



SCUTTLEBUTT

May 2021

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What's Happening on the Showboat?



Remembering the Fallen – Dedicated on April 29, 1962, as the State of North Carolina's memorial to its World War II veterans and the 10,000 North Carolinians who died during the war, the Battleship *North Carolina* remains a visible reminder of the great sacrifices made by those who have served, and those who continue to serve in uniform, especially those who made the ultimate sacrifice.

USS *North Carolina* suffered 10 combat casualties during her participation in World War II. As we commemorate Memorial Day, let us remember the 10 men who made the ultimate sacrifice while serving aboard the Showboat.

George E. Conlon

August 24, 1942
Aircraft strafing

Albert Speers Geary

September 15, 1942
Torpedo hit

Oscar Callaway Stone

September 15, 1942
Torpedo hit

Ingwald Nels Nelson

September 15, 1942
Torpedo hit

William Osborne Skelton

September 15, 1942
Torpedo hit

Leonard Edward Pone

September 15, 1942
Torpedo hit

Eldon Emmet Means

April 6, 1945
Kingfisher recovery accident

Edward Emil Brenn

April 6, 1945
Friendly fire, Sky II

John Malcolm Watson

April 6, 1945
Friendly fire, Sky II

Carl Elmer Karam Jr.

April 6, 1945
Friendly fire, Sky II

CBDR*

**Upcoming events
on the Showboat**

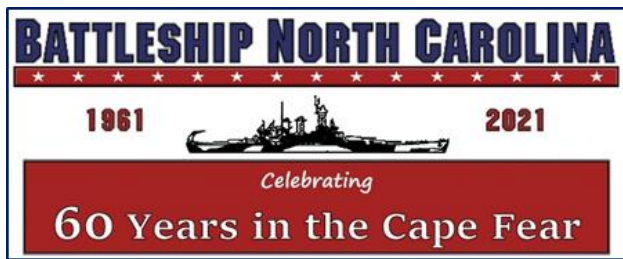
6 for 60 Tours
June 5-6
July 10-11

Raise the Flag
May 29-30
June 12-14
July 3-4

July 4th Fireworks

You can now book tours in
advance by clicking [here](#).

*Constant Bearing, Decreasing Range



Looking good at 80 – For those of you who have had the opportunity to visit the Showboat over the past few months, you are sure to have noticed that the ship is looking outstanding. The maintenance and preservation teams have worked hard over the past year repairing, prepping, and painting everything from decks to expansion joints, bulkheads to overheads, little guns to big guns, life rafts to aircraft trolleys, and a host of other equipment and machinery throughout the ship.



During the initial Covid shutdown, the volunteers took advantage of the days there were no visitors below decks to field day and preserve a large number of the spaces on the public tour route. As visitors returned to the ship, the volunteers found

ways to continue the preservation and maintenance efforts, both below deck as well as topside, while complying with social distancing and other public health requirements.

Their hard work and commitment to the Showboat are evident to everyone who now walks the decks and journeys through the passageways of the 80-year-old ship – including Battleship *North Carolina's* Executive Director, retired Navy Captain Terry Bragg.

"I just finished two plus hours on the Battleship tour route," Bragg recently wrote in an email to the volunteers. "I attest the ship has never looked better in my tenure and is probably at its best in many decades. Thank you for all you do and for all [you and] your shipmates get done in maintaining the great Battleship *North Carolina*."

Celebrating 55 @ 60 – The initial activities of the Friends celebration of the Showboat's 60 years in the Cape Fear got off to a good start following the April 9 kick-off event. During the first two special "6 for 60" weekends (April 10-11, May 1-2), 300 visitors took advantage of the 60-minute topside tour. The two "Raise the Flag" weekends (April 10-11, May 8) also started strong with 29 American flags flown over the Showboat and sent home with donors.



Fireworks – You should have recently received an email from Friends Executive Director Frank Glossl with an update on the annual July 4th Fireworks event that will be held on the Showboat. The update outlined the process for obtaining tickets to this popular, members-only event.

Only *current* Friends members will be eligible to order tickets. The number of tickets will be based on membership level. If your membership has expired you will need to renew before being able to download tickets. The cutoff for ordering tickets is July 1.



Your tickets will get you and your guests access to the Battleship Memorial property (park, walkway, and battleship). However, access to the ship will be on a first-come basis on July 4th. The actual number of people allowed on board the battleship itself has been set at 744 based on safety (Fire Marshall) limits and current public health restrictions. Once capacity on the Showboat has been reached, the SECU Walkway and Battleship Park will remain available for members and guests to view the fireworks.

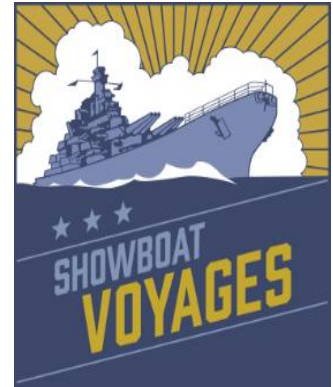
Parking permits will be included with your ticket confirmation.

If you have questions please email the Friends business office at info@battleshipncfriends.com or call 910-399-9117. Office hours are 10 a.m. – 2 p.m. Monday through Thursday.

Hull repair nears completion – As the work on the hull begins to wrap up, the focus will switch to getting

the hull prepped and painted before flooding the cofferdam and allowing the Showboat to return to the proper environment, surrounded by water up to her waterline. It's been a long, dry year!

Enjoy a Virtual Visit – Would you like to learn some interesting tidbits about the Showboat? Be sure to check out "The Showboat Podcast" and the "Discover the Showboat" video tours to find out more about subjects ranging from the effort to save the ship some 60 years ago to making ice cream for the crew. New podcasts and videos are being added regularly. Access the most recent additions by clicking [here](#).



This Month in Showboat History

May 19, 1941 – Just a month after officially joining the fleet, USS *North Carolina* gets underway for her "Builders 1st Trial Run". Assisted by ten tugs, the Showboat pulled away from the Navy Yard's Pier C at 5:15 a.m. and then steamed down the East River escorted by the destroyers *Badger* (DD 126) and *Leary* (DD 158), and two Coast Guard cutters. The ship proceeded out past Ambrose Light and turned south toward Delaware Bay. *North Carolina* returned to the Navy Yard on May 21.



May 19, 1941-- USS *North Carolina* eases down the East River as she heads to sea for the first time.

Over the next several months the Showboat's crew would train and run the ship through its paces, ensuring all the equipment and systems of the new

ship worked properly and forging the crew into what would become a highly-skilled, battle-ready team.

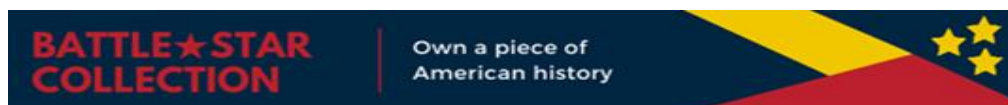
May 1942 – USS *North Carolina*, along with several other ships, were assigned to a task force operating in the eastern North Atlantic to guard shipping lanes against a possible sortie by the German battleship *Tirpitz*. By the end of May, the threat *Tirpitz* posed to shipping had not materialized and the Showboat received orders to deploy to the Pacific to bolster the strength of the American fleet.

Getting underway from Casco Bay, Maine on **May 28**, *North Carolina* steamed to Hampton Roads to prepare for her transit to the Panama Canal and into the Pacific.

May 27, 1943 – Captain Frank P. Thomas relieves Captain Wilder D. Baker to become the fifth Commanding Officer of USS *North Carolina*. Capt. Thomas, a graduate of the United States Naval Academy Class of 1914, commanded the Showboat until **October 6, 1944**. Like the four previous USS *North Carolina* commanding officers, Capt. Thomas was promoted to Rear Admiral upon departing.



Capt. W.D. Baker (L) and Capt. F.P. Thomas



Did You Know?

Of the ten *North Carolina* Sailors killed in action during the war, four were buried ashore on the Tongan island of Tongatabu, four were buried at sea, and two were lost at sea.

The day the three friendly fire casualties were buried at sea, *North Carolina's* senior chaplain offered the following during the evening prayer:

"Heavenly Father, today we committed to the deep the bodies of three of our shipmates who gave their lives so that others might live. We are particularly mindful at this time of their loved ones at home. Sustain them in their sorrow. Help them to understand that those they love gave their lives for their protection and care. Be with all the officers and men of this ship. Give us heart and mind to serve Thee and our country willingly and faithfully..."



There was an additional war casualty realized by the *North Carolina* family, though not directly. Capt. Frank Thomas had a son who also served in the Navy during World War II. A graduate of the Naval Academy's Class of '43, Lieutenant Frank P. Thomas, Jr. was declared "Missing in Action" after the submarine USS *Growler* (SS 215), on which he was serving, was sunk by the Japanese west of the Philippines on **November 8, 1944** – one month after his father had completed his tour as commanding officer and departed USS *North Carolina*.

Every
Thursday is



Show your support.
Wear your
"Showboat" gear.

Talk Like a Sailor

Captains Mast (Mast, NJP) – Navy term for Non-judicial punishment under Article 15 of the Uniform Code of Military Justice. *North Carolina's* first Captain's Mast was conducted by Capt. Olaf Hustvedt on **May 5, 1941**. At that first Mast, 18 Sailors were brought before the commanding officer for various violations of the Uniform Code of Military Justice – 16 of the individuals had been AOL.

AOL/AWOL/UA (Absent Over Leave/Absent Without Official Leave/Unauthorized Absence) – All terms for not being at your assigned place of duty. The consequences of being absent could range from extra duty assigned by a supervisor for minor infractions, to appearing before the commanding officer for Captain's Mast for more serious violations. Absences of more than 30 days can result in being declared a deserter.

CBDR – An acronym used in navigation meaning **constant bearing, decreasing range**. The term describes a contact or target that maintains the same absolute bearing, as observed from one's own ship, as its distance decreases. Two vessels that are CBDR are on track to collide if at least one of the vessels does not adjust either course or speed in a timely manner.

Support the Showboat



Time to Renew? – With the 4th of July just around the corner, make sure you don't miss out on the fireworks fun because your Friends membership expired. Renew now. While you're at it, 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 additional guests with you when you visit the Battleship or attend special events. Visit the Friends [renewal page](#) for details.

Wear your Support – Show your support for the Showboat by wearing Friends gear available now through the Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* e-store. Profits from the purchase of Friends merchandise go to support the Battleship *North Carolina*. You can access the Friends store at <https://battleshipncfriends.com/friends-store>.



<p>Scuttlebutt is published monthly by Friends of the Battleship <i>North Carolina</i> for its membership. Friends Chairman – Michael Zalob Scuttlebutt Editor – Gordon Hume 1 Battleship Road, Wilmington, NC 28401 Scuttlebutt1@battleshipncfriends.com info@battleshipncfriends.com battleshipncfriends.com (910)399-9117</p> 