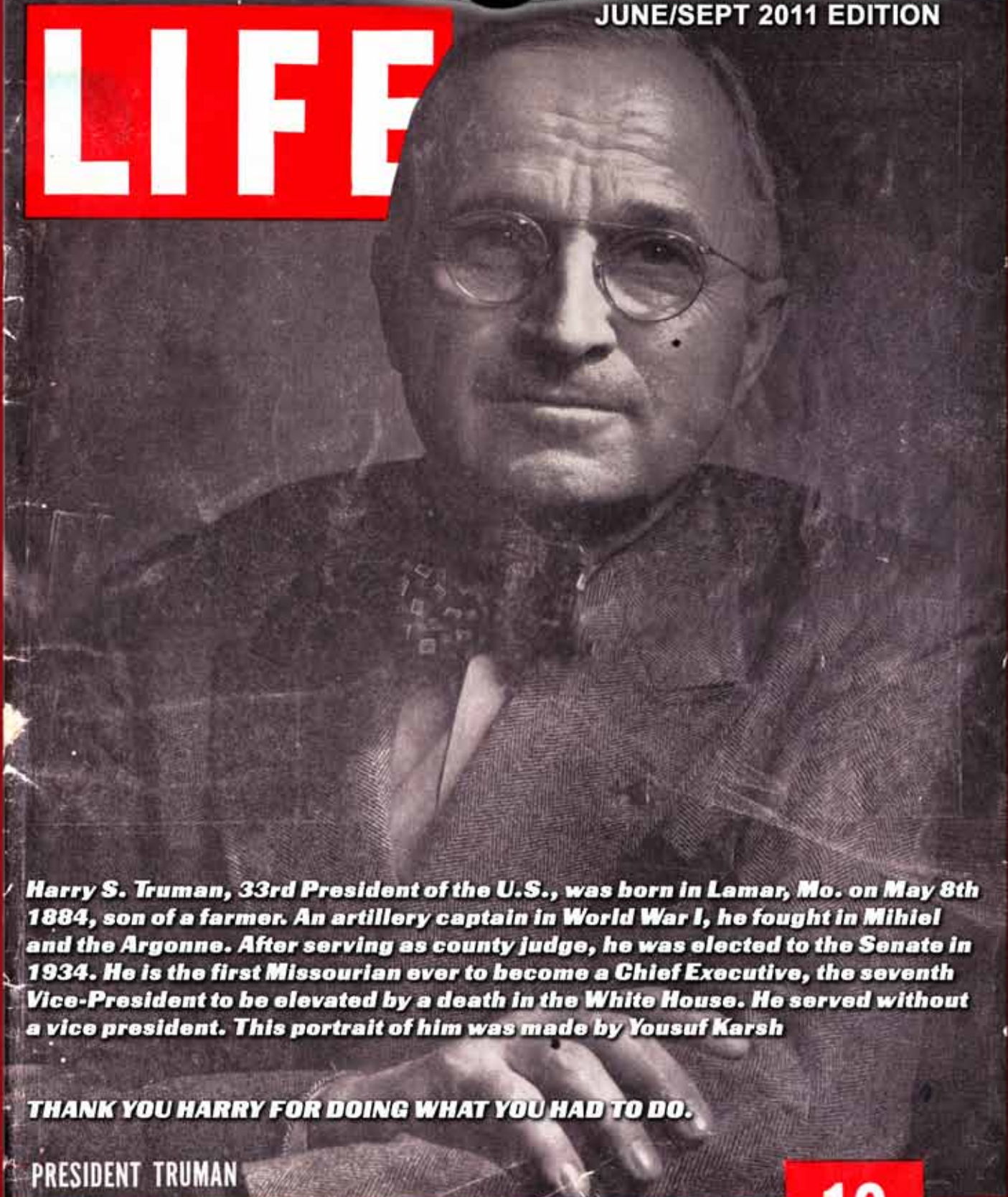


# THE POINTER

JUNE/SEPT 2011 EDITION

# LIFE



**Harry S. Truman, 33rd President of the U.S., was born in Lamar, Mo. on May 8th 1884, son of a farmer. An artillery captain in World War I, he fought in Mihiel and the Argonne. After serving as county judge, he was elected to the Senate in 1934. He is the first Missourian ever to become a Chief Executive, the seventh Vice-President to be elevated by a death in the White House. He served without a vice president. This portrait of him was made by Yousuf Karsh**

**THANK YOU HARRY FOR DOING WHAT YOU HAD TO DO.**

**PRESIDENT TRUMAN**

APRIL 23, 1945 **10** CENTS  
BY SUBSCRIPTION: TWO YEARS \$8.50



# ***ARMED GUARD MEETING ALABAMA***

See page 9



***From left to right are Richard Lowe, Bill Ridley, Harold Smith and Gene Pugh.***

## ***FLIGHT OF HONOR***

See page 10



# THE POINTER



Dear Armed Guard Crew and everyone,

Sept., 2011

*So sorry for the delay in getting out another POINTER but with the fires in Texas and else wheres; tornados in Joplin, Mo.; in Alabama; in Raleigh, N.C. and touching down again on the way here and popping a pine tree in yard next to us, it's hard to get down as what to say. And then the other tornadoes, floods in the midwest, plus, the drought and 104 degree weather, the Irene Hurricane, etc. . We got some rain and cooled us down and soon the summer will be over and we will start complaining how cold it is, so here goes.*

*For those of you who have computers and never thought about how to get WW II History info, here is a few suggestions. Go to GOOGLE and type in most any thing you want to know about: Port Chicago Tragedy WW II; Antwerp, Belgium WW II; S.S. Paul Hamilton WW II; Malta WW II; North Platte, Ne. WW II, PQ-17 WW II; PQ-18 WW II.; S.S. PAUL HAMILTON WW II; etc. are but a few. Always put WW II. Try it. If you don't have a computer, get your "grandchildren" to search for you!*

*As I was going though some letters sent in by the crew, I found one sent in back on Dec. 2010 by Jack Martin of Indiana that I had misplaced that I thought I'd like to share. It tells of his visit to the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN visit to R.I. in Sept. 2010. I called him to see if it was O.K. to put it in the POINTER and he said it was and that he and Nan had signed on to sail the Liberty Ship S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN in San Francisco this fall. His letter says it all. Jack sailed on 9 ships from 2/43-6/45 and 3 Fleet ships in 1951. Joe Colgan called to say the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN was in drydock with need for new plates and rivets. The riveters was scheduled to come to the BROWN but Irene messed them up. They need your donations if you are able to help keep her afloat, also.*

*There has been a slowdown in donations this year but, I guess that is understandable with the world financial conditions as they are. Approx. 545 total have donated as of Sept. 1, 2011. I am putting all who have not donated since 2005 on HOLD now. Those I hear from who donated in the year 2005 and before, can get any POINTERS missed by contacting me. I never thought I would see our country in such a mess but as the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt said that put hope in our people that brought us out of a depression-Quote: "THE ONLY THING WE HAVE TO FEAR- IS FEAR ITSELF."*

*Lou Tew has sent me his album of the Northeast Mini-Reunion in the past and it brought back many memories when I see so many of the friends who we have met over the years. I looked at several and in the background of some were the Twin Towers and then I think how in the world the countries that so many gave their lives for their Freedom, could turn against those who came to their rescue and could destroy the work of so many. Why???*

*Hilary Makowski , who organized and kept the Pittsburgh, Pa. crew together for over 18 years has sailed on to be with his Maker.*

*I have been informed that the guns and the plaque at the New Orleans has been removed and will be placed in the WW II Museum in New Orleans. It was already done without trying*

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

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& Sec. Treas. 1985-2011

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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

to contact any of our crew there who has tried to work with them without success in the past. I guess WW II history will soon be forgotten. That's the American way. I do hope they will save the Armed Guard history of Nola and Gulfport there. Story in next issue.

I have had the Life Magazine with the late Harry S. Truman picture on it for a long time and I thought it was time also for us to honor him on the cover of the POINTER so I have placed him there on this issue. A belated THANK YOU HARRY for ending the war, as I, plus so many more who had already suffered so much and were about to be in harm's way and run the risk of being killed with millions of the enemy who started the war. Look at your immediate family and the happiness you all have had and I am sure you will say "Thank you Lord." GOD BLESS AMERICA" (CAL)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★



Hi Charles, I was on a cruise in the Caribbean last Nov/Dec., when in one of the ports, I saw this good looking fellow with the Armed Guard cap on and we introduced ourselves and while standing on the curb we had a good conversation and a couple of good laughs. John Kozlowski and his wife, Josephine were on a cruise, too but they were on a different cruise ship. We wished each other well and then continued our respective ventures. Due to the short time in port, we did not get further acquainted. I did tell him I was on the S.S. Elk HILLS and he on the S.S. CHRISTIAN BERG. Enclosed is

a photo of two OLD SALTS and Josephine. (Photo by Hanna Norton)  
Leland Norton • 5178 Alderfield Pl.  
Vancouver, BC, Canada V7W 2W7  
604-926-6902 baum6902@telus.net

★ ★ ★

Thanks Norton for the photo and word that the Armed Guard sailors meet again. John is from 3603 Camden Ct., Auburn Hills, Mi. 48326 who was wearing his AG cap. (cal)



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

United State Armed Guard World War II Veteran Association. Firstly good days, this is (censored) and I am really very happy because you had written and you have tried helping me by yourself. I hadn't sent a message previously for you, because I hadn't access to internet previously, besides I must be careful because, if somebody at this country is caught getting in touch with through e-mail that nation, it will be demanded by the accusation of treason to the Cuban's government and it would be send in prison for some twenty years approximately. I not yet have looked for Web where you said that I should search, but I will do and don't be worried I will make you know about it. Neither I haven't gone to the United State Embassy in my country, on purpose, tell me one more thing, what apartment should I visit accurately in order that they may help me? My gratitude for you because you have helped me by yourself, however I need you help me with this last petition, I will make the results known for you and I'll be really grateful with you. I won't be available to sail across internet myself again even the day July 20, 2011, when I

go back to do it, I hope you've answered me, until then many thanks.  
My mail address is (Censored).  
Thanks you, good bye.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hello Charles, I was real happy to meet you and others at Bedford, Va. D-DAY Memorial on May 21st, 2011.

After I learned you would be there, I was going to make a SPICAL effort to be there. I wanted to meet you and shake your hand for all the information and POINTERS you have sent me and for the thousands of others like myself who gets the magazine. THANKS the upmost for I enjoy each and every one I have received. Great deed you have done.  
Welford Durrer  
18114 Lovers Ln.  
Gordonsville, Va. 22942

★ ★ ★

Durrer, It my pleasure to meet you and others in Bedford. It was an honor to represent the Armed Guard Veterans of WW II. I do hope those in the future who can afford it will support the expenses so the next generations will know the sacrifice the 19 Bedford boys of the 29 who hit the beaches at Normandy and were killed within 15 minutes. There is not another Memorial More meanful than this one as it is to all who served. (cal)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Charles,  
Thank you!!! I love reading the "POINTER". I don't know how you do it! I hope you will live forever. Enclosed you will find a little something to keep them coming.  
Nelson Smith, Stephen Hopkins  
Chapter AMMV  
705 NOLTE DR.,  
DALLAS, TX., 75208

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Lloyd, It was my pleasure to serve during WWII, thank you. It also helped



# LETTERS FROM THE CREW



me grow up. Yes, indeed, we had boot camp at Hunter College. Then it was down to the university in Milledgeville GA for training. We had all the pecans we wanted because the trees were planted everywhere on campus. Very fond memories that make me feel guilty because there was a war going on. Life is strange. In answer to an earlier question, no, I did not get any pictures of TI since I didn't have a camera, much to my dismay. And I lived off base because they didn't have enough barracks for us as we were the first batch of Waves on TI. Fortunately, my mother lived in the area, and I was able to live at home. I was a native Californian.  
Evelyn Welch



P.S.I shall take exception to the fact that women are not mentioned as part of the Armed Guard also! We, at Treasure Island CA, paid "y'all" in the 12th Naval command so that you could keep rolling along. And how in the world did you get my email address, let alone find me??? As you too have undoubtedly learned, people's eyebrows go up when Armed Guard is mentioned, but there are a few who have heard of them now - after 65 years.  
Evelyn (Lyon, Charles) Welch

★ ★ ★

On July 17, 2011, at 12:41 PM, CA Lloyd wrote: If you get this; click on [www.armed-guard.com](http://www.armed-guard.com) and then, look at POINTERS and get back to me. (cal)

SEE PAGE 18 FOR  
REST OF THE STORY

★ ★ ★

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Cal,  
I want to THANK YOU again for all you and others have done to keep the memory of the WW II Armed Guard alive. Attached is a small token of my appreciation. Last summer while we were staying in Michigan, I went on that PRIDE and HONOR trip to Washington, D.C.. I had seen the Wall before but the WW II Memorial and the Korean Memorial was new to me.  
Charles B. Wilson  
8393 E. Jumping Colla  
Gold Canyon, Az. 85218

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Cal, I just participated in the 2nd W. Central Florida Honor Flight to Washington, D.C.. What a wonderful thing these people are doing-- Honoring WW II Veterans--Army, Air Force, Navy, Marines, Coast Guard and the Merchant Marines. The Honor Flights provides escorts, food and an all expense trip. We visited all the Memorials and as long as a veteran who has no been is able to get on a plane or bus, the Honor Flight will take them with an escort.

They are organized in all States. CHECK IT OUT, VETERANS!!  
Cal, THANKS for the POINTERS.  
Donald S. Johnson • 9923 Brookdale Dr.  
New Port Richey, Fl. 34655

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Mr. Lloyd, I am writing this letter to you for my grandfather, John "Jack" Donaghy. He was a Merchant Marine

in WW II. He served from August of 1942 until March 1946. He wanted to THANK YOU for continually sending him the issues of "THE POINTER."

Reading them provides him with a lot of enjoyment and the information provided in the issues, as it offers a good understanding as to what went on in the lives of Merchant Seamen for family and friends such as myself.

Also enclosed are copies of Jack's discharge papers and an article out of our local newspaper about Jack and a small excerpt from the Vacuum Oil News about my great uncle, Clifford Gaines who was KIA and an article on Sun Oil Ships that were sunk during WW II.

Your work to keep the memories alive about WW II is greatly appreciated. Enclosed is a donation check to keep it going. Wishes for good health and happiness to you and your wife, Hilda.  
Sincerely, John Gaines. (for )  
John P. Donaghy • 922 Thornton Rd.  
Boothwyn, Pa. 19061  
610-485-1856

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear C.A., Jay Wildfong asked me to write of our Illinois/Wisconsin Veteran's 10 bus tour to the WW II Memorial in Washington, D.C.. Mark and John Finnegan of South Beloit, Il. believed that Veterans of WW II and Korea should be Honored for their heroic efforts so they did something no one else had done before and the founded the VETSROLL program and they, and hundreds more, from Beloit made it possible for 200 Veterans to go FREE and 111 of the Volunteers, who paid their own way, to take a 10 bus load crew to D.C. and we were escorted out of town by flag-bearing motorcycle crew at 5:30 A.M. on 5/16/11.

Along the way, the veterans were welcomed as heroes. We spent the night

# LETTERS FROM THE CREW

near Pittsburgh, Pa. and to the site of Flight 93 downing on September 11 where a shadowbox was presented as a memorial. Our next stop was at the Gateway Restaurant in Breezewood, Pa. for lunch and adults and children lined up to welcome us. We were so blessed by this out-pouring of genuine appreciation of our service. Hagerstown, Md. was our next stop and dinner at the Western Sizzlin Restaurant and a welcome session by Mayor Robert E. Buchey II and MAIL CALL. This was highly emotional with tears flowing. Family, friends and school children had sent mail ahead, thanking us in their own way for our service.

Since we were told "REVEILLE" would be 3 A.M., we were tucked in at 8 P.M. and sure enough, 3 A.M., reveille was sounded and breakfast was served and on to Arlington National Cemetery and the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. After the changing of the Guard, we were fortunate to witness the funeral procession led by a full Company of U.S. Marines in full dress uniform, Marine band, the horseless rider while a 21 gun salute boomed. Our guide said she had never seen that in her many years working there.

At 11:30 AM, all ten coaches arrived at the WW II Memorial and saw the 4,000 gold stars there on the Memorial's Freedom Wall to the more than 400,000 who gave their all.

At Noon, we gathered at the Illinois Pillar for a talk by our guide. We assembled for a group photo and headed to the Lincoln Memorial. We also stopped at the Korean Memorial honoring those who died during that war.

At 4 P.M., it was time to return to the Ramada Inn and prepare for our long journey back to Beloit that began at 5 A.M. the next morning. We were escorted through Pennsylvania; Ohio; Indiana and Illinois by the State Police to Beloit to a tremendous celebration. It appeared that



**Leaning on rail, Radioman Sidney Levine • Signalman Joe Perrow • Radioman Cecil Ray - pointing at dud bomb • Radioman Lt. Hugh Bish (Navy)**

the whole town of Beloit was there to welcome us home. As we entered town, we were met by many fire trucks, police and others escorting us to the Eclipse Center for a huge celebration. There was fireworks, sirens wailing and huge crowds of well-wishers thanking us for our service. As we exited our coaches, people were lined up as we entered the auditorium. After a short ceremony, the trip ended and it was time to return to reality. It was a most memorable journey that will remain as a highlight of our lives for as long as we live. Jay Wildfong, of Sturtevant, Wi., Delbert Dauenbaugh and C.L. Thompson, both of Rockford, Il. and I, John Neven, were the Armed Guard on the trip. Our caps are off to Mark and John Finnegan and all the wonderful volunteers that gave us the opportunity to finally be welcomed home as veterans after many decades. (John Neven-Huntley, Il. AG.

★ ★ ★

*John, I made the April 19, 2011 flight out of RDU with 99 more WW II Veterans and their "CARETAKERS."*

*I had the opportunity to push a 92 year old blind Veteran around the Memorial. He had seen the memorial built so he knew where everything was as he had gone blind since it was built. Those who have not been, sign up and go even if you are blind or can't walk.*

*They will take care of you. (cal)*



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hi Charles, Again, Greetings from colorful Colorado. Just a note to THANK YOU and all the helpers for all you are doing and being the driving forces in keeping the U.S.N. Armed Guard WW II organization alive and well. Enclosed, please find a little help with the expenses. I always look forward to the POINTERS arriving. I am also enclosing an article that I wrote some time ago (SEE PAGE 19). I have never submitted it to THE POINTER. I thought you might be interesting in including it in some future issue as it is about our time and the invasion of the

# LETTERS FROM THE CREW

Philippines for the return of General Douglas McArthur. Also, a picture of a DUD bomb that fell on our ship showing R to L, Lt. Hugh Bish (Navy), Cecil Ray (Radioman pointing to the bomb), Joe Pearson, Signalman (with periscope) and Sidney Livine, Radioman. (leaning on the rail)  
Cecil Ray • 2580 Patriot Heights  
Colorado Springs, Co. 80904

★ ★ ★

*After getting most of this POINTER ready, I find Cecil's letter that I had looked for and as I read it, I remembered the others writing about the DUD bomb. What a coincident. Y'all had been wanting something on the Pacific so this POINTER is fill with this area of the war. (cal)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Charles, Thanks again for all the POINTERS you have had published and have sent to me. I was a signalman and shipped out of Brooklyn, N.Y. and I really liked my job in the Navy and did the best I could. I am proud and Thankful I was able to serve my country and I pray that we stay Free and the Politicians do not destroy our way of life.  
God Bless.  
John S. Stirling  
2901 Windsor Forest Dr.  
Louisville, Ky 40272 • 502-933-2343

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Charlie, Just a little note to let you know how much I enjoy the POINTER. At the age of 90, re-living my experiences through the POINTER gives me a sense of being 20 again and enjoying the good times we had as well as the bad. I am a member of the local Armed Guard and we are down to 12 members. Please accept my donation of this fine magazine.  
Anthony Zannie • 6206 N. Radcliffe St.  
Bristol, Pa. 19007

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

**Dear Lloyd,**

**For years we drove to Florida. Now we fly.**  
**Last November we flew out of New Hampshire.**  
**Just before we took off a male voice announced**  
**"We have an important personage aboard, a**  
**veteran of WW2, USN". Just before we set down**  
**in Chicago, that same voice intoned "Please**  
**allow the veteran to deplane first". Talk about 15**  
**minutes of fame. I was wearing my Armed Guard**  
**white hat. If you have any more would**  
**appreciate a new one. See If I get the same**  
**response going home. Thanks. (This machine**  
**has a mind of its own)**

**Al Gosselin**

**2626 NE Hwy. 70**

**Arcadia, Fla.**

**34266 lot 88**

Dear C.A., I am sorry to report that Al Gosselin, whom you had an article about on Page 49 of the Mar/May 2011 edition of the POINTER, passed away June 19th. He was so proud of his Armed Guard and his cap you sent him that brought attention on our Florida flight. We sent it to heaven with him. Thank you so much. Alice Gosselin, Arcadia, Fla.

★ ★ ★

*Alice, In behalf of the Crew, our condolences are extended to you, family and friends. (cal)*

Dear Cal,  
I received the Mar/May POINTER the other day and really look forward to getting it. You will find enclosed a check to help. I am going on 94 in December and we are not getting any younger. You called me about a year ago to write an article on Convoy PQ-18. Well, there is so much to write about. I believe, with all my time in the Navy, it was the Armed Guard duty I loved the most. You have had a lot of the guys tell you some things about PQ-18 and they told you about the bad weather we had. First, we had to go North past Spitzbergen which is only 500 miles from the North Pole to keep away from the long range bombers and we ended up in Archangel, Russia.

Trying to get into dock was so bad, the Russian ship pilots could not come out to take the ship in so the Captain was told to bring the ship in. We had to go through a channel which was kind of narrow and our ship and a couple of others ran aground. It even blew a British escort ship high and dry onto the beach. We lost both anchors and were stuck in the mud. The Germans flew over us and dropped bombs so close to the ship that mud used to fly over parts of the ship. The captain then gave orders to abandon the ship. We all took to two lifeboats. It was hard rowing as the weather was so bad. Our lifeboats hit the bottom so we had to get out and push the boats ashore. The bad part of that was we had to get into water above our waist and it was cold! When we got



# LETTERS FROM THE CREW



to shore, we gathered up quite a bit of driftwood and made a "lean to" like we used to do on the farm, built a fire and dried some of our clothing. We were on that island two days and two nights and it was rough!

Well, Cal, there is a whole lot more on PQ-18 but I will end this part here. I had two trips to Russia and for me, that was enough. The second ship to Russia was the S.S. WILLIAM WEBB. I was on four different ships. I was in the invasion of Sicily on the 29th of July 1943 with the 9th Army and in June 1944, we got in to Gurrock, Scotland



on D-Day. They unloaded our ship and sent us up the River Clyde in Scotland.

They stripped our ship and made a troop ship out of her and for about two months, we took Patton's third and fourth Army Division into Normandy beachheads. I believe I could fill the POINTER with my experiences. I am sending a few pictures including Albert F. Wohlers who you said you met in K. C. Mo. reunion and you said he gave you his Purple Heart for injuries that you placed on the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN. I am also sending you a picture of myself with a beard on the 2nd trip to Russia. My best to you, Cal and keep up the great work.

Roswell J. Ortt  
7439 Pinehurst Dr.  
Springhill, Fl. 34606

★★★★★★★★

Cal, Hope this helps keep the POINTER going. Really enjoy them, The picture of the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn brought back a few memories. I spent a few nights in the "BIG BARN" during my time in the AG. I am still going to the meetings with Arnold Latare and the crew once a month. He is a very nice gentleman. Our group is like everyone else's, getting smaller and smaller. Keep up the

good work. I don't see how you do it.  
Jerry Wallace  
981 8th Ave NW  
Altoona, Ia. 50009.

★★★★★★★★

Mr. Lloyd, For many years, I worked with the late Tom Bowerman searching for The Armed Guard Crew. I contacted hundreds of veterans and helped them look up former shipmates and renew old acquaintances. Many joined the Association and were happy to hear from old shipmates. As a result of numerous calls around the country, I happened to meet an Air Force Veteran. We became good friends and were later married. We are happily living in Florida. If any would still like to contact me, they can do so.

Thanks,  
Agnes Bridger Bast  
62 Strathmore Blvd.  
Sarasota, Fl. 34233  
941-377-0954

★★★★★★★★

Hi Cal, Enclosed is a check for the POINTER. Hope all's well with you and Hilda so stay that way. By the way, the article in the Mar/May POINTER about the convoy that left Sicily on Dec. 31 was a real New Years show. I re-



# LETTERS FROM THE CREW

member it well as I was in that one. The Germans flew right over us. You could see the flames from the engines. If they would have caught that convoy in Sicily, it would have been a disaster. So, the next time that shipmate writes, tell him he was so right about it. It was the first time I had been in Naples since September via North Africa. We were finally headed home. So, he verified what I had always told my buddy about that night. Thank you C.A. for all you have done and still do. Thank and Bless you both.

Conrad Will  
539 Cincinnati Ave.,  
Egg Harbor, N.J. 08315  
609-965-2600

★ ★ ★

*Conrad was a GM 3/C on the S.S. THOMAS TODD at the time 3/43-11/43 and later sailed the USED WILLIAM T.ROSSELL, an Ocean going tug and found many of his shipmates. (cal)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Mr. C.A. Lloyd, I write in regards to the article on Page 47 Mar/May POINTER, concerning the S.S. MUNGER T. BALL crew being gunned by a sub. The crew of the S.S. WILLIAM K. VANDERBILT was also strafed by a Japanese sub off Suva, Fiji Island after being sunk May 16, 1943. I have proof in my leg yet today. Just had to say something to let you know. Keep up the good work. C.G. Newton, 1759 Royal Way, San Luis Obispo, Ca. 93405

★ ★ ★

*Capt. Art. Moore's book, "A CARELESS WORD, A NEEDLESS SINKING" tells of the gun crew staying aboard after the first torpedo but abandoning ship and walked off the stern and was picked up by the lifeboats. The sub surfaced and cruised between and among the survivors and machine gunned one of the lifeboats and two rafts. When the sub approached in the dark, the men slid into the water and hid under the rafts and the survivors heard laughter coming from the sub. 56 survivors were rescued May 17, 2011 by the USS DASH. (cal)*

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear C.A., Again, THANKS A MILLION for what you do on the "POINTER." The day it comes, my wife knows I am not good for anything else until I have read it cover to cover. In the Mar/May issue, I found a few references to our town - PORT ARTHUR, TEXAS and also mention of ships I watched pass in the canal, about 300' from my home. I guess that is why I was a selective volunteer to the Navy. I watched many a ship go by as a boy growing up. My experiences were not as dramatic as most in the POINTER but I wouldn't trade them for the world. Our Seamen's Center recently had their program for the Merchant Seamen and Navy Seamen lost at sea. It is held at a huge memorial SUN DIAL. A wreath is deposited in the canal during the ceremony. Many THANKS for all the work on the POINTER. Smooth sailing to all. Ralph E. Burch, (SM)  
4220-36 th St., Port  
Arthur, Tx. 77642  
409-963-8955  
BOATBOY8432@ATT.NET

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Mr. Lloyd, You have honored me for a number of years with MM-HON behind my name membership. I have been very grateful for the receipt of the POINTER and have shared them with classmates and other graduates of the UNITED STATES Merchant Marine Academy at King's Point. As a 1950 graduate, the days of the USN Armed Guard's service had ended before I actively sailed, but, I appreciate their service aboard ships that my father, a marine engineer, had served on during WW II. The enclosed check is intended to help you to continue to publish such an excellent periodical.  
Ronald L. Tarbox Jr. Lcdr, USN (Ret)  
7787 Tommy St. Apt 14,  
San Diego, Ca. 92119

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Cal, I'll never forget entering the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, N.Y.. The movement of all the Navy coming and going. Some of the men had already survived the sinking of their ship and some injured. I felt like I was in another world right there in Brooklyn, N.Y.. It was a long time ago. I heard about the Armed Guard WW Veterans Association in 1992 and have had the great pleasure of receiving the POINTER and the great stories it brings. I will always be proud of my service in the Armed Guard. I am sending another donation to help out and to keep the POINTER going. All the best and best to all.

James Montesarcio  
800 Bronx, River Rd.  
Bronxville, N.Y. 10708

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Dear Mr. Lloyd, You are such a busy man that I hate to call upon your help, but it's real important. I need to get a photo that was in the last "Pointer" for Mr. Gene Pugh. He promised me that he would begin to record his memoirs if I could get a copy of that photo of the S. S. Dashing Wave located on the inside back cover of the last "Pointer" for him without my E-mail on it. He loves how the photo is superimposed or whatever the official term for it is.

I feel that he would get a better copy of it if we went through you instead of me trying to xerox and cut and paste it. It will lose some of the color and shading doing it my way. I hope my request isn't too great. We don't know what tomorrow will bring. I want him to get started now writing down all that he can remember that he went through for his family and families to come.

I also attended their Armed Guard meeting with my dad and mom yesterday in Alabama. There are only 4 of them left in the group. I took a picture with my phone that I thought you might enjoy of them holding the Armed Guard flag that

# LETTERS FROM THE CREW

I had purchased from you. \*\*SEE INSIDE FRONT COVER\*\* They seem to cherish their times when they get together quarterly. The men in the photo from left to right are Richard Lowe, Bill Ridley, Harold Smith and Gene Pugh. If there is anything I can do to help accomplish the request that Gene Pugh has asked, I will be glad to.

Just let me know. I hope you and your wife are doing well and staying cool this summer. I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

Dayla Newton

410 Broadmeadow Ct.

Roswell, GA 30075

770-992-0926

[dadnew@mindspring.com](mailto:dadnew@mindspring.com)

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

Hi Howard and Charles, Here are the pictures that Robert Burton's daughter Lynn took of us yesterday. I realized I should have told you both that Robert is blind, a degenerative eye disease that is genetic. That's why I took him by the arm...he has decided he would like to have a wheelchair on the 19th and I think that will be easier on him and I. When we are in DC I will be doing my best to describe things to him, but if you guys would like to chime in and explain things also I know you know a lot more about a lot of the things we will see than I do. I hate he won't be able to see everything you all will - other than that he is in great shape.

If you would like to email him for any reason his wife Joan's email address is [jburtun1930@yahoo.com](mailto:jburtun1930@yahoo.com). It was so great to meet you both yesterday - if any of you would like for me to swing by your house and talk a little more about the trip or anything, just let me know - I have the next 3 days off and will be in Raleigh Monday for an appointment. - I'd really love to visit



★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

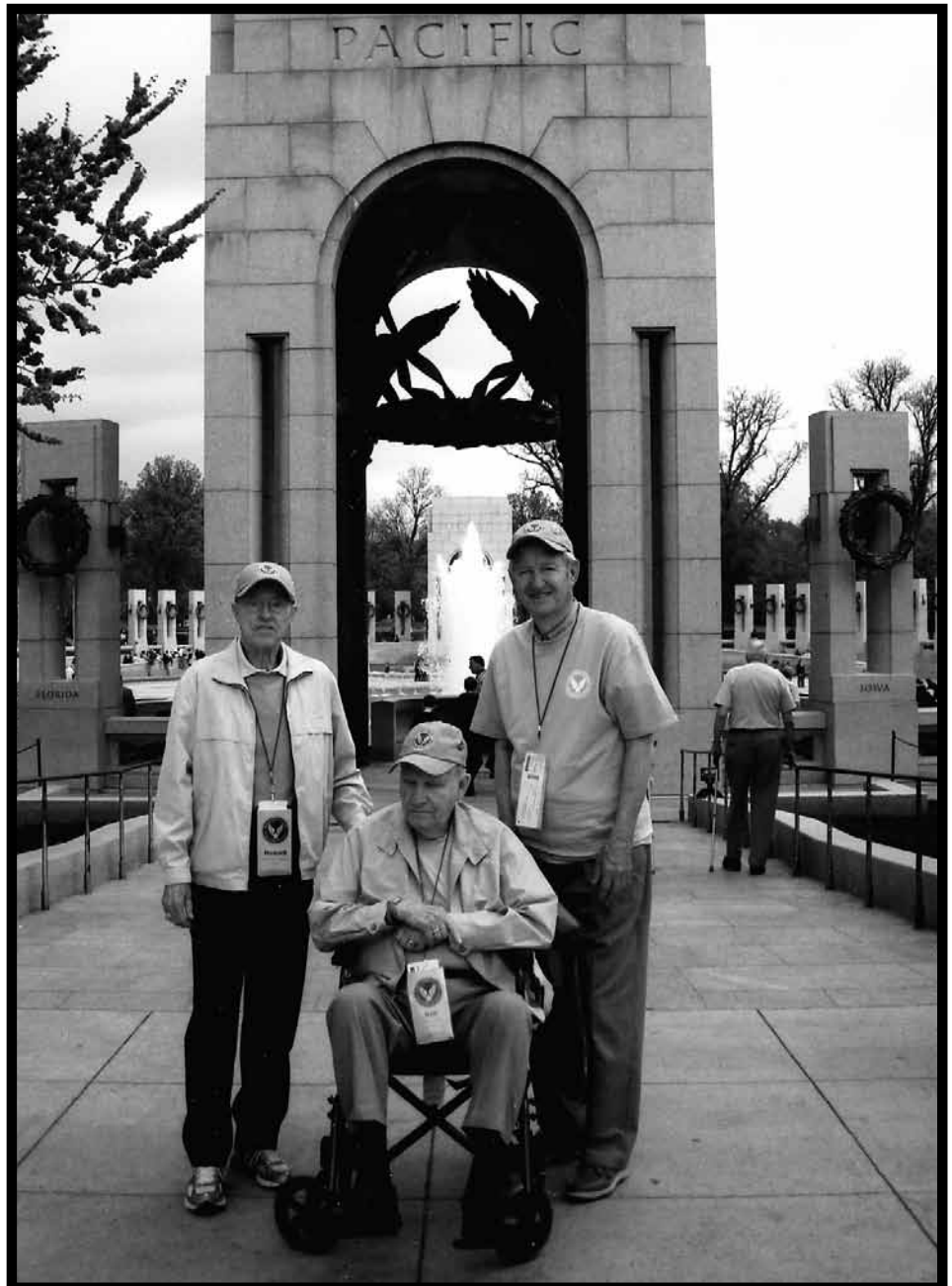
more than we were able to on Saturday if possible. Let me know if you have time.

Thanks again and take care

Dee Sams • 919-868-0431

Dear Cal,

I just received my copy of the POINT-ER Jan/May 2011 edition. Well done.





# LETTERS FROM THE CREW

I am mailing you copies of two trips that I took when I was in service that may interest you and the crew. We were thankful we went to the Persian Gulf via Cairo, Suez Canal, Red Sea to the City of Kharramsha instead of going to Russia on the North Atlantic Run. The ship was the S.S. WILLIAM HAWKINS from 4/44 to 9/44.

★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★ ★

*Naval Armed Guard veteran,  
Hoover, Alabama resident,  
wins service nod from Russia  
Published:*

Tuesday, June 14, 2011, 8:30 AM

Diagnosed with infantile paralysis or polio at birth, doctors told Richard Lowe's parents he'd be handicapped his entire life.

He took his first steps as a frail 8-year-old boy, but a Texas-size gust of wind knocked him down. Eighty-one years later, Lowe, who lives in Hoover, stands tall as one of remaining U.S. Naval Armed Guardsmen from WWII.

The Russian Embassy honored the veteran on June 3 on behalf of the Russian government, giving him his third commemorative medal for his efforts to thwart the German blockade on Russia during WWII. Lowe was a gunner aboard the S.S. William Moultrie during Murmansk Run. Every decade on the anniversary of the victory in the "Great Patriotic War," Lowe, along with his fellow Armed Guardsmen, are honored.

"I've lived a charmed life. I guess the good Lord figured I've got to do some good before I leave this country," said Lowe, who recalls his mother rubbing his legs with Vicks vapor rub daily to help him overcome polio.

The Naval Armed Guard was formed during WWI to protect U.S. and Al-

lied merchant supply ships from enemy attack.

Lowe's efforts in WWII brought about recognition from several countries, including letters of recognition and medals from both Great Britain and the Philippines.

However, his most prized moment of recognition came after receiving his first award in the 1960s, nearly two decades after the war.

Lowe and his fellow Guardsmen were invited to Washington, D.C., by the Russian Embassy to be presented their awards. A Russian officer who spoke broken English called Lowe to the side of the stage and said he wanted to thank him personally for that country, Lowe said.

"For someone on the other side to say they appreciated it, that was better than any medal or any award or anything," Lowe said.

Lowe's military service only spanned a total of four years, but three years and seven months of that time was spent at sea during WWII.

Growing up the youngest of 13 children in San Antonio, Texas, Lowe felt an obligation to serve after two of his older brothers enlisted into the Armed Forces, so in 1941 he joined the Navy Reserve.

"I had brothers serving, so I had to do something," he said.

For much of his life, he enjoyed a 6-foot-3-inch, 180 pound frame, but a combination of gravity and life experience has turned Lowe into a 6'1", 150 pound war hero.

Lowe daydreams about his days at sea with fellow Guardsmen, particularly the eight-day nonstop battle with the Germans where sleep was nonexistent



and nightfall lasted as long as what seemed to be the blink of an eye.

"At nightfall, we thought we could rest because the aircrafts and torpedoes would end, but whenever they quit, they'd hit us with submarines," he said.

The memories of the past war appear upbeat, but nearly 70 years later Peggy Lowe, Richard's wife, knows that the nightmares are quite vivid and they're not all good.

"You just never get over what he's experienced," Peggy Lowe said.

Email [jbrimley@bhamnews.com](mailto:jbrimley@bhamnews.com).

Name of Book: *The Ship That Never Was: Ramming of the USAT J.W. MCANDREWS*  
Authored by: B. J. Bryan (Bonnie)  
Order from: B. J. Bryan  
7209 Skyway, Space #6  
Paradise, CA 95969  
Tel: 530 877 5701  
Or;  
Order from: *Amazon.com or Barnes & Noble*

# LETTERS FROM THE CREW



## *Navy Memorial 9/11 "Never Forget" Commemorative Pin*

### **"In Remembrance"**

Order Your 9/11 Commemorative Pin from Navy Memorial at \$12 Each.

This 10th Anniversary limited edition pin will honor those that gave their lives on that fateful day. There is no limit to the number of pins you can order, and shipping will be free via USPS. Place your order today!

<https://web.memberclicks.com/mc/quickForm/viewForm>.



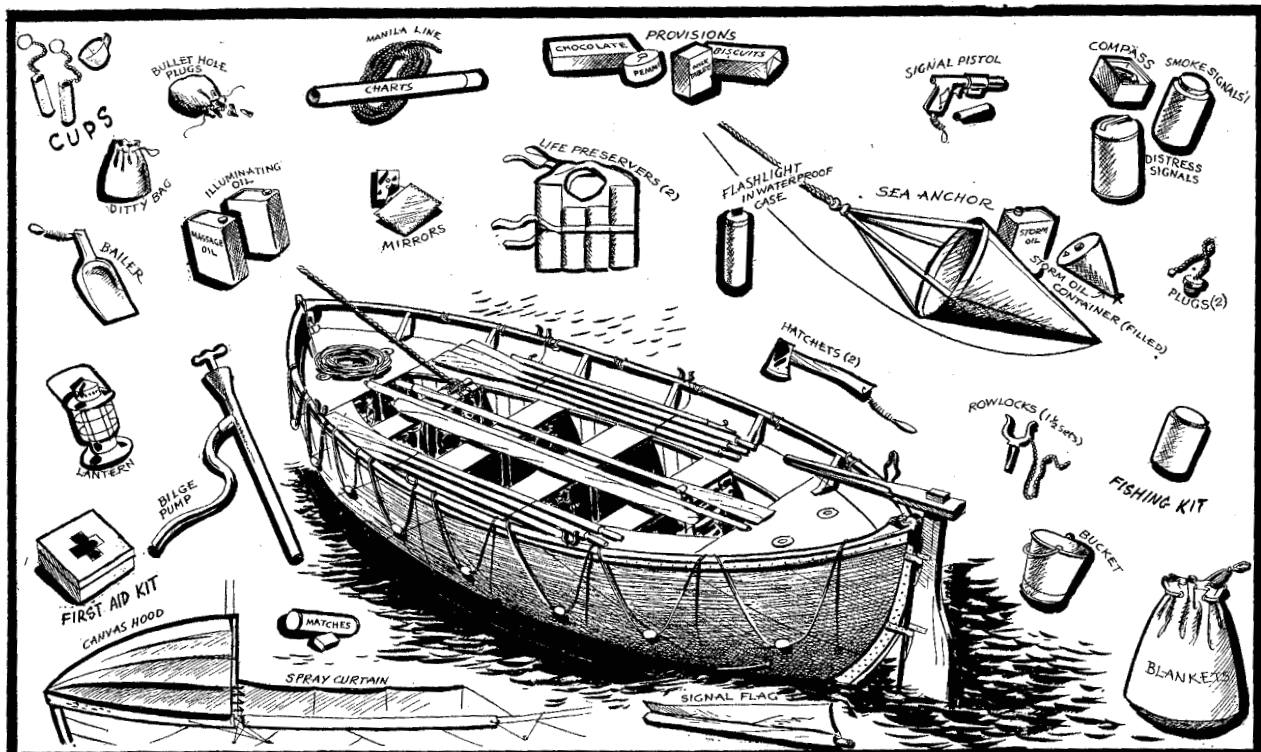
## *Good Ole 3"50*

Taken on the SS BROWN LIBERTY SHIP in Portland Maine.

Ernest Mains

434 Cumberland St.

Westbrook, ME 04092-2415



THIS IS THE GEAR THAT MAY MEAN THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN SURVIVAL AND DISASTER. IT WAS PUT THERE FOR YOUR PROTECTION. TAKE CARE OF IT.



# REUNIONS

## USN ARMED GUARD MEETINGS AND REUNION 2011

NOTICE: Hosts Names, Addresses, Zip Codes, Telephone, E-Mails may change anytime so it's up to you and them to keep each notified. Any changes will be in the next POINTER. If your group is not included or need corrections, advise NOW for the next POINTER. If your meeting was in the POINTER, it will not be in this one unless it has changed.

do?orgId=m2&formId=105091

The Long Island Chapter of Armed Guard meet at the Farmingdale, N.Y. Public Library on the 4th Wednesday of the month at 11 AM. Contact Dot and James Pellegrino 527 Livingston St., Westbury, N.Y. 11590 516-997-5585

Delaware Valley Armed Guard/Merchant Marine will meet at 11:30 AM at the "OLD COUNTRY RESTAURANT" Oxford Center, Fairless Hills, Pa.. Contact Host John Harman, 9 Tree Ave., Levittown, Pa. 19054 215-295-3114.

The SOUTH New Jersey Pinelands Armed Guard Unit meets the 4th Thurs. of the mo. at 12:30 PM at THE CAPTAINS INN. 304 E Lacey Rd., Forked River, NJ 609-693-3351. The hosts are: Mike Chengeri 908-486-6577, Al Messina 732-350-1304 and William Wilkie 609-597-2946. They ask all NJ Armed Guard members to come join in with them. Wives & Widows of the members are welcomed to attend a great "sit down" luncheon and view the Forked River. Come on down and join us. Those outside of NJ are welcomed, too. (Mike Chengeri)

NORTHERN N.J. CREW is now meeting at STASHES RESTAURANT, Wood Ave.(Off Rt.1 North), Linden.N.J.on the 1st Tuesday (Monthly) at 12 noon. Hosts: Ernest Stoukas, 65 Webb Dr., Fords, N.J. 08863 732-225-2054. Ernie says that if anyone interested in holding a Mini-Reunion at Atlantic City, N.J. or Pocono Manor, Pa., to contact him NOW.

Iowa/Mn/Daks still meet the 2nd Wednesday monthly at 10 A.M. for coffee and gab monthly at the Machine Shed on the West Side of Des Moines, Ia. off Exit 125 on I-

80/I-35, the Hickman Rd. Contact Arnie Latore, 4400 E.P. True Pkwy #59, W.Des Moines, Ia. 50265 515-225-1084 malata@q.com . All the AG/MM and family are welcomed. These same States will hold their Mini-Reunion Sept. 16-17, 2011 on the North Side Of Des Moines at the Holiday Inn, 4800 Merle Hay Rd., Des Moines, South of I-80 and 35 at Exit 131. Latore will be the Host and Contact.

The TEXAS 2012 USN Armed Guard Reunion will be held at the Hampton Inn & Suites, Buda, Tx. March 1-3, 2012. Host contact is Connie Whisenant, 206 Gatlin Creek Road., Dripping Springs, Tx.78620-4949 512-965-6153 (cell) 512-858-7024 (home) visinand@txwinet.com

Destroyer Escort Association will hold their 36th Annual Convention Sept. 11-15, 2011 in Plymouth Meeting, Pa. at the Doubletree Suite. Contact: DESA, 1924 Ruth St., Allentown, Pa. 18104.

Texas Armed Guard Crew meets on the 1st Monday of the month at 9:00 A.M. at Ramsey's Restaurant 1401 N. Navarro, Victoria, Tx.. Contact: Norm Neureuther 361-578-7900 neureuther@suddenlink.net

The Harrisburg. Pa. Area new hosts Charles Hastings, 300 Old Orchard Ln., York, Pa.19403 717-843-6231 and Eugene Alexander 1147 Galway Ct., Hummelstown, Pa. 17036 717-220-1090 at HOSS'S at Hummelstown at 11 A.M. 1st Thurs of month.

The SUNCOAST Armed Guard/Merchant Marine Veterans of WW II will meet again 9/10/11 at Kally K's at 11:30 hours. Contact: Hal Conn, 6625 W. Seven Rivers Dr., Crystal River, Fl.34429

352-795-6257halconn@embarqmail.com  
THE SARASOTA MANATEE CHAPTER of the AMMV along with the Armed Guard in the area have moved their meetings to DUFF'S, 6010 14th St., Bradenton, Fl. and meet the last Wed. of the mo. (excluding-July/Aug) at 12:30 P.M. but most go at 11:30 to enjoy the buffet lunch and hold their SEA STORY Session. Ed Cleary (AG) attends and wants more AG to join in. Host: James Waters, 137 Osprey Circle, Ellenton, Fl. 34222 941-729-1346. Visitors welcomed.

The RUDY KOZAK Chapter of the U.S.Merchant Marine and Armed Guard Veterans still meet at 1 P.M. on the 2nd Wednesday of each month except July and August at the American Legion Post No. 53 in Sanford, Fla.. Contact: Richard McCamy, 26002 Zinna Ln, Astatula, Fl. 34705 352-742-1394 marymccamy@embarqmail.com. of MM/AG who enjoy swapping our sea stories. We invite you and everyone to come join in while we are able.

Our Joe Colgan, AG on the S.S.JOHN W. BROWN asked me to remind all of you of the ship's cruises and get your tickets now to be sure of the 2011 and 2012 cruises.

The SOUTHERN Calif. Region of Armed Guard meet every 2 mos. alternating starting with the WEST BUFFET in Carlsbad, Ca.. at 11:30 AM and San Diego FAMILY Restuarant, Chula Vista. Contact Howard Wooten, 2438 E. Vista Way, Spc-23, Vista, Ca. 92084 760-724-4724 ankerclanker0135@gmail.com

Rhode Island and Eastern Ma. Chapter Host, Gerry Greaves, 1287 S. Broadway, E. Providence, 02914 401-

# REUNIONS

431-0011 USNAGVan@aol.com informs me that they will meet the first Thursday October 2011 at the Imperial Room, #1 Rhodes Place, Cranston, R.I. at 12 Noon.

The Wisc/Il Mini-Reunion will be held Oct.11/12, 2011 at the AmericInn in Burlington, Wi.. Hosts are Jay and Jane Wildfong 13211 Durand Ave., Sturtevant, Wi. 53117 262-886-2966 WILDfongJ@cs.com Everyone welcomed. Check with them on Dec. 13th meeting and 2012 meetings.

US Navy Armed Guard & Merchant Marine Veterans of WW II. Meet every third (3rd) Sat. of the month, except June, July and August at Marsh Landing Restaurant at 44 North Broadway, Fellsmere, FL. For info contact C.F. "Korky" Korker 772 571-0230 E-Mail korkykorker@aol.com

The LOGANSPORT, IN. AREA meets at the VFW POST 1024 Erie Ave. on the last Friday of each month at 11:30 except December. Hosts are William and Betty Zwyers, 9239 N State Rd 29, Frankfort, In. 46041 765-258-3353

The Rochester, N.Y. Area AG/MM meet on the 2nd Tuesday 11 A.M. at the JAY'S DINER 2612 W. Henrietta Rd., Rochester, N.Y. 585-424-3710. Hosts John Shevlin 585-467-2057; Walter Mace 585-394-7165, Frank Hutter 585-473-8103, Michael Lucci 585-388-0576 and Marie Lane 14 Hanna Ln., Webster, N.Y. 14580 585-217-9897 coolforest@frontiernet.net

Albany, NY Area Armed Guard/Merchant Marine WW II meet the 4th Thurs. of month at Schuyler Inn, 545 Broadway, Menands NY at 11:30 AM. Host are Art and Marion Fazzzone 3936 Albany St., Schenectady, NY 12304-4371 (518)374-5377 mamoon3@aol.com and Peter Falasco, 49 Monroe Ave., Latham, NY 12110 (518) 785-7890 (CHANGES UNDERLINED)

Patrol Craft Sailors Assn. CONTACT: Duane Walters, 103 Cross Rd., Camillus, N.Y. 13031 315-487-2623 buckypcsa@twcnr.com

NORTHERN NEW ENGLAND members of the USN Armed Guard Veterans of WW II will hold their FALL meeting at the RED BLAZER Restaurant in Concord, NH. Oct. 12, 2011 at 1 P.M., Eat at 2 PM. RSVP by Oct. 8th to: Bob Norling, 6 Tow Path Lane., Concord, N.H. 03301 Ph. 603-224-4927 E-Mail uppa1924@aol.com

Bainbridge, Md. USNTC meeting, contact Walter Alexander, 2311 Idavere Rd. SW, Roanoke, Va. 24015-3903 540-353-5826 DE585@cox.net

WVA Armed Guard Merchant Marine WW II Veterans meet at the "Ranch House" Restaurant in the Conference Room Rt. 55 Craigsville, WV. 304-742-6117 on the 24th of Sept. 2011. Hosts are Forrest Flanagan PO Box 119, Craigsville, WV 26205 304-742-3160 or Robert Wheeler, 203 Hunt Ave. Beckley, WV. 25108 304-255-0897.

The American Merchant Marine Silicon Valley Veterans Chapter meet CARROW'S RESTAURANT at 3180 El Camino Real, Santa Clara, Ca. on the 4th Friday of each month (except Nov/Dec) at 11:30 A.M.. They take in the Santa Clara Veterans Day Memorial Services at the Memorial Park and would like to have many Armed Guard to come join in the Comradary and show their AG Colors. Contact: Perry Adams, 5100 EL CAMINO REAL Apt 303, Los Altos, Ca 94022 650-967-3696.

MM/AG Susquehanna Mariners Contact Wm. Balabanow, 74 Delp Rd., Lancaster, Pa. 17601 717-569-0391 b.balabanow@verizon.net for their next meeting.

The Merchant Marine "NEW" National President Morris Harvey announces they

will hold a Regional Natl. Convention 11/2-6, 2011 at the Ramada Inn, 1700 W. Hiwy 76, Branson, Mo.. Make reservations: 1-800-641-4106 or call Jack Grothe, 314-631-7492 jackgrothe@att.net. Armed Guard are welcome. The City of Branson is dedicated to all veterans.

The S.S. JEREMIAH O'Brien tentative sailing dates for 2011 will be FLEET WEEK and will be Oct. 8th & 9th. Contact: Eliz Anderson-Office Mangr. 415-544-0100 1275 Columbus Ave. Suite 300, San Francisco, Ca. 94133 liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org

Oregon MM/AG Chapter host Ruthann Heineken, 7055 SW 184th Ave., Portland, Or. 97007 503-848-7031 asks all in the area to come and be with them.

For the yearly July meeting Memorial Service at the PORT CHICAGO TRAGEDY, Contact: National Park Service, 4202 Albhambra Ave., Martinez, Ca. 94553 925-228-8860 poch\_general\_info@nps.gov The following ID is required: Name/Gender, Date of Birth, Address, Phone Number, E-Mail if you have one, Govt. ID or Driver's license. Mail two days ahead.

Ohio Veteran's Memorial Park is located at 8005 Cleveland/Massillon Rd, P.O. Box 3, Clinton, Oh. 330-773-2385 www.ovmp.org

Michigan Chapter USNAG WW II Veterans next meeting will be Wed. Sept. 21, 2011 at Fire Mountain Restaurant 730 Elmwood Lansing, Mi. 321-1200 Hosts: Carl and Ruth Mescher, 508 Wayland, E.





# THE GALLANT SHIP

## **The Gallant Ship the S.S. MARCUS DALY by Dilmar S. Gould U.S Merchant Marine WW II**

August 1, 1944, we left Long Beach, Ca., headed for New Guinea and on the 19th, we had an initiation ceremony at the equator and two days later, we passed the international dateline. On the 24th, at 3 A.M., we were challenged by an unidentified surface craft and we fired 14 rounds from the 3"50 gun. We were plenty scared. On the 26th, we arrived at Finchaven, New Guinea and they removed our deck cargo and on the 28th, we sailed for Oro Bay, arriving there on the 30th and there was nothing there but rain, coconuts, palms and wrecked Jap landing craft and was there 2 about weeks. We sailed for and arrived at Langumac Bay and discharged the remaining cargo and loaded the 44th Tank Battalion headed for Los Negros in the Admiralty Islands with a plenty of activity there as it was a staging area, arriving there on the September 23, 1944. We

counted 6 aircraft carriers of a small class and the "USS ENTERPRISE" and there must have been at least 200 Merchant Ships and Naval Crafts in all the harbor.

Left Los Negros and arrived in Finchaven on the 27th and loaded troops and equipment of the 98th Chemical Unit and 2nd Engineer Division and took them to Humboldt Bay and discharged them on Oct. 6, 1944. Loaded 700 more troops and equipment for the Philippines or Saipan. One was a "ONE STAR" General, 3 full Colonels and 25 other officers. It really looks like we are going into something! Yes! We are. It's an island between Luzon and Mindinao in the Philippines. We are to arrive on D-DAY plus 4, which means 4 days after the invasion. WOW!!

On the 18th, we pulled out of Humboldt headed for the P.I.s in a convoy 87 ships. The General's name is WALLENDOR and we arrived at Leyte this morning on the 14th. No excitement on the way here but "PUH-LENTY" here. We were attacked by 3 Jap dive bombers. Our Navy gun crew shot one down that was coming

in, just skimming the water to skip bomb us. That incident right there would have stopped the MARCUS DALY for good if it had not been for our gunners aboard. We were all pretty much scared. I am writing this at NOON as the fireworks have stopped for the present time, but it's been going on since the early morning hour. It is now 5 PM the same day and as we were trying to dock this afternoon, and we got into shallow waters and we are now stuck on the bottom and with the Japs pushed back only 1500 yards. We have had 3 direct attacks on our ship so far today by light bombers and other aircraft but none were Zeroes.

### **BOY!! WHAT A DAY!!!**

Oct. 25, 1944. We were attacked all night long. It started at dawn today and hasn't let up yet and it is now 4:30 P.M.. The little yellow bastards are good fliers. Five men on board were wounded today; 2 of our crew and 2 soldiers. The Jap planes come over a little mountain range directly behind Tacloban, the biggest city on Leyte, and let go their bombs before we have time to get our guns into actions. It is TOO HOT here and I am not speaking about the weather. I wish we had some air protection. The Navy Fleet is not too far from here in battle with a Jap Task Force trying to bottle us in. That gives the Jap's planes a clear field to bomb this harbor without any navy here to help us. As yet, there are no Army planes anywhere near here. They are due in tomorrow.

Our Army is still having a hell of a time. The plane that caused the boys aboard to get hurt, came in directly dead ahead out of the clouds. He started his guns the minute he broke from the clouds, blazing away until he was about 200 yards off our bow, letting go his 3 bombs—one landed to our starboard and 2 aft and took off alone into the clouds. The other plane cut across our beam, cutting a guy wire line on one of the booms with his straffing and turned over a native and his boat with one of his bombs and came within a few yards of hitting us. All this happened while we were on the sand bar. We hear there has been 1 Liberty ship, 1 LST and some small crafts sunk in

the harbor.

Oct. 26, 1944—Still we have no Army Air Corps. Only two raids so far today. It's considerable quieter. Two Japanese planes came in real high this morning but the shore batteries kept them high and no damage done. One of our boys that was injured yesterday, came back from the hospital with the news that 3 of our aircraft carriers were sunk in the naval battle not far from here. That in itself explains why we saw a few of our Navy planes flying around trying to land on a vacant lot they call an airstrip and not trying to give chase to the Japs. They were out of fuel and ammunition and without a place to land because their carrier was no more. We are sitting at the dock today. The Liberty ship tied up ahead of us and "her out of ammunition" and a LST and ourselves are trying to fight off the whole Jap Air Force.

Oct. 27, 1944— Things are a little more quiet today. Only one raid this morning. Most of the action today seems to be over towards Dulag, a few miles away, and we sure glad of it. Well, our ship has 3 Jap planes to its credit so far. One on the 24th and two on the 25th. The latter was our worse day. The P-38s came in today. They really had a big cheering section. Now, maybe we won't be bothered so much with raids in the daytime. Just before the P-38s sat down on the field, we had a Jap plane giving us trouble, dodging in and out of the clouds, straffing the docks and dropping a stick of bombs on a small craft just to the right of us. But, then, the P-38 spotted it and gave chase. They got him but the plane fell into a Liberty ship in the harbor and set it on fire.

Oct 28, 1944—We are almost unloaded. We were still raided last night, all night. The shore batteries kept them pretty high so their dropping bombs were pretty much of a hit and miss proposition. It is rumored that the P-61, or, "BLACK WIDOW" night fighter is due in tomorrow. If so, it should stop these night raids to a certain extent.

Oct. 29, 1944—We had one raid early this morning about 6 A.M.. He came in

# THE GALLANT SHIP

straight astern of us and coming down, the P-38s went up though and did away with him. There are still 2 planes that bother us—one about 6 A.M. and the other about 6 P.M.. These are more or less, nuisance raids. The naval battle is still going strong out in the strait. We don't know how we are doing but I hope it's O.K.. We pulled away from the docks today and are at anchor waiting for a convoy.

Oct 30, 1944—Some out of the way action last night. During the night, a miniature hurricane came up and dragged us about a mile, even with our anchor down. Meanwhile, an L.C.I. had rammed us and put a hole in our side, right side, amidship. The hole isn't big but big enough. The ship's carpenter plugged it with cement so we are O.K. to travel. It is now 6 A.M. same day and we are leaving right away, in convoy. Boy! What a relief to be leaving here. We are the first ships to be leaving the Philippines since the day of the invasion. The convoy consists of ourselves, one other Liberty, a Dutch ship; the one who rescued Dr. Wassel and his party from Java and 5 LSTs and our navy escorts. An exceptional small convoy, but the reason we are so few is that the Navy doesn't know if the Japs have us bottled up here or not. In other words, we are the "Guinea Pig Convoy." We are headed for Humboldt again.

Nov. 5, 1944—We arrived in Humboldt safe and sound with only one submarine scare on the whole trip. The destroyer escorts evidently scared or chased it away. We are now in anchor and don't know what we will do next or where we will go. In all the excitement, I forgot to mention that while we were in Leyte, at the Tacloban dock, that General who rode with us to Leyte, came back aboard before we left and told our Captain and gunnery officer that General Douglas MacArthur had commended our ship for courage and fighting ability in doing a major part in saving the Tacloban dock and for knocking 3 Nips out of the sky. On the 11th, we are still at anchor in Humboldt Bay. It's still a mystery as to what is going to happen to us. We still have

to have the hole in the side welded.

Nov. 14, 1944—We are leaving for Oro Bay. We, George and I, have spent the last few days at sea making a paddle board. We can't wait to find out if it will even float. We will find out tomorrow when we arrive in Oro Bay.

Nov. 18, 1944—We pulled into the docks at Oro Bay today after setting overnight at anchor. We are going to load part of the 38th Division and equipment. It will be our biggest troop loads so far. They will be aboard the 21st; between 1,000 and 1,200 men and we will be headed right back to the Philippines again. WOE IS US!!

Nov. 21, 1944—Loaded troops today and we are headed for a place called Lae, New Guinea to take on water. It's the 22nd and we are taking on water. Nice little place — nothing here. Leaving tomorrow for Humboldt Bay to meet a convoy.

Nov. 29, 1944—Leaving Humboldt in a 38 ship convoy with the 1,200 of the 38th Division. The other 18,000 are on Liberties and Transports.

Dec. 5, 1944—We were attacked this morning (we are just 24 hours from our destination) at 9:15 A.M. by a dive bomber. He dropped one bomb on the port side of No. 2 hold. We have been on the alert since then but so far, it is quiet. (Now 2:00 P.M.)

Dec. 8, 1944—This is the first chance I have had to write anything since the 5th. On the afternoon of the 5th, the Liberty ship in coffin corner next to us, was attacked by a torpedo plane and was damaged to the extent that it wasn't able to maneuver because her rudder and screw had been blown off. Another plane came in then and put a torpedo in her no. 2 hold. She did not sink even after that. Two destroyers and a tug stayed back to protect her. The following morning, the Jap planes came back and sunk her. We haven't heard how many of her crew was lost. Not many I hope. Getting back to us---That same afternoon at 3:30 P.M., just 30 minutes after that ship got it, WE GOT IT. A dive bomber came

at us from the stern. Before it got quite to us, our 3 inch gunners had shot it's entire tail assembly off, but, that didn't stop him as he came on with intentions of dropping his bomb and crash diving us. He succeeded in his intentions because his bomb fell into No. 1 hold and the plane followed. (I wish I didn't have to write this part) To start with, our whole bow is blown out and our forward 3 inch gun is in shambles. The ship's loss of men were: 1 Navy Armed Guard — Dead; 2 Merchant Marine — Dead and 1 MM wounded.

Of the 3 that died, only one got a quick and merciful death. He was Merchant Seaman. The Navy Boy and the other Merchant Marine died during the night from their horrible burns. I am not positive as to the exact number of soldiers killed, wounded and blown from the deck of the ship into the water, but I've heard it was 174. There were 10 casualties of our own, 3 killed and 7 injured. All this happened at a place called Tarragona Beach, about 40 miles south of Tacloban.

Our No. 1 hold is an awful mess as we were on fire for 4 hours. That same afternoon, we had 2 torpedoes at us but missed. We did not sleep that night because our rooms were full of wounded and dying men. We arrived the 6th with no more trouble. Our gunners had accounted for 2 more Jap planes, but what a price we paid for them. We discharged our troops, the wounded and dead on the 6th. We have had raids every since we got here.

Dec. 10, 1944—Up until today, we have been pretty lucky as we hadn't been hit, but today, 4 planes came in at 5:00 P.M., it was over in 10 minutes but so much happened in that ten minutes. We shot down two of them. The second of these two, as he was coming in to crash dive us, was shot to pieces before he got to us, but what was left of him kept coming directly over the bow and headed straight for the bridge. Instead of hitting the bridge and stack, he hit a boom on the port side that was swung out. This altered his plunge a bit. He hit the port bridge gun tub and leveled it. The plane then dropped to



# THE GALLANT SHIP

the boat deck, still with a tremendous momentum, tearing both lifeboats from their davits and then crashed, bomb and all into the L.C.T. tied alongside us at No. 4 hold, taking off our cargo. The plane exploded, setting the L.C.T. afire and blowing a few good size holes in our side from the water line right up to the maindeck. Our casualties from this were 14 injured and none killed. On the L.C.T., 3 killed and quite a few injured. We are banged up good and proper now, but we're still afloat and with a few repairs, we could still get by at sea. A third plane crash dived into the S.S. WILLIAM LADD Liberty, into her No.4 hold setting it afire and damaging the fire pumps beyond working order. They had no chance to fight the fire. Evidently, it was loaded with gasoline or oil because it burned all night and the next day. It finally sank to the bottom. We heard it didn't suffer one casualty. The 4th plane, I saw taking off alone pretty high when I spotted a P-38 taking after him. I saw the fight and the Jap plane burst into flames and saw it spiral to the ground, then the crash and explosion. The tears came into my eyes as I thought of our boys who had gotten killed and said to myself, "There's one dirty bastard for you boys." All this happened at a place called Tarragona Beach about 40 miles South of Tacloban.

Dec. 11, 1944- We moved today into the Leyte Harbor near Tacloban. We think it will be a little safer here, as we are almost unloaded and there are at least 500 other ships in the harbor, so I don't think we will be singled out to attack. There are quite a few Navy ships around us with plenty of firepower, so we all feel a little safer here. All of this last week has really played hell with our nerves. Everyone has a case of the "jitters". Call it BOMB HAPPY if you want to.

Dec. 16, 1944- Even if I had time to write before today, I couldn't have on the account of D.T.s. We are still in the harbor near Tacloban and we'll leave when the repair ship finds time to repair us enough to be seaworthy. Raids here every day but not in our immediate vicinity. We just sit and watch them. There are so many more ships to pick on here that it lengthens our chances of

coming away from here with a hole in the side and a ship to be on. Our Army made an invasion of Mindora Island yesterday, the 15th, which should draw some of the fire from here for the time being. Too many Jap planes suicide diving to suit me. One crashed yesterday in the water on the starboard side of a Liberty oiler tanker, with a cruiser refueling from alongside. We saw the whole thing and we thought he had gotten both ships. Nothing you can do but stand and watch and wait. Boy!! How my nerves are standing it, I don't know.

Dec. 22nd- We have been repaired enough to be seaworthy. We pulled out from Leyte today with no regrets, with 27 other ships bound for Humboldt. In two or three days, we should be far enough out to sea to be safe from the "LOCO" Jap Air Force.

Dec. 24, 1944- CHRISTMAS EVE !! BOY! WOULD I LIKE TO BE HOME!!

Dec. 25, 1944- Today is Christmas. What a beautiful day. No trouble so far but we are holding our breath. We will arrive in HUMBOLDT on the 28th. I sincerely believe that I have more to be MERRY about today than any Christmas I have ever seen because I have a whole skin and I am very much alive. It's only by the Grace of God that those of us on this ship are alive.

Dec. 27, 1944- No trouble yet. We will arrive in Humboldt by dawn.

Dec. 29, 1944- Arrived yesterday morning, no excitement on the whole trip. WHEW!! We are just sitting here at anchor with our hopes high. We thought we might be leaving for the good old U.S.A. but it looks now like it will be tomorrow or the next day. I received 1 letter and one Christmas card—the first in 6 weeks.

Dec. 30, 1944- WHOOPEE! We left Humboldt Bay this afternoon for good old Frisco. Maybe you don't think the morale hasn't gone up for everyone?!! The Captain went ashore early this afternoon for sailing orders and pick up the last mail for the S.S.

MARCUS DALY until we hit Frisco. As usual, no mail for me. Maybe I don't have a wife any longer! The Post Office told the Capt. That most of our mail had been sent to the Philippines.

Jan. 1, 1945 We came down the coast of New Guinea from Humboldt to Finchavé—and this afternoon, we made a hard left turn towards sea and HOME. We have seen the last of New Guinea today unless something unforeseen happens. The morale is up 1000 percent. We figure a 21 day crossing to Frisco and about Jan. 27th. On the 6th, a mine was sighted and GQ was called and it was fired on it as we circled it at some distance until it was sunk. I hope we don't have to fire the guns again the rest of the trip. I didn't know what kind of effect it would have on me but it wasn't pleasant. It sounded like we were back in the P.I.s. We cross the Equator again on the 9th and maybe it will cool off after 5 months.

Jan. 17, 1945- It started a storm about midnight and hasn't let up. As you know we are empty and no bow to speak of and we are taking a beating. The waves lift us out of the water and then drop us and sounds like we are breaking up. It's the 19th and we have been tossed around like a cork for a few days. We have passed 200 miles South of the Hawaiian Island.

Jan. 26th- Everybody has "CHANNEL FEVER"—can't sleep, packing clothes, shining shoes, etc. This about winds up my all unpleasant trip and the end of my story and I want to say this: The Merchant Marine has quite a few fancy names such as "DRAFT DODGERS" by the Navy and Army boys in the USA who have never seen any action or ever been overseas. In my opinion, they are envious of our job. They don't stop to realize, even though our pay runs a little higher than theirs, that we still have our necks stuck out as far as any of them and if they don't think we are doing our part, I think of them as I do those yellow bastards we are fighting as they are in the same class and no better than them.

THE END

Delmar G. Gould 4011 Jackson Ave.,

# HUNTER COLLEGE



I was reading an article when I saw a name, and, an E-Mail address so out of curiosity, I typed in: "If you get this; click on [www.armed-guard.com](http://www.armed-guard.com) and get back to me and I gave my name and address." The person read about the Armed Guard and she wrote back: "I shall take exception to the fact that women are not mentioned as part of the Armed Guard. Also, we, at Treasure Island, Ca. paid 'Y'all' in the 12th Naval Command so that you could keep rolling along. Now! How in the world did you get my E-Mail address, let alone find me?" So I answered and asked if she'd like to know more about the Armed Guard doings since 1982 and if she got her training in Hunter's College in New York and THANKED her for serving in WW II.

She answered back and said, *"It was my pleasure to serve in the Navy during WW II, thank you! It also helped me grow up. Yes, indeed, we had BOOT CAMP at Hunter College. Then it was down to the University in Milledgeville, Georgia for training. We had all the pecans we wanted because the trees were planted everywhere on the campus. Very fond memories that make you feel guilty because there was a war going on. Life is strange. In answer to your earlier question, no, I did not get any pictures of T.I. since I didn't have a camera. Much to my dismay. And I lived off base because they*

*didn't have enough barracks for us as we were the first batch of Waves on T.I. Fortunately, my mother lived in the area, and I was able to live at home as I was brought up there."* She said, *"Some of the rules were-- if we were married, (and I made that mistake some times after enlisting) we were not allowed to go overseas without our spouse's consent. And when we were disbanded, we also had to have our spouse's consent to stay in the Navy, if we so desired. I could have been Chief Petty Officer in two months'*

*time had I not been married, alas and alack. I should have known then that it wasn't going to work out. But, I'll keep the one I have now -- it's been 46 years this month--Bastille Day to be exact. I am sure women's branches of services are now much more equal. We certainly had advantages too, though -- like having our meals in the Chief's mess hall and doing our shopping at the store over in Yerba Buena, the Marines part of the territory. It was also the Waves who decided how much money you fellas were entitled to when you put into port, and we had to stay up all night, working on the books, every 3 or 4 months, to be sure everything was balanced. But our Lt.Cmdr. had them bring in all kinds of good food over to keep us going, so no one objected. I hope this gives you a little insight on the Armed Guard Waves at Treasure Island."*

Evelyn Welch  
2108 S. Dusk Lane  
Greenacres WA 99016.

★ ★ ★

*I went to GOOGLE in the computer and typed in HUNTER COLLEGE, N.Y. Waves WW II and there was all the Waves Training Centers listed. I have sent her several more names of Waves I have located over the years. (cal)*





# **THE ARMED GUARD HELPED HIM RETURN**

## **THE ARMED GUARD HELPED HIM RETURN**

by

Cecil W. Ray

When the SS Samuel K. Barlow eased into the harbor of Hollandia, New Guinea, we knew something big was brewing. There were so many ships, hardly a spot could be found to drop anchor. Besides our liberty ship, there were many other liberties, tankers, troop transports, and every category of regular navy ship imaginable.

Not until we were at sea a few days later did we know our destination. We were headed North to fulfill General Douglas MacArthur's promise of returning to the Philippines. The invasion armada has been described as 700 ships stretching to the horizons, and carrying approximately 200,000 invasion troops. The Barlow was to arrive D plus 4, with a cargo of just plain trash cans, barrels of high test gasoline, and 500 Army troops having to do with makeshift accommodations on the deck and in three of the holds.

As we steamed Northward, we thought it strange that no enemy attacks were forthcoming either by air or sea. We arrived at San Pedro Bay, Leyte Island, on October 24, 1944. In the early morning hours of the 25th we were to find out why we had encountered no resistance.

Our arrival on the morning of the 24th was greeted by enemy bombers and attack planes. We had barely dropped anchor, when we became the target of an enemy bomber. He did a broadside strafing of our neighboring ship, and then headed for us. With a banking turn, he approached us from the stern flying about mast high. Our 20MMs were pounding at him all the way. Upon seeing fire spitting from his wings, I jumped behind the bridge wheelhouse meeting the Captain coming around from the other side. When not on radio duty, I was assigned to be a loader on one of the bridge 20MMs, however, that function was given to one of the merchant crew. Lt.(jg) Hugh W. Bish, our Commanding Officer, had reassigned the duties of log keeper to me.

In a split second, the plane was by us and crashed into the bay just off our port bow. Jubilantly, I yelled, "We got him, we got him!" At about that same instant, there was a terrific vibration on the bridge. The gunner in the gun tub nearest me was pointing at an object that had come to rest no further than 5 feet away. The object was a 200 pound unexploded bomb.

I had noticed that he had done little or no firing at the approaching plane. Seeing the bomb headed directly at him, he had become frozen from fright and unable to fire. Lt. Bish had to jump aside to keep from being physically hit by the bomb.

We immediately cleared the bridge. In somewhat of a panic and not knowing what to do, we signaled the central communications ship and told them of our situation. Within an

# **THE ARMED GUARD HELPED HIM RETURN**

hour, an Australian Naval Officer boarded and defused the bomb. The bomb had two fuses--the first had detonated, the second hadn't. According to him, there was one chance in ten thousand that this could happen. If exploded, the bomb would have totally destroyed the bridge taking approximately 20 of us with it.

That evening the following message was written on the chalk board in our mess hall-- "Thanks fellows" and signed "U. S. Army." Obviously, the 500 troops were still on board when all this action took place.

During the war, cameras were not allowed by anyone in the service, except for some specially designated people. I was quite sure that none of the Navy or Merchant Marine crews had one. I hurried down to the Army troops, and asked if someone might have one. Fortunately, one of the guys did. He came to the bridge, and took a picture of four of us and the bomb, before we threw the bomb overboard. I gave the guy with the camera my home address, and told him if he made it through the war, I would sure appreciate a copy. Sometime shortly after the war ended, here came a copy. I have no recollection of his name or where he lived. I know that I wrote him a letter of thanks.

We were under a continuous air attack the rest of the day, and hoped for a little relief that night. However, this wasn't to be. I was on my radio shift from midnight to four on the 25th. At approximately 0330, the radio message came for all ships to be prepared for a bombardment from the Japanese Navy. We were also to be ready to abandon ship and swim to the nearest shore, where we were to be on our own. The Japanese Navy, in a surprise move had bottled up and closed our only exit from the bay. Of course, this then turned into the famous naval battle of Leyte Gulf or Surigao Strait where, fortunately for us, our totally outmanned Seventh Fleet outfought a much larger and more fortified Japanese Navy.

Standing on the bridge, secured in our life jackets, we watched the ensuing battle take place. Flashes from the 14- and 16inch guns flashed across the horizon for what seemed like hours. It was some time before the all clear was sounded, and the order to possibly abandon ship was rescinded. We now had a better understanding why our invasion convoy was left alone. The Japanese had a better plan, and it almost worked.

In the first few days, we were under constant air attacks with the only protection being our own anti-aircraft guns and the few planes that could be spared from some of our nearby aircraft carriers. Those planes were also needed to provide protection for the carriers. Australian planes, coming from somewhere, were also giving protective help.

On the 27th came a most welcome sight. Approximately 32 Lockheed P-38 Lightning Fighters, in formations of 4, arrived overhead to provide additional air protection. As if at a football game, the bay erupted into a cheering roar from the personnel on all the ships. From that day on, they ruled the sky. They flew in groups of 4, with 4 to 8 in the air at all times. That didn't mean that the air attacks lessened, but they were much less effective. Dog fights were common, and the P-38 victory rolls after an engagement were great to watch. The Japanese planes were fast, but no match for the P-38s.



# **THE ARMED GUARD HELPED HIM RETURN**

During the night raids, which was every night, the sky lit up like the Fourth Of July from all the firing of the bigger guns and the tracer bullets from the 20mms. One night, a direct hit was scored on one of the raiders. A large ball of fire filled the sky as the plane fell earthward. Apparently, the pilot still had enough control, and by following the tracer bullets, he was to guide the plane into a direct hit on one of the liberty ships. Amid other explosions from the ship's ammunition supply, screams of the injured and dying could be heard. The ship burned all night and into the next day. An immediate order went out to all ships that there would be no more firing at enemy aircraft during the night.

Continuous sleep was almost impossible.. The Japanese sent one or more bombers over every night to keep us awake and at general quarters. Part of their plan was to drop small personnel bombs on the area, just to let us know they were there and to hope for a lucky strike. One night they succeeded. One of their bombs hit a PT Boat anchored just a short distance from us. The concussion from the PT's exploding torpedoes caused the Barlow to react with a giant swaying motion. Daylight reflected only bits and pieces of small debris as a reminder of the boat that existed the night before.

On November 12, we experienced our first encounter with the Kamikazes, or the Divine Wind Squadron. It was a new and terrifying weapon they were throwing at us. We could count on them visiting us every day, early morning and at dusk. They were very effective, and we lost many ships as well as the personnel assigned to them. We had several dive on us, but luckily were able to shoot them out of the sky before finding us as their target. One, however, missed us by only a few feet. Our gun crew must have hit the pilot on the way down, and the weight of him falling forward onto the controls caused the plane to veer away barely enough to miss us. Miscellaneous pieces of his plane were found strewn over the deck both fore and aft.

On November 22, we were ordered to depart and return to the States. Our total cargo had finally been unloaded. The troops and trash cans had departed in the first few days, but we sat on the high test gas for most of the time we were there. During those 29 days in San Pedro Bay, we experienced 50 major air raids, numerous Kamikaze attacks, and two typhoons. If all the small nighttime nuisance bombings were included, total air raids were more like 105. This was my count as the log keeper.

We arrived back in the states with the symbols of seven Japanese planes or flags proudly painted on the smoke stack, the ship fully in tack, but with weary and glad-to-be-home Navy and Merchant crews. A Letter Of Commendation by Lt. Bish to the Commanding Officer, Armed Guard Center (Pacific), described the action encountered and contained the following words: "During the above enemy action the enlisted personnel conducted themselves efficiently and courageously. I wish to commend each enlisted man for his conduct during this action with the enemy. It is desired that a copy of this letter be placed in the service record of each man of the Armed Guard and Communication Liaison Units." As a token of thanks and gratitude, the Merchant Crew threw a party, including a wonderful steak dinner, for the Navy guys.

On three of the ships which I served, I only have a vague remembrance of my shipmates. On the Barlow, however, almost every crew member remains vividly imprinted in my memory. Also, a memory that includes being a part of helping to fulfill those famous words "I Shall Return".

## JACK L. MARTIN

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Dear C.A. and Hilda,

We hope the two of you are okay and enjoying the pre-Christmas activities as the two of us are.



Jack Martin

David LaPointe

Nan and I recently had the pleasure of cruising out of Providence, RI., September 25, 2010 aboard the John W. Brown Liberty ship. A party of two married couples comprised of a veteran (me) of the U. S Navy Armed Guard from WWII, and Korea, and my brother-in-law a Navy veteran of Vietnam. We read about the cruise in your excellent Pointer Magazine and this is a fine way to relive previous experiences and meet new shipmates..

We are pleased to salute the cruise arrangers, crew and the related personnel that made the event so very special for everyone on-board. Following are a few of our comments to share with you along with a few photos description on the back of each print;

Upon arrival at the pier parking was readily available at no extra charge

The crew was friendly and responsive to questions.

The orchestra's performance throughout the day was outstanding with memorable songs.

The professional actors portraying General MacArthur and President Franklin Delano Roosevelt were a fine addition as were the Abbott and Costello comedians with their enjoyable and entertaining routines including the memorable "Who's on First"..

The food and beverages were deliciously-superb and having complimentary bottle water readily available throughout the cruise a real plus.

Having free gangway while on-board to explore the ship was meaningful.

The ceremonies and wreath placement was a thoughtful and very moving program.

The simulated air attack was a fun addition and brought back memories of convoys during WWII.

To sum up our overall pleasure – **"WOW!"** and thanks to all for an excellent and fun cruise!

It is our intention to cruise with the O'Brian from the West Coast next year and we anxiously await for the details to appear in the Pointer.

In the interim, we continue to enjoy your great publication the Pointer. Frequently when perusing the latest issue I get feelings of missing the camaraderie of being on active duty then, I begin to recall some of the hardships we all experienced and I quickly settle down watching TV and NCIS!

Enclosed is our check Censored, to help offset some of the costs you continually wrestle with. Please keep up the good work and pleasure you bring to each of us.

Merry Christmas and a wonderful New Year for you and yours from the two of us.

With warmest regards from the two of us,



Culver City, Calif.

## THE SAGA OF THE S.S. MARCUS DALY

by Capt. Alvin W. Opheim

I was appointed Master of the S.S. MARCUS DALY on July 18, 1944, to relieve Capt. E.W. Greenup, who was transferred to another ship. This will be voyage number two for the ship. Loading operations commenced a few days later. The cargo loaded at Long Beach, Ca. dock was the usual war material; guns, ammunition, foodstuffs, planes, etc.. Our destination-New Guinea, seemed far away the night we dropped the pilot and set our course toward it. We sailed alone. The U.S. Navy did not have enough escorts to meet the requirements. The need was too great in the Atlantic. Our feelings were not joyful when leaving the safety of a home port, bound for the war zone. Rather, it was a feeling of indifference. There was a job to be done, and it had to be done.

The S.S. MARCUS DALY was a Liberty-type ship, built in Richmond, California. The crew consisted of forty-one merchant men, including the skipper, and twenty seven navy men, including the gunnery officer. That was the regulation number of men required to man this type of vessel, as prescribed by the war-time authorities, and it sufficed. The route we were instructed to took us south of the Hawaiian Islands. The weather was fair at all times, and it was as pleasant as the taut nerves and tension caused by war-time strain, would permit.

The officers and crew of any ship, loaded with explosives whether it was a Merchantman or Man-of-War, were never any delusion, during wartime, that it can only happen to someone else. Each time we sail with a dangerous cargo, we knew it could be our last time. It was great satisfaction to know that most of the crew had had previous experience at sea. The chief engineer, Steen Magnus and I were former shipmates. We

sailed together on a ship about twenty years previous to the voyage. His waistline had increased a trifle since that time, but his cherubic features had not changed. Lt (jg) J.S. Feathers U.S.N.R., the gunnery officer, was a man of my own heart. He was raised on a farm and prior to joining the Navy, he held a position as principal of a high school in Oregon. His pleasant smile and efficient, quiet manner made me feel he would soon organize the various gun crews and train them well enough, so that they would be able to account for themselves when the need arose. I was not to be disappointed with him. He was later twice decorated by the Navy. We made the long voyage without sighting anything excepting one small cone-shaped island. which our route brought us near to. The island was uninhabited, and it made a good landmark for navigators to check their positions.

When we arrived off the port of Finchaven New Guinea, we were told by blinker signals on shore to wait outside of the harbor till the pilot came onboard. We waited for several other ships, till nearly dark before they found a place for us to drop anchor for the night. Our anchorage was located behind a coral reef protruding from the shore, with one natural inlet, just wide enough to permit a Liberty ship to enter. If a torpedo were fired at us during the night, it would lodge harmlessly on the coral reef. That night, we all enjoyed a sound sleep. The next morning, I was awakened by voices and gleeful laughter coming from the vicinity of the ship's bridge. I had a desire to check on the ship's position at anchor, in relation to shore and any possible dangers, which I could not do in the semi-darkness at the time we dropped anchor. Sleepily and reluctantly, I left my bed to satisfy my curiosity regarding the hilarity on the bridge and our position.

I found all the ship's officers except the engineer on duty, taking turns at the binoculars, inspecting the shore line.

It was a beautiful sight. The inlet was shaped like a half-moon with the shore forming the outer curve, and the coral reef part cutting it in half. The white, sand beach was like a picture. An army hospital was located in a jungle clearing not far from the beach. A

ship's officer graciously asked, "Captain, do you wish to see something soothing to sea-wary eyes?" With thanks, I excepted the pre-offered binoculars, which were my own, and trained it on the beach area which had drawn their attention. All I could see was a number of army nurses taking an early morning sun bath. They has a canvas screen set up to conceal themselves from the prying eyes of the convelesing soldiers sitting on the hospital veranda. They did not seem to object to the seeing eyes of the seamen. The pleasant scene did not last long. The harbor pilot came aboard in time for breakfast and later piloted the ship to another area where there were facilities for unloading the fighter planes which were stowed in crates on our decks.

During the unloading operations, the pursers pharmacist mate told me, "The crew wishes to draw money." For what purpose in these jungle ports he did not know, and I could not imagine. During the war time in these ports, a master of a merchant ship, when in need of money, had toobtain it through an army or navy paymaster. "It is 15 miles to the paymaster's office" said an army officer, "If you wish, I will phone the vehicle pool for transportation for you." I wished and he phoned. They sent a two-ton six wheeler to take me to the money office. Several members of the crew requested permission to accompany me, so they could buy money orders to send back to the States. They confided, while en route in the truck, they left San Pedro, California owing \$50.00 each to a madame. They had promised they would send the money at their first opportunity. I was glad they were maintaining the tradition of the Merchant Marine, by paying their

debt when due.

When we had unloaded the deck cargo, we were instructed to proceed to Oro Bay, about twelve hours steaming, south of Finchaven. En-route to that port, it was stated in our sailing orders, to check our position with Mitre Rock. The instructions stated the Mitre Rock is easily identified because it is shaped like a bishop's mitre. I had forgotten, if I ever knew, what a bishop's mitre looks like. I asked the officers and men, "Do you know?" No one did. The dictionary was consulted and it contained a picture of a bishop's mitre. The rock was easily identified, our position ascertained and we proceeded without further incident to our destination.

Oro Bay is open to the sea, but well-protected from the north, south and west. The army engineers had built two docks, one on each side of the bay. We discharged the remainder of our cargo at the long pier, which accommodated three ships at one time. During the unloading operations, the soldier stvedores accidentally dropped a sling load of dehydrated potatoes over the side into the water. The soldiers exclaimed, "WHOOPEE, there goes twelve cases we don't have to eat." When the unloading operations were finished, we shifted the ship across the bay to the smaller pier, to commence loading. There, we loaded sixty Sherman tanks and the equipment for operating them. There existed a general feeling at the time that something big was pending. Hollandia was safely in our hands and a small island to the west of it had been captured from the enemy only recently. We surmised the Philippines would be our next objective, but we knew not which port, or what island there would be the first to be attacked.

The tanks and complement were delivered at Manus Island, in the Admiralty group, where they are reloaded aboard LST's. We made several more short trips between various bases in New Guinea, hauling loads of war mate-

rial for its final assembly. We felt concerned for fear we would be kept on the "peddling" run as we called it, and miss taking part in the invasion. I asked a high ranking army officer, "Why do some Merchant ships lie at anchor, weeks at a time, whereas we have been constantly on the go?" "We choose the ships with experienced masters," said he. "The inexperienced masters wreck too many docks."

Our turn finally came to load for D-Day. It was a mixed cargo. The deck and number two hold were loaded down with road building machinery, bull-dozers, carry-alls and road leveling machines; the type required to rebuild damaged air-strips and create new ones, where needed. The lower holds were filled with quartermaster stores. I was told by someone, "There is three million dollars worth of invasion money in them thar holds." The last item we loaded were army provisions. These were packed in cases, then ten cases to a bundle and strapped together with wire. It was known as 10-1 rations, which meant that each bundle contained enough provisions for 10 men for one day, or ten days for one man. The field kitchen was set up on number two hatch with a canopy over it. The ship engineer installed a fresh water pipe with a faucet near the field kitchen. The latrine for the troops was constructed by the ship's carpenter, using planks to form a trough, placing near the ship's stern. A salt water hose placed in one end of the trough effected sanitary requirements.

When all was in readiness, the troops were marched on board, about twelve hundred in all. Last but not least, came Brig.Gen. E.K. Walladder, a real gentleman of the old school, to ride with us. It was a pleasure indeed, to have him onboard. When the convoy was formed, the LST's led and the other ships followed. There were forty-two cargo troop ships forming 6 lines, seven ships in each line. The S.S. MARCUS

DALY was number 25, which meant we were the fifth ship in line two. It was interesting to observe the army cooks prepare meals for twelve hundred troops in that one field kitchen. The menu was balanced and well prepared. The soldiers lined up with their mess kits at meal time to receive their rations, they sat on the hatches or anywhere space was available to eat them.

We approached the entrance to the Gulf of Leyte before the break of day, to be in a position to enter it at dawn. When we entered the Gulf, the enemy planes greeted us in such a way that I am inclined to feel our arrival was not welcomed. They reminded me of the hornets on the farm, when the kids threw rocks at their nests. Mr. Feathers, our gunnery officer, instructed his men not to waste ammunition, but to direct their fire on the planes within range. They held their fire when a high flying plane dropped a string of bombs. The bombs missed us. When the plane made a turn, and came in for another run at a lower altitude, the boys let go with their all. I observed the tracer bullets through my binoculars, closing in on the plane, and it gave my great pleasure to see the bullets explode on target. The plane caught fire and crashed into the bay.

A few minutes later, another plane came at us; a dive bomber. Will our gunners find the target in time? The tracer bullets are passing underneath the plane. I know Mr. Feathers is aware of it. If the interphone system is functioning properly, he will notify them to raise their sight. Can they hear him when all guns are spitting a deafening staccato? I watched as the starboard wing gunner is raising the stream of tracers. The tracers are exploding against the enemy cockpit. I can see the pilot slump over. As the plane was about to hit us in a crash dive, it swerved sharply upward. The bomb was dropped. It missed us by no more than ten feet. Several naval vessels were now creating an artificial



# ***WARTIME TANKERS:***

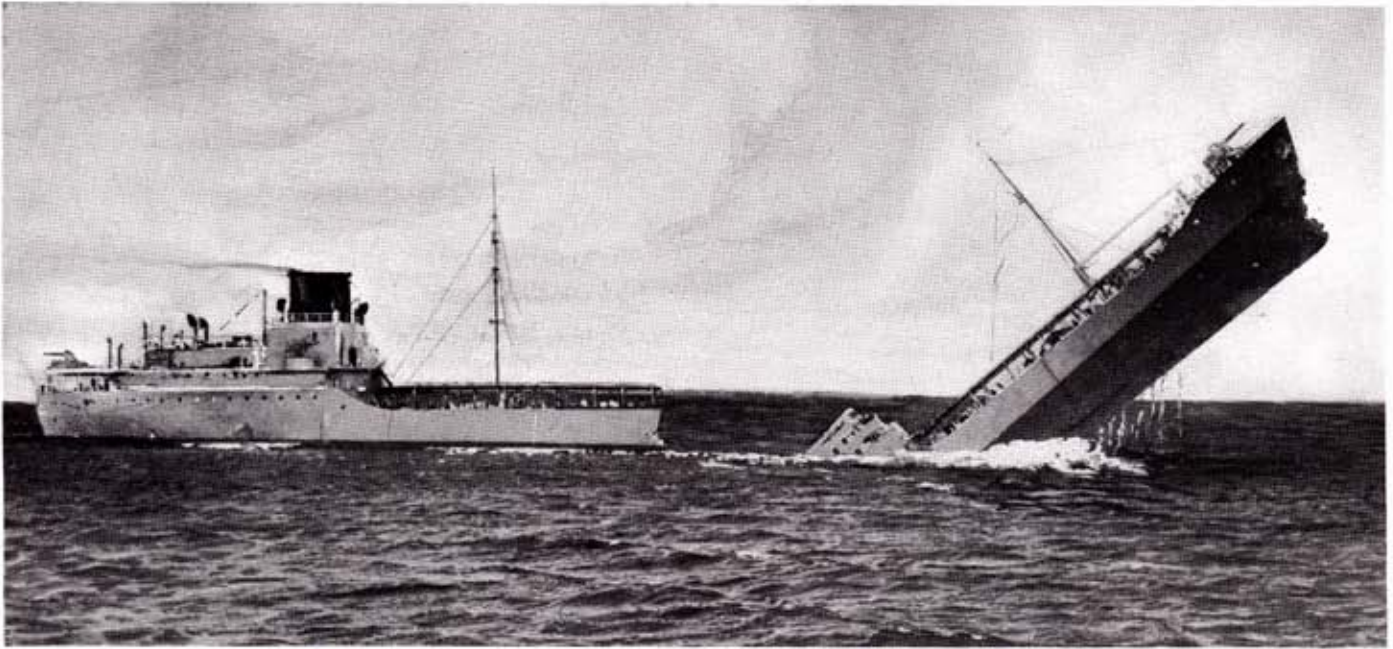


***Our  
Lifeline  
to  
Victory***





# WARTIME TANKERS



**ALL BUT ONE CREW MEMBER PERISHED WHEN THE *ATLANTIC SUN* WAS STRUCK BY A TORPEDO.**

**B**attleships. Destroyers. Aircraft carriers. Minesweepers. All important to America's success in World War II. Yet a ship that many would agree was just as vital to the war effort was not a U.S. Naval ship. In fact, it was a commercial ship, the oil tanker. Its stories are sometimes tragic, sometimes successful, always heroic.

The tasks handed to America's tankermen and tankers during the war years were extremely challenging and hazardous. Those tankers, 222 of which were built by the Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co., rose to the occasion and delivered the goods. They continued to deliver inordinate amounts of oil and gas worldwide even after many ships were torpedoed and many crewmen were killed.

So critical was the role of the tanker and so valuable its

petroleum that they became the specially sought out targets of the Nazi U-boats. Out of the first 100 American ships lost in the war, 36 were oil tankers. When sinkings off the Atlantic coast were at their height, more than half of all vessels sunk were oil tankers.

The feats accomplished by the tankships and their crews are borne out by the approximately 245 million barrels of product transported worldwide from 1942 through 1945. In the Pacific War, the raid on Okinawa took 1,000 ships using 1.4 million barrels of fuel oil. During one four-month period, tankers in the Pacific pumped 15 million barrels of oil products into Naval ships.

Even more significant than the amount of oil carried was the fact that this task was performed while the ships were underway. These tankships operated so efficiently that "delivery on the

run" became a routine occurrence. In reality, fueling on the run, even in calm water, is an extremely difficult and dangerous undertaking.

One tanker, the Sun-built *USS Neches*, won special Navy recognition for fueling 1,000 ships at sea. The one-thousandth refueling was performed in post-typhoon waves in the Pacific as the *Neches* fueled the *USS Independence*.

Sun aided the war not only by producing the petroleum necessary to keep up the war effort but also by providing its transport, oil tankers. Sun-built vessels, whether it was a Sun-owned vessel, a maritime commission-owned vessel or a vessel owned by another commercial enterprise, played a critical role in World War II. The use of tankers was not limited to the delivery of petroleum products. As more



# WARTIME TANKERS

and more planes were needed in the European Theater, additional carrying space was needed. Thus tankers were reframed so that planes and other equipment could be carried through rough seas without being washed off deck. The tanker decks utilized provided additional space equal to 375 cargo ships.

In this capacity, the *MS Sun* carried 60 Mustang planes between September 1943 and March 1945. The *M/S Sabine Sun* transported nine Vultee planes and the *M/S Texas Sun* carried 50 aircraft of various types and 12 landing craft between May 1943 and April 1944.

Tales of the Sun Oil fleet are rich in heroism and steeped in bravery. The Sun Shipbuilding and Dry Dock Co. became the largest single shipyard in the world. Between December 7, 1941, and October 1, 1945, the yard turned out 222 large tankers and 27 cargo ships.

Neither Sun crews, nor its ships were immune from Nazi attack. On February 21, 1942, the *S.S. J. N. Pew* became the first Sun casualty of the war. Torpedoed off the coast of Aruba, the ship was sunk, taking 33 lives. Only three crew members survived.

One of the survivors of the *J. N. Pew*, Robert E. Kelly, was picked up in the Caribbean after 21 days. Ten of his crew mates succumbed to the conditions one by one until Kelly was the sole survivor. The lifeboat was spotted by patrol planes, which called for a rescue. When Kelly

was found, he was weak and barely conscious. Eventually he was nursed back to health and returned to his native Philadelphia.

The other two survivors of the attack *Orla Bowhall*, steward, and *Charles Lynch*, first pumpman, made it to shore in a wilderness of the South American coastline. There, they were found by friendly Indians who aided them in reaching *Richacha, Venezuela*. From there, they made it home.

Two days after the sinking of the *J. N. Pew*, Sun's second casualty, the *M/S Sun* was torpedoed. She did not sink and eventually made it back to *Chester* for repairs.

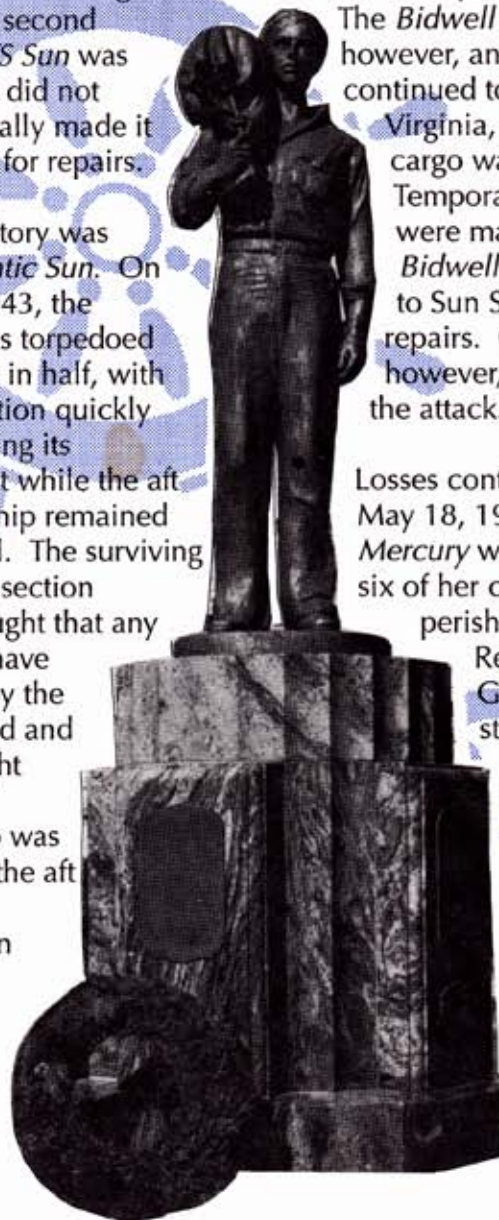
Another tragic story was that of the *Atlantic Sun*. On February 15, 1943, the *Atlantic Sun* was torpedoed and literally cut in half, with the forward section quickly sinking and taking its crewmen with it while the aft portion of the ship remained on an even keel. The surviving crew on the aft section incorrectly thought that any U-boat would have been satisfied by the damage inflicted and thus were caught unawares as a second torpedo was launched. As the aft portion began sinking, Seaman *William Gobolich* was washed off deck while eight of his crewmen

managed to get on a water-logged life raft. The raft sinking, *Gobolich* swam over to a U-boat to plead for help. Upon reaching the sub, he blacked out and awoke to find himself a POW. The Germans explained that they could do nothing for his crew mates. *Gobolich*, the sole survivor of the *Atlantic Sun*, would spend two years as a German-held prisoner of war.

Next on the German hit list of Sun tankers was the *M/S Bidwell*. The *Bidwell* was hit by an enemy torpedo on April 6, 1942, off Cape Lookout, N.C. The *Bidwell* did not sink, however, and the vessel continued to *Norfolk, Virginia*, where its cargo was discharged. Temporary repairs were made and the *Bidwell* made it back to Sun Ship for full repairs. One life, however, was lost in the attack.

Losses continued. On May 18, 1942, the *M/S Mercury* was sunk and six of her crewmen perished.

Relentlessly, the Germans stepped up their U-boat attacks and the *M/S Pennsylvania* was their next victim. Torpedoed off *Key West*,



SEAMEN'S  
MEMORIAL,  
MARCUS  
HOOK, PA



# WARTIME TANKERS



**M.S. SUN**

The preceding stories were but a few of the highlights in the history of Sun's tankers and her brave and valiant crews. Tale after tale could be told of these heroes and their adventures with the enemy, with the Navy and with each other. Without their valiant efforts, the war may have had a very different outcome.

Although Sun Ship is now a memory, at Sun's Marcus Hook refinery, a great memorial just inside the gates honors the bravery and heroism of those who gave their lives for their country. The memorial is a stirring tribute to Sun's Seamen.

Florida, on July 15, 1942, the cargo caught fire and enveloped the ship. All but two of the crew left the ship. The two crewmen who stayed behind perished in a valiant effort to save the ship. The next day, with the fire abated, the crew returned to the ship and with the help of the Navy put out the remaining flames. The *Pennsylvania* eventually returned home for repairs.

the *M. S. Sunoco* sank following an explosion of undetermined origin and resulting fire. This tragedy took place off Sandy Hook, New Jersey. After attempting to fight the flames, the *Sunoco* was pushed into deeper waters and sank. It was later salvaged and rebuilt in Chester, Pa.

The fourth and final U-boat sinking of a Sun vessel occurred on April 5, 1943, when the *M/S Sun Oil* was lost. Her entire crew and Navy armed guard all perished. Sun's total loss of life now stood at 131. This tally would increase to its final tally of 141 when 10 men died as



**VAL ZDUN (LEFT), FIRST RECIPIENT OF J. HOWARD PEW AWARD FOR BRAVERY, WITH MR. PEW AND NORMAN WALLS, CAPTAIN OF THE M.S. SUN.**

fog. This fog will conceal us from the enemy for the time being. It will give us respite, which will enable us to get our bearings and further orders where to proceed. I received orders to anchor our ship near the beach, where the airstrip is located. It was a nice place to lay. We could watch the progress of the battle on shore through our binoculars, and we presumed there would be a number of anti-aircraft batteries near the end of the air-strip to help ward off the attacking planes.

A few minutes after coming to anchor, I received orders to proceed to the Tacloban dock. "I have no chart," I said. "Follow that power boat," I was told. The boat was small, it had power; it could proceed faster than a Liberty ship. We followed it but I felt skeptical. The channel was not marked with the usual buoys. Instead, we had to rely on bamboo poles. The fishermen were using bamboo poles, too. We passed close astern of several LST's with their gaping mouths extending from the water to the shore. I could then see the concrete pier. I could see an oil drum not far from the end of the pier end. Its color appeared to be rusty brown, such as oil drums are colored when they've been in salt water for some time. I headed for the pier. The ship went aground. I ordered, "Full astern." The ship came afloat.

The dive bombers came at us. The gunners drove them off. The merchant deck crew were standing by the lines, to make fast. They should be helping at the guns. The navy men will carry on. They always have. I lined the ship up, heading for the pier once more. It went aground again. The boat came back to inform me, "The oil drum is supposed to be painted red, and it is a buoy."

The enemy planes are coming at us again. Two army tug boats take our stern line to assist us off the mud bank. They start off with a jerk. The lines part. The broken ends fall into the propeller going full astern. They foul it. We stop the engine. It is now dark. The enemy cannot see us.

That is, the dive-bombers. The respite allowed us to plan how we might extricate ourselves from our awkward position. The bow of the ship was in the mudbank. The stern mooring lines were fouled in the propeller. The cargo was needed on shore. So were the troops.

I held consultation with the ship's officers and we decided to hook up the jacking-engine which would enable the engineers to slowly turn the propeller opposite to the way it was turning when the lines were fouled. At the same time, the deck crews took the lines to the after-mooring winches to keep strain on the lines. This was done, and the lines came clear. Tug boats took the lines again and this time were cautious when taking up the slack. The ship came afloat before midnight. The following morning, we were ready to go alongside the pier when it became light enough to see. We hoped to make fast before the enemy attacks began, so the merchant seamen could help the navy men at the guns. I maneuvered the ship through the narrow channel, twixt the oil drum and the beach, and as the bow of the vessel was nosing toward the pier, the gunners opened fire.

The soldiers standing by on the pier to handle the lines, made a dash for the trenches near the dock installations. I asked through the loud speaker, "Who in the hell will handle our lines if you all run away?" The officer in charge, Captain Carlson looked at the men running, shook his head and said, "I will make your lines fast, Captain." He did and by the time we were made fast to the dock, the attack halted for the time being. I did not have time to observe the attack as I was too busy bringing the ship alongside of the pier. I was told it was a three-plane attack. All the bombs missed us. The gangplank was lowered and the troops aboard the ship lost no time in going ashore. I heard several remarks by various soldiers as they were leaving. They were glad to get off the ship and to a place where they can seek

refuge during a dive-bomber attack. The six days and nights, while the soldiers-stevedores were unloading our cargo, the enemy tried their upmost to sink us alongside the dock. Our gunners stood by their guns, day and night. As the dive-bombers came skimming over the mountain tops across the small bay from the dock, they held their fire till the planes were near enough to let them have it point blank. They brought down many plaques whose bombs all missed us except one. That one blew a hole in the center of the concrete pier. Our ship's bow was punctured in several places and three of the gunners on the forward three-inch gun were injured.

When the cargo was discharged, we departed from the hot spot with sighs of relief. Orders now directed us to join a convoy of empty LST's returning to New Guinea. On our arrival, we started loading the ship for another voyage to Leyte. No heavy equipment this time. The lower hold cargo consisted of stores, ammunition, medical supplies, trucks and jeeps. The truck and jeeps, which was stowed on deck, were fitted with gun mounting in such a way that the guns could be utilized to supplement the ship's armament. When they mounted the guns on the vehicles, I noticed they were all 50-caliber rapid-fire, with armor-piercing bullets. This pleased me. My theory was that an armored-piercing bullet would be more effective against a dive-bomber than our own 20mm missiles, which exploded on contact with the target. I had noticed several times, the 20mm missiles exploding against the radial motor on the dive-bomber with no effect. When the cargo was loaded, the troops came onboard commanded by Colonel Skelton (No relation to Red, so he said). It was a pleasure to have him aboard.

The convoy we were to join formed in the waters outside Hollandia. It was paced by LST's in the lead, with the larger ships following them. The size of the convoy was about the same as the previous one, probably a few more escorts vessels. The route followed the pattern of the first one



too, keeping well away from the coast of Mindano, till abreast of Leyte Gulf. During the afternoon, on the day before our scheduled arrival in Leyte Gulf, a signal was flashed to all ships. "There are friendly planes overhead." The sky was partly cloudy and a choppy head sea was running, caused by a moderate headwind. We spotted several planes as they passed over the clear areas between the clouds. I heard Mr. Feathers remark, "The friendly planes are acting strangely, dodging behind the clouds." A few minutes later, one of the planes left the clouds and made a swoop down over the convoy. Its guns strafed various ships as it came down at the convoy, then concentrated its aim at our ship. Just before passing over us, it let go a string of bombs. The bombs missed us by a few feet.

The chief mate, Mr. F.A. Steele of Rose Mead, California became pock-marked with fragment from a 20mm which burst in contact with the steel bulkhead behind him. He was not seriously injured, but suffered a lot of pain. The doctors removed all the pieces they could find, and on arrival in Leyte, took him to an army hospital where they removed many more splinters. About two months later, several more pieces, deeply imbedded, were removed in a San Francisco, Ca. hospital. An army doctor received similar injuries when another missile exploded upon hitting the ship's smokestack. The man at the wheel was injured at the same time. I asked the doctor,

"Where were you standing when you were hit?" He retorted, " Safest place on the ship, close behind you. You blankety-blank so and so." I realized then, that he had acted as a shield for me. I had received only a few pieces in my left arm. We did not know, and there was no way we could determine whether the strafing of our ship came from the guns of the attacking planes, or from the guns of the other ships, in their excitement, forgot the warning given them not to hit their own ships. One 30 caliber bullet hit the breech on one of our 20mm gun and lodged there. This, we knew came from

an enemy plane.

A few hours later, we were attacked again. By this time, it was noon. This I know because I was observing the meridian passage of the sun with my sextant when it happened. A twin-motored bomber led the attack on our ship. It dropped a string of bombs as it passed over us at low altitude. Then came a Zero dive-bomber. It circled our ship once. The tracer bullets from our guns were hitting it. I could see them explode against the fuselage. It closed in on us. Its right wing sheared off as it hit the raised boom on number one hatch. It crash-dived into number one hold. There was a terrific explosion. Fires broke out forward with a roar. The flames, fanned by the head wind, reached back towards the bridge. The ship's crew led out the fire hoses and opened the forward hydrant. No water come. The explosion had carried away the forward fire line. "Connect the hoses together to make them reach the after-fire hydrants," I ordered. The men worked feverishly to carry out my orders. I maneuvered the ship out of the convoy, and headed it down wind on slow speed. The flames now were being blown forward, away from the ship and the men could approach the fire with one hose. Then I had to order, " Never mind the fire, flood the ammunition magazine first." Many men were coming up out of number one hatch with their clothes afire from head to foot. Some of the injured are moaning; others were wandering about in a daze. Some were jumping overboard. I shouted through the loud speaker, "The order to abandon ship has not been given. We cannot rescue anyone leaping overboard." No one left the ship after that.

The magazine is flooded. The engineers have blocked off the broken main, and now they have several hoses playing on the fires. I use my binoculars to get a close-up look at the havoc wrought. I see a merchant seaman, Richard Mathieson (Glendale, California), stand up in in the forward gun tub with his clothes ablaze. He leaned over the edge of the gun tub. He lost his balance and fell to the deck

below. The man at the hose drenched him with water to extinguish the fire. Richard stood up and staggered toward the damaged ladder leading up to the gun tub. He climbed back into the gun tub. He picked up an unconscious navy seaman and eased him down to the men below. Someone helped Richard down. He collapsed. He is picked up and carried to his quarters for medical attention. He regains consciousness a few hours later, joked with his shipmates a bit, then passes on, to where his tribulations and pain ceased to exist. He was awarded the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal Posthumously.

The fire was gradually brought under control, when we were faced with another danger. An enemy torpedo plane had launched a torpedo at a ship astern of us. It knocked the propeller and rudder off that ship, which left it helpless. It then let go another torpedo at it, which hit abreast number two hold. The ship took a list to port, and we could see the troops aboard abandoning ship. The plane had one more torpedo strapped to its belly, and now it commenced stalking our ship. I notified the engineer on watch, to stand by the throttle and give it the works, when the signal "full ahead" is given. The plane was skimming the surface of the sea and weaving back and forth, a difficult target for the gunners. The tracer bullets were hitting the water a little behind the plane. The men in the engine room knew what was about to happen. They knew if this torpedo hit us abreast the engine room, it would be curtains for them. The plane launched the torpedo. We could see the splash as it hit the water, and the churning of its propeller as it gained momentum. We were at a slow speed ahead. I signaled "full speed ahead and hard left rudder." The torpedo was coming towards our port side. The ship vibrated as the engineer opened the throttle. The sudden force of water against the rudder angled to the left, pushed the stern of the ship away from the oncoming torpedo. It missed us. The plane withdrew towards its base in Mindano and the sun has set.

Darkness is about to envelope us. The fire in number one flares up occasionally. The injured have been brought into the officer and crew quarters, where the doctors and first aid men can administer them under the lights. My cabin and office has room for only four. Three died during the night in my quarters.

When we thought the fires were all extinguished, I called for "Full speed ahead" in order to rejoin the convoy, which was not out of sight in the dark. An escort vessel came near us, and someone on it sang out through a megaphone, "You merchant ship, get the hell out of the convoy." Just then a fire flared up with a blaze many feet high in the ship's forepeak. I slowed the ship and headed down wind again. Someone on our ship shouted to the escort vessel, "Where do you say we should go?" The fire was extinguished and after running at full speed a few more hours, we could distinguish the outlines of the ships in the convoy, but could not re-occupy our position in it till daylight.

Merchant seaman, Alvin H. (Happy) Crawford of Santa Monica, California could not be found when it came time for him to do his "trick at the wheel." He helped man the three inch forward gun and was last seen there. We searched and at last found him at his station with a bullet hole through his head. With two members of the ship's crew killed and several seriously injured besides the chief mate, we were rather handicapped in our regular ship's operation. We did not have reserves to call on, so we had to carry on by increasing the hours on watch for the others.

We entered Leyte Gulf early the next morning. And there received orders to proceed to Gorgona Beach to land the troops and discharge our cargo. The navy had several vessels standing by to remove the two hundred dead and injured from the ship. The dead and injured seamen were taken care of with the soldiers.

I could not bring the ship to anchor be-

cause our ground tackle was disabled by the bomb explosion. I got permission from the master of a Liberty ship at anchor, to tie up alongside of it. The gun crew on that ship seemed to take perverse delight in chiding our men for standing by their guns, ready for action at all times. They said, "The radar stations on shore will give us ample warning." The following forenoon, a brisk wind kicked up the sea too much, and we had to let go the lines and steam slowly back and forth while we discharged the cargo into the landing boats.

During the afternoon, a twin-motored enemy plane, skimming the tree tops, came at us, dropping a string of bombs as it came over. The bombs missed, but a suicide plane following, did not. It crashed-dived into the gun tub located on the port wing of the bridge. The bomb attached to the plane slid out of the carriage, knocked the two port side lifeboats into the sea, and exploded in the landing craft, loaded with cargo, alongside number four hold. The bomb fragments penetrated the hull in many places abreast number four hold, which contained seven hundred barrels of high test aviation fuel. The oil-soaked dunnage on top of the barrels blazed up and the situation, for awhile, looked hopeless. Many smaller fires broke out on the ship's deck, caused by the gasoline from the crashed plane. But tired and worn out as my officers were, they worked as if they were supermen and managed to extinguish the fire. Miraculously, no one was killed this time, except the suicide pilot. Mr. Feathers was painfully injured, several members of his crew, and several merchant seamen, too. How the men in the gun tub escaped remains a mystery to me.

During this same time, another suicide plane crashed-dived into the aft hold of the ship we were recently tied alongside. The fire pump on that ship was knocked out and they could not save the ship. It burned all night and the next day. It finally sank at anchor, with the bow remaining

above water. It made a good beacon for us to steer by during the black of the following night. When we had finally finished discharging our undamaged cargo, we shifted to the Tacloban area of the gulf, where we managed to bring the ship to anchor by using the kedge anchor attached to the towing wire. We borrowed a gas driven centrifugal motor from the army engineer to pump the water out of number one hold.

The bilge had been plugged with debris resulting from the bomb explosion. We had to discharge our remaining cargo and clean the holds. Then we replaced the between deck hatches and covered them with cement to prevent water seeping in and flooding the lower hold. Then we cut out limbers in the t'ween deck sides, to keep the t'ween decks drained. It was a long, tedious voyage home to San Francisco via New Guinea. When our battered and scarred ship, the S.S. MARCUS DALY entered the Golden Gate, a silent wave of thanksgiving rose from each man of us. We were home at last. (Capt. Alvin W. Opheim -Ret. - Seattle, Wa.)

★ ★ ★

*Capt. Opheim had retired from the Maritime Service for 8 years prior to December 7, 1941, acquired a small business of his own, gotten married and fathered 3 children. A few months after the Pearl Harbor attack, he had the occasion to renew his Master Mariner's license which has to be done every 5 years after issued, or it expires. The officials at the Steamboat Inspection Service notified him that Uncle Sam needed his service. He went back to sea as did many thousands of others in this same situation. He was awarded the **MERCHANT MARINE DISTINGUISHED SERVICE MEDAL** on Nov. 26, 1945 by the President of the United States.*

*The Gallant Ship Award was awarded to the ship and crew of the Liberty Ship S.S. MARCUS DALY. The Gallant Ship bronze plaque was installed at San Francisco, California on April 30, 1944 in ceremonies presided over by the West Coast Director of the*

# A WARTIME DISASTER

The Decision Rested With One Man . . . 23-4-54

## WHEN WELLINGTON FACED A WARTIME DISASTER

DISASTER was close to Wellington on a July morning of 1943, when a heavily-laden American munitions ship lay at Queen's Wharf, afire. The decision to be made lay between scuttling the ship at sea—if she could make it—and fighting the fire at the wharfside.

WELLINGTON'S Chief Fire Officer, Mr. Charles Woolley, made but the briefest reference to war-time ships' fires when speaking at the farewell function tendered him last night on the eve of his retirement after 46 years of fire fighting, and then his reference was to thank the Harbour Master, Captain David Todd, for "the inspiration and technical advice" given on every such occasion.

What Mr. Woolley did not add was that many of those ships carried explosive—bombs and shells and high explosive for demolition of Japanese strong-points in the Pacific.

For instance—the fires on the John Davenport (July 6, 1943), the Fort Pine (September 8, 1942), the Kookinai (October 16, 1942), the Marina (February 2, 1943), the Glenbank (July 11, 1944), the Serpens (December 22, 1944), and the Cetus (January 29, 1945), mostly Liberties and Victories.

### Took 148 Lives

WELDING started several of the fires; some were from causes unknown; and two, the Cetus and the Serpens, took fire through spontaneous combustion among sandbags chemically treated against rot and mildew up in the Pacific. The U.S.S. Serpens set herself going again at Guadalcanal and ended in an almighty bang, with only two survivors of her crew of 150.

As no one talked in those war years, Wellington did not know what it had missed.

THE JOHN DAVENPORT HAD FOR WELLINGTON THE MAKINGS OF A GREATER DESOLATION THAN WIPED OUT ALMOST HALF HALIFAX, NOVA SCOTIA, IN THE FIRST WORLD WAR.

At nine in the morning of December 8, 1917, a French munitions

ship, the Mont Blanc, collided in the channel at Halifax with a Belgian relief ship, the Imo. Neither ship was badly damaged, but an oil lamp was overturned in the fore-castle of the Mont Blanc. The crew panicked. They lowered the boats, dropped a rope ladder, and went over the side and made for the high country.

Not that it saved them. They were included in the blast that killed 3000 and demolished and burned 5000 buildings when 3000 tons of T.N.T. roared up in an explosion that was heard 50 miles away, and hurled steel, including the ship's anchor, up to three miles from the harbour front.

### Block Busters!

HOW many tons of explosive the John Davenport was carrying is not known, but it was more than 3000 tons. The Americans were piling up munitions for the drives that were to clean the Japanese out of Rabaul, New Guinea, and Truk, and a big part of her cargo was in 8000lb block busters. It was the heaviest single cargo of bombs and other munitions which passed through Wellington.

The John Davenport was undergoing urgent deck welding repairs and lay at the Queen's Wharf, about where the Tamahine ties up. Fire was discovered at 5.30 in the morning, fairly deep in No. 3 hold, just forward of the bridge.

The crew of the Mont Blanc made for the high country, and so did some of the crew of the Davenport. The first engine from Central met them moving with exceeding great promptitude through the wharf gates.

### Scuttle Or Save?

THE skipper of the Davenport had changed his mind. He didn't want any fire brigades. He was going to make for the open and scuttle his ship as quickly as possible.

Charles Woolley asked for ten minutes and the way to get below to look things over.

"Get it out and it's worth 10,000 dollars to you," the skipper forecast.

The way below was down a man's

hole and into the smoke. The fire was well down and not to be reached without a lot of cargo shifting. The chief came up, his face half suffocated, but he said they would give it a go, and would lick it. Then he temporarily took the count and was out of the next immediate rounds. Another officer who went down with smoke gear confirmed Mr. Woolley's opinion that the fire could be beaten, with the right equipment.

### The Decision

THE John Davenport was loaded to the hatches, and on the hatches with cased aircraft, too heavy to be moved readily with the ship's gear, and the decision was to shift the ship round to Aotéa Quay, where the Hikitea could get alongside in deeper water.

Manned by her officers and remaining men, the John Davenport was taken round by Captain W. M. McLeod, of the Harbour Master's Office. Four brigadesmen were aboard to do what they could do with the ship's fire-fighting equip-

ment. Even at this distance they say that that harbour trip was the longest sea journey in history.

### Six Tense Hours

THERE were four engines and 20 or 30 men waiting at Aotéa Quay. The Hikitea went alongside and the aircraft were hoisted clear. Then the top cargo was manhandled and hoisted away to get at the fire.

It was not a great ship fire—as a fire—any more than was the lamp overturned in the fore-castle of the Mont Blanc in the harbour at Halifax. But no ship fire ever had more appalling possibilities.

The brigades were back at their stations just on midday, 5.40 to noon.

That that was so was so because of the intestinal fortitude—in English, the guts—and the judgment and the experienced assurance behind the decision to give it a go, and to the confidence which Charles Woolley held in the courage and trained efficiency of every officer and man under him, and of the officers and crew of the Hikitea and the other Harbour Board men called on to go in with the brigade and do the job.

### Bombs On Time

SO the John Davenport's shipload of bombs and munitions, urgent at a critical stage of the Pacific war, was not scuttled and lost to the Allied cause, nor did the John Davenport and half Wellington disappear on the morning of July 6, 1943. Instead, bombs and shells were delivered to Rabaul, Truk, and elsewhere up the Pacific on time.



# UNITED STATES COAST GUARD

*War Shipping Administration. (cal)*

The United States Coast Guard, one of the country's five armed services, is a unique agency of the federal government. The service was founded on August 4, 1790 when the first Congress authorized the construction of ten vessels to enforce tariff and trade laws and prevent smuggling. Known variously as the Revenue Marine and the Revenue Cutter Service, the Coast Guard expanded in size and responsibilities as the nation grew. The volunteers and staff of USS SLATER commemorated the 221st Birthday of the United States Coast Guard on Thursday, August 4, 2011 at 9:00 a.m. with a ceremony aboard the ship in Albany. "Coasties" and their friends and families were

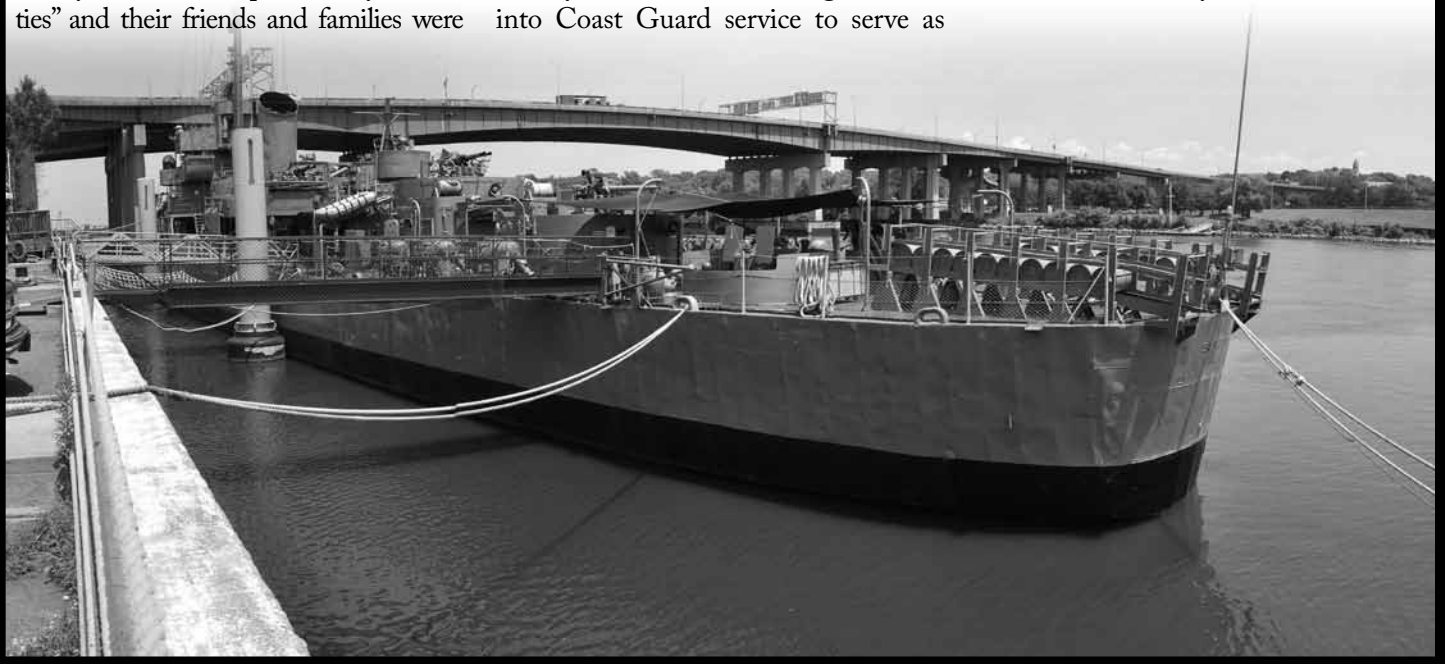
invited to attend.

It is appropriate to celebrate the Coast Guard's Birthday aboard USS SLATER as during World War II the Coast Guard manned hundreds of Navy and Army vessels including 30 Destroyer Escorts. Coast Guard-manned ships hunted enemy submarines, protected convoys to Europe, delivered troops and supplies to the various theaters of the war, and operated landing craft which delivered troops to the invasion beaches. Coast Guard cutters and destroyer escorts played a pivotal role fighting Nazi U-Boats in the Battle of the Atlantic. Following the war, during the 1950s, destroyer escorts were once again called into Coast Guard service to serve as

weather ships. The SLATER volunteer crew includes a strong Coast Guard contingent, dedicated to preserving a piece of American history.

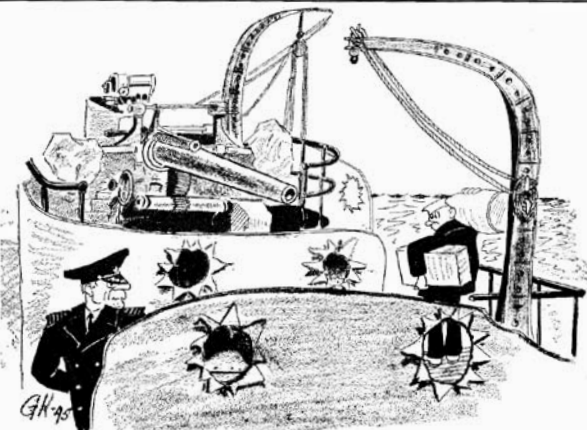
The ship is open Wednesday through Sunday, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m., through November 27. Admission is \$7 for adults and \$5 for children. The ship is located on the Hudson River in Downtown Albany just south of the Dunn Memorial Bridge.

Call 518-431-1943 for more information or visit the website at [www.uss-slater.org](http://www.uss-slater.org). They can tell you whether they will hold #222 next year and when. (cal)



## THE OLD MAN

By George Kenney



Skipper: "You realize, Crabtree, that your transfer to shore duty is no reflection on your gunnery."



# A VISIT TO CAIRO

## A Visit to Cairo (Willie's Wehlp's Wander) By Albert J. David

It all began really on Friday afternoon. Lt. Sivon, our Armed Guard Officer, had been ashore to look over the "Liberty situation". (Liberty is a sailor's term for a leave of less than seventy-two hours). On his return, he told us that he had contacted a guide who would – for a very reasonable sum take us to Cairo on a two-day jaunt. Fourteen of the "Willie's" gun crew decided to try it. Have you ever gone to bed at midnight and then been awakened at four in the morning? That was our predicament on that Sunday morning. Everyone was stumbling around looking for the whites' he had so carefully pressed the night before. The mess room was crowded as each one tried to forage a breakfast snack for himself. At the height of the melee Mr. Sivon announced the arrival of the launch. That was at four-thirty.

We piled helter-skelter into the boat and away we went. On arrival at the customs pier, we searched for our guide. None was to be found, but a telephone call brought him running. In return for his tardiness he promised us an extra special trip. We agreed after threatening physical violence if he failed to deliver. Two 1938 Chevrolets were by now awaiting our convenience. The sun was just above the horizon as we took our places and started for Port Said. At first the road ran alongside the Suez Canal. We saw other ships going along the path we had just raveled. Along the banks we watched the maintenance men taking their morning dips and preparing their breakfasts in front of their shanties and dugouts. The road turned for awhile into the outskirts of the Arabian Desert. Now, instead of truck gardens and lush vegetation we had enjoyed, there was nothing but sandy wastes covered with low bushes. Again the road turned this time towards the

shores of the lake Timsahl. Nestled in the oasis of greenery lay the pretty little town of Ismailia. We drove through slowly, up on street and down the next in search of a restaurant. Hunger, ravenous though it was, did not stop us from seeing all the pretty, and from the whistles you would think the "wolves" were loose. Our search for food was unsuccessful, so we left the town behind and headed out cross country again. Soon we crossed a branch of the Nile and turned south along its western bank. Now we began to see more evidence of Old Egypt.

On the river there were flat bottomed boats with high almost flat bows and sterns. The stems had swan-like figure heads, while the pattern of the planks across the bow suggested the feathers on a swan's breast. One or sometimes two masts with huge lanteen sails propelled them. The outsides of these crafts were brightly painted, and their names were inscribed in graceful Arabic script along the sides. The sails were patched but gaily colored.

Here and there we passed the ancient irrigation pumps still serving at their old job. A huge wooden wheel resting on the axle driven into the ground turned by an ox, which was often ridden by a little boy. Beneath this wheel and at right angles to it was another wheel. This second one had small spokes projecting beyond its rim. These spokes meshed like gears with the spokes of the upper. Attached to the rim of the lower wheel were flat shovel like buckets, which dipped water from the small ditch in which the wheel stood. As the pails went above the horizontal trough, which fed the tiny canal, they emptied into it. This canal ran under the road and through the fields carrying the previous water to the crops.

We passed ox carts almost as old as Egypt. We saw "fellahin" sleeping alongside the road. At one point we were held up for quite awhile to await

a group of sailboats passing through a bridge. As we were waiting, we bought grapes from a girl who wore the black veil with the little scroll between her eyes. A tiny donkey carrying the carcass of a freshly killed goat on its back came along. When we first noticed him, his owner was walking behind him using a small stick as a goad. When next we looked, the poor donkey was carrying the man too. The blood dripped from the goat's slashed throat and the trailing toes of the man's bare feet turned it under the dust. Going the other way was a great man – a fat one, too – dressed in a long black robe. On his head was a bright red "fez", in his hand a white parasol and under him another of the tiny donkeys. Of course, there were other automobiles and busses, too, but we were not interested in them.

Just north of Cairo we rode for a number of miles across the river from the king's pleasure gardens. Parts of them were like our tree nurseries; other sections had caretaker's houses. There were beautiful gardens at the several landing piers and quite a grand palace in the background. At the outskirts of Cairo is the site of the city of On. All that is left is the Obelisk, which was the center of the town. Now this tall, pointed square column with its hieroglyphed sides stands in a prairie. The surrounding ground is higher than its base so an iron fence guards the ditch which as been out to reveal the foundation. The ditch is partly filled with seepage water from the Nile.

On leaving the Obelisk, we drove into Cairo and down its main avenue to our hotel – the Luna Park. There we had a sumptuous breakfast of two pigeon eggs and a sliver of fried salt port. The coffee was undrinkable especially when the goat's milk and coarse sugar were added. Then we saw our rooms. They were not as fine as those at Gray's Inn, but tourists can't be choosers and they were clean. Now refreshed and fed, we began our actual tour. The first stop was

# A VISIT TO CAIRO

at the Citadel Mosque. As we stepped into its courtyard, our shoes were covered with canvas pads. (Mohammedans remove their shoes and go stocking footed here because a mosque is a holy ground). In the center of the courtyard was the fountain where the "Faithful Mohammedans" wash their faces, hands and feet before entering the Mosque proper. Nearby stands the ancient well which once supplied the washing trough. Across the courtyard from the church entrance is a huge bronze clock in a beautiful tower. It was a gift to the Caliph from Queen Victoria of Great Britain and now the Mosque itself. This church has many names. Some of them are: The Citadel Mosque – because it stands in what was once the citadel of the fortress of Cairo. The Mohammed Aly Mosque – in honor of its founder, the first ruler of the present dynasty. He is buried seven feet beneath the sarcophagus that rests in the chapel to the right of the main entrance. The Alabaster Mosque – because of its walls and floor were faced with alabaster which was once sheathed the Great Pyramid. The Crystal Mosque – because of the thousands of crystal globes and crystal chandeliers, which served to light it. On the floor was a huge red Persian rug. Worn though, it was by the feet of untold millions of worshippers. It still has a thick pile. It was kept in good repair by the ceaseless care of the church's attendants.

The exit from the newer of the two pulpits was through a Venetian door, which was made of wooden panels faced with plates of pure gold, beautifully decorated. The entire pulpit casing was gold lined. The main floor was ordinarily used only by the men. On festival and ceremonial occasions the women worshipped in the balcony, which was covered by metal lattice work. The altar screen was a huge affair of solid gold, flanked by two alabaster columns, one of which turned. We left the church to wander on the promenade, which ran along two of its

sides. From there we had a magnificent panoramic view of the city. The air was so clear that we could see in the middle distance the Pyramids at Gizeh about fifteen miles away and in the far distance, the old Pyramids over thirty miles off. Our guide pointed out from this vantage point many of the historic shrines within the city.

Back in the cars again, we drove through the excavations in Old Cairo and on the Tomb of the Royal Family. Next to the Crystal Mosque this was to us the most beautiful building in Cairo. It was strictly Mohammedan architecture with its square form, minaret and globular dome. Within it was a marvel of delicate beauty. We removed our shoes and on stocking feet stepped upon the rich pile of Persian rug. In the center of the room stood the sarcophagus of the second king of the present line. At his feet was his mother's vault. To his right were the coffins of two of his sons who died as children. At his head was his brother's tomb which was ready but unoccupied, and at his (the brother's) side was his mother's vault. At the foot of each of the occupied sarcophagus was a Koran, inscribed in a foreword, with pertinent facts regarding the life of that person. About the floor over the beautiful Persian rug were scattered small prayer rugs of even more beautiful patterns. Lamps of intricately designed stained glass illuminated the room softly by night. Inlaid ebony and ivory tables held the glass cased Korans, while priceless tapestries adorned the walls. The huge windows of leaded stained glass gave an air of serene beauty for the place as the softly filtered sunlight. It was with regret that we tore ourselves away from the beautiful spot to be hurried to the Bazaars.

We knew when we had arrived at the Bazaar by the scent of native foods mingled with incense, perfume and other less pleasant odors and the excited chatted of the haggling natives as they bargained and bartered. Like lambs

led to the slaughter, we were herded into the perfumery salon of our guide's good friend. Within minutes we were daubed with all the exotic scents of the Orient. At length with senses reeling from the almost overpowering odors, we practically fought our way into the comparatively pure air of the market place. That was the end of our Bazaar adventure. Our lack of will to buy perfume discouraged our guide, and he neglected to show us the silk and curio shops we really hoped to visit. Now we began to madly rush for the more desirable places in the car, Jensen's long legs were uncomfortable anywhere but in the front seat, but usually they did not get him there fast enough. Scheeler may be small, but he gets places. David, Smitty, Porcella, Cole and our obese guide took turns in the back section, but Faulkner's legs were too long to fit behind the movable seats. His was usually a midsection seat.

Dinner at Luna Park was not up to the "Willie's" par, even when the Chef was under the weather. Our dissatisfaction, loudly expressed, with our morning repast had at least gained us a second helping at this sitting. After a short rest to let our "huge" lunch settle, we again embarked into the trusty Chev-rolts for the 15 mile trip to Gizeh. In accordance with this promise to show us everything, 'Big Boy' drove us through the "City of the Dead", a five mile stretch of tombs and excavations not ordinarily displayed to the casual tourist. Then as we rounded the curve, we saw our "Ships of the Desert" waiting to receive us. Just to step out of the car was enough to cause a riot as the camel drivers fell over one another and us in their hurry to get a fare. In a few minutes all of us were astride the ugly brutes holding on for dear life to the saddle horn. First, they lurched to their fore knees; then to the upright position and then with a final forward heave they were up and were on our way. Our constant accompaniment from then until our final dismounting was "Bak-



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sheesh, master, Baksheesh. You give me a five piaster tip, hey? I got wife and four children, master. All I get is money from tip to feed camel buy food. Thank you, master. I know you make it right for me, master.” There were variations but that was the theme.

Up the road, we wound, past the Cheops Pyramid and then down a slight incline to the entrance to the Temple of the Sphinx. This was our first dismount. It was a reverse of the mounting process complete with all the lurches. On foot we entered the ruins of the temple. The outer walls, several crypts and broken columns are all that are left to tell the story of a temple that was old and powerful when the Pyramids were being built. From the Priest’s garden a right-half profile of the Sphinx was obtained. Here the camera enthusiasts got to work. The usual “hangers-on” were quite willing to snap the picture, even be included in it for a nominal fee.

On leaving the Sphinx, we remounted our camels and posed for a group picture and then, on our own again, we wound back to the Pyramid of Cheops. The camel drivers now made their final plea for “Baksheesh” and we left them to follow a new guide into the interior of the Great Pyramid. We made our entrance through the “Robber’s Tunnel”. It was supposed to have been made about two hundred years after the Pyramid was sealed by an organized bank of grave robbers.

First we clambered over a pile of rubble, which lay between us and the Pyramid. Then up three of the huge blocks. We could not be bothered with the recently cut steps. We went into the dark cavity. We almost crawled up a steep incline. At intervals our guide would light a magnesium wire, which cost five piasters extra. By its blinding white light, we were supposed to note the height of the ceiling in the crypt room; the smoothness of the walls and ceilings and the sharpness of the incline

we had traversed. The descent was an ordeal, too, trying to keep from losing our balance and falling forward. The guide told us that we had been half way up the inside of the huge mass of stone. None of us felt like climbing the outside to the apex.

We now adjourned to the canteen maintained by the Cairo Police for the members of the United Nations Armed Forces. There we regaled ourselves with watermelon and lemon squash, and Jensen met P.F.C. Rose Tosen of the U.S.Wacs. After this pleasant interlude, we crawled back into the cars and drove through scenic Cairo to our hotel and supper. En route, we passed the American College, the King’s yacht, the Nile, the house where Roosevelt and Churchill stopped and many other interesting places. After supper we were free to do our own sight seeing. Some went to a movie, some went night clubbing, some tried the Red Cross Dance and some just went walking, but soon all went to bed.

We were roused about seven the next morning by the shouts of a group of lads who were racing their carts. These wagons were laden with fresh produce brought from the truck gardens, which surround the city. Other carts were piled high with chickens in willow work crates. There were hand drawn furniture vans stacked so high we expected them to over balance themselves. On another, rode a black-robed, be-fezed figure carrying a white parasol. We had breakfast, a slightly more substantial one this morning and then went down to the lounge to await our guide’s arrival. While we were waiting we saw a wedding party and a funeral cortege. The wedding group was carried in two open Victorias. The bride was in pale pink and her attendants in pastel blue. All were gay and called to pedestrians whom they knew. The funeral procession was an elaborate one. The first carriage was full of flowers. Next came a white hearse heavily encrusted with

gold. The coffin could be seen through the plate glass sides. The horses, four in number, were white. They had plumes in their bridles and were covered with white blankets. They moved slowly and sedately while other carriages carried the mourners.

Finally, our guide came and with him our two cars. Again the rush for choice seats ensued, and off we went. The big item on today’s list was the Wax Museum. It was housed in an old building rather in need of repairs but the courtyard showed evidences of having once been lovely. In one corner of the garden was an umbrella, shaded rustic table and chairs. The flower beds at the entrance were all aglow with blooms. In another corner stood a stone lion and other bits of Egyptian statuary apparently being modeled for other groups within the museum.

On entering the building the first sight to greet us was Mohammed Aly on his throne. To the right through his palace window was a section of his fleet, the largest in the Mediterranean in those days. His prime minister stood near him introducing a group of foreign envoys. Just around the corner was a reproduction of the Dutch Royal Yacht. In the drawing room sat the Queen. She shared a sofa with one of her ladies-in-waiting while another played the spinet and a third turned the sheet music on the rack. Adjoining this scene was one of the outside of the ship. The Captain was just coming from his foc’sle and a group of ladies stood on the ladder (staircase to you) leading to the bridge. They were supposedly looking at the banks of the Suez Canal as their yacht streamed slowly through.

Scene four was a two part scene. A man who had been smoking opium was lying on a couch dreaming. His dream was a vision of wine, women and song. The dreams were suddenly shut off and above his head stood a grinning skeleton. A reproduction of an ancient

# A VISIT TO CAIRO

store drew our attention next. It was completely equipped from the customer and the retailer down to the money in the till. There were packages on the shelves and a scale as well as a host of other details. To our right as we moved along was a side view of the King's yacht. On the starboard deck were a group of harem women, veiled and behind a screen. Dinner was laid in the salon and the King (Ismail Pasha) was on the foredeck with the Captain. Now came the amusing scene. A drunkard who had come home too late to suit his wife was standing in the street pleading with his lady, who leaned against a lattice window above, to let him come in. She was not convinced by his excuses. Up a short staircase we went now, and coming to the top, we looked at a two part scene. The upper section depicted a marriage in the Coptic Church of St. Sargius. The Archbishop in his gorgeous robes was performing the ceremony as the bride and groom knelt before him. Directly beneath them was a scene in the crypt beneath the church showing how the Holy Family lived while they were in Cairo.

In another group of three individual scenes were; King Farouk standing in front of his chair of states; King Fuad seated in a chair; and the office of the Prime Minister who arranged the treaties and agreements which made the Suez Canal possible. There were several other scenes under construction in this wing, but we were not shown them. The next corridor began with Cleopatra's Death Scene. She was reclining on a couch and reaching for an apple, which held the asp. A servant was holding a tray of various fruits for her. Another stood behind fanning her. Her two sons were there with their nurse and at the door waited a huge bodyguard. Saladin's visit to Richard Coeur de Lion when Richard was taken ill with fever during the campaign, gave a true picture of costumes and martial customs of those days. Before the tent where the sick monarch lay, was tethered Sal-

adin's white Arabian stud. There were several camp fires scattered about, and the meals were being prepared by some of the soldiers. Other men cleaned equipment or performed other tasks.

Our next view was laid on the Island of Roda where Pharaoh's daughter once lived. Here we saw the Princess and her attendants waiting for her handmaid to bring her the little boat, which held the baby Moses. Miriam, his sister, was standing near to see what would happen. A turn to the left brought us near King Solomon's time. We saw him on his throne, the Queen of Sheba sitting near him and two fan-bearers behind them. Before this, the executioner stood holding a tiny baby by one heel as he awaited the King's order to sever the child in half. A dead infant lay at his feet. One woman looked on stolidly while another pled tearfully that the child be given alive and whole to her rival. The last scene depicted life in a harem. There was a Eunuch guarding each door, a juggler performing his tricks, the master reclining beside his favorite wife and other wives and children scattered about playing, sewing, or watching the show. The figures had seemed surprisingly life-like. Their garments were authentically styled and the equipment shown was reproduced accurately from the originals. On leaving we felt almost as though we had seen history come alive. The next stop was for a picture of the Nilo meter on the Island of Roda. This was the first instrument of its type to measure the rise and fall of the Nile's waters. Next we passed beneath a huge banyan tree that had let down aerial roots enough to form a dozen or so trees each in itself as large as the parent tree. Some where along here we passed a poor man's funeral. His body was wrapped in a white sheet and was carried by two poles on the shoulders of two friends. The mourners in a little group followed close behind.

Across the river we glimpsed another

type of irrigator. This one was made up of a continuous chain of buckets dipping up the water instead of a wheel and buckets. It was designed to lift the water to a higher level than the wheel system could. At the northern tip of the island of Roda we saw the ruins of the palace wherein Pharaoh's daughter dwelt at the time of Moses' birth. We were shown the patch of bulrushes whose forefathers sheltered the baby Moses. From here we were driven to a portion of old Cairo, which was still inhabited. In this section we found the oldest Coptic Church in Egypt. The approach to the edifice was through an ancient barred door and down a narrow alley like streets. To enter the building we had to descend a series of steps. The rubble of the centuries has raised the surrounding ground that much above the former level. The church has been built over the cave where Mary and Joseph are believed to have dwelt during the "Sojourn in Egypt". In this cave, which is beneath the altar of the present St. Sargius Church, are to be seen the ancient altar and triple immersion fount. St. Mark was supposed to have been officiating bishop for a number of years there. The church over the crypt was one of the first Coptic churches in Cairo. The central portion was supported by twelve columns, which represented the twelve disciples. One column was uncapped and represented Judas, the Betrayer. The altar screen was entirely hand carved. Some its panels, about six in number, date back to the seventh century. They were recently put under glass. Most of the church's other treasures are packed away until after the war.

Back at the car again we fought off the vendors and drove back to the main part of the city. The streets were being cleared for the passage of the King from his palace to the Government house. We parked our cars on a side street and ran across the streets to get a good view. We had barely taken our stand when the sirens of his motorcycle



guard sounded. The palace gates swung open and the cortege swept out, a motorcycle guard, two Packards, in the front of which the young monarch sat and a rear guard of motorcyclists. They passed so quickly, we got but a glimpse of His majesty's face. Pellmell back to the cars we hurried for choice of seats and then back to Luna Park. Arriving there, we were told that dinner was not included on the guide's list nor had breakfast been, but for the standard charge they would condescend to feed us. That was too much so we walked out. On the sidewalk we held a conference and decided to eat out, but first to visit a bookshop in search of Schindler's "Guide to Cairo". We found the shop opposite Shepard's Hotel and bought the clerk (a pretty girl) out of guide books, and then found many other delightful things.

There were carved wooden items, silk handkerchiefs, picture postcards, ivory curios and other things too numerous to

mention. Well laden with our purchases, ten of us wandered down the street several blocks to the Y.M.C.A. We inquired as to whether meals were served there. The desk attendant directed us to a garden and there under the trees we were eventually served with the finest food we had eaten for a long time. The menu consisted of an omelette, potato chips, fresh tomatoes, tea, whole wheat biscuits and ice cream. The charge, including two servings of ice cream was less than fifty cents. The service had been so leisurely that we had to hustle back to the hotel. There the cars were waiting for us and after we had arranged ourselves comfortably, we retraced our steps to Port Said. The afternoon was warm and most of the people had left the road. We noticed the fields more closely this time, how rich and green they were. We saw, too, the huge jail, the small wayside checking stations where our licenses were noted and the busses with their white clad men and

black veiled women.

We stopped at a small wayside station for refreshments. It was almost like those in the States. Small tables with red checkered cloths, straight backed wooden chairs, a counter across one side of the room and ice cream, candy and soft drinks describe it quite well. The next stop was Port Said, but first there was an argument by the bridge because the other car had one passenger too many. Through the streets of Port Said we went on to the agent's office to find out where our "Willie" was. Then into a launch and back to our floating home, tired, hungry and satisfied that the money had been well spent by the crew of the S.S. WILLIAM HAWKINS 43/44

Albert Jas. David  
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## Opinion

### Seaman Donaghy's ship finally comes in

**J**ack Donaghy is due to get a check for \$500. You'd have to say he earned it. He's 81 years old, a retired truck driver for Linde Air, living in Boothwyn.

In 1942, he was an adventurous teenager anxious to serve his country. He tried to join the Navy, was rejected because of a bad left eye and told the recruiter he'd try the Marines. That didn't work either.

Reared in South Philly, he had seen tankers and freighters coming in and out of the Atlantic Refining docks, and the idea of going to sea appealed to him. He went to the Shipping Commission at Second and Walnut streets and applied for the Merchant Marine.

He shipped out as a mess man aboard the Gulf Caribbean, a brand new ship built at Chester's Sun Shipyard, Dec. 1, 1942, four months after his 17th birthday.

For the next four years, Donaghy sailed around the world on a half-dozen tankers and freighters carrying supplies to our armed forces in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters. He made many East Coast runs, braving "torpedo alley" off North Carolina where German submarines made a graveyard for Allied shipping. His ships also were in the South Pacific where monster typhoons were every bit as dangerous as Japanese submarines.

Finally, Uncle Sam is going to recognize men like Donaghy with a \$500 bonus. Pardon those brave men if they don't say, "Well, it's about time." For the overwhelming majority, it's not the money, it's the recognition that counts.

"It's not going to cost the government a lot of money," Donaghy said. "The last report I read said that there's only about 500 to 700 of us left in Pennsylvania and less than 10,000 in the whole country."

There are two reasons why their numbers are so few.

One, of course is age. Even teenage Mariners like Donaghy are in their 80s now. The other is the high casualty rate, estimated to be one of every 26 killed. That's the highest rate of casualties of any branch of the armed forces during World War II.

Donaghy signed on as an ordinary seaman, advanced to able bodied Seaman and eventually made carpenter.

"Like all carpenters, I was called 'Chips,'" Donaghy said.

One of his more memorable trips was to Ireland and England, although crossing the North Atlantic in a convoy was no day on the lake.

"We tied up in England at Plymouth Steps," he said. "That's where the Mayflower set sail. Later we were able to visit some of the pubs in Belfast, Ireland. Believe me, they treated us like gods."

Donaghy was at sea years at a time.

"When I got my first leave, my father had been dead and buried 14 months," he said. "They were able to get my brother Nelson home from the Air Force, but they couldn't even locate me."

Donaghy pulled down \$87.50 a month when he first signed on. When he made able bodied, his pay jumped to \$112.50, plus a \$100 bonus for duty in combat areas. Almost all of the money was sent home.

"I enjoyed being at sea," he said. "Plenty of time to play cards and write letters home. And the food was very good."

A 30-man "armed guard" from the U.S. Navy manned what few weapons were on the ship.

"During air craft attacks, we would pass the ammunition," Donaghy said.

With the war in Europe over, Donaghy was on leave and married his faithful girlfriend, Edith Malagier of Germantown. They were in a rowboat, crabbing off

Seaside Park, N.J., when a lady on dock began yelling at them.

"I thought she was saying, 'Come on over, Come on over.' What she really was saying was, 'It's all over!' The war had ended," Donaghy said.

"I told my wife, 'Great, I'm not going back.' Then I got a letter. If I didn't report back right away, I would be subjected to the draft! Well, they put me on a freighter, the Frederick W. Wood, on Sept. 10, 1945, and I didn't get back until March 11, 1946 ... six months and one day.

"We had a load of big timber. We went through the Panama Canal to Okinawa, didn't unload so much as a matchstick, then headed for the Philippines. Didn't unload anything there either. So we headed back to California where they have more timber than they know what to do with. Eventually we came back to Boston with the entire cargo intact. I heard 28 other ships did the same thing."

Just like a busman's holiday, Jack and Edith have taken a couple of cruises during his retirement.

"The first was to Bermuda," he said. "It was more like being in a hotel than on a ship. They wouldn't even let me go up to bow. I was hoping to see porpoises jumping in and out of the water. I always enjoyed watching them."

"Then Edith and I took a cruise to Alaska. They didn't give you a tour of the ship, but you could get a tour by watching the television set. I didn't want to see the engine room on TV; I wanted to go down into the engine room. I told Edith that was our last cruise."

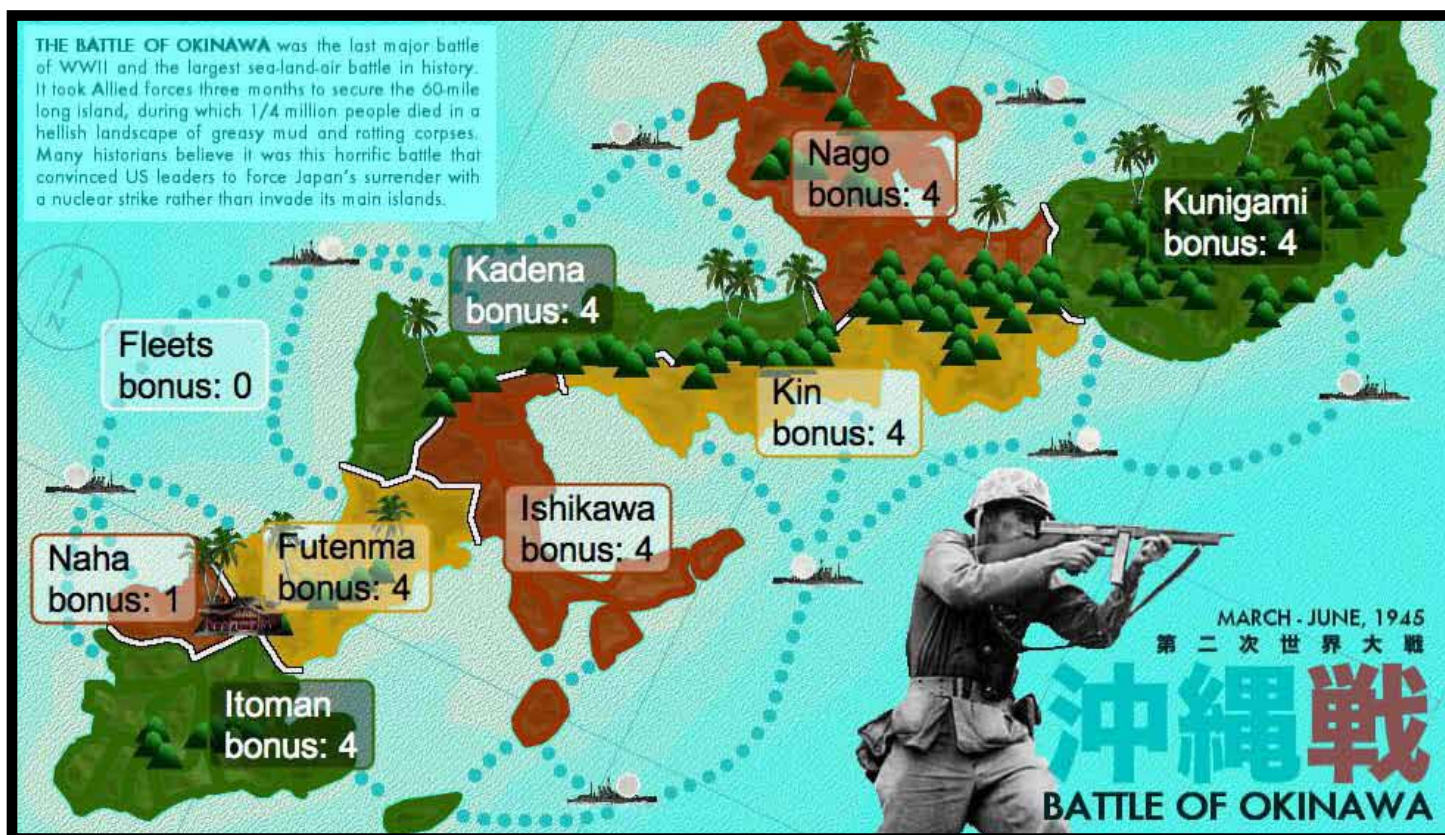
He'd rather motor down to Baltimore's Inner Harbor where the John W. Brown, the last of more than 3,000 Liberty ships built during the war, is anchored. Old salts like Jack can tour the ship. They even let you check out the engine room.

**Ed Gebhart** is a retired public relations executive who works part-time in the Delaware County government public relations department. His column appears Friday and Sunday.



By Ed  
GEBHART

# BATTLE OF OKINAWA 1945



Tel-770-232-3023

## Battle Of Okinawa 1945

*Source: Office of the Chief of Naval Operations. "History of the Armed Guard Afloat, World War II." (Washington, 1946): 237-251. [This microfiche, identified as United States Naval Administrative History of World War II #173, is located in the Navy Department Library, and can be purchased, or borrowed through interlibrary loan.]*

The Seizure of Okinawa was a long and costly operation. Merchant ships went to this island in great numbers from April to June, 1945 in order to bring the bombs, gasoline, and thousands of other items needed to consolidate the conquest of this outpost on the direct road to Tokyo. Many of these vessels were Victory ships, a much finer and faster ship than the slow Liberty. The action at Okinawa differed somewhat from that in the Philippines in that the whole emphasis was on concealing merchant ships by smoke. Armed Guards who had been highly trained in local control firing and who had been

trained in many previous actions were now ordered not to fire at enemy planes unless direct attacked or unless their ships were not adequately covered by smoke. This wise procedure undoubtedly saved many ships. Nothing marks a ship out clearer as a target than tracer fire on a dark night. Armed Guards in the European theater and in the Pacific were quick to observe that their ships often escaped detection by the enemy when they did not fire. Another reason why unrestrained firing was discouraged at Okinawa was the elaborate air coverage which was supplied. Merchant ships risked shooting down our own planes. All in all the Okinawa campaign was a very trying experience for Armed Guards. They spent long hours at general quarters, endured the constant strain of having the enemy attacking close by, and were able to do little but wait for the enemy which came too close or for that moment when the protective curtain of smoke was swept away by the wind. It has seemed proper in this account to deal only with the significant actions of the Armed Guards at Okinawa. With so many

ships involved, it hardly appears practical to record every remote contact with the enemy. This chapter describes damage done to merchant ships and damage done to enemy planes by the guns of merchant ships. It makes no attempt to list all ships which went to Okinawa and which fired at enemy planes.

The first merchant ships in the Okinawa area arrived at Kerama Retto on April 6, 1945. These ships were the Pierre Victory, the Logan Victory, the Hobbs Victory, the Halaula Victory, and the Green Bay Victory. Enemy planes heavily attacked the first three ships, which were loaded with ammunition, and an LST, all of which were in the outer anchorage on April 6. First a plane crashed into the LST at about 1620. The next ship to be hit by a suicide plane was the Logan Victory at about 1647. The Logan Victory had already shot down one plane and assisted in destroying another. The kamikaze hit just aft of her deck house on the port side at the boat deck level. A large explosion followed and flames spread rapidly. Wooden deck houses added to the



# BATTLE OF OKINAWA 1945

intensity of the flames. Many acts of heroism followed. One Armed Guard was killed and two were missing. Wounded Armed Guards and other Naval personnel injured number nine. The ship was abandoned. The Hobbs Victory assisted in the destruction of a plane which crashed about 100 yards from the Pierre Victory at 1640, but at 1945 a plane crashed into the ship just forward of amidships at boat deck level. There was a large explosion and flames quickly covered the deck. Armed Guards and other Navy personnel killed numbered two, and two Armed Guards were wounded. Merchant crewmen killed or missing numbered thirteen, and another merchant crewman was wounded. The ship was abandoned. The Pierre Victory scored three assists against enemy planes and survived to arrive at Okinawa on April 11. Her only close call came on April 27 when artillery shells landed within 100 yards. The Green Bay Victory and the Haulaula Victory escaped damage inside the harbor. The former was credited with one plane downed and one assist. On April 14 at Nago Wan, shells from shore based artillery fell around

the ship.

Some 15 additional merchant ships defended by Armed Guards arrived at Okinawa on April 11. One of these, the Minot Victory, brought down a plane on April 12 which strafed the ship and crashed into her No. 4 kingpost. Five Armed Guards were wounded. Between April 11 and 20 the United Victory claimed the destruction of one enemy bomber and the probable destruction of two enemy fighters. This action took place on April 15. The Afoundria claimed assists on April 12 and 15, and was credited with an assist on the latter date. The Dashing Wave was under fire from shore batteries on April 14 but escaped damage. The Saginaw Victory was credited with the destruction of one enemy plane on April 12 and another on April 15. Bombs landed about 300 yards away on the latter date, and the ship was strafed. The Flagstaff Victory reported ineffective fire from shore batteries, and was officially credited with two assists against enemy planes on April 12. She reported 56 air alerts, mostly at night, between April 11 and May 4. According to the Sioux Falls Victory, there were air raids throughout April except for April 24 and 25.

Suicide boats also entered the anchorage on at least two occasions and hit a ship on April 26. Enemy shelling was not the only menace; a number of times the Sioux Falls Victory was showered with shell fragments from our own anti-aircraft fire. An Armed Guard was wounded by a fragment or by an unexploded 20mm shell on April 28. This ship claimed the probable destruction of one plane on April 15. The Brigham Victory fired at a plane which passed directly over her stern on April 12 and then burst into flames. Many ships were firing, and it is impossible to assign definite credit in such cases. Other ships which fired during the early days of the invasion without any definite credit for destruction of enemy planes were the Cape Georgia, the Claremont Victory, the Whirlwind, the Silverbow Victory, and the Sea Runner. The latter ship made two trips to the Okinawa area in April and May. Two ships, the Morning Light and the Czechoslovakia Victory reported no action at Okinawa from April 11 to 26.

After the initial convoys, ships came to Okinawa in rapid succession. Most of these merchant vessels had some contact with the enemy. But the fighting for the Armed Guards was not as tough as that in the early stages for the invasion of the Philippines. The Michael Pupin established an enviable record by downing one plane, probably destroying another, and assisting in the destruction of three planes between April 14 and June 19. She was at Okinawa much longer than the average merchant vessel. On May 26 a bomb fell only 25 to 40 feet away from the ship. The Kelso Victory reported that enemy torpedo boats and swimmers were active but that none attacked her. The William R. Davie had the interesting experience of being at both the western and eastern sides of Okinawa. Japanese attacks were normally much heavier at Hagushi than at Nakagusuki Wan on the eastern side. While anchored to the west, the Davie Armed Guard of-



# BATTLE OF OKINAWA 1945

ficer reported a suicide attack by small craft or two-man submarines on April 26 which damaged one ship. The *Davie* brought down a plane on the same day. On May 4, two days after she changed anchorages, the *Davie* became involved in another attack by Japanese small craft. She fired at an object resembling a small submarine. Perhaps the action which gave the Armed Guards the most satisfaction was the attack by a Japanese suicide pilot on some rocks jutting out of the sea. The pilot apparently took these rocks to be a large ship, and crashed his plane into them on May 9.

The *Mariscal Sucre* was in bombardments by enemy artillery on April 27 and 29, and reported 205 air raids, in addition to a suicide boat attack on May 4. Two phosphorous bombs landed close to the *Rockland Victory* during her stay at Okinawa from April 26 to May 15. The *Virginia City Victory* reported considerable losses in navy ships as a result of the suicide boat attack of May 4 and indicated that a plane hit a cruiser on the same day.

A serious loss was the sinking of the *Canada Victory* on April 27. A plane crashed into the ship and dropped into the number 5 hold. An explosion blew out the side of the ship and it sank in seven minutes. Two Armed Guards were killed and twelve were wounded. On the same day, a shell landed only 15 yards from *Clarksdale Victory* and threw fragments on the deck. One lifeboat was damaged.

The *Moline Victory* was at Okinawa and nearby Ie Shima in May. She downed one plane and assisted in destroying another. This action took place at Ie Shima on May 18 and 20. While there her Armed Guards witnessed the torpedoing of an LST and a suicide dive by a Japanese plane on the damaged naval craft.

The *Clearwater Victory* assisted in destroying a plane on May 6 and another



on May 11. Like so many ships at Okinawa, she was present when a Japanese plane crashed into the battleship *New Mexico* on May 12. The *Clearwater Victory* was hit by stray anti-aircraft fire and by shell fragments. The *Robert M. La Follette* also reported shell fragments on her deck on May 13, mute testimony to the tremendous amount of flak which was sent into the sky around Okinawa.

At less than two hours past midnight on the morning of May 4, the *Paducah Victory* was approached by a Japanese suicide boat which slipped alongside and then headed away at high speed as the Armed Guards fired. Later that morning her Armed Guards witnessed a kamikaze crash into the cruiser *Birmingham*. The *Henry J. Raymond* may have scored hits on this airplane. The *Sea Flasher* also claimed hits on this plane.

On May 13, patrol boats once again fired at the "skunk boats" as the Japanese suicide boats were called. Phosphorous bombs fell on either side of the *Henry J. Raymond* on May 9 and an anti-personnel bomb landed on her deck on May 24, wounding the purser. The *Henry L.*

*Gantt* had shell fragments land on her deck on May 4, while the *Laredo Victory* was either hit by a small bomb or by shell fire. Two of her Armed Guards were wounded. According to the *Henry L. Gantt* Armed Guard officer, there were over 300 raids between May 3 and June 6, and well over 2,000 planes over the area during this period. He also observed that few ships suffered damage while covered by smoke, and that these few were only attacked after they opened fire.

Many ships which arrived in the May 3 convoy had little or no action. The *Aniston Victory* had bombs fall moderately close only twice in May. On May 4, shell fragments hit the chief mate on the *Ames Victory*. This ship claimed hits on the plane which crashed into the *Birmingham*. The *J.S. Hutchinson* claimed hits on one of four planes observed on May 4. One military passenger was wounded when shell fragments and a 20mm projectile struck the *J. Maurice Thompson* on May 4. Shell fragments also landed on this ship on May 6 and 9. One merchant seaman on the *El Reno Victory* was wounded by a shell frag-



# BATTLE OF OKINAWA 1945

ment on May 12.

The Harvard Victory, which arrived on May 4 and departed on May 27, described the effectiveness of the anti-aircraft protection around Okinawa. Only fourteen times during this crucial period were planes able to break through the outside patrol and damage ships and shore installations. This Armed Guard officer believed that his ship hit one Japanese plane. Only once did a phosphorous bomb fall close.

But all merchant ships were not able to escape the blows of a ruthless enemy who was quite willing to give his life to achieve limited damage. On May 11, the Tjisadane was struck by a plane which she had already hit and set afire. The plane struck the booms of No. 2 hold and disintegrated, throwing wreckage and flaming gasoline over the forward deck and on the bridge. This plane had previously launched a torpedo which passed astern of the Tjisadane and under the Panamint. The Tjisadane shot down another plane, brought her fire under control, and left the area under her own power. Four Army and Navy personnel were killed and nine were wounded.

Three merchant ships fell victims to kamikazes on May 28. These ships, the Josiah Snelling, the Mary A. Livermore, and the Brown Victory were badly damaged but survived. The Livermore was hit on the starboard side of her bridge at 0525. Her losses were heavy, including seven merchant crewmen killed, three Armed Guards killed, four merchant crewmen wounded, and three Armed Guards wounded. But her Armed Guards continued to fight in the best tradition of the Navy and claimed a plane shot down and one or two more hit before the morning was over. The Josiah Snelling was credited with two planes and an assist and probably assisted in bringing down another. Just after 0800 a plane struck her in the No. 1 hold and sent flames upward as high as the masthead.

Wounded personnel aboard the ship numbered eleven, of which three were Armed Guards. One the same day, the Brown Victory at Ie Shima was hit by a suicide plane, with two Armed Guards killed and nine wounded. Earlier, on May 25, the William B. Allison had been hit by an aerial torpedo while anchored at Nakagsuku Wan. There were no Armed Guard casualties, but one Navy man was killed, six merchant crewmen died and two were wounded. The Allison assisted in shooting down a plane the same morning.

Many ships were present when these attacks took place and claimed a part in bringing down enemy planes. The Sea Partridge claimed that she assisted in bringing down the plane which struck the Tjisadane on May 11. The C.W. Post, which earlier had been saved from damage by the discovery of five enemy swimmers in the vicinity of the ship, also fired at the plane which hit the Tjisadane. The Ethiopia Victory may have hit the plane which crashed into the battleship New Mexico on May 12. The Jubal A. Early was credited with an assist against another plane which missed the New Mexico. The Early suffered casualties on May 24 when a 20mm projectile struck her No. 4 gun tub and exploded. Two Armed Guards and a merchant seaman were wounded.

The Clark Howell claimed an assist on May 25 in shooting down a plane which crashed about 10 feet from the starboard side of the ship by the No. 4 hatch. There were no casualties. On May 28 she claimed three assists. One of these planes crashed into a Liberty. The John Owen assisted in the destruction of a plane which dropped two bombs on the disabled Allison. The Donald MacCleary claimed credit for an assist in downing a plane at Ie Shima on May 20. The Norman J. Colman scored an assist in the destruction of a plane on May 28. She had also fired on May 25 and had shell fragments land

on her deck that same day.

The Segundo Ruiz-Belvis was missed by a plane by only about 100 yards on May 25. The plane exploded and littered the decks with debris. Shell fragments also landed aboard. At 0905 on the same day, Ruiz-Belvis assisted in downing a plane which landed about 150 yards from her side. She and Dartmouth Victory claimed assists against the plane which hit the Brown Victory at Ie Shima on May 26. The Charles M. Conrad claimed an assist against the plane which hit the Snelling. The Jean La Fitte was credited with an assist on May 27 and three more on May 28. A claim for a fifth assist was not credited. The Clovis Victory destroyed two planes and assisted in the destruction of three other planes on May 28. The Cape Alexander was credited with an assist on May 28. She also claimed hits on two other planes that same day, as well as a third aircraft on May 25 and a fourth attacker on June 11. All of these planes crashed into the sea except for the one which hit the Snelling. The Uriah M. Rose brought down a plane on May 18 which missed her by about 50 feet. She shot down one plane and assisted in destroying another on May 28. Rose was also credited with the destruction of one plane on June 3 and another on June 11.

The Kota Inten assisted in bringing down a plane on the afternoon of May 20 at Ie Shima, and in seven minutes shot down another. The latter landed not more than 40 or 50 yards from the Inten. Parts of the plane and pilot, as well as oil and water, were scattered over the ship from bow to stern. Within five minutes, the ship probably destroyed another plane. On May 21, she shot down a plane that had friendly markings but behaved in a hostile manner. There was doubt as to the identity of the aircraft.

The Cornelius Vanderbilt claimed destruction of five planes at Ie Shima on May 18 and 20 and received confir-

# BATTLE OF OKINAWA 1945

mation of four of these. Three planes dived at the ship on May 18, and her Armed Guards shot down all three. A near miss from a bomb late on this date caused small fires. When two suicide planes dived at the ship on May 20, she again brought both of them down. This was big league shooting.

The Stanley Matthews at Hagushi, Okinawa was credited with assists on June 3 and 11. On the former date, a bomb missed the ship by only 30 feet and a nearby ship hit her with a 40mm projectile. The Sea Quail claimed two assists at Ie Shima on May 20. The Cape Douglas was credited with assists on May 21 and 27. In the latter part of May and the first part of June, the Greenville Victory found Nakagusuku Wan in eastern Okinawa a rather quite place as compared with Hagushi in western Okinawa. She fired only twice, and one of her targets was quickly discovered to be an American plane.

On the other hand, the Armed Guards aboard the Kota Agoeng would have insisted that Nakagusuku Wan was still a rather dangerous place. When this ship arrived on May 27, four to six bombs, all near misses, welcomed her to Okinawa. She claimed direct hits on three planes on May 28. One June 3, a stray shell fragment from a strafing plane wounded an Army private. The crew of the Dutch-flagged vessel manned one 37mm gun, while the Armed Guards manned the other, claiming credit for two and one-half planes (this is presumed to mean two planes and an assist). The Berea Victory was credited with three assists on May 28. She reported that bombs fell on two occasions, but they were not very close.

By the end of May, the worst of the fighting at Okinawa was over for merchant ships, but there was still some action. The reduction in peril to merchant ships is probably best attributed to the excellent fighter screen created by Marine Corps pilots. From May 22 to July 12, according to the William H. Dale, there were 86

alerts, but planes only came near Hagushi only some 20 times. These figures testify to the efficiency of the fighter screen.

On June 3 the Cape Bon fired at a plane which fell into the water near another ship. It is impossible to assign definite credit in such cases. The Norman Hapgood was credited with an assist on June 11. After assisting in the destruction of a plane on June 3, the Walter Colton had a narrow escape on June 11 when a plane missed her bridge by only a few feet. Water, gasoline, and debris were thrown over the decks. Shell fragments injured several "Seabees" and one passenger had his helmet knocked off by a .50 caliber bullet. The Belle of the West had four fragmentation bombs fall 100 yards from her bow on June 17 and was showered by bomb fragments. On June 16 shell fragments landed around the George E. Waldo, but she did not fire her guns during 44 air alerts. Many other ships had little or no actual action with the enemy and are not even mentioned in this account.

The Hurricane, anchored at the Nakagusuku Wan from June 7 to 28, reported that the enemy planes penetrated the harbor region only three times. She scored an assist on June 11 and was in turn hit by shell fragments and 20mm fire from other ships. The Skagway Victory observed that the Japanese bombing was very inaccurate. The Rock Springs Victory had no bombs fall very close, but a hole was discovered in the skin of the ship

near her stern post after her departure from Okinawa. The Master believed that a bomb fragment caused the damage. On June 26 three small bombs landed about 50 yards from the John Muir, proving that the Japanese pilots could still bomb with a certain degree of accuracy. A fragment hit the #3 gun tub on the Muir. Two light bombs also landed 50 feet from the Henry George on the same day.

While the Armed Guard reports for the latter part of June and the first part of July indicated either no direct contact or, at most, firing on one or two occasions, alerts were still frequent and some warships were being hit. One of the last reports to indicate bombs falling in the vicinity of merchant ships was that of Peter Lassen for June 30. The William T. Sherman also reported that bombs fell close to the ship on several occasions, but did not report exact dates. Taken together, all these reports mean that the back of Japanese air power had been definitely broken. Japan was no longer able to defend even such a vital key to her homeland as Okinawa. That merchant ships were able to come through such a campaign with so little damage and to inflict so much damage on enemy planes was due in no small degree to the Armed Guard service. Here was the final fruit of the long years of developing Armed Guards. No finer group of fighting men ever sailed on any ships than those who had come through so many campaigns and were now participating in their last battles before the end

NEW ORLEANS, LA.	
ARMED GUARD ORDNANCE MAINTENANCE	
<i>Specialist Certificate</i>	
5" 38 MAINTENANCE	
THIS IS TO CERTIFY THAT <u>HALFACRE, Norven J.</u> <u>QM3c V6 USNR</u>	
HAS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETED THE COURSE IN 5" 38 MAINTENANCE,	
WITH A FINAL AVERAGE OF <u>3.34</u>	
<u>COUNTERY OFFICER</u> Officer in Charge	<u>L. V. TIMMIS, LIEUT. COMDR. U. S. N. R.</u> Commanding



# THE INTER

UNITED STATES NAVAL ARMED GUARD CENTER

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## CARGO SHIPS DELIVER RECORD TONNAGE IN '44

Story on Page 3



**DESIGN FOR INVASION.** Pattern of strength of America's Navy prior to successful landings on Leyte in the Philippines. The first Liberty to unload survived 56 bombings, bagging two and possibly four Jap planes.



## Armed Guard Insignia On Uniforms Banned

Attention of all hands was directed this week by Comdr. William J. Coakley, commanding officer, to the Bureau of Naval Personnel circular letter which directs that "no insignia be placed on the uniform, bags, or baggage of members of the Armed Guard Service to indicate that they are members of this service."

In response to an inquiry by Comdr. Coakley on the subject, Commodore Vance D. Chapline of the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations in Washington said: "This directive was promulgated in the interest of security of armed merchant vessels and with the view of eliminating the possibility of internment of Armed Guard survivors when landed in neutral countries. It is essential that this directive be fully complied with."

## Gulfport, San Diego Gunnery Schools Close

The Armed Guard schools at Gulfport, Miss., and San Diego, Calif., have been closed, it was announced recently by James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy. The gunnery schools were to cease activity on or about the first of the year.

## Speculation on War's End Forbidden

### Pointer Reaches Admiralty Islands in 2½ Weeks

The gun crew of the MS Gulfbird, recently returned to Brooklyn after a trip to the Pacific, reported having received its copies of one of last fall's issues of The Pointer two-and-a-half weeks after publication. The crew was at the Admiralty Islands at the time. Ens. John D. Rumbough was the gunnery officer aboard.

### USO Revue Jan. 31

Come and Get It, a revue, is the USO-Camp Shows offering at AGC on Wednesday evening, Jan. 31. Laughs are the highlight of this presentation, which features George Moran, famed blackface comedian; Rosemary Marsden, singer formerly with George White's Scandals, and Will Aubrey, the Wandering Minstrel.

## East Coast Ships Set Cargo Record Last Year

With Armed Guards at the guns to protect them from enemy surface, air and underwater craft, merchant vessels shattered all previous records for shipments from Atlantic Coast ports last year when more than 25,000,000 tons of dry cargo and 12,750,000 tons of bulk liquid cargo were moved out from this seaboard, it was revealed last Saturday in a report by Walter

W. Schwenk, Atlantic Coast director of the War Shipping Administration.

Mr. Schwenk said dry cargo shipments alone represented a 70 per cent increase over the previous record year of 1943. He also revealed that ship sailings had risen from 3,148 in 1943 to 4,868 last year as more and more supplies were dispatched to far-flung battlefronts.

The Atlantic Coast accounted for almost half of the nation's total of 56,300,000 tons of dry cargo, with the Port of New York contributing impressively to this achievement by accounting for 11,260,948 of the tonnage shipped and 2,277 of the sailings.

### World's Largest Convoy

One of the shipping highlights of 1944 was the world's largest convoy—167 ships—which covered an area of 26 square miles and carried more than 1,000,000 tons of cargo of every type, it was reported by Frank J. Taylor, president of the American Merchant Marine Institute.

## 2 Armed Guards Save Boy in East River

William W. Heath Jr., SM3c, of St. Louis and Everett M. Lightiza, Slc, of Boston, members of the Armed Guard crew of a Liberty ship moored in the East River at Astoria, L. I., N. Y., last Sunday dove from the deck of the ship to rescue six-year-old Roger Marcino of Astoria.

The youngster had fallen into the river while trying to clamber into a rowboat moored at the same dock as the Liberty. After bringing him to the surface, the Armed Guards revived him and he was taken to a nearby hospital, suffering from shock and submersion.

## Heroes Honored



Peter F. Lavell, Slc, of Clinton, Mass., left, and Henry W. Kochanowski, RM2c, Sagmore, Mich., were the recipients of awards at Captain's inspection on Jan. 6. The former received the Commendation Ribbon while Kochanowski was presented with the Purple Heart Medal.

James Forrestal, Secretary of the Navy, has directed all naval personnel to comply with the text of the following letter from President Roosevelt to the Secretary:

"At a most critical time, when production of essential supplies vital to the war effort must be kept at a high level, speculative public statements by responsible military and civilian public officials at home and abroad indicating an early termination of the war tend to curtail production of essential war materials.

"It is highly necessary that this condition be remedied and to this end all government officials are directed to refrain from such public statement."

## Not at One Time, Though

Navy nurses are now authorized to wear nine different "service" uniforms.



# S.S. PAUL HAMILTON



## The S.S. PAUL HAMILTON

April 20, 1944

The Ammunition Laden 441 feet- 6 inches long; 56' 10 ¾" width; 37' 4" Depth, Liberty Ship S.S. PAUL HAMILTON was struck by an German aerial bomb launched from Junkers JU 88A just North of Algiers and it's destruction was caught on film. Loss in human lives: 504 Army troops; 29 U.S. Navy Armed Guard; 39 U.S. Merchant Seaman Crew and 9 officers. During the engagement, 5 ships were torpedoed, 3 being sunk. Sunk were the destroyer, USS LANSDALE (DD-426); The S.S. PAUL HAMILTON and the S.S. ROYAL STAR. The S.S. SAMITE and the S.S. STEPHEN F. AUSTIN were torpedoed but managed to reach Algiers. (USCG photo) Photo taken by PhoM 1/C Arthur Green, USCGR, aboard the USS MENGES (DE-320)

of hostilities.

**One Torpedo • 580 men  
7000 tons of Explosives**

*SS PaulHamilton  
Sunk April 20, 1944*

On this day, April 20th, 1944, the largest loss of life on a WWII Liberty ship took place when the SS Paul Hamilton was sunk with all hands. But these men were killed not one, but twice.

Yes, the German Junkers torpedo bombers did their work. But as their various body parts rained down on the nearby ships of the convoy, no one knew then that details of the incident would be classified for 50 years.

All the families of these men would ever be told, for that whole time, was..."Missing in action, presumed dead, Mediterranean Theater." I have a complete alphabetical KIA roster

link below.

Why, do you ask? The brass did not want to face the families with explaining to them why they had loaded a troop ship with 7000 tons of explosives and munitions.

### *Western Union Kid*

My mother had married Sgt Leon Miller only about four months prior. He was in the Army Air Corp...photo intelligence, and has assured her he would be behind the lines. When the door bell rang she saw a young boy in a Western Union uniform standing with a telegram.

In those days you would rather see the devil himself. It still had not hit her yet until he said the magic words..."Are you Mrs. Leon Miller?" Everything...at that moment...changed forever. She was...sixteen years old.

Denial is often the survival instinct for

these telegram moments. She refused to accept it. She did the best she could to push the grim reaper away, in an impressive way for a young lady,

"I am sure there is some mistake. My husband has not even gotten over there yet." The young boy had been trained well, and he did his job. He read the address to her and asked if it were correct, then again asked her again if she was Mrs Leon Miller. And then he stretched out his hand and said, "I'm very sorry." He had done this before. She had not.

Stage two of denial now enters. The young widow sees the only avenue open to her not have this really happen is to still not accept the telegram. She insisted that he go back to the office and double check ...she was sure the mistake would be discovered.

The young boy, seeming unhappy that he had failed to do his job, left. If he could have shown her this photo to your right, she would have taken the telegram. But mother never saw this... until last year.

### *Death of the Paul Hamilton*

The sixty two ships of convoy UGS 38 were off the coast of Algiers on the fateful evening. The SS Paul Hamilton was headed for the Anzio bridge head which was surrounded by strong German forces. Our troops were so hard pressed that many of the 504 Army Air Corp men aboard had been retrained in mine demolition work for the planned break out.

For more efficient shipping logistics the brass had decided to keep the men and their 7000 tons of explosives together in the same unarmored ship, where one hot tracer round could blow them all to smithereens.

### *Close Formation Convoy*

The convoys were well protected by that time in the war. The Luftwaffe was no

longer attacking them during the day because they would lose too many planes. Their main tactic was the low level torpedo bombing attack timed to strike just after the sun went down. They came in from the coast, using the mountains to hide their radar detection for as long as possible.

The picket ships finally picked them up and reported the incoming attack but there were communications complications and most ships found out when the shooting started. The convoy was already at general quarters as standard procedure.

There is not much for those on a troopship to do in a situation like this. They are literally along for ride in a game of high stakes roulette. Every man on the Hamilton knew that if they were hit no life boats would be necessary. They did not have to suffer a long wait. They were the first hit.

### *Junkers 88 Medium Bomber*

As the planes closed on the ships in the post sunset darkness flares were reported being dropped by higher altitude German planes which helped the helped the torpedo bombers pick out ships to make their runs. But the convoy commander's official report has no mention of flares.

Although the first wave of planes attacked the convoy head on, the destroyers in front never opened fire on them. I can only surmise they could not see them in the dark and the planes were by them before they could shoot.

A witness on a ship near the Paul Hamilton reported that an alert gunner fired a burst at a crossing plane, which then focused in on the gunner's tracers. This was actually against firing protocol where the armed freighters were only supposed to fire on planes making an attack run on them, so their tracer fire would not expose them in the darkness. The fate of the Hamilton was sealed.

As the plane bore in all the guns the Hamilton could bring to bear blasted

away. When the plane did not go down, the gunners knew what that meant...incoming torpedo. If you look at this larger photo you will see all the extra gun tubs mounted fore and aft and amidships to give them a fighting chance.

### *Extra gun tubs mounted on the Paul Hamilton*

The Coast Guard destroyer escort Menges was screening the the column that the Hamilton was in, a bit behind it. Combat cameraman Art Green was at his battle station on the fantail where he had a panoramic view. His eyes were drawn to the outgoing fire from the nearby ships, and straining to see any planes in the darken twilight. Suddenly, the sky turned from night to day.

### *USS Lansdale Survivors Art Green*

The flash stunned everyone. When Green's eyes reopened he watched the mushroom cloud rise up from what had been the SS Paul Hamilton, and snapped his famous shot. Within a month the photo was being used for war propaganda in American papers and magazines as an example of the risks and carnage involved in getting supplies to the front.

The families of the Paul Hamilton KIA's who happened to see it never knew it was their photo. There are not too many WWII families who have such a morbid memento, but after sixty plus years you take what you can get.

The following link is a complete alphabetical roster of all those who died in that blinding flash.

### *Captured German Aviator Art Green*

Green recounted that the Hamilton explosion lasted six to seven seconds and then everything went dark again. More explosions were heard as four more ships were struck. Some of the torpedos that missed their targets and exploded at the end of their runs were mistakenly reported as bombs.

The destroyer Lansdale was sunk, and the damaged Royal Star sank the next



day. Both the damaged Samite M/V and Stephen F. Austen M/V were successfully towed to Algiers. Green saw one plane go down.

The gunfire tapered off as the convoy continued on its course into the quiet night with the rear screening destroyers and tug boat assisting the damaged and sinking ships. \*\*\*

The door bell rang again. The young widow had gathered Leon's brother and wife from their work. The wife went to the door. Words were mumbled, and she returned to the living room to inform, "He says he has to deliver it to you only." The denial time was over.

Mother went to the door. The young boy, more tense this time, stretched out his arm with the telegram and said, "There's been no mistake. I'm very sorry." She remembers to this day,

"He had a very sad look on his face...so sad. I felt sorry for him." The telegram was hers now. She handed it to the brother and soon heard the next worst sentence in WWII, "The Secretary of the Army regrets to inform you...."

## *Two Paul Hamilton Bodies Buried in Tunis*

Only two bodies were recovered and are buried at the Allied cemetery in Algiers. They were identified through fingerprints so those two families had some closure.

A search for any survivors went on for two days, the search for bodies for a week. The photo and attack reports were flown back to Washington. The brass knew there were no survivors on the Hamilton. They had the photo of what can happen with their hybrid troop and ammo ships.

The 'missing in action' first telegram was followed by the second, adding ...'presumed dead'. Later followed the obligatory condolence cards from Secretary Marshall, President Roosevelt, and a Purple Heart. And that was that...until 1995. No apologies or explanations were ever

forthcoming as to why the whole 50 year classification period was allowed to run. Many of the parents of these KIAs passed away never knowing exactly how their sons died. I personally feel it was an act of governmental cruelty to do this. It served no other purpose than to have fewer living parents alive to make a stink over it.

## *Nice Words But a Bad Deed for the Hamilton*

Mother had said the government did offer transportation to Algiers and a boat ride out to the site for a wreath laying at sea.

I have no idea if anyone has ever done this, the dead parents certainly not. Mother never mentioned going. I never asked why, not being sure it would be anything more than driving another stake into her heart.

By that time she had collected her third flag in 2004, burying a son, an Army Ranger Colonel, from Agent Orange related causes. She and I did a ceremony for Sgt. Miller the next day in an area of Arlington for stones with no bodies.

It was a beautiful setting, filtered light, and the Arlington Honor Guards are a memorable experience which I will share with you below. This was the first shoot I did with my new TV camera.

These young soldiers teared up when I told them the story that she was getting this done after waiting sixty years. I was proud of her...two Arlington ceremonies back to back.

Make sure you click on 480p for the best resolution. You are watching the most beautiful flag folding footage that I have, and I have a lot.

## *YouTube - Veterans Today -*

Mother was a shell for the next five years. An Algeria trip was definitely not in the cards. But I did send her a copy of my high resolution photo. You can see tracer fire from one plane's tail gunner, crazy to be exposing their position the the convoy

gunners.

I met Helen Jones online, the widow of a destroyer seaman on the convoy. They had made several trips to the archives to get all of the declassified records. Her computer literate children put it all on a CD for me...every name, every captain's report, even the gunner station reports including the rounds that they fired.

They include the word for word radio transcripts of the rescue operations. I am eternally grateful to Helen and her family. I had trouble getting the 100 plus page file to load, but leave me a note in the comments and I will be sure to let you know when that is fixed.

My mother and her good VA man did get a copy of most of the Hamilton file following the declassification, but somehow the photo was among the missing.

Next up to share his retrospective is eye witness Howard Morseburg who was in the convoy. This is the only personal video I have found on the Net, so a big salute to Howard for honoring his mates. He has a big punchline at the end. Don't miss it, another story in itself.

## *YouTube - Veterans Today - - Howard Morseburg*

So there you have it from Howard. The merchant seamen got a triple shafting. Allow me to add another indignity to the list. All the service men KIA families got \$10,000 of GI life insurance. The merchant marine families got \$5000. Isn't that special. Widow's benefits...zero...kids?...zip. Howard did not seem bitter. He just wanted it on the record. I will have to see if old Howard is still around.

For this last video I wanted to put you in the seat of the German bombers, even though it is day time, to see some actual footage of such a torpedo attack going in on a convoy. What struck me right away is they seemed to dropping them almost like bombs, and from long distances where it seems like a wish and a

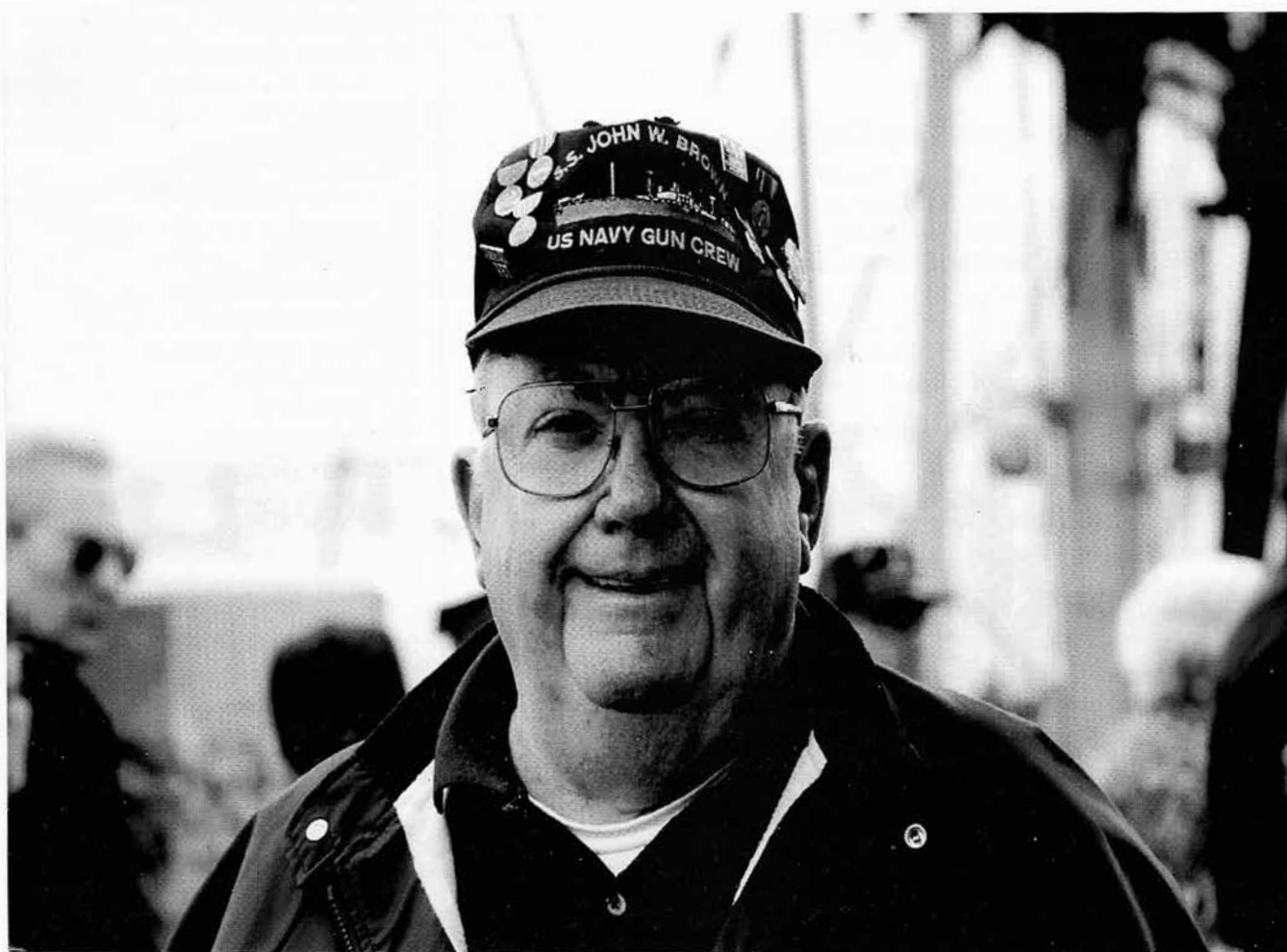
# *Liberty Log!*

*A Newsletter of Project Liberty Ship*



Volume XXXIV

No. 2



## **Joe Colgan**

**Armed Guard commander Joe Colgan, who fought the Japanese from a ship in the South Pacific, and was seriously injured in an accidental shipboard explosion has directed a loyal Navy gun crew on the JOHN W. BROWN. He reminds other Navy veterans of the heroism of the Merchant Marine and their close partnership.**

*Photo by Ernie Imhoff*



## Navy Armed Guard Gunner Joe Colgan Steps Off the Board, But Not the Ship

By Ernest F. Imhoff

When Joseph Colgan got off his last Liberty ship after World War II, the U.S. Navy Armed Guardsman who saw service in the South Pacific “was sure I’d never get on another one.”

These are famous last words for many current crew members of the Liberty ship SS *John W. Brown*.

Forty two years later, in 1988, toward the end of a successful career in the beer business, the affable Colgan met a fellow former Navy Guard gunner. One thing led to another. Before he knew it, Colgan was back on a Liberty ship in Baltimore, the *Brown*, surrounded by other former Navy gunners.

In the next 22 years, under the leadership of AG commander Colgan, they rebuilt the *Brown*’s wartime gunner quarters, helped put in place 12 wartime-era guns armed with “Hollywood style” explosive noises, built a unique Armed Guard museum in the ‘Tween deck, honored different veterans’ groups each year and helped the *Brown* steam almost 90 times again in her second life since 1991.

Naturally, Colgan supplied the free beer.

“We had great camaraderie, just like in the beer business,” says Colgan. “We were diversified, had nothing in common, but we were all in the Armed Guard in the war and we had some wild thinkers among us.” That was enough to get to work on the *Brown*.

In the spring of 2011, at 84, Commander Colgan stepped down as vice chairman of Project Liberty Ship and off the board of directors but he will remain active for the ship, probably the rest of his life, perhaps trying to attract interested donors.



**Joe Colgan (foreground), commander of the *BROWN*’s U.S. Navy Armed Guard contingent, leads a burial at sea**

He’ll still be coming aboard. The old Liberty ship, which like other Liberty ships was protected by the Armed Guard in the war, does that to people. Some veteran gunners who began work in 1988 have died, but some like the indefatigable Navy gunner, John Confair, sign in cheerfully each week and take care of the gun tubs, the guns and the crew quarters.

If Colgan, an Irish lad raised in Jersey City, N.J., were a priest, he’d bless them all and he wouldn’t leave out the civilian merchant marine with which he fought side by side in the war. Colgan sees Navy and merchant marine aboard as one big family.

Speaking of family, Colgan will continue to devote even more time to his closest pals, his four children, their spouses and six grandchildren.

“I took my youngest grandson last night to the Harlem Globetrotters game in Salisbury” near his home on Maryland’s Eastern Shore, he said recently. After the game Sean Colgan said, “That was great, let’s do it again.” It was fun but Colgan’s second thought was “Oh, oh, \$60 for tickets and \$40 for food.”

Joe and his late wife Alice had four children: Lisa Houck, JoAnne Mold, Kathleen Rollins and Kevin Colgan, all of whom live in Maryland. They had seven grandchildren: Billy Mold (deceased), Colin Mold, Patrick Houck, Caitlin Colgan, Sean Colgan, Kiefer Rollins and Kurt Rollins.

Joe will continue a family tradition he and Alice started, giving the four children a week away for themselves while the grandparents watched over the younger set.

“We used to cook and get them to bed, but they’re older now. I don’t do the cooking anymore, but I’m there to help. I was brought up to always be available to serve others. My dad always served people. He was deputy chief of police Hudson County, New Jersey. He tried to find work for neighborhood people in the Depression. He died at 98.”

Colgan joined the U.S. Navy in 1944, serving in the Armed Guard aboard three merchant ships in the war: the tanker M.S. *Texas Sun*, and two Liberty ships, S.S. *William E. Borah* and S.S. *Walt Williams*, both of which carried ammunition. He sailed in the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans and Philippine Sea.

Colgan was severely “injured, not wounded” in an accidental explosion in Saipan when the *Texas Sun* was refueling Navy tankers. He was thrown from a gun tub to the deck. The doctor said just get a little rest, but the ill effects lasted far longer than that. After the war, Colgan finished his duty aboard the APD 63, USS *Lloyd* in 1946. Honorably discharged, he entered Seton Hall College the same year and graduated in 1949 with a B.S. degree in business. It took two and a half years, instead of four: “I wanted to get out and work.”

# LIBERTY LOG - JOE COLGAN



The A&P was his first big job. He rose from grocery clerk in 1949 to advertising manager of the Philadelphia unit and public relations manager of the Philadelphia, Scranton, Baltimore and Richmond, VA units. He resigned in 1958 to begin a career in beer, quite sober except for the first day.

"First day, National Brewing Company put me with an old time beer salesman, Jim Wirtz. I went out with him to see how beer is sold. We went met workers in the morning around the Sparrows Point steel mill. I started drinking boilermakers...beer and a shot. They poured me back into the hotel room at 9:30 a.m. I was looped. Jim said "Learn it yourself, you damn fool."

Colgan did and had "a fascinating life in the beer business." He travelled often to military bases and conventions with Orioles announcer Chuck Thompson and colorful promoter Bill Veeck for the Oriole organization owned by National suds brewer Jerry Hoffberger. Colgan worked in management positions for the National Brewing Company, Regal Brewery and Carlin-National Division of G. Heileman Brewing Co., and consulted for breweries from 1988 to 1990 before retiring.

By then, Colgan had already been Armed Guard commander of the *Brown* for two years. His experience at sea and in beer management and promotion served him well in helping save the *Brown* and then promoting the ship and veterans. He set his retirement on a steady course, sailing from family to the *Brown* and back.



Enclosed photo is a memorial located in the memorial pathway at the Ohio Western Reserve National Cemetery in Pittman, Ohio.

The pathway is unique and has at least 50 similar type memorials. Thought you may like this to add to your collection of Armed Guard memorabilia. As usual, enjoy the Pointer. Thanks, Bob & Curdey Cottrell  
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Our prayers are with the shuttle crew. GOD BLESS.

**Remember Pearl Harbor!**  
**December 7, 1941**

*"Donations keeps us afloat"*



**Support The USN Armed Guard**  
**WW II Veterans Reunions**  
 Remember Also  
 The World Trade Center  
 September 11, 2001

**June/September 2011 Edition**



**Lone Sailor**

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



## DEDICATION

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

REMEMBER ALSO:  
 THE TWIN TOWERS  
 THE PENTAGON  
 AND FLIGHT 93  
 God Bless Them

This POINTER is in Memory of all Branches of service in WW II; the Navy, Army, Marines, Airmen, Seabees, Merchant Seamen, Wacs, Waves, and especially to the Special Unit of the Navy known as the U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD which was first used as Gun Crews in WW I on board cargo, tankers and troopships and where needed to protect the ship, cargo and the merchant crews who bravely ran the ships to each port of call until deactivated after WW I. They were established again for the same purpose in September of 1941 and remained active until WW II was over and the need for gunners were not needed. This issue is also in honor to all the people all over the world who built ships, planes, tanks, trucks, jeeps, guns, ammo and all things needed to win a war against the ruthless killers. Thanks to the farmers who fed us all. Thank God for seeing us through.