

Steady As She Goes

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France does not forget

The Jeremiah O'Brien and France have a connection dating back to June 1944. Events during the Seaman's Memorial Cruise in May reinforced that connection, as two French groups came to San Francisco to sail with us.

By Carl Nolte
Chairman and CEO

Two groups from France flew halfway around the world to ride aboard the Jeremiah O'Brien on our May 22 Memorial cruise.

One of the groups — Normandie Memoire, from the area around the D-Day beaches — are old friends. They are the people who gave the ship the diorama of the O'Brien that is the centerpiece of our museum.

The other group — Aux Marins, an association of French navy and merchant marine veterans — was new to us. The Aux Marins group, 16 strong, was led by retired Rear Adm. Pierre Leautic.

This group, which comes from the Breton

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Carl Nolte, above left, and Rear Adm. Pierre Leautic sign an agreement to make their respective organizations — the National Liberty Ship Memorial and Aux Marins — twins. Aux Marins is an association of French navy and merchant marine veterans. The ceremony took place during the O'Brien's May 22 cruise. Left, Leautic speaks aboard ship as Nolte listens. Photos by Lenny Pevzner.

INSIDE: Jacking gear search / Ghost Fleet photos / Kissing contest



Our music for the day came from the Big Band of Rossmoor, under the direction of Mo Levich, left. The band is part of the nonprofit Generations in Jazz Foundation.

This multigenerational band features musicians ranging in age from 14 to 91. The group's big band sound is supplemented by string, flute and clarinet sections. Passengers were entertained with plenty of 1940s musical offerings.



The battleship USS Iowa still reposes at Suisun Bay, awaiting a home somewhere, someday.



O'Brien deckhand Joan Raphael is not above doing whatever is necessary to keep the Jeremiah O'Brien shipshape — which is why she's the reigning Myron Alexander Award winner. The award, named in memory of O'Brien crew member Myron Alexander, recognizes the O'Brien volunteer crew member of the year.