



The USS New Jersey BB – 62 Battleship Encampment

March 30 –31, 2006



Well it's off to "Sea" we go! Several Royal Rangers Outposts from the West Central Section, joined in with our Host Church, Marlton Assemble, Outpost 91 for an Encampment on the Battleship New Jersey, located at the Camden Waterfront in Camden, New Jersey.

Those that arrived early to the ship were sent back in time (1945), as they catapulted off the ship and flew to the island of Iwo Jima, where they fought off the Japanese Army in a fierce battle on land and in the air.

Those that arrived awhile later were also sent back in time, but to a different era where they fought in Iraq in Desert Storm. They were also catapulted off the ship and flew some sorties over Iraq where they guided in the Tomahawk Missiles that were launched from the ship.

What an exciting time we all had in the Flight Simulator!!!

After a short time on board the ship, we had a fire drill, we all had to line up on the "fantail" the back end of the ship and had a head count called "muster" not the kind you put on a sandwich.

After the fire drill, several boys from different outposts were selected to do Color's on the ship, headed by David Kay. They all helped lower the flag down, from the Mast of the ship. The ship representatives stated that this was the best Color Guard that he has seen thus far. Great job, guys

Once the fire drill was over we all settled down for some good chow, (aka food). Although the dinner was great, most of us couldn't decide if it was veal or chicken parmesan that we were eating.

We also learned some new words that weekend, like fore and aft. The front end and the rear end of the ship. The word Mess, not that we made a mess, but it was the food and the Mess Hall meant the dining room. Then there was the "head" for bathroom and so on. It seems that they spoke a different language in the Navy.

After dinner we took a guided tour of the ship. We were broken up into 3 sections. There was a lot of exciting stuff to see, like those huge 16-inch guns and the missile launchers. The ship also had some museum areas, where we learned more about the ship and its history.

After the tour, it was every man and boy for it self. We all returned to the mess hall where we all shared in some sea stories. As it drew closer to 23:30 hundred hours, (11:30 pm) those of us at the mess hall started to find our way back to the bunks for what we thought would be a good nights rest. But we soon found out that the boys returned with a second wind and the played all night long and I don't think anyone got more than 1 hour's sleep the whole night. I guess some of the older guys were worn out and could not gather up enough strength to see what all that commotion was all night long. Anyway they had a great time that night (boys will be boys) young and old.

We started off our last day with a great breakfast (scrambled eggs and potato's) along with some cereal and juice. And after the morning colors we were told we could stay until; noon. Some outpost's stayed and some left after Liberty Call.

Those of us that attended the encampment had a once in a lifetime experience that they will never forget and for those that once served our country on Navy Ships, it brought back some fond memories and took us back to our youth. We had some old sailors with us who served our country in the Korean War, Vietnam, and Bierut War and in the Persian Gulf War. Our hats go off to them, and we at the West Central Section salute you for your service to our country.

We also want to thank Commander Pat Cody from Marlton Assemble, Outpost 91, for doing a great job in organizing this encampment and for allowing those of us from other outposts to join in so that we could also be included a one in a lifetime experience that we will be talking about for years to come.

Thank you, Commander Pat Cody.

Ship Statistics:

Class: IOWA
Displacement: 45,000 Tons
Length: 887'7"
Beam: 108'1"
Draft: 28'11"
Speed: 33+ knots
Complement: 1921 Men
Armament: 9 16", 20 5" Guns