



In Search of Eldorado

Link to the Eldorado Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VczD1olutQ8>



Day 56
Thursday,
February 27th

USS
Battleship
Iowa

Weather
60's to 80's Sunny

Hello to Family & Friends

Since I was parked in Culver City, probably the closest I will be again to the Long Beach and Los Angeles ports, I decided to use my GoCard to visit the Battleship USS Iowa museum.

The Iowa was commissioned in 1943 and served at the end of WW II, throughout the Korean 'Conflict' and the Cold War.

Decommissioned in 2011, she had a good refurbishing prior to becoming a floating museum for the public.

Once again they let you drive in free then charge you for parking on the way out. I just drove through and parked on the street.

As I parked I noticed the cruise ship below. I think it's bigger than the battleship.



In Search of Eldorado

By Edgar Allan Poe

Gaily bedight,
A gallant knight,
In sunshine and in shadow,
Had journeyed long,
Singing a song,
In search of Eldorado.

But he grew old—
This knight so bold—
And o'er his heart a shadow—
Fell as he found
No spot of ground
That looked like Eldorado.

And, as his strength
Failed him at length,
He met a pilgrim shadow—
'Shadow,' said he,
'Where can it be—
This land of Eldorado?'

'Over the Mountains
Of the Moon,
Down the Valley of the Shadow,
Ride, boldly ride,'
The shade replied,—
'If you seek for Eldorado!'



This far away and I still can't get the whole ship in the frame. It's a lot larger than I expected.

IOWA STATISTICS

887' length overall.

108' beam (width) – 1' clearance, port and starboard to travel through the Panama Canal

37' draft (below water line) at full load

174' from waterline to top of main mast

57,500 displacement tons full load

Compliment in 1980's; 65 officers, 1,445 enlisted, plus 58 Marines. WW II compliment was close to a total of 2,800 due to the great number of anti-aircraft guns being carried and aircraft.

This is a rather intimidating sight.





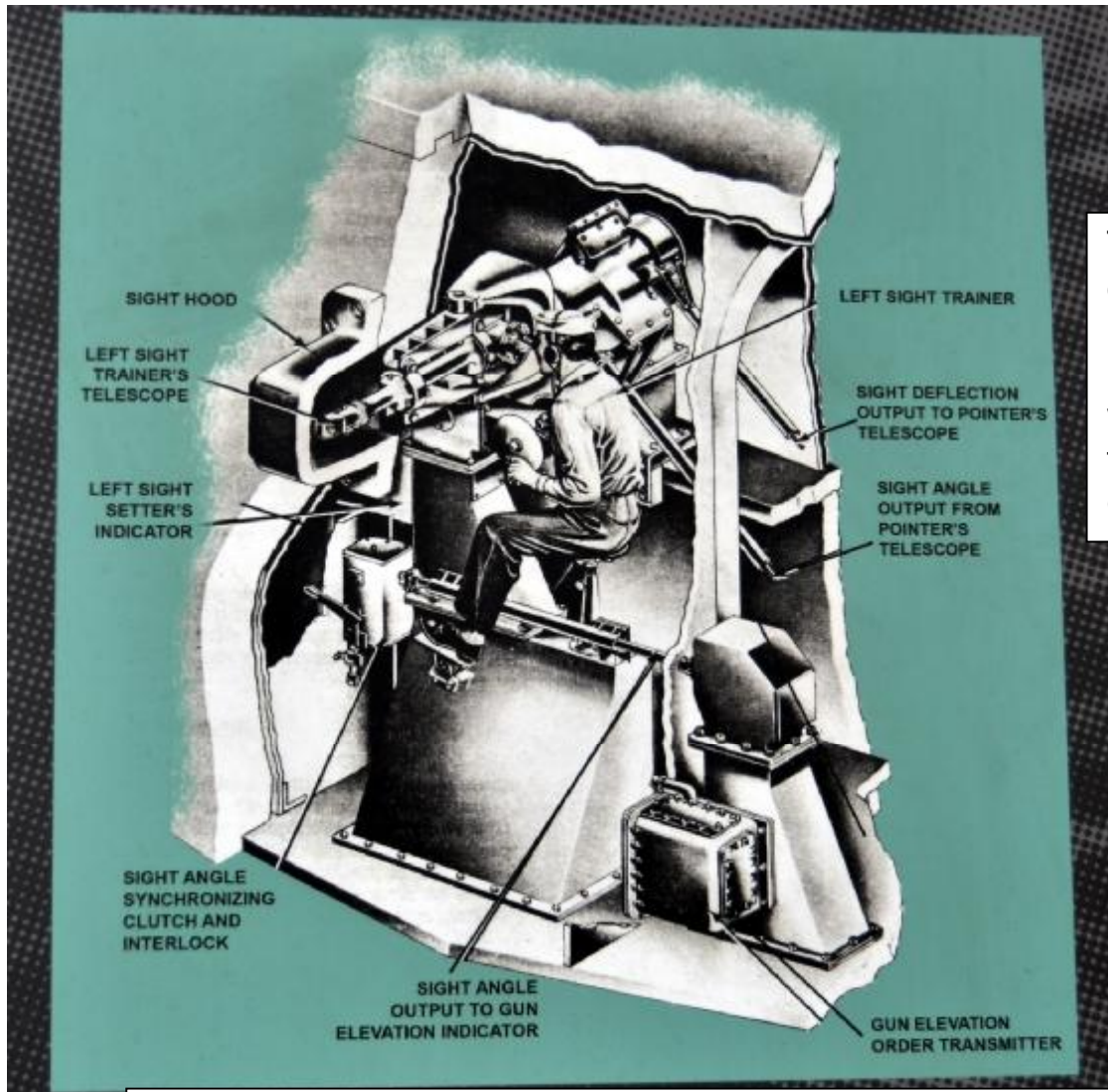
This gives you an idea of the size of those guns.

The shell that gets fired. And take note of the white silk bag of powder. Each one weighs 110 pounds and they use six of them for every shot.



WHO AND WHAT'S INSIDE?

16 Inch, 50 Caliber Sight Trainer's Station and Sight Trainer assist in aiming the big guns. Protruding from both forward sides of the turrets are armored hoods which house 12x power Mark 66 telescopic sights for the pointer and trainer positions. The top telescopes are for the Pointer's sight operations and the lower telescopes are for the Trainer's sight operations. A "Pointer" elevates the guns, while a "Trainer" rotates the turret. The sights are used only in local turret control scenarios where the primary control systems have failed.



There was another diagram like this of the levels below, there must have been 25 sailors working in there when they are firing all three guns one after another.

WHEN BIG GUNS FIRE





Some of the armor protecting vital areas, like here on the bridge, is eighteen inches thick. The Iowa was only hit twice by enemy fire, one of those Japanese shells just bounced off the exterior armor of the ship.

COLD WAR CONVERSION IOWA-1984

Of course, before the Korean War the Iowa was updated with the latest technologies and weapons. Then again in the 80's she had another upgrade.

During the Cold War, the USS Iowa was outfitted with more modern weapons and technology:

Four twin 5" gun mounts were removed to allow for the addition of modern missile systems on board the upper decks.

32 Tomahawk cruise missiles were housed in eight Armored Box Launchers (ABL).

16 Harpoon cruise missiles were carried in four quad Kevlar protected canisters.

Four Phalanx anti cruise missile gatling guns were added, two port and starboard on the superstructure.

The latest electronic warfare sensors, radars and communications were also added.

The boiler rooms were converted to burn distillate fuel used by the modern navies.



Tomahawk missiles could be fired from here



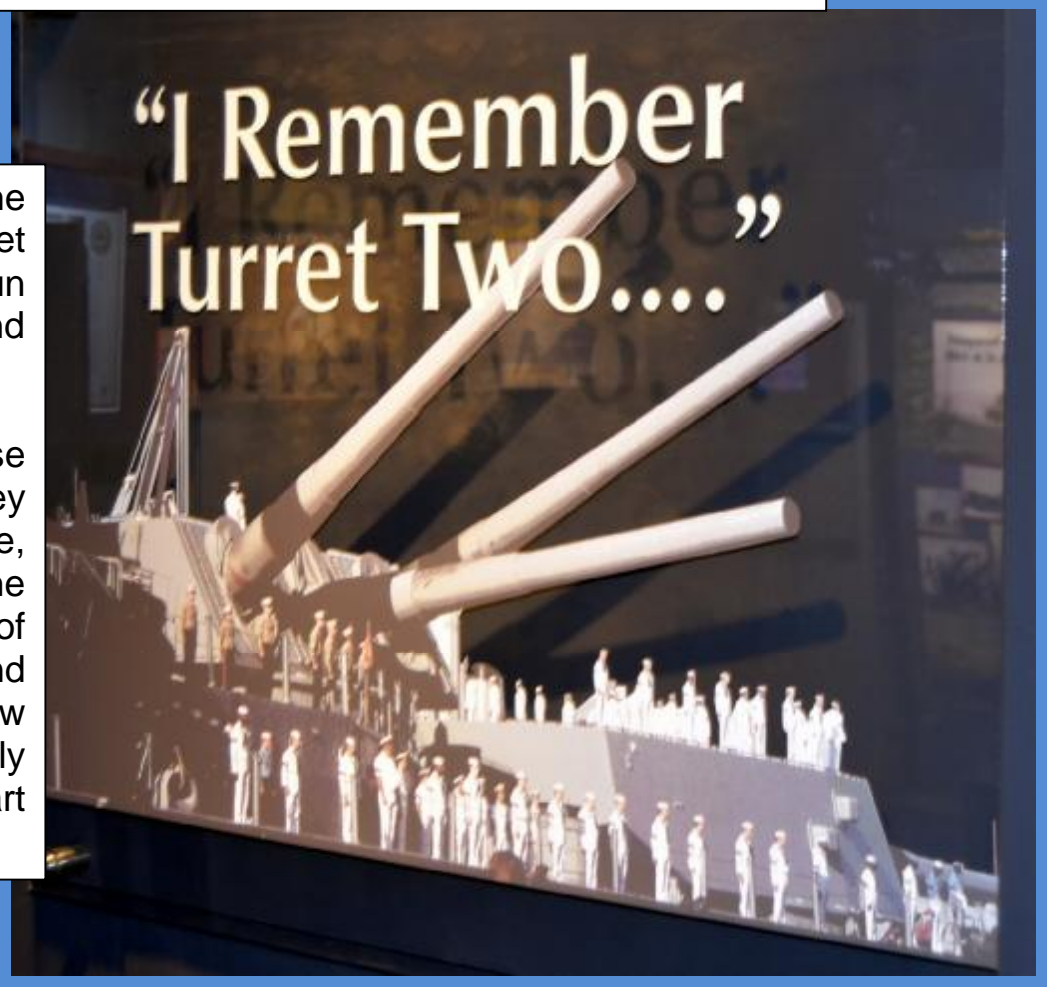
This rack, one of four, fires cruise missiles.



The enlisted men's mess.

On April 19th, 1989, the Number Two 16-inch turret exploded in the center gun room, killing 47 crewmen and damaging the turret.

This was a tribute to those men. It was compelling. They had photos, all black & white, of, I assume, many of the men who died as well as of the rescue itself and reactions of fellow crewmates. This will probably be the most memorable part of my visit.



BATTLESHIP EPILOGUE

- The US Navy Battleship era lasted from 1896-1995, some 99 years.
- A total of 75 "capital" ships were ordered with 51 completed.
- Over 99 years no USN Battleship was sunk by enemy action at sea.
- Three battleships were lost at Pearl Harbor (7 December 1941) and the USS Maine from an internal explosion (15 February 1898).

I think this is an incredible statistic



Yep, this is a short one. I drove down the street for more free parking at the Ports O' Call shopping area, and then spent the next four hours on the phone (credit card Company), on chat (Groupon), or on the web (my phone), putting out fires, complaining again to Groupon, scheduling Saturday, ordering a new bike cover for delivery to the RV Park next week, organizing this and organizing that.

When I started my 45 minute drive back to Burbank it was after 10:00 p.m.

I've decided to visit Universal Studios tomorrow (thus parking in Burbank). I have some extra days available and I might as well since it's included on the GoCard. So brace yourselves for another studio tour.

My list is dwindling to nothing. Maybe I'll head to the mountains on Sunday for a couple days. Who knows?

Until next time.....