



February  
2003

***THE JERSEYMAN***

**BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY**



## BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY ARCHIVES



### Donations gratefully accepted...

Curatorial and Educational Affairs for the Battleship New Jersey, are under the direction of Mr. Scott Kodger shown with USS ARIZONA model on the left. All existing and planned museum display areas are of his design, and are unique in their explanation of what USS NEW JERSEY and her former crew were all about. Scott comes to the Battleship New Jersey with extensive experience as Curator aboard the Cruiser USS LITTLE ROCK. The Battleship New Jersey Archive Manager is Mr. Bob Walters, shown in the photo to the right. It is with the assistance of both Scott Kodger and Bob Walters, that we will share some of the BB62 ship artifacts with readers of *The Jerseyman*. Archive

Manager Bob Walters is also a former crewman aboard USS NEW JERSEY, having served as a BB62 Quartermaster from 1955—1957.

If you might have a USS NEW JERSEY artifact, or any item related in some way to USS NEW JERSEY that you might like to donate to the ship, we would like to hear from you! Please contact:

**Bob Walters, Archive Manager**  
62 Battleship Place  
Camden, New Jersey 08103  
(856) 966-1652 Ext. 202



### USS ARIZONA—

“My dad, Milan J. Somora, served in USS ARIZONA from 1936 to 1939. As I was growing up, he always spoke highly about his time in the US Navy, often saying that he wished he had made it a career. But it was with the birth of his first child, my sister, in November of 1939 that it caused him to make the decision to leave the Navy. He then returned to civilian life in rural southwestern Michigan. I am told that on December 7, 1941 like so many other Americans, he was in disbelief listening to the news of the attack on Pearl Harbor. But he was more affected than most because he had many friends that were still serving aboard the Arizona when it was bombed and sank in Pearl Harbor. Because he was now at work producing military axle housings and other heavy military equipment, and at a vital war-time industry at Clark Equipment Company, he continued to work there throughout the war. He was a foreman, and continued at this job in Buchanan, Michigan for over 20 years, before retiring in the early '60's. Dad did return to Hawaii for a reunion at least once after the war and visited the Arizona memorial. I can only imagine what dad's thoughts could have been as he looked

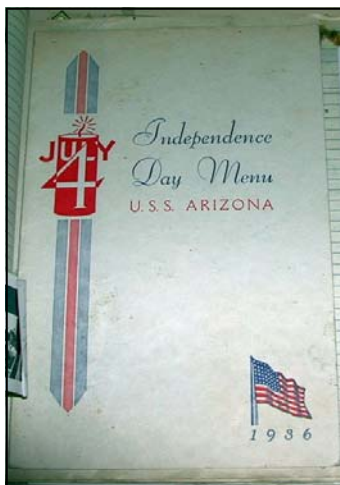


down at the ship's outline beneath the water.

My dad's navy mementos were very important to him until his passing in 1984. Among the items was a thick USS ARIZONA scrapbook of 1930's pictures, letters, insinias, clippings, menus, and other items showing life aboard his ship. This USS ARIZONA scrapbook is currently on loan to the Battleship New Jersey. Another artifact on loan to the ship is my dad's Arizona letter “A” sweater, awarded to him for serving on the Arizona's boxing team. Another of his mementos that we have is the framed certificate he received when he crossed the equator on the Arizona and became a “Trusty Shell-back.” That certificate didn't have much meaning for me until I saw Scott Kodger's crossing the equator presentation shown in the *Sailor's Life* display of our ship's museum area.

My intention had always been to eventually donate these items to the USS ARIZONA museum at Pearl Harbor. For the time being though, it will be with proud satisfaction that I see them on display here at the home of the USS NEW JERSEY.” - Lon Somora

Editor's note: Lon Somora began maintenance volunteering aboard Battleship New Jersey on Jan 4, 2000. Later on, he was employed by the Home Port Alliance (HPA) to work



with Artifacts Manager, Bob Walters, and for a brief time as Docent Supervisor and Trainer. He recently served as an assistant to the Chief Financial Officer, and is currently the Operations Coordinator.

**BATTLESHIP DEVELOPMENT...**

On February 24, 2003 the long-planned opening of our International **“Battleship Development”** display area is scheduled for Battleship New Jersey. This display was planned by Mr. Scott Kodger, Vice President of Curatorial and Educational Affairs, and it provides an educational and technical resource to describe battleship ship design evolutions throughout the twentieth century. Comparisons and contrasts of these mammoth ships, can be drawn from over a dozen models of famous battleships of many nations - all in 1/350 scale. Many of these models (built in the configurations described below,) were crafted by the Philadelphia Ship Modelers Association - we sincerely thank them for these fine works of art and detail.

**United States**

<b>USS NEW JERSEY</b>	1943	(As deployed in 1943 with round bridge)
<b>USS NEVADA</b>	1944	(First with “All or Nothing” armor)
<b>USS CALIFORNIA</b>	1941	(As she was at Pearl Harbor with “Cage Mast”)
<b>USS MISSISSIPPI</b>	1944	(As she was late in the Pacific war)
<b>USS NORTH CAROLINA</b>	1944	(Late World War II configuration)
<b>USS INDIANA</b>	1942	(Early 1942—Least known of South Dakota Class)
<b>USS OHIO</b>	(Not Built)	(USS MONTANA Class - Cancelled)

**England**

<b>HMS PRINCE OF WALES</b>	1941	(Only allied BB sunk underway by air)
----------------------------	------	---------------------------------------

**Germany**

<b>DKM BISMARCK</b>	1941	(As she appeared in North Atlantic without “Baltic Stripes”)
<b>SMS KONIG</b>	1916	(One of Germany’s best in WWI—Grosser Kurfurst Class)

**Japan**

<b>IJN KIRISHIMA</b>	1942	(Configured as sunk at Guadalcanal -Influenced USS Iowa Class)
<b>IJN YAMATO</b>	1945	(As she appeared on her one-way “Suicide” run to Okinawa)

**France**

<b>FSN JEAN BART</b>	1945	(As a late WWII US Refit— FSN Richelieu Class)
----------------------	------	--

**Italy**

<b>RN ROMA</b>	1943	(Only battleship sunk by a guided missile, a “Fritz X” rocket propelled guided bomb. - RN Vittorio Veneto Class)
----------------	------	--





## MAIL CALL...



### Boot Camp Bainbridge, Maryland - 1952...

In our January 2003 issue, we tried to generate interest for submission of personal stories and photos from our *Jerseyman* readers. One "thought starter" offered was to "Dig out the photo showing you using a swab at Bainbridge boot camp during service week in 1952." The day after the January issue was published, the photo shown here appeared in our *Jerseyman* mailbox. Volunteer Rich Castro (on the left) was a boot at Bainbridge in 1952 and the swabs are seen directly behind him.

### Typhoon Cobra - December 18, 1944...

The *Jerseyman* is asking for the stories from sailors that rode out **Typhoon Cobra** in 1944. We could probably devote an entire issue of *The Jerseyman* from those that remember this storm aboard USS NEW JERSEY, and aboard the other ships comprising Task Force 38. In an area estimated as a 50 by 60 mile box during this storm, there were seven Essex-class and six light carriers, eight battleships (with Admiral Halsey aboard USS NEW JERSEY), four heavy, and eleven light cruisers along with fifty destroyers. Then if the Third Fleet fueling group is added, another twelve fleet oilers, three fleet tugs, five destroyers, ten Destroyer escorts, and five escort carriers. Many ships and men were involved that day, and 3 Destroyers lost with most of their crews. If any readers were aboard one of the **Typhoon Cobra** ships on December 18, 1944, We want to hear from you - please contact *The Jerseyman*, and share your story.

### New Grandpa Frank O'Keefe - January 7, 2003...

Congratulations to Volunteer shipmate and first time Pop-Pop Frank O'Keefe. On January 7, 2003 new Granddaughter Hannah was born at St. Peters Hospital in New Brunswick. Franko says Mom, Dad and Baby Hannah are doing just fine...



### Battleship Seminars... - Submitted by Volunteer Rich Zimmerman

The Crew Members of the Battleship New Jersey are invited to attend free, the next round of Battleship Seminars. The Classes Run 2 sessions, 4 nights: Mondays-March 3/10/17/24 and Tuesdays March 4/11/18/25. All sessions run from 1600 to 2100 hours. The seminars are offered to the General Public for \$25.00. Some of the topics covered include: Class #1-Orientation, Speaker Service Program and full tour. Class #2- The History of the Battleships New Jersey- Both BB 16 and BB 62- Events between the Wars, building of the Battleship, plus WWII, Korea, Vietnam, Beirut and Beyond. Class #3- Life at Sea with former Battleship Sailors and mini tours to their duty areas. Class #4- Bringing the New Jersey Home- Carol Comegno-Courier Post, Ships Programs, and Bringing Classes to the New Jersey. We are seeking additional Battleship Sailors to talk about their experiences at sea. You can attend any or all seminars, just tell Dan Soldano in the Curators Office, which of the classes you will attend.

**Editor's note:** Since *The Jerseyman* started up in January of 2002, we have received a lot of interesting reader mail, and in 2003 we will begin sharing some of that mail with you here. Some include a question or a ship's announcement, some include a photograph, and some chide to correct an increasing number of errors... They are all truly welcome, but please remember when sending jokes, that *quality* is better than quantity! We try to answer all emails to *The Jerseyman*, but as traffic picks up, this may not always be possible. Also, to help quickly identify ship's mail, please try to use **BB62** or a similar identifier in your subject line. If you want to submit something for *The Jerseyman* please send it on to:

[THelvig@aol.com](mailto:THelvig@aol.com)



### An answer to a recent question:

*The Jerseyman* is an independent volunteer publication, and is written primarily for our ship's volunteers - by a volunteer. I am not on the staff of the Home Port Alliance (HPA). *The Jerseyman* is my retirement fun contribution, to help inform our volunteer crew, and to keep my old brain working. *The Jerseyman* will also be my excuse when I try to convince my wife that I am going to "need" a new digital camera. Any goof-ups are also only mine...

**Master Chief Tom Helvig, USN (Ret. -1975)**  
**Volunteer Writer/Editor *The Jerseyman***



**CORRECTIONS AND UPDATES...****From the Admiral...**

After *The Jerseyman* was published last month, several other ship volunteers with ties to Mobil Corporation were also identified. All of these folks are now actively engaged in requesting donated funds for the ship through Mobil Foundation for their volunteer efforts aboard the NEW JERSEY. We want to recognize all 4 and thank them for their efforts! Not only do they volunteer their services aboard ship on a regular basis, but they are each potentially able to provide the ship a Mobil donation of \$2,000 each. An \$8,000 per year combined gift that goes a long way to help our finances aboard the Battleship New Jersey! The four volunteers are:

**Joe Donnelly****Frank Randolph****Charlie Vaughan****Harry Frank**

Thank you all!

*To Sergeant  
RADM USA (RET)*

**U. S. NAVY SHIP'S BELLS...**

Since posting our request for photos of US Navy ship's bells, additional bell photos have been received for:

**USS Philippine Sea (CV-47)**  
**USS Sam Houston (CA-30)**  
**USS Constitution**  
**USS Texas (1895)**  
**USS North Carolina (BB-55)**  
**USS Oriskany (CV-34/CVA-34)**

For the many fine bell photos, we sincerely want to thank:

**CPO Chuck Davis, USN (Ret.)**  
**Secretary/Treasurer**  
**USS Philippine Sea (CV-47) Association**

**Former USS NEW JERSEY**  
**crewman (1953-1956)**  
**LTJG Bill Lynch.**  
**Bill's brother Charles Lynch,**  
**made the supreme sacrifice aboard**  
**USS Sam Houston (CA-30)**  
**March 1, 1942**

**Battleship NEW JERSEY**  
**Volunteer Paul McPike**

**Ms. Karen Jacobson**  
**Curator,**  
**USS ORISKANY (CV-34/CVA-34)**  
**Museum**

**GOOF-UP IN THE JERSEYMAN!**

In our January 2003 **Welcome Aboard!** notice of new volunteers, we regret incorrectly spelling the name of Volunteer Pete Fantacone. Sorry Pete. We should also mention that Pete was one of those we had in mind when we said we have volunteers aboard that were there in Normandy, France on D-Day the 6th of June.

**BB-62 RADIO ROOM...**

**January 2003** - Every volunteer organization has it's group that does a great deal of work, but rarely gets much in the way of recognition. The group that fits that description aboard the Battleship New Jersey is our own "Radio Gang." Many of these radio volunteers are also members of the ship's Ham Club. Most work full time, and are usually aboard only on Saturdays, and the regular Monday to Friday volunteer crew rarely sees them come aboard. Yet as we look at what our "Radio Gang" has accomplished for the ship over the past couple of years (and on only one day a week!) it has been a truly amazing effort. Far more was completed by our radio gang than just the familiar 1MC system that everyone now hears throughout the ship. The 1MC job alone, took many hundreds of man hours by just 4 or 5 individuals in rewiring harnesses (in some not so very roomy spaces...) all over the ship. And there are many more systems being brought back to life besides just the 1MC, such as the audible alarms, and much in the way of old/cold equipment being made operational again.

With this new **RADIO ROOM** feature every month in *The Jerseyman*, we would like to describe just what naval communicators did, beginning with Morse Code and including Signal Flags and Flashing Light. Just as we try to explain how the Gunner's Mates did their jobs at Main and Secondary Batteries, we will also take a *Jerseyman* look at the navy radiomen of WWII, Korea, Vietnam, and the Cold War. Covering a spread of years and decades from 1943 to 1991, we will also try to expand on the evolution from Morse Code to Teletype, to computers and into satellite communications. Then we would like to share what is involved today in our radio gang trying to revive complex communications of a "Cold Iron" ship - as the Battleship New Jersey museum. For the former crewmen reading *The Jerseyman* from across the country, and that might also have a few **RADIO ROOM** stories of their own that they would like to share, we would welcome your input!

We also want to introduce our Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station (BNJARS) radio crew a few at a time. The first two short biographies below, have been provided to us by Dave and Margaret Burgess. With our sincere thanks, Margaret has also provided many photographs for *The Jerseyman*, and promises more on the way.

**Gene Furmanski (a.k.a. "Gadget Guy")**  
**Database Administrator Philadelphia SEPTA**

Gene is responsible for lighting up all the red phones around the ship and for getting the "coke machine" to look so realistic. His little gadgets have also lit up other pieces of equipment in the Radio Room. He is just one of the outstanding members of our group.



**John Saracen (Radio Technician)**  
**64-65 Naval Weapons Charleston SC**  
**65-66 STG3 on USS San Pablo AGS-30**  
**66-68 STG2 USS Barton DD-722**  
**Test Engineer Lockheed Martin**

John has taken on the job of doing repairs to radios and getting them on the air - such as some of the R-1051 receivers in FACCON 1, the R-390 receiver in FACCON and also one in the transmitter room. He is an excellent technician and with the help of several others has managed to bring one of the URT-23 transmitters from the 1980's ship configuration back to life! John is also one of the 4 or 5 volunteers mentioned above that were responsible for bringing the 1MC back to life. It took hundreds of painstaking hours rewiring all the harnesses throughout the ship to get them working. The result and benefit can be heard today on every deck and in every compartment...





## ABOUT THE DECKS...

### Time Out...

There's always time for some fun aboard Battleship New Jersey. Here are USS Des Moines (CA-134) plankowner Mike Timothy on the left, and WW2 "Gator Navy" Radioman (and Speed Key Operator) Joe Donnelly on the right. They are taking some time out for a friendly "duel" with 5 gallon water bottles. Looks like the bottles are both full of water... guess you don't want to mess with these guys.

(Reminds me of a time (1953) when we "dueled" with frozen chickens at Boot Camp in Bainbridge - The Chief was **not** pleased.)



### Need some tile work?

In case you didn't know who our deck tile experts are on the ship, here they are. Hugo Di Bona shown here on the left working in the Chapel area, served in the USAF during the Korean War, and travels in from Gibbstown, NJ. His partner is Jim Moore, who served in the US Navy as a printer (Lithographer 3rd Class) from 1949 to 1954. His ship was Destroyer Tender USS SHENANDOAH (AD-26), and Jim is from Westmont, NJ. Samples of their great tile work can be seen throughout "Broadway" and many other areas. Thanks for all the hard work (and for putting up with some aching knees) - to volunteer shipmates Hugo Di Bona and Jim Moore...



### Fancy line work...

It is Wednesday, January 16, 2003 and ship's work goes on... Shipmate volunteer Harry Schafer on the left, and shipmate volunteer Ed Miller on the right, tying fancy line work for a stanchion in the wardroom. Skill with tying fancy lines are a tradition with U.S. Navy Boatswain's mates, and Harry and Ed are both former "Boats" with long memories (and some old calluses) of knot tying. BM3 (Boatswain's Mate 3rd Class) Harry Schafer served in the US Navy from 1951 to 1955 aboard Fleet Oiler, USS NOVASOTA (AO106.) His partner is BM2 Ed Miller who served in the navy from 1942 to 1948, aboard USS COWIE (DD632/DMS39.) In 1949, and shortly after Ed left the navy, he joined the Air Force, and went on to retire as Senior Master Sergeant/E-8 in 1972. Both of these volunteers are also long time Mummers and active members of the Greater Kensington String Band, where they play the banjo "in their spare time." With more wardroom stanchions scheduled for this fancy line work, there is still time if you want to check out how to tie knots from the "Boats..."



**VOLUNTEERS...**

These "Yesterday" photos of Battleship New Jersey Volunteers, and of former volunteers (now on HPA staff) will be identified in future issues of *The Jerseyman*. How many can you ID?

**"YESTERDAY" PHOTOS ARE WANTED!**

For future issues, *The Jerseyman* plans to include "Yesterday" and "Today" photos contributed by all Battleship New Jersey volunteers. If you dig into your old photo album (the one that holds each picture with four glued-in black corners...) and come up with one, please leave it in a sealed envelope for us in the Docent mailbox. There is no age limit on how far back in years you want to go. All photos will be returned—sorry, can't help about returning the years... Thanks,

Tom



---

---

---



---

---

---

---