



SCUTTLEBUTT

July 2021

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D O N A T E

What's Happening on the Showboat?

Fireworks Dazzle the Friends— An estimated 1,000 Friends of the Battleship and their guests were treated to a spectacular display of fireworks on July 4. With near-perfect weather, guests were lined up and ready to board the Showboat when the doors opened at 6 p.m. *North Carolina's* main deck filled quickly as approximately 750 guests crossed the brow and claimed their viewing spot for the city of Wilmington's 2021 edition of the annual pyrotechnics show. In addition to those who chose the ship as their viewing venue, about 250 guests found their preferred vantage points in Battleship Park and along the SECU Walkway.



Winners of the Battle Star knives display their winnings.

The crowd kept busy as they waited for the sun to set, spending time to walk the decks of the 80-year old battleship, as well as dining on a variety of holiday fare they brought along with them to the festivities. Guests also had an opportunity to take their chance at winning one of two knives from the new Battle Star Collection

"Outstanding," "Awesome," and "Great evening!" were just a few of the comments made as those who gathered departed the ship after the fireworks had concluded.

Save the Date to Toast BB 55 – October 2 will mark the 60th anniversary of the Showboat's arrival in the Cape Fear. To celebrate the occasion, the Friends of the Battleship North Carolina will be hosting a "60 for 55 Anniversary Celebration." The event will be for Friends members and their guests only and will begin at 6 p.m. on the Battleship. Guests will be treated to a variety of hors d'oeuvres, beer, wine, and soft drinks and will be treated to music by the Brunswick Big Band as well as having a prime view of the Riverfest Fireworks show.

July 2021

Tickets for the celebration will be available for a \$60 per person donation on the Friends website around August 15. The number of guests a member may include in their party will be based on membership level.

Circle October 2 on your calendar now and plan to join the Friends as we *Celebrate the Showboat's 60 Years in the Cape Fear*.

Feet Wet! – The gates of the cofferdam were opened July 20, signaling the completion of the years-long project to repair and replace hull plating on Battleship *North Carolina*.



Showboat in the News – People from throughout the Carolinas have had an opportunity to find out a little more about Battleship *North Carolina* as she has been highlighted in several television broadcasts and magazine articles over the past couple of months.

WRAL in Raleigh and WMBF in Myrtle Beach both did features about the Showboat in the lead-up to Memorial Day with the Myrtle Beach station anchoring their half-hour *Grand Strand Today* from the decks of the ship. Locally, both WWAY and WECT reported on the Friends' "Raise the Flag" activities over the three-day Memorial Day weekend and North Carolina Public Television also prominently featured the Showboat in their *North Carolina Weekend* program.

The nearly complete hull repair project was written about in the summer edition of the Wilmington Business Journal, and the Friends' efforts to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Battleship's arrival in the Cape Fear was featured in the local Waterford community's *Waterways* magazine.

Hidden Battleship Returns – Another upcoming date to mark on your calendars is November 13. That's when the popular behind-the-scenes tour of unrestored areas of the Battleship returns. Space is limited, so be sure to make your plans now to be able to explore some of the Showboat's seldom seen spaces. Watch for details on the Battleship's website.

C B D R*

Upcoming events on
*The Showboat***6 for 60 Tours**August 7-8
September 4-5**Raise the Flag**August 14-15
September 11-12**Battleship 101**August 14
October 9**Friends of the Battleship
Annual Meeting**

September 18

**60 for 55
Anniversary Celebration**

October 2

Hidden Battleship

November 13

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

*Constant Bearing, Decreasing Range

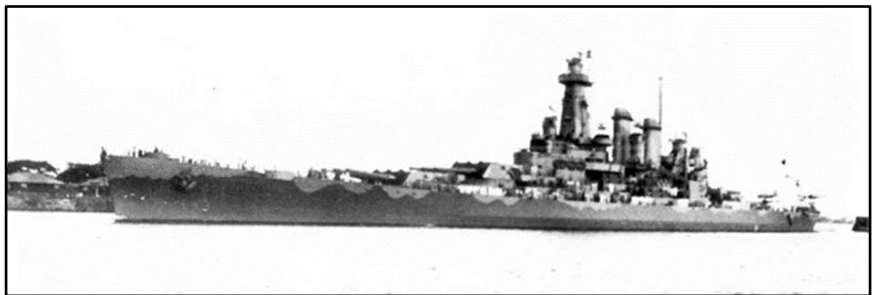


This Month in Showboat History

July 5, 1942 – After having arrived in San Francisco on **June 24** for a 10-day port visit, USS *North Carolina* got underway from Pier 35, sailing under the Golden Gate Bridge at 1500 – destination, Pearl Harbor.

As the coast of California disappeared behind them, the crew of the Showboat began preparing for war by removing from the ship as much unnecessary, flammable material as possible. Items such as wooden furniture, chair coverings, wall decorations, floor coverings (rugs, linoleum, etc.) were all disposed of as *North Carolina* made her way toward Hawaii.

In the early evening of **July 11, 1942**, USS *North Carolina* entered the channel at Pearl Harbor. Word quickly spread around the waterfront that America's newest battleship was making its way through the harbor.



July 11, 1942 - USS *North Carolina* arrives Pearl Harbor.

Many of the Showboat's crew were surprised by what they saw and the reception they received as the ship made its way to her berth.

"Even with all the movies and pictures you saw, you couldn't appreciate the devastation that had taken place there," Larry Resen recalled after the war. Resen was an 18-year-old Fire Controlman when *North Carolina* arrived at Pearl Harbor.

"As we arrived and I looked at the oil-covered harbor and the broken rows of ships, I choked up. There were all the sailors who had seen nothing but the damage that the Japanese caused here, who had gotten a very sharp kick in the teeth at Pearl Harbor and who had, in the months that followed, lost other ships in battle," Resen remembered. "And these crews, they cheered and cheered us."

"I couldn't help saying to myself, 'They're cheering us for nothing.' We hadn't done anything. We had not fired a shot yet. But to them, we were the symbol of help finally arriving in force. It broke me up. I admit being a misty-eyed 18-year-old."

Kenneth Dews, former chairman of the USS *North Carolina* Battleship Commission, was 19 years old serving on a fleet tug when the Battleship arrived.

"After the devastation of Pearl Harbor and our losses at Coral Sea and Midway, *North Carolina* was a godsend," he recounted years later. "As I stood there on that small tug with 16 other members watching *North Carolina* come down the channel, this beautiful ship and hundreds of men aboard her, brought a ray of hope that we were going to come back. As *North Carolina* sailors and officers on the bridge looked down at us and around the harbor, they saw devastation they had never expected. Pictures had been very limited in the news as to what had happened in Pearl. But as we looked up at them, we saw hope."

Among those inspired as *North Carolina* joined the fleet at Pearl Harbor was Admiral Chester Nimitz, Commander in Chief of the Pacific Fleet.

"I well remember the great thrill when she arrived in Pearl Harbor during the early stages of the war – at a time when our strength and fortunes were at low ebb," Nimitz wrote. "She was the first of the great new battleships to join the Pacific Fleet, and her mere presence in a task force was enough to keep morale at a peak.

USS *North Carolina* departed Pearl Harbor on **July 15**, heading south to participate in operations that would take place in the Solomon Islands the following month.

July 4, 1944 – While operating west of Guam as part of Task Group 58.3, USS *North Carolina* developed a continuous noise in #3 Shaft. The repair ship USS *Ajax* (AR 6) made temporary repairs to the shaft while the Showboat was anchored in Eniwetok Atoll from **July 10-16**. *North Carolina* then transited to Bremerton, Washington, via Pearl Harbor, arriving at the Puget Sound Navy Yard on **August 1** to begin a 60-day overhaul period. Not only were repairs made to the #3 shaft during the overhaul, but the two inboard 3-blade propellers were replaced with 5-blade props, and the Combat Information Center was relocated from spaces adjacent to the Gunnery Plotting Rooms on the first platform, to the 03 level just aft of Flag Plot.

July 17, 1945 – Operating in company with the U.S. battleships *Alabama* (BB 60), *Iowa* (BB 61), *Missouri* (BB 63), *Wisconsin* (BB 64), and the British battleship *King George V*, along with several cruisers and destroyers, *North Carolina* commenced bombardment of the Hitachi Industrial Complex, 90 miles northeast of Tokyo. It would turn out that the operations against Hitachi would be the last major shore bombardment USS *North Carolina* would be involved in during the war. Of note is the fact that approximately 24 hours before the beginning of the Hitachi bombardment, the first atomic bomb was tested in the desert of southern New Mexico.



Did You Know?



November 1944 – USS *North Carolina* receives fuel from USS *Neches* (AO 47).

embedded among several oilers. Each time the task force expended all its ordnance, it would sail through the night to the rendezvous, then line up along a 40-nm front to make three successive replenishments and breakaways (fuel, then ammunition, then food/stores), before steaming overnight to the next objective. Instead of a three- to four-day engagement followed by a 10- to 12-day interlude [to sail to Ulithi Atoll and back for rearming], the task force was away for two nights for each three-day engagement."

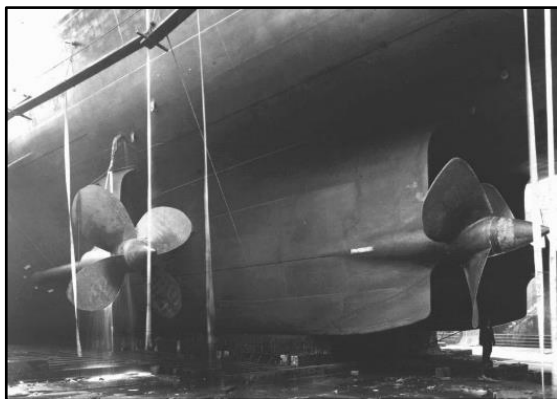
Beans, Bullets, and Black Oil – Underway replenishment (UNREP), also known as replenishment at sea (RAS), is the method of transferring fuel, munitions, and stores from one ship to another while underway. It has been used by the American fleet for well over a century and was referred to as the "U.S. Navy's secret weapon of World War II" by Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz.

The value of underway replenishment, especially the ability to replenish ammunition, was demonstrated as Task Force 58 conducted operations against the Japanese home islands in 1945.

According Navy Cdr. John Lukacs IV, writing for the U.S. Naval Institute's *Naval History* magazine, "TF-58 sailed to support the upcoming invasions with an ammunition ship

Prop in the Park – The propeller on display in Battleship Park arrived with the Showboat in 1961. At the time it was located and displayed on the fantail. In the mid-1990s, when work was being done on the teak deck, the propeller was moved to its current location in the park, according to Showboat volunteer Nick Priscu.

Based on the number and configuration of its blades, the four-bladed propeller in the park is clockwise rotating and would have been installed on the outboard starboard shaft of *North Carolina*. The Showboat's two starboard shafts rotated clockwise, the two port shafts counter-clockwise. Additionally, the final arrangement of *North Carolina*'s propellers had four-



USS *North Carolina*'s propeller arrangement between August 1941 and September 1944.

bladed propellers on the outboard shafts and five-bladed propellers on the two inboard shafts.

Vibration plagued the Showboat throughout her time in service, especially at higher speeds. In an attempt to resolve the issue, the ship's propeller arrangement was modified shortly after commissioning in 1941, and again when the ship went through overhaul in 1944. The cause of the vibrations was never fully determined.

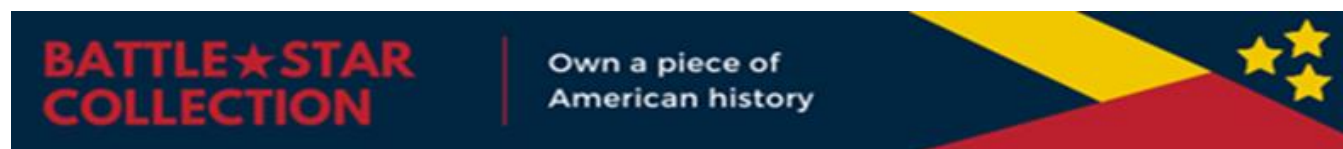
The table below shows the modifications made to the propeller arrangement over the life of USS *North Carolina*.

	April 1941	August 1941	September 1944
Inboard propellers	4-bladed	3-bladed	5-bladed
Outboard propellers	3-bladed	4-bladed	4-bladed



Battleship *North Carolina*'s propeller in its original display position on the fantail.

Hat tip to Nick Priscu for contributing information for this article.



Talk Like a Sailor

Propeller or Screw? – A ship's propeller is also referred to as the 'screw' of the ship. The term 'screw' is simply a shortened version of the type of propeller found on most maritime vessels – the screw propeller. It is also helpful to think of the propeller as a screw when determining the pitch of a propeller with pitch being the distance the propeller would move forward in one rotation if it were moving through a soft solid (the blades of a propeller being analogous to the threads on a screw.)

Scrambled Eggs – The nickname for the golden oak leaf and acorn decorations embroidered on the visors of Navy combination covers and ball caps. A single row of the embellishment is worn by senior officers (Commander and Captain) and a double row is on the covers worn by flag officers (Rear Admiral, Vice Admiral, and Admiral).



Support the Showboat

Membership has its Benefits – Just a reminder that your Friends membership provides year-long access to the Showboat for you and your guests (the number of guests is dependent on membership level). In addition, you receive a 25% discount in the Gift Shop and on Friends VIP Guided Tours, a subscription to the *Scuttlebutt* e-newsletter, and discounts on the Showboat's Lifelong Learning Programs and tours such as Hidden Battleship, Firepower!, Power Plant, and Systems & Design tours.

But most importantly, your membership and donations "Help Preserve the Legacy" and makes it possible for the Friends to promote and enhance the visitors' experience by helping to fund programs, acquisitions, and restoration of Battleship *North Carolina*.

To our entire Friends membership -- your continued commitment and support are greatly appreciated.



1961  **2021**

The Friends of Battleship North Carolina

Celebrate the Showboat's

60 Years in the Cape Fear

60 for 55

Anniversary Celebration

October 2, 2021
6:00 p.m.

\$60 Donation
Per person

Hors D'oeuvres
Beer - Wine - Soft Drinks
Music by Brunswick Big Band
Prime View of Riverfest Fireworks*

*weather permitting

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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

