



THE ATLANTA WORLD WAR II ROUND TABLE

PRESERVING HISTORY

INTERNET: <http://www.atlantawwiiroundtable.org>

VOL. 25 No. 5

245th MEETING

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Contributor(s) To This
Newsletter

- * William (Bill) S. Burton
- * Richard Manning McMurray
- * Fletcher Thompson/Randolph Goulding
- * Marilyn Pahr/John Davis/Bill Owens
- * Jay Lenny/Bob Rivers

Elected Officers 2010-2011

Commander – Fletcher Thompson
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Tel: 770-592-5611

Sgt.-at-Arms – Bill Shepherd
Sgt.-at-Arms – Lee Weinstein
Chaplain – Bill Sperry (Lead)
Tel: 770-452-1309

Asst. Chaplain – B.G. Harold A. Dye

Asst. Chaplains – Guyton McCall / H.T. Maclin

Date: JANUARY 20th, 2011 (THURSDAY) >> Next Meeting FEB..19th

Time: Social Half-Hour: 11:00 AM - 11:30 AM > MEETING START
TIME 11:30 AM - Speaker Immediately Following Lunch

** **PETITE AU BERGE RESTAURANT**

2935 N. Druid Hills Road. Web Site: www.petiteauberge.com
Atlanta, Georgia 30329 (Restaurant Phone: 404-634-6268)

Price: \$ 15.00 Per Plate ** NO RESERVATION REQUIRED **

Speaker: William (Bill) Speight Burton

Subject: “U.S. Navy Armed Guard in WW II”

Mission Statement

We, who by our own actions, and by our heritage, know that liberty has not, is not, nor ever will be free, do in association with our friends and comrades, who believe as we do, pledge that we will meet at the call of our Commander no less than ten times a year:

- * To hear of the war experiences of our members and invited guests
- * To encourage and demonstrate pride in our country and its armed forces
- * To pass on to posterity our knowledge of World War II, and of the price - human and material - that was paid by our nation for the preservation of liberty in the United States and the world

Speaker for JANUARY 20th, 2011–William (Bill) Burton (To Be Introduced By Deputy Commander Goulding)

Our first speaker for 2011 will be Bill Burton, a WW II Navy veteran from Lilburn, GA. Bill was born in Columbus, GA. and enlisted in the U.S. Navy when he was 17 after pestering his mother to sign his enlistment papers.

He was assigned to the civilian ships manned by the merchant marines ferrying supplies to England. These sailors were known as the *U.S.N. Armed Guard*, their main purpose being to maintain the guns and ammunition furnished by the U.S. Navy for the protection of the ship and to protect the ship, ship’s crew and cargo from the enemy. The *U.S.N. Armed Guard* served on more than 6236 ships during WW II. Other *U.S.N. Armed Guard* included officers in charge of the crew, radiomen and signalmen.

In February 1943 Bill was assigned to an ammunition convoy headed to *Murmansk* in the Soviet Union. These were extremely dangerous runs, the merchant ships operated in arctic conditions, often coming under attack from enemy surface raiders, German Submarines and aircraft. After a violent storm separated Burton’s ship and two others from the convoy, his was the only one to make it to sanctuary in Iceland.

Bill ended-up shortly thereafter in England, practicing for the D-Day landings and would make a total of nine runs to the beaches at Normandy carrying infantry from England, five runs to *Omaha Beach* and four to *Utah*. Later; during the *Antwerp Bomb Blitz of 1944*, he would survive over 500 German V-2 Rocket attacks and then be sent to the Philippines and take part in the *Battle of Leyte Gulf*. Lastly, Bill was sent to Norfolk to pack guns for storage and while there the war ended. He served a total of 3 ½ years in the service, 32 months of sea duty aboard 5 different ships and was discharged in February, 1946. He has been awarded the *Russian Great Patriotic Medal* from President Boris Yeltsin for his participation in the *Murmansk Runs’* in WW II, the *French National Order of the Legion of Honor Medal* for his participation on D-Day, the *Navy Citation Theater Award* for participating in 3 theaters of operations and a special award for establishing the *Georgia Chapter of USN Armed Guards*. During WW II, the *U.S.N. Armed Guard* lost over 6000 men killed in action serving aboard 216 liberty ships which were sunk.

Bill has a second story to tell as well. He has been diagnosed with a irreversible lung disease called *Asbestosis* and is working to get legislation enacted so former sailors can get service-connected disability for *Asbestos Poisoning*. He is the author of the book *Asbestos..The Silent Killer Of Navy Veterans*.

Please welcome William (Bill) Burton as our JANUARY 20th, 2011 speaker. (245th Meeting)

Review of DECEMBER 16th, 2010 Speaker –Richard McMurray (Introduced by Deputy Commander Goulding)

Richard McMurray’s presentation to the Round Table on December 16th was about “*The Great American Battleship: It’s History And It’s Role In World War II.*” Richard is a American Civil War scholar, having a keen interest in Battleships; He earned a degree in history from *Virginia Military Institute (VMI)* as well as a M.A. and Ph.D. from Emory University in history.

Richard credits the Vikings with perhaps creating their own version of the Battleship by hanging their steal shields over the sides to protect from enemy projectiles. U.S. Navy Battleship construction began with the CONTINUED ON BACK

keel laying of the *Maine* in 1888. It ended with the incomplete *Kentucky* (BB-66) in 1947. The U.S. Navy continued to build a fleet of Battleships during the late 1880's; these ships were able to take action in the Spanish-American War. A larger fleet of Battleships were conceived during the 1930's, the first of these going into service in 1942, the *North Carolina*, followed by the the *South Dakota*, and the *Iowa* Class ships. The Navy then started planning on building an even larger class of Battleships to compete with the new Japanese *Yamato Class*, which had 18.1" main guns, these would have been designated the *Montana Class* ships, but this project never got off the planning stages.

During WW II, the Battleships took on several new roles; as escort ships to convoys; providing support and shore bombardment for amphibious invasions, and as protection for Aircraft Carriers.

Thank you Richard for your enlightening presentation and for a job well done.

I am pleased to announce that we have five (5) new members who have joined us since the December 16th, 2010 meeting:

WW II Veteran – William (Bill) S. Burton – Bill served in the U.S. Navy in the *USN Armed Guard*. In his 42 months of service, he took part in the invasion of Normandy, bringing troops in to the Omaha and Utah beaches; participated in the *Antwerp Bomb Blitz of 1944*, and the *Murmansk Runs*, convoys which supported the Russian forces with delivery of vital supplies.

WW II Veteran – Marvin Nash Worthy – Marvin served in the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, 271 Combat Engineer Battalion, 71st Infantry Division as a Water Supply Technician. He served in France, Luxemburg, Germany, Austria, and participated in the *Battle of the Rhineland*, serving under General George S. Patton, Jr.

WW II Veteran - Morton (Mort) Waitzman – Mort served in the 29th Infantry Division, 115th Regiment, HQ.CO. in the ETO. He served in a combat communications regiment on *D-Day* and across Europe in Bremerhaven, Germany and was directly involved in liberating the slave labor and concentration camps.

Veteran Robert Lehr – Robert served in the U.S. Air Force in the Dental Corps in San Antonio, TX.

Veteran John B. Neeld, Jr. M.D. – John served in the U.S. Army Medical Corps from 1967-1970 in Vietnam with the 9th Infantry Division. He was wounded during the *TET Offensive*.

Please welcome Bill, Marvin, Mort, Robert and John as our newest members of the Round Table at our January 20th, 2011 meeting.

>>> **Upcoming Speakers for - 2010-2011** Program chairman John Davis and program co-chairman Bill Owens have done a splendid job in lining up a wonderful list of speakers for the Atlanta WW II Round Table for our January through June 2010 meetings. The following speakers will be making a presentation to the Round Table in: **January 2011 – William (Bill) Burton – (U.S.N. Armed Guard)**; February Banquet – Jim Starnes (U.S.S. Missouri - Navy); March – Walter Victor (Army); May – Dr. Susan Young (Redstone Arsenal). More info to come on future speakers as they are booked. Please note that the speaker's engagements are subject to change. Thank you John M. Davis and William (Bill) Owens for your continuing efforts to seek-out and engage excellent speakers for our meetings and for a job exceedingly well done.

>> **CALANDAR OF EVENTS**

>>> **(UPDATED) - FEBRUARY BANQUET- February 19th, 2011 (Saturday)** – Round Table members are encouraged to get their reservations in early for the Feb. 19th, 2011 Banquet. A Reservation form and a return envelope for Finance Officer Jay Lenny were enclosed with the December 2010 Newsletter. Please let Adjutant Kovach or Finance Officer Lenny know if you did **not** receive a **Reservation Form** and you will be sent another one. John Kovach can be contacted at 770-928-4579 and Jay Lenny at 770-638-7824. Member's **current with their dues** will have their meal paid for **courtesy** of the Round Table.

The **2011 Banquet** will again feature a very special speaker, a U.S. Naval Officer who was onboard the *U.S.S. Missouri* in Tokyo Bay on the day the Japanese surrender on September 2nd, 1945. The Banquet will also feature entertainment during the social hour with vocals by our very own *Jill Sherman (formerly Jill Berry)* and live music provided by the *Stew McGhee Trio*. More info will follow in the February 2011 Newsletter.

The Banquet is the only scheduled Round Table meeting where **reservations are required**. **Reservations need to be booked no later than February 15th, 2011 (Tuesday)** so the Petite can do appropriate planning. **Please NOTE that Cancellations of Reservations will be accepted up until 72 hours (Wednesday) of the Banquet in order for a refund to be requested.**

Please remember that the Banquet is the only scheduled meeting of the Round Table for February 2011.

>>> **SPECIAL MEMBER SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENTS**

>>> **REQUESTS BY INDIVIDUALS TO MAKE ANNOUNCEMENTS AT ROUND TABLE MEETINGS** – In a effort to not interfere with our scheduled speaker's allotted time and also to allow more time during our lunch for table-conversation, the Atlanta WW II Round Table Executive Board has approved the following policy: ***Requests by individuals to make announcements during the Atlanta WW II Round Table meetings must first be cleared through the Commander prior to the date of the meeting.*** The number of announcements will be limited at each meeting and will also be based on priority of interest to the Round Table. Commander Thompson may be contacted at 770-952-4812 or via email at fandkt@yahoo.com

>>> **COMMANDER'S REQUEST** – Commander Thompson is requesting that all members should make our Chaplain and Asst. Chaplains aware of any member who is sick, stricken, or seriously ill. This can be done at the monthly meetings or by calling Chaplain Bill Sperry at 770-452-1309. Asst. Chaplain B.G. Harold A. Dye can be reached at 404-315-9253; Asst. Chaplain Guyton McCall at 404-237-1011 and Asst. Chaplain H.T. Maclin at 404-377-3178

>>> **(NEW) AWWIIRT Directory:** It's picture time! We have so many new members and we'd like to get to know you. Please be sure to have picture taken at upcoming meetings. All members receive copies of the Membership Directory so if you haven't received yours, see me at the meeting. Marilyn can be contacted at 404-888-0767 or via email: mpahr@emory.edu

>>> **(UPDATED) AWWIIRT Lending Library** – We continue to add titles and now have a library numbering over 200 titles. A selection will be available at the monthly meetings for members to "check out" and read or view at their leisure. Contact Marilyn Pahr if you wish to donate books, videos or DVDs related to WWII. (see above for contact info)

Monthly Quotation

"The 7 modern sins: politics without principles, pleasures without conscience, wealth without work, knowledge without character, industry without morality, science without humanity, worship without sacrifice."

--- Canon Frederick Donaldson – Canon of Westminster Abbey 1924-1951