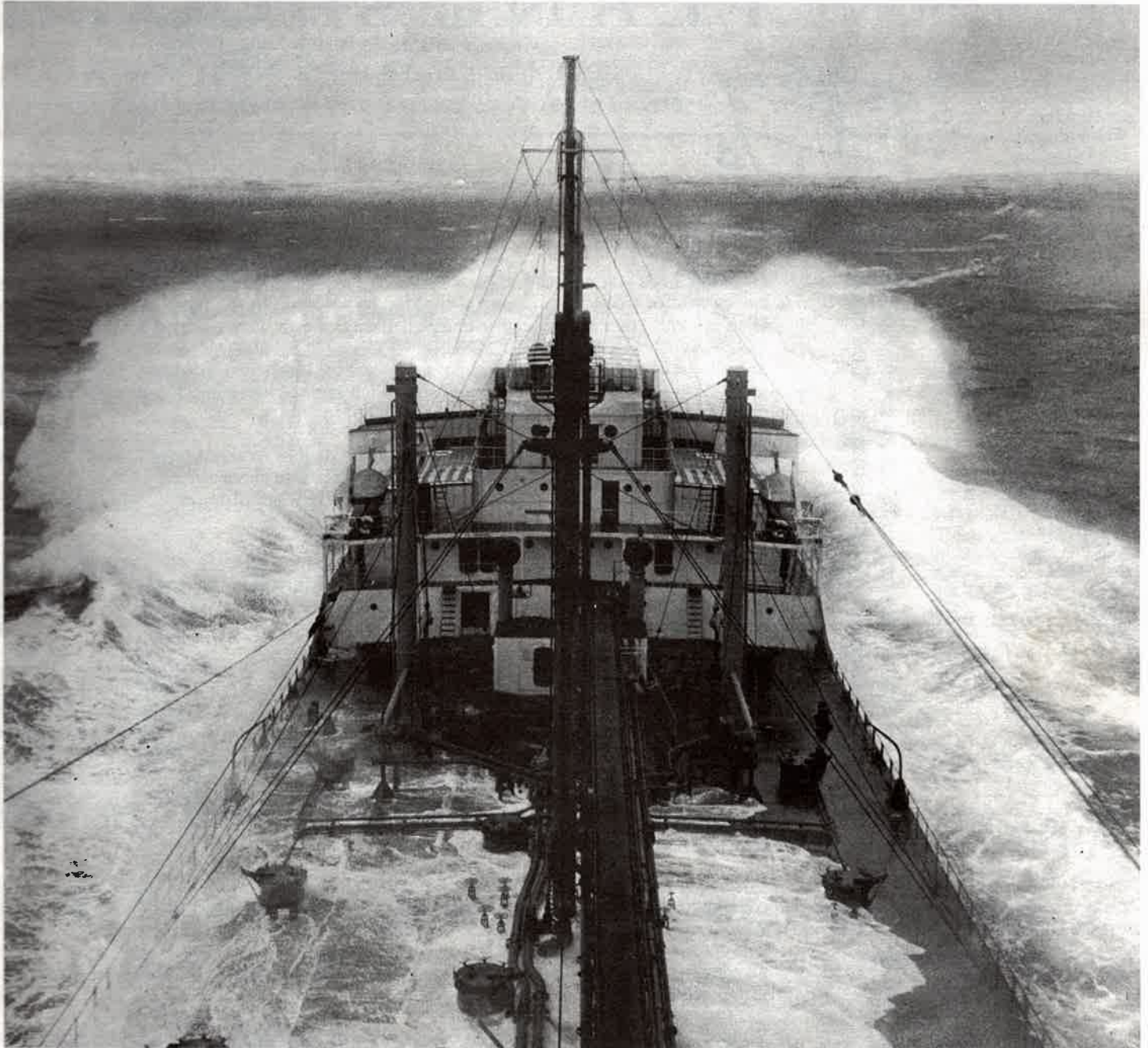


AUG./SEPT./OCT., 1997

THE INTER



HOMeward BOUND

A striking picture of the National Defense Features Tanker “Esso New Orleans,” by her former Chief Engineer, Ernest G. Bornheimer, who was lost in the torpedoing of the “W. L. Steed.”

(This photo and the one on page 16 are reprinted from “Ships of the Esso Fleet in World War II,” copyright 1946, Standard Oil Co., NJ - out of print)

Officers for 1997-78

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

Joseph and Jeanne Benedict, 1998 Hosts
8220 Quinn Circle
Bloomington, MN 55437-1228
1-612-835-1380

Lonnie D. Lloyd, Treasurer

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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

THE POINTER

THE PLANE SHOOTER

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

USN Armed Guard World War II Veterans

"PLAIN SHOOTING FOR PLANE SHOOTERS"

Dear Everybody:

August 1997

Hope this finds you well and in good health. We're "hanging in there" and are enjoying the cooler weather from the recent hot spell. May be hot again by the time you get this. I try to keep up with you on the weather channel. If any of you were effected by the FLOODS, FIRES, TORNADOES, HURRICANES or "TYPHOONS," please let me know as people ask about some of their shipmates they have found and see where you could have been affected. I know it would be difficult right after it happens but some of you may not have a place to go to and if I don't hear from you, the POINTER will be returned.

Many have written, thanking me for putting the picture of the Armed Guard Center in Brooklyn, N.Y. and the Liberty Ship in the POINTER. Both photos were by Clarence Korker. I hope to get one of Treasure Island in a future POINTER and also one at Algiers, La., better known to Armed Guard as "NOLA."

Hilda and I will be attending the IL/WI Mini-Reunion in Appleton, Wi. September 18-21, 1997 and also the NORTHEAST MINI at the Pocono Manor Inn, Oct. 2, 3, 4, 5, 1997 so hold up your phone calls 2 days prior to and after those dates. Wish I could attend all those going on but someone has to look after the computer.

I got a stack of returns from the Changes of Address; Temporary Away; Moved-left no address; wrong zip; Deceased; or, just plain returns from "ALL DIRECTIONS." Plus! Tom Bowerman has my address on the internet and we are picking up quite a few "NEW OL'SALTS." And, then there's the ones who see the caps and bumper stickers. You can tell that by the jump in numbers since you got your last backup. Today, I came across several from all over the States who had been active in the past but their mail had been returned. I picked up the phone and called them at the number I had listed and got 4 back on the mailing list and found that 2 had joined their Maker. PLEASE NOTIFY ME 2 WEEKS BEFORE MOVING! SAVES US STAMPS!!

I had Lyle Dupra send those who hold mini-reunions and breakfasts, or those who receive computer backups, his book and I paid for it out of the Armed Guard Bank Account as I did Zed Merrill's Video. Zed has already over reimbursed the Armed Guard for the approx. \$1900 cost upfront to get the Videos out so you could see what they were like and show to others and give them a chance to see what they were getting. It worked fine on the Video and should be just as good or even better with Dupra's book.

William McGee from California has informed me that his book will be at the book stores in October. I hadn't read it as yet but Walt Jaffee says it will be a "WINNER." This will be in the "POINTER" and I will send his book, also, as I did Zed Merrill's tape, as soon as published. SEE BOOK NOTICE IN THIS POINTER. If you order it before October 15th, it's cheaper. The Armed Guard will receive a portion from the sales.

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

***Remember, I 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**

Also for the Book Lovers, I was loaned a book, "FORGOTTEN TRAGEDY" by Carlton Jackson which is about the sinking of the HMT ROHNA, a British Troopship. I read it almost through before I put it down because it was so interesting. Approx. 1000 American Army Personnel were killed along with 149 others. The ship had taken a direct hit from a guided missile, the first ship ever sunk this way. It is published by the U.S. NAVAL INSTITUTE PRESS, 118 Maryland Ave., Annapolis, Md., 1-800-233-8764. It is a great tribute to those who lost their lives and also to the survivors and the rescuers. It is a "MUST" for those interested.

I erred on "WHO WON THE RAFFLE" in the June/July POINTER. Should have been: Frank Galbraith, Topeka, Ks and

Mrs. A.E. Olsen, Gibraltar, Mich. along with the others. That sets the record straight, I hope.

On behalf of the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN Historical Liberty Ship in Baltimore, Md. and the NAVY MEMORIAL in Washington, D.C., they have asked me to THANK each of you that took part in their recent fundraisers. The S.S. JOHN W. BROWN was able to keep their promise to sail to New London, Ct. this August. I hope many of you were able to go and sail on her, or, just go on board her. I sent each place a backup of the names we have located and they sent the material. We have already picked up names from this and we hope to receive many more. (WORKING TOGETHER) Should you receive anything asking for donations, etc.,

DO NOT feel as if you are obligated to send. If you can afford it - GREAT! IF NOT - WE UNDERSTAND! The S.S. JOHN W. BROWN WILL NOT BE GOING TO CHARLESTON, S.C. or GALVESTON, Texas.

From our house to yours, we hope the rest of the summer is great and the Fall and Winter is even greater. If you know of an Armed Guard or Merchant Seaman, check and see if he is on the mailing list, and if not, get this information, FIRST TIME!! Last Name; First; Middle; Wife's Name; Address; City; State; Zip; Telephone; Service No.; Date of Birth; Ships; Dates ON and OFF. SIMPLE! IT HELPS ME, TOO. Y'ALL TAKE CARE, YOU HEAR!! REMEMBER-KEEP IN TOUCH! *calloyd*

— In Memory —

Deceased shipmates since June/July, 1997 POINTER

Aldridge	Herman W.	Blanchard	Ok	*	7/20/97
Chamberlain	Gordon M.	Whitehall	Pa	Delores	7/25/97
Coonrod	Robert T.	Cottage Grove	Or	Mona	5/22/97
Cooper	Thomas A.	Follansbee	Wv		
Crowbridge	George	Amberg	Wi	Marjorie	2/7/97
Fallis	John J.	Peabody	Ma	Ann	7/7/97
Gibson (MM)	Coy B.	Clark's Summit	Pa	Clara	4/24/96
Hartman	Curtis G.	Hill City	SD	Emma	2/7/97
McCormick	Richard	Rockaway Point	NY	Nora	5/13/97
Odom	Leroy	Auckland	NZ	Shirley	97
Overton	Marcial	Whiteville	Tn	Mary	6/9/97
Ponoski	John	Hyattsville	Md	Clara	5/19/97
Quin	Louis L.	Summitt	Ms	*	8/3/97
Raleigh	Wyatt F.	Brockport	NY	Lucille	6/30/97
Reksik	Don	Oakview	Ca	Lois	97
Sanderson	Laurence W.	McLouth	Ks	Rosemarie	5/13/97
Sheridan	Harlan	Salisbury	Md	Frances	
Smith	Harold	Tucson	Az	Miriam	7/5/97
Stade	Leroy W.	East Bernard	Tx	Bernice	7/22/97
Wontor	Joseph	South Holland	Il	*	7/19/97

(FOR YOU BOOKLOVERS)

"Bluejacket Odyssey: Guadalcanal to Bikini Atoll, Naval Armed Guard in the Pacific," by Bill McGee. Order before Oct. 15 for only \$30.00, including shipping (saves \$8.00 off regular price). Check, Visa, or MasterCard to: Glencannon Press, Order & Shipping Dept., PO Box 633, Benicia, CA 94510, 1-800-711-8985. They also have two other titles of interest, both by Capt. Walter W. Jaffee: **"The Last Liberty: The Biography of the SS Jeremiah O'Brien,"** and **"The Lane Victory, the Last Victory Ship in War and in Peace."** Contact Glencannon Press for ordering info.

A new book has been published called: **"When Civilians Manned the Ships"** by James A. Kehl. \$13.95 plus \$5 S & H. Brandylane Publishers, POB 261, White Stone, Va. 22578, 800-553-6922, FAX 804-435-9812. All net proceeds go to expenses to bring the LSM 45 from Greece to New Orleans.

WWII liberty ship to travel Great Lakes in 1999

GRAYLING — Veterans of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard from World War II are being sought.

James M. Kolka of Grayling, and Martin Vallee of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard WW II Veterans Office in Flint, are seeking veterans to help bring the WW II liberty ship John W. Brown up the Great Lakes in 1999. The Brown will dock in Detroit, Milwaukee and Chicago. Kolka, an Armed Guard veteran,

also wants to dock the ship in Bay City, and other Michigan cities. While docked, the ship will be open to the public.

The Flint office of the WW II Armed Guard needs veterans committees to help bring the ship to another Michigan port besides Detroit, and to man the Liberty Ship as it is being brought through the Great Lakes.

In the last year, Kolka has

attended three Armed Guard conventions across the country, meeting fellow veterans and gaining information on the Brown project for 1999. He hopes news bulletins will encourage other veterans to attend the Naval Armed Guard convention in Frankenmuth this fall, which is expected to draw veterans from Ohio, Indiana, Kentucky and Michigan.

Those interested in the conven-

tion or being part of the Brown committee or crew can contact: Martin Vallee at 810-235-3530, or write U.S. Navy Armed Guard - World War II Veterans, PO Box 809, Flint, MI 48501; Charlie Lloyd, 919-876-5537, or write U.S.N. Armed Guard - World War II Veterans, 5712 Partridge Lane, Raleigh, NC 27609-4126; or James M. Kolka, 517-348-9527, or write PO Box 263, Grayling, MI 49738.

★ ★ ★ ★ REUNIONS ★ ★ ★ ★

**"REGIONAL, MINI-REUNIONS
AND GET-TOGETHERS"**
Support these local meetings
while you're able.

**OOOPS!! COLUMN!!
BEFORE I FORGET IT AGAIN!!**

UNDER REUNIONS, BE SURE TO PAY
ATTENTION WHEN IT SAYS:
"IF MAKING RESERVATIONS, BE SURE
TO SAY "ARMED GUARD."

NOTICE: BELOW ARE CORRECTED
DATES FROM WHAT I SENT OUT ON
THE NORTHEAST MINI-REUNION.
WE WILL SEE YOU THERE, I HOPE.
(CALLOYD)

01. THE NORTHEAST REGIONAL
REUNION WILL BE HELD "OCT. 2, 3,
4, 5, 1997," AT THE POCONO MANOR
INN AND GOLF RESORT, POCONO
MANOR, PA., 18349, 1-800-233-8150 OR
1-717-839-7111. HOST: ALEX LOMBAR-
DI, 14 BROOKFIELD RD., UP. MONT-
CLAIR, NJ. 07043. 1-201-746-6361.

02. THE IOWA/MINN REUNION
HOSTED BY ARNOLD LATARE AT
THEIR REGULAR MEETING PLACE,
SEPT. 11-13, 1997.

03. THE ARKANSAS/KANSAS/MIS-
SOURI/NEBRASKA AND OKLA-
HOMA REUNION, SEPT 26-28, 1997.

I LEFT OUT SO MANY IN THE
JUNE/JULY POINTER AND I DO
APOLOGIZE. PLEASE MARK DOWN
OR SAVE THIS POINTER FOR
FUTURE REFERENCES AS TO WHEN
MEETINGS ARE HELD, AS I WILL
NOT HAVE ANY IN THE NEXT
POINTER UNLESS AN ERROR IS
MADE OR THE PLACE OR TIME
CHANGES, IN ORDER TO SAVE
SPACE. IF YOUR MEETING IS NOT
LISTED, PLEASE NOTIFY ME AT
ONCE GIVING ALL INFORMATION.
THANKS - calloyd

ALL AMPHIBS VETERANS: Grant L.
Lee, 1920 Lula Ln., Enola, Pa 17025-1415,
717-732-1712 has on file 46,000 of the
Approx. 440,000 who served. Send him a
self addressed stamped envelope when you
contact him. A small donation to help his
search, I am sure, would be nice as he took
the burden on himself. A lot of you Armed
Guard "VOLUNTEERED" for the
AMPHIBS!!

SANDPOINT, Id AREA!! Milan and
Dottie LaMarche have moved to: 5881
Isabella Ct., Coeur D'Alene, Id. 83815, 208-
665-9598 and they have informed me that

they have put their meetings on "HOLD"
due to health reasons, etc. I hope someone
else in the area will continue what they have
started. They can let you know if you will
contact them if I don't find someone.

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, ILLINOIS
Armed Guard area meets at McDonalds in
Fairview Hgts. on the 2nd Saturday of each
month 9:30-11:00. Contact: Skipper
Theodore Kawula, 3232 Carlson Ave.,
Granite City, Il. 62040. A.G. and M.M.
"GET-TO-GETHER."

**SACRAMENTO, CA. AREA ARMED
GUARD CREW, WIVES AND FRIENDS:**
10:00 A.M. - 3rd Thursday at BRADSHAW
RESTAURANT, HWY 50 at Bradshaw
Exit. Welcome Hosts are: Bill and Doris
Welch; 6048 Holstein Way, Sac, Ca. 95822-
2955, 916-428-4681 and Peewee and
Charlotte Hunter, 916-354-0623.

ORANGE COUNTY, CALIFORNIA
AREA Contact: Walter Davis, 2604 No.
Tustin Ave. #F, Santa Ana, Ca. 92705, 714-
997-7119; or Curtis Mellin, 3173 Bern Dr.,
Laguna Beach, Ca. 92651, 714-494-6603.

ALABAMA CREW Contact Gene Pugh,
3131 Hale Dr., Huntsville, Al. 35805 205-
533-6049 for meeting at the Golden Corral,
3117 Lorna Rd. Hoover, Al..

INDIANA CREW meets each month on the
last Saturday-11:00 A.M. at Al's Restaurant,
Logansport, In. Hosts are: Forrest and
Annabelle Spencer, 219-753-7066.

GEORGIA CHAPTER Skipper Bill
Burton, 251 Cardigan Cir., Lilburn, Ga.
30247, 770-381-5395 and the Ga. Crew
meet at SHONEY'S, Exit 38, Lilburn, 11
AM "FIRST MONDAY."

**PBY CATALINA INTERNATIONAL
ASSOC.** CONTACT: Jas. Thompson,
1510 Kabel Dr., New Orleans, La. 70131,
504-392-1227 FOR REUNION IN SAN
DIEGO, CA. 10/8-10/97. HAVE FUN
Y'ALL.

**ROCHESTER, N.Y. AREA ARMED
GUARD and MERCHANT SEAMEN**
of WW II contact John and Mary Shevlin,
37 Winfield Rd., Rochester, N.Y. 14622-
2212, 716-467-2057. A LUNCH MEET-
ING is held at 11:00 A.M. on the "2ND"
TUESDAY at the "OLD COUNTRY BUF-
FET" Culver-Ridge Plaza East Ridge Rd.,
"IRONDEQUOIT, NY." Vincent Daddazio,
100 Dunn Tower Dr., #1 A-404, Rochester,
14606, 716-429-6653 assists John.

IOWA CREW meets the 2nd Wednesday,
10:00 A.M. at the "VALLEY WEST
INN," 3535 Westown Parkway, West Des
Moines, Iowa, off I-235. Arnie and Mary
Latare, 601 34th St. W., Des Moines, Ia.
50265, 515-225-1084 are the hosts. THEY

WILL ALSO BE THE HOSTS FOR
THEIR IOWA/MINNESOTA MINI-
REUNION THURSDAY, SEPT. 11
THROUGH SUNDAY, SEPT 14, 1997
AT THE SAME PLACE AS ABOVE.
ARNIE "SEZ" EVERYONE'S WEL-
COME TO ATTEND THE EVENT.

BROOKLYN, N.Y. AREA: CONTACT
MIKE MOLINARI, 1422 EAST 54TH
ST., BROOKLYN, N.Y. 11234, 718-444-
8449. THEY MEET THE 3RD THURS-
DAY OF THE MONTH AT KING'S
PLAZA DINER, 4124 AVE 'U'
BETWEEN HENDRICKSON and COLE-
MAN at 10 A.M.

NEBRASKA Host, Moe Carlton, 2425
FOLKWAY BLVD., #321, Lincoln, Ne.
68521, 402-438-9321 holds an 11:00 LUN-
CHEON on the FIRST MONDAY of each
month at FARABEES RESTAURANT,
58TH and OLD CHANEY ROAD.

WILKES-BARRE, PA. Area Host
Delbert Lennon, P.O. Box 772, Wilkes-
Barre, Pa. 18703, reports that they hold a
4th Saturday of each month meeting at the
MARK II RESTAURANT, 1020 Wilkes
Barre Township Blvd., Wilkes Barre, Pa.
Lennon's number is 717-467-2161, week-
days only.

Hosts Alvin and Thelma Kemble, 8150
Chamber Hill Rd., Harrisburg, Pa. 17111,
717-566-8728 announce they hold their
"FIRST THURSDAY" of each month
meeting for their area, at the "HOSS'S
STEAK HOUSE" in HUMMELSTOWN,
PA at 1:00 P.M.

KEYSTONE MM CHAPTER invites all
ARMED GUARD to their meetings.
Contact: Geo.K. Bathie, 580 Melissa Ln.,
State College, Pa. 16803-1221, Phone/Fax
814-237-0329, on the 4th Sat. of each month
at a 12 NOON LUNCHEON at the "DAYS
INN-MOTEL," ALTOONA, PA.

**WESTERN N.C. AREA MEETS AT
THE "MILLS RIVER RESTUARANT,"**
MILL'S RIVER, N.C. ON THE "4TH
THURSDAY" OF EACH MONTH.
"LUNCHEON" starts at 11:30 AM.
Contact: Crayton Hall, PO Box 39, 88
Wilkie Way, Fletcher, N.C. 28732, 704-
684-4588.

ILL-WISC. CREW MINI-REUNION
will be held Sept. 18-21, 1997 at the
RAMADA INN in Appleton, Wisc., in the
heart of beautiful FOX RIVER VALLEY,
and the Hosts will be Gloria and William
(Bill) Tubbs, W 3022 Tubbs Rd., Seymour,
Wi. 54165, 414-833-6673. "HILDA AND I
WILL MAKE THIS ONE."

WILMINGTON, N.C. Armed Guard
holds a 1ST WEDNESDAY monthly
meeting at 9:30 A.M., WHITEY'S

Restaurant, 4501 Market St., Wilmington. Host is George W. Cameron, 611 Middle Sound Rd., Lot 16, Wilmington, N.C. 28405, 910-686-4193.

PHILADELPHIA-DELAWARE VALLEY PA. Area Armed Guard holds an 11:30 A.M. - 2ND Wednesday monthly meeting at the AMERICAN LEGION, FALLS TWP POST #834, FALLSINGTON, PA. 19054, 215-295-9858. HOSTS: **AL AND NORMA FARRARA**, 45 UPPER HILL TOP RD., YARDLEY, PA. 19067, 215-493-9134.

SOUTHWEST OHIO HOSTS Bob and Dot Ober, 7115 Dunn Rd., Cincinnati, Ohio 45230, 513-231-3181 hold an 11:30 Luncheon on the "2ND MONDAY EVERY OTHER MONTH" starting on DEC. 9th, 1996, at "TOMMY'S BUFFET" 10784 READING RD., EAVENDALE, Oh., 513-733-3663.

WESTERN RESERVE CHAPTER OF A.M.M VETERANS OF EASTERN OHIO meets the 3rd Thurs. of each mo. at "THE OLD COUNTRY BUFFET" at "THE SHOPS at BOARDMAN'S PARK" 387 Board-Poland Rd., Boardman, Oh at 11:30 AM. Contact Howard Brown, 2023 Thalia Ave., Youngstown, Oh., 330-783-0996. Armed Guard are encouraged to meet together.

DEMS - CONTACT: DOUG SEPHTON, RCNA-DEMS, 203 ANNE ST. NORTH, BARRIE, ONTARIO CN L4N 4T4 FOR INFORMATION ON THE "ROYAL CANADIAN NAVAL ASSOCIATION" 1998 Reunion.

GREATER PORTLAND, OREGON ARMED GUARD MEETS WITH THE OREGON CHAPTER AMMV THIRD MONDAY, 11:30 A.M. at "OLD COUNTRY BUFFET," 13500 SW PACIFIC (99W) TIGARD MARKET PL., TIGARD, OR. Contact: George Goode, 4017 S.E. Aldercrest Rd., Milwaukie, Oregon 97222-6161, 503-659-1925.

The "NORTH-WEST PASSAGE", "AK-OR-WA-ID" HOLDS A LUNCHEON AT 1400 HOURS ON THE 3RD WEDNESDAY AT THE BELL'S RESTAURANT, 8501 FIFTH AVE N.E., NORTH SEATTLE, WA. ONE MILE SOUTH OF NORTHGATE MALL. Contact: **Billie and Richard Kohse**, 2304 Lister Rd., N.E. Olympia, Wa. 98506-3616, 360-456-1946; or Don and Pearl Werner, 18605 N.E. 219th St., Battle-ground, Wa. 98604, 360-687-3630. The Kohses will again host their 1st Sunday in December ANNUAL CHRISTMAS PARTY December 7th, 1997 (PEARL HARBOR DAY) at "GENOAS ON THE BAY" 1525 N. Washington in Olympia. (Tel-360-943-7770)

CONTACT: WYOMING Armed Guard Skipper Charles Gray, P.O. Box 126, Fort Duchesne, Utah 84078 for meetings there.

I FINALLY CHANGED MICHIGAN'S MEETING DATE TO the "3RD"!! Lansing, Mich. Area holds a "3RD" WEDNESDAY of the ODD MONTHS at the "Cojral Gables Restaurant," 2838 E. Grand River Ave., East Lansing, Mi. 517-337-1311. Hosts are **Carl Mescher**, 508 Wayland, East Lansing, Mi. 48823, 517-332-1027; or **Martin Vallee**, P.O. Box 809, Flint, Mi. 48501, 810-235-3530, Fax 810-235-3556. Vallee is trying to get financial help from cities along the lakes to sponsor the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN up the St. Lawrence River as far as Cleveland, Detroit and Chicago in 1999 if he can get ship's O.K. OK?

MICHIGAN-OHIO-INDIANA-KENTUCKY will hold their **REGIONAL REUNION** October 5-8, 1997 at the beautiful ZENDER'S-BAVARIAN INN in Frankenmuth, Mi., the same place they held their 1993 Mini. Contact Mescher or Martin Vallee at the address in above paragraph.

KENTUCKY CREW: Contact Joe and Earlene Foreman, P.O. Box 99303, Jeffersontown, Ky. 40269, 502-267-4576 or James and Norma Close, 4036 Preston Hwy., Louisville, Ky 40223, 502-366-8966 as they are the Hosts for a "3RD THURSDAY 9:30 BREAKFAST at SHONEY'S RESTAURANT at Shelby and Eastern Parkway.

The "RHODE ISLAND CHAPTER" of ARMED GUARD VETERANS have a "LUNCHEON MEETING" on the 1st Wed. of every month at NOON at BICKFORDS in Warwick, R.I. Gerry and Lena Greaves, 143 E. Killingly Road, Foster, RI 02825, 401-647-2212 are your hosts!!

OKLAHOMA CREW contact **RALPH McNALLY**, P.O. Box 423, Skiatook, Okla. (918) 396-2693; or Jim Carlton, 519 E. 6th St., Bristow, Ok. 74010, 918-367-6764 on their meetings at BETTY ANN'S RESTAURANT, 4401 SO..MEMORIAL DR., TULSA, OK.

TOPEKA, KANSAS. AREA meets on the "FIRST THURSDAY" of each month at 8:30 A.M. AT THE TOPEKA PLAZA INN WITH DON GLEASON, 2405 N.W. CROSS, Topeka, Ks. 66606, 913-234-6087, and Dean Vining, 1026 S.W. Cambridge Ave., Topeka, Ks. 66604-1716, 913-273-1247 as hosts.

The **WICHITA, KS** Area Merchant Marines WW II Veterans **CONTACT:** Glen Trimble, 1725 Woodrow Ct., Wichita, Ks. 67203. **Wilfred Bergkamp** 530 Homestead, Colwich, Ks 67030 is the Armed Guard Coordinator.

NOTICE: AR/IA/MO/KAN/NEB/OK AND ALL OTHERS WHO LIKE TO ATTEND THE MID-WESTERN MINIREUNION AT THE SAME D.A.V. PLACE MENTIONED BELOW ON 9/26-27/97 WITH THE SAME HOSTS AS BELOW. The MO-KAN CREW will

meet on the 3RD TUESDAY of each month and the location is: D.A.V. Chapter #2, 8787 Old Santa Fe Rd., Kansas City, Mo. 64138, near the intersection of 87th St. and Blue Ridge Blvd. at 11:00 A.M. with Stan DeFoe, 4308 South Osage Ave., Independence, Mo. 64055-4645, 816-373-5890 and Bill Sears, 8505 NE 56th St., Kansas City, Mo. 64119, 816-453-2179 as hosts. SHOULD BE A GREAT ONE!!

The **UPPER PA.** HOLDS THEIR MEETING at PLATZ'S RESTAURANT, 101 Harrit Rd., Lehighton Pa. 18235, 610-377-1819 come Spring. **CONTACT:** Clint Barr, 2340 Third St., Easton, Pa. 18042, 610-258-3056.

LITTLE FERRY, N.J. AREA meets on the 1ST TUESDAY of EACH MONTH, 11:30 AM luncheon at TRACEY'S RESTAURANT #4 Bergen Pike, Little Ferry NJ 07643. Hosts for this area will be William and Irene Yansick, 80 Charlton Ave., Lodi, NJ. 07644, 201-473-6640.

PITTSBURGH, PA. crew meets on the "3rd Sat." for a NOON LUNCHEON at the GREENTREE MARRIOTT. **CONTACT:** Hilary Makowski, 202 Wedgewood Crt., Carnegie, Pa. 15106, (412)-429-8510.

CHICOPEE-LUDLOW, MA. HOSTS Tom and Priscilla Dufresne, 289 Munsing St., Ludlow, Ma. 01056, 413-583-8580 hold a "2ND SUNDAY" 9 A.M. BREAKFAST at the MOOSE LODGE #1849, 244 FULLER RD., CHICOPEE, MA. and they're assisted by: Sam Pittitieri, 413-592-1854 and Louis Carr, 413-783-5904 AND GEO. HURLEY, 413-593-3286. They got it together!!

COLORADO CREW: EVERYONE is invited to attend their FIRST (1st) TUESDAY of the month LUNCHEON at the EMBASSY SUITES, 4444 Havana St., (I-70 and Havana) Denver, Co. 80226, 303-988-5583. Contact Ed Jones, 616 S. Carr St., Lakewood, Co. 80226, 303-988-5583.

ALBANY, N.Y. AREA HOSTS, Henry and Joyce Carrangi, 11 BULLARD AVE., QUEENSBURY, N.Y. 12804, 518-793-0326 and crew meets at 12 NOON, "4TH" THURSDAY of each month at the "WATERVLIET ARSENAL OFFICER'S CLUB," WATERVLIET, N.Y.

S.C. CREW CONTACT: Jeff and Mabel Haselden, 120 Richardson Blvd., Lugoff, SC 29078, (803) 438-1491 for their meetings.

RICHMOND, VA. CREW meets at 12:30 PM for a LUNCHEON at MORRISON'S Cafe, 7035 W. Broad St., Richmond, Va. on the "2ND SAT." Clarence Durham, 4813 Lowells Rd., Richmond, Va. 23224, 804-233-6023 had to give up as host due to his health. Durham has done a great job and we wish him better health.

NORFOLK, VA. Contact: Reginald Dolliver, 3820 Amberly Forest Pl., Virginia Beach, Va. 23456, 804-471-6397 for their meetings on the **LAST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH** at the **OLD COUNTRY BUFFET**, 1952 Laskin Rd., Virginia Beach, Va. at "HILLTOP REGENCY SHOPPING PLAZA."

ROANOKE, VA. AREA meets on the 2nd Friday of each month at the **ROANOKE RESTAURANT**, 2522 Colonial Ave. Roanoke, Va. at 11:30 A.M. and Ralph and Myra Swillinger, 734 Estates Rd. SE, Roanoke, Va. 24014, 540-427-1927 have volunteered to Skipper the crew there and they do a great job.

DESTROYER ESCORT ASSOCIATION, INC., PO BOX 469, ALLENHURST, NJ 07714, 908-531-5899, FAX 908-531-7724, James R. Mitchell (Acting Exec. Administrator)

NOTICE!! ADDRESS CHANGE FOR MILK!! George Milk, 3136 ST. JAMES ST. NE, Port Charlotte 33952, 813-627-6759 area meets at the **Golden Corral-PUNTA GORDA, FL.** on the 3rd Tues. at 1:30 P.M. When vacationing, join in with these Florida Crews.

MID-FLORIDA CHAPTER - CONTACT: Jack and Corinne Renaud, 839 So. Success Ave., Lakeland, FL 33801, 941-688-1312 assisted by: SAM AND DOLLY MORRIS, 2055 S. FLORAL AVE. LOT 221, BARTOW, FL. 33830, 941-533-4891.

Rudy and Ellie Kozak, 4950 Dory Dr., New Port Richey, FL 34652, 813-847-4038 and Harold Ceaser, 8621 Vixen Ln., Port Richey, FL 34668, 813-863-1367 notifies that the **FLORIDA NATURE COAST ARMED GUARD** meets on Wednesday for **LUNCH** at "KALLEY K's" Restaurant, located on Hwy. 19 in New Port Richey. Contact Rudy. Everyone is **WELCOMED!! KOZAKS WILL HOST A DECEMBER 7, 1997 MINI-REUNION AT THE CLARION HOTEL IN ORLANDO, FLA. CONTACT RUDY!!!**

SPRINGHILL, FLORIDA AREA - Contact: William T. Young, 4206 Parkhurst La., Springhill, FL 34608, 904-683-9333 for a breakfast on the "SECOND" Saturday 10 AM AT the **EVERGREEN WOODS RETIREMENT COMMUNITY.**

PORT ST. LUCIE, FL. area meets on a "LAST FRIDAY" IN THE MONTH" at **JOHNNY'S CORNER FAMILY RESTAURANT**, 7180 U.S. #1, PORT ST. LUCIE, FL 34952, 407-878-2686 with **HOST DICK JARMAN**, 1461 MERION CT. SE, PORT ST. LUCIE, FL 34935-3716. THEY WELCOME all "Y'ALL"!

SANFORD, FL. AREA: Fred and Margaret Fontaine, 2537 Mohawk Dr., SANFORD, FL. 32773, 407-323-7410 **HOLD A MEETING ON THE 2ND SUN-**

DAY AT 1 P.M. AT THE AMERICAN LEGION HALL ON SANFORD AVE., SANFORD, FLA.

ARIZONA 9TH ANNUAL MINI-REUNION WILL BE HELD **OCTOBER 21-23, 1997 AT DON LAUGHLIN'S RIVERSIDE HOTEL AND CASINO**, 1650 CASINO DR., LAUGHLIN, NV 89029, 1-800-227-3849. **CLARENCE HALPNY AND WILLIAM HOWARD (ADDRESSES BELOW) ARE THE HOSTS. THIS IS OPEN TO ALL ARMED GUARD, LADIES AND FRIENDS. Be sure to let the hotel know it's for the ARMED GUARD.**

MESA, ARIZONA HOSTS ARE Clarence and Marilyn Halpny, 1180 S. Starr St., Apache Junction, AZ 85219, 602-983-5212. THEY MEET AT THE "RED MOUNTAIN STEAKHOUSE" in Mesa on the "FIRST THURSDAY" of the month at 11 A.M. Assisting is: Adele Traficano, 108 N. Greenfield Road, Apt-2117, Mesa, AZ. 85205, 602-396-6233. **NOTICE: Tucson will skip the Aug. meeting but will resume in September.**

The **TUCSON, AZ. AREA** hosts are William and Marion Howard, 4056 N. Tuttle Ave., Tucson, AZ. 85705, 602-887-8703 for the **LAST "FRIDAY"** of each Mo. meeting at 11 AM at the **VILLAGE INN**, 6251 N. ORECLE RD., TUCSON, AZ. 85704, 602-297-2180.

PBY CATALINA INTERNATIONAL ASSOC. CONTACT: James Thompson, 1510 Kabel Dr., New Orleans, La. 70131-3632, 504-392-1227.

PUGET SOUND CHAPTER OF M.M. VETERANS contact James Colamarino, 2904 168th S.E., Bellevue Wa. 98008, (206) 746-6984. All Armed Guard are **WELCOMED!! A GREAT CREW!!**

CONTACT: LCI NATIONAL ASSOC. EDITOR ROBERT KIRSCH, 643 CALLERY RD., EVANS CITY, PA. 16033, 412-538-8151 for reunion data.

USS LCS(L) 1 THRU 130 NATIONAL ASSOC. REUNION WILL BE HELD AT THE **CLARION HOTEL, ORLANDO, FL.** 8/13-17/1997. **CONTACT "JEFF" JEFFERS**, PO BOX 9087, WAUKEGAN, IL 60079, 847-360-0560.

Contact: **Joe Piccolini**, 9724 Paseo De Oro, Cypress, Ca. 90630, 213-598-8326; Charles Savonna, 8777 Coral Springs, Crt G-9, Huntington Beach, Ca. 92646, 714-960-6925; or, Thom Hendrickson, 1531 S. Pomona Apt-A-30, Fullerton, Ca. 92632 about the **LANE (V)**. They have guns in firing order and have a large turnout for meetings!!

SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA REGION-SAN DIEGO plan to meet "EVERY TWO MONTHS" at 11:00 from 1/11/1997 at the "BAYVIEW CLUB", MCRD, San

Diego, Ca. Hosts are: Howard Wooten, 772 E. Vista Way #B, Vista, Ca. 92084, (619) 724-7871; Joe Zapotocky, 1846 Warmstand, Vista, Ca. 92084 and George Kost, 3609 Belle Bonnie Brae, Bonita, Ca. 92084, (619) 267-5797. They are doing just great on their meeting, too!!

BELOW ARE ARMED GUARD CONTACTS ON THE THREE SHIPS! **JACK RHODES**, 3143 Cotter Rd., Millers, Md. 301-343-0369 about the **S.S. JOHN W. BROWN** as to where she is berthed when going for a visit. Ship's address is: **S.S. JOHN W. BROWN**, P.O. Box 25846, Highlandtown Sta., Baltimore, Md. 21224-0846, 410-558-0646. Contact the **BROWN** for sailing dates.

SAN FRANCISCO, CA. AREA. Carl Kreidler, 15852 Via Eduardo St., San Lorenzo, Ca. 94580, 510-317-9600 welcomes you to be a part of the "U.S.N. ARMED GUARD GUN CREW" on the **S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN** (NOW AT PIER 32). Ship's address is: **S.S. JEREMIAH O'BRIEN**, Ft. Mason Center, Bldg-A, San Francisco, Ca. 94123-1302, 415-441-3101. **CONTACT THE SHIP FOR SAILING DATES!!**

On the **S.S. LANE VICTORY**, Contact **Joe Piccolini**, 9724 Paseo De Oro, Cypress, Ca. 90630, 714-952-2656 for info. The ship's address is: **S.S. LANE VICTORY**, 839 S. BEACON ST., PIER 94, SAN PEDRO, CA. 90733, 310-519-9545. Contact them for **SAILING DATES.**

WICHITA FALLS, TX CREW MEETS AT "GRANDY'S" FIRST SATURDAY OF THE MONTH AT 8 A.M. CONTACT: Jack Sims, 5111 Bahama Dr., Wichita Falls, Tx., 76710-3101, 817-691-7393

TEXAS MERCHANT MARINE meet the 2nd Wednesday of each month at **LUBY's Cafeteria**, 2233 W. North Loop, Austin, Tx., 11 A.M. Contact Chas. Smith, 404 N. Water St., Burnett, Tx 78611-2451, 512-756-9853. All Armed Guard and Merchant Seamen are welcomed at the **Ol'Corral!!** Contact: **Bob Thompson**, 6300 Hillcroft, Ste. 260, Houston, Tx. 77081, 713-665-1276, Fax-713-270-8531.

DAKOTAS!! Verne and Evelyn Barrett, 255 Texas St., #H-226, Rapid City, S.D. 57701, 605-343-4171 have a 2nd Wednesday 8A.M. meeting at "TALLY'S" across from the **ALEX JOHNSON HOTEL** in **RAPID CITY, S.D.**

THE LAS VEGAS AREA CREW meets on the first Tuesday of each month at the "COUNTRY INN" on **SUNSET ROAD** in Henderson, Nevada for 1 P.M. Lunch. Contact: **Merv Yarbrough**, 7920 W. Wigman Ave., Las Vegas, NV 89115, 702-361-6817 or 565-4022.

STATESVILLE N.C. area meets the 1ST TUESDAY- 8.A.M. at **SHONEY'S "SIG-**

NAL HILL MALL." CONTACT: K.E. Watt, 2967 Wilksboro Hwy., Statesville, N.C. 28667-9242, Tel-910-876-0650. Sez, "ALL Y'ALL COME ON."

CHINA COASTERS CHAPTER of AMMVWWII CONTACT: Floyd (RED) Hayes, 4501 W. 141ST ST., Hawthorne, Ca. 90250, 310-679-2107.

PLACE AND DATE CHANGE!!
GULFPORT, MS AREA will hold their Mini-Reunion at the Holiday Inn East Beach Hotel, Gulfport, October 6-8, 1997. Contact: Hosts are John and Dean Foretich, 310-44th St., Gulfport, Ms. 39507, 601-868-2551. They also are hosts for a 2nd Sat.

CA
meeting at the American Legion, Gulfport.

RALEIGH, N.C. We still meet at "GRIFFIN'S RESTAURANT," IN THE QUILT ROOM, on the "FIRST" Saturday of the month at 8:00-10:30 A.M. Take I-440 around to the NORTH SIDE and take Exit 10 North, to 4500 Wake Forest Rd.; onto 1604 N. Market Dr. See sign on the right. It's behind the Red Lobster. (CAL)

TINCAN SAILORS, INC. OF NJ - Contact Vince Diomedes, 20 Admirals Row, Freehold, N.J. 07728, 908-308-0071.

PATROL CRAFTS SAILORS ASSOC- (PSCA) Contact: Joe Kelliher, 14 Hickory

Hills, Southington, Ct. 06489 for Reunions.

U.S.N. CRUISER SAILORS ASSN., 21 Colonial Way, Rehoboth, Ma. 02769-1220.

LOGANSPOUT, IN. CREW meets at Al's the last Saturday of each month. Contact Pete and Mary Delacruz, 5508 McFarland Rd., Indianapolis, In 46227, 317-783-6567 for more info.

MISS ANYMORE? SOMEONE LET ME KNOW NOW! Please send me any correction as to time or date changes too!! **IT IS THE ONLY WAY I CAN CORRECT MY ERRORS. Y'ALL HEAR!! (CALLOYD)**



(Top Left) The Merchant Seamen and Armed Guard display their banners in the Southport, NC parade, July 4, 1997.

(Top Right) L-R: Robert H. Kenna, 1531 Washington Ave., Rathdrum, ID 83858 and Charles Norris, 78 Northwood Dr., Wilmington, NC 28405 hold an Armed Guard banner used in the July 4th, 1997 Southport, NC yearly parade. Kenna and Norris were shipmates on the S.S. COLINA in the South Pacific from 8/43 until 12/44.

(Right) Branton Olive admires the banner on Tom Southall's pickup truck at the Southport parade.



SERMON NOTES... LETTERS FROM OUR MEMBERS

My friend and shipmate, James "STRETCH" Mede, was very active in the Armed Guard Unit in Port Richie, Florida and he died with cancer. I was with him the day before his death and his thought was to get well so he could attend the reunion in Virginia. "Stretch" was always researching the Archives of the Armed Guard as he wanted to know all he could of the service. He was proud to be an "OL'SALT" of the Armed Guard. I am enclosing a picture "Stretch" with members of the S.S. BILLY SUNDAY.

I first met "Stretch" as we boarded the Liberty Ship on Sunday, September 6, 1944. He was a tall, skinny guy, about 6'4" and about 140 pounds. He was from Boston, Massachusetts. Mede was assigned to quarters on the starboard side focsle mid-ship and assigned to the 3"50 gun forward with shipmates Hillman, GM#/c, Easton, Hicks, Doer and Case. I don't remember their first names.



(L-R) Shuster, Karen, Stretch, Nanek

We sailed from New York soon afterwards in a Convoy of 87 ships bound for England. The remainder of our crew was made up of Lt(jg) Luther Farmer; Norman Frederick, SM2/C; James Caster, Radio-man; Emmet Nitsky, Coxswain; Broughman, GM3/C; Humphries; Izykowski; Poling; Laurie; Linge; Green; Karen; Vanek; Schuster; Cope; Clement; Livingston; Seeley; Tolland; Stratton; Strack and Graves.

The crossing to England took us 21 days with a number of submarine alerts and our British Corvettes dropping some depth charges until we unloaded in Swansea. We sailed to the Island of Corsica and arrived on November 26th to evacuate the 1st SEABEE (Navy) Petroleum Division and headed for Marseille, France where we faced the enemy for the first time (not

counting the subs) as we entered the harbor of Toulon. Two German planes came off the mountain and strafed our convoy. We returned fire from the 20MMs. No harm was done.

In Marseille, the fun began for the Armed Guard crew. There was a fenced-in area filled with vehicles; jeeps, trucks, water vehicles, etc. and they were to be our deck cargo. The BILLY SUNDAY crew took advantage of this prize as they became our PERSONAL VEHICLES FOR LIBERTY!! Marseille was 200 miles away. One day, Stretch decided that he would take one of the water vehicles up the river and was arrested by the Shore Patrol and was taken by the Provost Marshal. Thanks to Lt(jg) Farmer, he got out with a light sentence and was confined to the ship for the rest of his stay there.

On December 2, 1944, we sailed for Oran, North Africa where an enemy plane flew over the harbor and all ships opened fire. Again, Stretch got into trouble along with Green, Case and Easton for being "OFF LIMITS" while on Liberty. Each were given 36 hours of extra duty and restricted to the ship for the rest of the trip.

The S.S. BILLY SUNDAY left Oran and headed for Hueneme, California, the home of the 1st Petroleum Division. We had a long way to go and Christmas had arrived. Stretch decided that we would have church service on Christmas Day and he asked the Gunnery Officer Farmer if we could use the Officer's Mess Hall. With the Officer's permission we all came together and sang Christmas songs and Stretch brought some Christmas thoughts. It was a great day.

We were passing through the Panama Canal on January 1, 1945, a sight to behold! Colon on the Atlantic side and 21 miles of Canal and on to Balboa where we received fresh supplies and fuel. Our trip up the coast to Hueneme was another 6 days. We left all our cargo aboard. After Liberty in Los Angeles, we again made ready to sail on to Pearl Harbor and arrived on January 31st. Because of needed ship repair, we had 10 days of "LIBERTY" in Hawaii. The Billy Sunday returned to the States and berthed at a shipyard in San Francisco. It was time for me to separate from my friend, Stretch Mede. I was removed from the ship on March 15, 1945 and assigned to another Liberty Ship, the N. Baker, which was headed for Murmansk, Russia. Stretch stayed on the Sunday and headed towards Okinawa. I had sailed on the S.S. JAMES BOWIE-12/43-44.

It was 50 years later when Stretch and I met again in Orlando, Florida at an Armed

Guard Reunion. Our heights were the same, we were "SOMEWHAT HEAVIER," our HAIR THINNER and GREYED in COLOR - but the same love for the U.S.N. Armed Guard remained! Thank you, **Donald F. Green, GM3/C, 38 N. Keystone Ave., Sayre, Pa., 813-541-2555**

A wonderful tribute to a shipmate. Yes, Stretch loved the Armed Guard and would stop by on his way North and South to say hello and chat. I miss him, also. cal

Dear Charles: 5/22/97

Betty and I certainly enjoyed the National Reunion in Alexandria, Virginia in May. One of the highlight of the event was meeting and "Ole" shipmate, Nick Doscher from the S.S. CHRISTOPHER GREENUP from March to December of 1944. The GREENUP was a converted troopship like the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN except we had two 3"50s forward two 3"50s and one 5"38 back aft, along with 12-20MMs positioned for good firepower. We carried about 2000 Army troops and their gear.

Thanks for the "AIRSHOW"!! I do believe the Jap planes were flying a little faster during the war and I know that I was more scared. Anyways, it was a great show and reunion. Here's a little financial help with the postage and the Lord willing, we'll see you next year where ever it may be. **Edward H. Easton, 641 W. Cherry Ave., Jonesboro, Ar. 72401-3920.**

AHOY!! LLOYD!! 25 July 1997

Just a note to pass along the address of an Armed Guard that I just ran into. I was in the Post Exchange, at Patrick Air Force Base, when this guy asked me, "Were you a "PARA?" He saw the British Airborne shirt that I was wearing. He told me he was in the Airborne in the Korean War, got shot up and was medically discharged from the Army. We talked for awhile and as I was walking away, he told me he was in the U.S. Navy all through World War II. Then, he said the "MAGIC WORDS"-"I WAS A MEMBER OF THE ARMED GUARD AND SERVED ON MERCHANT SHIPS." I stopped in my tracks and gave him my rundown on my time in the Merchant Marine. I then told him about the USNAG VETERANS ASSOCIATION OF WW II. Lawrence Joyce of Melbourne Beach joined in 1942 and served until 1946 so I told him that you probably had located many of his shipmates. Enclosed is his address.

Charlie, I am going back to Liverpool, England this October, for the NORTH RUSSIA CLUB's annual general member-

ship meeting, dinner and dance. I will pass on greetings to all of the mates who still remember your performance, during the International Reunion in 1992. CHEERS, CHEERIO, "UP SPIRITS." CSM Bill Ryan, Ret., 705 S. Harbor City Blvd., Melbourne, Fl. 32901 USA

Tom Bowerman has asked me to inform you that if any of you with access to EMAIL on the INTERNET would send him your name as printed on the POINTER LABEL and your EMAIL to him at: bowerman@Quicklink.net, he will print it out and send it on to me. Tom has located many of the Armed Guard Crew through the INTERNET that we would not have located, otherwise. Thanks, Tom. Keep up the great work. (cal)

MERCHANT SHIPS LOST DURING
WORLD WAR II WITH NO SURVIVORS
by Jim Hoffman, 8/10/97
PO BOX 10415, Bakersfield, Ca. 93389
VOICE AND FAX 805-322-2070

+ +Ammunition Ships
* Cadets aboard

1941
S.S.CYNTHIA OLSEN

1942
S.S. ALBERT F. PAUL • S.S. LOUISIANA
S.S. AZALEA CITY* • S.S. MARGARET
S.S. COAMO* • S.S. MUSKOGEE
S.S. JAMES MCKAY* • S.S. NORLANDIA
S.S. L.J. DRAKE • S.S. NORLAFORE
M/V ESSO WILLIAMSBURG
S.S. LASALLE* • S.S. FRANCIS SALMAN
S.S. MAJOR WHEELER
S.S. JOHN WINTHROP*
S.S. MARIANA • S.S. LAKE OSWEYA
S.S. TILLIE LYKES • S.S. WEST IVIS
M/V WICHITA*

1943
S.S. EDWARD B.DUDLEY*
S.S. LOUISE LYKES*
S.S. JAMES SPRUNT* + +
S.S. SAMUEL HEINTZELMAN*
S.S. MERIWETHER LEWIS*
S.S. SUNOIL • S.S. ROBERT GRAY*
S.S. WEST PORTAL
S.S. HARRY LUCKENBACH*

1944
S.S. JOHN BURKE* + +
S.S. PAUL HAMILTON* + +
S.S. SUMNER I. KIMBALL
S.S. ROBIN GOODFELLOW

1945
S.S. LEWIS L. DYCHE + +

Dear Charles Lloyd:

Enclosed is a donation for the U.S.N. Armed Guard Veterans. My brother, Norbert Ambroski was a Merchant Marine Cadet Midshipman in WW II who lost his life when the S.S. STONE STREET was torpedoed in the Atlantic on 9/13/42. Through your group and publication, I have

been able to find out a great deal about his last voyage. I enjoy the "POINTER."

I've located an A.G. Veteran who survived the sinking and actually knew my brother well and gave me details of their trip. I correspond with him often. Please keep up the good deed. I do all I can to make my friends and relatives aware of the contribution of the Armed Guard to the WW II efforts. Best wishes for good health and continued success. Sincerely, Leonard Amboroski (Hon. Member), 62 Wedgewood Dr., Williamsville, N.Y. 14221.

Dear Lloyd: 7/23/97

Just a few lines to let you know that my book, "ARTIC INTERLUDE" printed by "WW II HISTORICAL SOCIETY," 218 Beech St., Bennington, Vt. 05201-2611 is now on sale for \$24.95 plus \$3.00 shipping and handling. It is on the Armed Guard and the Merchant Seamen. I have been researching these 11 ships for the past 10 years and this printer finished what I had left off. My ship, the S.S. RICHARD H. ALVEY, led the parade of ships that sailed one at a time, unescorted, to North Russia in November of 1942. I was not on the ship at the time but Armed Guard Selvin Lein was. I replaced him bound for Russia but on March 7, 1943, we were ordered by the Commodore to drop out of the Convoy to pick up the survivors of a sunken ship. We picked up 56 women and children, 26 Merchantmen and 9 Armed Guard. The Captain of the partially sunken ship asked our Captain to lower a boat so he, his crew and the Armed Guard could return to the still floating section of his ship. We were given orders to take the remaining survivors to Bermuda. An Oceangoing Tug found the ship and crew 3 days later and towed them into Bermuda. We were there to wave them in and were glad they had made it safely.

We caught a Convoy of 150 ships and did not know before we passed the Azores that we were bound for North Africa. We sailed to Casablanca and hedgedhopped along the African Coast, supplying ammunition to the Armies. We finally arrived at Phillipville, Algiers and we were ordered back to the States.

Upon arriving, our crew was ordered to Deland, Florida for R & R plus a 30 day leave. My folks were glad to see me for they had not received any mail from me since February of 1943 and I got home in June of 1943. I had earned my first Battle Star. Regards to you and Hilda, Brother L.D. and Mary and to all the rest of the crew there. Sincerely, Ray Barba, 1461 W. Kilburn St., Tucson, AZ 85705-9231. 602-887-7792.

Dear Charlie:

AT LAST!! My book, "BLUEJACKET ODYSSEY: GUADALCANAL TO BIKINI ATOLL, NAVY ARMED GUARD IN THE PACIFIC" is in print! I welcome comments on the books from those who buy it. It was good to visit with you and Hilda in your home last year. Wm. L. McGee, 1187 Coast Village Rd., 93108-2794, 805-969-5970.

Brooklyn Armed Guard Picture
comments from June/July "POINTER".

Dear Charles, I really liked the cover with the Armed Guard Center. I was in and out of that Center many times. If you never had "liberty" in New York City, you missed something great. James Chamberlain, Cheektowaga, N.Y.

Dear Lloyd, I would like to THANK YOU for the picture in the June/July POINTER of the Brooklyn Armed Guard Center. It really brings back memories. This is the only Center that I shipped out of and I tried to tell my children and grandchildren what it looked like and now I can show them. Keep up the good work. John M. Stockton, Spring City, Tn.

Dear Cal, I received my June/July POINTER and was surprised to see the Brooklyn Armed Guard Center picture. As a 17 year old sailor, I spent many hours on guard duty on the corner where the bus is, in the white guard house. Thank you. Francis S. Karol

Dear C.A., sending a check to help defray expenses. As I said to you in Orlando last January, please say something good about the Radiomen who also served!! We enjoyed the three days at the Orlando Reunion and look forward to November when we will have another great Mini-Reunion. Keep up the good work.

Oh! By the way - They did have a Communication Pool at Trinidad, POS, during 1943 and 1944. Later, all personnel records were forwarded to AGC Brooklyn. Sincerely, Al Gosselin, W. Lynn, Ma.

My answer: The Radiomen did a "GOOD" job during WW II. BUT!! Let's not forget the signalman, Radarmen, Shanker Mechanics and all that served. Everyone did a great job for WE DEFEATED THE ENEMY and I'm proud we did. I don't think I have ever met one WW II military man or woman who was against dropping the A-Bombs. I am so glad we had it to drop instead of them. I just hope no country has to use it on other human beings to protect their homeland. (calloyd)

The following article and photos are reprinted from "Ships of the Esso Fleet in World War II," copyright 1946, Standard Oil Co., NJ (out of print). We've located three Armed Guard who served on the *ESSO BATON ROUGE*: Joseph E. Jeanette, 191 Cameron Dr., Cotton, MN 55724, 813-796-2570; Franklin H. Pearce, 2921 Moneyham Rd., Marianne, FL 32448, 850-526-3780; and Curtis J. Simmons, 174 Dentation Dr., Baton Rouge, LA 70808, 504-766-2490. Armed Guard Gilbert Esham was KIA on the *BATON ROUGE*.

TRIUMPH BEFORE DISASTER

SS *Esso Baton Rouge*

ONE of the few tankers torpedoed twice during the war, the *Esso Baton Rouge* was commanded by the same captain on both occasions of enemy action. The record of the *Baton Rouge* discloses the calm leadership of the ship's officers and the fine morale of her crews. In addition, her story includes difficult and daring salvage operations which floated the vessel in 9 days, and the completion of extensive repairs in about 6 months. These achievements hastened the return to service of an oil carrier urgently needed when petroleum transport was severely handicapped by many sinkings.

A memorable indication of intrepid spirit was shown by the officers and crew of the unarmed *Esso Baton Rouge* not long after the attack on Pearl Harbor. Early in January, 1942, they carried out an idea suggested by Captain James S. Poché which might possibly bluff an enemy submarine into staying at periscope depth. Building wooden "gun platforms," aft and on the foc'sle head, they mounted realistic looking "guns"—a "4-inch" aft and a "3-inch" forward—and painted their handiwork war gray. But that was not all. "Gun watches", with two men to each platform, were maintained in daylight hours. As the men figured it, the silhouette of the wooden structures might keep a Nazi sub from coming to the surface and shelling the ship. In any event, the circular wooden shields of the platforms were a protection from the wind in cold weather.

* * *

The SS *Esso Baton Rouge* was built in 1938 by the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Ltd. at their Sparrows Point, Maryland, plant. Her sisterships were the *R. W. Gallagher*, *Esso Baltimore*, *Esso Charleston*, and *Esso Nashville*. The *Esso Baton Rouge* and the *Esso Charleston* were distinguished from the other sisterships by pipelines specially arranged for loading mixed cargoes including refined lubricating oils, paraffin distillates, and crude wax—usually at Baton Rouge, Louisiana. Also, the *Baton Rouge* and the *Charleston* each had a special pump and separate discharge lines for wax.

A single-screw vessel of 12,950 deadweight tons capacity on international summer draft of 28 feet, 6¼

inches, the *Esso Baton Rouge* had an overall length of 463 feet, a length between perpendiculars of 442 feet, a moulded breadth of 64 feet, and a depth moulded of 34 feet, 10 inches. With a cargo carrying capacity of 106,718 barrels, she had an assigned pumping rate of 6,000 barrels an hour. Her geared turbine engine, with steam supplied by two water-tube boilers, developed 4,000 shaft horsepower and gave her a classification certified speed of 13 knots.

On August 31, 1939, the day before Germany attacked Poland, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, with 88,048 barrels of mixed cargo, left the Mississippi River port for which she was named, bound for New York. She was under the command of Captain Martin Olsen and her engineroom was in charge of Chief Engineer Daniel C. Dunn. Including this trip, she completed 58 voyages, mainly from Baton Rouge to New York, and transported—including the salvaged part of the 59th cargo—5,294,573 barrels, consisting almost entirely of mixed petroleum products.

With repairs completed after she was torpedoed on April 8, 1942, the *Esso Baton Rouge* left Baltimore on November 30 of that year—a few weeks following the invasion of North Africa. Between then and February 23, 1943, she delivered two more cargoes—78,557 barrels of Navy fuel oil at Norfolk, Virginia, and 66,592 barrels of West Beaumont crude oil at Swansea, Wales.

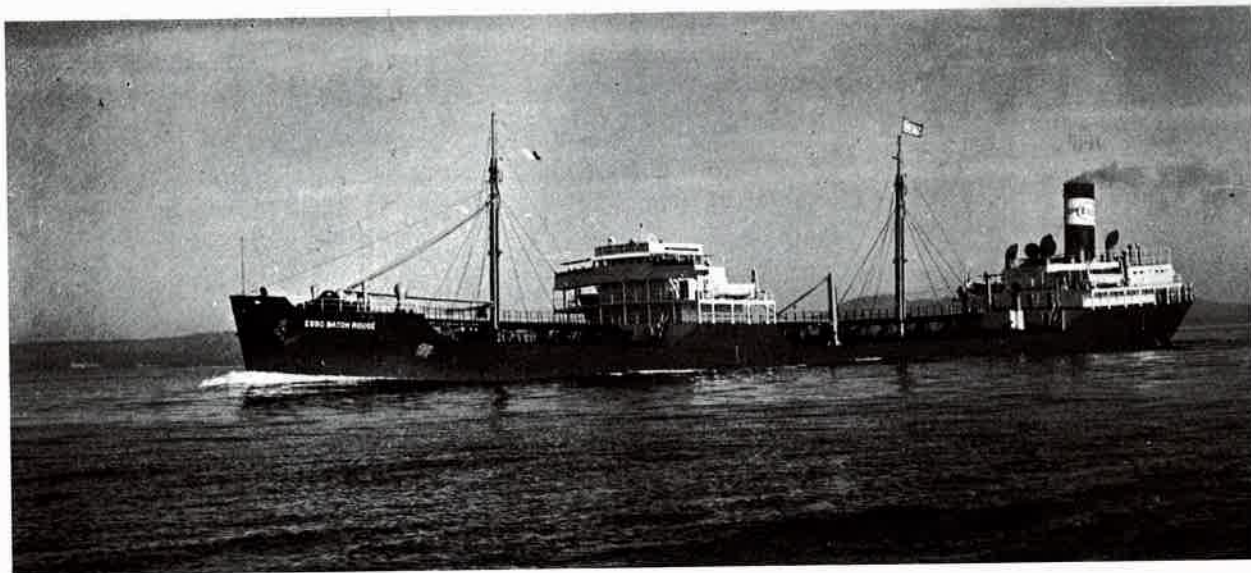
Delivered Valuable Cargoes Before Her Loss

In view of the cost of repairing the vessel and the time consumed, it seems of interest to consider the war importance of these two cargoes transported and delivered by the *Esso Baton Rouge* after she returned to service and before she was lost.

As to the 78,557 barrels of Navy fuel oil discharged at Norfolk:

A modern American destroyer, at battle speed, consumes from 1,790 to 1,950 barrels of fuel a day. Thus 78,557 barrels would supply about 42 destroyers for a day of combat action or a single destroyer for 42 days and, of course, considerably longer under average conditions of cruising or patrol.

With regard to the 66,592 barrels of West Beaumont crude—easily processed for use as a Diesel engine fuel—delivered at Swansea, Wales:



The "Esso Baton Rouge" as she appeared before the war

A Diesel engine produces approximately one horsepower hour per each half pound of fuel. At almost 15 horsepower hours to the gallon or 630 to the barrel, 66,592 barrels of Diesel fuel are capable of furnishing more than 40,000,000 horsepower hours.

The wartime voyages and cargoes of the *Esso Baton Rouge*, in number and amount, were as follows:

Year	Voyages (Cargoes)	Barrels
1939	8	714,181
1940	22	1,975,194
1941	23	2,112,618
*1942	7	571,137
1943	1	66,592
	<hr/> 61	<hr/> 5,439,722

* Out of service from April 8 to November 29, 1942.

The wartime masters of the *Esso Baton Rouge* were Captains Martin Olsen, Harold I. Cook, Olav Olsen, and James S. Poché.

During the same period her engineroom was in charge of Chief Engineers Daniel C. Dunn, Henry R. Clements, Manuel Z. Gonzalez, Roy A. Anderson, Edwin A. C. Book, Carl Dietz, Johan Larsson, and Earl Williams.

* * *

On April 3, 1942, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, commanded by Captain Poché and with her engine department in charge of Chief Engineer Larsson, left Baytown, Texas, for New York with a cargo of 89,398 barrels of various lubricating and heating oils. Her crew numbered 38 officers and men. Unarmed, she proceeded according to routing instructions from Navy authorities at Houston. All hands had recently been supplied with rubber lifesaving suits.

To quote the joint statement of Chief Mate George W. Bill and Second Mate Ralph W. Durdle, as approved with comment by Captain Poché:

"On the morning of April 6, 1942, we met an armed British tanker which proceeded in our company, keep-

ing on our starboard side until she left us on April 7. We also met a considerable number of southbound ships.

The First Torpedoing

"The vessel was all blacked out. On April 8, at about 2:25 a.m., we picked up four intermittent white lights about three to four points off the starboard bow. The weather was fair, the sea calm, and there was a slight southeast breeze. The moon was just rising and visibility was fair. We were near the coast of Georgia, about 13 miles from Brunswick Sea Buoy."

As Captain Poché stated in his subsequent report, written on his return to New York after assisting in the salvage operations:

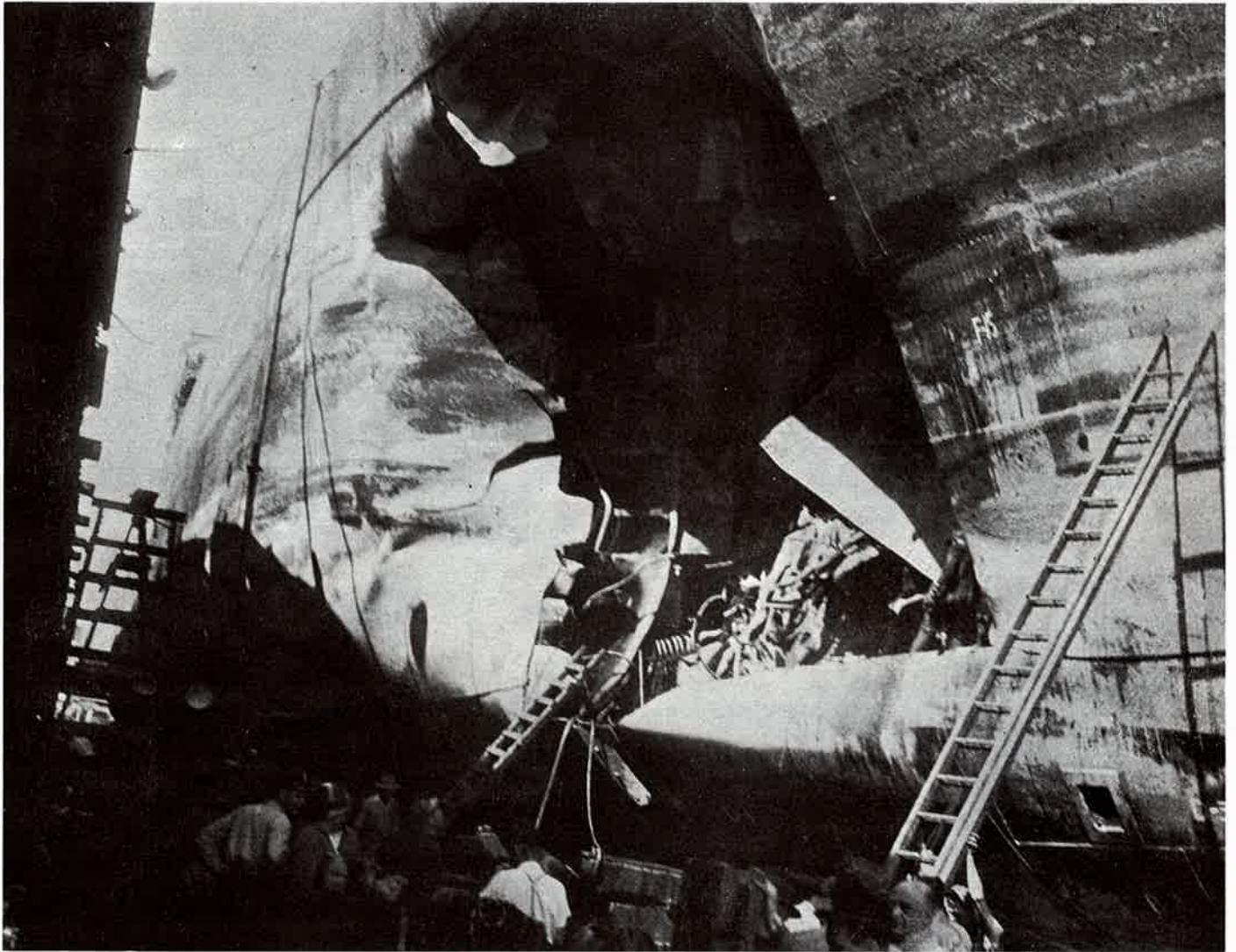
"I went into the chart room about 2:48 a.m., April 8, to determine our proximity to the southbound track. We figured our position was Latitude 31° 12' North, Longitude 81° 04' West, at 2:50 a.m., that is, at the very time we were struck by the torpedo.

"From inside the chart room the shock felt as if the vessel had collided with some object. I returned to the bridge, where Second Mate Durdle informed me we had been torpedoed.

"The ship settled rapidly by the stern until the weather deck between the pumproom and the after house was awash and she apparently rested by the stern on the bottom in approximately 7 fathoms of water. As the ship's radio was put out of order by the explosion, Radio Operator Michael J. Reilly was not able to send a distress message."

The officers' joint report described what followed:

"Second Mate Durdle sounded the general alarm as the captain came out of the chart room, where he had gone shortly before the explosion to plot our position. All hands rushed to their boat stations and released No. 1 and No. 3 lifeboats ready for lowering. The captain watched the launching of the two starboard lifeboats while Second Mate Durdle was standing on the boat deck supervising the fore fall of No. 1. When all were safely in the boats, the captain joined us in No. 1 lifeboat and we hauled away from the



Hole in port side of "Esso Baton Rouge," photo taken from aft

ship's side after seeing that No. 3 had cleared.

"We rowed until daybreak in a northwesterly direction and set sail. At sunrise No. 3 boat became visible in the far distance and we sent up a flare to signal our position. At 7 a.m., a patrol plane came out and circled over the ship. This plane was shortly followed by many others. At about 10 a.m., No. 3 caught up with us, together with a lifeboat from the torpedoed *Oklahoma*, Texas Company tanker, and the three boats sailed in company until we were sighted at noontime by a U. S. Navy patrol vessel.

"Second Mate Durdle went aboard with fifteen men from the boats. Captain Poché remained in No. 1, which was towed, with No. 3 and the *Oklahoma's* lifeboat, to Brunswick, Georgia. We arrived there about 4 p.m. (The *Oklahoma*, salvaged and repaired, was afterward in service until March 28, 1945, when she was lost in the Caribbean.)

"Three men were found to be missing: Second Assistant Engineer James E. Layne, Fireman-Watertender William J. Scheich, and Oiler Carl B. Hollger, who were on watch in the engineroom when the torpedo struck; the bodies of all three were recovered. Six men were injured: Radio Operator Michael J. Reilly; Able Seamen Paul Fisher, Eugenio M. Gallego,

and John F. Aiken; Oiler Antonio Barboza; and Fireman-Watertender José Garcia."

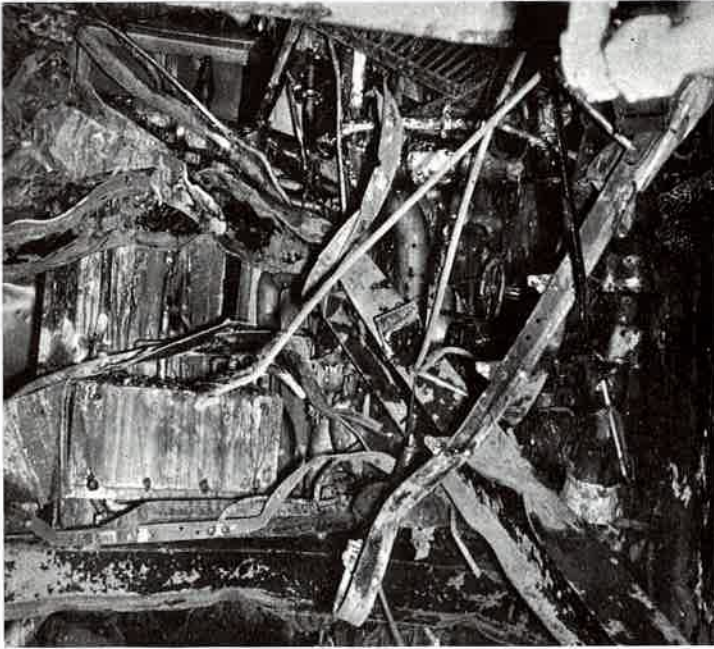
To resume the report of Captain Poché:

"We landed at 4 p.m., April 8, in the vicinity of Brunswick, Georgia, and I reported to the U. S. Navy authorities. At about 6 p.m., a U. S. Coast Guard patrol boat took me back to the vessel, with First Mate Bill, Second Mate Durdle, and Chief Engineer Larsson, to inspect the general condition of the *Esso Baton Rouge*.

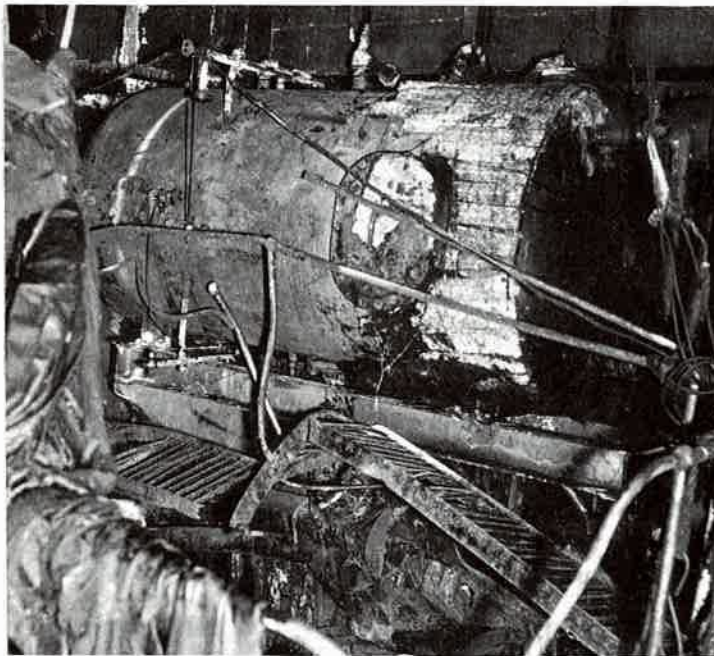
"About 9 a.m., April 9, I called the Company's office on the telephone, reporting the casualty and the possibility of saving the vessel. They said they would send Merritt-Chapman & Scott salvors to undertake operations as soon as possible and that Mr. Guy L. Bennett, Port Engineer, would join me at Brunswick.

"About 11 a.m., on the 9th, with Lieutenant Findag, USNR, Chief Mate Bill, and Chief Engineer Larsson, I went out to the *Esso Baton Rouge* in a cruiser yacht owned by Mr. H. Candler, in command of his skipper, Mr. Ole Olsen.

"When we arrived alongside the *Esso Baton Rouge* we found a U. S. Navy tug, with a 1-inch wire cable from the bow, attempting to tow the vessel to port, but the commanding officer of the tug told us he



A view of after upper engine room hatchway



Gratings and condenser on starboard side



would have to abandon the job because he was unable to move the ship. The weather at that time was good; the sea moderate, with a light breeze. Our party boarded the *Baton Rouge* and found she had taken an 18 degree list to port. Little movement of the vessel, if any, was noticed.

"Later we went ashore in Mr. Candler's yacht. In the evening, Mr. W. B. Kimball, the Company's port representative, arrived from Jacksonville, Florida, to assist me in securing transportation for the ship's crew. Chief Engineer Larsson and I remained. The other members of the crew were dispatched to New York on the evening of April 9.

"Mr. Bennett arrived about noon, April 11. We discussed the prospects of salvaging the *Esso Baton Rouge* and made contacts with owners of various local small craft to assist."

Difficult Salvage Operations

The salvage tug *Resolute* arrived on April 13, fueled at Brunswick and began work on the 14th. To quote from *The Ships' Bulletin* for July-August, 1943:

"With enemy submarines a constant threat, salvage work was confined to daylight hours and there was fear that at almost any moment the Axis sub would return to finish the job. At night the tug and her people returned to port and at each dawn there was a sigh of relief when it was discovered that the submerged tanker was still there."

Throughout the salvage operations a continuous anti-submarine patrol was maintained by a Canadian corvette and a U. S. Navy dirigible.

As stated in *The Ships' Bulletin*:

"Air supplied by heavy compressors swung aboard from the pitching tug was used to blow cargo out of some tanks into others to correct the list. Oil was blown from aft forward to lighten the ship's stern and weight her bow. After seven days of strenuous effort under extraordinary circumstances, the ship was floated and brought into port, where divers made a more complete survey of the damage. It was found that the torpedo had ripped a 25-foot hole in the ship's side, almost abreast of the engine room; the main pump room was open to the sea and the engine room flooded."

The *Esso Baton Rouge* was towed to St. Simon Sound by the salvage tug *Willet*, assisted by the *Resolute*, on April 21. Mr. Bennett, who then returned to New York, stated in his report:

"During the salvage work Captain Poché and Chief Engineer Larsson were of material assistance to the salvage tug officers and to the ultimate success of the operations."

Sails Again

After temporary repairs were made, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, in tow, left Brunswick on May 14 for Baltimore, where she arrived May 22. At the Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation yard, Sparrows Point, Md., permanent repairs were completed November 29, 1942, and the vessel sailed on November 30 for Houston, Texas. She was again commanded by Captain

Poché. Her engineroom was now in charge of Chief Engineer Earl Williams.

As previously stated, the cargo of 78,557 barrels of Navy fuel oil which she then loaded at Houston was discharged at Norfolk and on her next voyage she took on, at Beaumont, Texas, her last cargo, 66,592 barrels of Beaumont crude. Proceeding via New York, she discharged this crude at Swansea, Wales.

The *Baton Rouge* sailed in convoy from New York on January 22, 1943, arriving at Swansea on February 8. This convoy was attacked by enemy submarines continuously for more than a week. Several ships were sunk and others damaged. The North Atlantic weather was severely cold; aboard the tanker the men on deck watches kept warm by wearing their rubber lifesaving suits.

On February 13, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, with 43 merchant officers and men and Navy gun crew of 25, left Swansea in company with 7 other vessels in ballast. With these ships, she awaited instructions at Milford Haven and then proceeded to a rendezvous where about 32 tankers and freighters gathered to make up a convoy for the Atlantic crossing.

The convoy sailed on the morning of February 16, bound for Curacao, each ship taking position as directed by the commodore, a British rear admiral aboard the tanker *Athelregent*. In the escort were four American destroyers (the *Madison*, *Lansdale*, *Hilary P. Jones*, and *Charles F. Hughes*) and six British naval vessels—corvettes and destroyers.

The *Esso Baton Rouge* was armed with a 3-inch gun on the foc'sle head, a 5-inch aft, four 20-mm. anti-aircraft guns on the after boat deck, and four more AAs on the bridge.

As stated by Chief Mate Martin Wiberg in his report, to which additions were made by Captain Poché:

"From the time of leaving Swansea, the weather was fine and clear; occasionally we had moderate light swells, but on the whole the weather was fine at all times.

"Beginning February 21, the convoy was attacked by enemy submarines. During the succeeding days and nights depth charges were dropped frequently by the escorting vessels and especially by the destroyers running ahead of the convoy. At night, the corvettes and destroyers close by the convoy used a considerable number of depth charges, indicating the constant presence of submarines."

On February 24, 1943, the Berlin communique asserted that "A group of submarines attacked a strongly protected enemy convoy in the Atlantic. After hard fighting they sank 17 vessels, totaling 104,000 tons, and torpedoed three other steamers."

Depth Bombs

To continue Wiberg's report:

"About 7 p.m., February 23, while I was standing the 4 to 8 watch, the British corvette *Totland*, then about two miles to starboard of the *Esso Baton Rouge*, turned on her searchlight and began dropping depth charges. Later, when aboard the *Totland*, I learned she had sighted an enemy submarine on the surface close by. The U-boat immediately started a crash

dive, which was the occasion for the searchlight and depth charges. It was believed that the sub could not have escaped and was sunk."

As reported by Captain Poché:

"About 7:20 p.m., February 23, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, in No. 4-3 position in the convoy, was in Latitude 31°15' North, Longitude 27°22' West, or approximately 600 miles south southwest of the Azores."

Other Ships Hit

"The convoy," Wiberg said, "was proceeding at a speed of about 9 knots. Suddenly, the Netherlands flag tanker *Morina*, in No. 4-1 position and the second vessel ahead of the *Esso Baton Rouge*, was torpedoed on the starboard side, but did not sink and was able to proceed with the convoy.

"At that time I was in charge of the bridge. Captain Poché was atop the wheelhouse directing a change of course then being made. Harry L. Clark, A.B., was wheelsman; Charles L. Haynie, A.B., and Charles D. McMurchy, A.B., were lookouts on the bridge. First Assistant Engineer Joseph M. Cooper was in charge of the engineroom and on watch with him were Oiler David H. Owen and Fireman-Watertender Howard C. Landiss.

"Within one to two minutes after the *Morina* was hit, a Norwegian flag tanker, directly ahead of the *Esso Baton Rouge* in the same column, began firing her stern gun to starboard. Almost simultaneously, torpedoes struck two British tankers in No. 1-1 and No. 2-1 positions—the *Empire Norseman* and the *British Fortitude*. The *Empire Norseman* was the first hit, by a torpedo on the port side, followed by two on the starboard side; she subsequently rolled over and disappeared. The *British Fortitude*, torpedoed on the starboard side, was able to continue with the convoy.

Then the "Baton Rouge"

"Immediately after the two British tankers were struck, the *Esso Baton Rouge* was torpedoed on the starboard side aft, in way of the bunker fuel tank. A sheet of flame rose high in the air from the burning fuel oil. Flying debris was scattered all about. All the vessel's lights went out."

As reported by Chief Engineer Earl Williams: "The force of the explosion carried away the bulkheads between the bunker tanks and the engineroom, which began to fill with burning oil. Various parts of the ship and superstructure were torn into fragments of jagged steel and blown a distance of fifty to sixty feet."

"The *Esso Baton Rouge*," said the chief mate, "settled by the stern, indicating that the engineroom bulkheads had been blown out and the engine and firerooms flooded.

Preparedness

"At the time the *Morina* was hit, the general alarm was sounded on the *Baton Rouge*, so that when she was torpedoed most of the crew were taking their stations near the lifeboats.

"No. 3 lifeboat was completely destroyed by the explosion. No. 4 boat was launched in charge of

Chief Engineer Williams and was boarded by 22 men in all. As chief officer, I launched No. 1 lifeboat with a total of 27 men. Captain Poché, Second Mate William Hamilton, and Third Mate Roy V. Denton, with 12 of the crew, were in No. 2 boat. Captain Poché was the last man to leave the ship."

Three men were missing: First Assistant Engineer Joseph M. Cooper, Fireman-Watertender Howard C. Landiss, and a member of the Navy gun crew, Seaman 1st Class Gilbert C. Esham.

Four men were seriously injured: Boatswain Karl P. Martinsen, Oiler David H. Owen, Storekeeper John L. Chappelle, and a Navy gunner, Seaman 1st Class Joseph E. Jeanette.

Returning to the chief mate's report:

"Several rafts were launched while the vessel still had considerable headway and they were some distance away when she was abandoned, therefore being of little use. One raft, however, launched by Second Cook Charles A. Wilcox, proved to be important.

"Wilcox, who jumped overboard, was able to reach this life raft and he subsequently rescued Oiler David H. Owen, who had received severe burns. Wilcox and Owen were taken from the raft by Captain Poché in No. 2 boat."

As reported by Oiler Owen:

"At the time of the explosion, the first assistant engineer was at the ahead throttle and I was at the reverse throttle nearby. The engine room was enveloped in flames, followed by darkness. I floated in the water as it filled the engine room space and rose to the upper level. Then I got out to the after deck and put on two life preservers before I entered the water. I swam for about 15 minutes until I reached the life raft."

Boatswain Karl P. Martinsen reported:

"When the vessel was torpedoed I was standing on the starboard side of the poop deck behind the black-out screen. My hands, face, and scalp were burned by flashes of flaming oil. I was able, however, to go amidships and get into No. 2 lifeboat."

Storekeeper John L. Chappelle said: "I was standing on the after boat deck when the ship was hit. Fortunately, I was near No. 3 boat. I was covered with burning oil, which was extinguished when members of the crew rolled me on deck several times in their efforts to put out the flames in my clothing. I was then assisted into the lifeboat."

Several of the injured members of the crew were assisted into the port lifeboat by Galleyman Russell O. Wirtz, who had previously pushed two injured men overboard as the ship settled and supported them in the water until he and they were picked up by No. 2 boat.

"When last seen," Wiberg said, "the bow of the *Esso Baton Rouge* was upright at a 90 degree angle and she was slowly going down stern first. All the lifeboats were excellently stocked and provisioned, with about 80 gallons of water in each boat. No. 3 starboard boat (which had been destroyed by the explosion), and also No. 2 port lifeboat, had motors and portable radio sets.

"Instantly following the attack, our escort vessels went into action and dropped a great many depth charges. While the convoy proceeded with the escorts,

the lifeboats remained near where the *Esso Baton Rouge* was torpedoed.

"At about 8:15 p.m., the corvette *HMS Totland*, which had rescued the survivors of the *Empire Norseman*, was observed close by. The men in No. 2 lifeboat shot a flare. The *Totland*, leaving the scene until the flare burned out, returned and picked up, in succession, the survivors in boats Nos. 4, 1, and 2. The lifeboats, with the plugs removed, were then set adrift and the *Totland* proceeded, rejoining the convoy on the morning of February 24." (The *Totland* was originally the U. S. Coast Guard cutter *Cayuga*; constructed in 1920, she was one of the first turbo-electric vessels built in the United States.)

Martinsen, Owen, and Chappelle, suffering from second and third degree burns, were given skillful treatment aboard the *Totland* by Galleyman Wirtz, who in his earlier years studied medicine and had a good practical knowledge of first aid. Wirtz volunteered to assist in caring for the burned and injured men of the *Esso Baton Rouge* and the *Empire Norseman* and his services were promptly accepted by the corvette's commanding officer. The *Esso* galleyman's prolonged and tireless work, day and night for eleven days, which saved a number of lives, is described in his citation for distinguished service, which is hereafter quoted in full.

Other Attacks by Submarines

To continue Chief Mate Wiberg's report:

"During the nights of February 24 and 25 there were several further attacks by submarines on the convoy, but so far as I know, none of the ships was hit. In the afternoon of the 25th, however, a British freighter had machinery trouble and dropped astern of the convoy. The *Totland* stood by this vessel for some time. Several hours later, when relieved by the destroyer *USS Madison*, the *Totland* proceeded at full speed and caught up with the convoy.

"Later in the evening of February 25, gun flashes could be seen astern of the *Totland*, indicating a surface engagement between a destroyer and an enemy craft. Subsequently, when the *Madison* rejoined the convoy, we heard that she had fought an enemy submarine, but we did not hear the result.

"About 11 a.m., February 26, owing to crowded conditions aboard the *Totland*, the merchant crew of the *Esso Baton Rouge*, except the most seriously injured, and some men from the *Empire Norseman* were transferred to the Netherlands flag freighter *Maskerk*. At noon, March 4, the *Totland* bore off from the convoy and arrived that day at Antigua, British West Indies.

"Martinsen, Chappelle, and the injured U. S. Navy gunner, Jeanette, who had been left aboard the *Totland* in charge of Wirtz, were landed at Antigua and taken to the U. S. Navy Hospital. Owen, who had been transferred to the *Maskerk*, was taken to a hospital in Port-of-Spain, Trinidad, when the Netherlands vessel arrived there on the morning of March 6 and landed 37 men from the *Esso Baton Rouge*. All personnel were given Red Cross emergency rescue kits."

As reported by Captain Poché: "The unlicensed men were given accommodations at the U. S. Army

Camp, known as 'Torpedo Junction', at Port-of-Spain, and the officers were taken to the Allied Merchant Marine Navies Officers' Club. At both places, everything possible was done for the comfort of all hands."

Of the survivors of the *Esso Baton Rouge*, 36 returned to the United States on the SS *George Washington*, operated by Alcoa Steamship Company, which sailed from Trinidad March 7 and arrived at Baltimore March 13. At Baltimore they were met by an agent of the Company who furnished them with money and clothing and arranged for their transportation by rail. They arrived in New York on the morning of March 14.

Captain Poché and Chief Engineer Williams returned by Pan American Airways, leaving Port-of-Spain March 9 for Miami and arriving in New York March 11.

On behalf of the President of the United States and Chairman Emory Scott Land of the Maritime Commission, a Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal was presented on June 22, 1944, to Russell O. Wirtz, then a ship's clerk, at a Propeller Club meeting in New York City, where he was congratulated by Mr. B. B. Howard, then General Manager of Marine Operations.

The citation, dated June 20, 1944, was as follows:

"For meritorious service beyond the line of duty.

"When his ship, the *Esso Baton Rouge*, was sunk by an enemy torpedo, four of her crew were seriously burned. One, a member of the Armed Guard who had been burned over one-third of his body and was blinded, and another, a merchant seaman, not so severely burned but also blinded, were pushed overboard by Wirtz and supported by him in the water until picked

up by a British corvette. The rescue vessel already had aboard about 200 survivors of other torpedoed ships and her medical staff was taxed beyond capacity for adequate care of the injured. Wirtz, who had been a medical student years ago, volunteered his services, and was assigned the care of nine of the most serious cases, two of which were in critical condition. For eleven days and nights he tended these injured seamen, in some cases hourly treatment being necessary. He administered sedatives and skillfully performed delicate surgical operations which elicited the admiration of the regularly assigned British Naval surgeons. By his technical skill and his untiring efforts he probably saved the lives of seven men, and definitely did so in the two most serious cases.

"His unselfish devotion to his injured shipmates, and his ability to meet emergencies by efficiently performing duties far beyond those expected of him, will forever serve as an inspiration to the men of the United States Merchant Marine."

Russell Wirtz was so seriously exhausted by the constant work and loss of sleep described in the citation that when the *Totland* put him ashore at Curacao he had to be hospitalized himself.

The Liberty ship *James Eagan Layne*, launched on December 2, 1944, at the Delta Shipbuilding Company's yard, New Orleans, La., was named in honor of the second assistant engineer of the *Esso Baton Rouge* who lost his life when the vessel was torpedoed on April 8, 1942. The Liberty vessel was sponsored by his widow, Mrs. James Eagan Layne, of Baton Rouge,

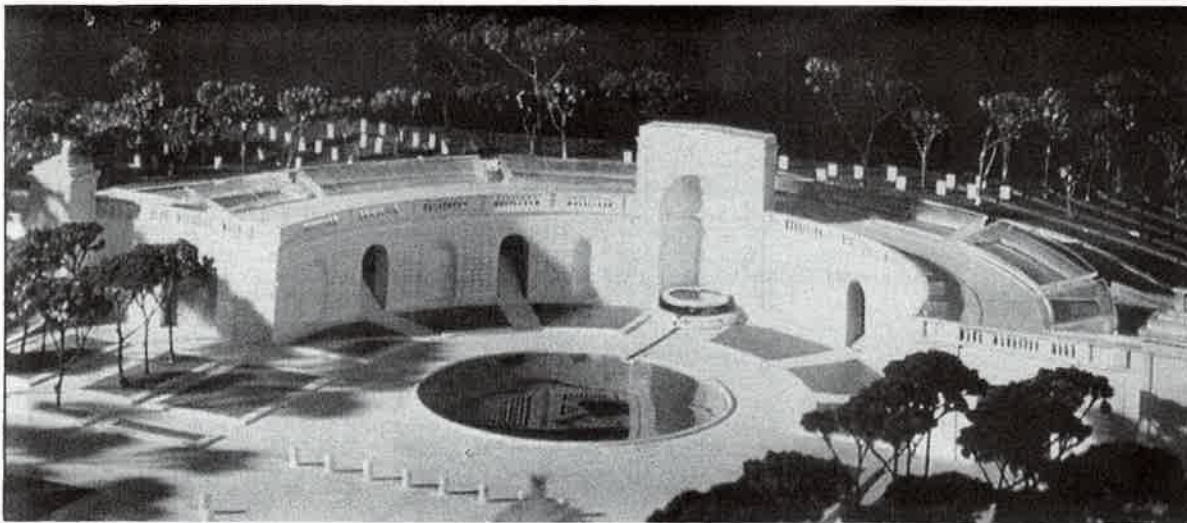


The S.S. CITY OF BRUNSWICK - On April 18, 1942, a German submarine torpedoed two tankers just 13 miles off the Brunswick, Georgia coast. They were the S.S. ESSO BATON ROUGE and the S.S. OKLAHOMA. The OKLAHOMA was hit at 0200 EWT and the BATON ROUGE was hit at 0248 EWT. Both ships were unarmed and sailing alone. Nineteen men of the 37 man merchant crew were lost on the OKLAHOMA and 3 were killed on the BATON ROUGE. Photos by the Brunswick, Georgia Visitors Bureau, 4 Glynn Ave., Brunswick, Ga. 31520, 912-265-0620 and the replica of the Liberty Ship S.S. CITY OF BRUNSWICK is on display there. Stop by to see it, "Y'ALL.



(Official Photograph, U. S. Navy)

SS "Esso Washington" speeding for New York from Houston, Tex., June 24, 1943



to register

Registration forms for names to be included in the **Women in Military Service for America Memorial** are still available. To register an ex-service woman and make donations, contact Aurelia Kozlowski, 1st District American Legion Auxiliary, American Legion Post 369, 4201 Ivy St., East Chicago, IN 46312.

Marion Gail Weiss and Michael Manfredi, Of Weiss/Manfredi architects in New York City won a national design competition in 1988 for their conception of the memorial now under construction at the ceremonial entrance to Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. Dedication is scheduled for Oct. 18.



Mary Petersen
Highland
Army nurse



Wanda Bodner
Hammond
Navy



Rosalyn Karas
Munster
Navy



Helen Pramuk
East Chicago
Army



Making history HER STORY

STORY BY LARRY SHIELDS ■ TIMES COLUMNIST

More than 2 million women served the United States with military service and now will be honored with a monument in Washington

The names of women who have played major roles in the progress of the United States of America, as humanitarians, suffragists, pioneers, physicians, nurses, fighters and chiefs of staff, brighten the pages of history.

Monuments, memorials, statues and sites have been constructed and dedicated to some of the deserving, as individuals and as groups. But nowhere has there been an official acknowledgment of the overall achievement of woman in military service.

At long last, U.S. military women officially will be honored. A coalition of women's groups has planned to construct Washington's newest monument, the Women in Military Service for America Memorial.

The monument, in the working stages for more than 10 years, will restore the historic hemicycle in Arlington National Cemetery in Washington, D.C. It will house a 33,000-square-foot Education

Center that will include a 196-seat theater, an exhibit gallery, a computer registration area and a Hall of Honor.

Serving the country

Since the American Revolution, women have served their country in some capacity in the front echelons of warfare, but their participation was not officially recognized until 1917.

It was during World War I that women first received recognition and veteran status from the Department of the Navy - 11,275 yeomen and 305 in the Marine Reserve.

Women in the Army's Signal Corps were not as lucky. Most were sworn into the Army, given uniforms and shipped off to France to work in communications. Their veteran status was not granted until 1977.

See HER STORY, Page C-4



Margaret Dean
Portage
Coast Guard



Elaine Ramage Olson, Dyer
Marines



World War II saw 265,000 women volunteer in the WACS, the Women's Army Corps; WAVES, the women's reserve of the U.S. Navy; WASP, Women's Auxiliary Service Platoon; WIRE, Women's International Resource Exchange; WRS, Women's reserve; SPAR, a member of the women's reserve of the U.S. Coast Guard, "Semper Paratus"; and 68,000 in the Army and Navy Nurse Corps.

Helen Pramuk, of East Chicago who served in the Army, relates her experience serving the nation.

"(I) arrived in England Sept. 29, 1943, just prior to the invasion. We moved nearer to the coast and lived in tents. My first casualties were Navy and British soldiers ... on D-Day. ... I like to remember how proud I felt when I was given the honor of presenting the Purple Heart to some of my patients. ... It was an experience."

Members of the nursing corps,

organized in the early 1900s, were not new to battle. The Army Nurse Corps had 66 of its members held as Japanese POWs, 1,600 received decorations for bravery, and 217 died.

Mary Petersen of Highland, who served in the Army Nurse Corps, recalls her decorated service fondly. "I was awarded the Victory medal, the American Theater ribbon, the Asiatic-Pacific Theater ribbon and the Good Conduct medal."

But not until 1944 were the Army and Navy Nurse Corps granted full military status.

A similar story is that of the WASPS. Those 1,074 female pilots flew 60 million miles transporting 12,650 aircraft. They, too, waited until the '70s for their recognition as veterans.

Gaining recognition

In 1980, the federal census asked women if they were veter-

ans. The results of the census revealed to Washington this previously forgotten constituency of 1.8 million women.

Rosalyn Karas, of Munster who served in the Navy, says her experience in the service was invaluable. "You couldn't pay me a \$1 million for my services (again), but I wouldn't take a million for that experience."

One result of the census findings was the Women's Health Program Act of 1992. Up until that time women's health issues were not addressed by the Veterans Administration. The act expanded its hospital services to increase treatment of women-specific needs.

And now, the monument will give women vets recognition for their service.

Constructing a monument

Overseeing the project is retired Air Force Brig. Gen. Wilma L. Vaught, age 67, president of the

nonprofit, nonpartisan Women in Military Service for America Memorial Foundation (WIMSA).

Gathering the names and stories of service women, planning the memorial, and raising the \$12 million in private donations needed to fund the project has taken 11 years, and it isn't complete yet.

Nearly 2 million women have performed military jobs since the founding of this country. Oct. 18 their efforts - sometimes only grudgingly acknowledged in their lifetime - will finally be recognized and symbolized.

One of the many national veterans organizations supporting WIMSA is the American Legion. A pledge of \$150,000 was made by American Legion Auxiliary to aid in the construction of this \$18 million memorial.

■ Larry Shields writes *Retirement Road* for *The Times*.

This article written and sent in by Larry Shields, 601 West 45th Ave., Munster, IN 43021.

SHIPBUILDING ROSIES

War widows heroines for freedom

Story and photo by Kathy Manney

More than 50 years ago, Americans celebrated V-E and V-J Day, their hearts filled with pride and admiration for the troops who had liberated Europe and the Pacific Rim.

Lesser known were the female troops on the front line of the war's shipbuilding effort. The ships these women built were engineered for battles that helped America win the war.

My mother, Bonnie Hyland Reeves, and my aunt, Mildred Ledahl Snyder, personified the wartime icon known as Rosie the Riveter.

Moving to Portland, Ore., after graduating from high school turned into an employment adventure for both. Today, they are vibrant great-grandmothers in their early 70s enjoying retirement.

Neither woman looks upon what she did and where she worked throughout the war as anything special. But they were both heroines in the effort, blazing a trail others might follow while working toward a standard of equal opportunity for everyone.

Both women married after graduation following their dreams of a family and a home with a white picket fence. But the draft called their young husbands to war, and the two women learned early how to face life head-on.

Between 1941 and 1945, the Portland-Vancouver area was home to three shipyards on the Willamette and Columbia rivers. Production crews worked round-the-clock, turning out 750 Liberty and Victory ships, aircraft carriers and other vessels.

An ad in Portland's newspaper, *The Oregonian*, pleaded for 10,000 workers needed at the Swan Island Yard on the Willamette. The shipyards encouraged women to apply, offering liberal employment and high earnings long before the equal rights movement existed.

The large influx of job seekers to the area brought lasting changes to the community. Minority workers were afforded a great degree of equality because of new government regulations.

A perky 21-year-old blue-eyed blonde, Aunt Mildred began her shipyard career as a secretary. Soon

she traded her office job for production work as a lead boss, enabling her to earn higher wages.

She supervised an all-female crew who scraped rust from the hulls and bulkheads in the bottom of ships. It was difficult, dirty and backbreaking work.

Aunt Mildred fondly remembers a marked camaraderie among her crew as they worked in successful partnership.

Mom reflects on the war years with sentiment. She was a 20-year-old newlywed when she embarked on her shipyard career as a taper. A male lead boss headed her 23-woman crew.

Certification as a journeyman painter/taper required 20 hours of training, essential apprenticeship for the job. The training was independent of the yard job site. Once hired, Mom attended class elsewhere in the city before reporting for her eight-hour shift each day.

Tapers followed the electricians, finishing seams by cutting and fitting pasted strips over the fiberglass insulation fastened onto bulkheads and ducts. Fiberglass fibers got in their eyes and left small cuts and scratches on exposed skin. Some cuts became lifelong scars.

Mom explains how the workers cleaned their hands in paint thinner to remove the thick, sticky, yellow glue. Workers got a half-hour for lunch, not much time to go to the bathroom, wash off the glue, find a place to eat and finish your meal, she recalls.

Before long, Mom was accomplished at reading blueprints. Her job switched to riveting ships, and she became a rightful Rosie the Riveter, working the swing shift. The local shipyards stayed in non-stop production.

Allied victory didn't alleviate the rigorous demands on shipyard workers. V-E Day signaled increased production to support our forces in the Pacific and bring a speedy end to the war against Japan.

Greater contributions to this new effort went full force for ultimate victory. "Only the first half is over - Let's Keep on the Job!" a newspaper headline shouted.

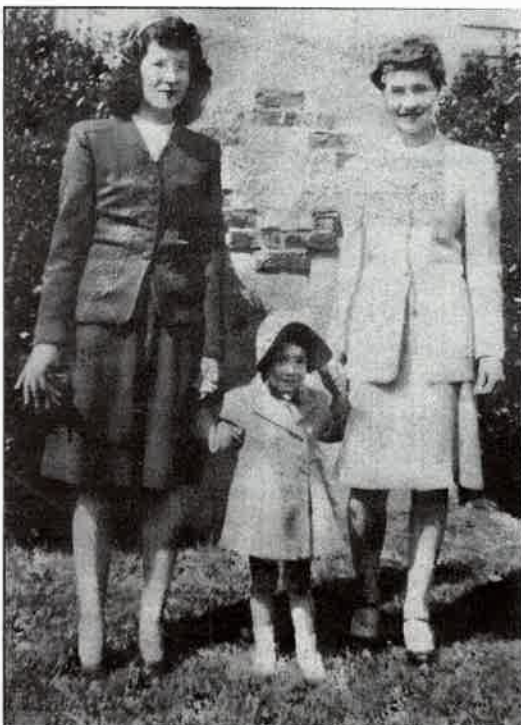
Mildred and Bonnie were war widows with husbands fighting for freedom. Both say their shipbuilding work was something they had to do for the war cause while the men were away.

In a time when each woman was young, slim and sassy, they enjoyed independence, good pay and friendship as coworkers, sisters-in-law and housemates. This spirit led to being ahead of the times throughout their lives and prepared them for tough times ahead.

Mildred and Bonnie became divorced, working mothers after the war, long before single parenthood was a social topic. Both women remarried and became part of blended families.

These two Rosies learned generations before their sisters to deal with the problems and questions now common to the 1990s.

Offering their fond remembrances of the way things were some 50 years ago, my mother and aunt are genuine pioneers, heroines and microcosms of the World War II shipbuilding effort.



Mildred and Bonnie with Kathy in 1944.

Kathy Manney is a reader from Las Vegas, Nev.



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