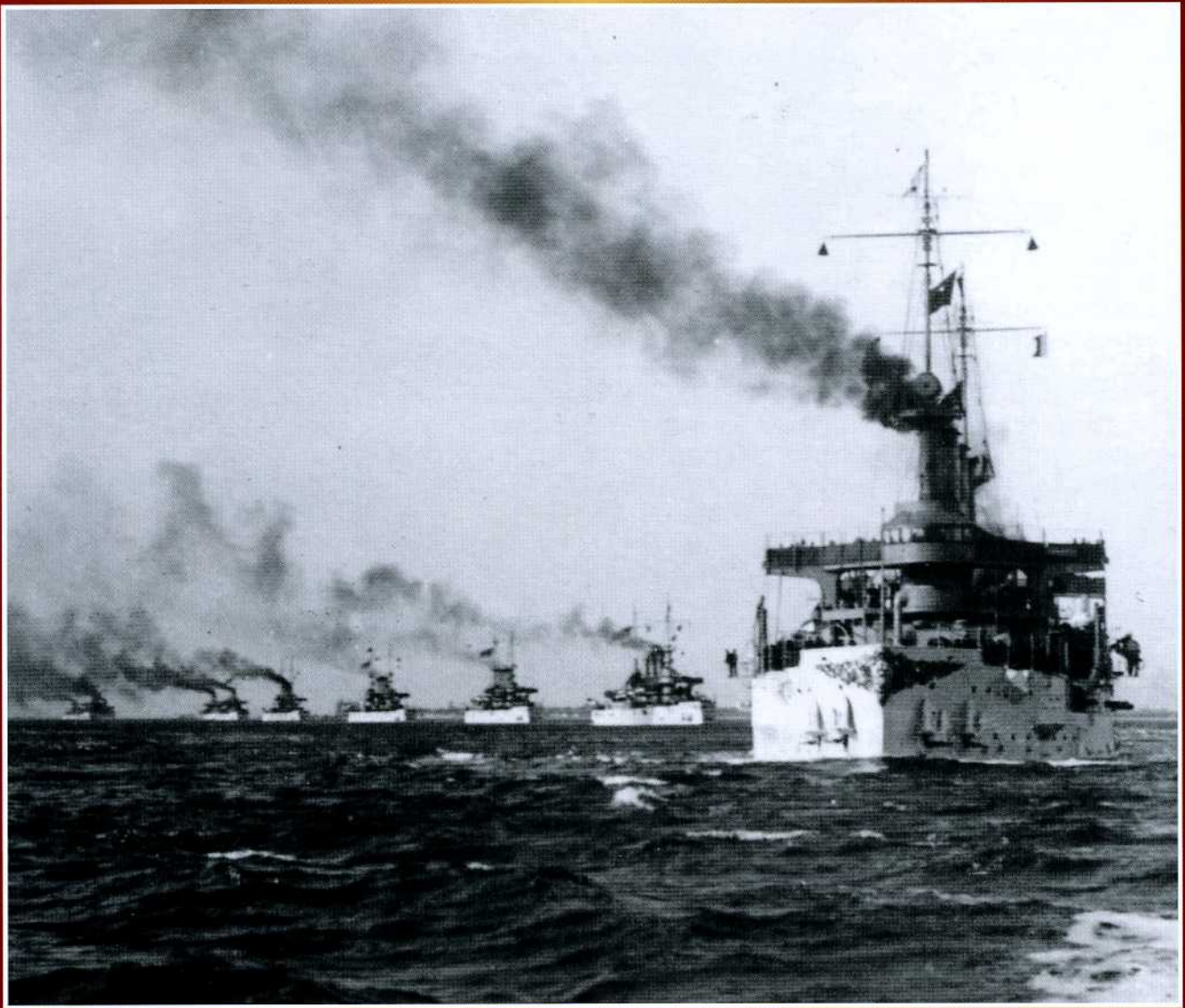


PULL TOGETHER

Newsletter of the Naval Historical Foundation



December 2007 marks the centennial of the departure of the Great White Fleet. *See article inside on p. 3.*

Navy Museum News Focus on Education! See p. 9

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Farewell from the 11th Director of Naval History

As the Director of Naval History, I've been on the job for 30 months and thoroughly enjoyed "rejoining the Navy." Much has happened during my tenure at this final duty station. For openers, we consolidated the 12 major U.S. Navy museums under the Naval Historical Center and created a Director of Naval Museums with an administrative staff. This action effectively doubled the center's resources to 165 employees and a \$21 million budget.

Accommodating over 2 million visitors per year, our museums seek to tell the Navy story to America's youth with extensive outreach programs to local schools. In this edition of Pull Together, you will see examples of the types of programs we make available to students at our flagship museum here at the Washington Navy Yard.

Of course, with the construction of the Cold War Gallery, we will have even more opportunities to supplement school curricula with a series of interactive exhibits that teach not only history but also the science and technology behind the history. Again, I am grateful to Admiral Holloway and the Naval Historical Foundation who are working hard to obtain the needed funding so that we can transition to the installation phase. To those of you who recently contributed to the Foundation's year-end appeal or at other times during the year, let me assure you that your donations are appreciated and are being wisely spent.

In addition to telling our story to the public with museum exhibits, we completed several books for publications as well as monographs and documentation for key historical events. Our Early History Branch created a Great White Fleet Exhibit that is now on display in Newport, Rhode Island. Besides Dr. Winkler's facing article, you will be hearing much more about the round-the-world cruise over the next 14 months.

Disseminating our history through exhibits and publications is just part of our mission. Preservation is job #1. Though working in old buildings provides historical ambiance, it also can be a nuisance for our people and collections. Thus we improved the appearance and functionality of our old and deteriorating buildings. We also commenced digitizing and archiving our valuable one-of-a-kind CINCPACFLT microfilm collection as well as digitizing a significant portion of our Vietnam documents. In addition, with the help of the Naval Historical Foundation, we were able to digitize hundreds of oral history tapes.

One of the reasons we were able to gain the support of Navy leadership and others for these projects is that we have leaders and friends who have taken the time to call on us. I have enjoyed conducting many behind-the-scenes tours for a wide range of guests including the Secretary of the Navy, the Chief of Naval Operations, the Navy Inspector General, the Chief Operating Officer of the Smithsonian, and CEOs and presidents of major corporations and universities.

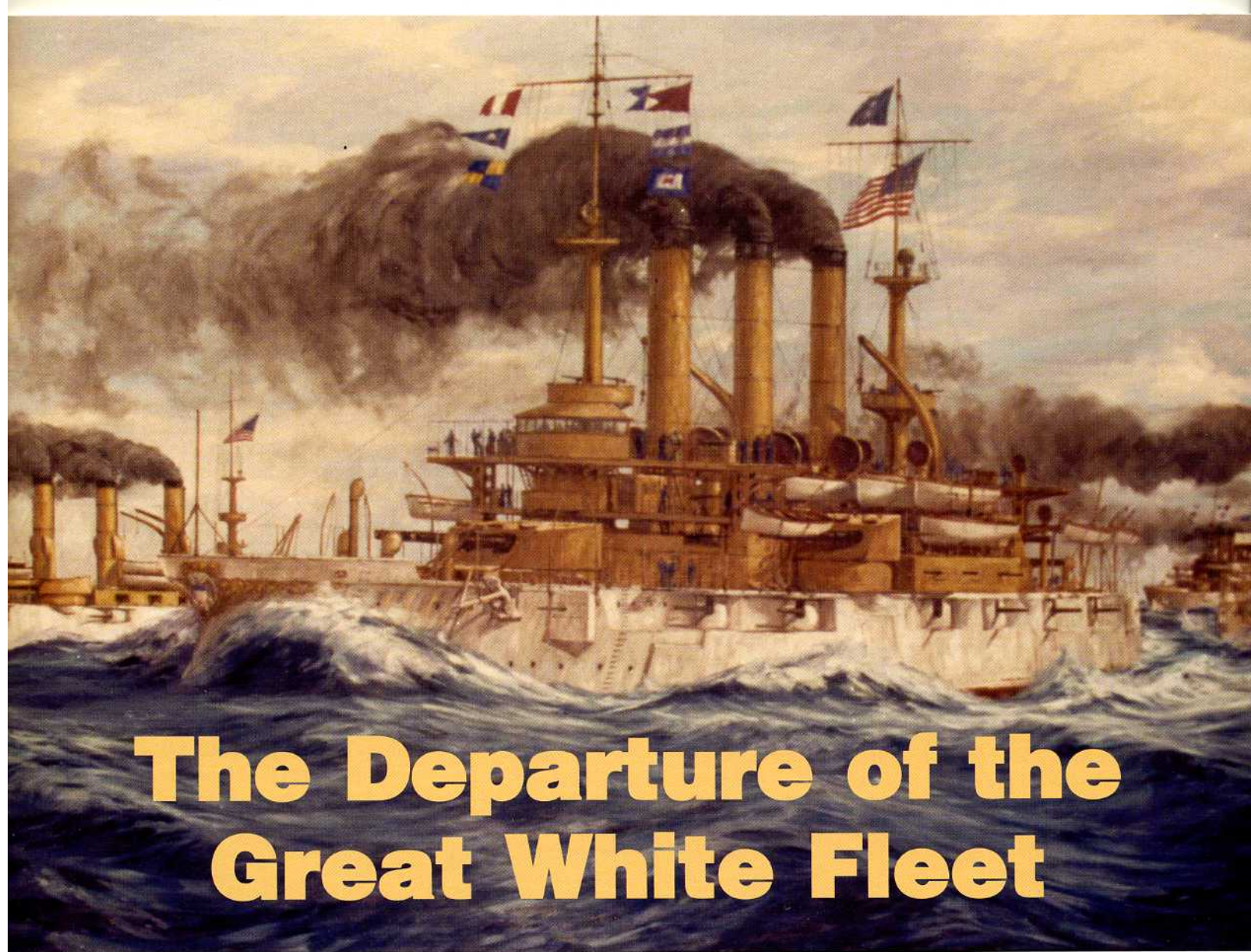
Another aspect of this job that brought me pleasure was speaking throughout the country to Navy special interest groups including the Navy League, the U.S. Naval Academy Alumni Association, several ship reunion groups, and the International Midway Memorial Foundation with activities in Hawaii and Midway Island.

But finally, what made this job so much fun was working with the dedicated civil servants and active duty personal at the Naval Historical Center, the equally dedicated staff led by Admiral Holloway at the Naval Historical Foundation, and all of you who took the time to visit the center and helped us preserve and promote our great naval heritage.

I cannot imagine a better way to finish my long association with the Navy than to have worked here at the Naval Historical Center. It has been an education and a great pleasure to be a part of this wonderful team. I will certainly maintain my interest in and support of naval history and hope you do, too.



Rear Admiral Paul E. Tobin
U.S. Navy (Ret.)



The Departure of the Great White Fleet

By David F. Winkler

NAVIES TYPICALLY attain their glory in combat. Thus the cruise of the Great White Fleet stands out as the U.S. Navy enhanced the reputation of a rising world power without firing a shot in anger. No nation, before or since, has endeavored to maneuver the bulk of its naval firepower on such a grand global scale. For perspective, it would be as if President Bush decided to deploy all of the Navy's aircraft carriers on a 14-month world sojourn.

Why did President Theodore Roosevelt dispatch the Navy on such an epic deployment?

Historians have debated this question for decades because the former president gave a different explanation to the public than he

did to private confidants. In his autobiography, Roosevelt claimed his primary motivation was to stimulate additional interest in the Navy. Historian Lori Bogle noted the cruise would demonstrate to the Japanese that the U.S. Navy could maneuver its fleet in the Pacific Ocean and "arrive battle ready." In addition, Roosevelt was attempting to gain public support as he was lobbying Congress to authorize funds for four more battleships. Though Roosevelt's motivations are often debated, what is less discussed is the confluence of circumstances that enabled the president to order such an action.

First and foremost: To deploy a battle fleet, the United States needed to have a battle fleet.

Though Theodore Roosevelt is cited as being a great proponent of sea power, the truth is that most of the ships of the Great White Fleet can attribute their origins to the presidency of William McKinley. The following provides some historical background for the fleet (note that the Navy did not use the "BB" hull designations until 17 July 1920).

The classic surface warfare trivia question is to name the only American battleship that was not named for a state. The answer is *Kearsarge*. The two battleships of the *Kearsarge* class [*Kearsarge* (No. 5), *Kentucky* (No. 6)] were commissioned during the McKinley administration. The three battleships of the *Illinois* class [*Illinois* (No. 7), *Alabama* (No. 8), and *Wisconsin*

