FLEET WEEK CRUISES ON THE JEREMIAH O’BRIEN, THE BEST PLACE ON THE BAY TO WATCH THE AIR SHOW!

We will be sailing on Saturday October 8th and Sunday October 9th for the most popular cruises of the season!

FOOD, DRINK, LIVE MUSIC AND TOURS OF THE ENGINE ROOM ALL INCLUDED!

This is our biggest and best cruise of the year! Find out more at eventbrite.com and make plans to join us!

OUR BEARING PROBLEMS FIXED by our ENGINEERS !!!

The Main Engine Connecting Rod Bearing

“The engine crew and I have had some misfortune this year with the low pressure cylinder connecting rod bearing” said Chief Jon Eaton. During the Memorial Cruise this bearing ran hot - too hot as it turned out. It required repair. This included removing the bearing from the foot of the connecting rod, then disassembling it to fit up the ash hoist (a winch in the forward starboard ventilator which lands items on the main deck level in the fiddley in the upper reaches of the boiler room). Thence to the main deck and over the side using the ship’s gear to land it into a waiting pickup truck.

On May 22nd, the bearing was transported to Unico Machine in Benicia for a skim cut and re-grooving of the oil passages. This had to be a minuscule adjustment - only thirty thousands of an inch (.030”) was removed to accomplish the repair and after it was done it all looked very good. The bearing followed a reverse path back to the engine room floorplates.

Continued on page 3
**DIRECTORS**

Forrest Booth, Chairman,  
President & CEO  
Capt. Cevan LeSieur, Master  
Jon Eaton, Chief Engineer  
Tom Bernard  
Judy Collins  
Chris Friedenbach  
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Mike Savino  
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Mailing address: NLSM, 45 Pier, Suite 4A, San Francisco, CA 94133.

We welcome crew news, maritime events and articles of interest about Liberty ships.

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**Matt’s Message**

Friends, members and volunteers,
First, we at the SS Jeremiah O’Brien hope you are enjoying your summer. This year marks 79 years of service for the SS Jeremiah O’Brien. As we sail towards 80, we are continuing to look even further down the road. As many of you know we are working diligently to prepare our beloved liberty ship for its dry docking later this year. This is part of the ship’s 16th special survey in coordination with our comprehensive preservation and maintenance program that involves the American Bureau of Shipping, The US Coast Guard and our internal group of expert mariners.

This year’s Dry Dock will include many inspections and standard renewal work such as tail shaft inspections, hull inspections and coatings, valves, and machinery checkups. In addition to that, we will be looking to more internal tank and void cleaning and coatings, the restoration of our radio mast and much more. Much of this is once in a lifetime work and will last for many more decades. This is not the end of the work that needs to be done, but we are constantly taking real measured steps towards getting us to 100 years old and beyond.

This work has required a lot of planning, is time intensive, expensive and comes at a time where resources have been hard to come by. So, I want to thank all of the volunteers, donors and supporters that have come together to help accomplish our lofty goals. Our unique community of mariners, marine companies, Veterans and family of those veterans and history enthusiast have created this opportunity to keep sailing and educating. Forever enriching the lives of current and future Americans.

Matt Lasher  
Executive Director, NLSM

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**Steady As She Goes**

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Fall - Winter 2022
It was inspected again, then installed on the connecting rod journal. Leads were taken (lead wire of .018” thickness placed into the bottom half of the bearing and the bearing made up hard which flattens the lead to the space available and this gives one the running clearance). The bearing was partially disassembled to retrieve the lead wires. These wires were then measured with a micrometer and found to be at twelve thousandths of an inch (.012”). The recommended clearance is between ten thousandths and fourteen thousandths of an inch (.010”-.014”). With .012” being totally acceptable, the bearing was pre-lubed and re-assembled. The engine crew fired up the boiler and did a test run in July. This bearing once again got hot. Once again the engine crew removed the bearing to find that it was lightly damaged. The cause of this failure and the previous one was inadequate lubrication. If all the oil supply holes, grooves and reliefs are not perfect there will be grief. It is impossible to determine exactly why it failed given the numerous chances for error.

The bearing did not look terrible and the Chief Engineer elected to hand scrape it back into shape. In the end the crew removed ten thousandths of an inch (.010”) to bring the bearing back into the correct profile. The arc of the circle is confirmed by a process called bluing. This is where a mandrel (a cylinder of the same dimension as the engine journal) is coated with Prussian blue and then rotated in the bearing. The high spots on the bearing will have some blue on them. The high spots are then hand scraped and the bluing process is repeated until we had over 90 per cent contact. (This is similar to the process that a dentist uses to fit a new crown, bite down, chomp and then file off the colored tooth portion.) This took place over the course of about two months on every Thursday and some double days. That bluing process happened about 80 times. Each time required rigging the mandrel (heavy steel replica of the journal at fourteen and 250 thousandths of an inch in diameter, 14.250”) into and out of the bearing!

The engine was test run on 10 September with no issues and again on the subsequent two days with no problems. This process is something that was done by engineers many years ago and may not be done again. Our visitors were all impressed by this unusual activity. My hat is off to our crew and the old timers who thought these engines out.

Chief Engineer Jon Eaton
Photos by Dave Rauenbuehler (sorry if we didn’t include pictures of all the engineers who worked on this project.)

“The entire ship is amazing! If you like history and museum you’ll definitely enjoy visiting SS Jeremiah O’Brien. One of the engine crew was very informative and will answer any of your questions. I hope they’ll continue to preserve the ship that seen the “D-Day” in Normandie and make every “Rosie the Riveter” proud!
A visitor from the Philippines
It has been a busy Summer for the Deck Gang!

**Mooring Lines:** Led by our Bosun Greg Adams we have had to replace or resplice nine lines this year. While the rope materials and construction is high-technology the splices are put in with a wooden fid and a marlinspike.

**Cargo winches:** Our anchor windlass, cargo winches and warping winches get a regular workout as we load on and off the equipment needed for a fully operational ship. Maintenance and lubrication is a never ending task led by Joan Raphael and Ed Castiliongi.

**Painting:** Time, salt air and the Pier 45 fire has been hard on our paint Job. Our Senior Shipkeeper Phil O’Mara along with deck crew Bob Jarvis, Holden Rodgers and Kevin Welsh have been prepping the surface with our Hydroblaster donated by Chevron Shipping Co., Needleguns, wire wheels and old fashioned chipping hammers. The new paint looks beautiful and this crew will have her looking like a yacht in no time!

**Shipyard Prep:** With Shipyard looming and the propeller shaft potentially being removed from the ship through #5 Hold for the first time since 1992 the gang has been busy clearing the decks in #5 tween and #5 lower hold. This is a huge task accomplished with the full gang including Jim Strain and Ed Somerauer.

**Learning the Ropes:** We have two new recruits in the Deck Department. Eric Gates, an experienced hand, and Holden, a college student come to us with enthusiasm and strong backs, both necessary requirements to work on deck of a Liberty. Old Salt Brian McAullife is literally showing them the Ropes.

**Fleet Week:** As the Fleet week cruises approach Alternative Captain Stu Quan and Chief Mate Ray Conrady prepare the ship’s Wheelhouse, radio and navigation gear.

And no matter what we are doing, Ship’s Photographer Dave R. is always willing to lay down his camera and lend a hand.

Working the deck on an eighty year old ship is hard work, but the deck crew know that there is a hearty meal waiting at noon from our amazing Stewards department, Eddie and Josie Holleman, Joe Borg, Jim Remington and, Peter the Galley Hand.

Sorry if we didn’t include photos of all the deckhands who work on Wednesdays. Next issue...
Uncle Buddy Flies Again!

By Phil O’Mara

Uncle Buddy Flies Again! My Great Uncle James Patrick Dundon was born in NYC in 1920. He grew up next to Grand Central Station. Him and his pals used to roller skate through Grand Central “knocking the hats off of swells”. Security there could never catch him.

He got a Degree in Math at CCNY and the War broke out. He wanted to be a pilot but because of his Math skills they made him a Navigator.

On a mission to bomb Solingen on Dec. 1st 1943 with the 566th BS 389th Bomb Group, they were attacked by German Fighters. His plane, a B24 D Liberator, went down over Aachen and him and others on his Crew died. He was 23. Four of the Crew survived and ended up POW’s.

My Grandfather Philip O’Mara and his Infantry unit of the 9th Division were done in Sicily at that time and they were sent to Winchester England. He stopped by the air base to visit his Brother in Law, James who my Father was named after later, only to be brought into the Commanders office and given the bad news. The Luftwaffe had returned his remains, with his hat and wings to England with honor. The flag we flew on the SS Jeremiah O’Brien was his 48 star coffin flag.

My Uncle Kevin O’Mara says that an unknown woman would occasionally leave a rose at his grave in Long Island New York.

Steady As She Goes
WELCOME NEW JEREMIAH O’BRIEN VOLUNTEERS OF 2022!

Eric Bates - Deck

Louise Booth - Docent

Sebastian Chen Docent

Matt Hess - Store

Jack Holleman Steward

Keith Madding Deck

Justino Ortiz - Engine

Jim Remington Steward

Holden Rodgers - Deck

Arlene Susmilch Docent, Deck
BE PART OF SOMETHING HISTORIC!
Aboard the SS Jeremiah O’Brien

JOIN OUR CREW

‘volunteer@ssjeremiahobrien.org’

If you have some time to spare and the idea of working on a historic ship appeals to you, consider volunteering on the O’Brien!

Docent, Deck, Engine, Steward and Storekeeper Departments are seeking volunteers.

Volunteering on the Jeremiah O’Brien is a wonderful way to get out and help the ship. Share a few hours with other volunteers on beautiful San Francisco with views of Alcatraz and the entire bay area, while saving a world famous, operating relic of World War II. Simply, nothing could be more fun or rewarding!

If you would like to apply, please go to ‘volunteer@ssjeremiahobrien.org’ and send a message with your name and email address and we will get back to you.

Or you can stop by the ship at Pier 45, where Taylor Street meets the bay and ask for an application at the Doghouse. Closed Tuesday & Wednesday.

BECOME A MEMBER OF THE NLSM

Here’s a way you can support the ship throughout the year and visit whenever you like. Membership is one of the best ways to show your support and keep history alive by keeping the O’Brien sailing! Please consider joining the NLSM.

★ Student $35 For a currently enrolled student;
★ Individual $50 One year free admission and benefits for an individual;
★ Family $100 One year free admission for one family - two adults and two children;
★ Contributor $250 One year admission for one family and two visitors;
★ Sponsor $500 One year’s admission for one family and four visitors;
★ Admiral $1,000: One year’s admission for a family and up to a maximum group of six visitors per visit;
★ Normandy Life Membership $1,500 per person includes same perks as Admiral Membership AND includes one year’s Fleet Week Cruise tickets for two.

★ Contact us at NLSM, 45 Pier, Suite 4A, San Francisco, CA 94133 or ‘ssjeremiahobrien.org’ to join!
JOHANNES VERHOEK RETIRES

Johannes Verhoek, long time Engineer is stepping back from regular weekly duty but we hope to see him at all our events. Chief Jon Eaton and Johannes in #2 at his retirement dinner.

Overnight Program Post-Covid Restart

By Tom Bernard

We are happy to say the Overnight Program is successfully up and running aboard to Jeremiah O’Brien. We are one of the few overnight programs operating in the Bay Area with full tours of the ship including dinner and breakfast food provided to the group. The group can be any group of Youth be they Girl or Boy Scouts, School or other Youth Groups. We also can provide the same to Adult groups too. We can accommodate groups from a minimum of 20 people to a max of 64 “souls” (using the maritime term). We even provide parking for the group. Program starts around 5 pm and we start with a ship board fire drill. Next is a background history of WW2, shipbuilding in the US, the Normandy invasion and “who is Jeremiah O’Brien?”.

The group is next escorted into the museum to look at the gift from the French Government, a Diorama of the beach at which the O’Brien unloaded while being shot at by the AXIS.

Dinner of pizza, salad and dessert provided by the Program and prepared and served by the Group is next and well received. After dinner, we start the tours. Full tour of the Engine Room and it’s operation; tour of the House (What was that? Cooking with coal?), Main Deck machinery and GUNS. Anyone seen the Tom Hanks movie “Greyhound”? This movie is about the tension and strain of sailing from the East Coast to Europe with much needed supplies. The ship’s own Michael Garner has developed and copywritten the game, Convoy, about the issue and risks of troops and supplies being transported to Europe during the war. This tour’s game format is a hit with the youth coming to the ship for the program.

If you are interested in finding out more, please visit our website at https://www.ssjeremiahobrien.org/ or contact us at 415-544-0100; Email us at email.liberty@ssjeremiahobrien.org. We are at Pier 45 in the heart of Fisherman’s Wharf.
The following article by Carl Nolte is reprinted from the Fall 2002 edition of ‘Steady As She Goes’.

For the old-timers in our crew, it was 20 years ago that we took the voyage to Sacramento!

The temperature was over 100 in the state capital but the Jeremiah O’Brien was the hottest thing in Sacramento over the Labor Day weekend. The O’Brien steamed up the river and the Sacramento ship channel for a five day visit that was a huge success – the ship carried over 500 passengers up river on Friday August 30th and around 300 down to San Francisco on Tuesday, September 3rd and was open to the public at the Port of Sacramento over the 3 day weekend.

Nearly 6,000 visitors came aboard to see the ship. It was easily the largest number of visitors for any three day event onboard in years. It was more than the ship drew in nearly a week in Seattle in 1996 and compared to the crowds, the O’Brien attracted during the ship’s famous D-Day voyage in the summer of 1994.

“It was the greatest thing we’ve done since the Normandy voyage,” said Rear Admiral Thomas Patterson, chairman of the O’Brien’s board. “Our crew did a magnificent job.”

A lot of credit goes to Patterson and to Mark Shafer, who was the chairman of the Sacramento Voyage committee. “Captain Shafer did an outstanding job,” said Patterson, “he worked on it over a year.”

Logistics were one of the major keys to the success of the operation. Shafer and his committee had arranged for buses to meet the ship at the Port of Sacramento and at the San Francisco end to take passengers home.

Passengers who made the trip also go a box lunch and a barbecue dinner in Sacramento on the way up, and in San Francisco on the return trip. In addition, the committee arranged for bus service between Old Sacramento and the Port which is located some distance away from downtown Sacramento. This way, hundreds – maybe thousands – of visitors got a free ride to and from the ship.

In all, the operation was enormously complicated, including everything from running the ship nearly 90 nautical miles up the river and the ship channel, figuring the tides and currents, to providing meals for the ship’s crew for five days. The devil, they say, is in the details, and this included medical service for the ship’s visitors, and even an impromptu water and soda bar set up on the port side, forward, in Sacramento. They called it the Lido Bar.

Everybody was a hero, but two get special credit. One was Wendy Brown, an Amador Stage Line driver who drove the bus between Old Sacramento and the Port “she was wonderful,” said Patterson. “She never came back with an empty bus.”

The other was crew member Steve Freeman. When one passenger somehow missed the return bus from San Francisco to Sacramento, Steve stepped forward and offered to drive her back to the river city. You don’t find that kind of service at any price.

Thanks to all those who helped make this trip such a success…we appreciate you!! Port of Sacramento, Port of SF, SF Paramedics, SF Bar Pilots, U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII, Dixon Phirehouse Philharmonic Jazz Band, Natural Gas Jazz Band C.B. Hannegan’s Food & Libation, Erna Press, Iris Taggart for aircraft flyovers, Patrons of SS Jeremiah O’Brien

Answers to O’Brien quiz on page 11.

1. Coal ship; 2. E=Emergency; C=Cargo; 2=waterline between 400-450 ft.; ‘S’ means vessel is both a steam and single screw; C1 is the design number. 3. Sam ship indicates the vessel was transferred from the U.S. to Britain on Lend/Lease terms. ‘Ocean’ is a British design of an emergency cargo ship to be built in the U.S. based on a British ship - the ‘Empire Liberty’; 4. #230; KXCH. 5. 5. 6. Crack arrester; 7. the ‘Unity’; 8. Voyage #3 Nov. 19, 1943 to March 24, 1944. 9. Entered in 1946 and left in 1979 for a layup of 33 years. 10. Portsmouth, Southampton, Chatham, Londres in England and Cherbourg, Rouen and Le Havre, France. 11. the ‘Richard Montgomery’. 12. Bruce the Raven was a fictional character in the popular Chronicle comic strip ‘Farley’. His likeness is painted on the O’Brien’s crow’s nest. Phil Frank created Farley and was onboard to retouch the image on the crow’s nest.
FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS - TERRY DECOTTIGNIES
1959 - 2022

Volunteer Terry Decottignies passed away on June 14. He was an esteemed member of the Engine Crew from 2011 to 2022. Old time crew members of the O’Brien remember Terry fondly for his work in the engine department as well as towing a 20’ Liberty ship replica from a maritime museum in Washington state. The museum was about to close and there was no place for the model to go. He and his partner towed the large load from upstate Washington to Pier 45, going about 35 mph so as not to jar all the intricate parts of the model. The model is now on display in the Pierhead space and is a popular attraction. We can thank him for saving it!

Chico natives will remember Terry from his Bathtub Refinishers commercials. He was also a member of the Chico Underwater Hockey Club.

A funeral service was held on June 24, 2022 at 1:00 p.m at the Jesus Christ Church of Latter-day Saints Church in Chico.

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FAIR WINDS AND FOLLOWING SEAS PIERRE HURTER
1953 - 2022

Pierre was a valuable member of the Deck Department. Always a diligent volunteer and articulate conversationalist, his upbeat presence and friendliness was appreciated by all. The ship has lost a prized Deckhand and his co-workers have lost a friend.

"Pierre truly enjoyed working and spending time on the ship, it became a part of him and I still hear him telling me about his experience and the folks he worked with.\" - said wife Gerda Hurter

Born in Geneva, Switzerland in 1953, Pierre came with his family to Milwaukee, Wisconsin when he was 5 years old and later moved to Southern California. After enlisting and serving in the U.S. Army, he went back to school to finish his degree as a civil engineer with a focus on land surveying at California State University, Fresno. He became a licensed land surveyor in 1992. He worked for PG&E for 30 years.

Pierre was a member of many other volunteer organizations; the 22nd Street Jungle Stairs; he was an expert scuba diver, he and his wife Gerda traveled around the world. He wrote a column for San Francisco Reef Divers; he volunteered for the San Francisco - Marin Food Bank; was a member of Friends of Noe Valley.

sigh….
POP QUIZ - So you think you know the O’Brien??

A quiz on Liberty ships and the Jeremiah O’Brien

1. What is a ‘Collier’?

2. Freight bearing Liberty ships were designated EC2-S-C1; what does that designation show? How many shipyards in the U.S. built Liberty ships?

3. What is the difference between a ‘Sam’ ship and an ‘Ocean’ class ship?

4. What was the hull number assigned to the O’Brien at the New England shipyard? What are the call letters?

5. How many times did the Jeremiah O’Brien traverse the Panama Canal?

6. To solve the problem of stress damage on the metal plates particularly in cold water, a certain technology was implemented, what was the name of that fix that halted the metal damage?

7. In June 1775, three British ships, ‘Margaretta’, ‘Unity’ and ‘Polly’ entered the harbor at Machias, Maine with the intention of commandeering a cargo of lumber. Jeremiah O’Brien and several of the colonists fired down on the Margaretta from a bluff above the harbor, disabling the ship which then sailed downriver to safety. The next day, the British sloop ‘Unity’ was commandeered by the colonists and restocked with arms and ammunition and headed to the Margaretta. A battle ensued and Jeremiah O’Brien hauled down the ship’s British ensign, thus winning the first naval battle of the Revolutionary War. Which of the British ships was then renamed ‘Machias Liberty’?

8. On which of the O’Brien’s seven wartime voyages did the ship make two trans-Atlantic crossings?

9. What year did the O’Brien enter the Reserve Fleet and how long was her stay in the Reserve Fleet?

10. Voyage 8 commenced on April 18, 1994 when the O’Brien let go the lines and headed for the European continent in commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of D-Day. On this voyage, the ship visited 7 Ports of Call - name two of them.

11. The name of the Liberty ship that sank on the Thames River loaded with 7,000 tons of bombs headed from the U.S. to the U.K in August 1944 - and remains to this day?

12. A stowaway named Bruce was ‘aboard’ the Normandy voyage; who was he and what famous San Francisco comic strip was responsible? Who was the creator?

All questions and answers taken from Capt Walter Jaffe’s book ‘The Last Liberty’ and ‘Appointment in Normandy’.
The SS Jeremiah O’Brien was built in 1943 as part of a massive shipbuilding effort in WWII. The ship is a survivor of D-Day in 1944; she survived the Atlantic and Pacific theaters in WWII. Then she was saved from being scrapped in 1979; then survived a massive fire in 2020 which destroyed parts of Pier 45. And thanks to her devoted volunteer crew, she is still sailing!

This ship is a survivor and her volunteer crew invites you to sail with us for Fleet Week 2022. Either day - October 8th & 9th, will feature live bands, complimentary food and drink, a Silent Auction, tours of the engine room while underway. The best place to see the Blue Angels Air Show!