



# Anchor Watch

To support the preservation of historic naval vessels  
and to honor those who served at sea

JULY 2025

THE JOURNAL OF THE HISTORIC NAVAL SHIPS ASSOCIATION



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# President's Message

Steve Banta, CAPT, USN (Ret.), USS Lexington Museum



Greetings to all our HNSA members at all levels! I hope 2025 has been a good year for you so far, and I would like to thank you for your patience while we are getting back to a more regular schedule of publishing *Anchor Watch*. I definitely want to start with a big thank you to the amazing team at the USS *Midway* Museum for the HNSA Symposium held in San Diego last fall. Check out this issue for more information and photos. Terry Kraft, Len Santiago, and the entire team at *Midway* really set the bar, with an outstanding week of educational and entertaining sessions and events. BZ!

We are looking forward to seeing as many of you as can make it to this year's symposium in Buffalo, New York, from 24 to 27 September. Our host is The Buffalo and Erie County Military & Naval Park. More information can be found in this issue, and also at the following two websites. The HNSA Symposium this year will be co-hosted by the National Maritime Historical Society (NMHS), as a joint event with their Maritime Heritage Conference. NMHS is running "Admin" for the event. Check both links for details, with registration found through the second "seahistory" link.

<https://www.hnsa.org/annual-symposium-and-registration>

<https://seahistory.org/maritime-heritage-conference/>

For those that haven't yet heard, we bid farewell earlier this year to our outgoing HNSA Executive Director, Ryan Szimanski. We are grateful for his dedicated four years of service in that important position, and wish him all the best as he continues preserving naval history onboard the USS *New Jersey* as the VP for Education & Curatorial Affairs. *Fair Winds and Following Seas!*

In March, we welcomed HNSA's new Executive Director, Mike Getscher. Mike comes to us with over 28 years in the attractions industry, and over 12 of those during his time working on board the Battleship IOWA Museum. Mike has hit the ground running already, and we are excited for the future his leadership will bring. Welcome Aboard! During these early days of Mike's first year as ED, I encourage you to reach out to him and make him aware of the challenges of your organization, as well as any details on how HNSA can better serve you as a supporting organization. (Mike Getscher [executivedirector@hnsa.org](mailto:executivedirector@hnsa.org))

Best wishes for a strong summer of large attendance numbers for your organizations. I look forward to seeing as many of you as possible at the HNSA Symposium in September.

Steve

**Cover Photo: Battleship IOWA (BB-61) during Los Angeles Fleet Week 2024.**

[Note from the editor: Capitalizing IOWA in the name is part of the ship's official branding and is maintained here in contrast to usual guidance in the HNSA Style Guide (available upon request).]

**Cover Credit:** Battleship IOWA's photographer, Rick Stipa.

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# Welcome Aboard, Mike Getscher!

*John Elliker, HNSA Treasurer*

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Many of you know Ryan Szimanski, our Executive Director for the past four years, resigned recently to focus on his responsibilities as the Battleship *New Jersey* curator. Ryan brought fresh perspectives and energy to HNSA's leadership team and we will miss him, both for his contributions and because he's a great guy!

It is our pleasure to welcome Mike Getscher as his successor. Many of you know Mike for his work on the Battleship IOWA as Chief Engineer and, most recently, Chief Operating Officer. Other candidates were equally qualified and talented, but Mike's breadth of experience and strong ideas for the future of HNSA were compelling to the search committee and to the Board of Directors in making the hiring decision.

Mike is a certified engineer and contractor, a proven

manager and organizer, and above all, a great leader. His 25-year non-profit career includes 13 years in executive roles with historic ships and museums. He is drawing down his responsibilities on IOWA and looking for new challenges. He'll certainly find them here with HNSA.

Mike spoke compellingly in his interview of the specific need to expand and improve HNSA's internal and external communications. His eagerness to build coalitions of ships to share data and expertise will benefit any ship in our fleet, regardless of size. His record of collaboration in the Los Angeles area and beyond is stellar and is a very necessary skill of any great Executive Director.

Welcome Aboard, Mike! We're delighted to have you join the team.

## Farewell from Ryan Szimanski

*Ryan Szimanski, Vice President, Education and Curatorial Affairs Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial*

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Shipmates -

After four great years with HNSA, I am stepping down as Executive Director. I am maintaining my role with Battleship *New Jersey*, and will continue to see you all in the community over the coming years. Working both jobs at a time when *New Jersey* and HNSA were both growing became too much for me in 2025, when it wasn't only a couple of years ago. Between the support of HNSA's Board and Mike taking over as Executive Director, I am excited to see what new directions HNSA moves in as it continues to serve our historic ship community.

I have been able to work with four great museums and their staff in planning annual the HNSA symposium over the last several years. Mobile was our first post-pandemic get together, and we celebrated aboard *Alabama* and *Drum* (2021). We went back to Hawaii the following year (2022), and were able spend time on *Bowfin* and *Missouri*. In 2023, *Slater* in Albany hosted for the first time and put on a great symposium. And, finally, last year (2024) we went to San Diego to tour *Midway* for that museum's 20th

anniversary. The things I am most proud of from these symposia are the prize tables, awards, and how everyone contributed research in the form of papers and presentations; organizing the capacity to live stream and record the conference for those who couldn't join in person; and the ongoing availability of the scholarship program, which is helping more emerging museum professionals participate in and attend the conference.

Getting to work with all of you has been incredibly fulfilling! I look forward to continuing to work alongside you in the museum ship community. Please reach out to me at [r.szimanski@battleshipnewjersey.org](mailto:r.szimanski@battleshipnewjersey.org) if you ever need anything and be sure to stop by if you are ever in the Philadelphia area. The thing I am looking forward to most is having more time at the HNSA symposium to have fun with everyone now that I won't be working in an official capacity!

Ryan



# AROUND OUR FLEET AND BEYOND

The Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park, the nation's largest inland naval park and a treasured local institution dedicated to honoring military service and educating the public, has officially launched a national search for its next President and CEO. This announcement follows the planned retirement of Paul Marzello, who has served as President & CEO since 2017. Under his leadership, the Park has experienced tremendous growth and renewed visibility across Western New York and beyond. Mr. Marzello's tenure has been marked by meaningful progress in organizational development, expanded educational programming, capital improvements, and community engagement. From Adam Poole, Chair of the Board of Directors, "We are immensely grateful to Paul for his visionary leadership and steadfast commitment to honoring our veterans and preserving our nation's military history. His legacy will have a lasting impact on the Park, the community, and the countless visitors who walk our decks each year." *Fair Winds and Following Seas!*



Paul Marzello, retiring President & CEO of Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park.

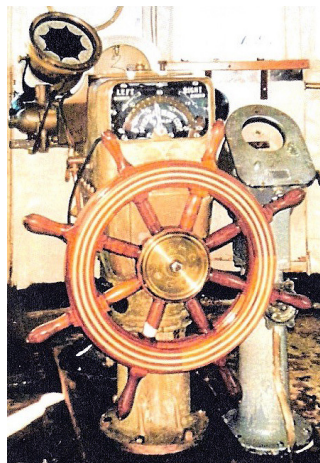
Credit: Buffalo & Erie County Naval & Military Park

In late 2024, a family from Wollongong, Australia, was greeted with lei after touring the historic USS *Bowfin*, celebrating them as the ship crossed its 11th millionth visitor mark to the Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum (PFSM) in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. PFSM Executive Director, Chuck Merkel, gave them a free tour of the *Bowfin* and presented them with a gift certificate for the museum gift shop and a complimentary lunch in the cafe. "Welcoming our 11 millionth visitor marks an incredible milestone for the Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum, and we are grateful for all of our visitors since opening to the public over 40 years ago," said Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum

executive director Chuck Merkel. "Thanks to our dedicated museum staff, this achievement underscores the lasting significance of preserving the legacy of the submariners who served to share this historic vessel and its stories with people from around the world."

Shelly Reid, senior staff writer for the National Maritime Historical Society, recently published a blog post entitled "Getting to know the Historic Naval Ships Association". She included some less well-known details about the HNSA origina story and how it remains relevant and important to the membership today. We thought you might want to have a look in case you missed it when it was published: <https://tinyurl.com/2tzeubm4>.

The Virginia War Memorial in Richmond, Virginia, established to memorialize Virginia's war dead from World War II onward, recently received the bridge conning station from the former USS *Zuni*/USCGC *Tamaroa*. *Zuni/Tamaroa* was a World War II-era (and beyond) *Cherokee*-class ocean-going tug. Former Chief Boatswain's Mate Harry Jaeger, well-known to many HNSA members, designed a new "Ship's Bridge" exhibit to include this equipment for the War Memorial. Prep work is underway in the Education Center in Richmond. The exhibit will expand Naval History well inland! The story of *Zuni* at Guadalcanal is worth the effort alone. These will be the only remaining pieces of her—she was sunk as a reef off New Jersey in May 2017. The estimated cost is about \$22,000. You can help by donating, making your check payable to the Virginia War Memorial Foundation, with the notation "For Ships Bridge Project." Mail your donation to Virginia War Memorial Inc., 621 S. Belvidere Street, Richmond VA 23220. Alternatively, you can make a digital donation by visiting their website [VaWarMemorial.org](http://VaWarMemorial.org).



Archive image of USS *Zuni*/USCGC *Tamaroa* bridge conning station.

Credit: Virginia War Memorial Foundation



In April 2025, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) revealed that a remotely operated vehicle (ROV) crew spotted an unusual vehicle inside the hangar of the lost aircraft carrier USS *Yorktown* (CV-5), which was lost in battle off Midway in 1942. The investigating team has suggested the car may be Admiral Frank Fletcher's flag vehicle as the USS *Yorktown* was his flagship. The level of chrome trim on this particular vehicle showed a level of flair and decoration not typically seen on GI-issued Jeeps. The vehicle appears to be a 1940–1941 Ford Super Deluxe "Woody," typically a civilian car, with distinctive wood body and a unique combination of trim on the fenders.



1940s car found inside USS *Yorktown*.

Credit: NOAA Ocean Exploration, 2025 Beyond the Blue.

In February 2025, Naval History and Heritage Command (NHHC) and the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) used a human-occupied vehicle (HOV) to visit and document the resting places of two United States Navy sunken military craft off San Diego, California. The HOV *Alvin* explored the World War I-era submarine USS *F-1* (SS 20), the final resting place for 19 sailors, and a World War II Grumman TBM Avenger aircraft, BuNo. 52404. The broader mission was to use the Office of Naval Research (ONR)-owned research vessel (R/V) *Atlantis*, in conjunction with the HOV *Alvin* and the Autonomous Underwater Vehicle (AUV) *Sentry*, for training and engineering exercised. However, this was a unique opportunity for the NHHC Underwater Archaeology Branch. It marked the first time the Navy made use of *Alvin* for the purposed of archaeological documentation. "This is a remarkable success for the Navy, NHHC, and underwater archaeology," said Bradley Krueger, an archaeologist with NHHC's Underwater Archaeology Branch who participated in the documentation effort. "Using new methods and technologies to document the Navy's submerged cultural heritage, while also honoring its lost sailors, is both an exciting and humbling experience, particularly as we approach the commemoration of 250 years since the founding of the U.S. Navy." For additional details about the project and the wrecks that were investigated, please see the following link: <https://tinyurl.com/hxu6nb64>.

## 2025 HNSA SYMPOSIUM - REGISTER NOW!

*Join your colleagues from the Historic Naval Ships Association and the National Maritime Historical Society for their upcoming joint symposium being held in Buffalo, New York:*

24–27 SEPTEMBER 2025

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN  
AT THE FOLLOWING LINK:

<https://seahistory.org/maritime-heritage-conference/register/#mhc>



# FLEET FEATURES

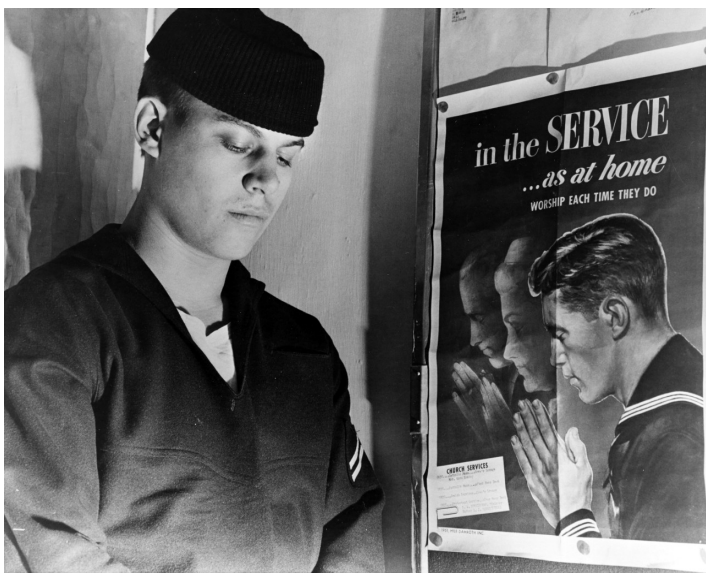
## Burial at Sea Aboard the Battleship Wisconsin

*Alex Bowback, Maintenance Manager, Battleship Wisconsin*

Harry Vivian Yetter was only 20 years old when he found himself being transferred by high line to USS *Wisconsin* above the rolling seas of the Pacific Ocean in April 1945. A Seaman, 1st Class, aboard USS *McDermitt*, Yetter was among a string of severe casualties being transferred for treatment after a friendly fire incident: USS *Missouri*, attempting to shoot down a low-flying Kamikaze, peppered USS *McDermitt* with countless anti-aircraft rounds and one 5-inch shell, the latter creating a four-foot diameter hole in the hull and penetrating the forward fireroom. Some casualties needed more treatment than could be provided by the limping destroyer's medical team. Unfortunately, war has its cost and even on a ship with state-of-the-art medical equipment, some wounds were just too severe, requiring transfer to other vessels. After suffering a long night in critical condition in USS *Wisconsin*'s sick bay, Yetter of Chatfield, Minnesota, succumbed to his wounds and was buried at sea from the starboard side fantail on 16 April 1945. He is one of three sailors that were buried at sea from USS *Wisconsin* during wartime operations when the ship was with Battleship Division Nine during the World War II.

*Wisconsin* after his ship, USS *Watts*, came under attack by Japanese Kamikaze. He was buried at sea on 11 August 1945. Gunner's Mate, 2nd Class, Mervin Randolph Clark was on USS *Maddox* when his ship came under fire from Japanese guns. He was transferred to USS *Wisconsin* where the ship's medical team tried its best to save him, but, unfortunately, 27-year-old Clark, born in Limestone, Tennessee, succumbed to his wounds and was buried at sea on 22 January 1945.

By the time USS *Wisconsin* had laid to rest Harry V. Yetter, Mervin R. Clark, and Robert E. Caya, she had already done the same with two members of her own crew a few months prior. One of these sailors was Seaman, 2nd Class, Joe J. Goldblatt, who passed away on August 21, 1944, on authorized leave while the ship was in Philadelphia. He was buried in Tiferet Israel-Agudas Achim Cemetery, Dallas, Texas. The other sailor was Seaman, 2nd Class Frank O. Ratcliffe. He had come down with pneumonia while the ship was anchored in Honolulu, Hawaii, and at 0810, while he was in sick bay, succumbed to his illness and passed away on 16 November 1944. He is buried at the National Memorial Cemetery of the Pacific in Honolulu.



Sailor on USS *Wisconsin* stops to pray.

Credit: Naval History and Heritage Command, 80-G-443726 USS *Wisconsin* (BB-64)



USS *Wisconsin* sailing somewhere in the western Pacific, December 1944.

Credit: Naval History and Heritage Command, 80-G-470324 USS *Wisconsin* (BB-64)

The two other World War II sailors who were committed to the deep from USS *Wisconsin* also served on destroyers that screened carrier groups. Machinist's Mate, 3rd Class, Robert Edward Caya, a 37-year-old sailor born in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, was transferred to USS

USS *Wisconsin* closed out World War II having suffered no casualties of her own as a result of combat, but in 1951, when she was reactivated for the Korean Conflict after a few years in mothballs, her starboard side fantail was again prepared to commit another man to the deep. This time,



however, it would not be a sailor from USS *Wisconsin*'s own navy. It would be a combatant from the other side of the 38th parallel, a North Korean prisoner of war.

Not many details about the burial at sea of this North Korean prisoner of war are known. The only evidence that could be found were photographs from USS *Wisconsin*'s 1951–1952 cruise book and oral accounts from sailors that were on the ship at the time of the burial. From the evidence we do have, we know that this North Korean prisoner of war was given full military honors during the burial and was committed to the deep with the same respect a sailor from USS *Wisconsin*'s own navy would have received. No exact date for this event has been found, but we know the year to be 1951, while USS *Wisconsin* was serving off the Korean peninsula.

## The Story of “Alligator Junior”

*Chuck Veit, President Emeritus, Navy & Marine Living History Association*

We are taught that USS *Holland* in 1900 was the first modern submarine in the United States Navy. This is true—but it was not the first boat to interest that service. That would be *Alligator*, which was deployed in 1862. Square one in the story of Navy submarining, however, actually dates to three years earlier in 1859.

At that time, an immigrant French inventor, Brutus de Villeroi, designed a salvage boat for the specific purpose of recovering \$2.4 million in gold aboard the Central America when she went down off the coast of South Carolina in 1857. It is fortunate that this submarine never actually dove on the wreck, which was thought to be only about 170 feet below the surface, but was later found at 7200 feet—far beyond the reach of any technology of the period. Happily, de Villeroi's boat had teething problems and spent the years before the Civil War being tested along the Delaware River below Philadelphia.

When war broke out, Brutus decided to offer his now-completed submersible to the government of his new country, and unwisely appeared too near the Navy Yard on 17 May 1861. His crew was arrested and the “infernal machine” impounded. Several days later, Commandant Samuel F. Dupont decided the small vessel posed no threat and ordered the release of both men and machine. By 20 May, de Villeroi's request that the Navy examine his creation convinced Dupont to order Commander Henry K. Hoff, Commander Charles Steadman, and Chief Engineer Robert Danby to examine and report on the unique craft. This trio of officers thus became the first United States Naval personnel to set foot inside a submarine.

It is important to remember these five United States' sailors and the North Korean prisoner of war when deciphering USS *Wisconsin*'s military career in both World War II and the Korean Conflict. Together, these six show us just how personal war became to the sailors of USS *Wisconsin*, whether it was members of the ship's own crew, like Frank Ratcliffe and Joe Goldblatt; or members of other ships' companies who were transferred to USS *Wisconsin* for medical care, like Harry Yetter, Mervin Clark, Robert Caya, and the unnamed prisoner of war. For the latter four, the fantail is the closest thing to a tangible grave they have and should be respected as a place of memorial for those who gave the last full measure of devotion to their country. It is the last place their earthly bodies would rest among their comrades as the words “we therefore commit this body to the deep” rang out to all hands standing silently on deck.

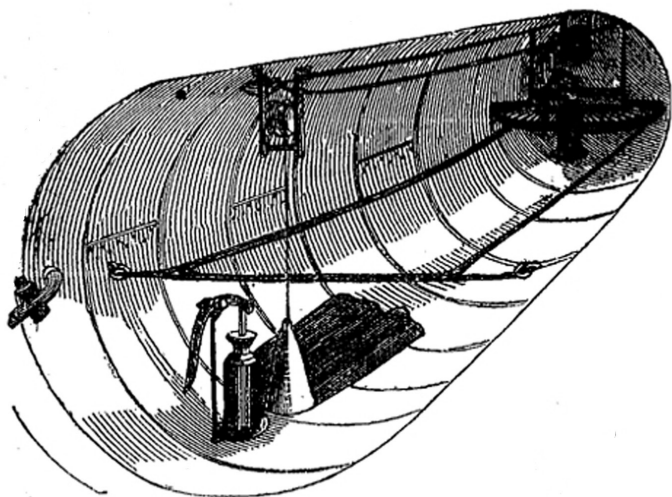
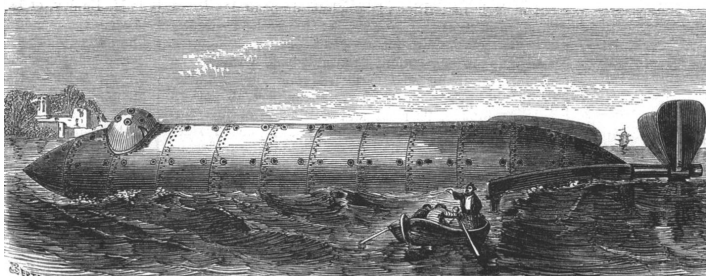
That the Navy had any interest in the submarine was contrary to that organization's proud peacetime claim that “the boats used by the Navy go on and not under the water.” But now the country was at war and such a craft might prove useful. While de Villeroi's boat could never hope to attack a ship underway, one possible target would be ships anchored in the harbor at Norfolk, Virginia. These included the ironclad *Virginia*, known to be under construction at Gosport Navy Yard. A submarine would be the perfect way to make a clandestine attack.

The report written by Hoff, Steadman, and Danby on 7 July 1861 made it plain that they considered the “Diving Machine of Mr. de Villeroi” to be but “a model to demonstrate the principles established by the inventor.” It was recognized that the salvage boat had not been designed “for war purposes.” Various inefficiencies were cited and improvements suggested in the construction of a larger submarine, which would become known as *Alligator*. As built, the Navy had no further interest in the 1859 boat—even for training—and she was tied along the bank of a tributary creek on the New Jersey side of the Delaware River...and forgotten.

What do we know of this first submersible that caught the Navy's attention? She was “perfectly round” down the length of her thirty-five foot hull, long and narrow, and measured forty-four inches in diameter. The interior was illuminated by a double row of bulls-eye deadlights embedded along her back. One hatch on the top allowed the crew of a dozen men to wriggle in and out, while a second hatch amidships on the bottom afforded divers a

means to exit and reenter when submerged (1). This was not an air lock. Instead, de Villeroi followed the example set by fellow French submarine designer Payerne: the entire interior of the boat was pressurized and a hatch in the bottom opened to allow men to leave and return. This is proven by a report of 2 October 1859, which stated that:

*M. Villeroi's men (sailors) plunge into the water and disappear, and after entering the boat, reappear on the surface, thus testing the power to enter and quit the boat while she is under water. (2)*



Historical views of the 1859 vessel.

Credit <https://www.navygeneralboard.com/the-first-submarine-of-the-civil-war-the-story-of-alligator-junior/>

The means of keeping the air for both divers and crew fresh was kept secret, “but it is believed to be by some chemical arrangement.” As evidenced in the 7 July Navy report:

*an artificial atmosphere perfectly respirable by the*

*men is generated by the inventor by a chemical process so that the submerged boat executes its maneuvers without any connection with the surface. Its entire apparatus is contained in the interior and invisible from the outside.*

The most common means of refreshing the atmosphere inside a diving bell was the well-known “bucket and bellows” technique, where air was forced over or through a container of slaked lime. This captured the CO<sub>2</sub> molecules and released breathable air back into the interior of the boat. De Villeroi’s need for secrecy probably related more to his arrangement of apparatus than any new chemical mixture. Air was provided to deployed divers by “means of tubes attached to the boat.” (3)

A three-foot manually operated propeller pushed the submarine through the water. This was powered by six of the crew who, ranging down the length of the hull, pulled on a leather strap that ran along the outer edge of the vessel. This strap spun a large wheel fixed in a horizontal attitude to a post in the stern of the boat, which in turn rotated the propeller, probably through use of a simple bevel gear. Given the confines of the boat, the “propeller men” probably knelt or sat on small benches, facing outward, in a staggered formation. De Villeroi, acting as captain “sits near the head” to operate both the diving planes as well as the rudder. (4)

Diving and surfacing were effected by means of flooding or emptying gutta percha (latex) coated canvas bags that ran along the interior hull on either side. Known as “camels,” these were typically used to raise sunken ships whole or in part. These were operated “by machine”—probably manual force pumps. (5)

While underway, the boat could be made to rise and fall by angling her bow planes. These were plates of iron about eighteen inches square, which “are moved like the fins of a fish.” (6) Their use seems obvious today, but we must remember that early submarines evolved from diving bells. These were used almost exclusively for vertical movement, and had to rely upon a surface support boat for any lateral motion. When the bells became enclosed and carried their own air supply, the notion of diving or surfacing while underway was not obvious: it was enough that the vessel could submerge in place to a desired depth and then move about horizontally; if it became necessary to sink further or rise a bit, more or less water could be admitted to the ballast tanks. No submarine prior to 1859 had diving planes, and it may well be that these were first devised by Brutus de Villeroi.





Magnetic anomalies identified during drone survey in 2024.

Credit: Steve Nagiewicz and Mark Sullivan, Stockton University

What became of this 1859 salvage boat? In 2002, when the Navy undertook a concerted effort to locate *Alligator (7)*, some lesser attention was devoted to finding its predecessor, dubbed "*Alligator Junior*" because of her smaller size. Despite the fact that local historian Alice M. Smith insisted folks in the area knew pretty well where the submarine lay, no focused attempt was made to pinpoint her location. Since that time, and in face of foul weather, lack of funding, health issues, and the COVID pandemic, Smith and her volunteer team undertook eleven expeditions into the now-swampy area where a period letter told them they would find the boat. In March 2024, Stockton University professors Steve Nagiewicz and Mark Sullivan surveyed using a Phantom 4 Pro V2.0 with Drone Deploy (Flight and Analysis) and turned up two suspicious anomalies in the area.

To verify that one of these might be *Alligator Junior* required larger-scale aerial magnetometer (MAG) scans, which cost far more than the scratch team of volunteers could afford. This was the next step toward eventual recovery and preservation of the first submarine associated with the United States Navy. To this end, a fundraising campaign under the auspices of the non-profit Navy & Marine Living History Association was started in spring 2024. Its primary goal was to pay for the necessary scans; in the longer term, it was hoped such evidence would attract the attention of professional archaeologists willing to undertake the salvage of this relic from the earliest days of submarine warfare. She is not, after all, fathoms deep in the inhospitable ocean, but mere feet under the mud.

The fundraising drive was very successful, and sufficient money was donated to allow the team to conduct aerial MAG scans that showed a magnetic anomaly of sufficient size to be the submarine. The next step of conducting a survey with ground-penetrating radar (GPR) had to wait for the swampy area to firm up sufficiently to support a field team and equipment. This finally happened in February 2025.

To identify the actual contact, we enlisted the experts at the University of Delaware's Marine Laboratory, who brought in GPR and conducted an extensive survey at the center area of the anomaly. But nothing definitive was identified. In an effort to understand why the GPR did not pick up whatever was causing the magnetic anomaly, we conducted an exhaustive reevaluation of the aerial drone magnetometer data, only to conclude the data and position were valid. It was noted that the aerial MAG survey did not cover the entire marsh/ditch area adjacent to the treeline. That left two possibilities: a) the magnetic anomaly extended outside the survey area, causing the position of the potential contact to shift, or B) there was a small metal piling driven into the marsh which the GPR missed.

Resolving the mystery required a high-resolution walking MAG survey of the aerial anomaly and the unsurveyed area adjacent to the woodland. The marsh area is hazardous during the summer months with deep, sticky mud and insects, including Lyme disease-carrying ticks. However, the team felt we could squeeze in the walking MAG survey prior to spring. So an attempt was scheduled for 02 May 2025, with equipment borrowed from Franklin



and Marshall College. Unfortunately, the day prior to the planned survey, during pre-survey testing, the instrument screen failed, and the survey had to be postponed.

The hunt is not over, but merely postponed. We will go back into the marsh next winter with the walking MAG and determine what the aerial drone picked up, and cover the uncovered area.

#### NOTES

(1) "A Submarine Vessel," Philadelphia Evening Journal, 26 August 1859.

(2) "Another Experiment," in the Delaware State Reporter, 14 October 1859.

(3) NARA RG71, Miscellaneous Letters Sent and Received, Bureau of Yards and Docks 1861–1863, Hoff to Dupont, Report on de Villeroi Submarine, 7/7/61.

(4) "Submarine Experiment," The Tribune (Hornellsville, NY), 29 September 1859.

(5) Ibid.

(6) "A Submarine Vessel," Philadelphia Evening Journal, 26 August 1859.

(7) For full details of this 2002–2003 project, see [www.navyandmarine.org/alligator/index.htm](http://www.navyandmarine.org/alligator/index.htm)

## USS Constitution Museum - Chief Executive Officer Search

*Russell Reynolds Associates*

The USS *Constitution* Museum is currently seeking a new Chief Executive Officer. Russell Reynolds Associates has been exclusively engaged to lead this search. Given the need for confidentiality throughout this process, prospective candidates are invited to reach out directly to our search consultants at [USSConstitution@russellreynolds.com](mailto:USSConstitution@russellreynolds.com) with a resume and brief expression of interest. We welcome nominations and expressions of interest to the Russell Reynolds team. All inquiries and discussions will be considered strictly confidential. If any HNSA members are interested in more details about the position and the search criteria, please contact the Executive Director who can provide a copy of the full search packet.



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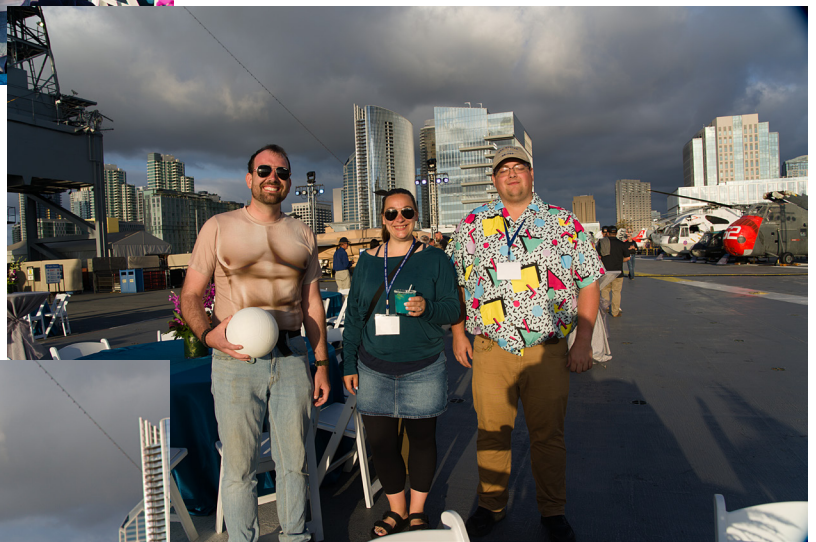
# Highlights from the 2024 HNSA Annual Banquet & Awards Ceremony aboard USS Midway

*Photos by Feliz Zamora, USS Midway Volunteer Photographer*



Jeffrey Barta (NHHC), Ryan Szimanski (New Jersey), Frank Thompson (NHHC), Ken Newman (Olympia), and Libby Jones (New Jersey)

Ryan Szimanski (New Jersey), Shanna Schuster (Slater), John Epp (Slater)



Frank Thompson (NHHC), and Jeffrey Barta (NHHC)



Troy Vail (IOWA), Ken Newman (Olympia), and Libby Jones (New Jersey)





Chief Mario Roy (Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park), Brendan Lindahl (USS *Little Rock*), Steven Tedesco (Buffalo and Erie County Naval & Military Park)



Parks and Tamara Stephenson (*Kidd*) and Ryan Szimanski (*New Jersey*)



Rear Admiral Theodore LeClair, Deputy Commander Naval Surfaces, Lieutenant Daniel McCormack (Flag Aide), Tom Cruise "Maverick" (Real Name: Jerome LeBlanc)



The team from Advanced Material Preservation (AMP), corporate sponsors for the annual symposium.



Rear Admiral Theodore LeClair (Deputy CNSP) and Rear Admiral (ret) Terry Kraft (CEO, USS Midway)



Mary Kraft and Paul Ward (USS Midway, Chaplain)



Rear Admiral Theodore LeClaire's flag aides with Len Santiago (USS Midway)



Presentation screens on the deck of the USS Midway for the conference banquet.





# Selection of Award Winners 2024

Photos by Feliz Zamora, USS Midway Volunteer Photographer





# Award Winners From The 2024 HNSA Conference

## 2024 Casper J. Knight, Jr. Award

Presented to Lindsey Shaw, Australian National Maritime Museum

## 2024 Russell Booth Award

Presented to the Sharla Shuck, USS *Lexington*

## 2024 Henry A. Vaden Award

Presented to Melanie Templin, USS *Lexington*

## 2024 Educator Award

Presented to Stephen Tedesco, Buffalo Military Park

## 2024 Bos'n Marvin Curry Award

Presented to Nathan Bergeron, USS *Kidd*

## 2024 Maintenance/Preservation/Exhibition Award

Presented to Wednesday Restoration Crew, USS *North Carolina*

## 2024 Maintenance/Preservation/Exhibition Award

Presented to Timothy Riley, Friends of USS *Cassin Young*

## 2024 Dr. John C. Fakan Communications Award

Presented to Evan Cerne-Iannone, USS *Cod*

## 2024 President's Special Award

Presented to Jeffery Barta, Naval History and Heritage Command

## 2024 President's Special Award

Presented to Frank Thompson, Naval History and Heritage Command

## 2024 Old Walrus Award

Presented to Shane Stephenson, Buffalo Naval Park

## 2024 Symposium Scholarship Award Winners

\* Brendan Lindahl, Buffalo Naval Park, sponsored by USS *Bowfin* & Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum

\* Karen Voit, Buffalo Naval Park, sponsored by USS *Lexington*

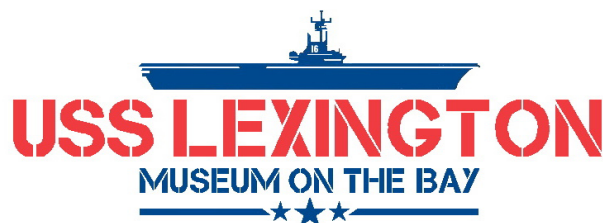
\* Elizabeth Rekowski, University of Maryland, sponsored by USS *Bowfin* & Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum

\* Natalie Leighton, USS *Hornet*, sponsored by USS *Lexington*

\* Aaron Prendergast, United States Naval Shipbuilding Museum & USS *Salem*, sponsored by USS *Bowfin* & Pacific Fleet Submarine Museum



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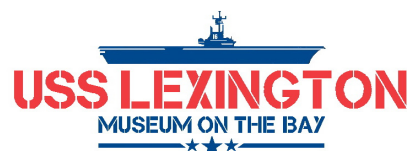
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# FLEET FEATURES (CONTINUED)

## ***U-474: An Unprecedented Approach to the History of Submarines and German Warfare***

*Andreas Haberman, U-474 Project (<https://u-474.com/>)*

Developing a museum experience around the German U-boat, U-474, is creating an unusual and exciting project, which is about to be realized near Germany's capital Berlin. Andreas Habermann and his team are working to recreate a type VII C submarine using original construction plans and place it in a domed building. This will span an area of approximately 80 meters x 40 meters and reach a height of 15 meters. The submarine will be moved using a hydraulic system, which will make it possible to experience the real feeling of sea conditions and maneuvers. The outside world will be projected onto the inner wall of the dome using around 60 projectors, allowing any environment and weather situation to be displayed. The weather influences felt on the boat will be simulated using wind and rain machines. This will be rounded off by further special effects, which, for example, create realistic representations of water intrusion and lead to an "up-close" experience.

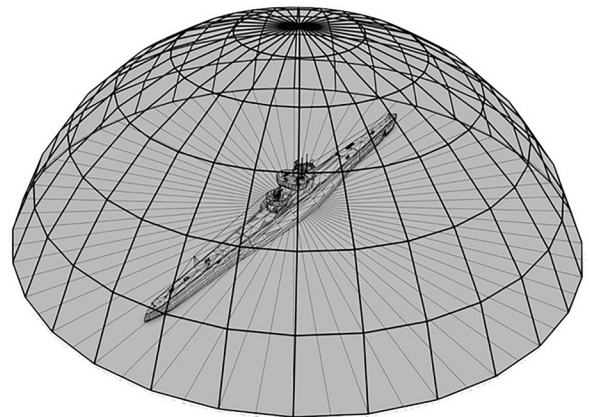
By combining these complex technical elements, U-474 will bring to life real missions from war history, as well as fictional scenarios. The intent of the project is to convey to the public how and why decisions were made in warfare. The cramped situation in the boat under stress will push the participants to their personal limits and create an understanding that no history book in the world can convey. Up to 50 people at a time will have the opportunity to experience a simulation of a submarine dive and a military conflict up close in a three-hour (or longer) event. Visitors will experience for themselves what living in the confined space of a submarine was like.

During the three-hour event, roles will be assigned and orders and instructions will be given, which are based on real, documented scenarios from war history. Visitors will have the opportunity to choose their role as officers, noncommissioned officers, or sailors in advance. The officers and noncommissioned officers will be primarily responsible for managing the boat and the crew. On the one hand, they'll have to calculate courses and carry out attacks on enemy ships, and on the other hand, they'll have to delegate tasks to the crew.

Sailors must perform maintenance and repair work. These tasks will predominantly have the character of an escape room adventure; therefore, no previous technical knowledge

or experience will be required. In addition to the U-474 experience, an attached museum will offer exhibits that provide a deeper understanding of the tragedy of human warfare. Thus, an awareness will possibly be created for the impact of war on individuals and, at the same time, for the sheer mass of fates that are influenced by acts of war on a much larger scale. Above all, the individual submarines will be presented and their unique stories will be told. Visitors will be able to view war diaries, personal letters from the crew, and more in the digital archive. Several reports from the Allied forces will also be accessible. The ambition is to encourage people to consciously consider the implications of their own decisions and actions. There will also be various experiments, for example on the topics of buoyancy, navigation, and encryption.

At this point, the project is completely planned out and has a motivated team of different trades, waiting to get started. The total cost of the whole project will be €30 million, for which several banks have agreed to finance €27 million by giving credit to the project. Now the last but very crucial step is to raise the remaining €3 million through a fundraiser. It is planned to sell tickets and goodies way ahead of the actual start, which will help raise equity and bring this amazing project to life. Andreas Habermann and his team therefore invite you, to visit the project on [www.u-474.com](http://www.u-474.com), where more detailed information is given and interested people can register for the upcoming fundraising campaign.



*Schematic representation of planned replica U-474 museum space.*  
Credit: Andreas Habermann

# Tribute to Tug Hawk - A Storied Legacy

Kimberly Walters, Senior Marketing Manager, J.F. Brennan Company, Inc.

J.F. Brennan Company (Brennan) is honored to pay tribute to the Tug *Hawk*, a vessel whose remarkable history and dedicated service have left an enduring legacy. Originally launched in 1941 at Pearl Harbor and believed to be one of the last tugs from the war still in service, the *Hawk's* journey is a testament to resilience, dedication, and historical significance.

The *Hawk*, a single-screw tug rated at 240 horsepower, served tirelessly in various capacities. Propelled by a diesel engine and single propeller, she embodied strength and reliability. Her exact specifications include a length of 66 feet/2 inches, a beam of 17 feet, and a draft of 4 feet/11 inches.

Built in 1940, by the United States Navy at the Pearl Harbor Navy Yard, the *Hawk*, then known as YT-153, was a 65-foot long motor tug. Her keel was laid in 1940, and she was launched in 1941, entering service at the 14<sup>th</sup> Naval District at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii. The tug was present during the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor on 7 December 1941, earning her a battle star for her service in World War II.

In 1944, the United States Navy redesignated the tug as YTL-153. Although the exact date when she was placed out of service is unknown, in 1947, the tug was struck from the Naval Register. Over her distinguished career, the YT-153/YTL-153, received numerous accolades, including the Combat Action Ribbon (Pearl Harbor), the American Defense Service Medal, the American Campaign Medal, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal, and the World War II Victory Medal.

In 1980, the tug acquired civilian documentation and was eventually renamed the *Hawk*, by Kenneth Gallup, Jr., of Wakefield, Rhode Island. In 1998, she was acquired by Specialty Diving Services, Inc., of North Kingstown, Rhode Island. Her final chapter began in 2020 when Brennan acquired her with the purchase of Specialty Diving Services.

Under Brennan's stewardship, the *Hawk*, continued to provide invaluable service over the next four years. She played a pivotal role in moving construction barges for high-profile projects, including the reconstruction of Pier 1 in the Port of Davisville, which was part of a \$234.5 million revitalization plan. Additionally, she contributed to pier and landside improvements on Quonset Point, supporting the construction of the U.S. Navy's largest submarine.

As Brennan bids farewell to the *Hawk*, we honor her extraordinary service and the historical legacy she represents. From her role in World War II to her decades of civilian service, the *Hawk*, has been a symbol of resilience and dedication. Her presence at Pearl Harbor and her subsequent service to the nation and various owners mark her as a vessel of great historical significance.

Brennan, alongside previous owners Kenneth Gallup, Jr., and Specialty Diving Services Incorporated, have all played a part in preserving the *Hawk's* legacy. The *Hawk's* legacy will continue to inspire future generations, reminding us of the enduring spirit and dedication that defined her service.

We extend our gratitude to all who served aboard the *Hawk*, and those who ensured her continued service. The *Hawk's* legacy will forever be a proud chapter in the annals of maritime history. Thank you, Tug *Hawk*, for your unparalleled service and for reminding us of the strength and resilience that define our maritime heritage.

After an exhaustive search, J.F. Brennan Company has recently transferred ownership of the tug *Hawk* Senesco Marine in North Kingstown, Rhode Island. We hope to have more information about this fascinating ship in an upcoming issue of *Anchor Watch*.



Tug Hawk transiting Naragansett Bay.

Credit: J. F. Brennan Company





# Battleship Missouri Memorial Main Deck Restoration Complete

*Jaclyn Hawse Battleship Missouri Memorial, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii*

In Spring 2024, the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial proudly announced the completion of the main deck teak restoration project, marking a significant milestone in the preservation of this iconic piece of American history. Mike Carr, President & CEO of the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial, ceremoniously laid the final teak plank on the main deck, ending a meticulous restoration endeavor that spanned nearly 14 years.

The project, which commenced following the Battleship *Missouri*'s drydock in 2010, involved the restoration of over 48,000 square feet of teak deck, a symbol of the ship's enduring legacy. Through the dedication of skilled craftsmen and the support of numerous volunteers, the endeavor required an estimated 68,514 man-hours, along with an investment of \$6,193,535, covering the costs of teak, supplies, and labor.

Teak wood aboard battleships had vital functions beyond decoration. It protected against the sparks from metal-on-metal contact, reducing the risk of fires during the transportation of gunpowder. Additionally, it provided insulation for the vast deck area, shielding against the sun's relentless heat. Notably, on 2 September 1945, the teak deck of the USS *Missouri* (BB-63) served as the historic platform for the formal end of World War II, witnessing Japan's surrender.

Under the leadership of Missouri Governor Mike Parson, the State of Missouri has played a pivotal role in the restoration effort, generously contributing \$436,500 to support the project's completion. Their commitment to preserving the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial's historic significance underscores the importance of safeguarding our nation's maritime heritage for future generations. Ruwe Jibas, Teak Preservation Supervisor, expressed his enthusiasm for the project's completion, stating, "This journey has been truly incredible, and being a part of this monumental project fills me with immense pride. Despite the hot and humid days, every moment dedicated to preserving this historic vessel has been truly rewarding." Jibas has been instrumental in leading the teak preservation team since 2012, supported by dedicated assistants whose collective efforts have been indispensable in achieving this major milestone.

The completion of the main deck restoration not only ensures the structural integrity of the USS *Missouri* but also reaffirms its status as a living testament to the bravery and sacrifice of those who served aboard her. As a symbol of American naval power and resilience, the Battleship *Missouri* Memorial continues to inspire visitors from around the world, offering a poignant reminder of our nation's enduring commitment to freedom and democracy.



*Mike Carr, President & CEO of the Battleship Missouri Memorial with members of the teak restoration team memorializing the final teak placement!*

*Credit: USS Missouri Memorial Association!*

# Battleship Missouri Memorial Association and OBON Society Commemorate Peace

*Jaclyn Hawse Battleship Missouri Memorial, Pearl Harbor, Hawaii*

In late 2024, the USS *Missouri* Memorial Association, in partnership with the OBON SOCIETY (<https://www.obonsociety.org/eng>), celebrated a pivotal moment in peace and reconciliation with the formal transfer of custody of three Yosegaki Hinomaru flags—unique heirlooms created for Japanese servicemen by their parents, family, and friends. This event honored the ongoing unity between the United States and Japan, seventy-nine years after World War II officially ended aboard the USS *Missouri*.

The ceremony featured the viewing of the three Yosegaki Hinomaru flags, originally presented to Japanese servicemen during World War II. Each flag, inscribed with signatures, messages of hope and love from family and friends, is a deeply personal artifact that speaks to the human side of war. These flags represent the servicemen's spirits and their unbreakable ties to their families and country. These historic flags have been part of the USS *Missouri*'s collection for many years, with one arriving shortly after the ship's opening as a museum in 1999. Since then, the awareness of the importance of these artifacts has grown, with ongoing research shedding new light on the deep cultural connections they represent.

As the USS *Missouri* Memorial Association approaches the 80th anniversary of the end of World War II, this flag transfer carries profound significance. It symbolizes a renewed commitment to peace and the importance of educating future generations about the power of understanding and healing. Returning these heirlooms, once taken as wartime souvenirs by Allied servicemen, marks a crucial step in closing old wounds and restoring these cherished items to the families where they rightfully belong.

"This ceremony is a powerful reminder of the importance of honoring the past while looking toward a peaceful future," said Michael Carr, President and Chief Executive Officer of the USS *Missouri* Memorial Association. "By transferring these historic flags to the OBON SOCIETY, we not only recognize their cultural and emotional significance but also reaffirm our role in fostering reconciliation between nations that were once at war."

Following the viewing, a formal presentation was held in which the flags were folded and transferred to the OBON SOCIETY, who will conduct further research on them in Astoria, Oregon, as part of their ongoing mission to heal the lingering grief among World War II families and strengthen peace between nations. "The return of these flags is a profound act of reconciliation and healing," said Rex Ziak, co-founder and president of OBON SOCIETY. "The government of Japan lists more than one million MIA servicemen from WWII. These unique, personalized flags, each one as unique as a fingerprint, are the only existing trace of these men and they can be traced back to family with 100% accuracy. By returning these heirlooms, we offer these families the closure they have long sought, and in doing so, we strengthen the bridge of peace between our nations."

This flag transfer represents more than a simple handover; it stands as a testament to the power of reconciliation and a shared commitment to healing the wounds of war. As both the USS *Missouri* Memorial Association and OBON SOCIETY continue their missions, today's ceremony served as a reminder that peace is not only about ending conflict but also about remembering the past and working together to create a more unified future.



Dignitaries and representatives from the USS *Missouri* Memorial Association, OBON SOCIETY, and the Consulate of Japan gathered aboard the USS *Missouri* for the transfer of three historic Yosegaki Hinomaru flags from World War II.

Credit: USS *Missouri* Memorial Association



# INTERVIEW WITH NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, MIKE GETSCHER

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***Please provide an introduction about your museum/ship and your association with the organization.***

I joined the Battleship IOWA team as a volunteer in August 2011, just weeks before the Secretary of the Navy awarded the ship to the organization. Now recognized as one of the leading museums in Los Angeles, the ship is a founding partner in Los Angeles Fleet Week and a deeply embedded member of the San Pedro community. I attended my first HNSA conference in Key West on behalf of IOWA in 2012.

Moving forward as the Executive Director (ED) at HNSA, I intend to leverage my expertise and relationships within the community to the benefit of the organization.

My goals for the role include:

- Effectively organizing, promoting and executing the annual symposium, as well as elevating it to a national presence.
- Establishing clear communication practices, productive collaboration, and mutual support among members.
- Introducing robust and relevant standards for historic naval ships with a focus on steel vessels, modern methods, and the needs of the current HNSA fleet.
- Growing and formalizing HNSA sponsorships with corporate partners.
- Developing impactful relationships in Navy

and congressional offices.

I feel privileged to have been chosen for this role, and I'm looking forward to working with members to bring real value to their participation.

***How would you describe your main duties and responsibilities?***

As Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer for IOWA, virtually all aspects of operations were under my purview including all revenue, educational and operational departments. Now shifting to a narrowed role as Vice President and Chief Engineer, engineering, capital projects, curatorial, safety and security are the focus.

As ED for HNSA, the overall business of running an international organization is a direct responsibility. Organizing the annual symposium, working with sponsors, addressing memberships, and a full range of communications requirements will be involved.

***What are your goals for the museum/ship in the next five to ten years?***

Aboard IOWA, we are working on a \$10M capital program for the coming year or two, including the construction of a shoreside Freedom of the Seas Park and Pavilion, the creation of Phase 1 of the National Museum of the Surface Navy, and several major deck restoration projects. We are also working on hull preservation as a priority.

Being brand new to the HNSA role, I am drinking from the proverbial fire hose. Short term goals include the 2025 Symposium, sponsorship cultivation, membership follow-up and communication improvements.

***How did you get your start in naval history?***

My father was a battleship sailor during World War II and instilled in me a fascination with everything related to maritime history. Adding to this was my role as a Merchant Marine engineer, and now my younger son is a naval officer on a submarine is carrying on the

The main value that I see is the relationships that have formed over the more than dozen years that I've been involved.

## Nautical Challenge Answers



# NAUTICAL CHALLENGE

*Captain Rich Abele, USNR (Ret.)*

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1. What was the shortest service life of any United States aircraft carrier?



2. In June 1940, a British aircraft carrier was sunk by shellfire from two German battlecruisers in the Norwegian Sea. Name that doomed flattop. BONUS: Can you name the two German warships?

3. What was the name of the first *Los Angeles*-class attack submarine decommissioned by the United States Navy?

4. During the Vietnam War, only one major United States Navy ship was sunk by enemy action. Can you name that ill-fated ship?

5. In September 2024, two *Ticonderoga*-class guided missile cruisers were decommissioned in Norfolk, Virginia, and in Hawaii. Name those two warships.

6. This past summer the *Ocean Infinity*, deploying autonomous underwater vehicles, located the “Ghost ship of the Pacific”. Can you name that legendary vessel?

7. On 20 March 2009, a collision involving two United States Navy vessels occurred in the Straits of Hormuz. Name those two ships.

8. On 1 October 2024, two United States Navy destroyers fired a dozen interceptors at Iranian missiles launched at Israel. Can you name those two warships?

9. In 2005, during a high-speed patrol at 525 foot depth, this *Los Angeles*-class submarine collided with an uncharted seamount causing extensive damage to the submarine. What was the name of that vessel?



10. What was the name of the battleship that suffered a horrible explosion in Turret No. 2, while firing its 14-inch guns during an intense mock warfare maneuver off the coast of California in 1924?



*(Answers on page 22)*

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*Did you present at the September 2024 or 2025 HNSA Symposium? Has your ship completed an interesting or innovative project recently? Are your conservation staff developing new methods for preserving a particular portion of your ship or a particular museum artifact type? Are your outreach staff developing new approaches to engaging with the public? Whatever the topic, I'd love for you to submit an article for an upcoming issue of Anchor Watch. **The deadline to submit articles for the next issue is 31 October 2025, but you can submit at any time for future issues!** I hope to hear from you soon! Sarah E. Holland, Editor ([editor@hnsa.org](mailto:editor@hnsa.org)).*

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# Historic Naval Ships Association Membership Application

*Please return completed form to:*

John Elliker, HNSA Treasurer  
4532 Rothwell Drive  
Virginia Beach, Virginia 23456-4800

## You are invited to join the **HISTORIC NAVAL SHIPS ASSOCIATION**

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Please enroll me as a member of the Historic Naval Ships Association.

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Signature \_\_\_\_\_

### **INDIVIDUAL SUPPORTER/PATRON.....USD \$35**

Benefits: Anchor Watch subscription, HNSA "member" card for use in identifying your affiliation with HNSA, free or reduced admission to and 10% gift shop discount at participating Fleet Member ships and parks, invitation to attend HNSA Annual Symposium.

Benefits of additional contributions/donations: In exchange, for your generous donation:

- For support above \$100, we will send you a special lapel pin showing your support.
- For support above \$200, we will send you the pin PLUS a coffee mug.
- For support above \$1,000, you will receive complimentary admission to the annual conference.
- For support above \$2,500, you will receive complimentary admission to the annual conference PLUS invitation to the executive director reception and your name listed on the front page of the website as a HNSA Blue & Gold Patron

### **INDUSTRY AFFILIATE.....USD \$105**

If your organization, company or agency's objectives are compatible with ours, you may be interested in becoming an Industry Affiliate Member of HNSA. Affiliates benefit from preferred marketing placement in HNSA media and as participants in our annual conference, depending on the level of sponsorship. The minimum sponsorship for Affiliation is \$105 US.

### **FLEET MEMBERSHIPS.....USD \$105**

To become a Fleet Member, contact the Executive Director at [executivedirector@hnsa.org](mailto:executivedirector@hnsa.org) or click below and select "Fleet" as your member type in the online application. Fleet Member dues are determined by annual revenues as reflected in your Form 990. The appropriate tier is input by the HNSA Treasurer or the Executive Director when your online application is approved. All our International Fleet Members' dues are set at \$105 US regardless of revenue or ship size