

My name is Robert Peacock. I'm writing you to thank you for your great website. My Grandpa, (Fire Controlman 1st Class) Richard A Heine, served aboard the USS South Dakota through all of her major battles. He lied about his age and joined the peace time Navy in 1935. He served until 1940 when he was honorably discharged. After Pearl Harbor he was called back up and soon found himself aboard BB57. The rest of course is history.

My Grandpa was so effected by his duty aboard BB57 that he could never really talk about it. He couldn't watch an episode of "Victory At Sea" without weeping. He attended as many of the reunions as he could and still had friends from the ship until he died. When confronted he always played down the heroics of BB57. He never considered himself a hero. He always said "We just did our duty then went home. The guys who didn't make it our the real heros". He was a Navy man until the end.

Due to the stoic nature of my Grandpa I never realized the contributions that BB57 made to the war in the south pacific. Websites like yours are very educational and I'm sure have helped many people better understand what our heros went through on BB57. I would love to submit his name and a picture of him in uniform to your website for posting. I also have a picture of him aboard ship with 14 other shipmates. Maybe if you post it someone may recognize someone and request a copy. My Grandpa is the tall thin guy on the right. I'm sending the jpeg along with this email. He aimed the 5" Guns in a turret near the bridge. I don't have any first hand battle accounts from him but over the years I managed to get a few pretty hairy personal details about some battles. I'd be happy to jot then down to include with his picture in your photo gallery. I guess I'll just send the other picture and personal accounts to this email address unless you instruct me differently.

God Bless America and the USS South Dakota. Her impact still reverberates 3 generations later in my family. When my nine year old son "Ricky" gets old enough he will understand too.

It's great to know that there are people out there still paying tribute to the efforts of these men. My Grandpa passed away on Sept. 6, 2003. He was a calm, happy, loving guy who always had a joke and was great to the family. He started a school bus company in 1950 that my family and I are still running today. They just don't make men like him anymore. His generation was a special breed of men that changed the world as we know it. I try everyday to live up to the examples he set.

Robert Peacock
West Chicago Il, 60185