Busy Season for O’Brien’s popular Youth Overnight Program

Pat Rose

Scouts from across the Bay Area have been enjoying the O’Brien’s popular Youth Overnight Program this winter. Kids get to visit the ship’s museum, explore the terrors of crossing the U-boat infested North Atlantic, learn about the daunting undertaking of the D-Day invasion, and journey deep into the heart of the ship to see our steam engine, used in the filming of the Academy Award winning movie Titanic. (Not to mention the amazing views of the Bay and City Skyline from the O’Brien’s Flying Bridge!)

Events and Youth Coordinator Kyle Day said the O’Brien has hosted six Cub Scout Packs, ages 6-11, and two Boy Scout Troops, ages 11-17, along with their parents and chaperones since January. The groups have come from across the Bay Area: Castro Valley, San Jose, Folsom, San Bruno, and Burlingame as well as San Francisco.

Roger Franz Named New Chairman of the Board of Directors

Pat Dupes-Masumoto

The Jeremiah O’Brien is pleased to announce that Roger Franz has been appointed as our new Chairman of the Board of Directors of the National Liberty Ship Memorial.

Roger originally joined the board in April of 2014 and took over as Chairman in December 2016.

Within a few short months after joining the board, Roger and his wife Donna were volunteering in Ship Clean Up Day and both began working as crew members on the May 2015 Memorial Weekend cruise. It isn’t easy for a 20th century ship to sail under 21st century rules. Roger volunteered to create a Ship Management Committee to review, update and centralize all vessel papers and procedures, making it easier to coordinate the work with all regulatory agencies. In addition to chairing this committee, Roger sits on the Membership, Insurance and Dry Dock Committees.

Roger is a 1979 graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy with postgraduate studies at Georgia Southern University - School of Business. Roger’s father was also a graduate of the United States Merchant Marine Academy, Captain Donald Franz, serving on T2 tankers in WWII as a cadet, followed by a distinguished career in the United States Navy.

Roger is a veteran of over 37 years in marine technical management and shipboard operations, including 10 years at sea as a licensed deck officer aboard U.S Flag LNG (Liquid Natural Gas) carriers. Roger has been the Director of Vessel Operations and Engineering for Matson Navigation Company since 2010 where he manages all
Manager’s Column
Matt Lasher, General Manager

Hello to all of our friends, volunteers, donors and members!

Spring is here, and our cruise season is just around the corner. The Jeremiah is humming with activity as volunteers work to get us in shape for the best part of the year. Expect us to add more cruises and events throughout the year. Here is list of some of the excitement:

**Memorial Cruise on May 20th**
As is tradition with the SS Jeremiah O’Brien, our cruise season is kicking off with our annual Memorial Cruise. The cruise is dedicated to those Merchant Mariners and Sailors who served and sacrificed during WWII. This cruise also provides an opportunity to honor those veterans, members and volunteers that have crossed the bar. Come out and be part of this Bay Area tradition that honors history and sacrifice.

**Challenge Coins!**
We recently received a coin that was designed by our good friend Manu Altierac from France. The design came with great thought about milestones of the SS Jeremiah O’Brien. See the illustration on the right:

We have sent the coins to print and they are available in our store!

**SSJeremiahObrien.org**
Our new website is up and running. We’ve created a more user-friendly experience. Cruise tickets are now available for purchase directly from our site and we’ve added a new online store with some of your favorite SS Jeremiah O’Brien gear for purchase including watch caps, t-shirts, sweatshirts and more!

**Upcoming Dry Dock**
While we are still working to fund our Dry Dock, I want to share my thanks for the amazing outpouring of support we have received. We’re so grateful to our community of friends who are looking out for the SS Jeremiah O’Brien with volunteer hours and donations.

**Triangle Visitor Center**
We are planning to open our joint visitor center at the Front of Pier 45 the beginning of April. Visitors will get a unique introduction to the pier and a sample of the amazing history moored here. The center will contain display exhibits from both the SS Jeremiah O’Brien and USS Pampanito.

See you aboard!
Fair Winds and Following Seas,
Matt
Help Us Get to Drydock!

In order to keep steaming with US Coast Guard and American Bureau of Shipping certifications, inspection and repairs, once every 5 years, are required of the O’Brien.

Well over $1 million will be needed to take the ship to drydock, but this is the only way to keep the ship sailing.

Thanks to you, we’re getting closer to our goal! Over $600k has already been raised with your help, but there’s still a ways to go:

- $270K - Preparation, blasting, painting and coating of tanks, hulls, masts, forward and aft peaks.
- $230K - Repairs to piping, propeller, sea chests, sea valves, rudder, tail shaft, anchor chain, zinscs.
- $70K - Tug assist to and out of dry dock, vessel inspections throughout duration of dry dock, safety checks, dockage fees.

It is a tremendous task, and we ask the friends of the ship—members of the National Liberty Ship Memorial, people who have sailed with us on voyages around San Francisco Bay, and people who are interested in World War II and the merchant marine, to give us a hand. Help us financially with our routine maintenance and our next drydock.

Thank You.
The trip to Normandy in 1994 was truly “The Voyage of a Lifetime” – probably never to be done again, and a tribute to all those that so generously gave, in so many different ways, of themselves to make the voyage happen. A highlight was our stay in London.

On June 15, we were in Chatham on the Medway the morning of our departure for London. A town crier from Rochester, dressed in black hat and red costume, took up a position at the foot of the gangway. Ringing his bell, he periodically announced the departure of the ship. As we prepared to pull up the accommodation ladder, one of the crew suggested he come along. He hesitated a moment, looked around, and bounded up the gangway.

Marci Hooper: “We departed Chatham on a sunny morning with the Sea Scouts, The Royal Marine Artillery veterans, our insurance brokers, some people from the Greenwich Maritime Museum and some extra pilots who just went for the ride.”

The tugs were made fast, we let go our lines and with one hundred guests, two dogs, one Town Crier and our pilot, we slid across the harbor toward the Thames. As we exited into the river, a lone Scottish piper, in full highland dress, marched in time-step across the face of the dock. The music from his bagpipes echoed against the hull of the Jeremiah O’Brien, mournful, yet thrilling to all on board. We blew three long blasts of the whistle in farewell to Chatham and proceeded down the River Medway, the notes of “Scotland the Brave” fading behind us.

Soon we cleared the River Medway and were on the Thames, snaking our way upriver toward London proper. The view progressed from flat, lush green countryside to gritty industrial areas, then to the magnificent urban skyline of London; every barge and ship along the way saluting us with their whistle. Late in the afternoon we went through the Thames River Barrier and Capt. Griffiths took over as pilot from Capt. Thake. As we glided past the Royal Naval College, we were honored by the salute of a midshipman in full dress uniform standing at the wrought iron riverside gate. We dipped our ensign in answer. In the distance, jutting above the trees, we saw the Royal Observatory at Greenwich and soon, much nearer, the Cutty Sark, elegantly resting in her graving dock.

On both sides of the river, people came out from their apartments, pubs and office buildings at the sound of our whistle, shouting and waving flags, toasting with pints of ale and cheering our passage. The air was charged with holiday spirit. So many whistle salutes were going back and forth that at one point I got completely carried away and blew “Shave and a haircut, two bits.” This brought a laugh from our passengers and soon all the barges and boats nearby were blowing the same beat, Dah-dah-de-dah-dah – Dah-Dah.

As we approached central London and the great Tower Bridge, traffic on both sides of the river stopped. The twin spans slowly opened. Our old ship, proudly decorated with vividly colored signal flags from stem to stern, corporate flags aloft and our largest American flag on the steering qaff at the mizzen mast, passed slowly through the heart of London. The crowd on the bridge, above and below, waved and cheered back. Carl Nolte stood beside me on the flying bridge. “Now that,” I said to him, “is what I call ‘Making an Entrance.’”

Our internet broadcast that evening summed up the days events: “Good Evening, San Francisco. This is the Voice of the Jeremiah O’Brien. . . Returning the whistle blasts from several passing vessels with O’Brien’s steam whistle brought hundreds of citizens onto their shoreside sun-decks. Upon seeing our ship arms waved and cheers were heard. We passed through the Tower Bridge at 1940 and moored alongside HMS Belfast. . . It is midnight now and the view of Tower Bridge and other building in the area is a sight to behold, and we have the honor of being right in the middle of it.”

Adm. Tom Patterson: “This was the first time in history that a Liberty ship had actually sailed under the Tower Bridge.”

The following day, June 16, the ship opened to visitors at 1000. We had 698 people aboard that day, many of them old “Sam” sailors (British Liberty ships were all named Sam-something) looking for “my old room” and complimenting the engine crew on how good the engine room...
The Chief’s Corner
Jon Eaton

Tech teasers, sea stories and more…

For all you sea dogs, I am going to start with two stories. The first will have an answer, the second you will have to wait for the next newsletter for the answer.

Story Number One:

Picture yourself in a highly automated control room of a high-powered steam turbine plant. This control room has over five hundred indicators, gages, buttons, circuit breakers and is air conditioned. As you are standing your watch, you notice an additional indicator light blink on. It happens to be the green run light for the stand-by main condensate pump. These pumps are very large two stage impeller pumps driven by one hundred and fifty horse-power motors. Each pump can handle the entire ship’s condensate load. The green light is still on the primary pump and there is condensate pressure. So, why did the stand-by pump start?

These pumps must satisfy a minimum discharge pressure or the stand-by pump will start if the lead lag switch is enabled (which in this case it was). Inspection of the pump assembly shows the motor to be turning, the coupling is turning, the shaft going into the pump bearing housing is turning but the pump shaft is not turning!

The automatic start feature of the stand-by set up worked seamlessly to provide condensate pressure and allowed the plant to continue to provide power for propulsion and other loads.

The motor had sheared the 2” diameter shaft as the double thrust bearings overheated, failed and as the bearings disintegrated they welded themselves into the bearing box.

This failure happened about once every six months for a couple of years. The engineers on that ship were well versed in repairing these pumps.

The cause of the failure was eventually found to be the quality of the grease being used. A different manufacturer of grease solved this problem.

Story Number Two:

You are on a large oil tanker in the Persian Gulf with half a load of crude on board (500,000 bbls). You are watching a reel-to-reel movie for the thirteenth time. The sea is flat calm, there is a full moon and it is about 1800. The ship starts shaking, then undulating and gradually starts to list to port. Did the two men in No. 1 centerline tank get out alive? Did the cargo shift?

Find out in the next installment of the Chief’s Corner!

Letters

Dear Sir or Madam,

I am sending this letter and a newspaper clipping I hope will interest you. I have always been interested in the U.S. Merchant Marine cargo ships. I worked on Victory ships in the 1960s and was an AB and Bosun for 33 years. I have a framed photo of the Jeremiah O’Brien on my wall that I bought from you in the 1970’s.

Yours Sincerely,
Ray Traynor
Crossed the Final Bar

It is with great sadness that we inform you of Edwardo “Eddy” Bosch Pubill’s passing on March 7, 2017. Edwardo had a great love and passion for the SS Jeremiah O’Brien; He volunteered his time and was the 3rd Cook aboard the O’Brien for the voyage to Normandy in 1994.

HOST YOUR NEXT EVENT ABOARD THE SS JEREMIAH O’BRIEN!
Unparalleled Views, Unforgettable Experiences

Looking for a venue for your next corporate event, wedding, holiday party, or business meeting? Imagine yourself aboard the historic SS Jeremiah O’Brien, a WWII ship that was part of the 1944 D-Day invasion at Normandy and whose triple-expansion steam engine was featured in the blockbuster movie, Titanic! The O’Brien is only one of two remaining fully functional WWII Liberty ships in the world. Moored at Pier 45, Fisherman’s Wharf, she is a premier San Francisco attraction with stunning views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, the Bay Bridge, and San Francisco skyline!

Book a Day Cruise on the San Francisco Bay aboard the SS Jeremiah O’Brien. Enjoy stunning up-close views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Tiburon, Alcatraz, and Angel Island. Sail under the new expansion of the Bay Bridge and back along the San Francisco waterfront the views of the refurbished Pier 1, the Ferry Building, Coit Tower and Twin Peaks. Capacity up to 800 passengers.

Host a Dockside Event on board the O’Brien at Pier 45 with the San Francisco waterfront as your backdrop. The ship’s deck is the perfect spot for musical entertainment, a wine tasting or a mix and mingle under the stars.

BOOK A SPEAKER TODAY!
Enlighten and entertain the members of your next club meeting with one of our knowledgeable speakers from the SS Jeremiah O’Brien. Learn about the history of the Liberty ships and stories about the O’Brien’s past and present. Book now by calling the office at 415-544-0100 or send us an email with the date and location of your next meeting.

Reserve Your Memorial Bench on the SS Jeremiah O’Brien

Honor the memory of your loved ones is with a memorial bench aboard the O’Brien. Our special bench plaques commemorate the lives of volunteer crew and long-time supporters of the ship. Your reservation for a memorial bench helps to finance major projects and operations of the ship, while providing a remembrance of a loved one who enjoyed cruises on the O’Brien, volunteered on board as a crewmember, or loved sailing. If you would like to reserve one of the remaining benches for your family, please give Matt a call today at 415) 544-0100 or email him for more information at matt@ssjeremiahobrien.org.

Hold your next reception, meeting or holiday party in the O’Brien’s #2 Cargo Hold, the perfect below deck space for a dinner, reception or dance. The Cargo Hold seats up to 170 for a sit-down dinner with dance floor, or up to 250 for a standing reception.

For smaller meetings or an intimate dinner party, the Officer’s Salon is the perfect spot below deck for up to 16 people.

While onboard the SS Jeremiah O’Brien your guests will have the opportunity to explore the ship’s galley, crew quarters, guns and gun mounts, historic exhibits, and the triple-expansion steam engine. Our knowledgeable volunteer docents are available to lead tours of the ship during your event.

Have an idea for a special event? Please let us know. We have lots of space available and are happy to help make your event a reality.

For Rental Inquiries or to take a tour of the ship’s facilities, please contact John Campbell at John@campbellandrose.com or Kyle Day at kday@ssjeremiahobrien.org.
Busy Season for O’Brien’s popular Youth Overnight Program  (CONTINUED from pg 1)

Kids arrive for the overnight around 4:30pm on Saturday and settle their gear in the bunks in the #3 tween deck. After some North Beach Pizza and dirt cups for dessert (chocolate pudding, crushed Oreos, and gummy worms in an ice cream cone), the group is given a tour of the ship.

What do these kids like best about the ship? “It’s probably playing on the 3-inch gun in the morning,” said Kyle. “For the parents and chaperones it’s the very strong Merchant Marine coffee. But if I had to pick one thing that everyone enjoys I would say playing Convoy. It’s hard to explain how the kids and parents come alive as the game progresses.” Convoy is a tabletop game, created by docent Mike Garner, where kids learn how WWII convoys maneuvered through packs of German submarines to bring desperately needed supplies to the troops at the front in every theater of the War.

It takes a large crew to help with these popular overnights. Many thanks to Bob Arakel, Hal Drummond, Mike Garner, Eddie Holleman, Evelyn Marquis, and Carolyn O’Brien. Many others that have helped over the last year include Larry Serkanic, Cris Feliciano, and Kathy Curran. And, a special thanks to Tom Bernard who started the overnight program in 2010.

If you would like to book your school or scout group for an overnight contact Kyle Day, Events and Youth Coordinator, at kday@ssjeremiahobrien.org, (415) 544-0100.

Roger Franz Named New Chairman of the Board of Directors  (CONTINUED from pg 1)

of the day to day operational and engineering issues for Matson’s Fleet of eighteen containers ships and three inter-island barges.

Since taking over as Chairman, Roger’s focus has been raising funds for the upcoming drydocking of the ship this summer. He has called upon many industry colleagues, including fellow King’s Point alumni and personal friends to help fund this upcoming event. As he mentioned at the SS Jeremiah O’Brien Christmas Party, “We all need to reach out to everyone we know to help us meet our funding goal – friends, family, co-workers and charitable organizations. The SS Jeremiah O’Brien is a national treasure which we all have been trusted to support for the benefit of future generations.”

The SS Jeremiah O’Brien in London  (CONTINUED from pg 4)

looked. Many others wanted to be part of the historic event and we hosted special groups and private tours. Even the famed shipping line, P&O, rented No. 2 ‘tween deck for a private catered party.

Pat McCafferty: “One of the things that did become a little hard was listening to the people who had a story to tell about a Liberty ship when they were young. You had people all the time. You’d listen to their story and they’d unfold their papers and say, I went to Long Beach at 16 years old and lived in a hotel for two weeks while they painted my ship to bring it back to the U.K. And they’d actually have tears in their eyes. The first couple of times it kinda grabs you, but after you’ve heard the story half a dozen times or more you start saying, un hunh, but then you think, no, no I can’t do this. This is important to this fellow. And so you have to be very diplomatic about it.”

The river traffic was a source of unending fascination. It was constant — workboats, tugs and barges chugged past, tour boats with two and three decks of people coasted by. We could hear the guides announcing on the public address system “… the grey-hulled ship made fast to the Belfast is a Liberty ship, the Jeremiah O’Brien. She has come all the way from San Francisco and is operated by a crew made up entirely of World War II veterans (actually, of our crew of 56, about 20% were veterans). She has just returned from Normandy, where she was the center of attention and will be with us … “ In the evenings sleek, modern dinner cruise boats slowly navigated the river as their patrons dined by candlelight. And at all hours harbor police, sailing yachts, motorboats and an occasional jet-ski passed by.

That Sunday, a London cab driver named Jeremiah O’Brien came aboard … but that is a story for another time…
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Thank you to all our donors for helping to keep the SS Jeremiah O’Brien sailing

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