



THEIR GUNS WERE ALWAYS READY

BY JAMES THOMPSON

PHOTOGRAPHIC HISTORY OF THE MIGHTY IOWA-CLASS BATTLESHIPS – THE WORLD'S MOST POWERFUL WARSHIPS. THIS IS THE SECOND SEGMENT COVERING THE USS NEW JERSEY - PART SEVEN



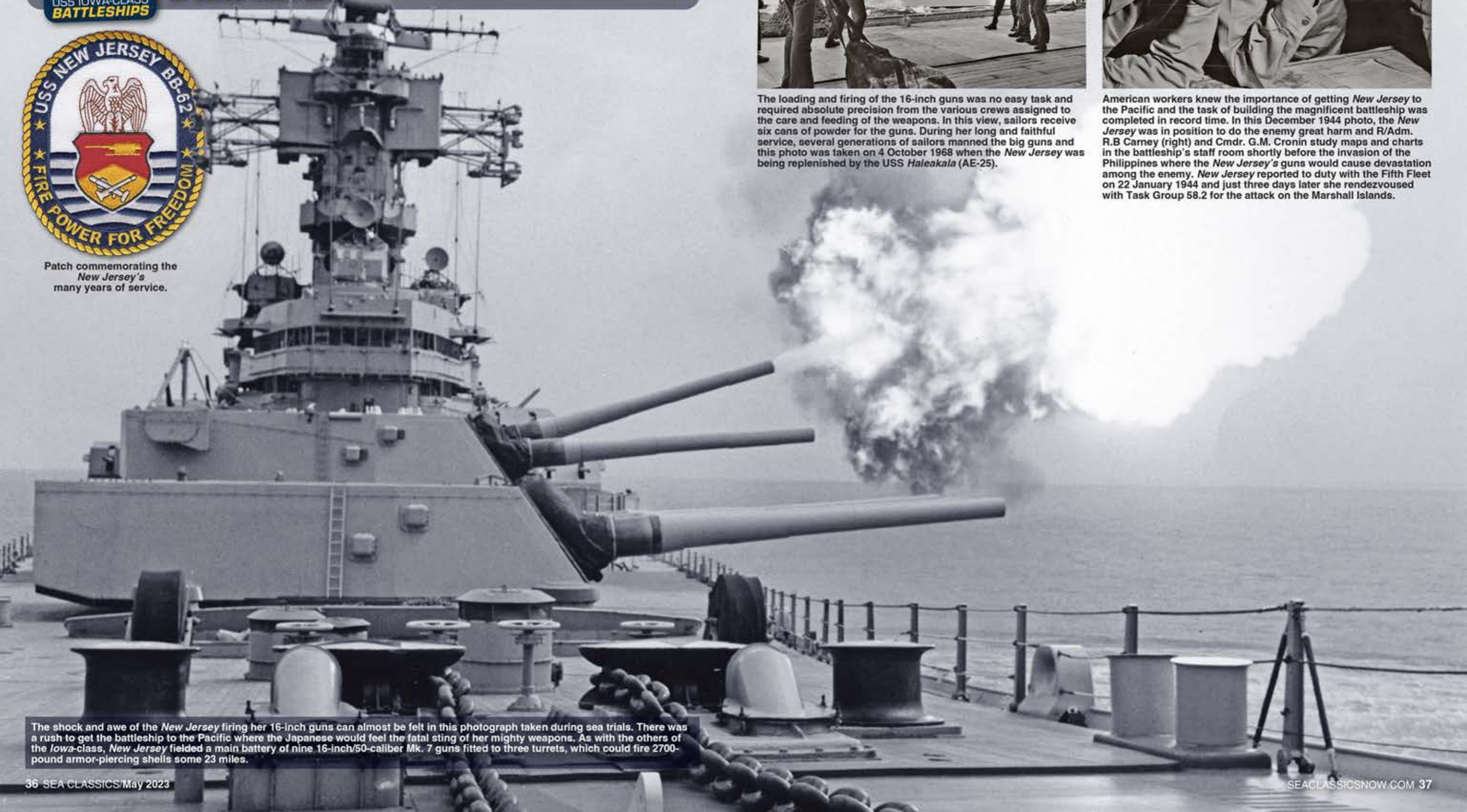
Patch commemorating the *New Jersey's* many years of service.



The loading and firing of the 16-inch guns was no easy task and required absolute precision from the various crews assigned to the care and feeding of the weapons. In this view, sailors receive six cans of powder for the guns. During her long and faithful service, several generations of sailors manned the big guns and this photo was taken on 4 October 1968 when the *New Jersey* was being replenished by the USS *Haleakala* (AE-25).



American workers knew the importance of getting *New Jersey* to the Pacific and the task of building the magnificent battleship was completed in record time. In this December 1944 photo, the *New Jersey* was in position to do the enemy great harm and R/Adm. R.B. Carney (right) and Cmdr. G.M. Cronin study maps and charts in the battleship's staff room shortly before the invasion of the Philippines where the *New Jersey's* guns would cause devastation among the enemy. *New Jersey* reported to duty with the Fifth Fleet on 22 January 1944 and just three days later she rendezvoused with Task Group 58.2 for the attack on the Marshall Islands.



The shock and awe of the *New Jersey* firing her 16-inch guns can almost be felt in this photograph taken during sea trials. There was a rush to get the battleship to the Pacific where the Japanese would feel the fatal sting of her mighty weapons. As with the others of the *Iowa*-class, *New Jersey* fielded a main battery of nine 16-inch/50-caliber Mk. 7 guns fitted to three turrets, which could fire 2700-pound armor-piercing shells some 23 miles.