

Brittany Pointe Estates Veterans Affairs Committee



BPE Pointer Article

Veterans' Corner by Bob Berger

Remembering The Greatest Generation- Pearl Harbor “The Ship That Wouldn’t Die”

“Samuel Cox, left, director of Naval History and Heritage Command, and Pearl Harbor survivors Wetzal Sanders and Geb Galle attend the remembrance ceremony for the crew members of the USS Nevada who died during the attack on Pearl Harbor, at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam, Hawaii, Dec. 8, 2016. Fifty men died were Killed in Action during the surprise Japanese attack. DoD photo by Lisa Ferdinando.”



Figure 1. Veterans of the USS Nevada

These brave men represent the Greatest Generation with honor and dignity. So many gentlemen have returned to Pearl Harbor over the years to pay respects to their shipmates who gave their all defending their battleship. Paying Respects is a longtime tradition for veterans to demonstrate a tribute to their fallen comrades. They return to quietly say a prayer. Others read the names of those 1177 men who lost their lives aboard a brave battleship at the Arizona Memorial’s Wall of Honor. While some come back to be interned with those who never disembarked.

On the morning of the attack, the USS Nevada was the only battleship of the eight docked in Pearl Harbor to get underway. She began her perilous journey through a gauntlet of enemy planes at 0840. Their chief engineer felt it was safer having two of their boilers lit at all times. She was hit by a torpedo a few minutes after 0800 and was taking on water but at 0840 sortied anyway among the falling bombs.



Figure 2. Ran Aground & Saved Her

The Nevada moved very slowly through the harbor trying to reach the ocean. Japanese dive bombers hit her with 5 bombs and several near misses. The resulting damage increased the ship's flooding, but the crew did not abandon her in this time of need. Instead, the captain ran her aground out of the main channel so other ships could exit later.

Of the eight battleships sunk or damaged, seven of them returned to duty in 1942 and 1943. The USS Nevada is the only battleship to fight in both the Pacific and Atlantic Theaters of War. In fact, she is the only surviving battleship from Pearl Harbor to support the landings at D-Day and the invasion of Southern France before rejoining the Pacific Fleet for the remainder of the war. During February 1945, she supported the invasion of Iwo Jima. Next came the battle of Okinawa, March – May 1945. It was on March 27, she was hit by a kamikaze aircraft and April 5, Nevada was hit by a large artillery shell. Although she was the second oldest battleship at Pearl Harbor, she and her crew were heroes throughout World War Two. She even served as a target ship at Operation Crossroads (1946 Bikini Atoll) and survived two atomic bombs.

Our committee plan to have a video (on our BPERA website) with more details about this incredible ship's life that began on commissioning 11 March 1916 and served during World War I.