

Small Yard, Big Story: Wartime Production at Brunswick Marine

Due to the city's deep natural harbor, it is no surprise that there is a long legacy of shipbuilding in Brunswick. The Brunswick Marine Construction Corporation was a local shipbuilding and repair facility that supplied ships for both World Wars, operating through the mid-twentieth century.

It was, in fact, Brunswick Marine rather than the better known J.A. Jones Construction Company that won the U.S. Maritime Commission contract in 1942 to establish a Liberty shipyard in Glynn County. Brunswick Marine carved the six ways and massive lot for workshops out of the marsh along the Brunswick River. The Liberty shipyard would be officially handed over to the Jones Company in 1943, but Brunswick Marine continued to operate their old yard, known as the Small Yard, on Bay Street throughout the war.

Brunswick Marine built 16 war vessels during World War II: nine tankers for the Navy, three



Army supply ships, and four tugs. Although nowhere near the volume of production at the Jones Yard, the company still swelled from 100 employees pre-war to nearly 700 employees at peak production.

Adolph P. Jensen was one of the employees recruited to work at Brunswick Marine. Of Scandinavian descent, Jensen was born in Hoboken, New Jersey, and was working in Brooklyn, New York, when he received a letter recruiting him to Brunswick in 1942. As shipbuilding ramped up in the South, there was a huge need for experienced shipfitters, and Jensen came with the recommendation of the Superintendent of Brunswick Marine's Hull Department.

The Coastal Georgia Historical Society recently received a collection of Jensen's family records, with information about his life and time working for Brunswick Marine. The collection includes the letter that offered Jensen the job in Brunswick for an annual salary of \$5,400.

Due to Jensen's position as construction superintendent, his wife was asked to sponsor, or christen, a ship. Included in the collection are items related to Mrs. Lucille Jensen's role in launching *USS YO-193*, a type of tanker known as a "yard oiler," on July 29, 1945.



The image shown (top) is of Mrs. Jensen (right) with Mrs. Julius Anderson, the co-sponsor and "matron of honor," whose husband was the master shipwright at Brunswick Marine. Also shown (above) is the tanker as it slips into the water after being christened.