



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

*All Hands on Deck!
Former Crewmen Returning to USS ALABAMA for Annual Reunion*

Mobile, Alabama, March 18, 2016 – The men who served aboard the USS ALABAMA (BB 60) will return to Battleship Memorial Park for their annual reunion on Friday and Saturday, April 15 and 16. This will mark the 51st year that the crewmen have assembled for the USS ALABAMA Crewmen’s Association Reunion.

“April is the most special time at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park,” commented Janet Cobb, executive director. “It’s a homecoming for the crew, a privilege only a few World War II sailors enjoy, that of reuniting with their ship. I can’t imagine how these men feel when they pull into the Park and see her at anchor, at rest, ‘The Mighty A,’ ‘The Lucky A.’ Whatever they might have called her back then, they’re still coming home every time they visit her,” Cobb continued. “We look forward to another special few days together with these members of the Greatest Generation and look forward to welcoming them aboard.”

This year 12 former crewmen will be attending the reunion, along with wives, children, grandchildren and other family members. “This is such a special time for these families,” explained Bill Tunnell, organizer of the annual reunion and member of the USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission. “The reunion is the time that these brave men share stories of the war and their lives with their grandchildren and great-grandchildren, passing their personal history down through the generations.”

As part of the Crewmen’s Association reunion, the Crewmen’s Luncheon, an invitation only event, will be held at the Park. During the luncheon there will be the unveiling of a plaque honoring Alabama’s Medal of Honor recipient Mr. Bennie G. Adkins, U. S. Army. Adkins, of Opelika, earned the nation’s highest military decoration in

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USS ALABAMA Crewmen's Reunion

2014 for his valor in the Battle of Shau in 1966. Adkins will briefly address the crewmen during the event.

The luncheon will be followed by battle station drills by the USS ALABAMA Living History Crew, WWII historical reenactors. A Yak attack, simulated enemy airplane attacks on the ship by vintage airplanes, is planned between 1:00 and 1:30 p.m., pending weather conditions. The USS MASSACHUSETTS (BB-59) Living Historic Crew will be joining the drills and day's events as our special guests. Look for General George Patton and General Douglas MacArthur to be strolling the decks as portrayed by a historical reenactors. Saturday will end with the traditional Crewmen's Association Banquet.

The Dixie Division Military Vehicle Show will also take place on the grounds of Park, adjacent to the tank installation. The car show will begin on Friday afternoon, April 15 and continue through Saturday, April 16. The show will include vintage and antique military jeeps, trucks and cars. A visit to the car show is included in the \$2 Park Entry fee.

The USS ALABAMA Crewmen's Association was launched on August 16, 1965 when 30 veterans who served aboard the battleship during her career founded the association. Beginning in 1970, annual reunions have taken place in Mobile each year, with the exception of 1979 and 1991. Today, membership is waning due to old age, since all of the crewmen are at least 87 years of age; however, the association is still robust with membership totaling 100. During her active years of service, the USS ALABAMA had 6,322 men who served aboard her from August 16, 1942 until decommissioning on January 9, 1947.

Battleship Memorial Park is open Monday through Sunday, from 8:00 a.m. until 6:00 p.m., with the last ticket for admission sold at 5:00 p.m. Admission is free for children up to 5 years of age, \$6 for children ages 6 to 11, and \$15 for children 12 year of age through adults. There is a \$2 Park Entry fee for all vehicles entering the Park. For more information please call 251-433-2703 or follow us on facebook at USS ALABAMA Battleship Memorial Park.

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