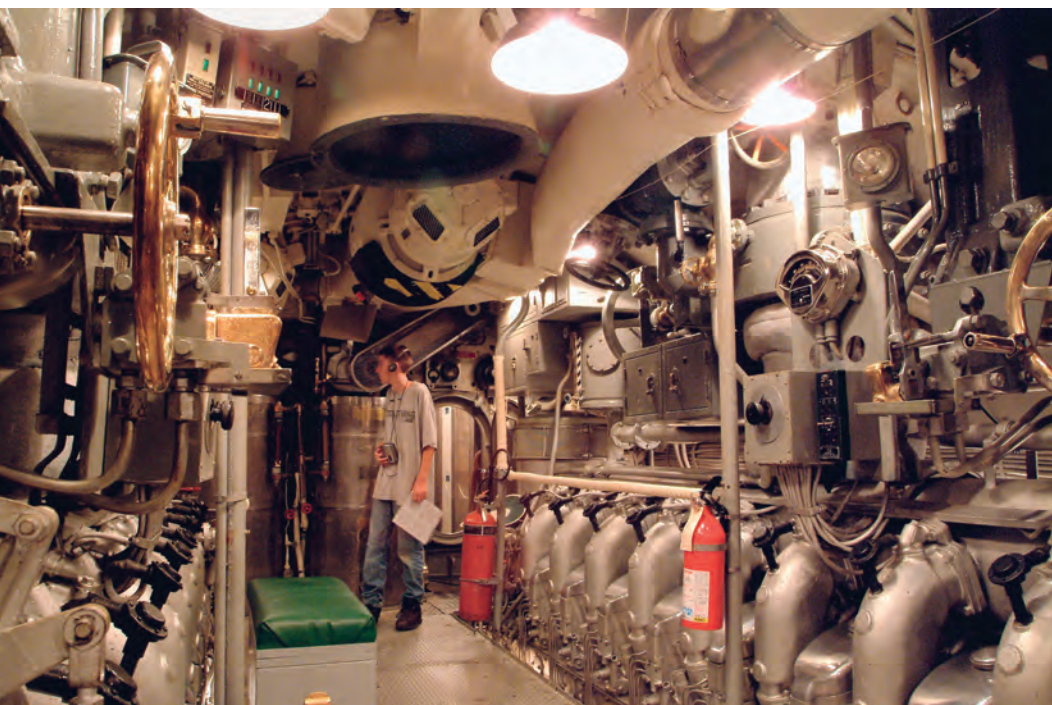


sank in 9 minutes, and only 337 were able to escape. In all, over 2,400 people were killed during the sneak attack here, a figure that would stand as an unwelcome record for six decades. It seemed like the kind of event that could only happen in the distant past, until today's generation experienced their own sneak attack. And like September 11th, America rode a roller coaster of emotion after Pearl Harbor—from shock to anger to resolve. For Pearl Harbor it took an empire's entire military might—a whole fleet of ships and subs, including six aircraft carriers, 353 planes and thousands of soldiers. September 11th required four planes and 19 men with boxcutters. But, whatever the source, it awakened a nation that had previously felt safe and insulated from the harshness of the world.

*For only \$10 you'll get to see the USS Bowfin submarine the way her crew saw her—without the two-year stint.*

Visiting the memorial is one of those must-dos on O'ahu, and for good reason. Since there are so few WWII vets left, it makes WWII real for the rest of us. *We* know how WWII ended because we've lived our lives *after* the attack. But those men still entombed under your feet at the memorial only knew the shock and awe of how they died. And it's not until you're standing on the memorial, perched over the sunken ship, that the echo of their lives can be heard. And when you see the massive marble wall with their names engraved, only then does the beginning of WWII turn from an event that happened as part of our history to an assault that stole the lives of people like you and me and galvanized a nation.

The memorial visit includes an excellent 23-minute film, a short boat ride and time at the memorial. It'll take 75 minutes *plus*



whatever time you wait. And that wait could be anywhere from 1–3 hours, sometimes more. You can't get your free ticket in advance (and the Arizona museum and bookstore aren't enough to keep you occupied for *that* long), but you can grab your tickets and leave for a while. See one of the other attractions mentioned below, or go have lunch. To minimize your wait, either get there first thing in the morning (7:15–8 a.m.) or around 1–2 p.m. If it's Wed., Sat. or Sun. and you're facing a wait, there's a swap meet (no food, though) at the nearby Aloha Stadium until 3 p.m. (or earlier).

The **USS Missouri Battleship** (877–644–4896) is a short distance away from the sunken Arizona. When the Navy was looking for the final resting place for this proud warship, the symbolism of this location wasn't lost on them: placing the floating ship that ended WWII next to the sunken ship where the war began. Because it was on the Missouri's deck that the Japanese signed the surrender agreement, bringing the bloody fighting in the Pacific to a close.

The "Mighty Mo" was launched in 1944, near the end of the war. It was the last battleship ever built, and after only 11 years in service it was considered obsolete and mothballed in 1955. It seems hard to imagine how a state-of-the-art battleship—the toughest and most visually menacing ship ever built with guns that could fire a 2,700-pound projectile *23 miles*—could be considered obsolete. In essence it comes down to this: It's more effective to *drop* things on the enemy than to *throw* things at 'em. Once ship-based aircraft had matured, aircraft carriers were far more efficient at projecting power than the greatest battleship could ever be. Even though the ship was brought back to service in the mid-'80s

for a short time and armed with Tomahawk missiles, the usefulness of battleships had long since passed, even for a giant that's 887 feet long and weighs over *100 million* pounds.

It costs \$16 to self-tour, \$8 for kids 4–12. Or you can take guided tours, which are much more interesting. They have several. We liked the \$45 Explorer's Tour (90 minutes) since it went into the firing rooms, engine room and other nuts and bolts areas that self-tours can't visit. Ironically, at least half the ship is off limits, even to guided trips. The reason? It's dirty. And although conditions were good enough for sailors who were there on the ship's final tour, it's not clean enough for the EPA to sign off. They also have a \$25 tour using their iPod Touch that tells stories and shows videos as you walk the ship.

However you tour it, it's a real treat to peer into this symbol of America's might during the mid-20th century. The sheer scale of this vessel can only be appreciated in person. It's amazing to stand on its giant teak deck, under the massive guns capable of such destruction, and try to imagine the dread that must have been felt by any enemy that watched this warship coming at them in anger.

Just in front of the entrance to the Missouri is the **USS Oklahoma Memorial**. In all, 429 officers, sailors and marines were lost on the Oklahoma, second only to the Arizona. The men were recovered, the hull was patched and the ship was sold as scrap to a company in San Francisco. As it was being towed across the Pacific, a storm caused her to sink again, this time forever, just 540 miles east of Hawai'i.

The almost forgotten attraction here is the **USS Bowfin** (423–1341). Launched in 1942 (and nicknamed the Pearl Har-