

MEDAL of COMBAT VALOR
THE FORGOTTEN BATTLE
HONORS THE FORGOTTEN WAR

LST 289
After The
Battle



**“LST’s, Their
 Finest Hour”**

Secretary of the Navy
 John Dalton, 1997



The U.S. Exercise Tiger Foundation

Presents

HISTORY & HEROES
The 69th Anniversary of Exercise Tiger
60th Anniversary of Korean War

&

USCG Petty Officer Nathan Bruckenthal
Remembrance



The National Ceremony
 at
United States Coast Guard Station
Barnegat Light, NJ



April 28th, 2013

Remembrance
 Victims ~ Boston Marathon
 Sandy Hook Elem School
 Korean War Memorial
 Washington, D.C.
 A Forgotten Battle
 Honors a Forgotten War

THE BATTLE OF EXERCISE TIGER



What began as a top secret naval operation to prepare US Army and Naval forces for the June 6th D-Day Invasion, would end with one of the highest losses ever suffered in combat by the US Army and Navy in WWII.

At 0135 on the morning of April 28th, 1944, eight Tank Landing Ships (LST's) and their lone escort, the British corvette HMS AZALEA, were en route to the landing area. Slapton Sands was selected because its beach looked every bit like the beaches at Normandy that would be code named Utah and Omaha by the allies.

The eight LST's of LST Group 32, formed convoy T-4. they were the support group for elements of the 4th & 29th Infantry, 82nd Airborne and 188th Field Artillery Group already ashore at Slapton Sands.

The LST's were carrying the 1st Engineer Special Brigade, the 3206th Quartermaster Company from Missouri, the 3207th Company and 462nd and 478th combat truck support companies as well as other elements of the US Army's engineer, signal, medical and chemical corps along with some infantry.

Miles south in the mouth of Lyme bay, lay the bulk of the Tiger naval force. Protected by the cruiser USS AGUSTA and the new British "O" class destroyers HMS ONSLOW and HMS OBEDIENT as well as the

Tribal Class destroyer HMS ASHANTI and a covering force of motor torpedo boats. Anchored along with LST's 55 and 382 they would be of no help to the ambushed LST force of T-4.

Attacking in the pitch black night, 9 German Navy "E" boats (torpedo) struck quickly and decisively. Without warning LST 507 was torpedoed first. Explosions and flame lit the night. At 0217 LST 531 is torpedoed. It sinks in six minutes. Of the 496 soldiers and sailors on her, 424 of them died. It would be on this ship that the state of Missouri would lose some 201 of its boys of the 3206th.

LST 289 tried to evade the fast German "E" boats but was hit in the stern. LST's 496, 515, and 511 all began firing at their attackers, LST 289 joined in returning fire while lowering landing craft to pull it out of harms way.

At 0225 the LST 499 radioed for help. Minutes later the lead ship, LST 515 sent out an urgent and chilling message. "E' boat attack". Radio stations along the coast pick up the dramatic calls for help. unaware of the top secret operation underway, the calls go unanswered. Only after an alert radio operator heard the words "T-4", did the Naval Command realize the calls were from "Tiger" and send help.

By 0240 the horror was slowly realized. Two LST's sunk, a

third lay crippled. Of the 4000 man force nearly a fourth were missing or killed. Official Dept. of Defense records confirm 749 dead, 551 US Army and 198 US Navy. The death toll makes "Tiger" the costliest battle to U.S. forces at that point in the war after Pearl Harbor.

On April 28th, 1944, the LST's darkest yet finest hour occurred. When, for one hour, the men and ships of Convoy T-4 fought the greatest naval battle ever faced by an LST force in history. Against superior enemy warships, the Tiger amphibious force held its own.

The German attack did not stop Exercise Tiger. Landing operations resumed later on the 28th. It is a credit to the tenacity and determination of the soldiers and sailors involved in Exercise Tiger, that the D-Day invasion at Normandy occurred as planned.

The events surrounding Exercise Tiger were officially declassified in early August 1944, two months after the Normandy Invasion. On April 28th 1996 Secretary of The Navy John Dalton stated in his remarks "Tiger....was the LST's finest hour."

This history was assembled by the NJ/MO Tiger Assoc. and based on Navy reports, DOD reports, and eye witness accounts.

Dedicated On April 28th, 2000

This 5000 pound anchor came off an LST of the class that were attacked on April 28th, 1944. It serves today as a beacon of remembrance for all TIGER Vets & US Forces in harms way.



The Missouri Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial

The Missouri Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial *History and Notes*

On June 12th 1997 a request was made to US Navy Captain Gary Chiavarotti, Director of the US Navy's Inactive Fleet by National Executive Director Walter Domanski. On July 13th 1997 the request was approved. The record approval time was because of Capt. Chiavarotti's desire to make a memorial to "Tiger" a reality. The request was for two ex-LST anchors that could serve as twin state and national memorials to the Battle of Exercise Tiger in New Jersey and Missouri. Working with Fred Hood, Director of Naval Sea Systems Command Detachment, Norfolk Naval Base and T.H. "Tommy" Tise the NAVSEA Maintenance Facility Supervisor, the Exercise Tiger Association, National Foundation was given two 5000 pound stern anchors from LST's of the Suffolk County Class. The Missouri anchor was used on an LST of this class. At the request of the Tiger Association the Navy will keep the anchor in the official US Navy Inventory, placing it on permanent loan to the Exercise Tiger Association making a lasting tribute to the courageous American Sailors and Soldiers who gave their lives in combat action with an enemy of the United States. Symbolically, the anchor will remain ever ready to again serve on an LST should an emergency exist for this type of anchor.

The anchor arrived in Columbia, Missouri as a Christmas present to area "Tiger"

vets and National Director Susan Haines on Dec. 16, 1997. Its 1500 mile journey from Norfolk, Virginia was due to the efforts of former US Navy Petty Officer Rocky Roberts who served on LST USS LaMoure County 1194, and Uponsor ETI of Columbia who donated their transportation resources. Roberts' ship, the LaMoure County hosted the 1995 Exercise Tiger ceremony and was the first LST and active ship of the U.S. Navy to do so. At that time the LaMoure County was the Navy's last LST. Under the direction of Lt. Col. Marty Walker the Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps, University of Missouri, painted it with official U.S. Navy paint that they secured for this project. Lt. Matt Mackenzie USN, oversaw the painting.

The Exercise Tiger Association, National Foundation in conjunction with the Audrain County Commissioners Dick Webber, Roger Young, Tom Groves and Missouri residents dedicated the memorial's host site in Mexico, Missouri.

To join the National Exercise Tiger Foundation or to make a financial contribution write c/o The National Exercise Tiger Foundation, P.O. Box 246 Columbia, MO 65205. Visit our website at www.exercisetiger.org for more information or current updates.



THE SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
April 8, 2013

GREETINGS TO ALL COMMEMORATING THE 69TH ANNIVERSARY
BATTLE OF EXERCISE TIGER

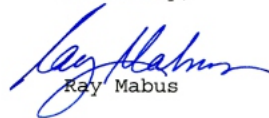
On behalf of the Department of the Navy, it is my pleasure to extend greetings and thanks to those gathered for the wreath-laying ceremony commemorating the Battle of Exercise Tiger and join you in remembering those Sailors and Soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for our great Country.

American Forces are deployed around the world to defend our Country's values and protect its interests. This is not that different from what the young Sailors and Soldiers involved in the Battle of Exercise Tiger were doing 69 years ago. Seven hundred forty-nine Americans lost their lives preparing for the Normandy invasion of June 1944. Despite suffering horrific casualties, the Sailors and Soldiers of Exercise Tiger held their own against a superior enemy force. Although our Nation paid a high price with the loss of these patriotic Americans, the lessons learned that day contributed to one of the most pivotal operations of the war, the D-Day Invasion.

The Korean War veterans attending the ceremony can be justifiably proud in the fact that their example of selfless service and courage is honored by the actions of today's service members who are defending our Nation around the world.

I salute your commitment and dedication to our Nation's heroes, and extend my best wishes for a memorable reunion.

Sincerely,


Ray Mabus



DIRECTOR OF
GOVERNMENTAL AND PUBLIC AFFAIRS
UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
WASHINGTON, DC 20593-0001

APRIL 25, 2009

A MESSAGE FOR THE COMMEMORATION OF
THE BATTLE OR EXERCISE TIGER

It is my honor and privilege to extend a warm welcome to all who have gathered to commemorate the 65th anniversary of the battle of Exercise Tiger.

On behalf of the men and women of the United States Coast Guard, I would like to express my thanks to the Tiger veterans in attendance and the families of the 749 service members who paid the ultimate price in the defense of our country during Exercise Tiger. Today we also remember those who are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan, especially PO Nathan Bruckenthal who lost his life April 24, 2004, while underway in the Persian Gulf in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom.

Today's ceremonies at Station Barnegat Light, Station Bodega Bay, & Station Miami help us remember the valor and the sacrifices that these heroes made to preserve our freedom and allow us to renew our commitment to the defense of our country. Their sacrifices are not forgotten.

Semper Paratus,



MARY E. LANDRY
Rear Admiral, U. S. Coast Guard



SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON

April 28, 2013

Commemorating the 69th Anniversary of the
WWII Battle of Exercise Tiger
“Remembering the Forgotten Battle”

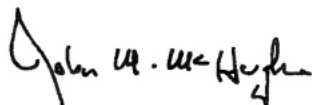
On behalf of the United States Army, I extend warm greetings to all those who have gathered today to commemorate the 69th Anniversary of the World War II Battle of Exercise Tiger.

We remember “the forgotten battle” to honor the courage and sacrifice of the brave Soldiers and Sailors who fought that day. We remember “the forgotten battle” to remind all generations of the deep and abiding commitment of those servicemembers who have gone before. We remember “the forgotten battle” to pay tribute to the sacrifice of the families and loved ones of those whose lives were lost on that devastating day.

Remembering can be difficult; but by remembering, we honor those who gave their last full measure of devotion on our behalf. The Soldiers and Sailors who fought valiantly in the face of overwhelming odds demonstrated during that battle the indomitable spirit that we have come to know as uniquely American.

Today’s military carries on this tradition of strength and determination, inspired by those heroes in history. As we commemorate the Battle of Exercise Tiger, let us keep our men and women in uniform – past and present – in our thoughts, that our military may continue to serve as an inspiration for future generations.

Never Forget,



John M. McHugh



Current & Future Programs

New Major Projects Planned - Funding Needed

- 1.) **Eternal Flame of Valor for Iraq & Afghanistan Troops**
- 2.) **New Memorial Design at Mexico, MO**

Several new projects are planned, funding is needed to complete them.

The Exercise Tiger Eternal Flame of Valor for Iraq & Afghanistan Wars is a concept that needs a location, costing in the neighborhood of \$25,000. The flame dedicated to our 5000 troops killed since 2001 and those 50,000 wounded would be a unique memorial. The first of its kind in the United States we would like for it to be located in Columbia Missouri, but are open to all interested parties. Contact the National Director.

The second project should be to redesign the Exercise Tiger Army & Navy Anchor Memorial in Mexico, MO. Additional funding is needed for this project as well. The Audrain County commissioners are updating the courthouse facilities to accommodate handicapped and physically impaired individuals.

Other projects funds are needed for along with legislative assistance are: Current & Future Programs, USS Exercise Tiger LPD (Future warship named after Tiger), MODOT Signage on Interstate 70, VFW 280 Plaque, CATS Campaign, HEROS Campaign, & Military Appreciation Day Game Trophy.



USCG Petty Officer Nathan Bruckenthal “That Others May Live”

On April 24, 2004 USCG Petty Officer Nathan Bruckenthal became the first “Coastie” to be killed in action since the Vietnam War. While conducting a training exercise with US Navy sailors in the Persian Gulf in addition to patrol duties, Bruckenthal and US Navy sailors responded to an Iraq “suicide” boat intent on ramming an oil rig. In minutes that training exercise became real, just as in Exercise Tiger.

Bruckenthal and the Navy team went to intercept the Iraqi craft. As the two craft met, the suicide boat exploded killing Bruckenthal. First Guardsman Joe Ruggiero and three of the sailors survived the attack.

The attack and interception marked a point in the Iraq War in which the Navy and Coast Guard faced threats but reacted in the tradition “*that others may live*”. The stopping of the suicide boat prevented countless others from dying that day.

For his actions, Petty Officer 3rd Class Nathan Bruckenthal is the first member of the United States Coast Guard to receive the “Medal of Combat Valor” presented by the United States Exercise Tiger Commemorative Foundation.



The Historic USCG Wreath Tribute “The Continental Ring of Honor”

At 1 p.m. over 21 US Coast Guard Stations that “ring” the United States will lay wreaths into the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Additionally, a USCG Cutter in Bahrain will lay wreaths into the Persian Gulf, a historical first and in Saint Louis Missouri, the Upper Mississippi River sector will lay a wreath at the Golden Arches, a historical first.

This USCG Motor Lifeboat “**Ring of Honor**” is historic. It is the first and largest of its kind by the USCG or any naval force to perform this ceremony simultaneously and in a coordinated tribute to honor the “Battle of Tiger”, 60th Anniversary of the Korean War, and Petty Officer Nathan Bruckenthal and the victims of the Boston Marathon.

USCG Stations Participating

Oregon

Tillamook Bay
Depoe Bay
Yaquina Bay (9)
Siuslaw River
Umpqua River
Coos Bay (9)
Chetco River

California
Humboldt Bay
Noyo River
Bodega Bay
Golden Gate
Morro Bay

Miami, Florida
USCG Cutter Diamondback

**USCG Station
Barnegat Light,
New Jersey**

North Carolina
Oregon Inlet
Hatteras Inlet

St. Louis, Missouri
USCG Upper Mississippi River

Massachusetts
Merimack River
Chatham

Washington
Quillayute River
Grays Harbor
Cape Disappointment

U.S. Coast Guard Patrol Forces Southwest Asia, Manama, Bahrain in the Arabian Gulf
Site of National Ceremony ~ USCG Station Barnegat Light, NJ



THE EXERCISE TIGER NATIONAL WREATH TRIBUTE

69th Anniversary of Exercise Tiger

Honoring 60th Anniversary of Korean War & USCG Petty Officer Nathan Bruckenthal

*The Historic 25th Annual "Tiger" Wreath Ceremony & USCG Ring of Honor Tribute
In conjunction with The NJ Submarine Association ~ 21 USCG Surf Stations & 2 USCG Cutters*



Sequence of Events

USCG Station Barnegat Light
April 28th, 2013

Welcome

*CWO Jay O. Greiner, Commander of
USCG Station Barnegat Light, NJ*

*U.S. Exercise Tiger Foundation
Susan C. Haines, National Executive Director*

Recognition by Missouri Gov. Jay Nixon

*Recognition by Ocean County Freeholders
Gerry Little, Freeholder*

*Recognition by New Jersey Assembly
DiAnne Gove, LBI, NJ State Assemblywoman*

Recognition by NJ Governor Chris Christie

*Recognition by USCG Commander
LCDR Scott Rae*

*Chief of Military Indoctrination
USCG Training Center, Cape May*

*Recognition of Secretary of the Army
Colonel David Clark, KW60 Committee Director*

Recognition by Department of Defense

*Recognition of Secretary of the Navy
Captain C. James Steinbaugh, USN
SEAL TEAM ONE (r)*

*Special thoughts to the Victims of the
Boston Marathon and Sandy Hook
Elementary School, Newtown, CT*



Presentation of Awards and Medals

*Recognition by U.S. Exercise Tiger Foundation
Medals of Combat Valor*

- ~WWII Exercise Tiger Survivors*
- ~WWII Veterans*
- ~Korean War Veterans*
- ~Cold War Veterans*
- ~Vietnam*
- ~Desert Storm*
- ~Iraq*
- ~Active Duty Military Forces Personnel*
- ~MWD & Handker*

*Korean War Video & Presentation of
KW 60 Certificates*

Luncheon w/ Documentary

1300 hours lay wreaths at Sea

Participants:

- WWII Tiger Vets*
- Korean War Vets*
- Capt. C. James Steinbaugh*
- Colonel David J. Clark*
- Commander John F. O'Brien*
- Susan Haines, Nat. Exec. Dir.*
- Bruckenthal Family*
- NJ Submarine Assn.*
- Assemblywoman DiAnne Gove*
- Freeholder Gerry Little*

21 Gun Honors

USCG Training Center Cape May Honor Details

Sergeant Rudy Baginski

US Marine Corps

In 1943 a 17 year-old boy dreamed of being the best. Too young for the Marines, he made a deal with the Navy to be assigned to the famed 2nd Division as a Navy Combat Corpsman beginning a journey that took him from the blood-soaked beaches of Saipan in 1944 to the bloody hills of Korea in 1952. As a corpsman with Marine Assault Group 53, 2nd Marine Division, Rudy not only treated Marines, but fought as one. On July 7, 1944, history's first Bonzai charge was made with 4,000 Japanese soldiers attacking the 2nd Div. The marines lost 10,000 men on Saipan. Rudy and his unit received the Presidential Unit Citation. By 1952 Rudy was a US Marine with the 1st Marine Division. On July 21, 1952, Rudy's 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment, Anti-Tank Company engaged communist Chinese forces less than 60 miles from Seoul during which his unit was virtually destroyed before help could arrive. Wounded, Rudy continued firing with his 75mm gun. For his actions, he received the DSM and Bronze Star. In all, Rudy received more than 22 medals and ribbons. Rudy was a resident of Long Beach Island, NJ all his life.



Office of the Governor
State of Missouri

Proclamation

WHEREAS, what began as a top secret naval operation to prepare United States Army and Naval forces for the June 6, 1944, D-Day Invasion would end with one of the highest losses ever suffered in combat by the United States Army and Navy in World War II; and

WHEREAS, *Exercise Tiger* was the code name for one of several secret military full-scale rehearsals for the Battle of Normandy, conducted along the southern coast of England; and

WHEREAS, *Exercise Tiger* involved more than 30,000 United States Army and Navy personnel, as well as British forces; and

WHEREAS, during this staging in the English Channel, on April 28, 1944, eight tank landing ships carrying American troops were unexpectedly attacked by German Naval Forces; and

WHEREAS, the aftermath of the German attack found two American vessels sunk, a third crippled, and 749 soldiers dead, including 201 soldiers from the State of Missouri; and

WHEREAS, the courageous servicemen who participated in *Exercise Tiger* made great sacrifices and endured hardships to help achieve victory and preserve the ideals of freedom and democracy for this great country.

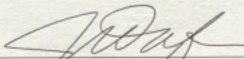
NOW THEREFORE, I, Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon, GOVERNOR OF THE STATE OF MISSOURI, do hereby proclaim April 28, 2013, to be

EXERCISE TIGER DAY

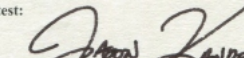
in Missouri to recognize the 69th Anniversary of the WWII Battle of Exercise Tiger, and urge all Missourians to honor all troops, especially the soldiers and sailors of "Exercise Tiger". And to nationally recognize the 60th Anniversary of the Korean War and all those who participated in it to protect this great country; Wherefore honoring ALL with the "United States Coast Guard Ring of Honor" Wreath Tribute at Sea hosted by the Barnegat Light Coast Guard Station, NJ.

IN TESTIMONY WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused to be affixed the Great Seal of the State of Missouri, in the City of Jefferson, this 25th day of March, 2013.




Jeremiah W. (Jay) Nixon
Governor

Attest:


Joan Kander
Secretary of State

The Historic United States Coast Guard “National Ring of Honor” Wreath Laying Tribute by USCG Motor Life Boat Stations

April 28th, 2013

