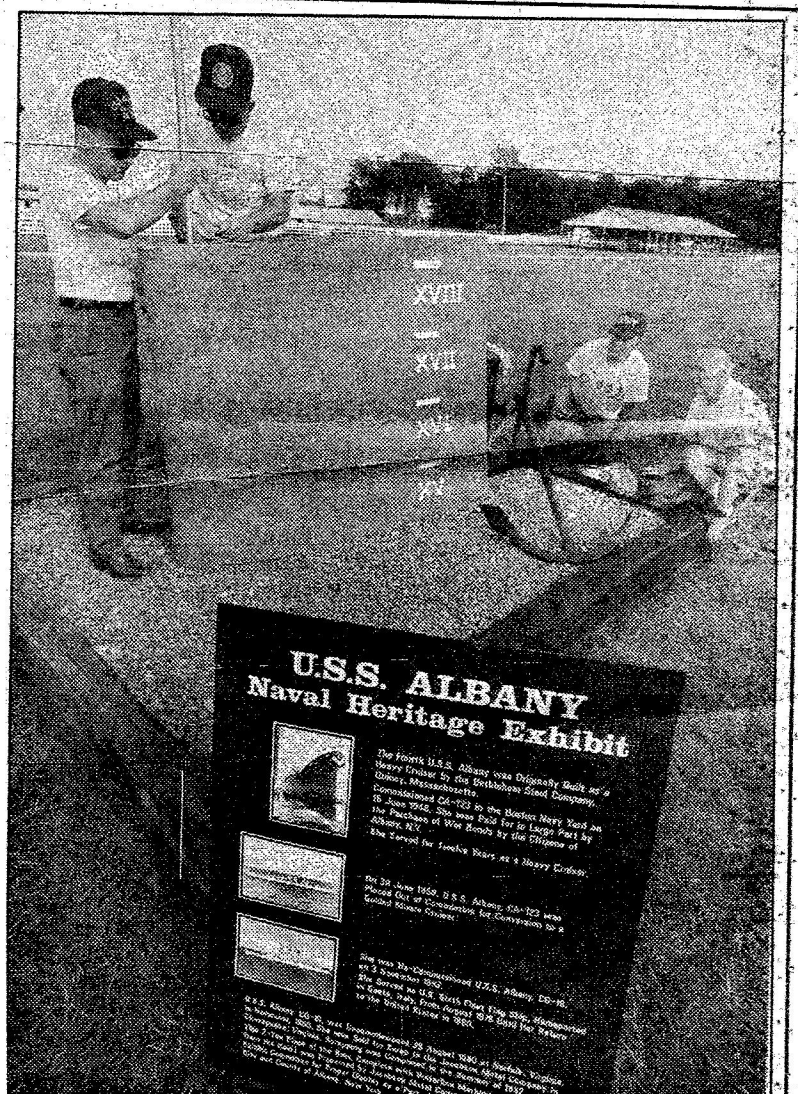


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Times Union photo by Jack Madigan

A PIECE OF THE ALBANY — Norm Nilsen of Nassau, right, works on installing the part of the bow of the USS Albany, with committee members, from left, Al Bursi of Rotterdam; Wayne Van Amburg of Castleton and Al Malcomson of East Greenbush. The permanent memorial to the ship is located in the Altamont Fairgrounds.

Permanent display on *Albany* put up at Altamont fairgrounds

By Kathleen Dooley

Staff writer

ALTAMONT — A reminder of the USS *Albany* is on permanent display at the Altamont Fairgrounds.

A small portion of the bow section of the cruiser CA-123 and CG-10, complete with the water line markings and weighing a mere two tons, has been placed on the fairground's infield, or Serviceman's Park. The memorial project involved five local men working with Jacobson Metal, which donated the piece to the exhibit committee for display.

Trans America Trailer Leasing of Colonie volunteered its services to transport the bow from Virginia, where it was located ready for scrapping, and brought it up to Albany. John McCullough of Rensselaer and Dominic Aldi of Albany helped with the transportation.

"The entire project was completed in a few months by those interested in preserving a small part of Albany's Naval Heritage," said Norm Nilsen, a former Navy man, and naval history buff who is also working to preserve the port of Albany's history for future generations.

On the USS *Albany* display committee with Nilsen, who lives in Nassau, were Wayne Van Amburg of Castleton, who served aboard the USS *Albany* CG-10; Al Malcomson of East Greenbush, Al Bursi of Schenectady and Richard Knapp also of Schenectady, who served on the USS *Albany* CA-123. Roger Moak of Albany created the graphic display at the fair and supplied a brief history on the piece of the ship, complete with photographs.

The Nicholas DiSalvo Unit of Sea Cadets assisted at the fair's dedication ceremony and marched in the fair's opening day parade.

"We still have a lot of work to do on the display," said Nilsen. A permanent sign will be erected at the site and eventually the display will be lighted for night viewing. Planners expect to have an official rededication at next year's fair, although the display was part of the fair's 100th anniversary year because final completion is not expected until next summer.

"This exhibition is dedicated to the people of Albany," according to Nilsen. The citizens of Albany raised \$40 million as part of the World War II effort in 1946 to commission the CA-123, he said.

Later, in June 1958, the USS *Albany* CA-123 was taken out of commission for conversion to a guided missile cruiser. It was re-commissioned the USS *Albany* CG-10 in 1962.

In 1980, he continued, the ship was decommissioned for the final time and left in storage by the Navy in the Norfolk-Chesapeake, Va. area. Then, it was sold for scrapping.

Nilsen says the most interesting part of the entire project is that it required only a few months of people working together to get everything in place. "It was done with absolutely no money changing hands," he said.

Anyone interested in helping with the USS *Albany* display being designed for the Albany Visitors Center may contact the committee by writing to: USS Albany Heritage Exhibit, PO Box 515, Rensselaer 12144 or call 732-4202.