



**FINAL DAYS
OF
WORLD WAR II...**



**3rd Quarter
2009**

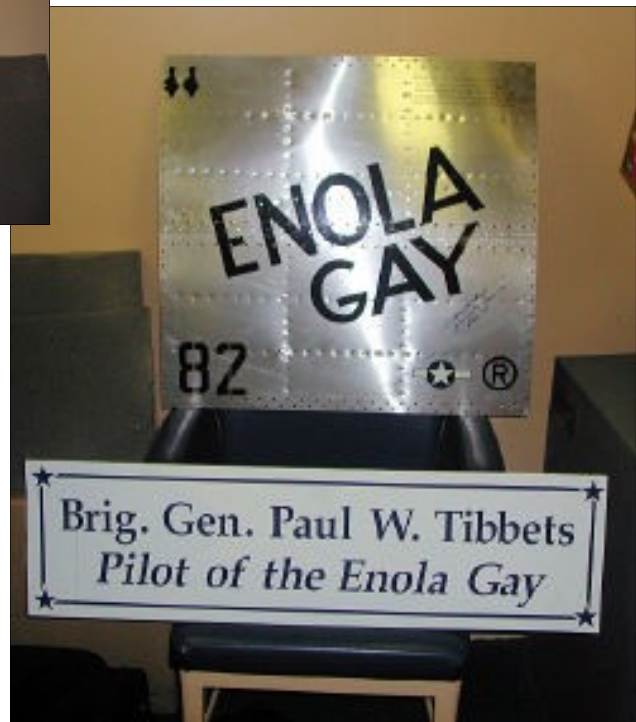
"Rest well, yet sleep lightly and hear the call, if again sounded, to provide firepower for freedom..."

THE JERSEYMAN

7 Years - Nr. 63



June 8, 2004...



THE JERSEYMAN

The last days of World War II...

On June 8, 2004, **Brig. General Paul Tibbets, Jr., USAF, (Ret.)**, visited the Battleship New Jersey. He was piped aboard by 16 veterans of World War II, and all were also long-time ship's volunteers.

At the time, General Tibbets was 89 years old, his hearing very poor, and he used a large hearing aid with a hand-held microphone... it was not hard to see that he was also not having an easy time getting around. But he did make the trip to visit Battleship New Jersey that day, and as he came aboard walking slowly down the brow through a line of saluting men as sideboys, World War II Veteran Ed Miller piped honors, and Tibbets smiled broadly through it all as he walked aboard on his own.

The General was then escorted to the Captain's cabin and each of the World War II veterans had a chance to exchange a few words with him. To a man, as they held on tightly to his hand, they thanked him for that day on August 6, 1945, when, as the pilot of the B-29 *Enola Gay*, he and his crew dropped the atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Several of the men used the same phrase... "I wouldn't be here today if you hadn't dropped that bomb." One had the feeling Tibbets had heard that comment many times before.

General Tibbets, gracious and smiling during the entire 5 hours that he was aboard Battleship New Jersey, answered all questions asked and offered many of his own stories about his famous 509th Composite Group, describing the Hiroshima bombing mission from takeoff to return, and a few other combat flight stories none of us had heard before.

Always outspoken, he made it very clear that he had no regrets about Hiroshima "I never lost one night of sleep over it.

I wanted to do everything that I could to subdue Japan. I wanted to kill the bastards. That was the attitude of the United States in those years."



During a Columbus Dispatch news interview in 2005 Tibbets said - "I don't fear a goddamn thing. I'm not afraid of dying. As soon as the death certificate is signed, I want to be cremated. I don't want a funeral. I don't want to be eulogized. I don't want any monuments or plaques. I want my ashes scattered over water where I loved to fly - The English Channel."

General Tibbets died on November 1, 2007 at his home in Columbus, Ohio. He was 92.

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During research to commemorate General Tibbets' visit to Battleship New Jersey five years ago, we found an article titled; "*An Invasion Not Found in the History Books (or why we dropped the Atomic Bomb)*" by **James Martin Davis**. We did not have to look any further...

Our thanks to Mr. Davis for permitting us to reprint his article in *The Jerseyman*. - TH

**"I never lost one night of sleep over it. I wanted to do everything that I could to subdue Japan. I wanted to kill the bastards. That was the attitude of the United States in those years."**  
**-Paul Tibbets, BGen., USAF, Retired.**



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### An Invasion Not Found in the History Books (or why we dropped the Atomic Bomb) by James Martin Davis, Esq. Omaha, Nebraska

Published in the *Omaha World Herald*, Nov, 1987.  
Reprinted in *The Jerseyman* with  
permission of the author.

Deep in the recesses of the National Archives in Washington, D.C., hidden for nearly four decades, lie thousands of pages of yellowing and dusty documents stamped "Top Secret". These documents, now declassified, are the plans for *Operation Downfall*, the invasion of Japan during World War II. Only a few Americans in 1945 were aware of the elaborate plans that had been prepared for the Allied Invasion of the Japanese home islands. Even fewer today are aware of the defenses the Japanese had prepared to counter the invasion had it been launched. Operation Downfall was finalized during the spring and summer of 1945. It called for two massive military undertakings to be carried out in succession and aimed at the heart of the Japanese Empire.

In the first invasion - code named *Operation Olympic* - American combat troops would land on Japan by amphibious assault during the early morning hours of November 1, 1945 - 50 years ago. Fourteen combat divisions of soldiers and Marines would land on heavily fortified and defended Kyushu, the southernmost of the Japanese home islands, after an unprecedented naval and aerial bombardment.

The second invasion on March 1, 1946 - code named *Operation Coronet* - would send at least 22 divisions against 1 million Japanese defenders on the main island of Honshu and the Tokyo Plain. Its goal: the unconditional surrender of Japan.

With the exception of a part of the British Pacific Fleet, Operation Downfall was to be a strictly American operation. It called for using the entire Marine Corps, the entire Pacific Navy, elements of the 7th Army Air Force, the 8 Air Force (recently redeployed from Europe), 10th Air Force and the American Far Eastern Air Force. More than 1.5 million combat soldiers, with 3 million more in support or more than 40% of all servicemen still in uniform in 1945 - would be directly involved in the two amphibious assaults. Casualties were expected to be extremely heavy.

Admiral William Leahy estimated that there would be more than 250,000 Americans killed or wounded on Kyushu alone. General Charles Willoughby, chief of intelligence for General Douglas MacArthur, the Supreme Commander of the Southwest Pacific, estimated American casualties would be one million men by the fall of 1946. Willoughby's own intelligence staff considered this to be a conservative estimate.

During the summer of 1945, America had little time to prepare for such an endeavor, but top military leaders were in almost unanimous agreement that an invasion was necessary.

While naval blockade and strategic bombing of Japan was considered to be useful, General MacArthur, for instance, did not believe a blockade would bring about an unconditional surrender. The advocates for invasion agreed that while a naval blockade chokes, it does not kill; and though strategic bombing might destroy cities, it leaves whole armies intact.

So on May 25, 1945, the Joint Chiefs of Staff, after extensive deliberation, issued to General MacArthur, Admiral Chester Nimitz, and Army Air Force General Henry Arnold, the top secret directive to proceed with the invasion of Kyushu. The target date was after the typhoon season.

President Truman approved the plans for the invasions July 24. Two days later, the United Nations issued the Potsdam Proclamation, which called upon Japan to surrender unconditionally or face total destruction. Three days later, the Japanese governmental news agency broadcast to the world that Japan would ignore the proclamation and would refuse to surrender. During this sane period it was learned -- via monitoring Japanese radio broadcasts -- that Japan had closed all schools and mobilized its schoolchildren, was arming its civilian population and was fortifying caves and building underground defenses.

Operation Olympic called for a four pronged assault on Kyushu. Its purpose was to seize and control the southern one-third of that island and establish naval and air bases, to tighten the naval blockade of the home islands, to destroy units of the main Japanese army and to support the later invasion of the Tokyo Plain.

The preliminary invasion would begin October 27 when the 40th Infantry Division would land on a series of small islands west and southwest of Kyushu.

At the same time, the 158th Regimental Combat Team would invade and occupy a small island 28 miles south of Kyushu. On these islands, seaplane bases would be established and radar would be set up to provide advance air warning for the invasion fleet, to serve



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as fighter direction centers for the carrier-based aircraft and to provide an emergency anchorage for the invasion fleet, should things not go well on the day of the invasion.

As the invasion grew imminent, the massive firepower of the Navy - the Third and Fifth Fleets -- would approach Japan. The Third Fleet, under Admiral William "Bull" Halsey, with its big guns and naval aircraft, would provide strategic support for the operation against Honshu and Hokkaido. Halsey's fleet would be composed of battleships, heavy cruisers, destroyers, dozens of support ships and three fast carrier task groups. From these carriers, hundreds of Navy fighters, dive bombers and torpedo planes would hit targets all over the island of Honshu. The 3,000 ship Fifth Fleet, under Admiral Raymond Spruance, would carry the invasion troops.

Several days before the invasion, the battleships, heavy cruisers and destroyers would pour thousands of tons of high explosives into the target areas. They would not cease the bombardment until after the land forces had been launched. During the early morning hours of November 1, the invasion would begin. Thousands of soldiers and Marines would pour ashore on beaches all along the eastern, southeastern, southern and western coasts of Kyushu. Waves of Helldivers, Dauntless dive bombers, Avengers, Corsairs, and Hellcats from 66 aircraft carriers would bomb, rocket and strafe enemy defenses, gun emplacements and troop concentrations along the beaches.

The Eastern Assault Force consisting of the 25th, 33rd and 41st Infantry Divisions would land near Miyaski, at beaches called Austin, Buick, Cadillac, Chevrolet, Chrysler, and Ford, and move inland to attempt to capture the city and its nearby airfield. The Southern Assault Force, consisting of the 1st Cavalry Division, the 43rd Division and Americal Division would land inside Ariake Bay at beaches labeled DeSoto, Dusenbergl, Essex, Ford, and Franklin and attempt to capture Shibushi and the city of Kanoya and its airfield.

On the western shore of Kyushu, at beaches Pontiac, Reo, Rolls Royce, Saxon, Star, Studebaker, Stutz, Winston and Zephyr, the V Amphibious Corps would land the 2nd, 3rd and 5th Marine Divisions, sending half of its force inland to Sendai and the other half to the port city of Kagoshima.

On November 4, the Reserve Force, consisting of the 81st and 98th Infantry Divisions and the 11th Airborne Division, after feigning an attack of the island of Shikoku, would be landed -- if not needed elsewhere

-- near Kaimondake, near the southernmost tip of Kagoshima Bay, at the beaches designated Locomobile, Lincoln, LaSalle, Hupmobile, Moon, Mercedes, Maxwell, Overland, Oldsmobile, Packard and Plymouth.

Olympic was not just a plan for invasion, but for conquest and occupation as well. It was expected to take four months to achieve its objective, with the three fresh American divisions per month to be landed in support of that operation if needed.

If all went well with Olympic, Coronet would be launched March 1, 1946. Coronet would be twice the size of Olympic, with as many as 28 divisions landing on Honshu.

All along the coast east of Tokyo, the American 1st Army would land the 5th, 7th, 27th, 44th, 86th, and 96th Infantry Divisions along with the 4th and 6th Marine Divisions.

At Sagami Bay, just south of Tokyo, the entire 8th and 10th Armies would strike north and east to clear the long western shore of Tokyo Bay and attempt to go as far as Yokohama. The assault troops landing south of Tokyo would be the 4th, 6th, 8th, 24th, 31st, 37th, 38th and 8th Infantry Divisions, along with the 13th and 20th Armored Divisions.

Following the initial assault, eight more divisions - the 2nd, 28th, 35th, 91st, 95th, 97th and 104th Infantry Divisions and the 11th Airborne Division -- would be landed. If additional troops were needed, as expected, other divisions redeployed from Europe and undergoing training in the United States would be shipped to Japan in what was hoped to be the final push.

Captured Japanese documents and post war interrogations of Japanese military leaders disclose that information concerning the number of Japanese planes available for the defense of the home islands was dangerously in error.

During the sea battle at Okinawa alone, Japanese kamikaze aircraft sank 32 Allied ships and damaged more than 400 others. But during the summer of 1945, American top brass concluded that the Japanese had spent their air force since American bombers and fighters daily flew unmolested over Japan.

What the military leaders did not know was that by the end of July the Japanese had been saving all aircraft, fuel, and pilots in reserve, and had been feverishly building new planes for the decisive battle for their homeland.

As part of *Ketsu-Go*, the name for the plan to defend Japan -- the Japanese were building 20 suicide-takeoff strips in southern Kyushu with underground

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seaplane bases.

On the night before the expected invasion, 50 Japanese seaplane bombers, 100 former carrier aircraft and 50 land based army planes were to be launched in a suicide attack on the fleet.

The Japanese had 58 more airfields in Korea, western Honshu and Shikoku, which also were to be used for massive suicide attacks.

Allied intelligence had established that the Japanese had no more than 2,500 aircraft of which they guessed 300 would be deployed in suicide attacks.

In August 1945, however, unknown to Allied intelligence, the Japanese still had 5,651 army and 7,074 navy aircraft, for a total of 12,725 planes of all types. Every village had some type of aircraft manufacturing activity. Hidden in mines, railway tunnels, under viaducts and in basements of department stores, work was being done to construct new planes.

Additionally, the Japanese were building newer and more effective models of the Okka, a rocket propelled bomb much like the German V-1, but flown by a suicide pilot.

When the invasion became imminent, *Ketsu-Go* called for a fourfold aerial plan of attack to destroy up to 800 Allied ships.

While Allied ships were approaching Japan, but still in the open seas, an initial force of 2,000 army and navy fighters were to fight to the death to control the skies over Kyushu. A second force of 330 navy combat pilots were to attack the main body of the task force to keep it from using its fire support and air cover to protect the troop carrying transports. While these two forces were engaged, a third force of 825 suicide planes was to hit the American transports.

As the invasion convoys approached their anchorages, another 2,000 suicide planes were to be launched in waves of 200 to 300, to be used in hour by hour attacks.

By mid-morning of the first day of the invasion, most of the American land-based aircraft would be forced to return to their bases, leaving the defense against the suicide planes to the carrier pilots and the shipboard gunners.

Carrier pilots crippled by fatigue would have to land time and time again to rearm and refuel. Guns would malfunction from the heat of continuous firing and ammunition would become scarce. Gun crews would be exhausted by nightfall, but still the waves of Kamikaze would continue. With the fleet hovering off the beaches, all remaining Japanese aircraft would be committed to nonstop suicide attacks, which the Japanese hoped could be sustained for 10 days. The Japanese

planned to coordinate their air strikes with attacks from the 40 remaining submarines from the Imperial Navy -- some armed with Long Lance torpedoes with a range of 20 miles -- when the invasion fleet was 180 miles off Kyushu.

The Imperial Navy had 23 destroyers and two cruisers which were operational. These ships were to be used to counterattack the American invasion. A number of the destroyers were to be beached at the last minute to be used as anti-invasion gun platforms.

Once offshore, the invasion fleet would be forced to defend not only against the attacks from the air, but would also be confronted with suicide attacks from sea. Japan had established a suicide naval attack unit of midget submarines, human torpedoes and exploding motor boats.

The goal of the Japanese was to shatter the invasion before the landing. The Japanese were convinced the Americans would back off or become so demoralized that they would then accept a less-than-unconditional surrender and a more honorable and face-saving end for the Japanese.

But as horrible as the battle of Japan would be off the beaches, it would be on Japanese soil that the American forces would face the most rugged and fanatical defense encountered during the war.

Throughout the island-hopping Pacific campaign, Allied troops had always outnumbered the Japanese by 2 to 1 and sometimes 3 to 1. In Japan it would be different. By virtue of a combination of cunning, guesswork, and brilliant military reasoning, a number of Japan's top military leaders were able to deduce, not only when, but where, the United States would land its first invasion forces.

Facing the 14 American divisions landing at Kyushu would be 14 Japanese divisions, 7 independent mixed brigades, 3 tank brigades and thousands of naval troops. On Kyushu the odds would be 3 to 2 in favor of the Japanese, with 790,000 enemy defenders against 550,000 Americans. This time the bulk of the Japanese defenders would not be the poorly trained and ill-equipped labor battalions that the Americans had faced in the earlier campaigns.

The Japanese defenders would be the hard core of the home army. These troops were well-fed and well equipped. They were familiar with the terrain, had stockpiles of arms and ammunition, and had developed an effective system of transportation and supply almost invisible from the air. Many of these Japanese troops were the elite of the army, and they were swollen with a fanatical fighting spirit.

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Japan's network of beach defenses consisted of offshore mines, thousands of suicide scuba divers attacking landing craft, and mines planted on the beaches. Coming ashore, the American Eastern amphibious assault forces at Miyazaki would face three Japanese divisions, and two others poised for counterattack. Awaiting the Southeastern attack force at Ariake Bay was an entire division and at least one mixed infantry brigade.

On the western shores of Kyushu, the Marines would face the most brutal opposition. Along the invasion beaches would be the three Japanese divisions, a tank brigade, a mixed infantry brigade and an artillery command. Components of two divisions would also be poised to launch counterattacks.

If not needed to reinforce the primary landing beaches, the American Reserve Force would be landed at the base of Kagoshima Bay November 4, where they would be confronted by two mixed infantry brigades, parts of two infantry divisions and thousands of naval troops.

All along the invasion beaches, American troops would face coastal batteries, anti-landing obstacles and a network of heavily fortified pillboxes, bunkers, and underground fortresses. As Americans waded ashore, they would face intense artillery and mortar fire as they worked their way through concrete rubble and barbed-wire entanglements arranged to funnel them into the muzzles of these Japanese guns.

On the beaches and beyond would be hundreds of Japanese machine gun positions, beach mines, booby traps, trip-wire mines and sniper units. Suicide units concealed in "spider holes" would engage the troops as they passed nearby. In the heat of battle, Japanese infiltration units would be sent to reap havoc in the American lines by cutting phone and communication lines. Some of the Japanese troops would be in American uniform, and English-speaking Japanese officers were assigned to break in on American radio traffic to call off artillery fire, to order retreats and to further confuse troops. Other infiltration with demolition charges strapped on their chests or backs would attempt to blow up American tanks, artillery pieces and ammunition stores as they were unloaded ashore.

Beyond the beaches were large artillery pieces situated to bring down a curtain of fire on the beach. Some of these large guns were mounted on railroad tracks running in and out of caves protected by concrete and steel.

The battle for Japan would be won by what Simon Bolivar Buckner, a lieutenant general in the Confederate army during the Civil War, had called "Prairie

Dog Warfare." This type of fighting was almost unknown to the ground troops in Europe and the Mediterranean. It was peculiar only to the soldiers and Marines who fought the Japanese on islands all over the Pacific - at Tarawa, Saipan, Iwo Jima and Okinawa.

Prairie Dog Warfare was a battle for yards, feet and sometimes inches. It was brutal, deadly and dangerous form of combat aimed at an underground, heavily fortified, non-retreating enemy.

In the mountains behind the Japanese beaches were underground networks of caves, bunkers, command posts and hospitals connected by miles of tunnels with dozens of entrances and exits. Some of these complexes could hold up to 1,000 troops.

In addition to the use of poison gas and bacteriological warfare (which the Japanese had experimented with), Japan mobilized its citizenry.

Had Olympic come about, the Japanese civilian population, inflamed by a national slogan - "One Hundred Million Will Die for the Emperor and Nation" - were prepared to fight to the death. Twenty Eight Million Japanese had become a part of the National Volunteer Combat Force. They were armed with ancient rifles, lunge mines, satchel charges, Molotov cocktails and one-shot black powder mortars. Others were armed with swords, long bows, axes and bamboo spears.

The civilian units were to be used in nighttime attacks, hit and run maneuvers, delaying actions and massive suicide charges at the weaker American positions.

At the early stage of the invasion, 1,000 Japanese and American soldiers would be dying every hour.

The invasion of Japan never became a reality because on August 6, 1945, an atomic bomb was exploded over Hiroshima. Three days later, a second bomb was dropped on Nagasaki. Within days the war with Japan was at a close.

Had these bombs not been dropped and had the invasion been launched as scheduled, combat casualties in Japan would have been at a minimum of the tens of thousands. Every foot of Japanese soil would have been paid for by Japanese and American lives.

One can only guess at how many civilians would have committed suicide in their homes or in futile mass military attacks.

In retrospect, the 1 million American men who were to be the casualties of the invasion, were instead lucky enough to survive the war.

Intelligence studies and military estimates made 50 years ago, and not latter-day speculation, clearly indicate that the battle for Japan might well have resulted



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In the biggest blood-bath in the history of modern warfare.

Far worse would be what might have happened to Japan as a nation and as a culture. When the invasion came, it would have come after several months of fire bombing all of the remaining Japanese cities. The cost in human life that resulted from the two atomic blasts would be small in comparison to the total number of Japanese lives that would have been lost by this aerial devastation.

With American forces locked in combat in the south of Japan, little could have prevented the Soviet Union from marching into the northern half of the Japanese home islands. Japan today could be divided much like Korea and Germany.

The world was spared the cost of Operation Downfall, however, because Japan formally surrendered to the United Nations September 2, 1945, and World War II was over.

The aircraft carriers, cruisers and transport ships scheduled to carry the invasion troops to Japan, ferried home American troops in a gigantic operation called Magic Carpet.

In the fall of 1945, in the aftermath of the war, few people concerned themselves with the invasion plans. Following the surrender, the classified documents, maps, diagrams and appendices for Operation Downfall were packed away in boxes and eventually stored at the National Archives. These plans that called for the invasion of Japan paint a vivid description of what might have been one of the most horrible campaigns in the history of man. The fact that the story of the invasion of Japan is locked up in the National Archives and is not told in our history books is something for which all Americans can be thankful.

### The Ivan Dexter Story... by Herb Fahr (Newsletter Editor USS *Missouri* (BB-63) Ass'n.)

Ivan Dexter joined the Navy on August 26, 1943, and he said it was the day after his birthday. He served as a Pharmacists mate/Corpsman and was with the invasion forces when they hit Normandy beach on D-Day, 6 June 1944. Following that, Ivan then served aboard U.S.S. *Missouri* (BB-63), and he joined the ship at San Francisco on its way to the Pacific.

Dexter told me of what he remembered when the now famous photo of a Kamikaze plane, at nearly the instant of impact, hit USS *Missouri* on April 11, 1945. When it hit, the top half of the pilot was strewn aboard the main deck of the ship while his other half went into the deep with what was left of his plane.



### U.S. Naval Historical Center Photo

When the Kamikaze hit the ship, Dexter was below at his GQ station in one of the boiler rooms. Soon after, the pilot's remains were brought down to sick bay for a post mortem when battle stations were secured. Ivan also remembered shipmates taking souvenirs of the pilot's clothing, his white scarf, his leather jacket and flight helmet. Along with other items, Ivan kept a piece of the pilot's white silk scarf. He remembered that the scarf, which was faded after 60 years, had sewn-in chrysanthemums.

After the doctor's examination the pilot's remains were encased in a canvas bag together with a few dummy shell casings to give it weight, as it had been decided that a military burial at sea was in order. The Marines assigned to do the honors at first refused the assignment, as this was the enemy! Ivan remembered that it was either Captain William M. Callaghan, or Admiral "Bull" Halsey himself, that said the Marines *would* render military honors, or they would be on the beach the next morning on Okinawa.

Ivan Dexter was assigned as one of the pallbearers, "along with Bob X. Snider and Larry M. Hogan", and the pilot's body was draped with a Jap flag sewn by the ship's Bosn's mates. Ivan didn't remember exactly how many there were, but the Navy photo shows that there were six pallbearers. At the designated time, they assembled and the ship's Chaplain asked if everything was in order. The response was affirmative. Instead of a liturgy, the Chaplain simply said, "Commit his body to the deep". And with that, the bearers slid the body over the side and a volley of Marine rifle fire followed. It was the end of a ceremony offered for an enemy that brought devastation on their

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ship, but luckily, there were no American casualties. There was still much bitterness on the part of many in the crew, but now, the honorable thing was done.



(Photo courtesy of Herb Fahr)

Ivan Dexter also related how he took part in Missouri's landing party, hitting the beach at Yokosuka Naval Base even prior to the September 2 surrender signing. There he found a box containing the personal effects of a Kamikaze pilot. It had several letters, a fan, and some picture post cards not filled out or mailed. One was a French post card depicting buxom

bathing beauties, and he remembered also wondering about the fate of *that* Kamikaze pilot. The letters have been submitted to the USS *Missouri* Memorial Museum where they will eventually be translated. A Japanese Army rifle was also donated as well as the Japanese fan.

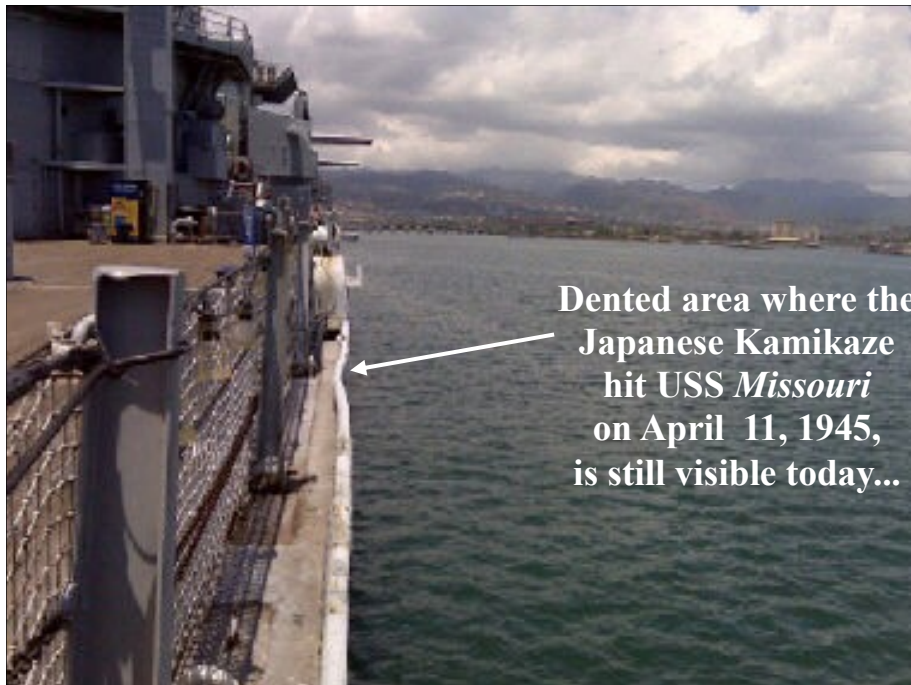
In later years, Ivan recalled his World War II time in the Navy by drawing a series of cartoons with his created character called "*Little-Mo.*" He submitted these cartoons to the editor of the Missouri Association's Newsletter, the *Missourian II*, and they ran in our newsletter for several years during the 1990's. The cartoons depicted life aboard ship, and on the beach, as Ivan had remembered it from his Navy time during the war.

In 2001, at 76 years of age, Ivan Dexter developed Parkinson's disease and spent the remainder of his life living in a Long Island, New York nursing home. Shipmate Ivan Dexter died on May 13, 2002.

Written by:

**Herb Fahr, Jr**

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May 16, 2009 photo - USS *Missouri* (BB-63)  
Courtesy of CDR Al Broch, USNR  
Auburn, Washington



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***Partial list of Allied ships present at the  
Japanese Surrender  
2 September 1945 - Tokyo Bay.***

### AIRCRAFT CARRIERS --

CVA-10 Yorktown  
CVA-11 Intrepid  
CVA-14 Ticonderoga  
CVA-15 Randolph  
CVA-18 Wasp  
CVA-19 Hancock  
CVA-20 Bennington  
CVA-36 Antietam  
CVE-90 Thetis Bay  
CVE-93 Makin Island  
CVE-97 Hollandia  
CVE-104 Munda  
CVE-107 Gilbert Islands  
CVE-108 Roi  
CVL-22 Independence  
CVL-24 Belleau Wood  
CVL-25 Cowpens  
CVL-26 Monterey  
CVL-28 Cabot  
CVL-29 Bataan

### BATTLESHIPS --

BB-40 New Mexico  
BB-41 Mississippi  
BB-42 Idaho  
BB-45 Colorado  
BB-48 West Virginia  
BB-55 North Carolina  
BB-57 South Dakota  
BB-58 Indiana  
BB-60 Alabama  
BB-61 Iowa  
BB-63 Missouri  
BB-64 Wisconsin

### CRUISERS --

CA-69 Boston  
CA-71 Quincy  
CA-73 Saint Paul  
CA-136 Chicago  
CL-8 Detroit  
CL-65 Pasadena  
CL-66 Springfield  
CL-67 Topeka

CL-86 Vicksburg  
CL-87 Duluth  
CL-91 Oklahoma City  
CL-101 Amsterdam  
CL-103 Wilkes Barre  
CL-104 Atlanta  
CL-105 Dayton  
CLAA-53 San Diego  
CLAA-54 San Juan  
CLAA-95 Oakland  
CLAA-97 Flint  
CLAA-98 Tucson

### DESTROYERS —

DD-440 Ellyson  
DD-441 Wilkes  
DD-442 Nicholson  
DD-449 Nickolas  
DD-450 O'Bannon  
DD-460 Woodworth  
DD-468 Taylor  
DD-484 Buchanan  
DD-486 Lansdown  
DD-499 Rensam  
DD-513 Terry  
DD-540 Twining  
DD-541 Yarnall  
DD-554 Franks  
DD-563 Ross  
DD-573 Harrison  
DD-574 John Rodgers  
DD-609 Gillespie  
DD-611 Kalk  
DD-645 Stevenson  
DD-646 Stockton  
DD-647 Thorn  
DD-650 Caperton  
DD-651 Cogswell  
DD-652 Ingersoll  
DD-653 Knapp  
DD-658 Colahan  
DD-668 C.K. Bronson  
DD-669 Cotton  
DD-670 Dortch  
DD-671 Gatling

DD-672 Healy  
DD-681 Hopewell  
DD-683 Stockham  
DD-684 Wedderbur  
DD-686 Halsey Powell  
DD-687 Uhlmann  
DD-692 Allen M. Sumner  
DD-694 Ingraham  
DD-722 Barton  
DD-723 Walke  
DD-725 O'Brian  
DD-742 Frank Knox  
DD-743 Southerland  
DD-770 Lowery  
DD-781 Huntington  
DD-797 Cushing  
DD-805 Chevalier  
DD-829 Myles O. Fox  
DD-857 Bristol  
DD-873 Hawkins  
DD-874 Duncan  
DD-876 Rogers  
DD-877 Perkins

### DESTROYER TENDER - AD-17 Piedmont

### FAST MINESWEEPER -

DMS-458 Macomb  
DMS-621 Jeffers  
DMS-249 Hopkins  
DMS-20 Hambleron  
DMS-25 Fitch  
DMS-30 Gherardi

### FLEET TUGBOAT —

AFT-82 Chawasha  
AFT-104 Moctobi  
AFT-105 Molara  
AFT-162 Wenaache

### HOSPITAL SHIPS —

AH-13 Benevolence  
AH-14 Tranquility  
AH-18 Rescue

### LANDING CRAFT INF. —

LCI(RCO)-647  
LCI(RCO)-649  
LCI(RCO)-762

LCI(RCO)-763  
LCI(RCO)-785  
LCI(RCO)-1024  
LCI(RCO)-1026  
LCI(RCO)-1067  
LCI(RCO)-1069  
LCI(RCO)-1070

### BRITISH FLEET SHIPS

HMS King George V (BB)  
HMS Duke of York (BB)  
HMS Indefatigable (CVA)  
HMS New Foundland (CA)  
HMS Whelp (DD)  
HMS Barflur (DD)  
HMS Wager (DD)  
HMS Tenacious (DD)  
HMS Tremagent (DD)  
HMS Nizam (DD)  
HMS Napire (DD)  
HMS Wrangler (DD)  
HMS Wakefield (DD)  
HMS Terpsichore (DD)  
HMS Troubridge (DD)  
HMS Teazer (DD)  
HMS Tjitjaleneka (DD)  
HMNZS Gambia (CA)

Also in Tokyo Bay was the Japanese battleship Nagato, plus several support vessels, most of which were either scuttled or severely damaged.

Compiled by the Editorial Staff of the Missouriian II, official newsletter of the U.S.S. Missouri (BB-63) Association.

Submitted by:  
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Association  
Plainview, New York

## THE JERSEYMAN

Along with this partial list of ships in Tokyo Bay, Herb Fahr of the USS *Missouri*, asked where USS *New Jersey* was located on 2 September 1945. We sent the diary entry that was kept by crewman CWO Victor Feltes. He meticulously kept a nearly daily record from the ship's commissioning on 23 May 1943 until the end of the war...

**July 4, 1945**, USS NEW JERSEY underway again for Long Beach, and a 10 day refresher course and gunnery exercise, before leaving for the combat area.

**August 2, 1945**, USS NEW JERSEY put out for the forward area, and Eniwetok for a couple of weeks and to pick up Admiral Halsey. He will transfer his flag from USS MISSOURI. On the way, we will throw some shells at Wake Island.

**August 8, 1945** at 1000, we started to bombard Wake Island with 16" (106 rounds are recorded as fired at Wake... opening up at 16,000 yards.) Return fire was encountered from the beach when we closed to work them over with 5".

**Aug 10, 1945** another atomic bomb dropped on Japan!

**August 13, 1945** anchored in Apra Harbor, Guam at 1235 hours...

**August 15, 1945** It's official, the war is over!

**Aug 17, 1945** Admiral Spruance's flag raised aboard USS NEW JERSEY!

Brief stays at Manila and Okinawa preceded the ship's arrival in Tokyo Bay on 17 September.

USS *New Jersey* served as flagship for the successive commanders of Naval Forces in Japanese waters until she was relieved on 28 January 1946 by USS *Iowa* (BB-61). - TH

### World War II Veterans/ship's volunteers honored by the State of New Jersey...



Not all of Battleship New Jersey's WWII Veteran Volunteers were able to make it aboard ship for the ceremony 21 April, but many of them were there, to accept a New Jersey commemorative medallion designed to honor World War II veterans, and presented as part of Volunteerism week. The veterans were all greeted by Major General Glenn K. Reith, Adjutant General of New Jersey, who said...: "It was your sacrifice that allowed all of us, my own baby boomer generation included, to follow the American dream, and this was just a way for us to say thanks to those World War II veterans that continue to serve even today." He went on to compliment all Battleship New Jersey volunteers, who would soon pass the 500,000 hour mark for volunteer service in May 2009

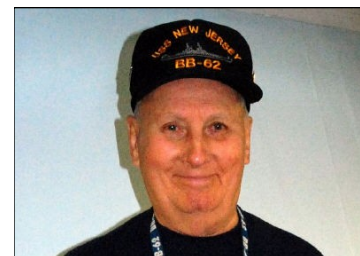
Following the ceremony, the veterans posed for *The Jerseyman* photos, and recalled a few memories of what they remembered from the final days of the war...

### Russ Collins... USS *New Jersey*

"When the war ended, *New Jersey* was anchored in Agana, Guam. I can remember being on the fantail

when the announcement came over the 1MC. White hats flew into the air all over the ship, and lots of them ended up over the side. The next announcement was "knock off throwing hats over the side!"

From Guam we went to the Philippines, and then headed for Tokyo Bay. As we headed north, I remembered watching a work detail and thinking "what are those guys doing"? They were holystoning paint off the decks, and the teak was showing through! That's when it settled in for me - the war was really over."



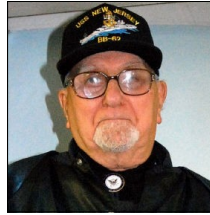
## THE JERSEYMAN

### Bob Westcott... USS *New Jersey*

When President Roosevelt died, I remember copying the Fox Broadcast announcement in plain language, and was startled when the message of his death came over. The date was April 12, 1945.

When the end of the war was announced in August 1945, I was under one of the catapults reading... there were groups of sailors forming all over the ship, excited and talking about it.

I returned to the states aboard the *USS General Sturgis* (AP-137) to Bremerton, Washington, and from there we took a loaded navy train to Bainbridge, Maryland for our discharge...



### Bob Cassel...

#### 94th Infantry Division, US Army, 1941 to 1946.

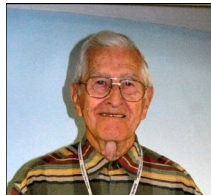
My entire division sailed to Europe aboard HMTS Queen Elizabeth. There were 16,000 of us on the ship, and we fought all through Europe, including the Battle of the Bulge.

During the last couple of weeks of the Second World War we were training for the invasion of Japan. The second Atomic Bomb ended all training...



### Dick Edwards... US Coast Guard Station, Manhattan Beach.

"When the war ended, I was already in Times Square on liberty. New York was going nuts, and no, it wasn't me that kissed the nurse in the middle of Times Square!"



### Frank DeRoberts... USS *Oregon City* (CA-122)

I had just arrived at Mayport, R.I., and waiting ship assignment. I was there on VE-Day. I will always remember...



### Dave Wetherspoon...

Two month after the war ended, I went to boot camp at Great Lakes (November 1945,) and served in USS *North Carolina*. I made the US Navy a career and retired in 1966...



### George Hunt... US Navy 1943-1946

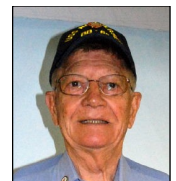
After being in all the landings for the Philippines and Okinawa, my LCC crew (12 men), were back in Pearl Harbor training for the invasion of Japan. On August 6, 1945, the day the first A-Bomb was dropped on Hiroshima, I was on liberty and heading into Honolulu when I heard the EXTRA! newspaper being hawked by newsboys.

The Japanese homeland defense plans would have been very tough for all of us. I pray, thanking President Harry Truman, every night...



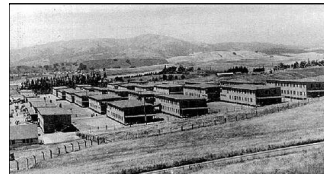
### Jim Ramentol... US Marine Corps

I was with other Marine NCO's at Boca Chica, Florida before the war ended. We were preparing as part of Fleet Marine Force (FMF) to invade Japan. When the news came out the war was over, there was absolutely joy and thanksgiving! I don't know any of us that was not in favor of dropping the A-bomb...

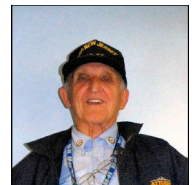


### Harry Frank... US Naval Air HEDRON 8, and CASU 6

My 30 day leave was cancelled when the A-Bomb was dropped. While waiting for re-assignment, I was trans-



ferred to Camp Shoemaker, Alameda, California, to help discharge our returning personnel... (National Archives Photo)



### Bill Schacht...

In June of 1945 I had just graduated from High School, joined the Navy, and was awaiting orders to go to Boot Camp when the Japs surrendered.

After Boot Camp I was assigned to LCT 813 in San Francisco Cal., and we went into dry-dock along with the carrier "Intrepid".

Following that we were supposed to go to Alaska but the Navy shipped me back to Staten Island, N.Y., and to ATR8 ( Auxiliary Tug Rescue -- like the one that towed BB 62 here from Washington ) for Air, Sea Rescue work from Maine to New Jersey. I was discharged late in 1946.

I again served as a First Lieutenant in the Army Ordnance Corps (guided missiles) from 1951 to 1955.





## THE JERSEYMAN

### Bonalyn "Bonnie" Selb...



When I joined the Waves in 1943, we were all sent to boot camp at Hunter College in Bronx, New York. When the war ended I was a Specialist "Q", Second Class (CP), which meant cryptographer. We were part of OP-20-G, Navy Communications, Navy Intelligence, and stationed at the Communications Annex on Nebraska and

Massachusetts avenues in Washington, D.C. Our barracks were located at Quarters "D", the largest on the East Coast.

When peace was announced, I was in Washington, D.C, and we all went out into the street to celebrate. Then, as night fell, all was dark and we had total blackout - the beautiful skyline was all dark.



All of a sudden one light came on in one of the buildings, and it was followed, one by one, as the memorials and monuments all lit up. All grew very quiet, and then there were great cheers heard from everywhere!

### Frank Foord... HMCS *Ironbound* (T-284), Sub-Leftenant Royal Canadian Naval Volunteer Reserve (RCNVR)

In June/July 1945, and quickly following V-E day, we were in London for the decommissioning of HMCS *Ironbound*. We then reported to the Royal Canadian Navy legation in London, for further assignment. However, if we volunteered for Pacific duty, we were offered priority transportation home. I did volunteer for the Pacific theater in large part to help settle a score in memory of my very good friend Ralph Maxwell. Ralph was with the Winnipeg Grenadier Regiment, which had been over-run by the Japanese in Hong Kong, and he was killed in action on Christmas day 1941. However, when the Japanese surrendered in August 1945, I was still at home on leave on V-J day.



As a side-note on my ship HMCS *Ironbound*...

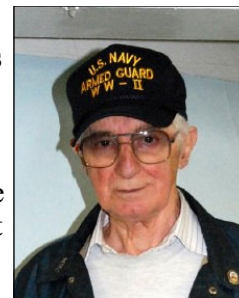


Built as an Isles-Class Trawler, and after she was decommissioned, she was soon bought for service as a fishing trawler. About five years later, while trawling in the Bay of Biscay, she pulled up a mine, which exploded, and the ship went down. A late victim of World War II...

### Lou Fantacone...

**US Navy Armed Guards from 1943 to 1946.** As we were getting ready to invade Japan, we were being trained as infantry at Lido Beach, Long Island and were scheduled to be part of the combat troops for the invasion.

We were also part of the first landing party to go into Yokosuka, Japan when the war ended. We're not the heroes, the heroes were the guys that never made it home...



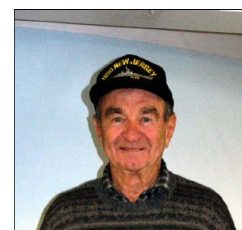
### Joe Donnelly... USS *Pickaway*

**(APA-22)** Well, the first thing I remember is being in San Francisco when a false announcement came over that the Japs had just surrendered and the place went crazy. Guys were climbing up movie marquees, unscrewing light bulbs, and throwing them like grenades. Furniture store windows were being broken, and when the cops came, police cars were stolen and they took off... When the official surrender finally did come out, I was aboard my ship, and underway. We had left the Philippines, stopped at Pearl, and were on the way back stateside. There was such jubilation on the ship that I can't even describe it.



### Earl Cargen...

The thing I remember most from the end of the war was that I was on a 9-day leave from boot camp...



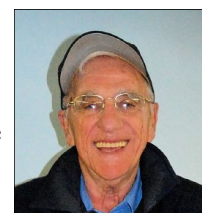
### Robert Christine...USS LSM (492)

We were on LSM 492 at Saipan, working on training for the invasion. At night we watched B-29's on Tinian taking off to bomb Japan.



### John Quinesso... USS LSM-302

I was a Radioman 2/c, and serving aboard USS LSM (302). I can still remember copying the Morse code message telling us that Japan had surrendered!



## THE JERSEYMAN

**Ed Miller...** I lied about my age in July of 1942, and was just 16 when I enlisted in the navy. I served aboard USS *Cowie* (DD-632/DMS-39) as a Coxswain for the entire war.



When the war ended in August 1945, we were tied up in San Diego, getting ready for mine sweeping inside Japanese waters for the

invasion.

But when the official end of the war was announced, I was on liberty in San Diego. By then I was a 19 year old kid, and I'm sure that I raised a lot of hell on that day.

Even with the war's end, by August 29th we set sail for Pearl, Guam, Eniwetok, Okinawa and finally into Sasebo, Japan, but now it would be for "peacetime" mine sweeping duty...

**Charles Stewart...**

**My ship was USS *Cheleb* (AK-138).** I went to boot camp at Bainbridge, Maryland and served from September 1943 to May of 1946.

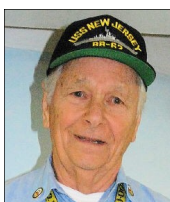
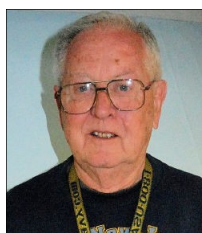
I remember we were anchored at Leyte Gulf in the Philippines when it was finally announced that the war was over.

Do I remember anything going on aboard the ship after the war-end announcement? No, but I do recall that they didn't get me back home until 1946...

**Woody Freeman... USS *Grant* (AP-29), and USS *Panamet* (AGC-13)**

I served from 1943 to 1945. When the war ended I was aboard my ship USS *Grant*, a troopship loaded with our U.S. Marines, and we were heading for Okinawa...

**Richard Palazzo... My unit was VPB-208.** I was in Boot Camp for Navy Aircrewmen in Millington, Tennessee when the war ended. My boot company was then hurriedly trained to march in a Victory parade. We marched down the Main street of Memphis, alongside the Mississippi River, while Navy pilots flew their planes underneath a Memphis bridge! The war was over...



**Joe McGrath... 31st Bn., CB's**

When the end of the war was announced, I was underway from Hawaii to the 31st Seabee Battalion as a replacement on Iwo Jima. We were to be trained to go into Kyushu, Japan for the invasion.

Here's some photos that I have kept through the years...

These are from our 31st CB Bn., book called "Spearhead", probably because Seabees were the first



occupation troops, and we were being used for heavy cleanup duty. This one photo of a destroyed plane shows what we found at Omura, our billet for over a

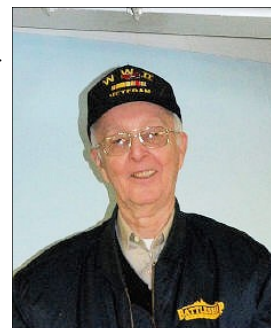
year as occupation forces. Omura is located about 10 miles from Sasebo, and it was easy to see that the town was very involved with building warplanes.

The other photo below, shows me with other CB's, and with two Japanese in our working party. Once the Emperor said it was over, that was it - and they were all as friendly as can be. But I can tell you, if we had not dropped the bomb, and invaded, they would have died fighting us to the last man, woman and child.



Now that we are talking about it, I remember walking into town one Sunday. An older Japanese gentleman invited me into his home, and being only 18 at the time, and not thinking about Germany, where our guys were still being killed by Nazi fanatics for months after the war, I accepted his invitation.

The family offered me tea and cookies, and although I couldn't speak much Japanese, the man brought out an album of pictures to show me. It looked like his son had been a Naval pilot, and from what I could gather, he was a Kamikaze. I haven't thought about that day in many, many years...



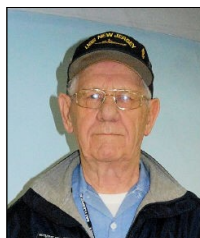


## THE JERSEYMAN

### Don Trucano... USS Oahu (ARG-5)

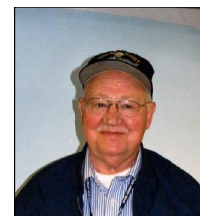
My ship was the repair ship USS Oahu (ARG-5).

When the war ended in August of 1945, I was returning back to service after a week of leave...



### Marty Waltemyer... USS John D. Henley (DD-553)

We were at Buckner Bay, Okinawa in August of 1945, our ship was anchored, and in late afternoon we received word the A-bomb was dropped. We were then assigned picket duty...



### Gabriel "Gabe" Tatarian, M.D...

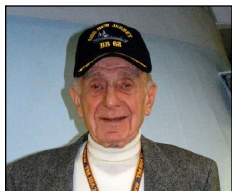
#### USS New Hanover (AKA-73)

I joined the US Navy in 1942, and had completed two years as a Pre-Med student. In July 1943, I was accepted into the Navy V-12 College Training program at Tufts University.

Later, I was assigned to Attack Transport USS *Samuel Chase* (APA-26), and USS *New Hanover* (AKA-73). As a Junior line officer I was assigned duty Boat Officer, Signal Officer etc... you name it, I did it.

A few weeks before the end of the war, our ship, USS *New Hanover*, was in San Francisco combat loading, and we were scheduled to participate in the invasion of Japan. When the end of the war announcement came over the 1MC, I was on the ship, shaving for a date. With pandemonium all over the ship from the good news, I figured, well, that's the end of my date tonight, and so I went into San Francisco. It wasn't long before a girl came running up to me, grabbed my officer's hat, and ran off happy as can be. We were all happy, and I never saw my hat again. I can only thank God that the Atomic Bomb was dropped, and which soon ended the war.

I also remember thinking, after all the long night watches that I had to stand in the navy, I was absolutely going to look for a civilian job without night hours of *any* kind. So, I became an OB/GYN...



### Pete Fantacone... (LCI (492) - Pete also participated in the Normandy landings during D-Day 6 June 1944), and later aboard the USS *Columbus* (CA-74)

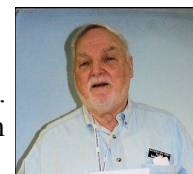
During August of 1945, at the end of the war, I was fortunate to already be at home on leave to enjoy all of the Victory celebrations....



### Don Beck... 25th Inf., Div.

I was still in High School when I went to work in a defense plant. We had an Army Lieutenant who sat in a locked cage, and he would hand out, and record, the parts we had to work on. When we were done, we brought the completed part back to him and he would give us another one. We had no idea what we were making at the time, but after the war was over, I received a letter from President Truman thanking us for working on a "detonation device for the atomic bomb."

They were still drafting for the war during 1946, so when I graduated High School, I enlisted and assigned to the 25th Infantry Division...



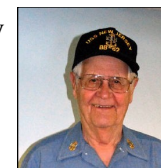
**Walt Burshtin...** I joined the Army right after high school in 1946. My unit was the 533 Rocket Field Artillery Battalion, and we were sent to Alaska.

In 1941, I was only about 13 when Pearl Harbor was attacked, and I remember people in Philly screaming - "*Pearl Harbor was attacked! Pearl Harbor was attacked!*" Then... "*Where's Pearl Harbor?*" Very few of us knew where Pearl Harbor was in 1941, and I even heard one neighbor say "*I think it is down by Avalon - near Stone Harbor!*" Today, all the world knows where Pearl



**Dave Cunningham...** I was in the Navy Reserves by 1939, and on active duty even prior to World War II. From April 10, 1941 to August, 31, 1945, I was mostly aboard USS *Vulcan* (AR-5.) The Atlantic ocean at that time was very much a place where we were in an undeclared war, and running convoys to Russia and England before Pearl Harbor.

Near the end of the war, I was on rotation shore duty at the old Coast Guard station in Cape May. When the war end was announced there were celebrations all over, with all door open, inviting us all in, and a very happy time. Already having 86 points, I was then shipped to Mechanicsburg for my discharge...





## THE JERSEYMAN

### World War II Victory Medal

The **World War II Victory Medal** may be awarded to all members of the Armed Forces of the United States or of the Government of the Philippine Islands who served on active duty in World War II at any time between 7 December 1941 and 31 December 1946, both dates inclusive.

*(Established by Public Law No. 135 of 6 July 1945.)*

*Source: U.S. Navy Awards Manual, 1953*



### European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal

The **European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal** was authorized Nov. 6, 1942, by Executive Order No. 9265 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The medal was issued to commemorate the service performed by personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard who served during the periods and in the areas designated.

Effective March 15, 1946, members serving in the geographical area between Dec. 7, 1941, and Nov. 8, 1945 (dates inclusive) are authorized award of the medal.



### Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal

The **Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal** was authorized Nov. 6, 1942, by Executive Order No. 9265 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The medal was issued to commemorate the service performed by personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard who served during the periods and in the areas designated.

Effective March 15, 1946, members serving in the geographical area between Dec. 7, 1941, and March 2, 1946 (dates inclusive) are authorized award of the medal.



### American Campaign Medal

The **American Campaign Medal** was authorized Nov. 6, 1942, by Executive Order No. 9265 signed by President Franklin D. Roosevelt. The medal was issued to commemorate the service performed by personnel of the Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard who served during the periods and in the areas designated.

Effective Oct. 12, 1945, service members who served in the continental United States for an aggregate period of one year between Dec. 7, 1941 and March 2, 1946, inclusive, may be awarded the American Campaign Medal under such regulations as the Secretary of War and Secretary of the Navy may severally prescribe.



### American Defense Service Medal

The **American Defense Service Medal** will be awarded to all persons in the naval service who served on active duty at any time between 8 September 1939 and 7 December 1941, both dates inclusive.



**"The world is too dangerous to live in - not because of the people who do evil,  
but because of the people who sit and let it happen."**

~ Albert Einstein ~

## THE JERSEYMAN



**John "Jack" Vaessen, F2/c  
USS *Utah* - 7 December 1941**

Thanks to the efforts of Warren Upton, and Bill Hughes, (two USS *Utah* survivors, whose stories appeared in the last issue of *The Jerseyman*,) we made contact with Jack Vaessen, now 92 years old, and living in Nevada.

In a hand-written note to *The Jerseyman* dated May

3rd, Jack Vaessen shared his eyewitness account of being aboard USS *Utah* on 7 December 1941, and of being trapped inside the ship, still maintaining the ship's lighting, as it rolled over. Jack Vaessen still has the flashlight and wrench that he used to pound on the hull...

Three hours after the Japanese attack, and shortly after 1100, a rescue crew from the USS *Raleigh* was furnished to Warrant Officer Stanley Szmansky and Chief Terry MacSelwiney of the *Utah*. (Ref: USS *Raleigh* deck log dated Sunday, 7 December, 1941) This crew literally cut Vaessen from an air pocket in the bottom of the ship.

"The main man who got me rescued from the overturned ship was Stan Syzmansky and his Chief, Terry MacSelwiney. I was tapping the hull in the double bottom. He (Stan Syzmansky) heard it and went to the USS *Tangier* which was not damaged, and asked for cutting equipment. They were turned down because the equipment was "Title B" equipment."

To further explain rescue efforts as Vaessen was in the hull, the following excerpt was extracted from **"Forgotten Casualty: USS *Utah* at Pearl Harbor and her Memorial"** - courtesy of Anthony P. Tully...

"As *UTAH*'s men swam and scrambled ashore onto Ford Island, they found a fortuitously placed ditch. It had been dug as a Public Works project for a sewer pipe to be installed, and now served to give good temporary cover for the survivors from the strafing and bomb explosions. Yet as men of the *UTAH* huddled in the ditch for protection, a loud banging was heard coming over the water from the upturned hull. At considerable risk, while the attack was still in progress Warrant Officer and Machinist Stanley A. Syzmanski and Chief Machinist Mate MacSelwiney made their way back to the ship. With some effort, they clambered upon the forward end, tracing the banging by ear. Soon it was discerned it was void space V-98. This was the space under the dynamo room. Thereupon the team contacted the *TANGIER* astern for aid and

equipment. However, reportedly, the *TANGIER* declined to provide assistance, supposedly due to some red tape from an OOD. The *TANGIER*'s refusal was apparently due to interpretation of "Title B" equipment.

Perplexed and annoyed, Syzmansky and MacSelwiney hastened forward to the *RALEIGH* instead. At 0820 she had begun preparations to get underway, and by 0830 was unmooring. But at 0833, as she was slipping her lines, a report was received of a Japanese submarine in the channel and the sortie was aborted. Two minutes later she had joined the gunfire duel raging that culminated with USS *MONAGHAN*'s ramming of the midget sub. In the meantime of course, Syzmansky had headed over to the *RALEIGH*.

The *RALEIGH* at the time had more than her own share of trouble, struggling to stay afloat from the torpedo hit between her pairs of stacks. Her main deck was almost awash and she was lurching alternately to port and starboard as the free water shifted about. Nonetheless, Captain Simmons immediately provided cutting equipment and some men to assist. Armed now with an acetylene torch, the party returned to the bottom of the *UTAH* and went to work, and after 1100 out popped fireman Vaessen at last. (Contrary to some accounts, Vaessen *was not* subsequently KIA, but in fact was still alive and well at the 2001 Reunion)."

In a second letter to *The Jerseyman*, dated May 18, 2009, Jack Vaessen said; "I was on the ship only 27 days and never got above the main deck. At sea, it was practice bombs from planes most of the day..."

When USS *Utah* had our reunion in Salt Lake City, we were all taken to the Naval Science Building, our bell was at the entrance, and a big crowd was watching. I was given a list of those still on board... and I brought along the flashlight and wrench from when I was rescued by Warrant Syzmanski and Chief MacSelwiney. Getting through an airport with that wrench and flashlight was big trouble.

I was supposed to read all the names on the list, then use the wrench to ring the bell for each name. The late United States Senator Frank Moss, *Utah* (1959-1977), said to me "You read the names and I'll ring the bell for each name..."

**Jack Vaessen  
Gardnersville, Nevada**



## THE JERSEYMAN



**May 16, 2009 - USS *Utah* Memorial photos  
Courtesy of CDR Al Broch, USNR  
Auburn, Washington**



## THE JERSEYMAN

### ATTENTION VETERANS... “Aid and Attendance Benefit”



“The Veteran’s Administration offers a Special Pension with Aid and Attendance (A&A) benefit that is largely unknown. This Special Pension allows for Veterans and surviving spouses who require the regular attendance of another person to assist in eating, bathing, dressing, undressing or taking care of the needs of nature to receive additional monetary benefits. It also includes individuals who are blind or a patient in a nursing home because of mental or physical incapacity. Assisted care in an assisted living facility also qualifies.

This most important benefit is overlooked by many families with Veterans or surviving spouses who need additional monies to help care for ailing parents or loved ones.

This is a “pension benefit” and is not dependent upon service-related injuries for compensation. Most veterans who are in need of assistance qualify for this pension. Aid and Attendance can help pay for care in the home, nursing home or assisted living facility. A Veteran is eligible for up to \$1,519 per month, while a surviving spouse is eligible for up to \$976 per month. A couple eligible for up to \$1,801 per month.

#### ELIGIBILITY

Any War Time Veteran, with 90 days of active duty, 1 day beginning or ending during a period of War, is eligible to apply for the Aid and Assistance Special Pension. A surviving spouse (marriage must have ended due to death of veteran) of a War-Time Veteran may also apply. The individual applying must qualify both medically and financially.”

**For more information, and to download the forms needed to file for the Aid and Assistance program, please visit [www.veteranaid.org](http://www.veteranaid.org)**

## THE JERSEYMAN

### SHIP'S BELLS...

#### USS Endicott (DD-495/DMS-35)

Bristol-Class

Laid down at Seattle Tacoma Shipbuilding May 1, 1941

Launched April 2, 1942

Commissioned February 25, 1943

Displacement 2,395 Tons (Full)

Length 348' 4", Beam 36' 1", Draft 13' 2"

Decommissioned August 17 1955

Stricken November 1 1969, and sold on October 6 1970 to be broken up for scrap

Several years ago, in a request made to the White House Historical Association, former USS *Endicott* crewman Ted Wieber, requested official confirmation that Endicott's ship's bell was located at Camp David, Maryland. He received this response from the White House, and forwarded a copy to *The Jerseyman*...

"Recently we learned of your inquiry regarding the bell of your former ship, USS Endicott (DD-495). Your understanding that the bell is at Camp David is absolutely correct. The Endicott bell is prominently displayed in front of Camp David's Evergreen Chapel. The bell is rung to start the 10:30 a.m. Sunday morning worship service, fifty two week a year, and at special services.

Our records indicate the bell was selected for Camp David because USS Endicott was launched in April 1942, the same month President Roosevelt chose our location as the site of the Presidential Retreat. In addition, when President Roosevelt traveled to Yalta in 1945 while embarked in USS *Quincy*, the Endicott served as escort.

Thank you for your inquiry. Please know that your bell is in good hands and continues to be used in service to our Nation and our Navy."

Sincerely,

R.A. Ramsey

Commander, CEC, U.S. Navy

Commanding Officer

Submitted by:

**Theodore J. Wieber**

USS *Endicott*, IC Electrician 1951-1954

Ballwin, Missouri



Mrs. Laura Bush greets the directors of Presidential Libraries Wednesday, June 4, 2008, at the entrance to Camp David's Evergreen Chapel in Thurmont, Maryland. Mrs. Bush shakes hands with Ms. Nancy Smith, Director of the National Archives' Presidential Material Staff in Alexandria, VA.

White House photo by Shealah Craighead

#### Sources:

1. President George W. Bush, White House Archives.
2. Dictionary of American Naval Fighting Ships (DANFS)

## THE JERSEYMAN

### BATTLESHIP DAYS... BY HAMP LAW

Smitty better clam up. That window's gonna slam down and we'll all be outta luck!!

My Lungos were free durin' the war! Now you want 50 Cents a carton? Next thing you know it'll be 90 Cents a carton... there's gotta be a limit! It ain't right...!



Logo courtesy of Maritime Artist and former USS NEW JERSEY crewman,  
**James A. Flood**

#### Disclaimer:

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