First Tactical Air Force moved to Morotai in the Netherlands East Indies in March 1945 and supported the Australian operations in Borneo. Other targets were in the Celebes, Ambon, Ceram and Halmaheras. The Squadron then moved to Tarakan in May and flew operations in support of the Australian landing at Balikpapan. With the war over, the squadron returned to Australia aboard HMS Glory and was disbanded 15 August 1945.

Ken Wright. 2008.



Dear Charles A. Lloyd,
Feb. 28, 2009

I want to thank you for providing my family and me with all of the informative reading materials and the cap that I am wearing with pride. I have enjoyed reading *The Pointer* during these winter months- I found so much that I can relate to, for I was there! My children and grandchildren have spent hours of reading *The Pointer* which has created another avenue of discussion and bonding for us. I am so blessed that they enjoy sharing these moments of my youth. Before you sent *The Pointer*, I shared mostly funny stories and moments with my family but *The Pointer* has put these stories into chronological order and made it into history. All of the people at *The Pointer* have done a colossal job of preserving these moments and times for generations to come. My family can never thank you enough for all of your hours of hard work.

I was very lucky during my Naval Service, I guess, and was on the right ship at the right time. I enlisted on Feb. 3, 1942 and was almost 25 years old, which was considered an older man. Most of the men I served with were only 18 and too many of these young men never made it home again. Even after sixty some years I am so very saddened at the thought of the men that had barely begun their lives when they went down at sea.

My first ship was the MS SUN, a tanker that had already been hit in the south - the vicinity of the Caribbean. In 1942, things were hot on the East Coast and south. We boarded the MS SUN in Chester, PA ship yards during April 1942. We headed for Texas and down the coast but things weren't good. When we went around Key West, Florida, we knew our chances weren't good because we picked up a SOS that ships were hit ahead of ours. There were 4-5 ships of us in this area,

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so we scattered and started zigzagging. The third morning about 4:00 A.M., we took a torpedo on the port bow knocking out two forward tanks. At this point, we were about 60 miles from the mouth of the Mississippi River. Two different ships behind us were also hit and one of them burst into flames. It was 8:30 A.M. before we spotted a patrol plane. We limped into New Orleans at a rate of 3-4 knots. We couldn't get repaired there, so we limped across the Gulf to Tampa, FL.

We went back to Galveston, Texas on the HH Rogers-a tub it was. This tub was a filled tanker with a full deck load. It was built in 1915, sailed WW I, - twin screws (tanker) and sailed under Pan Am Flag. It had some wooden decks causing cock roaches- more roaches than rust- lots of fun. It had 5 inch 51 bag guns on aft a 3inch 23 forward, and two 20 MM. We took on a load of fuel just off the cost of Texas City. The ship had an extended structure over deck with P38 planes and Higgins barges. We left the states in August of 42. I didn't keep a log or record any dates throughout my Navy time. Things went well on this ship until we hit the North Atlantic where there were very rough seas (we almost capsized), rudders broke down three times, and we had sub attacks. We lost several ships. One morning, within 45 minutes, we lost three ships. Our ship, HH Rogers, was in the outside column rear. The first ship hit was on our port side and the second one was just ahead of our ship. We had to make a hard starboard turn to avoid a collision. We got through and dropped our load at Oban, Scotland. We were home in the U.S. for Christmas of 1942.

During the early part of 1943, I was sent to Virginia for gunnery training on the new 5 inch 38 gun. After the training, back at the NAG Center, Brooklyn, NY I was placed on hold while they try to find a ship with these new guns. While waiting for a ship

they put me on shore patrol in south Brooklyn, which I did not like, but yet it was fun. I think they would have left me on shore patrol but I kept asking to be put back on a ship.

Then here comes the Thomas Sim Lee, which I boarded for the RUSSIAN RUN around Aug. /Sept. of 43. The Pointer tells the story very well. We were very fortunate. We formed the convoy for the northern run north of the British Isles I believe we had 19 merchant ships plus man of war. Our ship was well armed with 5 inch 38 aft and 3 inch 23 forward. I believe 4- 20 MM and a well trained crew. I was in charge of the 5 inch 38- a responsible job to make sure the gun was ready at all times. They picked the months of travel for the most darkness. Thank God we sailed through without a hitch. We left our load near the village called Molotovsk. We were on our way back to the British Isles when we got the great news that the German Scharnhorst was sunk. Christmas of 43 was spent at sea. We had nine days of terrible storms before we got back to the British Isle to form a convoy back to the states.

As we returned to the states the Thomas Sim Lee had "a big surprise" waiting - we were to load for a return trip to Russia. Lt. Demico went to bat for the crew so we got detached. They put a fresh crew aboard.

We were signed aboard the Edward Bellamy and headed to Europe. We were sent to Normandy/Omaha, France with a load for General Patton. The General was moving too fast so they shifted us from port to port and orders finally came for us to take our load back to the states. We put in Boston, Baltimore, New York with this same load.

Finally, we were ordered to take this load out of the states and headed with it to the Pacific through the Panama

Canal. We finally dropped our load at Iroquois Point, Honolulu and remained about a month. Back to the states and spent the Christmas of 1944 in San Francisco, California. Then we returned to the islands- our second stop was Hollandia, New Guinea and then onto Leyte. It took us several days to unload due to ruff seas at Leyte plus we had a very sick young man we took on a life boat over to a hospital ship (he couldn't even sit up for his watches - they think he had leukemia). We eventually went onto Manila. After Okinawa fell we were sent south to New Guinea and onto Australia. I said "Heck we're on an excursion trip." We put in at New Castree, Australia later to Wollongong and Sydney Harbor and for what? I will never know but it was a great part of my service in A.G.

Finally in New Caledonia, we took on some nickel ore and headed back to the U.S. It took us about 51 days to get to Panama and this was the high light of my life in the Navy. We ran through the Canal with running lights on and port holes open. I thought I was on an Excursion ship. By Aug we put in New York and were told to store our guns, take the ammo off then detached from the ship. I put in for discharge and got to go immediately home. I returned to be discharged on October 3, 1945 went home and was married on October 18, 1945. I was on the Edward Bellamy for about 23 months.

I would like to add that my relations with the Merchant Crew was excellent, they were great men. Plus all the A.G. Crew was superior young men- the best. Now you know four years of Okey H. Ford's life. I am sending you a check to help out with the monies you have spent on materials, postage and to help keep up the good work.

God Bless You,
Okey H. Ford 5735 State Hwy 152,
Richmond, Oh. 43944 740-765-5327

DEDICATED TO ALL THE BBs OF WWII



USS NORTH CAROLINA (BB-55)

Class: North Carolina

Launched: June 13, 1940

At: New York Navy Yard, Brooklyn, New York

Commissioned: April 9, 1941

Length: 728 feet, 9 inches

Beam: 108 feet, 3 inches

Draft: 35 feet

Displacement: 36,600 tons

Armament: Nine 16-inch/45 caliber guns; twenty 5-inch/38 caliber guns; sixty 40mm Bofors guns; forty-eight 20mm guns

Address: North Carolina Battleship Memorial • PO Box 480 • Wilmington, NC 28402 • (910) 251-5797



The first of ten fast battleships built by the United States that saw service in World War II, North Carolina set a standard for new shipbuilding technology that combined high speed with powerful armament. Her superior performance during the Battle of the Eastern Solomons in August 1942 established the primary role of the fast battleship as a protector of the aircraft carrier. Her resiliency to battle damage was proven just a month later in the same area when North Carolina sustained a hit from a Japanese torpedo. Despite an 18 by 32 foot hole in her side, and following a short period to counterflood, she resumed a speed of 25 knots to regain position to protect her assigned aircraft carrier. North Carolina is the most decorated U.S. battleship of World War II with 15 battle stars, having participated in every major naval offensive in the Pacific from Guadalcanal to Tokyo Bay. She is also credited with kills of 24 aircraft, a merchantman and the bombardment of nine Imperial Japanese strongholds.

In 1947, "The Showboat" was decommissioned and placed in the reserve fleet in Bayonne, New Jersey. In 1960, a public subscription drive which received broad statewide support, including nickels and dimes from 700,000 school children, raised over \$325,000 to save the ship from the scrappers torches and provide a permanent home for the ship. Now moored on the Cape Fear River just across from downtown Wilmington, North Carolina. The battleship North Carolina is the

memorial for the 10,000 North Carolinians (men & women) of all the armed services who gave their lives in WW II. It is also a growing museum and a major tourist attraction. Painted in her most distinctive Measure 32 camouflage scheme of the war, with many spaces open and interpreted for visitors, and with changing exhibits, the battleship accurately depicts shipboard life of the period for visitors to experience.

USS North Carolina is a National Historic Landmark.



PERIODICAL — TIME SENSITIVE — PERIODICAL

LST Scuttlebutt

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MESSAGE FROM THE OFFICERS AND BOARD OF THE LST ASSOCIATION



Milan "Mike" Gunjak—U.S. LST Association President

The President of the U.S. LST Association has passed away after a short fight with colon cancer. Milan Michael Gunjak passed away peacefully surrounded by his loving family Friday, February 13, 2009, at Hospice of Northwest Ohio.

He was born in Toledo, Ohio on August 11, 1927, to Michael and Anna (Stanich) Gunjak. Mike enlisted in the U.S. Navy at 16 years of age to support World War II operations. He served our country proudly as a Seaman First Class in the U.S. Navy aboard USS LST 1149, which became the ARL 38/USS Krishna.

Mike was an active member of the United States National LST (Landing Ship Tank) Association. In 1985, he co-founded the U.S. LST Association with Don Kinney, LST 69; Robert Busch, LST 851; Melvin Barger, LST 555, and Wayne Hessemer, LST 573 in the Toledo area. All were former WWII U.S. Naval veterans who had served on an LST. He served as the secretary/treasurer from 1985 to 1989 and has been president of the U.S. LST Association since 1989. Membership of the Association had an all-time high of more than 10,000 people

in 2000 and a current membership of 5,800 members. Membership continues to decline due to attrition.

While he was President of the U.S. LST Association, he served as the President of the USS LST Ship Memorial, which was instrumental in bringing home the USS LST 325 from Greece to Mobile, Alabama, on January 10, 2000. His signature and an act of Congress in 1999 in a bill signed by President William Jefferson Clinton enabled the 28 WWII veterans in Crete to sail the USS LST 325 back home to America. He and his wife, Linda, were behind the scenes making sure the way was clear for the ship to come home and helped in obtaining donations to bring her home. Mike and Linda went to British Petroleum (BP) Refining and asked for a donation of diesel fuel to bring her home. Dan Waterfield of BP was only asked for 15,000 gallons and was able to provide 50,000 gallons to the LST Ship Memorial. With the help of Priscilla Roberts, it happened in a matter of two weeks.

He was a guest speaker at the 1994 decommissioning of the USS LST 1197, Barnstable County at Little Creek Naval Base, Virginia, and also

was a guest speaker in 2000 at the decommissioning of the USS LST 1184, Frederick at Pearl Harbor Naval Base, Hawaii. While on vacation in Hawaii, Mike met Capt. Thomas Johnson of the USS LST 1184, Frederick. He had the privilege of joining the crew of the USS LST 1184 on her cruise from Hawaii to San Diego, before she was decommissioned. While on board, he realized the navy had changed from the time the WWII vets served. Sailors were constantly studying for their next testing cycle and not playing cards. This is the new navy, not the navy he remembered as a young man. He stated he would sail with them anytime.

In 1992 and 1998, he was invited to lay a wreath at The Tomb of the Unknown Soldiers in Arlington, Virginia. This was quite an honor for a person who is not a diplomat or a government official. He was invited to the groundbreaking of the World War II Memorial, in Washington D.C., in 1996.

He worked as a truck driver for more than 35 years. He is survived by his wife of 30 years, Linda Gunjak, corresponding secretary of the U.S. LST Association.

If you would like to make memorial contributions in Mike's name, please donate to: Hospice of North West Ohio, 30000 East River Road, Perrysburg, Ohio 43551 or the United States Navy Memorial, 701 Pennsylvania Avenue NW #123, Washington D.C. 20004.

Taking over as President of the U.S. LST Association is Robert Busch.

We will continue with all aspects of running the association smoothly and hope to get everything done in a timely manner. Nick Leonoudakis, chairman of the board, will assist Mr. Busch at this time.

Linda will continue with her duties, so if you need something you can reach her at the 800 number in the evening. It is a very busy time right now. If you would like to send a card, please send it to: United States LST Association, P.O. Box 167438, Oregon, Ohio 43616-7438.

Another item that is of importance is the ad hoc committee; they have sent some of you a proposal of how we should run our association. At this time, our lawyer is reviewing it and will let us know what we should do. They think we do not run our association in an efficient manner and want

us to turn our group over to an outside firm and buy new software for our membership program, accounting and have a travel agency plan our reunions. One other item that they propose is cutting back on issues of the paper. We are mailing out six issues a year they want to cut it back to four. In our by-laws, it says six and as far as we are concerned it will stay that way.

They have proposed that the jobs that are preformed by Jackie, Laura and Linda can be done in 70 hours. If that is so, they must be super-human. They fail to remember that we do this on a monthly time-table, not yearly. This way the dues monies come in monthly, not yearly, and cash flow is coming in monthly to pay the bills. They don't have a clue to what is done every month. Just because we don't use the most updated version of a program doesn't mean it doesn't do the job. Everyone has been happy with the way the paper is put out and when you need a list of names from your ship you always get it. We try to do what you want.

The opinion of the officers and board is we are not bowing down to them and letting them run our association. It has run smoothly since 1985, without a small amount of problems, so let's hear from you, good or bad. We are available if you wish to contact us, our addresses are on page 3 and do include phone numbers. Don't hesitate calling anyone on the board.

Please send your opinions to the United States LST Association, P.O. Box 167438, Oregon, Ohio 43616-7438.

TO ALL LST MEMBERS

As of February 1, I have been asked to step up and take the job of president of our association.

I do hope to do a good job for all of you.

I do feel quite sure of myself, because Linda and I will work together and we have a strong board chairman and he will be my backbone.

I would appreciate all of your support. I will need it.

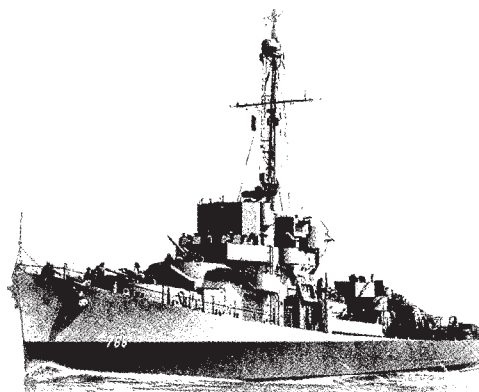
Robert "Bob" Busch, LST 851
President of the U.S. LST Association

Let's all keep Mike in our prayers.

USS SLATER DE 766

U.S.S. SLATER DE 766 *Destroyer Escort Historical Museum*

PO Box 1926
Albany, NY 12201-1926
Phone (518) 431-1943 Fax (518) 432-1123
www.ussslater.org



January 23, 2009

USN Armed Guard WWII Veterans
115 Wall Creek Drive
Rolesville, NC 27571

Dear Shipmates,

On behalf of the staff and volunteers of the SLATER, I want to thank you for your generous donation of \$100.00 to the Winter Fund which will help keep the SLATER open for restoration work throughout the winter.

The four months that we are closed to the public resulting in no visitor income is the most difficult time of the year for us. It is only through your generosity that we are able to keep the SLATER open during these months allowing the volunteers to continue their restoration efforts.

Our major projects this winter will be putting the finishing touches on the forward heads and beginning the restoration of the aft engine room (B3).

The Destroyer Escort Historical Museum is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law. Our federal ID number is 14-1836568. No goods or services were obtained from us in return for this donation and you should retain this letter as proof of your gift.

We continue to believe that the USS SLATER is now every DE to every DE sailor. In 2009 we will expand our efforts to attract school children and visitors to the museum so the legacy of service of the Destroyer Escort Sailors will not be forgotten. We thank you for your kindness.

Sincerely,

Timothy C. Rizzuto
Executive Director

Thanks so much!

Thanks for protecting us – USN Armed Gaurd!
I hope someday the USS Slater can sail with the
SS John W. Brown.

SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN



SS JEREMIAH O'BRIEN

SS Jeremiah O'Brien, also known as *Jeremiah O'Brien (Liberty ship)*, is a Liberty ship built during World War II and named for American Revolutionary War ship captain Jeremiah O'Brien (1744–1818). Now based in San Francisco, the O'Brien is a rare survivor of the 6,939-ship armada^[3] that stormed Normandy on D-Day, 1944,^[4]^[5] and one of only two currently operational WWII Liberty ships afloat of the 2,751 built during the war (the other being the SS John W. Brown based in Baltimore).

HISTORY

Built in just 57 days at the New England Shipbuilding Corporation in South Portland, Maine, and launched on 19 June 1943, this class EC2-S-CI ship not only made four perilous round trip wartime crossings of the Atlantic and served on D-Day, the vessel later saw sixteen months of service in both the South Pacific and the Indian Ocean calling at ports in Chile, Peru, New Guinea, the Philippines, India, China, and Australia.

The end of the war caused most of the Liberty ships to be removed from service in 1946 and many were subsequently sold to foreign and domestic buyers. Others were retained by the

U.S. Maritime Commission for potential reactivation in the event of future military conflicts. The O'Brien was mothballed and remained in the National Defense Reserve Fleet in Suisun Bay for 33 years. In the 1970's, however, the idea of preserving an unaltered Liberty Ship began to be developed and, under the sponsorship of Rear Admiral Thomas J. Patterson, USMS, (then the Western Regional Director of the U.S. Maritime Administration) the ship was put aside for preservation instead of being sold for scrap. Possession of the O'Brien was taken in 1979 by the National Liberty Ship Memorial, an all volunteer group, to be restored. Amazingly, those who volunteered to resurrect the mothballed ship were able get the antiquated machinery plant operating while the vessel remained in Suisun Bay, and after more than three decades of sitting in rusting idleness, the O'Brien's boilers were lit; and on 21 May 1980, the ship left the mothball fleet — the only similar vessel ever to do so under her own power^[citation needed] — for San Francisco Bay, drydocking, and thousands of more hours of restoration work. The ship then moved to Fort Mason, on the San Francisco waterfront just to the west of Fisherman's wharf. There the O'Brien became a floating museum dedicated to the men and women who built and sailed the ships of United States Merchant Marine in WWII. The ship also makes several passenger-carrying

daylight cruises each year in the San Francisco Bay Area, and occasional voyages to more distant ports such as Seattle and San Diego.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF D-DAY

SS Jeremiah O'Brien underway in San Pablo Bay on August 27, 2005, as seen from the aft steering station.

In 1994 the O'Brien, in its eighth voyage, (the previous seven were during WWII) steamed through the Golden Gate, down the west coast, through the Panama Canal, and across the Atlantic to England and France, where the O'Brien and its crew (a volunteer crew of veteran WWII-era sailors and a few cadets from the California Maritime Academy) participated in the 50th Anniversary of Operation Overlord, the allied invasion of Normandy that turned the tide of WWII in Europe... the only large ship from the original Normandy flotilla to return for the 50th anniversary celebration.

The SS Jeremiah O'Brien was designated a National Historic Landmark, and is docked at Pier 45 at Fisherman's Wharf, San Francisco, California. It also hosts the amateur radio station K6JOB.

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THE
S.S. LANE VICTORY**



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We will be away from our berth starting February 22, 2009 for drydock.

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P.O. BOX 629

SAN PEDRO, CA 90733-0629

Phone 310.519.9545 Fax 310.519.0265

S.S. JOHN W. BROWN



Photo by Joan Burke, Project Liberty Ship, 2002

Class: EC2-S-C1 Type Liberty Ship
Launched: September 7, 1942
At: Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard, Baltimore, Maryland

Length: 441 feet, 7 inches
Beam: 57 feet
Draft: 27 feet, 9 inches
Displacement: 14,245 tons
Gross Tonnage: 7,176 tons
Deadweight Tonnage: 10,920 long tons
Armament: Three 3-inch/50 caliber guns; one 5-inch/51 caliber gun; eight 20mm guns.

Address:
Project Liberty Ship, Inc.
Box 25846
Highlandtown Station
Baltimore, Maryland 21224-0564
Ship: (410) 558-0646
Fax: (410) 558-1737
Email: john.w.brown@usa.net
Email (for overnight encampments):
cjnemec@sparkchasers.org
<http://www.liberty-ship.com>
Latitude: 39.267888, Longitude: -76.56993
Google Maps, MS Local Live, Yahoo Maps, Mapquest

SS JOHN W. BROWN

One of only two surviving fully operational Liberty ships preserved in the U.S., SS John W. Brown is a product of the Emergency Shipbuilding Program that built more than 2,700 liberty ships during World War II. Designed for quick and relatively easy construction, Liberty ships made possible the massive sealift of troops, arms, and material to all theaters of the war. The Brown was built in 56 days by the Bethlehem-Fairfield Shipyard in Baltimore.

The Brown made 13 voyages during and immediately after the war. Those voyages took her to the Persian Gulf,

the Mediterranean Sea, and northern Europe. The Brown was at the Anzio beachhead and was part of the invasion force at Operation Dragoon, the invasion of southern France in August 1944. The Brown was awarded the merchant marine Victory Medal, the Combat Bar, and war zone medals for the Atlantic, the Mediterranean/Middle East, and the Pacific theaters.

After carrying Marshall Plan cargos to Europe to aid in post-war rebuilding, the ship was used as a vocational high school in New York City from 1946 to 1982. She was then returned to the James River Reserve Fleet until

acquired by Project Liberty Ship in 1988. The Brown has been fully restored and is an operating museum ship and memorial. She is the only operating Liberty ship on the east coast. The ship conducts 6-hour Living History Cruises about four times a year and travels to other east coast ports. The schedule and other details of the cruises are available on the web site or by calling 410 558-0164.

John W. Brown is listed in the National Register of Historic Places and has received the World Ship Trust's prestigious Maritime Heritage Award.

****SEE NEXT PAGE FOR INFO****



Spend a day in 1944 aboard Baltimore's restored Liberty Ship John W. Brown



2009 Cruises on the Chesapeake Bay

May 23, June 13, and September 12

Last day to order tickets is 2 weeks before the cruise

The exciting six hour day cruise on features: continental breakfast, luncheon buffet, afternoon snacks and beverages; **live big band music** of the 40's; **Abbott & Costello**; military reenactors; historical reenactment; barbershop music; **flybys** (weather permitting) of wartime aircraft, with the ship's Armed Guard gunners manning the guns to fight off **attacking Axis planes**. The ship is open for tours, tour museum spaces, crew quarters, bridge, messrooms, troop berthing and much more. View the magnificent 140-ton **triple-expansion steam engine** as it powers the great ship through the water.

Tickets are \$140 each Group rates available

Last day to order tickets is 14 days before the cruise

Conditions and penalties apply to cancellations

Please include the names of all passengers
(First & last names must be the same as on Photo ID)

Phone Orders: (410) 558-0164

Mail order: Project Liberty Ship, Attn: Cruises
P.O. Box 25846, Baltimore, Maryland 21224-0546

Order forms available online at: www.liberty-ship.com

Discover/ MasterCard/ Visa accepted.

Project Liberty Ship is a Baltimore based, all volunteer, nonprofit organization.

144,970 USN ARMED GUARD served on them in WW II 1810 KIAs.

Approx. 300,000 Merchant Seamen served with Approx. 8762 KIAs.



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



The USN Armed Guard WW II Veterans and The American Merchant Marine Veterans will hold their first joint National Reunion together May 14-18, 2009 at The Double Tree Hotel Westmore, Tampa, FL 33607. The AG were the Navy Gun Crews and the MM ran the ships; cargo, troopships, tankers or where need be. They served and sailed together and with 1810 AG KIAs of the 144,970 and approx. 8762 MM KIAs out of the approximately 300,000 who served. They died and suffered together. They endured. We salute all that lived through these trying times.



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