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What's Happening on the Showboat?

The Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* Board of Directors would like to wish all our members a Happy and Healthy New Year and thank you for your continued support.

Wreaths of Honor on Display – On December 7, members of the Friends' board of directors, along with Friends members and battleship volunteers gathered to attach nearly 200 evergreen "Wreaths of Honor" to the lifelines of Battleship *North Carolina*. The wreaths were purchased by the families and friends of veterans as a unique way of honoring those who had served in the Nation's armed forces.



Those hanging the wreaths took a short pause just before 1 p.m. to commemorate the time the attack on Pearl Harbor commenced in 1941. Following a moment of silence, a special 40-inch wreath was placed in the Battleship's Honor Roll Room in memory of the more than 11,000 North Carolinians who died in World War II. A second wreath was placed in the adjoining room in honor of the more than 7,000 men who served in USS *North*

Carolina during her six years of service from 1941 to 1947.

Members of the Friends' Event Committee who were responsible for planning the Wreaths of Honor program were delighted with the results of the inaugural year effort. Committee members were quick to point out that not only did the wreaths provide a personal way to honor those who served, but the program also served as a fundraiser to generate resources the Friends will be able to utilize to financially underwrite future projects in support of the Battleship.



"I cannot tell you how pleased I am with your success with our Wreaths of Honor program," wrote Friends board chairman Ron Henderson in an email note to organizers. "This is exactly what the Friends should be doing - supporting the Battleship, enhancing the visitor experience, and keeping the memory alive."

Organizers are already looking ahead to a 2023 edition of the Wreaths of Honor program with the hope of it becoming an annual tradition.

Friends Fund Switch Plate Replacement – As we wrote in November's edition of *Scuttlebutt*, several projects for the coming year were in the planning stages or already underway on board the Battleship. One project already in

CBDR*

Upcoming events on
The Showboat

Wreaths of Honor

On Display
Through January 7

6 for 60 Tours

January 7
February 4

Hidden Battleship

January 14 (Sold Out)
March 11
40 participant limit
[Get your tickets](#)

Battleship 101

January 21
February 18



*Constant Bearing, Decreasing Range



progress was the replacement of missing or incorrect switch plates on the switchboards located in the Main and Secondary Plot spaces on the first platform.

Equipped with knowledge gained by a similar undertaking previously completed in Turrets #2 and #3 and in the ship's Central Station, Battleship Curator Mary Ames Booker, along with volunteer project organizers Alex Dydula and Pete McWilliams, set out to verify the accuracy of the switchboards and to determine the scope of a refurbishment project.

After spending hundreds of hours examining a variety of blueprints, diagrams, and operational manuals, and comparing them to the current configuration, Dydula and McWilliams determined that approximately 100 of the 400 switch plates on the switchboards on Main and Secondary Plot were either missing or incorrect.



As had been done when the panels in Turret #2 and #3 were restored, the decision was made to have new switch plates manufactured by employing a 3D printing process that would provide the ability to fabricate the switch plates to original specifications. Each of the individual plates would then be laser-etched to reflect the proper information and switch positions indicated by the ship's blueprints held in the archives. Finally, the laser-etched information would be filled with paint, providing an authentic appearance once the switch plates were installed in their proper position on the appropriate switchboard.



The fabrication of the new switch plates and the subsequent laser etching was accomplished by Touchstone 3D of Cary, N.C. The painting of the etched plates and their installation on the proper switchboards was completed by Battleship

volunteers that make up the Wednesday Maintenance Group.

The final result of the project will be switchboards in Main and Secondary Plot authentically restored to how they would have appeared at the end of World War II.

The nearly \$6,100 in funding needed for the restoration project was provided by the Friends of the Battleship as part of their ongoing effort to "Help Preserve the Legacy" of the state of North Carolina's World War II memorial.

Editor's note: Thanks to Alex Dydula and Mary Ames Booker for providing the information regarding this project.

Every
Thursday is

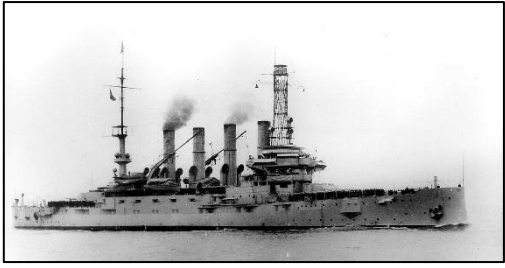
**BATTLESHIP
THURSDAY**

Show your support.
Wear your
"Showboat" gear.

This Month in USS North Carolina History

January 25, 1909 – Having only been in commission since May 7, 1908, the armored cruiser USS *North Carolina* (ACR 12) got underway from Charleston, S.C., on January 25, 1909, with then President-elect William Howard Taft onboard transporting him to Panama for an inspection tour of the Panama Canal that was under construction.

January 2023



The United States had taken over the construction of the canal in 1904 and the type of canal to be built was still being debated. United Press International reported the day Taft departed that the President-elect was “going to Panama with his mind open to conviction as to whether the sea level or lock and dam plan is the best to be followed in the completion of the canal.”

North Carolina, in Panama from January 27 to February 7, returned to the U.S. on February 12, disembarking Taft in New Orleans so he could make the journey on to Washington and prepare for his March 4 inauguration.

January 12, 1920 – At Norfolk Naval Shipyard the keel is laid down for BB 52, the fourth of a planned six *South Dakota* class battleships. The 43,200-ton battleship being built in Norfolk was to be named *North Carolina* but the work was halted in early 1922 with less than 40 percent of the ship’s construction completed – a casualty of the Washington Naval Limitations Treaty that limited the total tonnage of capital ships allowed by the U.S. Navy and limited the size of battleships to 35,000 tons.

January 1942 – With the attack on Pearl Harbor still fresh in their minds, the crew of USS *North Carolina* spent most of the month conducting intensive main and secondary battery exercises while operating in the warm waters of the Gulf of Mexico – preparations necessary for their inevitable entry into the war.

Meanwhile, the United States was trying to bolster its crippled Pacific fleet by moving the aircraft carrier *Yorktown* (CV 5) and the battleships *New Mexico* (BB 40), *Mississippi* (BB 41), and *Idaho* (BB 42) from the Atlantic to join the carriers *Lexington* (CV 2), *Saratoga* (CV 3), and *Enterprise* (CV 6) in the Pacific.

January 29-30, 1944 – USS *North Carolina* was assigned to Task Group 58.2 in the newly established Task Force 58 that was under the command of Rear Admiral Marc Mitscher. Made up of the carriers *Lexington* (CV 16), *Essex* (CV 9), *Intrepid* (CV 11), and *Cabot* (CVL 28); the battleships *North Carolina* (BB 55), *South Dakota* (BB 57), and *Alabama* (BB 60); and a host of cruisers, destroyers, and support ships, the task group participated in the bombardment and invasion of the Marshall Island atolls of Kwajalein and Majuro.

For *North Carolina*, it meant peeling off from the main task group and bombarding the small islands of Roi and Namur in the Kwajalein Atoll for nearly 24 hours, while the destroyers *Lang* (DD 399) and *Sterett* (DD 407) maintained an anti-submarine screen to protect the battleship. By early evening on January 30, having expended 307 rounds fired from her 16-inch guns and 2,200 rounds from the 5-inch batteries, *North Carolina* and her two screening destroyers rejoined the main task group.

Destruction of the Japanese airfields, along with the aircraft and ships that had been operating from the group of small islands, made way for the 4th Marine Division and the Army’s 7th Infantry Division to make successful landings in early February.



USS *North Carolina* fires a salvo from Turret #1 toward Roi and Namur.



Rounds from *North Carolina* bracket the *Eiko Maru*.

North Carolina was also responsible for the sinking of the Japanese freighter *Eiko Maru* in Kwajalein’s lagoon shortly before the bombardment of Roi and Namur commenced. Opening fire from over 20,000 yards, *North Carolina* pummeled the 340-foot auxiliary supply ship, first with rounds from her 16-inch main battery, then from her 5-inch guns. After approximately 30 minutes *Eiko Maru* was afire and going down by her bow.

Though the sinking of the freighter was not strategically significant, it did yield some valuable intelligence when the Navy later recovered from the wreckage, up-to-date navigational charts providing safe approaches to several Japanese-occupied islands in the Pacific.



USS *North Carolina* was awarded her 7th Battle Star for action taken during the Marshall Islands Operation from January 29 – February 8, 1944.

In **January 1945**, Operations in the South China Sea were the focus of Admiral “Bull” Halsey and Task Force 38. Looking to neutralize the Imperial Japanese Navy that had gone largely unchallenged in the region for the preceding three years, Halsey believed he could aid General Douglas MacArthur’s effort on the west coast of the Philippine island of Luzon by drawing the Japanese to defend against the task force rather than against MacArthur’s landing forces.



January 12, 1945 - Ships of a Japanese convoy burn off the coast of French Indochina.

Weather hampered many of the plans Halsey had envisioned with the task force carriers having limited success with air strikes against targets on the coasts of French Indo-China (Vietnam) and China. One bright spot was a **January 12** air strike against targets along the Indo-China coast, where the American fleet was credited with the sinking of a Japanese cruiser, 44 merchant ships, including 12 oil tankers, and the destruction of over 100 Japanese aircraft.

Samuel Eliot Morison would later write in his multi-volume *History of United States Naval Operations in World War II*, "Admiral Halsey did not exaggerate in calling this 'one of the heaviest blows to Japanese shipping of any day of the war,' and stating that 'Japanese supply routes from Singapore, Malaya, Burma, and the Dutch East Indies were severed, at least temporarily.'"



USS North Carolina was awarded her 12th Battle Star for actions taken during the Luzon Operations from January 3 – 22, 1945.

Did You Know?

It's National Bath Safety Month – Shortly after he was elected president, William Howard Taft traveled to Panama to inspect progress on the Panama Canal. Before the trip, a bathtub was custom-built and installed in USS *North Carolina* (ACR 12) for the bath-loving president-elect.

Taft was a big man, standing about six feet tall and weighing more than 300 pounds while he was in office.

"The navy department, appreciating the great difficulty Mr. Taft has experienced getting a bathtub of sufficient proportions to accommodate his modest requirements," newspaper accounts at the time reported, "has decided that its prospective commander in chief is entitled to a real bathtub on the battleship when he makes his visit to Panama soon, and has ordered ... a specially prepared white enamel bathtub of huge dimensions."

The tub measured 7 feet 1 inch long and 41 inches wide and weighed one ton.

Think of the challenge of getting a man of Taft's size safely in and out of a bathtub onboard a ship that is underway in rolling seas.

After the voyage to Panama, the bathtub was removed from *North Carolina* and was installed in the White House following Taft's early March inauguration.



Bathtub built for William Howard Taft.

Source: National Archives Foundation, Library of Congress, National Park Service (photo)

New Year's Deck Log Entry – It has been a tradition for the first log entry of the New Year to be written in some form of verse. Depending on the circumstances, the verse could include information about the command's current status, operations, location, or orders – other entries might be less specific and more imaginative. The deck log entry written 80 years ago by Officer of the Deck, Lieutenant Marvin L. Beadle, while USS *North Carolina* was moored at Dumbea Bay, Noumea, is an example of the latter.

UNITED STATES SHIP <i>North Carolina</i> Friday, 1 January, 1945	
ZONE DESCRIPTION	REMARKS
0001	Yesteryear, she steamed proud, yet unborn, Gleaming decks, her future still a dream, Bristling as if her heart was beating fast, Building, molding herself a mighty team.
0002	Tonight, a gray mottled veteran of grim war, Dark and dreary, like a monster waiting still, Lurking with its prey unknown, unseen, Resolute and strong, her mission to fulfill.
0003	A glowing tribute to her gallant past, Weary, tired, she hovers in the dawn, Yet inward she smiles, her heart leaps high, She knows we'll fight until her soul is gone.
0004	0001 - Huff, Raymond Joseph, St. returned to the ship Nov since 2200, a period of 10 hours and 10 minutes. 0130 - Kavin, Joseph W., was returned to the ship by the shore patrol Nov since 2200, a period of 10 hours and thirty minutes and one hour to 0100.
	Marvin L. Beadle Lieutenant USNR

January 1, 1943

Yesteryear, she steamed proud, yet unborn,
Gleaming decks, her future still a dream,
Bristling, as if her heart was beating fast,
Building, molding herself a mighty team.

Tonight, a gray mottled veteran of grim war,
Dark and dreary, like a monster waiting still,
Lurking, with its prey unknown, unseen,
Resolute and strong, her mission to fulfill.

A glowing tribute to her gallant past,
Weary, tired, she hovers in the dawn,
Yet inward she smiles, her heart leaps high,
She knows we'll fight until her soul is gone.

Support the Showboat



Time to Renew? – If it's time to renew your Friends membership, consider upgrading to the next level. Not only will you be increasing your commitment to the Showboat, but you may also have the opportunity to bring more guests with you when you visit. Visit the [Friends website for details](#) on the different membership levels.

Friends Shop, Amazon Gives, Friends Smile – Battleship enthusiasts participating in the AmazonSmile program generated a \$148.08 donation to the Friends during the third quarter of 2022. The amount represents 0.5% of eligible purchases made by those who have designated Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* as the charitable organization to receive the donations through AmazonSmile. If you already shop on Amazon, it's easy to sign up to participate at no cost to you. Find out how by clicking the button below.



Finally, a shout out to another Friends Business Member



Thank you for supporting Battleship North Carolina and the Friends

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