



**August
2003**

THE JERSEYMAN



**“GUNS OF NOVEMBER”
USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62)
ARTIST: ERICK MARSHALL MURRAY**



**Photograph of painting courtesy of
Naval History Center
The Navy Art Collection
and special thanks to
Navy Art Collection Manager, Ms. Karin Haubold**

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NAVAL HISTORICAL CENTER...

- MAY 21, 1951

In recognition of 50 years since the end of the Korean War, we recently visited the Naval Historical Center at the Washington Navy Yard in an attempt to locate USS NEW JERSEY's action report for the day the ship was hit by North Korean gunfire - on May 21, 1951. For helping us with this effort, we sincerely thank Kathleen Lloyd, Head, Operational Archives Division, and Captain Ken Johnson, USN, Ret., Archivist, for their warm hospitality and assistance. It was only with their help, that we were successful in being able to locate the USS NEW JERSEY action report for that particular day of the Korean War...

We also dedicate the August 2003 issue of *The Jerseyman* in honor of USS NEW JERSEY crewman Seaman Robert H. Osterwind, who was killed by shrapnel in the May 21, 1951 action, and his shipmates, Seaman Apprentice J.E. Schaniel, FCS3 C.A. Van Fleet, and Seaman J.H. Dezekou who were badly wounded in that action.



“Narrative

8. At 0930K, 21 May, observed shore battery firing on Kalmagak, salvos fell short of NEW JERSEY on starboard side. At 0931K, salvo splash observed to port about 200 yards. At 0932K received hit on number #1 turret and near-miss aft on starboard side. Commenced counter-battery fire with main battery and secondary battery. At 0945K ceased firing, shore batteries silenced. NEW JERSEY suffered casualties of 1 killed, 3 wounded and slight material damage. (See Part IV).”

“21 may 1951

0310 Fire in 40mm #42. Cause: Burning particles from 16” firing ignited oil from open can in mount which has splashed onto life jackets and canvas ammunition covers. Away fire party.

0327 Fire extinguished. One 40 MM shell exploded, all other affected were jettisoned. No personnel or material casualties.

0913 Launched one helicopter, BU. No. 122712. Pilot LTJG G.T. Tuffanelli, and one photographer for public information purposes.

0930 Observed enemy shore battery fire.

0932 Turret #1 hit. One near miss aft.

0933 General Quarters. Commenced counter battery fire with the Main and Secondary batteries.

0945 Ceased fire. Shore batteries silenced. Casualties: 1 Killed, 3 Wounded. Damage: Slight.

1001 Underway with USS MANCHESTER (CL-83), USS BRINKLEY BASS (DD-887) and USS MASON (DD-852) to rendezvous with TF 77.”

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IN THEIR OWN WORDS...

- Captain William J. Aicklen, Jr., USN (Ret.)



After graduation and commissioning from the US Naval Academy in 1946, William J. "Bill" Aicklen went on to serve a 15 month tour aboard USS NEW JERSEY, which included the ship's operating time in Korean waters for over 8 months during the Korean War. His naval career spanned over 25 years with command assignments as Commanding Officer **USS DUVAL COUNTY (LST-758)**, **USS CORRY (DD-817)**, **USS MT.**



RANIER (AE-5), **USS PUGET SOUND (AD-38)**, Naval Beach Group Two in Little Creek, Virginia and several staff assignments, including the **Joint Chiefs of Staff**, and **ComPhibLant**. Captain William J. Aicklen, Jr., USN, Retired from the Navy in 1973 and now resides with his wife in Lexington, Kentucky. Captain Aicklen has been a very supportive reader of *The Jerseyman*, and has contributed several personal artifacts from the Korean War to USS NEW JERSEY archives over the past 2 years. For this issue, we have asked Captain Aicklen if he would also provide his own story from the morning of May 21, 1951 for *The Jerseyman*. These are his recollections from 52 years ago....

"May 21, 1951 @ 0930 local... As a LTJG, I was on the USS NEW JERSEY bridge, and on watch as the JOOD. The ship was at half battle condition, with Port and Starboard sections manning half-gun readiness. The ship was lying DIW (Dead in the Water) inside Wonson Harbor with several other ships, to fire at any targets that appeared; also at the time, our helicopter was airborne and spotting for our gunnery people. It was a clear, bright morning, with excellent visibility. Ship's engines were ready to answer bells to maneuver in case she came under fire from enemy shore batteries. We had heard that DD's had been fired on from a shore point called Kalmagak. There was a cave there in which "Kalmagak Charlie" (as we called him) would roll out his gun on wheels or rails, fire a few rounds, and retreat back into his cave, if and when fired on.

The ship was fired on and one round hit 10-20 yards off the Port Side in the water abaft the bridge. We went to full GQ sometime prior to this shell hitting, and Seaman R.H. Osterwind from my division, and running to his battle station, caught a piece of shrapnel and probably died instantly. The next shell (that I remember) hit on the top left side of 16" Turret #1. Shrapnel from this hit was later discovered on the bridge. Luckily, no one was hit.

Five inch guns, and one 16" turret commenced counter battery fire and silenced Kalmagak Charlie, after blowing up his ammo supply. Shortly thereafter, ships got underway and we departed Wonson."

For USS NEW JERSEY Korean War crewmen who might also have a story to tell, or an artifact they may want to donate to ship's archives, we ask you to please contact:

**Bob Walters Archives Manager, 62 Battleship Place, Camden, NJ 08103,
or please call ship's archives directly at (856) 966-1652 Ext. 202**

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NAVAL ORDNANCE DISPLAY...

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

During our recent visit to the Washington Navy Yard and the Naval Historical Center's operational archives division, we also had a chance to explore the US Navy's extensive display of Naval Ordnance located at the Navy yard's Admiral Willard Park. To share as much as possible from this visit, we will provide just a few photos and descriptions of what is on display, and follow up with more details in future issues of *The Jerseyman*.



Shown in the photograph to the left are 3 artifacts removed from USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57.) In the foreground is a 16" steel belt armor plate section which once ringed the waterline hull of SOUTH DAKOTA. The middle plate is a partial top section of SOUTH DAKOTA's Turret #1, and next is a 36,000 pound manganese bronze propeller, manufactured for SOUTH DAKOTA at the Philadelphia Navy Yard. These screws produced 179 rpm and were capable of 28 knots for the 35,000 ton ship.

USS SOUTH DAKOTA was eventually sold for scrap in 1962. A full size layout of the maindeck, the main mast, 16-inch gun turret replicas and anchor chain of "Battleship X" are all that remain of the ship today at the USS SOUTH DAKOTA memorial in Sioux Falls, South Dakota.

In the close-up photo shown below, the same partial top of SOUTH DAKOTA's Turret #1 clearly shows a separation plate seen at the bottom. (Note the 12" ruler inside a side cut, to show relative thickness.) This plate separation was known as a "hook scarf joint," and "This (scarf joint) plate interlocking technique was thoroughly tested and refined at Dahlgren, Va. (Proving Ground) during the 1930's using scale model turrets and smaller caliber guns to represent their larger counterparts. This joint is very resistant to heavy impact "springing" the roof plates apart." (Source: Article in the *Dahlgren Bulletin* dated Feb 6, 1996, by FCCM (SW) Steve Skelley, USN G32, Gun Systems Branch).



USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57)...

Battleship New Jersey can proudly claim two World War 2 former crewmen of USS SOUTH DAKOTA, as members of our regular volunteer force.

They are; Volunteer (Coxswain) **Bob Whom-sley** (photo on lower right) who served in the projectile flats of Turret #3 in SOUTH DAKOTA during the 1942 night Battle of Santa Cruz, and Volunteer FC3 (Fire Controlman) (photo on lower left) **Richard Silvers** who later served in "Sky 1," aboard SOUTH DAKOTA. We also want to thank Volunteer **Richard Silvers** for providing *The Jerseyman* a photo showing USS South Dakota taking on ammunition "the old way" from sometime "around 1944 or 1945."



To both shipmates continuing to serve aboard Battleship NEW JERSEY - (60 years down the road...) We thank you both for all your battleship service!



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NAVAL ORDNANCE DISPLAY... JAPANESE NAVAL ARMOR



In another display at Admiral Willard Park, several unique naval armor plates are also on permanent display. One piece of armor in particular is a turret face plate section found at the Japanese Naval Shipyard in Kure, Japan, following the end of WW2. This armor plate was believed planned for IJN Shinano, which was begun as the 3rd Yamato class battleship. IJN Shinano was undergoing conversion as an aircraft carrier when she was subsequently sunk during her first sea trials in November of 1944 by USS Archerfish (SS-311), and with the loss of 1,435 officers and men.

The armor is an impressive 26 inches thick, and was pierced in an October 1946 ballistic test conducted at the US Naval Proving Grounds, at Dahlgren, Virginia. The 2 test projectiles were US Navy 2,700 lb 16" Bethlehem Steel Mark 8 Mod 6 Armor Piercing (AP) projectiles simulating an impact at about 30,000 yards of range. The test seemed to prove that in a fight with a US Battleship's 16" guns, The Yamato Class "immunity zone" was smaller than originally thought,

and may have been "at a distinct disadvantage." (For thickness reference, note the photo at right showing a US Navy ball cap placed at the left base area of the armor...)

The Dahlgren test projectiles were fired at the Japanese armor plate first on October 16, 1946 and the 2nd time on October 23, 1946. The striking velocity of the first test was recorded at 1992 feet/second, and resulted in complete penetration, with the plate snapped in two. The hole was "more or less cylindrical, with numerous small cracks put in the plate around impact." The 2nd firing test was at 1707 feet/second, and the projectile nose tip penetrated 21" into the plate, punching a hole entirely through. The US Navy projectile was undamaged, "except for the normal loss of wind-screen and AP cap." However, after a recent phone discussion with **FCCM (SW) Stephen Skelley, USN (Ret.)**, this test should be considered as somewhat misleading. The tests were conducted at an "angle of obliquity of approximately zero degrees on both firings." The IJN Yamato turret face plate design was constructed to be inclined at 45deg, and would have substantially "hardened" this armor. (USS Iowa Class 16" turret face plates are inclined at 36 deg off of vertical.) What it did prove though, (according to Master Chief Skelley) was that in comparison, the Japanese VH face-hardened armor was considered "brittle," and approximately 10% inferior to American type A armor.

Another armor plate on display at Willard Park has a direct link to the 26" Japanese armor, and the firing tests conducted on them. The photo below, is the same roof section seen on the previous page, of Turret #1 removed from USS South Dakota.



This roof plate was hit during the Battle of Santa Cruz in 1942, when a Japanese dive bomber scored a direct hit with a 500 lb bomb. The minimal damage impact from the Japanese bomb is clearly seen in the photo at the left. However, the right and center guns of Turret #2, (which were directly above the detonation point,) had their rifling badly scarred by the bomb fragments. When the guns were removed with USS South Dakota's battle damage after the Battle of Santa Cruz night action of November 1942, the guns were returned to the naval gun factory, and relined. The gun factory converted both guns to 16-inch/45 MK6, Mod 2's, and they were subsequently sent to Dahlgren to be used as test weapons. It was the center gun of USS South Dakota that was used to fire the rounds testing the 26" Japanese Armor plate shown above in these photos. (Sources: U.S. Naval Proving Ground, Dahlgren, Virginia, Report #5-47. "Ballistic Tests and Metal-

lurgical Examination of Japanese Navy Heavy Armor Plate" (November 1947), and "A tale of two plates: Buying American was better," extracted from the February 6, 1996 issue of the *Dahlgren Bullet*. FCCM (SW) (Master Chief Fire Controlman) Steve Skelley, USN (Ret.), of the G32, Gun Systems Branch, is a highly regarded naval ordnance expert, and authored the 1996 *Dahlgren Bullet* article. *The Jerseyman* sincerely thanks Master Chief Skelley for these reports, and his technical interpretations.



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

Since posting our request for photos of US Navy ship's bells, added bell photos were received with thanks for:

USS Scorpion (1899)
USS Hoga (YT-146)
Charles Jacobus
Auburndale, FL.

USS New Jersey (BB-16)
Bob LaVine
and William Reyes
PIO Elizabeth, NJ

USS Northampton
(CLC-1/CC-1)
Leonard Shults
Montgomery, AL.

Story sent...
(Bell photo not available)

USS Leyte (CV-32)
Richard Bolin
USS Leyte Ass'n
Farmer City, IL.

Story sent...
(Bell photo not available)

USS Sargent Bay (CVE-83)
Jerry Wintermute
Newhall, CA.

USS LST 325
Bob Pepper
St. Louis, MO.

USS Indiana (BB-58)
John Ensley
Fort Wayne, IN.

USS Topeka (CLG-8)
Jack Connery
Tulsa, OK

USS South Dakota (BB-57)
Volunteer Richard Silvers
and Cathy Verschelder
USS South Dakota Ass'n.

WANTED!!

Old Issues of "The Jerseyman"

If anyone has original issues of "*Clean Sweep Down,*" "*The Jerseyman,*" "*New Jersey Man,*" "*Midshipman News,*" or
USS NEW JERSEY
"*Family Grams,*"
from any of the four BB-62 commissioning periods, we request...

Would you please consider helping us complete our "*Jerseyman*" archives by donating them to the ship?

Can you help us fill in the many missing issues of *The Jerseyman*?

If so, please contact:
Bob Walters

Archives Manager
62 Battleship Place
Camden, NJ 08103
(856) 966-1652 Ext. 202

Thank you!

Battleship New Jersey
License plate photo
submitted with thanks to:



CDR (SC) John Desiderio
USNR, (Ret.)

MAIL CALL...

"All the *Jerseyman* stories have reminded me of the following surprising event that took place in 1951 while we were headed for Korea. I was Boatswain's Mate of the watch, on a clear, calm and bright moonlit night. About 0200 one of my watch hollered "Captain on the Bridge" as he was supposed to do. Captain Tyree came over to where I was, said hello and shook my hand since it was the first time we had spoken to each other. After a few minutes he said, "Boats send your messenger down to the galley for a big pot of coffee and a pail of cups." When the coffee and cups arrived, Captain Tyree and I made the rounds of all the lookout stations. I think there were eight stations. The Captain asked each lookout if he would like a cup of coffee and he said to each of them "It is ok have a smoke". One of the lookouts mentioned to the Captain that he was not supposed to light up while on lookout. Very quickly Captain Tyree said, "It's OK son, go ahead." This round of the lookouts took about an hour, and the memorable experience with Captain Tyree is still with me after all these years.

At that time I was a Boatswain's Mate Seaman (BMSN,) and several of the BMSN's were qualified to stand underway watches. I remember that Chief Bos'un Durham would take us down to the ship's sand locker and have us pipe the calls for him. If you failed this test of his, you could just forget about bridge watches, and also about making the (Petty Officer's) crow."

- submitted by:

BM3 Charles Jacobus
USS NEW JERSEY
Korean War

**"Single up all lines;
...Main Control,
stand by to
answer all bells!"**

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RADIO ROOM... by Dave and Margaret Burgess

This month, we have been asked by *The Jerseyman* to describe how the members of the Battleship New Jersey Amateur Radio Station were able to restore Radio Central (RC). Since there is no way to tell it all in just one article, over the next several *Jerseyman* issues, we will be describing how different areas of equipment in Radio Central (RC) were restored. This month we thought we would give you an insight into how the NAVMAC terminals came back to life. These articles may sound like things got done fast but you have to remember that our Radio volunteers were only there once a week on Saturday!

When we first viewed Radio Central (RC) in 2001, items large and small were stored on shelves, on the deck and under the desks. The first task we had was to take the vertical antennas stored in the room out to the weather deck so we had room to work. Then we inventoried what equipment was left. We also discovered 3 large pieces of equipment that we learned were NAVMAC (Naval Modular Automated Communications System) terminals. Since we had no drawings available at the time to tell us where they belonged, we had to figure it out another way, and this was done by starting an inventory of every cable and power panel in the room. Almost all the cables had numbers on them and some even had labels as to the equipment they were attached to. By entering all this info into a database we were able to determine where in the room the NAVMACS had been mounted. It was a start!

Our next task was to replace the missing equipment racks in RC. Luckily we were able to determine the size and style of the racks by looking at the paint outline on the foundation bases (footprints) around the room. We then scavenged around the ship and found racks that would fit those empty foundations. This may sound easy but it wasn't. We first had to find the right racks, then dismantle them, move them, sometimes up or down several decks, and finally re-install them on the empty foundations. Once this was completed we installed the terminals in the racks based on where the various cables were located. Of course, we ended up having to move them up or down on the racks to make sure the cables could reach them. Not an easy job since they were quite heavy! We also discovered other pieces of equipment that belonged in the racks and put them back in place. Now we were done - or were we?

In talking with the ship's Curator Scott Kodger, we learned he would like to see RC "come-to-life" for the visitors, and we agreed to do this. Now we had to figure out how to give equipment that had been demilitarized (chopped up) a second life. After tossing around ideas, we finally decided to "gut" the innards of the terminals, (which were unusable) and replace them with WYSE brand dummy terminals. Taking those terminals apart took awhile but we finally got all three done. Using the database inventory of cable ends, we found the correct power panels to give life to the monitors. Our next step was to have something actually displayed on the NAVMAC's. This was eventually accomplished by using our hobby of Amateur Radio to provide the live data to the terminals. The text seen on the screens of the three terminals are live, off the air data being sent between amateur radio stations scattered around the Delaware Valley and southern New Jersey.

Please take note that all the equipment was still in Radio Central when we arrived, and only the equipment racks were missing. This was because the Navy had use for the racks but not for the obsolete equipment.



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

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SHIP'S BELLS AND SHIP'S STORIES...

"Speaking of USS NEW JERSEY, here is a brief anecdote from my own experience with her. I was a Sonar Tech aboard USS GEORGE K MACKENZIE (DD-836) which was one of the first destroyers, if not *the* first, to operate with NEW JERSEY in Vietnam in 1968. We were using "DASH" and "Snoopy" to monitor shore bombardment during the exercise. The only monitor for Snoopy's video transmissions was in Sonar Control which was my assigned workspace. During the operation, our CO, CDR Sherwin J. Sleeper, came back to Sonar to watch what Snoopy was seeing. He pointed out a large shell crater on the screen and said, "See that? That's one of ours (5-inch.)" As the camera panned to the right another crater came into view. It was several times larger in diameter and much deeper than the first one, dwarfing it by comparison. We lacked any size reference other than trees but the relative difference was the same as between the size of a car and the size of a house. "That," he said, "is one of the New Jersey's."

On deck right after Knock Off that afternoon, several of us had been standing and watching BB-62 maneuver into position for shore bombardment when her sixteen-inchers opened fire. We were about three miles from the battleship at the time and saw the flash and smoke and watched as a shock wave disturbed the surface of the water toward us at the speed of sound. I wondered how much force it would have when it reached us. A low roar like distant thunder was all the sound it made and the shock wave wasn't much after all, but we could definitely feel it and that had come from firing only a single round. We never saw where the projectile hit but knew it was beyond the hills visible on the horizon, and well beyond our nine-mile range. New Jersey was an awesomely beautiful ship and I made it a point of going aboard during the open house in Yokosuka.

I hope you are successful in hearing from my fellow destroyer veterans, and I will urge them to contribute their ship's bell photos, and hopefully some recollections of once sailing alongside USS NEW JERSEY. Thank you for including destroyers as a part of honoring a great ship."

Terry Miller
Executive Director
Tin Can Sailors, Inc.
The National Association of Destroyer Veterans

USS TOPEKA (CLG-8)

This past month, *The Jerseyman* received a ship's bell photo for USS TOPEKA (CLG-8), along with this note:

"A few years back, we appointed John Deford (SA 64-67) of Bloomfield, CO., as "Keeper of the Bell." Don is an over-the-road truck driver who frequently passes through Topeka. Each time he passes through, he finds time to stop and polish the bell."

Jack Connery (64-66), Editor,
USS Topeka Reunion Ass'n Newsletter



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Notice: A final set of 8 photos in our volunteer "Yesterday" series will be published with our September issue...

TODAY'S BATTLESHIP NEW JERSEY VOLUNTEERS...



Volunteer and
Docent Supervisor
BMSN **Tony Pizzi**
USS POCONO (AGC-16)
"She was the Amphibious force
Flag, and General Communica-
tion ship. We had an
Admiral and Marine General
aboard , so we were always
"spit and polish...
and lots of inspections."



Volunteer **Harvey Morton** was employed as a "Shipwright" at the
Philadelphia Naval Shipyard from 1960 to 1963.
He remembers building "many scaffolds for
USS Kitty Hawk, USS Dahlgren, USS Pratt, USS Okinawa..."



Plankowner and volunteer MM3 **Russ Collins**
USS NEW JERSEY (BB-62)
1943-1946, Engine Room #1
"I was second loader of 20mm guns mid-ship, Port side.
GQ was at Sunrise and Sunset every day...
and sometimes it lasted all day, or all night."




