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Bell Tolls for Historic Iron Ship Docked in Honolulu Harbor



Falls of Clyde was impounded in 2016, when this photo was taken, and the Department of Transportation revoked its permit claiming it would be hazardous to the harbor during extreme weather. (Cory Lum/2016)

"It doesn't look like much, but it could block the channel easily. That's the kind of risk it poses."

Randy Grune
Deputy Director
Harbors Division

The 145-year-old vessel *Falls of Clyde* will be scrapped or scuttled after years of neglect.

A seven-year fight over ownership and repairs between the Department of Transportation and the nonprofit Friends of *Falls of Clyde* is ending after a recent survey deemed the ship a danger to the Honolulu harbor.

Bruce McEwan, the nonprofit's president, says the department is attempting to delist the vessel from the National Register of Historic Places to streamline its removal or destruction. He called the end result a catch-22: "We can't now argue the ship's not a safety hazard," and "we can't argue against the delisting process," he said.

The department did not make a representative available to

comment.

According to the survey completed in March, *Falls of Clyde* is the "sole surviving four masted, wrought iron sailing tank vessel from the windjammer days of sail."

Falls of Clyde has been moored in the Honolulu harbor since 1963 and was added to the National Register of Historic Places in 1989. It operated as a museum until it fell into disrepair in the 2000s and risked being reefed.

Years worth of repairs were estimated to cost millions of dollars, but in a supportive gesture the department issued the vessel a revocable permit and waived mooring fees.

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News Around the Fleet



■ Naval Shipyard Museum Peacot Tells a Story

Ross Patterson, Assistant Curator of the museum tells the story of one item in the collection. "As a peacoat, it's not quite the Navy pattern. It's actually civilian. But it's still very much intrinsically tied to one of the most important aspects of the Navy submarine history."

On the morning of May 23, 1939, the USS *Squalus* suffered a catastrophic valve failure during a test dive off the New England coast. "That ship plummeted 240 feet down, and 33 men are trapped in the forward torpedo bay area and have essentially 48 hours of air." According to Patterson, "Up till May of 1939, no one had ever saved anyone below 20 feet in a submarine."



Over the next 13 hours, all 33 survivors were rescued from the sunken submarine, making international news. Months later the *Squalus* was raised and salvaged, along with this

peacoat. Patterson says, "This coat is a tangible connection to that event. And from that point on, we suddenly are able to start saving people deep underwater."

■ Fundraiser to Save King's Former Ship Commanded

HMS *Bronington* - once commanded by the King - may find a new home at Portsmouth Historic Dockyard if the 70-year-old warship can be salvaged and restored.

The vessel, also known as the 'King's own warship', is a minesweeping ship that has been offered a spot at the historic dockyard. She was commanded by Prince Charles in 1976 during his time in the Navy.

However, she is currently in need of repairs and restoration as she was partially sunk at her mooring in Birkenhead.

The HMS *Bronington* Trust has launched a charity fundraiser to restore the ship and turn her into a museum, at an estimated cost of £1m.

A five-stage plan has been

drawn up to restore the vintage minehunter with the intention of getting *Bronington* out of the water, moving her to the Portsmouth Historic Dockyard and creating a special steel cradle to support her.

Mike McBride, trustee director, said the response to date from so many people offering money, time and support to raise the *Bronington* had been "humbling", with the King himself showing keen interest in the progress.

He said: "Everything is in place to rescue HMS *Bronington* and return her to her final squadron base port of Portsmouth - if we can get funding.

"She would look good next to HMS *Warrior* and would complement the HMS *Vernon*-Mine Warfare Memorial up the road at



Gunwharf Quays."

HMS *Bronington* is one of nearly 120 warships built in the 1950s. She served with distinction from the 1980s into the 1990s.

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■ Navy Department Library Relocation Underway

The Navy Department Library has commenced its relocation to a refurbished site on the historic Washington Navy Yard. The new Naval History and Research Center, a state-of-the-art, 2-floor structure, seamlessly combines two former ordnance factories and warehouses.

The move, initiated in May and scheduled to complete in August, has necessitated the temporary closure of its doors to the public.

According to Navy Librarian Dylan Beazer, the move and the new facility will bring key improvements.

"First, The Library staff will be more centrally located in one building. It's currently a challenge working projects with the team seated in different locations, so it will be a better working environment for us. The materials will also be more concentrated in one location, and that allows for ease of access for our patrons."

Furthermore, addressing concerns about environmental controls, Beazer highlighted the benefits of the new facility.

"This new facility will keep the Navy's books, historical documents, and other items in a long-term stable environment," he said. "That means we'll spend less time and money on preservation efforts as they'll stay in better condition for longer. It will also allow the public and Navy historians longer access to the material for research and provide us with room for growth for our future collections. The most important thing is a better environment to control the humidity and temperature, keeping books healthier for longer. The items will also be located together and the facility will give us more room for future growth."

The library's impressive collection includes a staggering 114,000 book titles, 374,000 manuscripts, and 189,000 periodicals, with a particular emphasis on naval, nautical, and military history from around the world. These invaluable resources



Entrance of the previous Navy Department Library facility which commenced relocation to a refurbished site on the historic Washington Navy Yard. The new Naval History and Research Center, a state-of-the-art, 2-floor structure, seamlessly combines two former ordnance factories and warehouses.

Navy Librarian Dylan Beazer showcases the expanded rolling shelves (in climate and humidity controlled facility) at the Navy Department Library which commenced relocation to a refurbished site on the historic Washington Navy Yard.



form the bedrock of the Navy Department Library's enduring legacy. Among its gems are historical artifacts that bring to life the rich legacy of naval heritage.

While the Navy Library collection is extensive, there are often misconceptions about its scope, Beazer said.

"The size of the collection, what it covers, and how we grow it. While we focus on U.S. naval history, we also cover other aspects of maritime history, and we have resources on the other military branches too. We grow our collection both through book buying and donations, especially

regarding cruise books and unique historical items."

Established by a directive from President John Adams to Secretary of the Navy Benjamin Stoddert in 1800, the Navy Department Library has evolved into a treasured institution that holds an array of naval and maritime history, customs, and traditions. As one of the few major military historical libraries accessible to the public, it serves as a beacon of knowledge for an international audience.

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■ Lakeland Native Serves on Oldest Warship

Fireman James De La Rua, a native of Lakeland, is one of nearly 80 sailors celebrating America's 247 years of independence while serving aboard USS *Constitution*.

De La Rua, a 2021 Lanier County High School graduate, joined the Navy one year ago, Navy representatives said in a statement.

"I joined the Navy to better myself, for financial stability and to travel the world," De La Rua said.

Skills and values similar to those found in Lakeland are important to succeed in the military, he said.

"I learned in Lakeland the importance of manners and working hard without complaining," De La Rua said. "In the Navy, you have to have discipline and manners and hard work help with that."

USS *Constitution* is the U.S. Navy's oldest commissioned warship and the crew is hand-picked to promote naval history and maritime heritage while raising awareness of the importance of a sustained naval presence, Navy representatives said.

The ship earned the nickname "Old Ironsides" during the War of 1812 after British cannonballs were seen bouncing off the ship's wooden hull. USS *Constitution* was undefeated in battle and captured



Fireman James De La Rua, a Lakeland native, serves on the USS *Constitution* (U.S. Navy Photo)

or destroyed 33 enemy vessels.

RELATED: NEW SAILOR ABOARD CONSTITUTION

■ Baton Rouge Bucket List: Visiting USS *Kidd*

The USS *Kidd* is one of Baton Rouge's most recognizable landmarks. The World War II destroyer has made the capital city its home since 1982, perched languidly on the Mississippi just across from the River Center in downtown Baton Rouge. It's part of the USS *Kidd* Veterans Museum, a memorial and museum that details the history of the ship and local veterans.

Since last year the museum has been overseen by director Parks Stephenson. Stephenson's history with the *Kidd* began when he dived on its sister ship the USS *Johnston* – one of the world's deepest shipwrecks – and he has plenty of exciting plans in mind, many sourced from other leading museums around the world. An engaging exhibit about pirates, relating the story behind the crew's self-appointed "Pirates of the Pacific" nickname, is his doing.

"I don't like the old traditional type of museum where you come in and read a placard and look at a thing," he said last year. "The number one job I see for my role here is to make this place more interactive. We've got to make *Kidd* relevant for the 21st century."

Entry to the museum is gained through its main entrance on River Road. There are plenty of exhibits located both upstairs and downstairs, including the *Kidd*'s history, women in war and Louisiana veterans. While you're at it, check out the World War II-era Curtiss P-40 fighter, painted in the colors of the famous Flying Tigers, located on the ground floor.

The *Kidd* itself is, as Stephenson says, "90% pure



1945" in its specifications. It's one of the world's most authentic warship tour experiences, an honor that sees visitors travel from all around the world to experience it. When first stepping aboard, being on something that you'll usually only see while reading historical accounts or watching old and grainy footage is a little surreal.

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■ University Backs Theory of Lost WWI Submarine

Experts believe they have located the missing World War One submarine *E52* buried beneath a public park in Dartmouth – the same place a Royal Navy officer believed she might be.

Two experts from the University of Winchester have been hunting for the mysterious submarine and they believe they have located it in Dartmouth's Coronation Park.

The submarine's location has been a popular myth in the town, and Royal Navy officer Lieutenant Tom Kemp, from Britannia Royal Naval College, already suspected it was in that

location.

David Ashby, who manages the university's soil laboratory, and Simon Roffey, a Reader in Archaeology who is also an ex-submariner who served for five years in O-Class subs in the 1980s, have been hunting for the lost vessel and believe they have located her.

The pair used the university's ground penetrating radar (GPR) to locate *E52*, although their results are not definitive yet.

Last year, Lt Kemp also identified the spot in Coronation Park as a potential resting place for the submarine, which had



fuelled a local legend for nearly 100 years.

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Lt Kemp said: "It's been my personal hobbyhorse for the better part of the past year.

■ USS *Cutlass*: Still Active After Nearly 80 Years

You might expect that a submarine in use during World War II would be retired, but that's not the case for the USS *Cutlass*. In fact, the usual life for a submarine is between 20 and 30 years, so the *Cutlass* has defied those expectations more than twice over. This submarine dates back to 1944, and it's still being used today. It started as a vessel for the U.S. Navy, but it has since been sold to Taiwan where it remains in active service.

Taiwan brought it in for maintenance in 2017, and the goal was to extend its service life to 2026. It's mainly used for training these days, but reports have indicated the *Cutlass*, now known as *Hai Shih*, is capable of laying mines and could still potentially fire torpedoes. Taiwan's submarine fleet actually features two from the WWII era. Joining the *Cutlass* is the *Hai Pao*, another submarine that

was once owned by the U.S. Navy. Formerly known as the USS *Tusk*, this submarine was launched in 1945 and sold in 1974, a year after the *Cutlass*.

Despite departing from Pearl Harbor – a few years after the 1941 attack that brought the U.S. into World War II – and patrolling Japanese waters, the *Cutlass* never saw any battles. It arrived near Japan a day after the Japanese surrender in 1945. The *Cutlass* patrolled the area for a little over a month before returning to Pearl Harbor and eventually settling on the United States east coast. In 1949, the *Cutlass* became the test submarine for Operation Rainbow, an exercise done to evaluate color schemes on subs as visibility was becoming a bigger problem since these vessels began to dive deeper than ever before.

From that point on, it



(USS *Cutlass*, c. 1970 (Naval History and Heritage Command Photo # NH 82301)

mostly made trips around the Western Hemisphere before going to Europe in 1953. The *Cutlass*' remaining time with the U.S. Navy consisted of patrols, exercises, and antisubmarine warfare

training before it was retired from the military and sold off to Taiwan nearly 30 years after its launch.

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■ Higgins Boat to Nebraska National Guard Museum

A World War II boat that stormed enemy beaches finds its final shore, unloaded at the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward.

"It's been a whirlwind tour for this thing and you got to remember this thing's had seven battle stars during World War II," museum historian Jerry Meyer said.

"Tarawa and the Pacific, the Marshall Islands, Saipan and Guam and the Philippines and Okinawa. Yeah, she's quite the lady. If you look at her, she's rough, but that's the kind of appearance we want to keep," he said.

It was an even longer journey than that, nearly lost to history until extreme drought revealed it at Lake Shasta, California, in 2021.

For James Dunsdon, the man who discovered the boat, its arrival in Seward is the culmination of two years of hard work.

"It's a little bit surreal. When I first saw this boat, it was on a mud bank, you know, in a dry lake bed," Dunsdon said. "It was kind of like a battlefield, the atmosphere, there's nobody there, the smoke drifting across the lake and then I came to this rise and there it was with the ramp down on the shore."

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Rich Eberspacher of Lincoln walks around Higgins boat PA31-17, which saw action in seven World War II battles, as it sits outside the Nebraska National Guard Museum in Seward. (The World-Herald)



Kenny Dabill of Blue Ox Millworks disassembles the wooden shipping container containing Higgins boat PA31-17. (The World-Herald)

A look the the ramp on Higgins boat PA31-17. (The World-Herald)



"It's been a whirlwind tour for this thing and you got to remember this thing's had seven battle stars during World War II."

Jerry Meyer
Nebraska National
Guard Museum

■ Midway Museum Begins Work for Park Next Door

The USS *Midway* Museum is beginning the process of working and raising money to build a long-promised park that will replace the majority of the current parking lot next to the ship.

The agreement to build a park was part of the original agreement to allow the *Midway* to come to San Diego as a museum.

"When the *Midway* first came here in 2004, there were some people that thought this ship was not going to be pretty down here in the bay. And there were some people who said 'Absolutely – it's going to be pretty. It's going to be the view. How can we come to a compromise?'" said Laura White of the USS *Midway* Foundation, who will help lead the fundraising effort.

Freedom Park, as it will be called, will have an open space look and will also contain several monuments honoring various aspects of the USS *Midway*'s history, as well as the history of the Navy Pier and the Navy's history in San Diego. That will include monuments to honor the many women involved in the building of the aircraft carrier and the families of those who served on the ship during its distinguished history.

One concern for those visiting the museum will be parking. The current plan for Freedom Park will eliminate around two-thirds of the 300 or so spots currently available on site. Those lost spots are expected to be balanced by new parking garages that will be part of the large complex of office and hotel buildings currently under construction across the street.

White says work underneath the parking lot has already begun. An official groundbreaking on the project is expected in early 2024, at which time demolition will begin on parts of the site.

However, while work is beginning to ensure the opening of the park meets a deadline required in the museum's permit, a majority of the money to pay for the project still needs to be raised.

White anticipates a fundraising goal of \$35 million, which she hopes to meet through a variety of sources.

"We're honoring our veterans. We're celebrating freedom. And we're going to talk about themes of how you, too, can be an everyday hero," White said. "I can't imagine anyone who doesn't want to be a part of that."



Freedom Park will be designed to connect with the adjacent park areas surrounding the Midway, including areas along the promenade and extending into G Street Mole to the Bob Hope Memorial, resulting in the largest veterans park on the West Coast.



The USS Midway Museum and Port of San Diego made a commitment in 2004 to one day develop a park on Navy Pier. After many years of negotiations and planning, the California Coastal Commission's approval in February gives us the development permit required to start the process of building the park, your park – Freedom Park at Navy Pier.



Historic Naval Ships Association

To Support the Preservation of Historic Naval Vessels &
To Honor Those Who Serve at Sea

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