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What's Happening on the Showboat?



Happy Holidays! – As we make our way through the Holiday Season and steam head-on into a New Year, the Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* Board of Directors would like to thank you, our members, for helping make 2021 a great year for both the Showboat and the Friends. Your continued membership, donations, and patronage have made it possible for the Friends to carry on its mission to enhance the experience of visitors to the Battleship and to support it with funding to assist, promote, and perpetuate educational and restoration efforts.

Much of what we are able to accomplish is directly tied to your support and generosity and for that, we are profoundly grateful.

Consider an End-of-the-Year Donation – With 2021 quickly winding down to its end, we would like to remind our members that the Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* is a 501(c3) non-profit organization and your donation to help preserve *North Carolina's* legacy is tax deductible as allowed by law.

Provisions in the Taxpayer Certainty and Disaster Tax Relief Act of 2020 enacted last December, allows individuals who elect to take the standard deduction to claim a deduction of up to \$300 for cash contributions made to qualifying charities during 2021. The maximum deduction is increased to \$600 for married individuals filing joint returns.

There have also been changes made to the amount that taxpayers who do itemize may claim on donations made to qualifying charitable organizations.

To qualify, donations must be made before the end of the year. Consult your tax professional for details.

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Ship's Store #1 Restored – One of the projects the Friends were able to fund this past year recently came to fruition with the restoration of Ship's Store #1. Volunteers Charlie and Sue Jones have spent over a year researching the content and configuration of the store and recently spent a weekend "restocking" the shelves with products.

The Jones' take great pride in maintaining the authenticity of what visitors see in the store, spending hours researching the products, their labeling, and their place in the store. Those products the Jones' and their network of living history interpreters were unable to locate and procure, were painstakingly recreated by Sue using her talents as a graphic artist.



Volunteers Sue and Charlie Jones and the newly restored Ship's Store #1.

The results provide visitors with an accurate look back into another sliver of history and to life aboard the Showboat.

Want to Learn More About the Showboat? – The Friends Tour Guide Training Coordinator, retired Rear Admiral Ron Henderson, will begin his free, six-week course about USS *North Carolina* on Saturday, January 22 from 9 a.m. to noon. Subsequent classes will be held on consecutive Saturdays until the course is complete.

The course is designed to prepare individuals for becoming ship ambassadors and tour guides but is also ideal for those who just want to learn more about the Showboat, her systems, history, and the men who served aboard her.

Henderson hopes to conduct the once-a-week Saturday sessions on board the battleship, however, he is prepared to conduct the course via Zoom or at an alternate location if the public health environment precludes gathering in a classroom-type setting on board the ship. Once the location has been finalized, participants will be notified.

If you are interested in participating in the next program, you can send an email directly to Henderson at ronaldh211@aol.com or to Scuttlebutt1@battleshipncfriends.com.

This Month in Showboat History



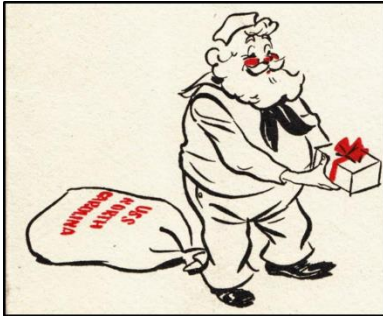
December 7, 1941 – USS *North Carolina* was tied up at the New York Navy Yard the first weekend of December 1941. Seaman William Taylor, one of many young sailors who happened to have duty that weekend recalled being awakened from an early Sunday afternoon nap by a startling announcement over the 1MC speaker in the berthing compartment.

"This is not a drill. The Japanese have bombed Pearl Harbor. We are in a state of war!"

The crew of *North Carolina* wasted no time preparing for what might be ahead for them. On **December 8** the ship took on provisions and by **December 11**, the Showboat was headed out of the harbor and anchoring in Gravesend Bay to prepare for her transit to Hampton Roads, Virginia.

Over the next several months, *North Carolina* continued its training and preparation for war, operating along the East Coast, from the warm waters off the southern tip of Florida to the colder waters of the North Atlantic off the New England coast.

Where did Santa find the Showboat on Christmas Day?



1941 – Anchored at Hampton Roads, Virginia

1942 – Moored at Dumbea Bay, Noumea, New Caledonia

1943 – Got underway from Havannah Harbor, Efate, New Hebrides

Editor's Note: Read a recently published article by columnist Sean Dietrich about the Showboat's Christmas in 1943, at <https://seandietrich.com/ill-be-home-for-christmas/>

1944 – Anchored at Ulithi, Caroline Islands

December 5, 1942 – Captain Wilder D. Baker becomes the fourth commanding officer of USS *North Carolina*, relieving Captain George H. Fort.

Baker was a member of the U.S. Naval Academy's graduating class in 1914. His assignment aboard the Showboat was not his first duty aboard a ship named for the Tar Heel State. In 1915, then Ensign Baker served aboard the armored cruiser *North Carolina* (ACR 12) while it operated in Syrian waters in the eastern Mediterranean Sea.

December 17-18 1944 – USS *North Carolina*, along with approximately 90 other ships operating as Task Force 38, encounter a fierce typhoon east of the Philippine Islands. The task force, made up of seven fleet carriers, six light carriers, eight battleships, 15 cruisers, 50 destroyers, and several auxiliary ships (oilers, ammunition ships), experienced swells over 70 feet and sustained winds of 120 m.p.h. At the height of the storm, some of the destroyers were experiencing 70-degree rolls. Though much heavier than the destroyers, *North Carolina* still found herself rolling as much as 43 degrees.

Task Force 38 emerged from the storm to find that three destroyers, USS *Hull* (DD-350), USS *Monaghan* (DD-354), and USS *Spence* (DD-512), had been lost along with nearly 800 men. At least 30 other ships sustained damage to some extent with nine requiring significant repairs before returning to the war effort. *North Carolina* made it through the storm with relatively minor damage and the loss of her Kingfisher aircraft which were washed over the side.

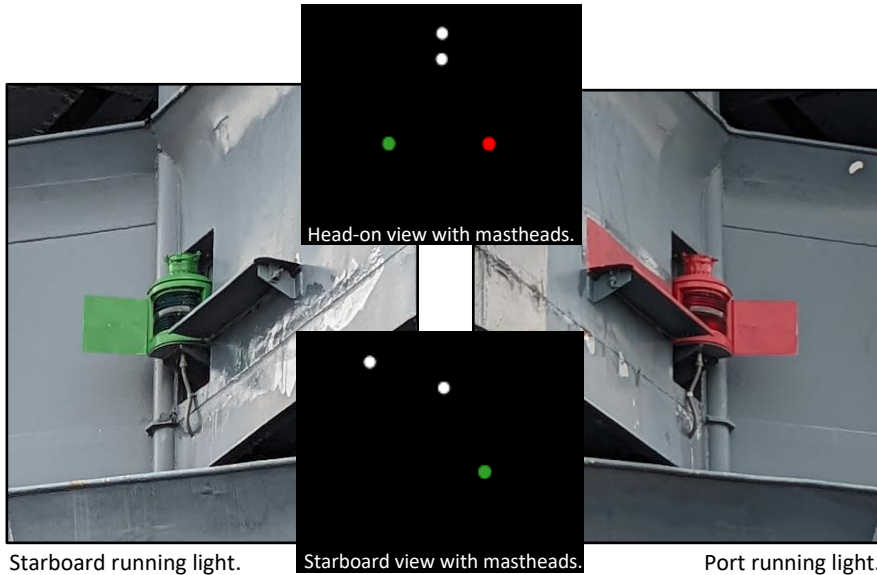


The Showboat continues taking water over the bow after emerging from a typhoon off the Philippine Islands.



Did You Know?

Do You See What I See? – The placement and visibility of the navigation lights on a ship have very specific requirements. It's not just a matter of placing a green light on the starboard side, a red light to port, and a white light aft, it is all about what is seen from the vantage point of another ship and how the lights can inform those observing.



Starboard and port running lights must be visible from directly ahead (000° relative) to a point 22.5° abaft the beam on each side (112.5° relative to starboard and 247.5° relative to port). In addition, ships are required to have a stern light that is observable from directly aft (180° relative) to a point 22.5° abaft the beam (a 135° arc). A white masthead light is also required to be observable over the same 225° arc that the starboard and port running lights can be seen. Large ships will have two masthead lights with the aft light being at a greater height than the one forward.

By observing the lights at night, especially when two masthead lights burning, an observer can determine the relative aspect and apparent course of the observed vessel.

Support the Showboat

Amazon Smile – Though your holiday shopping is complete (or at least should be), you can still designate Friends of the Battleship *North Carolina* as the charitable organization to receive donations through AmazonSmile for all your shopping on Amazon.com throughout the year. For all eligible purchases, AmazonSmile will donate 0.5% of your purchases to the Friends – at no cost to you. It's easy to sign up. Find out how by clicking the button below.



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