

Liberty Log!

A Newsletter of Project Liberty Ship



Volume XXXIII

No. 3

Summer 2010



PLS Nonagenarians

**These four gentlemen all served at sea in World War II and will be 90 years old – or better – in 2010. From left, Captain Herb Groh, Charles Gladding, Kalevi Olkio and Charles Blockston.
(See page 6.)**

Photo courtesy Ernest Imhoff

PLS EVENT CALENDAR

2010 Cruises

October 16 Living History Cruise - Baltimore

November 7 Veterans Day Cruise - Baltimore
See page 18 for order form.

Events

October 30 Friends and Family Annual Celebration
See page 19 to sign up.



The **SS JOHN W. BROWN** is a Fleet Member of
The Historic Naval Ships Association
(www.hnsa.org/index.htm)

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Restoration of Liberty Ship Engine in Progress

By Capt. Michael J. Schneider

During the early restoration of JOHN W. BROWN, PLS volunteers frequently visited the other two Liberty ships then in the James River Reserve Fleet to obtain the parts needed to get our ship operating.

One of the Libertys “donating” parts was USS PROTECTOR (AGR-11), launched as the WARREN P. MARKS. The ship was one of 36 four-hatch Liberty ships, built to carry crated aircraft. Sixteen of these ships were converted by the Navy, outfitted with a long range air search radar, and operated from 1955 to 1965 as radar picket ships. They were, in effect, maritime early warning ships, performing a function similar to the DEW line across northern Canada.

PROTECTOR was towed from Portsmouth, VA, in November 2004 for scrapping in Brownsville, TX. However, before that happened, her triple expansion engine – all 135 tons of it – was removed with the idea of making it a dynamic museum display.

The plan is to preserve and rebuild the engine and house it in an atrium made to resemble an engine room. A short stub “propeller” shaft will be connected to the engine’s crank shaft and pass through a simulated “engine room bulkhead”, behind which will be a large electric motor capable of turning the engine at slow speed, probably about 10 rpm. Many of the internal parts of the engine, pistons and valves, will not be installed but all the visible parts, including the piston rods, valve rods, cross heads, and the crank shaft will be assembled and will move as the engine is operated by the electric motor.

This work is being done in Norfolk by another group of volunteers. The crankshaft has been lifted and all six main bearings cleaned and reassembled. The intermediate and low pressure connecting rods have received the same treatment. The high pressure connecting rod bearing halves had been wiped (the babbitt material damaged by running the bearing without proper lubrication or allowing it to overheat) and requires more work.

The engine bed plate is resting on 12 inch “I” beams which lie on a concrete slab with a cover over it. The jacking engine (used to rotate the engine at slow speed when making repairs) has been rebuilt and painted and is being used to move the engine components as volunteers work on the bearings. While progress is slow, this promises to be a unique and interesting display once completed and will be another opportunity for people to see an actual Liberty ship triple expansion engine.



Ex-PROTECTOR (AGR-11) being towed from Norfolk, VA, in 2004, enroute to Brownsville, TX, for scrapping.



The engine cylinder casing is being lifted through the engine room skylight – a heavy lift and a tight fit!



The after port column the engine with the attached air pump, being lifted out of the ship.



The engine bed plate with crankshaft in place, an early step in rebuilding the engine.

From the Ship's Log . . .

Through the winter and spring our efforts were focused on finishing the planned winter maintenance tasks, completing the elements of the annual inspection by the Coast Guard, and preparing for the first Living History Cruise of the year on May 8.

The work on the throttle valve linkage was completed, the valve reassembled, and the valve tested by putting steam to the main engine. It functioned properly and the previous valve chatter, which was the reason for the repair, was been corrected. A key element of the repair was the installation of a new lever nut assembly that had been machined and donated by the Trail Tool Corporation of Glen Rock, PA. The throttle valve controls the steam going to the engine, and hence engine speed, when the ship is underway.

Another productive Working Weekend was held on March 19 – 21 with a team of volunteers tackling several jobs. The ship's name boards mounted on the bridge rails were refurbished and painted. More painting took place in the engine room as volunteers continued the efforts begun during the last working weekend to spruce up the engine room.

The last pieces of the cut-away boiler used by the schoolship as a training aid were removed from #3 lower hold. The deck area where the boiler had been sitting was preserved and painted. (The boiler components removed will be donated to an organization that will re-erect the boiler as an engineering display. While these components have some scrap value, we decided to forego that income so that this piece of Liberty ship equipment will be preserved and displayed.)



The restored jacking gear mounted on the engine bed plate and ready for use.

As part of the reorganization of #3 lower hold, the bundles of spare boiler have been stacked more efficiently in a newly constructed rack. This opens up space for the installation of a 20 foot container in which we will store artifacts in the museum collection that are not currently on display.

With the improving weather we enjoyed in the spring, Bos'n Walt Shober had the deck gang working to preserve the weather (outside) decks. That is a never ending task on any steel ship. The primary focus has been working on getting the boat deck into better shape and having it repainted prior to the May cruise.

A major job recently completed was the replacement of a 9" by 12" steam cylinder for one of the large cargo winches at #2 hatch. The cylinder had cracked and had to be replaced. Just finding a replacement cylinder was the initial challenge. We were fortunate to have the help of Jim Tampakis of Marine Spares International in locating and obtaining the replacement cylinder. (Jim is no stranger to Liberty ships and was a key person locating spare and replacement parts for ARTHUR M. HUDDALL before she was towed to Greece for restoration as HELLAS LIBERTY.) Once the replacement cylinder was found, Deck Engineer Harry Gordon assembled a team from all departments to tackle the replacement.

Removing the damaged cylinder was harder than we first thought. Having been in place for 67 years, virtually every nut and bolt was fused in place and had to be cut out using a torch. Next, we rigged a system which would support the heavy cylinder and slide it forward to remove it from the piston which remained in place. Once removed, a similar process in reverse was used to install the new cylinder. Once reassembled, the winch was tested and performed like new.

An engineering dock trial was conducted on April 21st to light off the steam plant and to check all the engine room equipment, particularly those pieces of machinery that had been repaired. All equipment operated properly. Coast Guard inspectors attended the dock trial to witness various evolutions and to complete the elements of the annual Coast Guard inspection.

The Coast Guard also witnessed the lifeboat suspension test and a pressure test of all the ship's fire hoses. For the suspension test, a lifeboat is filled with an amount of water equal to the weight of the crew members assigned to demonstrate that the life boat falls will support the weight and that the boat can be lowered to the water with a full load. The ship's #3 life boat was lowered and the crew was exercised by rowing the boat in the slip.

The ship's fire hoses are tested by bringing them on deck, connecting them together, and then applying normal fire main pressure to demonstrate the integrity of the hoses.

During the summer, the ship's volunteers and Moss Marine, a local marine contractor, completed repairs to a section of forward deck steam line supplying steam to the deck machinery, and they have modified the structure housing the starboard diesel generator by adding an access hatch. The steam line repair was a routine replacement of two sections of steam piping that had deteriorated over time.

To get at the line the crew needed to remove the heavy pipe guards that protect the pipe runs. The guards were needle-gunned and repainted in the process. The diesel generators are on the boat deck in small compartments originally used for berthing the Naval Armed Guard. The lack of space in the present arrangement made it very difficult to maintain and repair the starboard generator. We cut an access hatch in the after end of the space to make maintenance and repair easier.



Volunteers Gary Eng and Don Webster use needle guns on the heavy angled pipe guards that protect the piping that runs alongside #2 hatch. The replaced steam line is the upper of the two pipe runs shown in the background running alongside #2 hatch.

Another Working Weekend was aboard ship for July 9 - 11. Eleven out-of-town members along with local volunteers completed several jobs. The forward deck house was "attacked" with needle guns, scrapers, and chipping hammers to prepare and repaint the house. Fortunately, the weather cooperated. Other volunteers cleaned and painted the piping associated with the emergency fire pump located in the shaft alley. The bulkheads forming the casing around the stack uptakes inside the midship house were repainted.

The line throwing gun, displayed in the #2 tween deck, was completely disassembled, cleaned, and repainted. When completed, we decided the gun looked so good it needed an equally good looking mounting. We cleaned up a small hatch board, varnished it, and the gun mounted on it. The gun is a very interesting display and this work has made a major improvement in its appearance.

The major work accomplished during this period has been the removal and replacement of the two forward 20mm gun tubs. The original gun tubs were covered with "plastic armor" as a means of protection for the gunners. Plastic armor was a quick and inexpensive way of furnishing some protection from small caliber weapons and shrapnel on merchant ships.

Liberty ships had it installed on the gun tubs and around the wheel house, chart room and radio room. It was made of Trinidad asphalt with some additional aggregate material and placed on the vertical surfaces of the areas to be protected. Interestingly, the original "plastic armor" was developed by the Royal Navy and licensed to a local company that installed it. Over the years, both the plastic armor and the metal shield to which it was attached had deteriorated to the point replacement was required.

Volunteers, under the direction of Bob Jackson, chipped off the "armor" and cut the gun tubs into sections to facilitate removal. The deck department used the ship's cargo gear at #1 hatch to lift off the the4 sections of the gun tubs. New gun tubs were fabricated by Moss Marine, lifted into place, and welded to the existing gun platforms.



Chief Mate Larry Knapp, at the 20 mm gun mount, watches as Bob Jackson uses a cutting torch to remove a section of the starboard gun tub. Visible at lower right is Bien Gamboa serving as the fire watch. The piece being cut is held by a wire sling connected to the ship's cargo gear at hatch #1.



With the segment of the gun tub shield completely separated from the mounting platform, the ship's cargo hoist is swinging it across the hatch and will land it on the pier.

A significant task undertaken by the electrical gang was the complete replacement of the lighting system in #1 lower hold. In a space originally designed to carry cargo, lighting was not particularly important and temporary lighting, in the form of cluster lights, could be used to increase illumination when working cargo at night. On JOHN W. BROWN, #1 lower hold is used as a large bos'n's store room and working area by the deck department. Good lighting is essential. The newly installed lighting system now provides that without the need for portable lighting.

PLS Celebrates 90+ Year-old Volunteers

Service in World War II, then peacetime work. Then, along came the SS *John W. Brown* and it was back to sea.

Capt. Herb Groh (Merchant Marine, Army), Charles Gladding (Navy), Kalevi Olkio (Merchant Marine) and Charles (Blackie) Blockston (Merchant Marine) all served at sea in WW II. They have worked on the Brown since 1988 to help make her a success. "Elder statesman" Blockston turned 91 in 2009. The others turned, or will turn, 90 in 2010. Good Shipmates, all.

Michael J. Schneider, chairman of Project Liberty Ship, Inc., thanked them and other Good Shipmates who were honored at a recent luncheon at the Charlestown Retirement Community, in Catonsville, MD. Board member Mindy Sacks made the arrangements for the tasty lunch. All shipmates were pleased, especially those who can no longer visit their favorite Liberty as often as they would like.

Millionaire's Yacht Taken Over By US Army Transport Service.

By Ron Stahl (courtesy Kalevi Olkio)

During World War II, one of San Diego's most respected businessmen was Mr. Baron Long, a millionaire businessman who was the owner of the Biltmore Hotel and many other investments. His memory is still very highly regarded in San Diego today as having been a very generous philanthropist to the community.

He had a beautiful little yacht, the NORAB (NORAB is Baron spelt backwards) which Baron Long had used for many years to commute between his business interests in Mexico and San Diego. It was also very well known for the wonderful parties held in San Diego harbour.

Once it was taken over by the US Army Transport Service, the beautiful staterooms were ripped out and converted into hospital wards with four tiers of bunks close together. It was intended to use it as a sea going ambulance, retrieving wounded soldiers from the front line. Once the refit was done, it set out alone and unarmed across the Pacific war zone to join the US Army Transport Service Small Ships fleet.

There was great difficulty supplying the troops who were fighting the Japanese in New Guinea, because most of the little bays and inlets where supplies could be dropped were virtually uncharted and full of coral reefs whose locations were unknown. It was impossible for large ships to get supplies to the front-line troops.

A few American Army officers flew out from the Philippines to organise a fleet of small ships which could get in and out of these difficult areas. They scoured the country for any ships that could be used, and assembled a collection of old tugboats, barges; sailing boats, fishing trawlers, etc., even large sailing ships and trading schooners.

Because Australia was so desperate for manpower for the army, navy and air force, the Government decided that the only people eligible to join, this fleet would be those who were too old or too young for the armed services, or those who had tried to join the navy but had been declared medically unfit.

Of those who joined at the same time as myself, our Chief Steward and one of the cooks were in their seventies, our galley boy was 15, as was one of the dockhands. I had not yet turned 18

Crews were so short that some of the captains and officers had very little ocean going experience and had to navigate by dead reckoning. However, they did the job and supplied the troops, often under severe attacks from the Japanese.

As soon as the NORAB arrived in New Guinea she was immediately sent right up to the current battle area to evacuate the wounded to hospital. For several months she went up seven days a week and each day brought back about 70 stretcher cases and 100 walking wounded.

Later in the war, when the fighting had moved much further north, the NORAB was back in the port of Lae in New Guinea, anchored just off shore. Film star Gary Cooper and a group of famous actors were in Lae to entertain the troops. His party consisted of Red Buttons, Phyllis Brooks, Una Merkel and some others.

Gary Cooper was on the foreshore one day and recognised the NORAB anchored out in the harbour. Having cruised and partied on the ship many times, he said, "I know that ship", and asked the Port Commander if he could arrange for his party to visit. And so we had dinner with this very distinguished group of actors.

After about 10 months in New Guinea, the articles expired. A few of the Americans "stayed on" but many went home on leave and were replaced with an amazing collection of nationalities.

Happily, we survived the war, though the ship was fairly bruised and battered by the end, having been shipwrecked on a reef and having had many other misadventures.

She lay at anchor in a quiet area of the Port of Sydney for two or three years and was finally sold to a company which collected lobsters from the coast of Tasmania, a small Australian State.

The entrance to the harbour she worked from was extremely dangerous with many treacherous tides and currents. It is commonly known as "Hell's gate". One dark stormy night when attempting to enter the harbour, the NORAB hit the rocks and sank to the ocean floor.

Some thirty years later I made a sentimental trip to Tasmania to see her resting place. On the sightseeing boat which took passengers around the harbour, I was amused to find that the guide was saying that "General Macarthur's yacht was sunk below". He was very disappointed when I told him that was simply not true.

Liberty Ship Models

By Jim Murray

You wrote in the Spring 2010 issue of the Liberty Log that you would like to hear from PLS members who have built or acquired models of Liberty ships. Enclosed is a photo of my model of the *Jeremiah O'Brien* which was built from a model kit.

Incidentally, I am also a member of the National Liberty Ship Memorial and visit the *O'Brien* whenever I am in San Francisco. It took awhile to build the model due primarily to my inexperience as a ship modeler which accounts for the flaws. I was motivated to build the model because I served on three Liberty ships during World War II.



It all started when I was appointed as a deck cadet at the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy on November 19, 1942. Our group was designated as class 281 B. Arthur Jensen was also in that class and the enclosed photos of Arthur and me were taken during our basic training. We were housed in the old wooden Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) barracks. The accelerated program called for two months of basic training, then six months of sea duty and then back to the Academy to complete our studies.

I completed my basic training in January, 1943 and was assigned, along with another classmate, to the *SS Andrew G. Curtin*. We sailed to Casablanca, North Africa and back which took three months. I was then detached from the *Curtin* and assigned to the *SS William Pepper* which was loading supplies for Russia via the Persian Gulf. That trip took six months with the *William Pepper* circumnavigating the globe.

At that point, I had ten months of sea duty and was long overdue to be sent back to the Academy. However, the *SS Jefferson Davis* was loading more supplies for Russia, this time via the Murmansk run. At the time, there happened to be a shortage of Third Mates due, I believe,

to the fact that Christmas, 1943, was only a week away and the hazardous nature of the voyage. As a result, I volunteered and was assigned to the *Davis* as an Acting Third Mate.

The Atlantic crossing was uneventful and upon reaching Scotland, the convoy reassembled before heading north. My old ship, the *Andrew G. Curtin*, was part of the same convoy and unfortunately was torpedoed and sunk with loss of life. For some reason, the *Jefferson Davis* did not go into the port of Murmansk but continued up around the Kola peninsula and into the White Sea with a Russian ice breaker paving the way. We tied up and began unloading at Archangel, where I celebrated my 21st birthday.

When we returned to the States, I had fourteen months of sea duty so I was automatically classified as a "special" cadet-midshipman and was sent to the Basic Training School at Pass Christian, Mississippi, along with other "specials," to prepare for my license examination. Consequently, I received my Third Mate license and my Navy commission as Ensign in July, 1944 and decided to go into active duty in the Navy. I served on two naval vessels, an AK cargo ship and a LST, before being released to inactive duty in July 1946, then "swallowed the anchor" and began a new career.

I married and raised a family in Bowie, Maryland. Occasionally, I would visit the *John W. Brown* and enjoyed swapping sea stories with the crew. I also took a day cruise when Paul Esbensen was Master and was delighted to find my old shipmate from the *Casablanca* voyage also on board. I am now happy to report that at 87 years of age, I am in fairly good health and enjoying the good life in the Los Angeles area.



James L. Murray and Arthur Jensen
Captain Jensen is currently a Director of Project Liberty Ship

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<p>C-160 JWB Embroidered Cap® \$18.00 NAVY cap - JWB Liberty Ship is stitched in profile, lettering in gold.</p> <p>C-167 JWB Embroidered Cap® \$18.00 KHAKI cap with NAVY bill - JWB Liberty Ship is stitched in profile, lettering in gold.</p> <p>C-169 JWB Embroidered Cap® \$18.00 KHAKI cap - JWB Liberty Ship is stitched in profile, lettering in gold.</p>	<p>C-162 JWB States Marine Line Cap® \$18.00 KHAKI cap - the original logo of the States Marine Lines, the company that operated the BROWN during the war.</p> <p>C-165 JWB Embroidered Denim Cap® \$18.00 OATMEAL cap with WASHED DENIM bill - JWB logo embroidered in gold, silver, red, and black.</p> <p>C-159 JWB Embroidered Cap® \$18.00 NAVY cap - stitched in gold and silver.</p>
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M-225



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<p>M-225 JWB Pin® \$6.00 Color LOGO on gold tone pin.</p> <p>M-230 Merchant Marine Blue Star Pin \$10.00 Reproduction of the 'Sweetheart' pin worn by love ones at home.</p> <p>M-226 'Ships for Victory' Eagle Lapel Pin \$7.00 Reproduction of the Maritime Commission's wartime logo, used for Maritime Service, for shipyard awards, flags, etc.,. It was the most recognizable and distinctive of WW II maritime designs. Our reproduction is labeled "U.S. Merchant Marines". The pin is 1 1/8" tall.</p>

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Magnets



<p>M-186 JWB Photo Magnet® \$3.00 With photo of ship in the Cape Cod Canal.</p> <p>M-187 JWB Ship Magnet® \$3.00 The JOHN BROWN in color and 4" cut out to shape of the ship.</p>

**PROJECT LIBERTY SHIP IS
 A NON PROFIT, ALL-VOLUNTEER ORGANIZATION!
 All profits are used for the restoration and preservation of the
 LIBERTY SHIP S.S. JOHN W. BROWN.**

Ship's Store Order Form 2010 Fall

Mail Order:

Project Liberty Ship Store

Fax order:

410-558-1737

PO Box 25846, Highlandtown Station

Baltimore, Maryland 21224-0546

Billing address:

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zipcode: _____

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Ship to: (if different from Billing address)

Name: _____

Address: _____

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Country: _____

Method of Payment: Check or Money order (Make payable to Project Liberty Ship)

Credit card: Visa MasterCard Discover

Credit card Number _____ Expiration Date ____/____

V-code _____ (Located on back of card last 3 digits after card#)

Signature _____

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Shipping and Handling
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\$16 - 29.99.....\$7.00
\$30 - 49.99.\$8.00
\$50 - 74.99.\$9.00
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\$200 OR MORE ADD 10%

Merchandise Total	
Maryland Residents ADD 6% SALES TAX	
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ORDER TOTAL	

Heavy shipments may need additional postage.
 Allow 4 weeks for delivery.
 Prices subject to change without notice.

Revised 06/2010

PLS at Reading WW II Weekend

June 4-6, 2010, marked the annual World War II Weekend at the **Mid-Atlantic Air Museum** in Reading, Pennsylvania. The yearly event is a huge weekend of WW II-era events. Re-enactments, VIPs from the 1940's, rides on vintage aircraft, and flyovers featuring WW II aircraft. Again, we had lots of help from our Pennsylvania members and others. Below are this year's volunteers. Photos by Ernie Gaspari and Bill Balabanow. *Not pictured: Captain Brian Hope and Patricia Gallagher.*



From left: seated – Bill and Betty Balabanow; standing – Paul Johnson, Ernie Gaspari, Tom Lucas, Clarence Newcomer, and Larry Freeman.



Mark Chris and Donna Bugyi



Jay Snyder and Larry Freeman



Myrl "Bud" Flohr



Ernie Gaspari, Joan Burke and Betty Balabanow

USS TUTUILA

By Capt. Michael J. Schneider

This is the third in a series describing well known Liberty ships.

USS TUTUILA (ARG-4) was one of roughly 170 Liberty ships built under the Emergency Shipbuilding Program that were transferred to the U. S. Navy and operated as commissioned naval vessels. Although TUTUILA is probably not well known in merchant marine circles, she is well remembered by many naval personnel serving in World War II, the Cold War, and Vietnam. Her naval career would span nearly 30 years before she was stricken from the Navy list in 1972 and transferred to the Republic of China Navy. Her career in the U.S. Navy was longer and more varied than that of any other Liberty ship.

Tutuila was laid down at Baltimore's Bethlehem-Fairfield yard in August 1943 as the ARTHUR P. GORMAN. When about 80% complete, she was transferred to the Navy, towed across the harbor to the Baltimore Drydock Company for completion as a repair ship, and renamed USS TUTUILA (ARG-4). (ARGs were named for islands; Tutuila is an island in American Samoa.)

With the major amphibious operations taking place in the Pacific as part of the Navy's two-pronged, island hopping advance toward Japan, engine maintenance and repair was a vital requirement to maintain the many hundreds of landing craft, tugs, and other small vessels with internal combustion engines that made up and supported the amphibious forces carrying the fight to the enemy held islands. To meet this need, the Navy would convert 12 Liberty ships to internal combustion engine repair ships. All 12 were launched at the Bethlehem-Fairfield yard.

Commissioned in April, 1944, she sailed to the South Pacific, joining Service Squadron 10 based at Purvis Bay in the Solomons Islands. Her mission was to service the internal combustion engines in landing craft, tugs, mine sweepers and other small craft. She moved northwestward as the fleet and service ships closed in on Japan, operating from Manus in the Admiralty Islands, the large fleet base at Ulithi in the Carolines, at Leyte Gulf, and Okinawa.

At the end of hostilities, she was sent to Korea and China to furnish maintenance support and to help with the repatriation of POWs. After a brief post war deactivation period in the Reserve Fleet at Galveston, she was reactivated for the same mission with the Atlantic Fleet Service Force and based at Norfolk. During the Cuban Missile Crisis of 1962, TUTUILA served with the naval force blockading Cuba.

With the build up of forces in Vietnam in the late 1960s, she was refitted to service the many naval craft performing "brown water" missions in that theater – landing craft, Swift Boats, riverine craft, Coast Guard cutters, tug boats, and other small vessels. When anchored to provide maintenance, large pontoons were generally secured alongside at #2 hatch. The jumbo boom could then lift small craft from the water and place them on the pontoon, as a dry dock, for servicing. (See photo below.) Other client craft nested alongside the pontoons for service.

During this period, she was once assigned a shore bombardment mission using her 3 inch gun! TUTUILA received several awards for World War II and Vietnam service including seven battle stars, three Navy Unit Commendations, two Meritorious Unit Commendations, 13 awards of the Vietnam Service Medal, and several other awards.

Decommissioned on February 21, 1972 at Kaohsiung, Taiwan, she was transferred to the Republic of China Navy as ROCS PIEN TAI (ARG-516) and would serve that Navy for another seven years, repairing internal combustion engines before being scrapped. TUTUILA is a fine example of a Liberty ship that had a long and productive career.



USS TUTUILA (ARG-4), still having the classic lines of a Liberty ship, is shown anchored off Nha Be, South Vietnam in 1971 servicing landing craft. Pontoons can be seen alongside on both sides of the ship with landing craft "drydocked" on them. Also alongside (waterborne) is LCU 1498, and LCM-6 and LCM-8 landing craft. Her heavy lift boom at #2 hatch is seen rigged to the starboard side.

(Photo by Richard Leonhard, is used with permission.)

Crossing The Bar

Sunset and evening star,
And one clear call for me!
And may there be no moaning of the bar,
When I put out to sea,

But such a tide as moving seems asleep,
Too full for sound and foam,
When that which drew from out the boundless deep
Turns again home.

Twilight and evening bell,
And after that the dark!
And may there be no sadness of farewell,
When I embark;

For tho' from out our bourne of Time and Place
The flood may bear me far,
I hope to see my Pilot face to face
When I have crost the bar.

Alfred, Lord Tennyson

We honor the memory of our departed members.

Life Members

Edwin G. Barnes Prince George, VA
Thomas R. Gibson Catonsville, MD

Members

Jackson Hamlin Cincinnati, OH
Jack Sooter Payette, ID
Delores M. Soul Baltimore, MD

Armed Guard

Ed Barnes, Veteran of Seven Liberty Ships, Dies at 83; Joined Project Early When BROWN Was In New York

By Ernest F. Imhoff

Edwin Goode Barnes Jr. of Prince George, VA, a World War II veteran of three convoys, an early financial supporter of the SS *John W. Brown* when it was in New York and a fireman/watertender on her cruises since 1991, died of cancer in his sleep August 3, 2010. He would have been 84 on September 18, 2010.

He and his wife Louise, who survives him, were the parents of two sons, William J. Barnes and the late

Donald Wayne Barnes, six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. He was preceded in death by his son Donald and by his sister, Edna Lee Underwood. Other survivors include two sisters, Blanche Aileen Lee and Mable Griffin, and one brother Carl Barnes.

Ed and Louise were married 64 years.

His family has requested that his ashes be buried by *Brown* shipmates at sea. Barnes worked the 12-4 watch as a *Brown* fireman/watertender.

Barnes sailed to Europe during the war and stayed at sea for eight years until 1953. He also served in the U.S. Army. Altogether he shipped out on seven Liberty ships, other freighters including the *Cedar Rapid Victory* and "quite a few Esso tankers, mostly in the Atlantic."

He once took the Liberty *Rufus Choate* to Australia; his other Liberties besides the *Brown* were the tanker *Christopher L. Sholes*, *Thomas Say*, *J. Howland Gardner*, *Joseph Goldberg* (a tanker) and *Ephraim Brevard*. No melodramatic stories here.

"My trips were uneventful, pretty routine. Never came under attack. We did have some big storms, but you get that at sea. Nothing unusual."

"I've been in boilers all my life, mostly with Chesterfield Allied Chemical as a supervisor, generally in Virginia. I also worked at Anheuser Busch in Williamsburg, VA. I retired in 1991."

When the *Brown's* engine room gang hears the mating call of the double boiler triple expansion engine, they still come running to sail again. Barnes and his good friend, Ted Vargas, who sailed on many ore ships, would high-tail it from their homes in Virginia and West Virginia to join the *Brown* crew on Living History cruises.

Barnes grew up in Winston-Salem, N.C. His family moved to Virginia when Ed was 15. The wartime teenager yielded to the call of the sea when the time came to serve.

"I entered Sheepshead Bay merchant training station in New York in November 1944 and trained there. I caught my first ship, the *Christopher Sholes* on Jan. 5, 1945. We refueled Navy destroyers in two Atlantic convoys.

"I was first a wiper going over and they needed a fireman/water tender coming back. That's what I did from then on. In the third convoy, I was on the *Amasa Delana*, a regular cargo ship. We loaded ammunition in Baltimore, took it to Edinburgh, Scotland and came back to Baltimore. I was on her when the war ended."

Barnes' interest in the *Brown* goes way back. He heard about the *Brown* from a neighbor, Bob Face, a Chesapeake Bay pilot. "He taught Brian Hope, another pilot, and of course Brian spearheaded the *Brown's* revival in Baltimore.

"But before that I first learned in the 1980's about a Liberty ship they were trying to save in New York. It was the *Brown*. I wrote right away, exchanged letters with

Mike Gillen. He was a leader there. I became a Life Member then. I'm an Admiral.

"I perked up when they said they were trying to bring the ship out of the James River fleet to Baltimore.

"Everyone who has ever worked on a Liberty ship has a love for them. It's hard to explain. I remember my days on them fondly. The first time I came on the *Brown* in Baltimore I felt so good even if the ship was a mess. It was in pretty rough shape. I was a stranger there. Then I saw someone I knew, Art Wadsworth. It was good to be on a Liberty again."

"I live 175 miles away from Baltimore but I like to come up for the ship and the people. The *John W. Brown* is history. I love history. I read a lot of books. I just finished "Flags of Our Fathers" about raising the Iwo Jima flag."

"I'm here today [March 28, 2001] because Cookie [Chief Engineer DeLacey Cook] has a lot of work getting the boilers approved by the Coast Guard. So I decided to come to help Cookie and put my two cents in."

"I did two trips to the Reserve Fleet to get parts. I was on the third leg of the Great Lakes trip in 2000 and also sailed to Charleston, Boston, Long Island and Philadelphia. Both of my sons have been on Living History cruises."

Barnes was delighted when he upgraded his fireman/water tenders license in 2000.

"They told me I had to take the test. I bought the blue book for the engine room and studied for two months. I went back to the same guy to take the test. He conferred with someone else in another office. I could hear the other man say, 'Give the man his license', so I signed the papers and walked out of there and had five more years on the *Brown*."

Thomas R. Gibson, Restored Radio Room on Liberty Ship JOHN W. BROWN

From an obituary by Frederick N. Rasmussen

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Thomas R. Gibson, a retired rapid-transit project manager and World War II maritime radio operator who returned to sea as a radioman during the Persian Gulf War, died July 30 of cancer at the Charlestown retirement community. The former Joppa resident was 86.

Mr. Gibson, the son of a Northern Pacific railroader and a homemaker, was born and raised in Minneapolis, where he graduated from high school. Mr. Gibson's interest in ham radio began during his high school days and continued when he worked at a radio station in Green Bay, Wis.

By 1941, he had earned his radio license from the Federal Communications Commission. While attending the University of Minnesota in the fall of 1942, Mr. Gibson knew that a draft notice would soon be arriving.

"I read an article in the ham magazine, 'QST,' about the Gallops Island Radio Training School seven miles into Boston Harbor. They trained merchant marine radio operators. Sounded wonderful," he told Ernest F. Imhoff, a former Baltimore Sun editor, whose book "Good Shipmates" chronicled the volunteer restoration of the Liberty ship *John W. Brown*, which had been built in Baltimore in 1942.

Because Mr. Gibson held a radio license, he didn't have to attend a seaman's school and was accepted into the nine-month school at the U.S. Maritime Service Radio Training Station at Gallops.

Mr. Gibson graduated in six weeks and was assigned as a radioman aboard the Liberty ship *SS Irving M. Scott*, which sailed in 1943 from San Francisco with a cargo of war materiel for Australia and several other ports.

"I was an only child. My parents were terrified. Anyone who sends an 18-year-old out as the only radio operator on a ship is out of his mind. You're too young," "But at that age, you're invincible, impervious to danger. I had a lot of confidence. I thought I was as good as any other radioman, better than some, after Gallops and a year as a ham."

Mr. Gibson saw wartime service aboard ships in the Atlantic and Pacific, and told Mr. Imhoff that after a particularly powerful storm that pounded his ship, loaded with 38 fighter planes on deck, for a week, he was "too stupid to be scared."

When the war ended, rather than ship out as a radio operator on the passenger liner *SS Argentina*, Mr. Gibson returned to the University of Minnesota, where he earned a bachelor's degree in 1949 in electrical engineering.

From 1950 to 1955, Mr. Gibson worked in Seattle as a communications engineer for the Northern Pacific Railway. He then moved to Decatur, Ill., when he took a similar job with the Wabash Railroad. From 1960 to 1968, he lived in Peekskill, N.Y., where he was chief signal engineer for the New York Central Railroad's Harlem division.

In 1968, he joined Westinghouse Electric Corp. in Pittsburgh, where he was named project manager of the Bay Area Rapid Transit System in San Francisco. He came to Baltimore in 1971 when he went to work as a project manager for Kaiser Engineers, which was involved in building the Baltimore Metro subway line. He retired in 1986.

In 1988, Mr. Gibson attended the first meeting of Project Liberty Ship, whose intention was to bring to Baltimore and preserve and reactivate the *John W. Brown*, which was then languishing in the James River Reserve Fleet. He was elected treasurer, a position he held for most of the next two decades.

"Tom was our first treasurer, and I always enjoyed working with him. He was a quiet person but had a great sense of humor," said Michael J. Schneider, who is chairman of Project Liberty Ship, which owns and operates the *John W. Brown*.

"He always knew what had to be done and did it. He was a good shipmate and a key component of Project Liberty Ship for a lot of years," said Mr. Schneider.

In addition to overseeing the *Brown's* finances, Mr. Gibson and several other volunteers faithfully restored and made operational the *Brown's* radio room as it was built in 1942.



Tom and Louise Gibson

After being away from the sea for half a century, Mr. Gibson began sailing again in 1990 during the first Persian Gulf War, when he answered a call from the American Radio Association, a union, and signed on as a radioman aboard the *Overseas Joyce*, a car carrier that had been leased by Toyota.

"They were able to use me in place of others going to war," Mr. Gibson told Mr. Imhoff. "Strange, I was working on a ship carrying cars made by the Japanese, the people who used to shoot at my ships." Mr. Gibson signed on again for another voyage in 1991.

"These voyages were rather uneventful. I was happy to do it. I did what I always wanted to do again, and I was now satisfied," he said.

"Tom gladly went back and served his country," said Mr. Schneider.

About two years ago, Mr. Gibson relinquished his treasurer's job after being diagnosed with cancer.

Mr. Gibson and his wife of nearly 60 years, the former Virginia Louise Tuttle, moved to the Charlestown retirement community about five years ago. She died in 2008. Mr. Gibson, whose call letters were W3DJ, continued to enjoy being a ham radio operator.

Also surviving are three other sons, Thomas R. Gibson, Douglas Gibson, and John Gibson; a daughter, Laura Sonberg; and eight grandchildren.

Following Mr. Gibson's wishes, his remains will be buried at sea in late September during the *John W. Brown's* voyage to Providence, R.I., according to his son, retired Coast Guard Capt. Roger Gibson..

Providence Trip Will Have a Well Fed Crew

Thanks to the generosity of our members and friends, the crew will eat well during the September voyage to Providence, RI, the last of the East Coast ports that built Liberty ships to be visited by the SS *John W. Brown*.

Since we received more donations for meals than meals to be served, donations received after the meals filled up will be credited with fuel purchases. As those donations are still coming in, fuel donors will be acknowledged in the next newsletter. Meal expenses, listed in order of receipt, were donated by:

Ted Dietz
Chester Mason
Joan Burke
Capt. Bill Fries
Gene Airey
James C. Murray
Brian Hope and Patty Gallagher
Dan Bashore
Sheila Broerson
Robert E. Carlson
Ernest Gaspari
William B. Biddle
John F. Dalenberg
Stanley Griffin
Luann and Nick Basciano
Horace B. Drever
Howard and Sue Dolan
John F. Slanga
Harry W. Gates
Kurt E. Williams
Nils Anderson
Thomas L. Adams, Sr.
Ed G. Jones
Thomas A. Moran, Jr.
Peter E. Kolln
Scott M. Fisher in Memory of Wm. Fisher, USN
John D. Barnard

PLS wishes to thank all who contribute to our success and who help keep the SS *John W. Brown* steaming!

**The crew of the Liberty Ship JOHN W. BROWN
Invites you to attend a
Veterans' Day Celebration!**

Saturday, November 6, 2010



All Veterans and active military are invited.

At 1000 hours the JOHN W. BROWN will sail on a two hour tour of the outer harbor past Fort McHenry. There will be a Memorial Service, military music, a chorus singing songs of WW II, snacks, and tours of the ship.

Tickets are available for a \$20 donation.

Each Veteran may bring **ONE** guest(12 yrs or older) for an additional \$20
Ticket donation will help offset fuel expenses.

**All tickets are mail-order only and must be received by October 20, 2010.
No orders are accepted after this date due to port security requirements.**

For additional information visit our website www.liberty-ship.com or call 410-558-0646
E-mail: jwbvetcruise@yahoo.com

Project Liberty Ship is an all-volunteer, non-profit organization dedicated to the preservation of the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN as a Living, Steaming WW II Memorial and Museum Ship.

Please mail this reservation form to: **Project Liberty Ship
Veterans Day Celebration 2010
PO BOX 25846, Highlandtown Station
Baltimore, MD 21224-0546**

Due to port security policy, we need the legal first and last names of all passengers for entry into the port facilities. Only the names provided will be permitted access to the pier and the JOHN W. BROWN. The first and last name must match the photo ID exactly.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Veterans Name _____

Guest(12 and older) _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(required) _____ E-mail _____

I am ordering _____ ticket(s) @ \$20 each(check or money order only)

Tickets and directions will be mailed no later than 2 weeks before the cruise.

Make checks payable to: Project Liberty Ship.

Tickets are non-refundable and Project Liberty Ship is not responsible for lost or late orders.

Passengers must be able to navigate several stairways.

FAMILY & FRIENDS PARTY SET FOR OCTOBER 30

The date of our annual Holiday party (The Frostbite Buffet) has been changed from December to October. The milder temperatures in the fall will make this event much more enjoyable. Members, families, and any friends who may be interested are invited to attend aboard the S.S. JOHN W. BROWN at Pier One on Saturday, October 30, 2010.

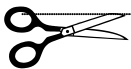
Our caterer will supply the main course of beef barbecue and fried chicken, and we ask each family to bring a dish to share that will serve eight. It can be an appetizer, covered dish, salad or dessert.

The party begins at 12 noon, with appetizers, following our Board of Director's Meeting, which begins at 9:00 a.m. We will celebrate various holidays. Come early, and spend some time touring the ship and seeing our new museum displays. Dress is casual.

We will still be collecting mittens, gloves and hats for needy children or adults for distribution in December. New toys are welcome. Please do not wrap presents.

You may also bring a holiday gift for the Brown! We can always use painting supplies (paint brushes, paint roller covers, paint trays, etc.) and a variety of cleaning supplies - brooms, push brooms, dustpans, mops, sponges, etc.

Please make a reservation using the form below and return by October 20th.



There will be _____ in our group to attend the Family & Friends Party on Saturday, October 30, 2010. Please provide the names of everyone attending on the back of this form.

Name _____

We will bring a (an) Appetizer _____

Covered Dish _____ Salad _____ Dessert _____

Mail to: Project Liberty Ship Holiday Party, PO Box 25846 Highlandtown Station, Baltimore, MD 21224-0546