



BATTLESHIP X

On June 7, 1941, Vera Bushfield, wife of the governor of South Dakota, smashed a bottle of champagne against the towering bow of a new battleship and proudly proclaimed, "I christen thee South Dakota!" While an 80 piece band from Sioux Falls Washington High School played "Anchors Aweigh" and "The Star-Spangled Banner," the huge hull of the battleship slowly slid into the Delaware River at Camden, New Jersey. The U.S.S. South Dakota was longer than two football fields, cost almost \$73 million, and would weigh 35,000 tons. After a year of fitting out, commissioning, and rigorous training of a green crew, the ship was ordered to the Pacific war zone.

The heavily armed but untested South Dakota mounted more than 100 antiaircraft guns. Her first engagement with Japanese planes occurred during the Battle of Santa Cruz on October 26, 1942. Even though her gunners shot down all 20 of the first wave of raiding enemy planes, in a later attack, one plane eluded antiaircraft fire and hit the South Dakota with a 500-pound bomb. Gunner's mate Hubert P. Chatelain was her first battle fatality, and Captain Thomas L. Catch was critically wounded by shrapnel. However, the carrier Enterprise was protected and saved because of the efforts of the South Dakota, and her baptism in battle was a stunning success.

(CONTINUED ON OTHER SIDE)

DEDICATED IN 2001 BY THE U.S. SOUTH DAKOTA VETERANS' INC.
AND THE BATTLESHIP SOUTH DAKOTA MEMORIAL FOUNDATION



USS SOUTH DAKOTA BB-57

U.S.S. SOUTH DAKOTA (BB-57)



BATTLE LEGEND

MAJOR OPERATIONS

- ① BATAVIA ISLAND - IN OCTOBER 1942 (PART UNIT COMMUNICATIONS)
- ② GUADALCANAAL ISLAND - IN NOVEMBER 1942 (PART UNIT COMMUNICATIONS)
- ③ IJIMA ISLANDS - NOVEMBER 1942
- ④ MARIANA ISLANDS - JANUARY 1944
- ⑤ ABOTEC-PALOMO ISLANDS - MARCH 1944
- ⑥ HONOLULU, HAWAII - APRIL 1944
- ⑦ WESTERN CAROLINE ISLANDS - JUNE 1944
- ⑧ IJIMA ISLANDS - JUNE 1944
- ⑨ LITTLE PHILIPPINE ISLANDS - OCTOBER 1944
- ⑩ LIZON, PHILIPPINE ISLANDS - JANUARY 1945
- ⑪ IWO JIMA ISLANDS - FEBRUARY 1945
- ⑫ OKINAWA OPERATION - APRIL 1945
- ⑬ THIRD FLEET OPERATION AGAINST JAPAN, HONSHU ISLAND - JUNE 1945
- ⑭ TOKYO BAY, SURRENDER OF JAPAN - SEPTEMBER 2, 1945

A horizontal wooden sign with white lettering, supported by two white posts. The sign is positioned in front of a green lawn. In the background, there is a large white building with a blue cylindrical structure and a white pedestal.

SIoux FALLS PARK &
RECREATION DEPARTMENT

U.S.S. SOUTH DAKOTA
BATTLESHIP

NAMED FOR THE STATE OF SOUTH DAKOTA
BUILT BY N.Y. SHIPBUILDING CORP. CAMDEN, N.J.

AUTHORIZED

MARCH 27, 1924

KEEL LAID

JULY 5, 1929

LAUNCHED

JUNE 7, 1941

FIRST COMMISSIONED

MARCH 20, 1942



THE OUTLINE OF THIS SHIP
WAS ERECTED BY THE OFFICERS
AND MEN OF THE NAVAL RESERVE
IN COOPERATION WITH THE
SIOUX FALLS BI-CENTENNIAL COMMISSION,
SIOUX FALLS PARK DEPARTMENT AND THE
BATTLESHIP FOUNDATION. IT IS DEDICATED
TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN WHO SERVED
ABOARD THE USS SOUTH DAKOTA (BB 57).



THE GUN BARREL STORY



THE VISION OF TRYING TO OBTAIN A 26"-94 TON 62 FT LONG BATTLESHIP GUN BARREL HAD ITS BEGINNING IN NOVEMBER 1992. WHILE CAPTAIN WITTE, USNR (Ret), PRESIDENT OF THE BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL FOUNDATION WAS SHOWING A VETERANS DAY GUEST SPEAKER THE MEMORIAL HE WAS GIVEN INFORMATION ON THE LOCATION OF A NUMBER OF 26" GUN BARRELS. THE BARRELS, LEFT OVER FROM WORLD WAR II WERE IN STORAGE AT THE NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE CENTER, DAHLGREN, VIRGINIA.

CAPT WITTE CONTACTED THE NAVY REQUESTING THE LOAN OF A GUN BARREL FOR DISPLAY AT THE MEMORIAL IN SIOUX FALLS, S.D. RECEIVING AN ENCOURAGING REPLY HE SET OUT TO OBTAIN QUOTATIONS ON TRUCKING THE GUN BARREL TO SIOUX FALLS AS THERE WERE NO RR TRUCKS SERVING THE DAHLGREN BASE. TRANSPORTATION BY TRUCK WOULD REQUIRE THE BARREL TO BE CUT IN TWO PIECES AND WOULD COST \$18,000 TO \$24,000.

CAPT WITTE WAS THE KEYNOTE SPEAKER AT THE CREW MEMBERS REUNION IN JULY 1993. HE SHARED HIS INFORMATION ON LOCATING A GUN BARREL AND THE COST OF TRANSPORTING IT TO THE BATTLESHIP ON THE PRAIRIE. HE CHALLENGED THE CREW TO ORGANIZE A FUND DRIVE TO FINANCE THE PROJECT. BEFORE THE CAPT. COULD LEAVE THE PODIUM CREW MEMBERS CAME FORWARD WITH CHECKS, CASH AND VOUCHERS OF SUPPORT. WITH DONATIONS SOLICITED LATER FROM CREW MEMBERS NOT IN ATTENDANCE THE CAPT. WAS ABLE TO RAISE \$20,000.

CAPT WITTE NOT LIKING THE THOUGHT OF CUTTING A NEW GUN BARREL IN HALF DECIDED THERE HAD TO BE A BETTER WAY. FOR THE NEXT 9 MONTHS HE EXPLORED DIFFERENT TRANSPORTATION POSSIBILITIES. THE ALTERNATE PLAN REQUIRED HIRING A PRIVATE CRANE CO. AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE TO LIFT THE GUN BARREL FROM THE STORAGE PIERS ONTO A TRANSPORTER CAR FOR MOVEMENT TO A WATER FRONT LOADING FACILITY AT THE DAHLGREN BASE.

IN THE EXECUTED PLAN THE GUN BARREL WAS LOADED BY A NAVY GANTRY CRANE ONTO A NAVY LANDING CRAFT (LCU) IN THE POTOMAC RIVER SLIP AT DAHLGREN. AFTER TWELVE HOURS UNDERWAY ON THE POTOMAC RIVER AND CHESAPEAKE BAY THE LCU ARRIVED AT PORTSMOUTH, VIRGINIA. THE GUN BARREL WAS OFF-LOADED BY THE PORTSMOUTH MARINE TERMINAL ONTO A 130 TON CAPACITY RR FLATCAR PROVIDED BY CDD. IN ORDER TO PASS RR SAFETY REGULATIONS THE GUN BARREL SHIPPING COLLARS HAD TO BE WELDED TO THE RR FLATCAR AT CONSIDERABLE EXPENSE. CSX TRANSPORTATION COMPANY'S RR DIVISION PULLED THE FLATCAR FROM PORTSMOUTH VIRGINIA TO CHICAGO, ILLINOIS. BURLINGTON-NORTHERN RR PULLED THE FLATCAR FROM CHICAGO TO SIOUX FALLS, S.D. ELLIS & EASTERN RR PULLED THE CAR FROM THE BURLINGTON-NORTHERN YARDS TO THEIR SIDING LOCATED THREE CITY BLOCKS FROM THE MEMORIAL. THE RR FLATCAR WITH GUN BARREL ABOARD ARRIVED IN SIOUX FALLS IN AUGUST 1994, HAVING LOGGED 99 MILES BY WATER AND 1,686 MILES BY RAIL. WINGERT HOUSE MOVING COMPANY UNLOADED THE RR FLATCAR AND MOVED THE GUN BARREL TO THE MEMORIAL WITH NORMAL HYDRAULIC HOUSE MOVING EQUIPMENT. THE NAVY SEABEE UNIT FROM SIOUX FALLS CONSTRUCTED THE MOUNTING FOUNDATION AND PIERS.

MOST OF THE ABOVE LOADING, TRANSPORTATION, AND CONSTRUCTION WAS DONE AS A PUBLIC SERVICE WITHOUT COST TO THE MEMORIAL.

16-INCH 45-CALIBER GUN

DATA:

MARK 6 MOD 1, SERIAL NO. 472, BORE 16", LENGTH - 61'-4",
WEIGHT-94 TON, BREECH O.D. - 46", MUZZLE O.D. - 23.5",
ELEVATION: MINUS 2° TO PLUS 45°, LOADING ANGLE: 5°
FORGED AT BETHLEHEM STEEL CO. - BETHLEHEM, PA.
MACHINED & ASSEMBLED AT NAVAL GUN FACTORY - WASHINGTON, D.C.

BALLISTICS:

1325 ROUNDS OF 16" PROJECTILES CARRIED ABOARD USS SOUTH DAKOTA BB-57

2700 LB. ARMOR PIERCING (AP) MK. 8

1900 LB. HIGH CAPACITY (HC) MK. 13

WEIGHT OF FULL POWDER CHARGE: 535 LBS.

WEIGHT OF REDUCED POWDER CHARGE: 295 LBS.

MUZZLE VELOCITY - AP PROJECTILE: 2300 FPS FULL CHG./1800 FPS REDUCED CHG.

MUZZLE VELOCITY - HC PROJECTILE: 2525 FPS FULL CHG./2075 FPS REDUCED CHG.

MAX. RANGE WITH AP PROJECTILE AT 45° ELEVATION: 36,900 YDS.

MAX. RANGE WITH HC PROJECTILE AT 45° ELEVATION: 37,075 YDS.

A 2700 LB. AP PROJECTILE WILL HIT A TARGET AT A RANGE
OF 20 MILES AFTER 89 SECONDS OF FLIGHT TIME.

A 2700 LB. AP PROJECTILE FIRED AT A 90° ANGLE TO A TARGET
AT A RANGE OF 9 MILES WILL PENETRATE 20" ARMORED STEEL.

A NEW BARREL LINER HAS TO BE INSTALLED AFTER THE
FIRING OF 395 ROUNDS OF FULL CHARGE AP PROJECTILES.

IN RECOGNITION AND APPRECIATION FOR THEIR HELP IN MAKING THE
GUN BARREL PROJECT A REALITY

NAVAL SURFACE WARFARE CENTER - DAHLGREN DIVISION - DAHLGREN, VA
ASSAULT CRAFT UNIT TWO - NAVAL AMPHIBIOUS BASE - LITTLE CREEK, VA
MILITARY TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT CONTROL- EA, DOD - BAYONNE, NJ
VIRGINIA INTERNATIONAL TERMINALS, INC. - NORFOLK, VA
CSX TRANSPORTATION - JACKSONVILLE, FL
BURLINGTON NORTHERN RAILROAD - FORT WORTH, TX
ELLIS & EASTERN RAILROAD - SIOUX FALLS, SD
JOHN WINGERT HOUSE MOVING - SIOUX FALLS, SD
NAVY SEABEE DETACHMENT 0715 - SIOUX FALLS, SD
FCCM (SW) STEPHEN SKELLEY - DAHLGREN, VA
MR DOUG DAVANT - PUBLIC AFFAIRS - DAHLGREN, VA
YNC DALE NORSTROM - BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL - SIOUX FALLS, SD
CAPT DAVID A. WITTE - BATTLESHIP MEMORIAL - SIOUX FALLS, SD

16" BREECH MECHANISM MKIII MOD. 1 NO. 227
(From Left Gun in Turret 3 on BB-57)

PREPARING GUN FOR FIRING:

- STEP 1. PROJECTILE (1900# or 2700#) IS HYDRO-MECHANICALLY RAMMED INTO THE BREECH END OF THE BARREL.
- STEP 2. SIX SILK BAGS OF SMOKELESS GUN POWDER ARE INSERTED BEHIND THE PROJECTILE. EACH BAG HAS A RED COLOR SILK IGNITION PAD OF BLACK POWDER (290 grams) QUILTED TO ITS BASE.
- STEP 3. THE BREECH MECHANISM IS SWUNG INTO PLACE BY SPRING/PNEUMATIC (40psi) CLOSING CYLINDERS AND ROTATED 29° BY CAMS TO LOCK-UP IN THE SCREW-BOX LINER.
- STEP 4. A BRASS MK15 LOCK COMBINATION PRIMER (approx. 3/8" dia. x 3" long) IS INSERTED INTO THE MK14 MOD. 5 FIRING LOCK ASSEMBLY AND THE GUN IS READY TO BE FIRED.





40mm TWIN MOUNT AA GUN

USS SOUTH DAKOTA: 17 - 40mm QUAD MOUNTS
TOTAL-68 GUNS

GUNS CAN BE OPERATED SINGLE FIRE OR
FULLY AUTOMATIC-120 ROUNDS PER MINUTE

BASIC GUN CREW FOR QUAD MOUNT:
MOUNT CAPT, POINTER, TRAINER,
4-LOADERS, 4-AMMUNITION PASSERS





