



Second Annual San Francisco Bay Wine Cruise! September 9, 2017

Join us aboard the O'Brien for our second annual Bay Wine Cruise! Set sail for a spectacular afternoon on the bay tasting wine from 13 of Northern California's top wineries. The wineries are generously donating their wine to help our dry dock fundraising campaign.



Take in stunning views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, Angel Island, Bay Bridge and the San Francisco Skyline, while sipping wines from some of Northern California's tastiest wineries: Pierce

Ranch Vineyards, Tulocay Winery, Parmeson Wines, Van Ruiten Family Vineyards, Balletto, Cass Vineyard & Winery, Hatcher, Jarhead, Muddy Boot, Paraiso Vineyards, Six Degrees, Ranch Sisquoc, and Zolo. A delicious lunch will be provided.

Boarding 11:00am, Departure 12:00pm, Returns 4:00pm

See our cruise order form for tickets!



Rosie the Riveter Phyllis Gould and the building of Liberty Ships

Brian Agron and Richard Mantegani

On Sunday December 7th, 1941, Phyllis Gould, 19 and recently married, was driving with friends in Oakland, California when news of the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was announced on the car radio. For Phyllis, as for so many others on that day, this event and America's immediate entry into World War II, profoundly changed her life.



Phyllis Gould. Photo courtesy of Alan Dep and Robert Tong of the Marin Independent Journal

A few months later, Phyllis and her husband were driving with another couple when they spotted a billboard advertisement for welders at the Kaiser-Richmond Shipyards. The men decided to apply for jobs as welders. To their surprise, so did Phyllis, who enrolled in a local welders school, graduated after taking the two-week course and immediately applied for a welder's position at the ship-

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Articles are subject to editing and condensing because of space limitations. Deadline for submitting articles for consideration in the next newsletter is September 30, 2017. Any correspondence received by NLSM might be published unless expressly requested otherwise. Please send articles and items to either liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org or NLSM, 45 Pier, Suite 4A San Francisco, CA 94133.

Director's Column

Matt Lasher, Executive Director



It's the middle of summer in San Francisco and Fisherman's Wharf is buzzing with visitors from all over the U.S. and the world. Many are coming to Pier 45 to tour and cruise on the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien* for a chance to step back into history and experience something wholly unique.

The Veterans Memorial Cruise, our first cruise of the season on May 20th, was a resounding success. The opportunity to honor our veterans, and more specifically, WWII Merchant Mariners, on the bay continues to be a special way we say thanks to those who sacrificed and those that recently crossed the bar. Cruise guests included a former Rosie the Riveter, Phyllis Gould (see her story in this issue) and many WWII veterans who shared their wartime experiences with other passengers. Listening to those stories being passed down to others is one of the highlights of our annual Veterans Cruise.

Dockside, our crew is spending countless hours on preservation and maintenance efforts. This work is critical for this year's cruise season, to enhance the visitor experience and also prepare the ship for dry docking later this year.

We replaced our main radar equipment before this year's first cruise. This new equipment improves our ability to safely operate and provides our deck team with a modern navigation system that is standard on most merchant vessels sailing today. I want to express our thanks to Matson, Mackey Marine and JRC America for their support on this project.

The Anchor Program (TAP) is in full swing and students are honing their skills with on-deck training aboard the *Jeremiah*. TAP trains the mariners of tomorrow by providing vocational and life skills training to youth (aged 16+) and others interested in pursuing careers in the maritime industry; more specifically, the United States Merchant Marine. We're pleased to partner with TAP to support members of our community looking to break into the maritime trades. Check out their Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/tapmaritime/>

Our dry dock fundraising continues to be our focus and major priority. We were disappointed with the recent news that our application for a Maritime Heritage Grant from the National Park Service for dry dock work was declined. With only a few months to go we need your help more than ever to meet our goal of \$1.2 million for this important dry dock work to keep the *Jeremiah O'Brien* sailing the Bay. The ship is now 74-years-old and that means her needs will continue to grow. We have taken a thoughtful, long term, approach to keeping her shipshape so she can be available for visitors well into the future.

Donate Online here: <https://www.ssjeremiahobrien.org/pages/donate>

We also accept stock donations, contact our office for more information.

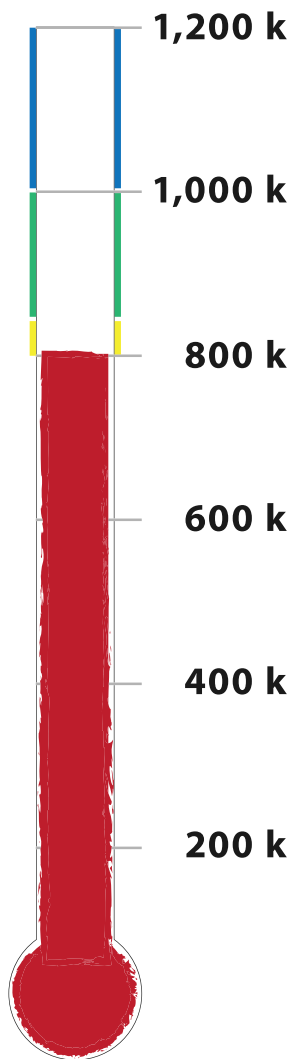
We hope that everyone has a summer to remember. See you all aboard!

Matt

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HELP US GET TO DRY DOCK!



The SS Jeremiah O'Brien requires inspection and dry dock repairs once every 5 years in order to keep steaming with US Coast Guard and American Bureau of Shipping certifications.

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 **\$800K** has already been raised with your help, but there's still a ways to go:

- \$200k - Preparation, blasting, painting and coating of tanks, hulls, masts, forward and aft peaks.
- \$150k - Repairs to piping, propeller, sea chests, sea valves, rudder, tail shaft, anchor chain, zincs.
- \$50k - 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 are asking the friends of our ship members, passengers who have sailed with us on voyages around the San Francisco Bay, those who are interested in WWII, and the Merchant Marine, to give us a hand. Please help us finance the O'Brien's routine maintenance for this year's dry dock!

Thank You.

The Mathews Men: A Talk by William Geroux

John Campbell

On Sunday, March 26th the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien* hosted an afternoon talk and book signing event with William Geroux, author of *The Mathews Men: Seven Brothers and the War Against Hitler's U-Boats*. Geroux discussed how U.S. Merchant Mariners suddenly found themselves squarely in the crosshairs of German U-boats bearing down on the coastal United States in 1942. He described how, from the late 1930s to 1945, virtually all the fuel, food and munitions that sustained the Allies in Europe traveled not via the Navy but in merchant ships.

After Pearl Harbor, those unprotected ships instantly became the U-boats' prime targets. Mathews County, Virginia, on the Chesapeake Bay sent an unusually large concentration of sea captains to fight on those merchant ships.

Through a fascinating slide show, Geroux showed a side of the war that these brave Merchant Mariners fought far beyond traditional battlefields, not only on the U.S. coast,



William Geroux

but also across the North and South Atlantic, the Caribbean, the Gulf of Mexico, the Mediterranean, the Indian Ocean, and even the icy Barents Sea in the Arctic Circle, where they braved the dreaded Murmansk Run. Through their experiences we have eyewitnesses to every danger zone, in every kind of ship. Some died horrific deaths. Others fought to survive torpedo explosions, flaming oil slicks, storms, shark attacks, mine blasts, and harrowing lifeboat odysseys—only to ship out again on the next boat as soon as they'd returned to safety.

The event was well attended and part of the ship's educational outreach program to share the important role that Liberty ships and the Merchant Marine played during World War II. After the event Geroux mingled with the guests and signed books. We hope to have more educational events like this and welcome suggestions from our readers.

National WWII Museum in New Orleans

Linda Greig

I recently had the privilege of visiting New Orleans and made it a point to schedule a day visit to the WWII Museum. But as I was to find out, one day isn't enough so I was back the following day to make sure I didn't miss anything.

This complex is quite large and definitely not on a shoestring budget. Literally every time I passed through the admission area, there were hundreds of people waiting in line to buy tickets – people of all ages and nationalities and many families. WWII history is alive here in NOLA! The docents are very much like our docents, many of them retired military and all of them informative and anxious to share their personal stories and museum information.

The museum is divided into four buildings:

The first is the Louisiana Memorial Pavilion where you can buy tickets and get the feel for what is in store for you: The giant overhead video screens detailing The World at War, the suspended aircraft including a Super Fortress, and on the ground, an exact replica of a Higgins boat, built in New Orleans using original plans. But don't spend too much time gawking at all these displays, because there is so much more to see.

Moving upstairs is the story of the Merchant Marine's contribution to the war, so naturally this was the place for me to start. All manner of relics, videos, huge posters and models of cargo ships and a U-Boat were on display. A special exhibit of the SS *Stephen Hopkins* battling two

German raiders is featured along with the quote by Gen. Eisenhower, "when final victory is ours there is no organization that will share its credit more deservedly than the Merchant Marine." I could have spent hours alone here, but had to move on.

Next on our tour was "Campaigns in Courage: European and Pacific Theaters." Highlighted was the European/Mediterranean Theater in 1942, where the landings in Morocco and Algeria first presented what was to become an ongoing problem for the Allies: the logistics of coordinating aircraft, ground and sea forces for an

invasion. But even as the fledgling armies made missteps, they were to win a hard fought beachhead in northwest Africa in Casablanca.

As might be expected, the D-Day Invasion was covered extensively from the actual landings to the battles afterwards.

One of the exhibits I found amazing was the Battle of the Bulge. The cavernous hall was dark, quiet, and large trees were placed all around to make you feel that you were in a forest in the Ardennes. There were three huge video screens which showed a tranquil winter scene, American GIs sitting in the snow, completely unaware that the might of the German army was amassing. The Germans' goal



The Beaches of Normandy in 1994

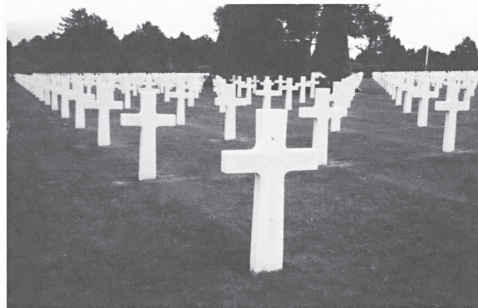
Walter W. Jaffee

Starting on July 5 our volunteer crew took the first of two bus tours to Pointe du Hoc, the American Cemetery at Colleville, and the British landing site at Arromanches. We had ordered wreaths to lay at Colleville honoring American merchant seamen who were buried there. To allow everyone to take part in the ceremonies, yet keep enough crew on board for normal operations, they were held on two days. The captain and the admiral presided the first day and the chief mate, the second. Each day half the crew boarded a bus just after breakfast for the beaches.

The days were perfect for sightseeing with a bright blue sky spotted here and there with puffs of white clouds. The route took us through the picturesque French countryside, the dark green hedgerows alternating with lighter green pastures clipped short by grazing sheep and dairy cattle. Again, every village and country home we passed was brightly dressed with the flags of the liberating nations and cheerful window flower boxes and verdant gardens.

After about an hour's drive we arrived at Pointe du Hoc. It was a short walk through a bomb-cratered landscape overgrown with grass to the cliff, marked by a stone monument, a granite pylon atop a concrete bunker with inscriptions in both French and English at its base. We looked out over the calm blue waters trying to envision the stormy Channel fifty years earlier when the 2nd Ranger Battalion attacked, scaled the one hundred-foot cliff under heavy fire and, after great losses, succeeded in capturing, then defending, the area against German counterattacks.

The sheer drop to the ocean looked impossible. A few feet back from the cliff were the remains of the German gun emplacements, fearsome-looking even in ruin. The remaining guns were twisted and rusty. The calm summer day, the butterflies fluttering about and birds singing made it difficult to imagine the great battles that took place on D-Day.



The perfect rows of grave markers at Colleville inspire deep emotion and reflection. Photo by Marty Wefald.

Our next stop was the Normandy Cemetery at Colleville-sur-Mer, overlooking Omaha Beach. One month earlier, President Clinton stood in this cemetery along with heads of the Allied Nations gathered to remember and honor the thousands of American soldiers who lie there. On this day we were met by Sgt. Hooker, retired from the U.S. Army and now an employee of the American Government in France. The Normandy Cemetery is actually American territory, given to us by the French government in gratitude for American sacrifices during the liberation of France. Sgt. Hooker escorted us along gravel paths through immaculately manicured lawns to the memorial.

There was a natural reverence to the surroundings that caused us all to unconsciously speak softly. We brought a wreath from the ship. For the first time, a memorial wreath would be laid for the fourteen merchant mariners who lost their lives at Normandy and are buried in Colleville.

The memorial is a semicircle of colonnades, open to the sky, with shrines at each end depicting the D-Day landings engraved in stone and embellished with colored enamel. In the center is the bronze statue, "Spirit of American Youth," a tribute to those who gave their lives. Around its base is the inscription "MINE EYES HAVE SEEN THE GLORY OF THE COMING OF THE LORD." We gathered at the entrance to the memorial, then lined up on each side of the statue as three senior members of the crew, Bill Rowlands, Wes Masterson and Ed Lingenfield, veterans of World War II, carried the wreath and set it at the statue's base.

Bill Rowlands: "I was very impressed with the cemetery. I was one of those chosen to present the wreath, at the memorial there to the merchant seamen and the armed guard that were killed in the D-Day landings. That was very touching."

Wes Masterson: That was a very emotional time. I helped put the wreath on the statue of youth at Colleville. Bill Rowlands and I were classmates at the merchant marine school in Catalina during World War II, so I thought it was significant that we laid the wreath together.

Sgt. Hooker triggered a switch and an electric carillon played the National Anthem. This was followed by three electronic rifle shots, perfectly spaced, and the saddest of all bugle calls, Taps, then three bells. It was a moving ceremony. Tears trickled down many weathered cheeks.

We dispersed past the reflecting pool in front of the memorial and through the cemetery. Symmetrically arranged, row upon row of white markers indicated the resting places of our countrymen. At the edge of the cemetery was a parapet overlooking the landing beaches of Omaha. We stood there quietly, looking at "bloody Omaha," the site of the fiercest of all the D-Day battles, wave after wave of emotions flooding our thoughts.

Rich Reed: My dad was an infantry soldier, went in to Omaha Beach. I've been hearing about Omaha Beach since I was a little kid. It was a big deal to him, I think, that



The entrance to the memorial at Caen captures the grandeur of our experience at Colleville. Photo by Jean Yates.

Crossed the Final Bar

It is with great sadness that we announce the passing of these wonderful volunteers. They will be missed.



Rudy Horak Noel White Marilyn Bruner Richard Hill



Ashley Martin Family

Ashley Martin and her parents visited the O'Brien recently. Her grandfather Theodore S. Martin was a gunner, Seaman 1/c, Coxswain on board the

O'Brien for Voyage 5 (Oct 14 1944 to Dec 15 1944), Voyage 6 (Dec 16 1944 to July 10 1945, and Voyage 7 (July 11 1945 to Jan 17 1946).

National WWII Museum in New Orleans

(CONTINUED from pg 4)

was to turn back the Allied advances to the Belgian Port of Antwerp and split the Allied lines. The sudden, blistering attack and element of surprise was captured by the giant video screens, as the sky suddenly lit up with enemy fire and utter chaos. It was one of the bloodiest battles of the war and I felt like I had (safely) been there.

Day one ended with the viewing of the film "Beyond All Boundaries," narrated by Tom Hanks. The theater was equipped with pulsating seats that shook with the sound of the oncoming tanks and brilliant eye popping effects. It was seriously good.



About this time, we realized we wouldn't make it to the Boeing Freedom Pavilion to experience "Final Mission" which simulates being down in the USS *Tang*, a Balao class submarine. We also hadn't seen the entire Pacific Theater museum "Road to Tokyo." So we changed our plans and made time to come back the next day.

For everyone with even a passing interest in WWII, you should visit this museum. The last exhibit portrays the devastation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki in such a way that you will feel the true cost of World War II. The message is clear: war is hell. But sometimes it's necessary. The bittersweet victory and unconditional surrender of our enemies paved the way to a time of relative peace and prosperity, allowing for a new era of freedom and democracy.

Letters

A few days after the May Veterans Memorial Cruise, I had a chance to spend some time with Marilyn Bruner. We discussed engineering issues on the ship and I found her exceptional "hands on skills" and superb knowledge of machinery issues, along with her obvious capabilities to take on MICRO machining and her devotion to repair/fix/solve/rebuild complex components, impressive.

We talked beside the small specialist lathe in No 5 hold tween, machinery section, and I listened intently to her knowledge of a number of projects on the morning of departure that she was involved in, and her keen attention for the progress to completion of componentry still outstanding!

Noting she was packing to depart, I helped her with all her many items she gathered to go ashore I saw her safely down the gangway, in three or so trips from her cabin to her vehicle with cases, bags, bedding, tools, then a final chat!

A small kiss as she got into the car, some help with almost being parked in, and a wave off!

I will always remember these precious moments. Peace be with YOU Marilyn.

Bruce Reilly

Thank you to our Donors!
Starting with our Winter 2018 edition,
we will be publishing our donor list
annually in the newsletter.

The Beaches of Normandy in 1994

(CONTINUED from pg 5)

fifty years later, his son got there. And from the merchant mariner's standpoint ... the convoys, the sea stories ... the Liberty ships crossing the Atlantic. I was glad I made it."

Our final stop was Arromanches, at the heart of Gold Beach during Operation Overlord. A small coastal village, it contains a museum dedicated to the British landings that freed the area of Nazi domination. Inside the museum we found glass-cased dioramas depicting the events surrounding D-Day, a theater showing a short film of the landings, and displays of artifacts, uniforms, weapons, ammunition, posters, letters, insignia and military equipment. We were all wearing our crew jackets and, as we entered the museum, the curator announced over the public address system that we were from the Liberty ship *Jeremiah O'Brien* and we had brought the ship from the United States to help commemorate the liberation of France. The room burst into thunderous applause. We were stunned. We simply didn't know what to do. The people shook hands with us, asked for autographs and even delivered a few hugs and the French custom of kisses on both cheeks. It was an overwhelming experience.

Phyllis Gould and the building of the Liberty Ships (CONTINUED from pg 1)

yards. She was turned down. Kaiser officials told her she needed to join the Boilermakers Union instead, so off she went only to be bluntly dismissed there too. The Boilermakers Union did not accept women into their ranks. Determined and unfazed, she returned again to the union office at Richmond and was rejected by Kaiser-Richmond a second time. Frustrated and disappointed, Phyllis broke down in tears. Fortunately, a more sympathetic union official heard her and she was finally accepted into the Boilermakers Union.

On July 6, 1942, Phyllis made history when she was officially hired as one of the first six apprentice female welders and paid the same hourly wage of 90 cents as her male counterparts. Three months later she became a journeyman with a pay raise to \$1.20 an hour, again equal to what the men were earning. Although closely chaperoned at first by their Kaiser employers, these first women welders quickly showed that they could meet the required production quotas. Eventually, Phyllis was given permission to work the nightshift and assigned to the prefabrication shop welding



Brian Agron with Phyllis Gould. Photo by Richard Mantegani

plate sections of the deckhouse superstructure for liberty ships. Working conditions were often harsh and the prefabrication house was extremely hot, but salt tablets and better clothes were eventually supplied for the workers. Phyllis said that she never actually saw a liberty ship completed during her years at the Kaiser-Richmond Shipyards.

When the war ended so did the shipyard jobs. Remarried in 1945, Phyllis spent the postwar years as a wife and mother raising five children with her husband Richard Gould. It wasn't until the mid 1990's that she realized the many contributions made by women to the war effort building ships, airplanes, tanks, arms and ammunitions had been woefully unrecognized. Phyllis, along with her



Donald Long and Earl J. (Chuck) Kohler. Photo by Richard Mantegani

friend May Krier, who worked on the Boeing B-17 bomber assembly line during the war, decided to start the "Rosie the Riveter" movement. Together they spent years lobbying U.S. government officials to recognize the contributions of the millions of women who worked as riveters, loggers, welders and electricians during the war. Finally, in 2014, she met with President Obama and Vice President Biden in 2014 to petition for the creation of a Rosie the Riveter Day. Three years later the U.S. Senate passed a resolution officially making March

21, 2017 as the national Rosie the Riveter Day. The former journeyman welder Phyllis Gould had made history again.

Last May Phyllis Gould stepped aboard her first Liberty ship, the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien*, and sailed with us as a special guest on our Veterans Memorial cruise. She was given her own *Jeremiah O'Brien* cap, escorted to a table set up for her on the #2 hatch and spent the day meeting many passengers and crew members and signing autographs. Phyllis was introduced to Pearl Harbor veterans Donald Long and Earl J. (Chuck) Kohler who were also on board for the cruise. Donald, a WWII pilot, was stationed at Kaneohe airfield during the attack. Chuck flew PBV Catalina float planes and was at the sea plane hanger and ramp on Ford Island where the first bombs fell. Phyllis, Donald, and Chuck were thanked many times for their service by other passengers, and Phyllis was recognized by many for her work to further the equality of woman. She was also introduced to David Hegeney, who had worked at the Kaiser-Richmond Shipyards the same time as Phyllis did welding the keel pieces together on Liberty ships. They had never met.

Today Phyllis Gould is a proud symbol of contribution of millions of American women who worked to support the war effort. The *Jeremiah O'Brien* is proud to call Phyllis a new friend and we hope she will return for future cruises.

WELCOME NEW VOLUNTEERS!



Thomas Reyes



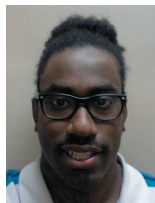
Darel Jenkins



Michael Bird



William Weinmann



Darryn Elder-Gotta



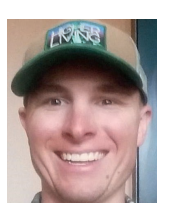
Andrew Manning



Buck Cantwell



Coleman Rosenberg



Peter Spencer

National Liberty Ship Memorial (NLSM)

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Sail with us this Fall!

Book your ticket today for our spectacular Fall Cruises!

September 9 Wine Cruise on the Bay.

A fabulous afternoon bay cruise and wine tasting with stunning views of the Golden Gate Bridge, Alcatraz, the Bay Bridge and the San Francisco waterfront. Enjoy wines from some of Northern California's best wineries along with a delicious lunch.

October 7 and 8 Fleet Week Cruises.

Bring the family for an all-day cruise on the bay! Explore the O'Brien's galley, crew quarters, guns and gun mounts, exhibits, and the triple expansion steam engine. Enjoy live music, a continental breakfast, a hot dog lunch, spectacular bay views, and front row seats to the U.S. Navy Blue Angels air show.

Don't miss these amazing cruises!

Book your ticket today with the enclosed order form or on our website at www.jeremiahobrien.org.

