



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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PRESS RELEASE

APRIL 22 TO FEATURE USS ALABAMA CREWMEN'S REUNION AND MORE

Mobile, Alabama, April 14, 2017 – Now Hear This! Battleship Memorial Park is preparing for our annual USS ALABAMA Crewmen's Association Reunion on Friday, April 21 and Saturday, April 22. It will be all hands on deck as we prepare to welcome these real life heroes back to their ship.

"The USS ALABAMA Crewmen's Reunion weekend is the highlight of our year here at Battleship Memorial Park," stated Janet Cobb, executive director. "We have eight living crewmen inbound with their families and friends. Two come from Alabama, two from Pennsylvania, and the other crewmen hail from Maryland, Florida, South Carolina and Illinois. A special note – we have 31 members of the family of crewman Wilbur Paul Giarrusso, Sr., who passed away January 25th, attending. They are all coming to honor his 1944-1947 service aboard BB-60. He was known as 'Gene' to his shipmates."

The Crewmen will begin visiting the USS ALABAMA on Friday. While at the park on Saturday they will be special guests for the Oath of Enlistment Ceremony, be honored with their annual Crewmen's Luncheon at 11:30 a.m., and then observe the battle reenactments by our historical reenactors that afternoon on the ship's Fantail.

"The USS ALABAMA Battleship Commission honors these special men with a luncheon aboard the USS ALABAMA, and then they hold their annual banquet at a hotel downtown," explained Cobb. "We are so fortunate to have this many WWII crewmen back with us to share their wartime stories."

In celebration of our Crewmen's Reunion weekend, a host of events will take place:

The Dixie Division Military Vehicles Show will open on Friday, April 21, 8:00 a.m. and continue through Sunday afternoon, April 23, 3:00 p.m.

The show will be located in the picnic area on the park's grounds and will feature antique and vintage military vehicles. A swap meet is included.

The USS ALABAMA Living History Crew will be aboard ship Saturday, April 22 and Sunday, April 23. These dedicated historical reenactors will be dressed in authentic uniforms, including some of the ship's original uniform items. The crew tell stories of our original crewmen, raise the Colors every morning at 8:00 a.m., conduct weaponry demonstrations and emergency drills. On Saturday afternoon at 2:00 p.m. they will hold their popular Yak Attack. Watch for vintage airplanes to attack the ship in a mock surprise battle reenactment, complete with the ship's 20mm and 40mm guns to firing back.

In the Wardroom we will have the Deep South Amateur Radio Operators set-up demonstrating how radios work. They will be operating on both Saturday and Sunday in the Wardroom.

On Saturday morning, 10:00 a.m., we will hold a community-wide Oath of Enlistment Ceremony that will include the induction of new military recruits from Mobile and Baldwin counties, representing all five branches of military service. The ceremony will be held in the Medal of Honor Aircraft Pavilion.

Along with our ceremonies and tributes to our USS ALABAMA Crewmen, we will also be the host site for the Phind A Cure 5K and Phun Run. The 5K race will begin at 7:30 a.m. and the Phun run will begin at 8:30 a.m.

Battleship Memorial Park will open at 8:00 a.m. We will be waiving the \$2 Park Entry Fee on April 22 in honor of the Crewmen's Reunion. Admission is \$15 for children 12 through adults, \$6 for children 6-11, and children under 5 are free. For more information visit www.ussalabama.com.

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