



THE NAVAL HISTORY OF ARKANSAS



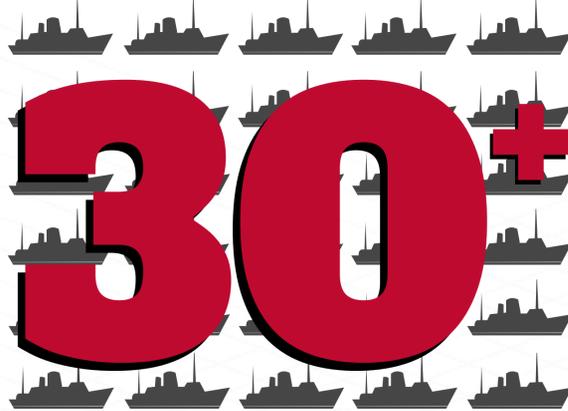
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SHIPS



USS Arkansas (BB 33)

The third ship to be named after the 25th state, USS Arkansas (BB 33) served in both World Wars. During World War I, Arkansas operated as part of the British Grand Fleet as the 6th Battle Squadron. In the interwar years, she performed training cruises for Midshipmen and goodwill visits overseas. At the outbreak of World War II, Arkansas escorted convoys to Europe through June 1944, supporting the invasion of Normandy. In 1945, she was transferred to the Pacific and bombarded Japanese positions during the Battles of Iwo Jima and Okinawa. At the end of the war, she participated in Operation Magic Carpet, ferrying troops back to the United States. Arkansas' final mission was as a target in Operation Crossroads, where she was sunk in Test Baker at Bikini Atoll in July 1946. Arkansas received four battle stars for her World War II service.



At least 30 ships have been named after the state of Arkansas, its cities, places, and people. A few of those include:

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| Arkansas I (Screw Steamer), 1863 | USS Jefferson County (LST 845), 1945 |
| Arkansas II (BM 7), 1902 | USS Johnson County (LST 849), 1945 |
| USS Arkansas (BB 33), 1912 | USS Lafayette County (LST 859), 1945 |
| USS Arkansas (CGN 41), 1980 | USS Lawrence County (LST 887), 1944 |
| USS Arkansas (SSN 800), TBD | USS Lee County (LST 888), 1944 |
| USS Benton County (LST 263), 1945 | USS Lincoln County (LST 898), 1944 |
| USS Boone County (LST 389), 1942 | USS Little Rock (CL 92), 1945 |
| USS Bradley County (LST 400), 1944 | USS Little Rock (LCS 9), 2015 |
| USS Calhoun County (LST 519), 1944 | USS Monroe County (LST 1038), 1945 |
| USS Chicot (AK 170), 1945 | USS Montgomery County (LST 1041), 1945 |
| USS Cleburne (APA 73), 1944 | USS Ouachita County (LST 1041), 1945 |
| USS Cooper (DD 695), 1944 | USS Poinsett (AK 205), 1945 |
| USS Craighead (AK 175), 1945 | USS Pulaski County (LST 1088), 1945 |
| USS Crittenden (APA 77), 1945 | USS Sebastian (AK 211), 1945 |
| USS Grant County (LST 1174), 1957 | USS Van Buren (PF 42), 1943 |

PEOPLE



John Smith "Jimmy" Thach, Admiral

Born in Pine Bluff, AR, Thach graduated from the Naval Academy in 1927 and was designated a Naval Aviator in early 1930. Thach gained a reputation as an expert test pilot, instructor, and in aerial gunnery. While commanding Fighting Squadron Three (VF 3), he developed a fighter combat tactic known as the "Thach Weave," allowing American fighters better survivability against the Imperial Japanese Navy Mitsubishi A6M "Zero." Thach was a WWII flying ace, shooting down six enemy aircraft.



Corydon M. Wassell, Rear Admiral

Born in Little Rock, AR, Wassell obtained a medical degree in 1909 from the University of Arkansas Medical School. After 12 years of serving as a medical missionary, he applied for a commission in the U.S. Navy and was made a provisional lieutenant in the Naval Reserves in 1926. During WWII, he was awarded the Navy Cross for saving a dozen severely injured men from capture during the Japanese invasion and accompanied them to Fremantle, Australia, on the Dutch ship Janssens.



Nathan G. Gordon, Lieutenant

Born in Morrilton, AR, Gordon graduated from Columbia Military Academy in 1933. In May 1941, he joined the Navy as a Naval Aviator. On Feb. 15, 1944, he commanded a PBY Catalina nicknamed "Arkansas Traveler," making three separate landings in rough seas to rescue 15 survivors of downed B-25 U.S. Army Air Forces aircraft near Kavieng. Lt. Gordon was awarded the Medal of Honor for his exceptional daring, personal valor, and incomparable airmanship under most perilous conditions.

PLACES



Did You Know...?

Arkansas, known as the "The Natural State," is a wealth of mineral resources. This apparently helped in naming cities like Bauxite, Marble, Limedale, Zinc, Coal Hill, Onyx, Calamine, Oil Trough and Lead Hill. Of Arkansas' 75 counties though, 60 are named for national or local dignitaries. Some of Arkansas' more unusual town names include Hogeye, Greasy Corner, Ink, Snowball, Romance, and Gild. Although the state boasts many unusual town names, cities like Stamps, Lepanto and DeQueen are believed to be the only towns so named in the United States.



Navy Operational Support Center (NOSC), Little Rock

The mission of NOSC Little Rock is to generate mobilization readiness by providing administrative services, training support, and world class customer service to Reserve personnel in support of surge and operational requirements for the Navy and Marine Corps team and Joint Forces.