

AMERICAN  
MERCHANT MARINE  
VETERANS  
NEWS MAGAZINE



Gasparilla Pirate Festival



Downtown Tampa skyline



Convention Challenge Coin



## *A Cold Day in Canton - 1964*

Back in the mid-19th Century, “China Clippers” from Baltimore carried on a brisk trade with the Chinese port of Canton. Most of these ships sailed from a section of Baltimore’s waterfront which became known as Canton. Over the years, Canton was always a busy center of Baltimore’s maritime commerce. In the 1950’s and 60’s United States Lines leased Canton’s Pier 11 and their large fleet of general cargo ships called in Baltimore regularly. The painting depicts U.S. Lines’ brand-new Challenger Class cargo liner *American Chieftain* being docked “stern-in” by two Baker-Whitely tugboats, *America* and *Columbia*. Fifty years ago, when winters tended to be colder, ice was frequently a problem for ship movements in the harbor. A third Baker-Whitely tug, *Britannia*, is made fast to the pier, running her engine to push the ice away from between the pier and approaching ship. Without this assistance the ship could not get alongside.

The eleven ships of the Challenger Class, designed for the North Atlantic trade, began entering service in 1962. They were at the time the world’s fastest cargo ships, capable of 24 knots. United States Lines, all its general cargo ships long since replaced by containerships, ceased operations in 1986.

Baker-Whitely was a Baltimore-based tugboat company which began service in 1878. After more than 100 years of operation the company was sold to McAllister Towing in 1980.

*Original acrylic by Capt. Brian Hope – Association of Maryland Pilots*

About the artist: After graduating from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point) in 1965, Brian Hope sailed on U.S. cargo ships in support of the Vietnam War. He began as a Chesapeake Bay pilot (Association of Maryland Pilots) in 1970, retiring over four decades later in 2013. Capt. Hope is also a founding member of Project Liberty Ship. In addition to a lifetime of maritime artwork, he is the author of *Bay Pilot, Volume 1*, a coffee table book detailing the history of the Chesapeake Bay Pilots. *Bay Pilot, Volume 2* is expected to be published in 2019.



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**Constitution & By-laws** ..... **vacant**

**Special Projects &**

**Veterans Outreach** ..... **Sheila M. Sova** *Member-at-Large*

**Membership** ..... **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*

**Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*

**Lynn Kelly** *Member-at-Large*

**Internet &**

**Social Media** ..... **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*

### 2019 National Convention Committee

**Convention Chairman** .... **Capt. Dru DiMattia** *SW Florida Chapter*

**Registration Head** ..... **Kimberly King** *SW Florida Chapter*

**Committee Member** ..... **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*

**Committee Member** ..... **Lynn Kelly** *Member-at-Large*

**Commemorative**

**Magazine Sales** ..... **Sheila Sova** *Member-at-Large*

**Commemorative**

**Magazine Design** ..... **Susan Alexander** *Member-at-Large*



# National President Capt. Chris Edyvean



## ***AMMV National Officers Election***

We now have candidates "on the ballot" for the upcoming National Officers election, which covers the service period of July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2021. John Pitts (current National Treasurer) has announced his bid to be our next President.

John has been a Merchant

Mariner for many decades, and those who know him are familiar with his work in heading the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Committee in San Pedro. In my opinion, John is the most qualified person to take the helm of AMMV. He has my full support.

Also throwing their names in the hat are Dennis Kelly (husband of our National Office Administrator, Lynn) for the position of National Treasurer, and Capt. Dru DiMattia for the position of Executive Vice President. Both candidates are well established in the maritime field, and together with John would provide a solid team to advance AMMV into the future.

We have Stanley Blumenthal as a candidate for National Secretary, a position he has held in the past. Stan served as a radio officer in WWII. It is notable to mention that he returned to sea in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom aboard the *M/V Cape Texas*. As with the above candidates, Stan also has my endorsement.

As a reminder, elected officer positions of AMMV are non-paid. If you have any communications with these candidates, I encourage you to thank them for their willingness to serve this great organization.

## ***Status of legislation***

I have no words to explain the lack of attention to pending WWII Merchant Marine legislation. Both versions of the Congressional Gold Medal Act - H.R. 5879 & S. 2127 - had shown progress (218 and 30 co-sponsors respectively as we head into press), but momentum was lost as the mid-term elections approached. Furthermore, there has been almost no action following the mid-terms, and with what little time remains in the 115<sup>th</sup> Congress, the outlook is grim.

Meanwhile, H.R. 154: The Honoring our Merchant Mariners of WWII Act of 2017, which would provide

eligible veterans a lump payment of \$25,000, had flat-lined quite some time ago. It sits with just 53 co-sponsors, only two being new since June.

I would like to personally thank our members, especially our key volunteers (they know who they are), who worked tirelessly at pushing these bills: I wholeheartedly commend your dedicated efforts! I'm sure that our WWII veterans are very appreciative of our collective work on their behalf.

## ***Tampa convention planning in full swing***

On the bright side, we have a wonderful convention ahead! Convention Chairman Capt. Dru DiMattia (SW Florida Chapter) is busy each day fine-tuning the details of this upcoming event. Confirmed guest speakers include WWII Merchant Marine veteran & motivational speaker Dave Yoho; maritime journalist/entrepreneur Capt. John Konrad (founder of gCaptain); and maritime historian Salvatore Mercogliano.

Please note that our interactive day aboard the *American Victory* is still taking shape, and that we are planning a special convention mailing once all details are solidified. However, I encourage all to not delay in making hotel reservations as we have a limited room block at the negotiated rate. Also, please consider advertising or placing a tribute page in our Commemorative Magazine, which helps offset overall convention costs. I hope to see you in Tampa!

Wishing a Happy New Year to our members, friends, and supporters.

Capt. Christopher Edyvean  
AMMV National President



# National Treasurer John Pitts



As an active U.S. Merchant Mariner about to retire from that career, I am proud and privileged to be associated with fellow Mariners and, more importantly to me, in the company of those who have served their country honorably and bravely as U.S. Merchant Mariners. Of particular note are those who served during

WWII. While little is known publicly, and even less taught in our education system, about the loss, hardship and sacrifice made by the majority of those WWII Merchant Marine Veterans, I have come to learn the overall and personal history of the U.S. Merchant Marine of this era. By being associated with these unassuming heroes, my life has changed. I have come to understand the unquestioned commitment to service to our Country and each other.

At the last AMMV convention in St. Louis, I had the good fortune of acquainting myself with a very special WWII U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran, Harry "Hap" Bledsoe, and his incredible wife Cynthia. Cynthia informed me that Hap would be celebrating his 95<sup>th</sup> birthday in Las Vegas and said he would be glad if I could attend. Living in the Los Angeles area, I figured the drive would be worth wishing Hap a happy 95<sup>th</sup> Birthday. I debated the 4 hour drive, each way, and after some consideration & encouragement, I decided to go. The drive from LA to Las Vegas actually took 6 hours due to traffic and congestion, while the return that evening was only 4 ½ hours. It proved to be a long day with more than 10 hours on the road on a Saturday, but very well worth the time and travel.

Looking back at how things developed, I am very glad that I attended and got to spend some time with Hap to celebrate his birthday. As a result, Hap's wife Cynthia also invited my girlfriend and me to attend another celebration of Hap's birthday in San Diego, which we were very happy to attend. While enjoying these times getting to know who Hap was as a person instead of as an AMMV member, I realized there was so much more to this man than I had realized. I wondered how many other untold stories of his shipmates and fellow combatants were being missed by those of us so eager to listen. Hearing the story of his life and experiences provided an opportunity to know Hap as the person he had become due to those experiences. Serving in the U.S. Merchant Marine during WWII was a very

important and developmental part of his growing process; it was a part of his education which contributed greatly to the successful life of which he was so proud.

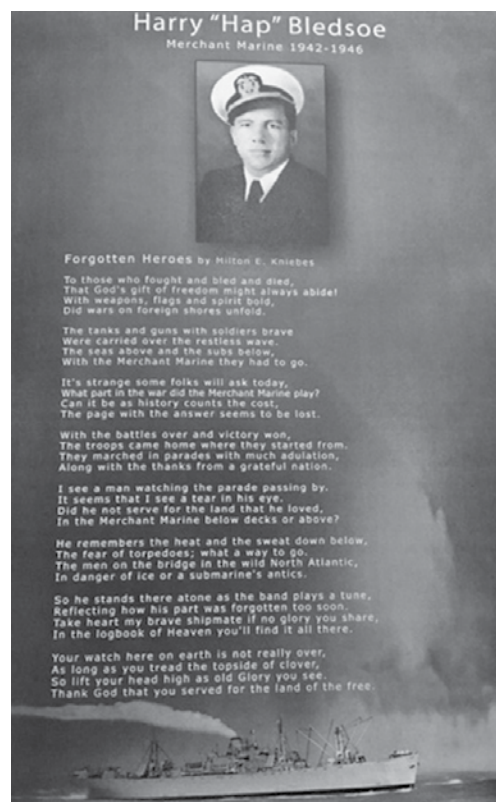
I have sailed with many U.S. Merchant Mariners who served during WWII. I've met more while volunteering as President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial in San Pedro, California, and have been acquainted with and educated about more heroic feats by this amazing group of mariners while serving with the AMMV especially at the conventions.

As these members of the greatest generation, like Hap Bledsoe, cross the final bar, and join their Brothers in Arms, we who remain benefit from their service. We are grateful for the legacy they leave us. Hap was fortunate that he lived a long, successful, happy life. His deeds and acts deserve to be celebrated rather than mourned. He and his generation will be missed but remembered fondly for what they gave us.

Our role is to carry on and inform the current and future generations of their deeds and actions; lest they forget how we came to enjoy the wonderful benefits and freedoms that can be so easily taken for granted.

Fair Winds and Following Seas.

Fraternally,  
John Pitts





# National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



As of this writing, any former members who have not renewed their membership for July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2019 have been dropped from our mailing list and will no longer receive the NEWS Magazine nor be entitled to a vote for the 2019 Annual Convention in Tampa in March, 2019. Although our By-Laws stipulate that a member is

dropped after three months of lapsed membership, which is September 30, we are instead using December first as our cut-off date. We don't wish to eliminate anyone, as we value all of our members. However, as you all know it costs money to operate AMMV and \$25,000 annually to produce the quarterly News Magazine. The AMMV organization cannot be supported by just three-quarters of the members.

For our Winter issue I have asked Sheila Sova to contribute to this column. Sheila is a valuable AMMV volunteer and runs her own popular Facebook page about the WW II Merchant Marine. On Twitter she is AMMV's voice in the public forum. In today's communication arena it is important to have someone like Sheila to promote the organization's goals with enthusiasm and a clear knowledge of the history of the Merchant Mariners. So, I introduce to you Sheila Sova, "guest columnist".

## **Sheila M. Sova writes:**

After becoming a volunteer in 2015, Captain Edyvean asked me to create a Twitter page for the AMMV. I did not realize the impact that the Twitter-verse world would have on the AMMV. In just three years, the social media page has grown to 5,100 followers and still growing.

An early follower to the AMMV Twitter page was Brian Herbert, son of "Dunes" series author Frank Herbert. Brian, who is known to most of our WWII Veterans as the author of "The Forgotten Heroes." Brian testified by phone on behalf of the USMM at the hearing conducted by the Veterans Affairs Committee, using the research done for his father's book.

Another great find was our returning favorite, David Alberg of NOAA, as well as the British attaché Commodore Martin J. Connell, who flew in from D.C. to attend our 2018 St. Louis convention. We even met a 96 year

old WWII USMM using Twitter to sell his "just published" WWII diary. He became a member of the AMMV after we "tweeted" to him, as do many followers who decide to join after seeing our tweets on membership.

The AMMV Twitter boasts followers from all walks of life including many historians, writers such as Sal Mercogliano, author of "Fourth Arm of Defense," ports of call, museums, liberty ships and victory ships, gCaptain founder John Konrad, maritime academies, modern day mariners and even several cast members of cable maritime TV shows, "Deadliest Catch" & "Wicked Tuna."

However, some of the best tweets come from the proud descendants of USMM WWII Veterans. One particular follower is Michael Callis, grandson of Captain Coleman Hodges of the book "The Mathews Men" by William Geroux. Some of his pictures include the sextant used by Captain Hodges from his collection and a myriad of photos from Callis that were not featured in the book.

What's in store for 2019 from our followers? A group is awaiting funding for a film called "At All Costs" (based on the book by Sam Moses) "a 5-part mini-series based on the true story of Malta and how two Merchant Mariners helped turn the tide of WWII." Another follower, John MacRitchie, just wrote a screenplay called "Murmansk Run" detailing the event of PQ-17 as told to him by his grandfather. This film has made it to the quarter-finals in the 2018 ScreenCraft Drama Competition. We will be watching and waiting for these films in 2019!

**The AMMV Twitter name is @AMMWWII**



If it had not been for the US Merchant Marine--carrying tanks, bombs, munitions & other war materials INTO DANGEROUS WAR ZONES--the heroes whose names we know could not have performed so well on the battlefield. Yet, after the war, the USMM was ignored. A travesty of justice.



11:37 AM - 11 Nov 2018



# NEWS Magazine Editor Sindy Raymond



As Editor of the AMMV NEWS Magazine, I am sometimes inspired by submittals to pack my suitcase and take off into the outside world. The article later in this issue about a WWII visit to the Sphinx in Egypt is one example, especially when there was frost here last night and the idea of hot, desert sands may have contributed to my

yearning to travel.

Of course, too, writing about our sojourn to Tampa, Florida next March for the 33<sup>rd</sup> National AMMV Convention triggered a desire to attend Gasparilla festivities – except of course I don't particularly like large crowds. However, that said, I probably won't ever get to Egypt or attend the shindig in Tampa, but one can always dream.

We are going to see you in Tampa at the national convention next March, aren't we? I sure hope so! Further information is printed later in the edition. Maybe the planned dinner cruise will satisfy my yearning for a Gasparilla "experience" I wonder?

## ***A historically busy last quarter of 2018:***

This issue of the NEWS has been generated a month or so early to follow the convention notice deadline mandated by AMMV By-Laws. However, that doesn't mean that historically this quarter hasn't had more than its fair share of events: the bombing of Pearl Harbor; the rescue of Korean refugees by Captain LaRue and the SS *Meredith Victory*; the "birthday" of the Statue of Liberty; the sinking of the SS *Athenia*, the first ship sunk in WWII; special Christmas salutations from WWII and more. Yes, you can read about most of these occasions in this issue.

## ***Looking forward:***

At the National convention in Tampa next March, there will be an election of National officers. We are going to have a brand-new slate in two of the positions, a reinstatement of a prior officer and a shuffling of positions as John Pitts transfers from National Treasurer to National President.

We are looking forward to the new "regime" as of the start of next fiscal year, July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2019.

Our current National President, Capt. Chris, has done

an exemplary job for AMMV in the last four years and I, for one, am very grateful for his youthful and dedicated service. He has certainly been a major contributor to shifting AMMV into full speed ahead. Thank you, Chris.

However, that said, he definitely feels the need for a respite and certainly joins us in welcoming John Pitts into the Presidential fold.

## ***Next quarter – beginning January 1, 2019:***

I have been asked recently how I can stay so determined and enthusiastic about our WWII Veterans' legislation appeals. There's an easy answer to that one. I ardently feel that these men, who served their country so valiantly under dire circumstances, were not treated fairly for many years after World War II. These men all have sometimes chilling stories about their service in the U.S. Maritime Service and should have been awarded the same benefits as other services during the War. In other words, I think they were sc..... and deserve equitable honors.

So, I am ardently appealing to our AMMV members to **not give up the ship**. With a new national Congressional session starting January 1, 2019, we will need to have our legislation re-submitted into Congress and renew our efforts to achieve success, finally. Hopefully this can be done earlier in the 2-year session and the results will be positive before it's too late.

I, personally, sincerely request and hope that every one of our members will do the utmost to help with these renewed efforts however and wherever you can; PLEASE step up to the plate and assist us.

Season's greetings to everyone and remember, my door is always open.

Full speed ahead,

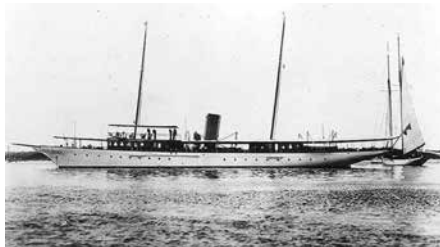
SINDY

# MANY NAMES – DIVERSE SERVICE – NOW A “GHOST” SHIP

A ship that lived many lives under many names is now known merely as the “Ghost Ship.”

About 20 miles or so down river from Cincinnati, in Petersburg, KY, sits what’s known as the “Ghost Ship”. Though there aren’t actually any ghost stories connected to it that that we’ve heard of, this rusted relic does have a lot of history behind it.

## *The Celt*



Built in 1902 and intended as a 186’ opulent steam-powered yacht for railroad mogul J. Rogers Maxwell, she was originally named the *Celt*.

## *USS Sachem*

When World War 1 began in 1914, the Navy started renting private boats that might be able to spot and outrun enemy submarines.

In July, 1917, the Navy got ahold of the *Celt*, renaming it the *USS Sachem*, and used her as a coastal patrol yacht. They loaded her up with depth charges and machine guns, and put her to work to defend us against enemy submarines. They also decided to use her for research and experiments into new ways to defend against submarines, and they enlisted none other than Thomas Edison to conduct those experiments.

Edison did his work aboard the *USS Sachem*, mostly around the New York Harbor, until the war ended in 1918, when he found the military stifling and his funding also ended. The *Sachem* was returned to her actual owner, Mantion B. Metcalf, in February of 1919. She was later sold to a banker named Roland L. Taylor, and then to Jacob Martin of Brooklyn, New York in 1932, who converted her into a fishing boat.

## *USS Phenakite*

She was reacquired by the Navy in February of 1942 for \$65,000 and converted for naval service. Featuring new, shiny armaments, sonar equipment and commissioned as *USS Phenakite* in July of 1942, she was again used to guard the home front. Her job this time was to patrol the waters off the Florida Keys during World War II. She was decommissioned to undergo modifications and placed back in service in November of 1944. She was used for testing sonar systems until she was put out of service in October of 1945, and transferred to the Maritime Commission for disposal in November of 1945.

After serving in two wars, she sailed away with an American Campaign Medal and two Victory Medals, one from each world war.

## *USS Sachem*

The vessel was returned to her previous owner, and renamed the *Sachem* in December of 1945.

## *The Sightseer*



It was later resold, this time to become the flagship of the new Circle Line Sightseeing Cruises in New York City, where she was again renamed, as the *Sightseer*.

## *Circle Line V*



And later, she was again renamed, this time to the *Circle Line V*.

In the early 1980s, the boat was cut from the fail-

ing Circle line Fleet and left at an abandoned pier in New Jersey, where she sat until 1986. That same year, though, she attended Ronald Reagan’s relighting of the Statue of Liberty torch.

In 1986, Cincinnati resident Robert Miller bought the *Circle Line V* for \$7,500. Miller said it took him ten days to repair the boat and get her seaworthy again. One day while working on the ship, a representative of Madonna showed up, and asked him if they could use it in a video. You can see her briefly in Madonna’s video for “Papa Don’t Preach”.



Eventually, Miller decided to bring the boat back to some land he owned in Petersburg, Kentucky. He and his crew sailed her from New York City, through the Great Lakes, down the Mississippi River and onto the Ohio River. About 20 miles west of Cincinnati, they turned the boat down a creek into a small tributary of the Ohio on his property, and there is where the story ends...she has sat there ever since.

# NATIONAL OFFICE CANDIDATES

For terms starting July 1, 2019 and ending June 30, 2021 as mandated by the AMMV By-Laws Section 202, for consideration at the AMMV National Convention – March 20-24, 2019 in Tampa, FL.

## NATIONAL PRESIDENT:



**John Pitts** - *Member-at-Large and former member of China Coasters Chapter*

John has been associated with the U.S. Merchant Marine as an active mariner since 1972. Employment with Atlantic Richfield Company and Polar Tankers, Inc. has provided for International and Coastwise voyages. Having held several seagoing ratings, he is currently rated as Boatswain.

In addition to seagoing employment, John has also held several representative offices in the Atlantic Maritime Employees Union of which he is presently serving as Chairman.

As a member of the Board of Directors of the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Committee, Inc., he oversees the maintenance, improvement and administration of the Memorial dedicated to and by U.S. Merchant Mariners, located in San Pedro, California. He has volunteered and served as board member, Treasurer and is currently President of the Committee.

John's career associated with the U.S. Merchant Marine is approaching its 47<sup>th</sup> year. He is employed at this time with Polar Tankers, Inc.

Currently serving as National Treasurer of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc., John is a candidate for the office of President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc. in the upcoming election.

Thank you for your service and sacrifice.

Fair Winds and Following Seas to all!

## NATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT:



**Anthony "Dru" DiMattia** - *Southwest Florida Chapter*

Master Mariner (ret) MEBA. Graduated from Maine Maritime Academy 1988.

Master, USMM retired; 30 yrs sailing. Sailed Operation Iraqi Freedom and Enduring Freedom; 2002-2010 Chief Officer on the USNS Mendonca, USNS Pililaau; Master on the USNS Gysgt Fred W. Stockham and USNS Yano. Sailed both Chief Officer and Master with Maersk Lines Limited on the Alliance Saint Louis. Sailed Chief Officer on the LNG Aquarius for Pronav, formerly Energy Transportation Corporation.

My involvement with AMMV started, about 8 years ago in Cape Coral, Florida. At that time, I learned that the AMMV formed locally back in 1984 and started the Southwest Florida Chapter. Shortly thereafter, the AMMV National founding fathers and growing membership, pushed for recognition for the Merchant Mariner sacrifices of WWII, gaining Veteran Status in 1988!

Currently, there are numerous battles requiring our constant support. H.R. 5879 and S. 2127 both requiring additional co-sponsorship and passing during this 115<sup>th</sup> Congress. Advocacy of current U.S. Flag issues: Jones Act, MSP, Cargo Preference, Title XI Ship building program, and H.R.1240 ; These battles are endless due to the continuous education and support of our "U.S. Maritime friendly" law makers.

Also, Chairman Merchant Marine Memorial design and construction committee; Cape Coral, FL. honoring our WWII Merchant Marine Veterans and Naval Armed Guard and Chairman of the 33<sup>rd</sup> National AMMV convention in Tampa, FL.

My desire to run for the AMMV National Vice President is for supporting our AMMV Team, fighting for recognition of our AMMV WWII Veterans, and maintaining the advocacy for our current state of U.S. Maritime industry. "In Peace and War"

## NATIONAL SECRETARY:



### Stanley Blumenthal - *Gulfstream Chapter*

I have Atlantic and Mediterranean zone medals and combat bars and a DD-214 making me an official veteran of WWII.

While working ashore for 34 years, I had a bout with the U.S. Supreme Court on having my FCC license returned as a past Communist Party member. See case – Blumenthal et al v. Federal Communications Commission and United States of America, - U.S. App. D.C. -, -, F.2d -. On June 3, 1968 the Supreme Court declined to review the appeals court decision, three justices dissenting. Note: 4 are required to consider cases.

Afterwards, I heard there was a shortage of radio operators and I wrote a letter to the Coast Guard if they would return my License and not only did they do so but they granted me Interim Security Clearance and I did a lot of shipping afterwards.

I also got a certificate as Radio Officer on the SS *Cape Texas* participating in Operation Enduring Freedom and Iraqi Freedom. I have Middle East War zone medals for that service. I also ran for U.S. Congress in 2010 and 2012 basically objecting to the practice of outsourcing factories instead of goods.

If elected I would consider it an honor to serve as your next National Secretary starting at age 94.

## NATIONAL TREASURER:



### Dennis Kelly - *Member-at-Large*

Originally from Wantagh, NY on the South Shore of Long Island, I attended the United States Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point. While a Midshipman there doing my sea year I sailed on various C2/C3/C4 freighters operated by US Lines, American Export-Isbrandtsen Lines and Farrell Lines. I completed my sea year with Hess Oil Co., sailing coastwise on the Hess Voyager.

I graduated cum laude as a deck officer with a BS in Marine Transportation/Nautical Science, a commission as an Ensign in the Naval Reserves and US Coast Guard License as a Third Mate (unlimited tonnage/radar observer).

A week after graduation I flew out to Los Angeles and joined the SS American Trader, a jumboized T2 built in 1943 owned by American Trading Transportation Company. The ship was on charter to the Military Sealift Command and for the next two years we were charged with delivering jet fuel during the Vietnam War to various US bases in southeast Asia (Sattahip Thailand, Subic Bay in the Philippines, Cam Ranh Bay and Da Nang, South Vietnam}.

In June of 1973 I came ashore to get married and joined Global Bulk Transport (parent company of States Marine Lines) as an Assistant Operations Manager. Over the next 43 years I worked ashore for various shipping companies culminating in my retirement in 2016 as Chartering Manager for Pioneer Navigation – a deep sea bulk shipping company.

I currently live in CT along with my lovely and forgiving wife of 45 years. We travel a few times a year to visit friends and see our grown children who live in Denver and Portland, OR. We still do a couple of ski trips a year and hope to continue skiing as long as the knees still bend.

We have a wonderful circle of friends whom we know from our Kings Point days. Many are still working but many have retired from careers in the US Government, Merchant Marine, Coast Guard and the Navy. We still get together for our anniversary reunions at Kings Point every five years and our KP mini-reunions held annually throughout the United States.

# ***U.S. Merchant Marine WWII Veterans given opportunity to be recognized during New York Yankees or New York Mets 2019 Season!***

*Submitted by volunteer Sheila Sova*

Recently one of our AMMV volunteers was contacted by Tony Ntellas, a volunteer for Combat Wounded Veterans of America. Mr. Ntellas was looking for a WWII U.S. Merchant Mariner for their "Veteran of the Game" programs. Tony is in charge of getting the veterans on the field for recognition during the baseball games. This will be for the 2019 baseball season and all entries will be considered. If selected, you will be contacted early spring.

**Now is your chance to help get some recognition for the WWII U.S. Merchant Marine.** You do not need to be a member of the AMMV to do this. Keep in mind, this is not an AMMV event, so this effort will have to be done by you or a family member. Sheila Sova is the contact person for this and will be available to help answer questions, send you the forms via email or have them mailed to you or assist with the forms. Email at shesova@aol.com or call 618-659-3401.



The Yankees, during the 7th inning stretch and the Mets during the 3rd inning, the honoree will be introduced over the public address system and shown on the video board in center field.

In addition, photos that you provide of your military service, and highlights of your military bio will be announced over the P.A. system and on the video scoreboard. Your picture will be displayed on the video scoreboard in center field and the announcer will read your military biography. Honorees will be asked to attend in military uniform if possible or CWVA attire (hat or polo) or even a military ball cap (e.g. noting veteran's military era).

The pictures should be good quality images of at least 800x800 resolution (or higher) taken during your time in the military. Images of you in uniform during a deployment are preferred.

Any active duty member or veteran of any age or era who served in the military and was discharged honorably is eligible to be invited as the Yankees *Veteran of the Game*.

You are **not eligible** for this honor if you previously have been recognized as the Yankees *Veteran of the game* or Mets *Veteran of the Game*. However, you may attend as a guest of another honoree if you have previously been honored.

In order to be considered for this opportunity, please send at least **four (4) photos** in JPEG (.jpg) format via email along with your military biography and the information requested below to:

**Tony Ntellas, CWVA Volunteer** via email at: [tnrellas@combatwoundedveteransofamerica.org](mailto:tnrellas@combatwoundedveteransofamerica.org) and by phone at: 917-676-7454.

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## ***Letter from Tony Ntellas:***

Dear Veterans,

Please provide all requested bio info in requested format and at least 1 photo of the veteran in military uniform preferably a photo by themselves. The names will be placed in the 2019 NY Yankees/NY Mets "Veteran of the Game" program and you will be contacted by the Combat Wounded Veterans of America organization early in 2019.

Combat Wounded Veterans of America (CWVA) is fortunate to once again be working with the New York Yankees/New York Mets for the "Welcome Back Veterans" "Veteran of the Game" program. The Yankees and Mets would like to honor you and/or a family member that served (or is currently serving) in the United States Military. As part of this opportunity, the honoree will receive a total of **four complimentary V.I.P. Seats**.

# Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

DUKE ADAMS III	DAVIDSONVILLE	MD	PAULA PAPAMARCOS	BARRINGTON	IL
JOHN Y. ALLISON	HAMPTON	VA	GEORG PEDERSEN	SEATTLE	WA
RICHARD ARNOLD	FAIRFIELD	CA	CAPT JOHN PETERLIN III	GALVESTON	TX
THOMAS BALL	KINGMAN	AZ	PATRICK RAMEY	GOOSE CREEK	SC
BLAIR BARNHART	FLEMINGTON	PA	CARL M. REED	LAS VEGAS	NV
BRIAN R. BEGLEY	SOUTHWORTH	WA	THRON RIGGS	WARRENTON	OR
CAPT JEROME BENYO	SAFETY HARBOR	FL	CAPT JAMES J. ROBINSON	MANITOWISH WATERS	WI
BOB BUNSEY	HURON	OH	PAUL ROONEY	JUPITER	FL
CAPT JOHN CAFFREY	MOHEGAN LAKE	NY	NORMAN F. SCHOENSTEIN	GREENBRAE	CA
CAPT GENE M. CAMERON	SUN CITY	FL	RICHARD F. SEIGEL	KAPAA	HI
JEFFREY COOK	NAPLES	FL	DAVID E. SERGENT	JACKSONVILLE	OR
GARY CORDES	PALM BEACH	FL	CURTIS SMITH	LUCEDALE	MS
CAPT RICHARD FINOCCHIO	MARBLEHEAD	MA	DOUGLAS H. SUBCLEFF	EDMONDS	WA
MATTHEW GERFIN	PORTERDALE	GA	THOMAS H. TANKERSLEY	JEFFERSON	MD
RONALD HAMSKI	SHOREHAM	NY	SAMUEL TILLES	MIAMI LAKES	FL
CAPT STEVE HUVANE	FAIRFAX	VA	ANDREW N. TRINDAFILOU	STAMFORD	CT
ALEXANDER KEPCHAR	ESSEX	VT	CAPT. GEORGE WAER	CHINOOK	WA
LYNN KORWATCH	ALAMO	CA	JOE WARFIELD	SANTA FE	TX
DANIEL H. MAC ELREVEY	CAPE MAY	NJ	HAROLD WELLINGTON	BREVARD	NC
JOSEPH P. MACO	MADISON	CT	PAUL WILLIS	WEST GRANBY	CT
ROD MC FADDEN	BURKE	VA	PATRICK M. WRIGHT	NEWPORT NEWS	VA

## IT'S NOT EVERY DAY THAT YOU'RE 100!

*Submitted by Christian Yuhas, National Vice President*

Recently, Frank Mendez and I – both AMMV Golden Gate chapter members - attended the 100<sup>TH</sup> BIRTHDAY celebration for another Golden Gate member,

**Ed Jacobson.**

Ed has had quite a life and seems to have enjoyed most of his 100 years. As a young man he worked in shipyards building bulkheads. He played 2nd base for the San Francisco Seals baseball team in 1938-1939 and attended Joe



DiMaggio's 50th Birthday party. He worked on gasoline tankers during WWII and his duties as an AB included loading ammo into the big guns on deck. He



had 3 holes-in-one during his life while playing golf. After WWII, he opened a cigar store in New York - he never smoked, yet was always known for carrying a lit pipe to encourage business. His biggest money-maker at the cigar shop was *Playboy Magazine*.

Many happy returns of the day, Ed!

# THE TRAGIC SAGA OF THE *SS BADGER STATE*

*Editor's note: Salvatore Mercogliano, author of the book "Fourth Line of Defense; Sealift and Maritime Logistics in the Vietnam War", includes this information about Merchant Mariners participation in the Vietnam conflict. He will be a featured speaker at the AMMV National Convention in Tampa, FL next March. This excerpt of his book is reprinted with his permission.*

## TRANSPORTATION OF AMMUNITION:

For Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) ships and Merchant Mariners the transportation of ammunition across the Pacific Ocean could be a dangerous endeavor. The States Marine Lines C-2 freighter *SS Badger State* sailed from Bangor, Washington, bound for Vietnam in mid-December 1969. Soon after

departure, the ship's steering system began leaking hydraulic fluid, compromising the operation of the rudder. Heavy weather in the North Pacific rocked the ship, causing her to roll repeatedly more than 50 degrees. Rough seas often buffeted the MSTS ships making the transit to Vietnam, but *Badger State's* case was especially worrisome since she carried 6,109 tons of bombs in her holds. Author William R. Benedetto, in his history of this event, noted, "in the annals of maritime history.... no other ship has ever been held hostage by a cargo of bombs."



The Navy depot in the states had loaded the ammunition during a rainstorm that soaked the wood used to secure the cargo (dunnage), and prevent one bomb from banging into another. Two days out to sea, the crew discovered bombs breaking loose and knocking about the holds. The mariners were not comforted when they remembered advice published in the May, 1968 issue of *Sealift*, the official publication of MSTS: Ordnance experts and others

knowledgeable about such matters as unarmed bombs, will be quick to reassure the laymen that there is little to fear from a bomb or projectile as long as there is no detonator attached. But, despite all the evidence that it is virtually impossible to explode one, that an unarmed 1,000-pound bomb is about as lethal as 1,000 pounds of cabbage, it is nevertheless nerve-racking to be riding a ship with even one

such bomb adrift in a cargo hold.

Concerned, Captain Charles T. Wilson altered course and headed the ship toward a safe haven in the roadstead at



Midway Atoll and requested an escort in case he and his crew had to abandon ship. Making matters worse, *Badger State* encountered a severe storm on Christmas Day. The next morning the crew peered into the ship's holds and made a terrifying discovery; several dozen 750-pound bombs were rolling free and causing sparks as metal hit metal. At 0940, an explosion blew off hatch number 5 and opened an 8-by-12 foot hole in the starboard

hull. Soon other bombs broke loose, starting a fire that threatened to ignite another hazardous cargo: 10,640 barrels of fuel oil. The captain ordered abandon ship.

Crewmen lowered a lifeboat and as they worked to prepare it for operation, the boat drifted aft down the starboard side. Suddenly, bombs started to spill out of the hole in the hull and rain down on the boat. Some men leapt into the sea while others remained on board.

Paul G. Kinney, in "The Fate of the *Badger State*," which was published in the October, 1981 issue of the U.S. Naval Institute *Proceedings*, described the scene as it unfolded: A 2,000-pound bomb slid out nose first very quickly and, narrowly missing the boat, fell into the water. When the ship rolled back to port, a second bomb, having gained momentum in the starboard roll, came out of the hole in the manner of a ski jumper. This bomb hit one crewman in the head driving him out of the boat. The bomb then landed squarely in the laps of four other crewmen. As the bomb landed in the boat, then about one-third full of water, someone yelled, "Let's get the hell out of here." In one continuous motion of the bomb landing in the boat and the remaining crewmen rushing to the outboard side, the boat capsized.

Those men who made it out of the boat entered frigid 56-degree water lashed by heavy winds. Fortunately for the survivors, the Greek freighter *MV Khian Star* had arrived on the scene and her boats came to their rescue. In the end, however, only 14 of the 40-member crew survived. Considered a hazard in navigation, gunfire from a Coast Guard ship later sank the crewless *Badger State*.

A Coast Guard investigation blamed the catastrophe on faulty loading materials and procedures; the tendency of the ship to "snap roll" which put great stress on the bomb restraints; routing of the ship through the rough waters of the North Pacific; and, not least, the severity of the storm.

Even as *Badger State* and her crew suffered their fate, MSTs had taken steps to improve the handling and transportation of ordinance. That same December, the Concord Weapon Station in California loaded SS *Azalea City* with ammunition, but in this instance, the cargo was secured in 226 specially designed and reinforced 35-foot containers. This method of moving ammunition minimized cargo handling, reduced costs, and speeded up the loading process



– it took only one day to load *Azalea City*.

The sacrifice of *Badger State*'s merchant mariners in support of the war effort did not go unnoticed. Just after noon on 31 August 1970, the President posthumously awarded Boatswain Richard D. Hughes of *Badger State*


the American Merchant Marine Seamanship Trophy, which was presented to Mrs. Richard D. Hughes and her daughter at the Oval Office. The citation read that Hughes had displayed "distinguished seamanship under great stress... during the fire and explosion which cost him his life."

Twenty-six men lost their lives in the disaster.

Those interested in further exploration of this book "Fourth Arm of Defense" can find it available at website: <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/publications/publications-by-subject/Fourth-Arm-of-Defense.html>; purchase it through the [www.history.navy.mil](https://www.history.navy.mil) website or perhaps buy one from the author, Salvatore Mercogliano, at the AMMV national convention in Tampa.

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# Christmas At Sea

The sheets were frozen hard, and they cut the naked hand;  
The decks were like a slide, where a seamen scarce could stand;  
The wind was a nor'wester, blowing squally off the sea;  
And cliffs and spouting breakers were the only things a-lee.

They heard the surf a-roaring before the break of day;  
But 'twas only with the peep of light we saw how ill we lay.  
We tumbled every hand on deck instanter, with a shout,  
And we gave her the maintops'l, and stood by to go about.

All day we tacked and tacked between the South Head and the North;  
All day we hauled the frozen sheets, and got no further forth;  
All day as cold as charity, in bitter pain and dread,  
For very life and nature we tacked from head to head.

We gave the South a wider berth, for there the tide-race roared;  
But every tack we made we brought the North Head close aboard:  
So's we saw the cliffs and houses, and the breakers running high,  
And the coastguard in his garden, with his glass against his eye.

The frost was on the village roofs as white as ocean foam;  
The good red fires were burning bright in every 'long-shore home;  
The windows sparkled clear, and the chimneys volleyed out;  
And I vow we sniffed the victuals as the vessel went about.

The bells upon the church were rung with a mighty jovial cheer;  
For it's just that I should tell you how (of all days in the year)  
This day of our adversity was blessed Christmas morn,  
And the house above the coastguard's was the house where I was born.

O well I saw the pleasant room, the pleasant faces there,  
My mother's silver spectacles, my father's silver hair;  
And well I saw the firelight, like a flight of homely elves,  
Go dancing round the china-plates that stand upon the shelves.

And well I knew the talk they had, the talk that was of me,  
Of the shadow on the household and the son that went to sea;  
And O the wicked fool I seemed, in every kind of way,  
To be here and hauling frozen ropes on blessed Christmas Day.

They lit the high sea-light, and the dark began to fall.  
"All hands to loose topgallant sails," I heard the captain call.  
"By the Lord, she'll never stand it," our first mate Jackson, cried.  
... "It's the one way or the other, Mr. Jackson," he replied.

She staggered to her bearings, but the sails were new and good,  
And the ship smelt up to windward just as though she understood.  
As the winter's day was ending, in the entry of the night,  
We cleared the weary headland, and passed below the light.

And they heaved a mighty breath, every soul on board but me,  
As they saw her nose again pointing handsome out to sea;  
But all that I could think of, in the darkness and the cold,  
Was just that I was leaving home and my folks were growing old.

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

# AMMV

## Profit & Loss

### July through November 2018

<b>Ordinary Income/Expense</b>	
<b>Income</b>	
402 · CONTRIBUTIONS	4,354.76
403 · INTEREST INCOME	25.18
405 · MISSION SUPPORT FUND	2,369.00
407 · RECRUITMENT MAIL INCOME	747.00
409 · MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	0.00
410 · CHAPTER DUES	
BSM · BIG SKY MARINERS	140.00
AKG · ALASKA GREATLANDS	64.00
BEE · BEEHIVE MARINERS	100.00
CEC · CENTRAL CALIFORNIA	150.00
DAR · DENNIS ROLAND	1,464.00
EOH · EDWIN O'HARA	421.00
GLD · GOLDEN GATE	1,250.00
GUL · GULFSTREAM	425.00
HIR · HIGH ROLLERS	550.00
JTS · JOHN T. SCHMIDT/PALMETTO	450.00
LON · LONE STAR	275.00
MAL · MEMBERS AT LARGE	18,687.00
MALW · MEMBER-AT-LARGE - WEBPAGE	731.06
NBM · NORTH BAY MARINERS	475.00
NOA · NORTH ATLANTIC	425.00
OCA · OCALA CHAPTER	32.00
OHV · OHIO VALLEY	350.00
ORV · OSWEGO RIVER VALLEY	146.00
PUG · PUGET SOUND	175.00
ROR · ROAD RUNNER	275.00
SAR · SARASOTA-MANATEE	425.00
THR · THREE RIVERS	575.00
<b>Total 410 · CHAPTER DUES</b>	<b>27,585.06</b>
411 · CONVENTION INCOME	
412 · CONVENTION - REGISTRATIONS	1,626.00
413 · COMM. BOOK ADS	600.00
414 · CONVENTION DONATIONS	11,068.00
<b>Total 411 · CONVENTION INCOME</b>	<b>13,294.00</b>
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>48,375.00</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
500 · FIXED EXPENSE	
501 · BANK CHARGE	89.50
507 · TELEPHONE	162.41
511 · SERVICE CHARGES - PAYPAL	33.16
<b>Total 500 · FIXED EXPENSE</b>	<b>285.07</b>
512 · MEMORIAL EXPENSE	149.88
514 · CONVENTION EXPENSES	
515 · CONVENTION EVENTS	1,000.00
518 · CON - CRUISE EXP.	1,501.00
<b>Total 514 · CONVENTION EXPENSES</b>	<b>2,501.00</b>
520 · MISSION ADVANCE	
525 · MISSION SUPPORT EXPENSE	2,367.53
<b>Total 520 · MISSION ADVANCE</b>	<b>2,367.53</b>
522 · RECRUITMENT & SPECIAL MAILING	1,215.48
526 · INTERNET INITIATIVE	166.00
528 · JCC STORAGE EXPENSE	594.00
530 · NEWS LETTER	
533 · POSTAGE	2,126.79
536 · PRINTING	7,274.40
538 · LAYOUT	2,600.00
539 · EDITORIAL FEE	600.00
<b>Total 530 · NEWS LETTER</b>	<b>12,601.19</b>

550 · PERSONNEL	
551 · ADMINISTRATOR	7,750.00
<b>Total 550 · PERSONNEL</b>	<b>7,750.00</b>
560 · OPERATING EXPENSES	
564 · OFFICE SUPPLIES	37.69
565 · POSTAGE - OFFICE	861.69
566 · PRINTING - OFFICE	74.69
<b>Total 560 · OPERATING EXPENSES</b>	<b>974.07</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>28,604.22</b>
<b>Net Ordinary Income</b>	<b>19,770.78</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>19,770.78</b>

### **NOTICE TO ALL CHAPTERS AND MEMBERS-AT-LARGE:**

*Chapter dues should be sent to your chapter and Member-at-Large dues in the amount of \$32.00 should be sent to National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly.*

*American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV)  
P.O. Box 2024  
Darien, CT 06820-2024*

*Dues for the fiscal year July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019 were due July 1st.*

# A WAR-TIME VISIT

AMMV member Clarke Langrall, a 94-year old WWII Merchant Mariner, recently submitted information about an excursion he made to see the Great Sphinx of Giza in Egypt in 1944. He has made a 12 minute You-tube film about the visit. It can be found at: <http://youtube/sbkZzMFzYg4>.

On November 19, 2018, he wrote to AMMV President Capt. Chris:

*In 1944, when visiting Egypt and the Sphinx, the amazing experience left an indelible memory. Periodically, over the many years, I would share, with friends, highlights of the interior design of that historical figure.*

*Only recently did I learn that the informed Egyptologists had no knowledge regarding the interior of the Sphinx. Thus I set upon a mission to inform those who might care to know what my personal experience can contribute.*

*Since the beginning of that effort, initiated in mid-August, 2018, there are four highly esteemed archeologists who are now aware of my factual descriptions and some are motivated in further research and study.*

## **Clarke's visit:**

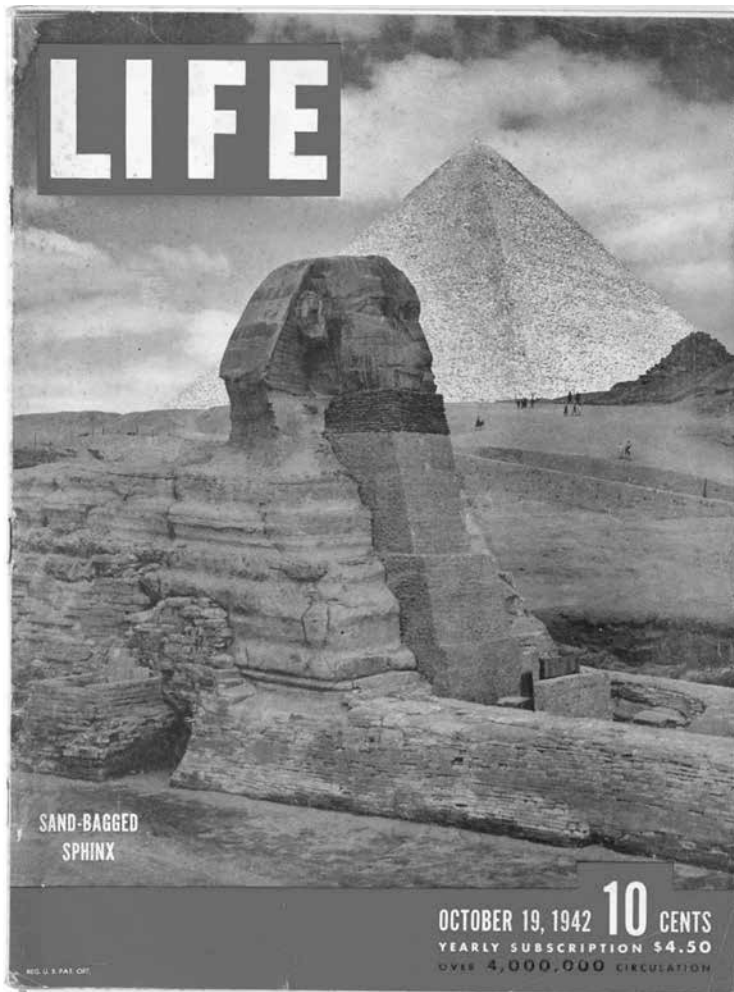
Clarke was on a Liberty ship in 1944 that was unloading a cargo of TNT in Port Tewfik, Egypt. He had a few days ashore and he and a couple of buddies thought a visit to the Sphinx in Giza might be interesting. So they ventured across miles of dry, hot desert to see it.

A local "self-credentialed" guide led Clarke and his friends through a labyrinth of granite panels between the legs to a narrow opening in the chest of the Sphinx.

The interior, which would otherwise be a cavernous space, was dominated by a massive block of stone. The guide instructed the group to stay positioned on one long side of the stone while leaving to visit the opposite side. In the darkness, the guide, holding a candle up close to the wall, caused an illumination to appear throughout the entire

thickness of the stone. They learned that the stone was a precisely hewn solid block of alabaster.

The excursion, in 1944, was an unforgettable one for Clarke. Others have described the experience of visiting it as a humbling sensation to stand between the creature's paws, each twice their height and longer than a city bus.



## ***The fascinating history of the Sphinx:***

The Sphinx is carved from limestone, which is a sedimentary rock composed mainly of skeletal fragments of marine organism such as coral forms. The statue is of a reclining Sphinx, a mythical creature with the body of a lion and the head of a human. Facing directly from West to East, it stands on the Giza Plateau on the west bank of the Nile in Giza, Egypt. The face of the Sphinx is generally believed to represent the Pharaoh Khafre.

Cut from the bedrock, the original shape of the Sphinx has been restored with layers of blocks. It measures 240 ft long from paw to tail, 66.31 ft high from the base to the top of the head and 62 ft wide at its rear haunches. It is the oldest known monumental sculpture in Egypt and is commonly believed to have been built by ancient Egyptians of the Old Kingdom during the reign of the Pharaoh Khafre (c. 2558–2532 BC).

The Sphinx is a monolith carved into the bedrock of the plateau, which also served as the quarry for the pyramids and other monuments in the area. The nummulitic limestone of the area consists of layers which offer differing resistance to erosion (mostly caused by wind and windblown sand), leading to the uneven degradation apparent in the Sphinx's body. The lowest part of the body, including the legs, is solid rock. The body of the lion up to its neck is fashioned from softer layers that have suffered considerable disintegration. The layer in

which the head was sculpted is much harder.

The Sphinx was not assembled piece by piece but was carved from a single mass of limestone exposed when workers dug a horseshoe-shaped quarry in the Giza plateau.

For thousands of years, sand buried the colossus up to its shoulders, creating a vast disembodied head atop the eastern edge of the Sahara. Then, in 1817, a Genoese adventurer, Capt. Giovanni Battista Caviglia, led 160 men in the first modern attempt to dig out the Sphinx. They could not hold back the sand, which poured into their excavation pits nearly as fast as they could dig it out.

The face, though better preserved than most of the statue, has been battered by centuries of weathering and vandalism. In 1402, an Arab historian reported that a Sufi zealot had disfigured it “to remedy some religious errors.” Yet there are clues to what the face looked like in its prime. Archaeological excavations in the early 19th century found pieces of its carved stone beard and a royal cobra emblem from its headdress. Residues of red pigment are still visible on the face, leading researchers to conclude that at some point, the Sphinx’s entire visage was painted red. Traces of blue and yellow paint elsewhere suggest that the Sphinx was once decked out in gaudy comic book colors. The Egyptian archaeologist Selim Hassan finally freed the statue from the sand in the late 1930s. “The Sphinx has thus emerged into the landscape out of shadows of what seemed to be an impenetrable oblivion,” the *New York Times* declared at the time.

### Why was it built?

There are many different opinions about why Pharaoh Khafre commissioned the Sphinx. Egyptologists have surmised over the years that Khafre’s architects arranged for solar events, like the March or September equinoxes, to link the close-by pyramid dedicated to him, the Sphinx and a temple. These may have been the complex as a cosmic engine, intended to harness the power of the sun and other gods to resurrect the soul of the pharaoh. This transformation not only guaranteed eternal life for the dead ruler but also sustained the universal natural order, including the passing of the seasons, the annual flooding of the Nile and the daily lives of the people. In this sacred cycle of death and revival, the Sphinx may have stood for many

things: as an image of Khafre the dead king, as the sun god incarnated in the living ruler and as guardian of the underworld and the Giza tombs.

It seems Khafre’s vision was never fully realized, though. There are signs the Sphinx was unfinished. In



1978, in a corner of the statue’s quarry, Egyptologists found three stone blocks, abandoned as laborers were dragging them to build the Sphinx Temple. The north edge of the ditch surrounding the Sphinx contains

segments of bedrock that are only partially quarried. Here the archaeologists also found the remnants of a workman’s lunch and tool kit—fragments of a beer or water jar and stone hammers. Apparently, the workers walked off the job.

### History questions and legends:

There are many more historical questions and legends related to the Sphinx. One story has it:

*According to the legend engraved on a pink granite slab between the Sphinx’s paws, the Egyptian prince Thutmose went hunting in the desert, grew tired and lay down in the shade of the Sphinx. In a dream, the statue, calling itself Horemakhet—or Horus-in-the-Horizon, the earliest known Egyptian name for the statue—addressed him. It complained about its ruined body and the encroaching sand. Horemakhet then offered Thutmose the throne in exchange for help.*

*Whether or not the prince actually had this dream is unknown. But when he became Pharaoh Thutmose IV, he helped introduce a Sphinx-worshipping cult to the New Kingdom (1550-1070 B.C.). Across Egypt, sphinxes appeared everywhere in sculptures, reliefs and paintings, often depicted as a potent symbol of royalty and the sacred power of the sun.*

### Clarke’s visit in 1944:

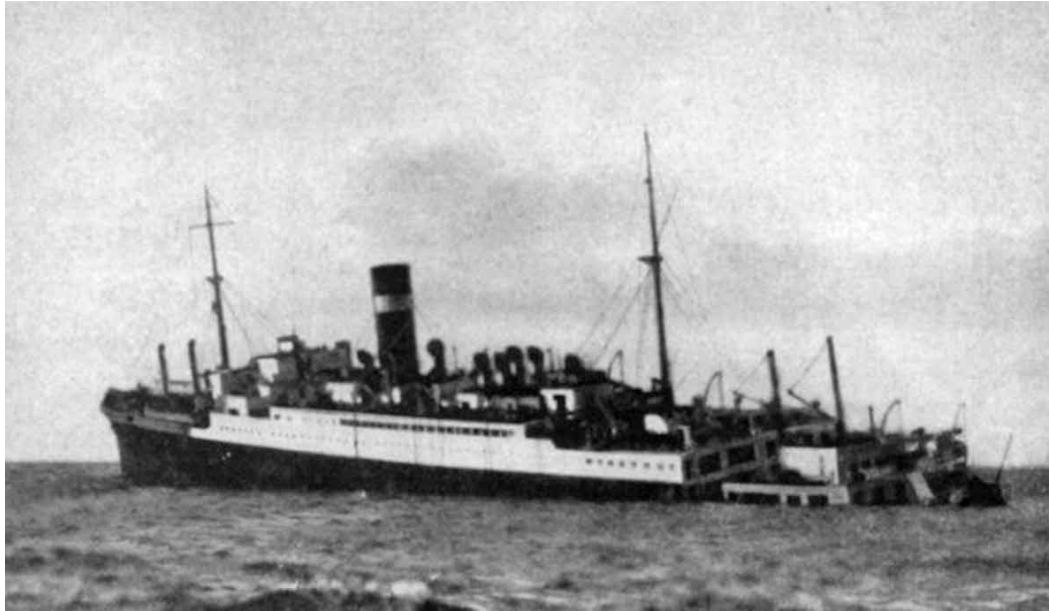
Since Clarke’s visit was not too much later than the 1939 evacuation of the body of the Sphinx, it must have been a fascinating and unforgettable experience to those young Merchant Mariners.

You are sure to enjoy the Clarke Langrall experience on the link given at the beginning of this article and are welcome to share with others.

Thank you, Clarke, for sharing this experience on You-tube and with us.



# FIRST SHIP SUNK IN WORLD WAR II – A “MISTAKE”



On September 3, 1939, a little more than eight hours after England and Germany declared war on each other, the British passenger ship SS *Athenia* was west of Ireland, en route to Canada, when she was torpedoed by German U-boat U-30. She carried over 1,400 passengers and crew when she left Glasgow, Scotland on September 1<sup>st</sup>.

When she later weighed anchor that same day from Belfast, Ireland en route to Liverpool, publicity rumblings about the possibility of war caused dock-workers to scream at the passengers on the deck that they were cowards, for running away from a war, instead of staying to stand and fight with the rest of them. As yet, no formal declaration of war existed between Britain and Germany. The *Athenia* sails off into a peaceful Irish Sea.

Under advisement that a state of war is soon likely to exist between Britain and Germany, the ship's master, Capt. James Cook, who had sailed during WWI, ordered a blackout onboard to protect against possible U-boat attacks. All the curtains were drawn. All the portholes were shut; the navigation-lights, mast-lights, port and starboard navigation-lamps and wheelhouse lights were all shut off. Passengers were not even allowed to smoke on deck, in case the glows of their cigarettes should give away the ship's presence.

On the ship, the war seems far away and distant. But the crew was already taking precautions. Apart from the blackout, the lifeboats were uncovered and other actions

were taken. The ship sailed up the western Irish coast. It stayed close to land to deter submarines, which can only maneuver effectively in deeper waters.

The *Athenia* ran without lights as fast as she could and the Captain had ordered a zigzag pattern for deterrence of possible U-boat attack.

## ***The Rules:***

Before sailing all German U boats had been issued strict orders to operate within the Prize Rules, international laws governing the conduct of war at sea. This was known as the Hague convention. Merchant ships were to be stopped and searched, if they were found to be carrying enemy cargo, they could be sunk. This was only after the crew had been seen safely into lifeboats.

On September 3rd at 1:15am, in the *Athenia*'s wireless-room, 2nd Radio Officer, Donald McRae, picked up a signal. It was a radio-broadcast from the tiny island of Valentia, off the west coast of Ireland. It was nothing less than Neville Chamberlain's famous speech that informed the entire world that "consequently, this country is at war with Germany".

The message was hardly unexpected. But it was a bit of a shock, anyway. McRae made sure that the entire ship knew the news before very many more minutes had elapsed.

The official declaration of war by Britain meant that

as of that time onwards, the *Athenia* is sailing through wartime waters. German submarines would be on the lookout for ships that were of importance to the British war-effort, and if they find them, they would sink them.

The Captain of the *Athenia* felt she was safe, however. As an unarmed passenger-ship without the facilities for being converted to an armed merchant-cruiser, troopship or munitions-transport, she was protected by international treaties. A ship such as the *Athenia*, which did not, and which was unable to contribute to the British war-effort, was an illegal target in marine warfare. This should have prevented her from being sunk by German submarines or battleships.

German U-boat U-30 had received the rules. However, upon sighting the ship, Oberleutnant Lemp, Commander of the U-30, decided then and there that she was an armed merchant cruiser and shadowed her, watching her zig-zig pattern and course and speed.

### **A “mistake”:**

Lemp appears to have been mistaken, thinking her an armed merchantman or a troop ship. In fact she was an ordinary passenger ship and 28 out of the 112 who died were United States citizens. Lemp realized his mistake and was horrified and guilt-ridden by what he did. Instead of torpedoing a prize of war, he had attacked and sunk an unarmed civilian passenger-ship, carrying women and children! He swore his crew to silence and secrecy. They would not speak of this to anyone, ever. Lemp felt so horrible about what he had done that he refused even to enter it into the logbook.

Meanwhile Nazi propaganda sought to make out that the British had themselves sunk the ship as part of a scheme to bring America into the war.

### **The truth revealed:**

The true story of what happened to the *Athenia* did not come out until 1946, during the famous Nuremberg trials. The following account of the attack on the *Athenia* was given by Adolf Schmidt to the Nuremberg War Crimes Tribunal. Schmidt was wounded in a subsequent action during the same patrol and put ashore in then neutral Iceland. He spent the rest of the war as an internee and then as a prisoner of war. His testimony:

*I, Adolf Schmidt, Official Number N 1043-33T, do solemnly declare that: I am now confined to Camp No. 133, Lethbridge, Alberta.*

*On the first day of war, 3rd September, 1939, a ship of approximately 10,000 tons was torpedoed in the late hours of the evening by the U-30. After the ship was torpedoed and we surfaced again, approximately half an hour after the explosion, the Commandant called me to the tower in order*

*to show me the torpedoed ship. I saw the ship with my very eyes, but I do not think that the ship could see our U-boat at that time on account of the position of the moon. Only a few members of the crew had an opportunity to go to the tower in order to see the torpedoed ship. Apart from myself, Oberleutnant Hinsch was in the tower when I saw the steamer after the attack.*

*I observed that the ship was listing. No warning shot was fired before the torpedo was launched. I myself observed much commotion on board the torpedoed ship. I believe that the ship had only one smoke stack. In the attack on this steamer one or two torpedoes were fired which did not explode, but I myself heard the explosion of the torpedo which hit the steamer. Oberleutnant Lemp waited until darkness before surfacing.*

*I was severely wounded by aircraft 14th September, 1939. Oberleutnant Lemp shortly before my disembarkation in Reykjavik, 19th September, 1939, visited me in the forenoon in the petty officers' quarters where I was lying severely wounded. Oberleutnant Lemp then had the petty officers' quarters cleared in order to be alone with me. Oberleutnant Lemp then showed me a declaration under oath according to which I had to bind myself to mention nothing concerning the incidents of 3rd September, 1939, on board the U-30. This declaration under oath had approximately the following wording: 'I, the undersigned, swear hereby that I shall keep secret all happenings of 3rd September, 1939, on board the U-30, from either foe or friend, and that I shall erase from my memory all happenings of this day.' I signed this declaration under oath, which was drawn up by the Commandant in his own handwriting, very illegibly with my left hand.*

*Later on in Iceland when I heard about the sinking of the Athenia, the idea came into my mind that the U-30 on the 3rd September, 1939, might have sunk the Athenia, especially since the Captain caused me to sign the above mentioned declaration.*

*Up to today I have never spoken to anyone concerning these events. Due to the termination of the war I consider myself freed from my oath.”*

### **The sinking of the *Athenia* precluded a peace settlement of tensions:**

The sinking of the *Athenia* destroyed any hopes that the Germans, or the British had, of finding a quick, peaceful and diplomatic end to what they hoped would be a false war. Instead, it horrified the British people and resolved them to despise the Germans. It shocked the Germans and dragged them into a war which they were still trying to get out of... with Britain, at least. The sinking of one ship had so polarized the European community that by 1940, the whole continent was at war.

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

## OUTRAGE AGAINST DOING SO LITTLE OR NOTHING

*Editor's note: This Letter to the Editor was sent to us by an anonymous member who was venting his frustration at the lack of support from politicians for the U. S. Merchant Marine over the years. He wrote: "With the passing of President Bush, I thought about service. This is all our WWII men have suffered and have had a long battle for these many years."*

### J'accuse

On January 13, 1898, Emil Zola, the French writer and novelist, wrote an open letter to the President of the French Republic and to people of France in the Paris newspaper L' Aurore. In the letter he addressed the false conviction and imprisonment of Alfred Dreyfus, a French Artillery Officer, of espionage. For expressing his personal view of the case, and his exposure of the corrupt nature of the French Army high command, Zola himself was castigated and convicted of libel.

Since the time of the publication of the editorial in 1898, the term *J'accuse* has been used as an expression to illustrate outrage against someone, or something powerful, for doing the wrong thing. Considering the continuing negative treatment the merchant seamen of WWII have endured since 1945 from all those that should recognize, promote and reward them, these groups should be accused of ignoring the devotion and sacrifice of men who went to sea in merchant ships and helped win the war. The public has a need to know what has gone wrong.

**J'accuse** those members of Congress who were formulating the GI Bill of Benefits in 1944 for not following through the wishes of President Roosevelt, who in 1944 expressed his intent that the men serving in the merchant marine be included in the veteran's benefit program.

**J'accuse** those members of Congress for their lack of understanding and application of PL 95-202 which recognized the women pilots of WWI as veterans, and provided for the recognition as veterans those civilian groups that had served in a military way. As a result, it took a federal trial and a federal court decision in the 1980s to recognize the merchant seamen of WWII as veterans.

**J'accuse** the Secretary of Air Force for permitting the Civilian/Military Service Review Board to repeatedly reject the petitions of merchant seamen of WWII to be recognized as veterans under PL 95-202 including those who were in training but did not get to sea until after August 15, 1945. The official end of WWII that covers all benefits of the war is December 31, 1946. It took an additional 10 years of legislative effort in Congress to have all WWII merchant seamen recognized as veterans under PL 95-202.

**J'accuse** those members of Congress who for many

years have refused to favorably consider legislation to provide a one- time compensation benefit to the ever dwindling number of merchant marine veterans of WWII indicating there were no funds, yet at the same time, officially start the beginning of the Vietnam conflict two years before the Bay of Tonkin start date to cover 15,000 American "advisers" in country. The Bureau of Budget stated this change of the start of the conflict, providing full GI Benefits to the advisers, would have no budget impact.

**J'accuse** those members of Congress ,while ignoring the petitions of merchant marine veterans of WWII for a one-time belated compensation benefit, included \$195,000,000 in S. 1, the Shovel Ready Bill of 2009, to provide \$15,000 to Filipino Scouts of WWII who were citizens, and \$10,000 to Filipino Scouts who were not citizens. To date, over \$235,000,000 has been paid.

**J'accuse** those members of Congress who awarded a Congressional Gold Medal for Filipino Scouts of WWII in 2016 but haven't awarded the U.S. Merchant Marine that honor yet.

**J'accuse** those departments and agencies of the government that are authorized to further the interests of merchant seamen yet take no active part in the legislative concerns of these WWII men, especially with legislation dealing with belated compensation and a Congressional Gold Medal.

**J'accuse** maritime related organizations for not taking a more active role in the legislative initiatives that would recognize and benefit the surviving members of the Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII.

**J'accuse** government sources that provide funds for preserving deeds and histories of the major services during the nation's conflicts and ignoring the military/economic miracle that was the story of building of the world's largest merchant fleet in WWII.

**J'accuse** most social media for ignoring the service of the merchant marine in WWII and for failure to identify members of Congress who sponsor or cosponsor supportive legislation yet make no effort to pass the legislation. It is difficult to believe that there are those in Congress who will not recognize and support the merchant seamen of WWII who helped win the war which made it possible for them to serve in freedom.

Someone wrote that never again will the world see such a fleet of merchant ships as in WWII. Also, never again will the world see such a group of men who sailed them.

Why has this part of our nation's history been so neglected?

*Eternal Father – hear us when we cry to thee.*

# Special Items From Our Readers

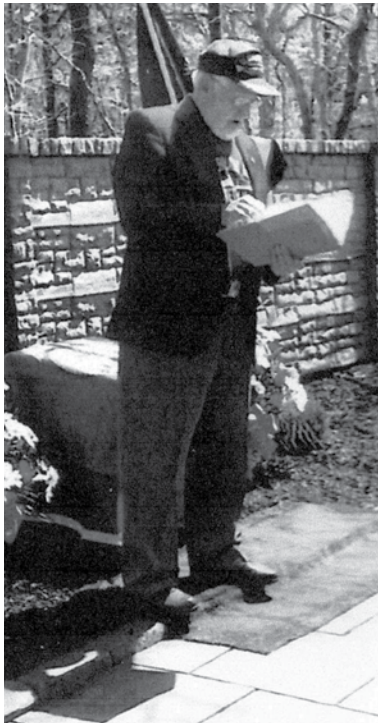
## A MEMORABLE MEMORIAL

Over the years, National recognition of efforts to honor Merchant Mariners publically has taken hard work and dedication. Many of these efforts have been the work of many people, including this memorial at Calverton National Cemetery in 2013.

It was a collaborative effort between AMMV North Atlantic chapter and now-dissolved Peconic Bay chapter to fund and build a monument to US Merchant Marines for installation at Calverton National Cemetery, Long Island, New York. Calverton resisted erecting it but Ben Balsamo (PEC) and Joe Bodner (NOA) persisted.

The chapters donated the money from their treasuries and individual members donated additional funds. The memorial was designed by Ben Balsamo (then VP of PEC) and dedicated at a ceremony on June 20, 2013.

The dedication ceremony was attended by: Peter Brady, Ernest Olsen, Salvatore Escaldi, Paul B. Mager, Nils Brekka, Robert Harrison, Paul Van Arts Dalen, Wilbur Anderson, Stephen Stadnicki, Joe Bodner, Evremonde J. Raynor. Others attending but not shown are John Siebold, and William Matthews. Ben Balsamo was not well enough that day to attend. Photos courtesy of Cindy Marciana-Germaine, current CEO & Sec./Treasurer of NOA.



*Paul Van Arts Dalen*



## A VETERAN'S DAY OBSERVATION

Scene: Phoenix, AZ, November 12, 2018. Thousands lined streets in Phoenix for the annual Veterans Day Parade on Monday in honor of those who served in the armed forces.

This year's parade theme is "Out of the Trenches, A Century of Remembrance," and commemorates the 100th year of the signing of the Armistice, which ended World War I. Since 2013, Honoring Arizona's Veterans has coordinated and promoted this large-scale special event. As in past years, the Parade Grand Marshals will include seven eras of Veterans: World War II, Korean War, Vietnam, Cold War, Desert Storm, Operation Enduring Freedom, and Operation Iraqi Freedom.

The parade embarked at 11 a.m. with high school marching bands, music, floats, giant balloons, American flags and a plethora of camouflage and red, white and blue apparel.

Many children ran round their parents' feet waving small American flags while others sat next to their veteran grandparents observing the festivities.

AMMV member and enthusiastic and dedicated volunteer, Laura Riddle and her family were in attendance to honor her late father. WWII MM Vet Norman Palmer was at the event and a band played "Heave Ho". Most of the family members in the pic are AMMV members.



# WWII Season's Greetings To Merchant Mariners

With the holidays upon us, let us pause and remember those long-ago World War II times. Christmas at sea, away from family, loved ones and friends, could be pretty lonely. In World War II, with danger lurking around every corner, it must have been particularly depressing. WWII U.S. Merchant Mariners were not necessarily forgotten during the struggle though.



**Christmas, 1943, President Franklin D. Roosevelt, broadcast this message to Merchant Mariners:**



**“A message from the President to the men of the American Merchant Marine** as we celebrate this Christmas we must all extend our greetings to the peoples of the United Nations. In their leaders I met open minded men of great vision forecasting a lasting peace and a future of peace and good will toward men. Today we have overseas almost twice the number of armed men that we had a year ago.

“We have handed the men of the Merchant Marine the great job of furnishing these men with supplies with food and munitions with planes and tanks with guns and more men to bring closer our victory. As fighting men you of the Merchant Marine are scattered throughout the world far from families and friends on this Christmas Day. The great plans made at the recent conferences will speed the day when you can again be with them. I bring to the people of our nation and to it's proud sons in the Merchant Marine the purposeful intentions of Churchill Stalin [sic] Chiang Kai Shek and the nations they represent that we will fight together until ultimate victory.

“The pressure of our united attack is constantly increasing on every front. That pressure will engulf our common enemy. The steel walls of Hitlers and Hirohitos brutal

empires will draw tight about their throats. Our plans are made and we are united. Hitler is listening and he would like to know when we are launch the attack that will seal his doom. So I cannot tell you but those plans are set and they will be carried out. A truly great American will lead that attack our own General Eisenhower [sic] and back of him in a powerful united effort are the full resources of all our nations combined to render a crushing defeat to those who gained what they have through force. We will defeat them.

“Those who have been enslaved will be freed even those who have through force been brought under the grinding heel of their own leaders. Three fourths of all the peoples of the earth are joined in a common cause of freedom loving people. We will be strong united strength for freedom not for enslavement there will be no slaves in our free world nor will the aggressor arise again to enslave his fellow men. It will be peace even if we must resort to force to maintain that peace on earth and good will toward men.

“On behalf of your friends your loved ones and the people of the United States yes and of the United Nations I send you this greeting. Our hearts are with you as you travel the wide deep oceans. May Gods blessing and comfort guide you and keep us strong in our faith that we fight for a better day for all mankind.”



**Bob Hope's radio broadcast to mariners at Christmas, 1944 was most welcome. He said, partially:**

“This is Bob Hope speaking to you from Hollywood. Three days from now we'll be celebrating Christmas here in the United States. We'll gather around Christmas trees with our children and exchange presents with those we love. Merry Christmas with stars on the Christmas tree and stars in the eyes of our kids and stars in the windows of our homes. Blue stars for those still at home. Gold for the men who'll be spending Christmas with God. And silver stars for the ones over there, like the boys I'm going to introduce




to you in a moment. They're Z-men. Did you ever hear of Z-men? Sounds like a gag, doesn't it? Well, it isn't. Z-men are the guys without whom General “Ike's” army and Admiral Nimitz' navy couldn't live. Five thousand seven hundred of them have died from

enemy torpedoes, mines, bombs or bullets since our zero hour at Pearl Harbor.

"Z-men are the men of the Merchant Marine. They carry a big wad of identification papers in a book called a Z book, so they call them Z-men. They're union men, too. They work for scale. Yeah, scale! Joe Squires worked for scale. He was a seaman on the S. S. Maiden Creek. He and Hal Whitney, the deck engineer, stayed aboard to handle the lines so the rest of the crew could get away before the Maiden Creek sank under waves thirty feet high. The crew was saved. They never saw Joe or Hal again. Did anyone ever make a wage scale big enough to pay for a man's life? Joe and Hal gave theirs voluntarily. So did 5,698 others. Did anyone ever devise a scale big enough to make men brave?

"Listen, it takes nerve to go to work in a hot engine room, never knowing when a torpedo might smash the

 *And even when WWII was officially over, at Christmas, 1945, Emory S. Land sent his blessings:*

hull above you and send thousands of tons of sea water in to snuff out your life. It takes courage to sail into the waters of an enemy barbaric enough to tie your hands and feet and submerge you so you can drown, like a rat, without a fight. It takes courage to man an ammunition ship after you heard how Nazi bombers blew up 17 shiploads of ammunition at Bari and not a man was ever found of the crews. I was there about that time. I'll never forget it. Neither will men like Admiral King, who said, «The Navy shares life and death, attack and victory with the men of the U. S. Merchant Marine.» Yeah, it's Merry Christmas Monday for a lot of us except the boys of the Army, Navy and Merchant Marine. Our Z-men will be on the high seas or in ports far away from home, like a crew you're going to meet right now."

URGENT	FULL RATE		OTHER RATE
FULL RATE	DAY LETTER		RADIO TOLLS
CDE	NIGHT LETTER		LAND LINE & CABLE TOLLS
OF FERRER			
NIGHT LETTER			TOTAL

Send the following Radiogram "VIA TROPICAL," subject to the terms on the back hereof, which are hereby agreed to

To **NPO MANILA, P.I. A T**

**BAMS DERERRED FROM CNO CONDR CK 235**

WILLIAM E. BEAKES, CHAIRMAN OF THE BOARD  
ROBERT V. HOWLEY, PRESIDENT

**S.S. SEA HARE  
DEC. 27, 1945.**

**ALL U S MERCHANT SHIPS. DURING THE PAST FIVE YEARS CHRISTMAS HAS COME TO MEN OF THE MERCHANT MARINE AS THEY HUDDLE BEHIND BLACKOUT SCREENS RIDING LOADS OF AMMUNITION OIL AND SUPPLIES FOR WAR. NOW WITH THE AID OF DIVINE PROVIDENCE OUR MERCHANT MARINE CAN SAIL THE SEAS WITH LIGHTS ON. WHEN THE JOB OF BRINGING THE TROOPS BACK HOME IS FINISHED THE MERCHANT MARINE WILL MOVE THE GOODS OF PEACE. DURING THE BLACK YEARS OF WAR THE MEN OF THE MERCHANT MARINE DID THEIR JOB WITH BOLDNESS AND DARING. SIX THOUSAND WERE KILLED OR MISSING IN CARRYING OUT THEIR DUTIES. IN MEMORY OF THOSE MEN AND IN THE INTEREST OF OUR NATION THE UNITED STATES MUST CARRY OUT THE BOLD AND DARING PLAN OF FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT FOR A MERCHANT MARINE OF THE BEST DESIGNED AND EQUIPPED PASSENGER AND CARGO SHIPS MANNED BY THE BEST TRAINED MEN IN THE WORLD. IN VIEW OF THE MAGNIFICENT JOB THE MERCHANT MARINE HAS DONE THE REAFFIRMATION OF THAT PLEDGE IS THE BEST CHRISTMAS MESSAGE WE CAN GIVE. SIGNED HARRY S. TRUMAN, THE PRESIDENT HAS ASKED THAT HIS CHRISTMAS MESSAGE AND PLEDGE TO THE POSTWAR MERCHANT MARINE BE FORWARDED TO YOU. THERE IS LITTLE I CAN ADD EXCEPT TO BLESS YOU FOR THE JOB YOU HAVE DONE FOR THIS COUNTRY AND FOR HUMANITY.**

**SIGNED E. S. LAND.**

Rear Admiral Emory S. Land,  
U.S.N. (Ret.)



Other celebrities and notables stepped up with the Christmas greetings to the brave U.S. Merchant Mariners who were far away from the loved ones during that tumultuous time all those many years ago.

*Editor's note: Most of this material is available on website: [www.usmm.org](http://www.usmm.org) and thanks for that extensive website go to Toni Horodysky, webmistress extraordinaire.*

# Before Hungnam, There was PQ 13!



*Editor's Note: Submitted by Fr. Sinclair Oubre.*

The cause for sainthood for Captain Leonard LaRue, later to be known as Brother Marinus, continues to move forward. However, before Captain LaRue rescued 14,005 North Korean refugees during the Korean conflict, he was the 2nd mate on the *SS Mormacmar*, and sailed in PQ 13 and QP 11 during World War II.

## A BEGINNING:

On Wednesday, February 11, 1942, Leonard LaRue, a 28-year-old, second mate, walked up the gangway at a Boston pier to be the 12-4 officer of the watch on the 22-year-old freighter, *SS Mormacmar*. He couldn't have known that he and his vessel soon would be part of the infamous PQ 13, in which five of the nineteen freighters were sunk, with the loss of 126 merchant mariners.

*Mormacmar* was not the graceful C3 stick ship that later bore the same name, but a ship built on behalf of the United States Shipping Board at Los Angeles Shipbuilding and Drydock Corporation, in San Pedro, California in 1920. She was a standard Design 1013 ship, and originally named the *SS Culberson*. In 1938, she was purchased by the Moore & McCormack Lines, and sailed under the Mormac flag from 1938-1945. In 1945, she became part of the US-Russia lend-lease program, but was returned to Moore & McCormack Lines that same year, and scrapped in 1946.

On February 18, 1942, the *SS Mormacmar* sailed from Boston, bound for Halifax, Nova Scotia. According to the Office of Naval Operations, she carried barrels of phosphorous on her deck which would burn if it came into contact with water, tanks, trucks, and planes.

The Office of Naval Operations notes that, "one day out of port, news came to the ship that another ship had been torpedoed about 60 miles ahead. Rather than risk her valuable cargo, the ship went to Portland, Maine. She sailed again on February 22. When near Halifax she passed a burning ship which had been torpedoed."

## CONVOY PQ13

On February 25, 1942, the *SS Mormacmar* became part of Convoy HX 177, and sailed for Liverpool. The trans-Atlantic voyage was not boring. Second Mate LaRue and the crew had to contend with a severe storm, engine trouble, and fire on deck.

The *SS Mormacmar* reached Liverpool, and sailed on to

Loch Ewe, Scotland. On March 10, 1942, she and 18 other vessels sailed for Reykjavik, and arrived on March 16, 1942. There, three vessels left the convoy, and were replaced by a fleet oiler and two ships that had missed their earlier PQ convoy.

On 18 March, PQ-13 sailed from Reykjavik but was ordered to return to port due to a false report that the German battleship *Tirpitz* was at sea. Two days later, the 19 ships of PQ 13 were escorted out of Reykjavik into the Norwegian Sea.

From March 20 - March 23, 1942, the convoy sailed peacefully along with a southwesterly breeze. However, on March 23, the convoy received reports of a picket of German u-boats, and changed to an eastern course. The following day, at noon, the convoy steered to port, and resumed its northeastern course.

On the evening of Tuesday, March 24, and into the morning of Wednesday, March 25, the weather deteriorated, and by noon, a full gale blew, and the crews struggled to keep the convoy together. That evening, Captain L.S. Saunders of the *HMS Trinidad*, broke radio silence to inform the Admiralty of PQ 13's plight, and ordered that the ships break formation, and rendezvous at a position south of Bear Island on Friday, March 27, 1942.

On Saturday, March 28, 1942, the gale finally subsided, and PQ 13 was scattered into two groups of six merchant ships each, and seven ships sailing on their own. The "eastern group" was made up of *Induna*, *Empire Starlight*, *Ballot*, *Dunboyne*, *Effingham*, and *Mana*. The ships of the "western group" are not accurately identified, but the *Scottish American* is recorded as part of the "western group."

On Sunday, March 29, 1942, the *HMS Eclipse* was sighted leading an 8-ship convoy consisting of *Eldena*, *El Estero*, *Empire Cowper*, *Gallant Fox*, *New Westminster City*, *Mormacmar*, *Scottish American*, and *Tobruk*. On Monday, March 30, 1942, this "western group" entered the Murmansk harbor, and anchored after facing a half-hearted German aircraft attack off the Kola Inlet.

Over the three-day period of March 28-30, 1942, five ships were lost, *Empire Ranger*, *Raceland*, *Bateau*, *Induna*, and the Lykes Line vessel *Effingham*.

Richard Woodman makes this observation:

"The passage of PQ 13 could hardly be acclaimed a success: almost 30,000 tons of Allied merchant shipping had been sunk, (5 ships: *Raceland*, *Empire Ranger*, *Induna*, *Effingham*, and *Bateau*) more than a quarter of the convoy. There is a rather pathetic note of disclaimer in the Admiralty's assessment of these losses as being 'stragglers,' and implicit inference that somehow it was the fault of the merchant ships that they had been lost, whereas two of the five had been part of the eastern group which had re-formed



after dispersal by the weather and had received no close escort for the remainder of the passage. This assumption tended to blind the Admiralty to the dangers of scattering a convoy, either by order or by act of God.”

### RETURNING VOYAGE:

For Second Mate Leonard LaRue and the crew of *Mormacmar*, they began their return voyage as part

of QP 11 on April 28, 1942. On April 30, the convoy came under attack by German u-boats, but suffered no losses. On May 1, German navy ships reached the convoy, and damaged the British destroyer *Amazon*, and sank the Soviet merchant ship, *Tsiolkovski*. On May 2, the *HMS Edinburgh* was hit, and later in the day sunk. She carried to the bottom \$20 million in gold, payment from the Soviet Union to the United States.

After this, the remaining ships of the convoy and their

escorts reached Iceland on May 7, 1942. Leonard LaRue finally signed off the *Mormacmar* on April 24, 1943, but continued to sail throughout World War II on the *SS Joseph M Medill*, the *SS Mormacdale*, the *SS Smith Thompson*, the *SS George B McClellan*, and the *SS Whittier Victory*.

### SURVIVAL:

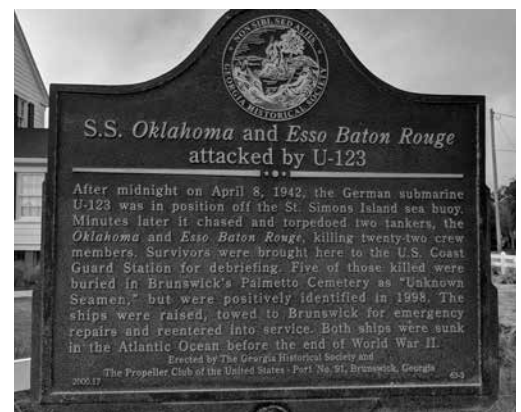
Whether it was the hand of God, fortune, or just stupid luck, Leonard LaRue managed to survive PQ 13, QP 11, and the Battle of the Atlantic. Eight years later, for 14,000 fleeing North Korean refugees over the Christmas of 1950, then holding the position of Captain of the Victory ship *SS Meredith Victory*, Leonard LaRue became the guiding force that rescued the refugees from certain death.



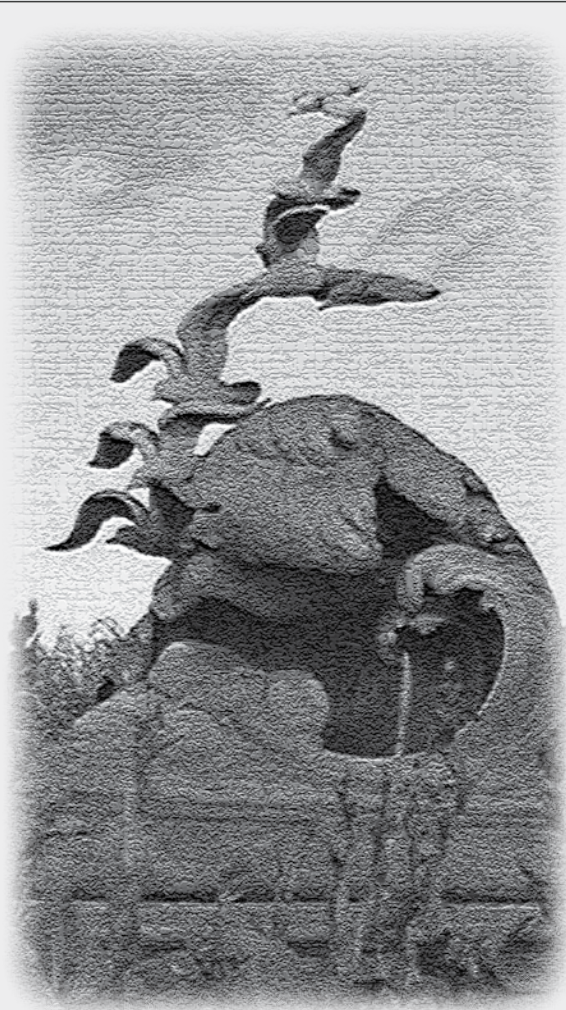
## A LITTLE TRAVELING

Chairman of the AMMV National Convention in Tampa, FL next March, “Dru” DiMattia has certainly been getting around. He has been traveling widely and always manages to get his photographs even under restrictions. He tells us that the famous NY Battery Park MM memorial park was closed for repair but Dru is determined, to say the least, as you can see.

Thanks, Dru for these photos and happy adventures. We’ll look forward to more submittals and see you in Tampa.



# *In memory of those who have Crossed the Final Bar*



*There are no roses on a sailor's grave,  
No lilies on an ocean wave;  
The only tribute is the seagull's sweeps  
And the teardrops that a sweetheart weeps.*

RICHARD ARCAND  
HARRY "HAP" BLEDSOE  
AL D'AGOSTINO  
WENZL EVANS  
ELIAS FLORES  
GEORGE T. HAYDEN  
E. ARNOLD JOHNSTON  
JOHN KAPPERS  
ROBERT DAY MC AMIS  
RICHARD W. MELL  
ROBERT I. OLSEN  
JOHN PAPAMARCOS  
RICHARD S. PARKER  
BERNARD A. QUESADA  
ROBERT B. RINGER  
JEREMIAH P. TAYLOR  
EDWARD WILLIS

To honor a loved one, memorial donations may be made to the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization on the loved one's behalf. This is a tribute to their memory and the dedicated service they gave to their country and to mankind. Thank you for your thoughtful gesture. Donations may be sent to: AMMV, P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024.

# NEW NAVY ARMED GUARD AND MERCHANT MARINE MUSEUM OPENS



FELLSMERE—A new museum, and the National Headquarters for the U. S. Navy Armed Guard, dedicated to the Navy Armed Guard and the U. S. Merchant Marine opened Dec. 8th in Fellsmere, Indian River County, FL. The museum, at 32 North Broadway, is dedicated to both of these groups, one military and the other civilian in World War II.

## ***The little known story of two groups who were in the same boats:***

U.S. Navy Armed Guard was a service branch of the United States Navy that was responsible for defending U.S. and Allied merchant ships from attack by enemy aircraft, submarines and surface ships during WWII. The men of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard served primarily as gunners, signal men and radio operators on cargo ships, tankers, troop ships and other merchant vessels.

Disbanded following the end of the war, the Armed Guard is today not well known or remembered by the general public or even within the Navy. Without the courage and sacrifice of the men of the Armed Guard, victory in WWII would have been much more difficult and taken much longer.

The U. S. Merchant Marine of the WWII era were non-naval ships with civilian crewman and officers who sailed the ships, carried cargo and troops, and provided maritime services. The ships and men of the U. S. Merchant Marine transported vast quantities of war materials, supplies,

equipment and troops needed to fight and win that war.

The men of the U.S. Merchant Marine died proportionally in numbers that rivaled or exceeded any branch of the uniformed military. Like the Armed Guard with whom they sailed, the men of the Merchant Marine made possible the Allied victory in World War II. The Armed Guard and the Merchant Marine were uniquely dependent upon one another; they were literally in the same boat. One cannot tell the story of one without telling the story of the other.

## ***The Fellsmere Museum:***

The museum will be run by volunteers, said Larry Wapnick, one of the founders. Starting on a small basis, the Board of Directors and members of the Museum hope to tell the story of both of these groups. The displays will feature artifacts and videos that will show how the free world might never have been if not for the courage of these men and women who served during World War II.

The museum's President, Larry Wapnick was also involved with the creation of the Four Chaplains Monument that honors those lost in the sinking of the USS *Dorchester* in 1943. About 10 members of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard were lost when the ship sank and the museum will serve as a way to remember their loss, he said.

For additional information, contact Larry Wapnick at (772) 532-8749; Ralph Oko at (954) 557-6226 or Richard Martucci at (772) 559-1946.

# VETERAN'S STATUS PROGRESS REPORT

## *"It is a black hole. FOIA is broken."*

Three years ago I agreed to make a good faith effort to do research and attempt to obtain government records required to meet evidence criteria established for acceptance of AMMV's group application to the DoD Civilian/Military Service Review Board. I realized that Korean and Vietnam War American Seamen do not enjoy anything akin to "protected-class status" and that their civilian service, however critical to sustainment of U. S. Armed Forces, would likely not be recognized as equivalent to active duty service. And through past experience I knew that bureaucratic intransigence would frustrate efforts to obtain the records needed to "document and substantiate the application." That has proven a reality. The Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) process is, indeed broken, and has been for a long time.

In my last progress report to *AMMV NEWS Magazine*, I referred to 7 FOIA requests submitted to agencies on 22 March, 2018. With the exception of MARAD, the others have either stonewalled, refused or otherwise not made reasonable searches responsive to our requests. These FOIA offices represent the Army, the Navy, the Military Sealift Command (MSC) and the Coast Guard. The last mentioned verbally refused to search at the National Maritime Center in West Virginia and the FOIA officer has not responded to my protest. In part, I requested a limited search for records in specific, former Merchant Marine Personnel Division files which may prove "subjection to military discipline" through admonishment, suspension and revocation action against licenses and Merchant Mariner's Documents. We know that there was a procedure for these actions but need sample copies of Coast Guard issued letters to prove it was done during the Korean Period of War. I offered to accept redacted documents but apparently dead mariners retain privacy rights, though the civilian records manager in charge (with prior military service, no less) said that they didn't. Funny how that works.

After seriously exceeding its initial response time threshold MSC denied our request for a fee waiver on 4 June and their FOIA officer was to get back to us "as soon as possible." Well, I'm still waiting for that to happen for all 3 separate and very important requests.

### **NEEDED RECORDS:**

We are seeking records from the former MSTs Washington HQ Contracting Office for both time- and voyage-chartered dry cargo ships and tankers, respectively. These are needed to identify commercial ships offered to MSTs and especially specific allocations made by the so-called "tanker board" under DoD's "Voluntary Plan to Contribute Tanker Capacity." I had been anticipating an expansion and refinement to my list of ships using these records but

without reasonably successful searches responsive to my requests there is no way to prove which ships, apart from those confirmed in Korean waters, sailed in direct support of U. S. Armed Forces. I have a Navy source stating that 148 civilian-manned ships and Navy vessels participated in classified Far North Operations "Bluejay" and "SUNAC" (Support of North Atlantic Construction) in 1951 and 1952, respectively. I am aware of a number of these ships from notations on MARAD's online Vessel History Database cards; but as usual, we get numbers but few, if any, names from MARAD and MSTs sources. Professor Sal Mercogliano's doctoral dissertation includes an authoritative MSTs source that cited 193 commercial ships under MSTs charter and an estimated 293 berth liners sailing with military cargo in the month of September 1953. (Perhaps the professor, a former MSC licensed officer, will use his good offices to "light a fire" under the FOIA officer in D.C.) Accounting for these ships and their contract periods is the name of the game with this application. Records were kept. Where are they now? Two other FOIA's to the DoD and DOJ met with success and failure, respectively, the former only after a protest that led to the Pentagon Library reluctantly handing over a 7-page directive from 1952.

### **ADDITIONAL MATERIAL ALSO NEEDED:**

In an effort to discover additional ships I researched the State Department's "Reports of Deaths of American Citizens Abroad," specifically seeking American Merchant Seamen in boxed "decimal files" for the period 1950 to 1954. I searched 10,329 document images on [www.ancestrylibrary.com](http://www.ancestrylibrary.com) representing 13 boxes for Korea, Japan, Venezuela, Netherlands, West Indies, Arabia (unfortunately missing surnames M-Z) and foreign countries and associated waters in general, plus specific homicides reported for Aruba, Algeria and Egypt (Suez Canal). This is but a small sample considering our post WWII foreign trade and obligations throughout most of the world during the Korean War. I found that 241 seamen crewing 214 U.S.-flagged ships died in these areas between 27 June 1950 and 27 December 1954. Two men from the SS *Citrus Packer* were shot and killed by direct enemy while ashore in Korea, but I have run into a four-month stonewall (so far) by the Mobile, Alabama Civil Court clerk in an effort to locate a wrongful death lawsuit filed by one of the widows.

In general, the deceased's document(s), when recovered, were routinely forwarded on to the Merchant Vessel Personnel Division at USCG HQ in D.C. Also, no MSTs organic fleet transports or cargo ships are represented as civilian mariners on these Civil Service-crewed USNS ships were not reported through the Consulates General, but

rather reported by the Department of the Navy. However, of the 51 tankers involved, 35 were commercially owned and 16 were government-owned USNS tankers.

Since the latter were crewed by merchant seamen out of union hiring halls their deaths were reported through American Consular Service channels. Eighty-four of the ships are not on my own compiled lists for various reasons. A good number were obviously sailing on essential trade routes to Africa and South America and bringing home bulk cargoes, some were passenger liners. A few are noted as under MSTs charters and these were unknown to me as they didn't reach Korea. At least one of them was a MARAD ship, the *Waltham Victory*, under general agency agreement employed by MSTs on the SUNAC run. And at least 8 MARAD Liberty ships were moving foreign aid cargoes for the Economic Cooperation Administration whose crewmen would not qualify for "veteran's status" recognition because their service under those circumstances was not in direct support to U. S. Armed Forces.

Of the commercial tankers only 2 were owned by companies that did not agree to participate in the Voluntary Plan to Contribute Tanker Capacity. The others are on my list of potential participants but we need to reduce that list to those that actually sailed. Unfortunately the images I searched do not carry any notes that refer to such a military mission. I have saved 452 images for inclusion in the application as there are valuable notations as to communi-

cations security, USCG merchant marine details overseas, Army MP/CID involvement, etc. But it is evident that whatever investigations may have been conducted by the Coast Guard (as opposed to Consular officers) that information was either removed from the files or was otherwise not imaged.

Despite pathetic Army and Navy FOIA office ineptitude, between Janet Wilzbach's tireless searching of Navy General Courts-Martial records in St. Louis and my research into published review/appeal cases, we now have extracts for 6 Army and 14 Navy courts-martial of merchant seamen and MSTs civilian mariners from 14 ships of the Korean Period of War. There would be many more Army cases at St. Louis but without a list of names from the Army or Coast Guard there is no practical way to search the collection (we're told).

Apart from the above I have spent many hours tediously organizing and scanning documents into "finished research files" for inclusion with the application. In saving these 35 files (so far) I ran out of storage space on my 4 gigabyte flash drive so have upgraded to a size 32 gismo.

*Submitted by Michael J. Helbig, 12/1/2018*



## NEW YORK TIMES

When the ruling about Veteran's status for the U. S. Merchant Marine was finally declared in 1988, on January 20, the NEW YORK TIMES ran this article. The decision was a momentous boost for recognition for the Merchant Mariners of World War II and, as you are probably aware, further recognition of the services of those gallant men is still being sought today.

### Wartime Merchant Seamen to Get Veterans' Status

WASHINGTON, Jan. 20 (AP) — The Defense Department, under orders from a Federal district judge to reconsider the issue, has agreed to extend veterans' status to the men who sailed merchant ships in World War II, the Pentagon said today.

The decision was made by Air Force Secretary Edward C. Aldridge, acting in his capacity as the Pentagon's designated administrator of a 1977 law that governs appeals for veterans' status, the Air Force said in a statement.

The new designation will apply to any seaman who served in an ocean-going merchant ship "during the period of armed conflict in World War II — Dec. 7, 1941, to Aug. 15, 1945," the Air Force said.

According to Navy historians, about 250,000 men served in the merchant marine in World War II. No one knows how many are still alive.

The designation approved by Secre-

tary Aldridge will entitle the merchant seamen to obtain military service discharge certificates, which in turn will make them eligible for such veterans' benefits as the use of Veterans Administration hospitals and burial in a national cemetery.

"But more than that is the status and dignity that comes from being declared a veteran," said Joan Z. McAvoy, a member of the Washington law firm of Proskauer, Rose, Goetz & Mendelsohn, which handled the case on behalf of surviving seamen. "That has been the point from the beginning."

C. E. DeFries, president of District 1 of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, said: "This is justice and it is justice long overdue. These merchant marines were men at war, plain and simple."

Two months ago, the judge, Louis Oberdorfer, gave Mr. Aldridge 90 days to reconsider earlier Pentagon denials

of veterans' status to the merchant sailors. That order came after a trial last summer in which the judge concluded the earlier denials had been "arbitrary and capricious and not supported by substantial evidence."

The suit that placed the matter before Judge Oberdorfer was filed by three former merchant seamen with the assistance of the Marine Engineers Beneficial Association, an affiliate of the American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations.

The earlier requests for veterans' status had been denied by Secretary Aldridge's predecessors. This was the first time he had reviewed the matter.

The Air Force said merchant seamen who believed they were eligible for veterans' status would have to obtain DD Form 2168 from Veterans Administration offices or merchant marine veterans' organizations in order to file an application.

# Men of the Merchant Marine: Unsung Heroes of the Korean War

Submitted by AMMV member Ned Forney

In April, 2018, as the elderly American, surrounded by cameras, microphones, and reporters, walked towards the memorial, two Korean men stepped forward from the crowd. As if on cue, the sea of people suddenly parted, and the three men shook hands, their warm smiles and contagious laughs drawing everyone's attention. It was a magical moment, one that words and pictures can't capture. It was the *feeling* that made it so memorable.

The two Korean men and the American, Burley Smith, first "met" nearly 68 years ago during the Korean War. Burley was a Jr. Third Mate aboard *SS Meredith Victory*, and the Koreans were two of five babies born on the ship during its two-day voyage from Hungnam, North Korea, to Geoje Island, South Korea, in December 1950. The Koreans, Lee Gyeong-Pil and Sohn Yang-Young, had come to the ceremony to personally thank Mr. Smith for saving their parents' lives - for saving *their* lives. They were genuinely grateful, and we all felt it.

## ***The Guys On The Ship***

All too often when researching the Korean War, I come across little-known anecdotes of selfless, hard-working men who served aboard US Merchant Marine ships during Korea's three-year conflict. These men, although they played a key role in the war, often go unrecognized. They're simply "the guys on the ship."

For UN forces fighting on the ground, however, they were much more. The dedicated men of the Merchant Marine, many of whom had earned their sea legs during World War II, transported everything from food and ammunition to vehicles and weapons to a war front over 6,500 miles away from home. For many American GI's and their commanders, Merchant Marine ships were a literal life saver.

As prominent military tacticians and historians have long argued, the difference between battlefield victory and defeat often revolves around logistics,

the ability to keep troops well-fed, supplied, and equipped. The Korean War, like World War II before it, reinforced this argument and illustrated the importance of a highly trained and professional Merchant Marine.

Despite the importance of these ships, however, their crews have been largely been forgotten, relegated to a mere footnote in history. But things are changing. Men like Jr. Third Mate Burley Smith of the United States Merchant Marine are now being recognized.

## ***Reporting For Duty***

I was introduced to Burley Smith three years ago, and he's one of the most interesting, optimistic, and

unassuming men I've ever met. Born in 1928, he spent his childhood and high school years in Atlantic City, New Jersey. Just a month before the outbreak of the Korean War, he graduated from the US Merchant Marine Academy in Kings Point, New York. By July of 1950, he was on his way to Korea.

The newly-commissioned deck officer had been assigned to the *SS Meredith Victory*, a World War II Victory ship skippered by Captain Leonard LaRue, LaRue, Smith, and *Meredith Victory's* entire 50-man crew

would soon be making history. In less than three months, they would play a key role in the Hungnam Evacuation, the unprecedented military and humanitarian operation of December 1950. But they would first have make it through the Inchon Landing.

## ***Our Hearts Were In Our Throats***

On the afternoon of September 14, 1950, a day before MacArthur's historic and hugely successful Inchon Landing, a typhoon hit the invasion fleet. Burley vividly remembers the storm's terrifying "hurricane force winds and waves of 50 to 60 feet."

At one point during the massive typhoon, Burley feared that *Meredith Victory*, filled with supplies, tanks, and soldiers, might not make it. A giant wave slammed into the ship, causing Sherman tanks and





military trucks lashed to the upper and lower decks to break free. With the ship now unstable and listing severely to the right, or starboard, side of the vessel, it looked like the worst was about to happen. “For a few breathless moments,” he remembers, “we were not sure if the ship would be able to survive the tremendous roll.”

LaRue turned the ship around, a dangerous but necessary move, and saved *Meredith Victory* from capsizing. “None of us had ever experienced anything so extreme,” Burley told me. “Truly, our hearts were in our throats.” Unfortunately, there was more to come.

A few days later, *Meredith Victory* found herself in another precarious situation. Anchored in Inchon harbor with numerous other vessels, the ship suddenly became the target of two North Korean planes.

On deck that morning enjoying the blue skies and calm weather, Burley saw the Soviet-era, World War II fighters heading straight for him. A direct hit from one of the plane’s bombs would have resulted in certain casualties, but at the last minute the planes veered and attacked another ship. The pilots, thankfully, missed their targets and no vessels were sunk. *Meredith Victory* had again avoided disaster.

### A Christmas Miracle

By late December 1950, after numerous trips up and down the Korean coast, *Meredith Victory* was on its way to Hungnam. North Korean civilians, fleeing from the Chinese army and hoping to be rescued, were trapped at the port. US and ROK troops were also there. Chinese troops had forced them out of the Chosin Reservoir, and they were now evacuating to Busan.

When *Meredith Victory* sailed into Hungnam harbor on December 22, its crew saw tens of thousands of refugees waiting along the port’s docks and beaches. Describing the scene, Burley said, “The Koreans on the dock, to me, that’s what we were there for, that was our job. The problem was how we [were] going to get them aboard.” There were too many people and not enough time to get them all loaded. “It looked like Times Square on New Year’s Eve,” Burley remembered.

With US battleships and fighter planes pounding the mountains around Hungnam, the crewmen of *Meredith Victory* loaded refugees for nearly 24 hours. The ship then maneuvered through “a very narrow channel [cleared of mines], it couldn’t have been more than a hundred yards wide,” and sailed out of the port on the afternoon of the 23rd. With no way to protect themselves or their passengers from enemy planes and submarines rumored to be in the area, the crew spent the next two days sailing down the coast of Korea to Geoje Island with 14,000 refugees. It was the largest humanitarian rescue operation ever by a single ship.

When *Meredith Victory* was finally unloaded on Christmas Day, every North Korean refugee was alive, including five babies born during the voyage. “We were just young men doing our job,” Burley later said.

### A Grateful Nation Pays Tribute

In April, 2018, Burley Smith, now 89, was recognized by the South Korean government for his service in US Merchant Marine and his role in the Hungnam Evacuation. The ROK Ministry of Patriots and Veterans Affairs (MPVA) presented him with an award and hosted a luncheon in his honor.

During that day in April, 2018, I was also reminded of a little-known chapter in the Hungnam story.

Two of *Meredith Victory*’s passengers, a couple with a young daughter, gave birth to a baby boy two years after arriving on Geoje Island. Their son, Moon Jae-in, one of an estimated one million descendants of those rescued at Hungnam, is now the president of South Korea.

The gratitude of the ROK President and an entire nation could be felt throughout the day, and the events were a tribute not only to Burley but to all the men of the US Merchant Marine who played a role in securing South Korea’s freedom.



# HISTORY OF A GREAT LADY

At the entrance to New York City harbor stands a famous lady; she's 132 years old this year and still greeting strangers and visitors alike with grace and dignity.

## ***Statue of Liberty Facts:***

The Statue of Liberty measures 305 feet 1 inch from the ground to the tip of the flame, and is as tall as a 22-story building. In 1886, it was the tallest structure in New York City.

Total weight of the Statue of Liberty is 225 tons (or 450,000 pounds).

There are 154 steps from the pedestal to the head of the Statue of Liberty.

The total weight of the Statue's concrete foundation is 54 million pounds (27,000 tons).

The statue is covered in 300 sheets of copper, 3/32 of an inch thick (less than the thickness of two pennies), hammered into different shapes and riveted together. The light green color (called a patina) is the result of natural weathering of the copper.

## ***Little known design elements:***

Although admired for its structure, massive size and statistics, the Lady Liberty statue's parts are not quite as obvious to those people who she salutes upon arrival in New York City's harbor.

The symbol of Libertas was commonly used by Americans to represent liberty. Libertas was commonly worshipped by the Romans, especially the emancipated slaves. The French designers Bartholdi and Laboulaye decided to incorporate the symbol of Libertas in building the Liberty statue. Laboulaye was not empathetic for revolution, so Bartholdi had to design a sculpture that would be in flowing robes.

Some popular accounts argue that Bartholdi designed the sculpture's face to resemble his mother, Charlotte. He designed the 8' tall facial sculpture with a strong silhouette, and aimed at making the design broad, bold, and simple yet clear enough to represent character.

Chains and broken shackles lie at the Statue's feet,



which symbolize the Statue as a woman free from oppression and servitude. Bartholdi had initially revised the design to let Liberty hold a broken chain in her arms. Later he thought would be quite derisive, especially during the civil wars. He, therefore, decided to let the chain stay at the feet of the statue, half hidden by the flowing robes, not easy to see while standing on the ground.

The tabula ansata in the left hand represents the law.

The seven rays of the Statue's crown represent the seven seas and continents of the world, each measuring up to 9 feet in length and weighing as much as 150 pounds. There are 25 windows in the crown, which symbolize gemstones and the heaven's rays shining over the world.

A tablet held in her left hand measures 23 feet, 7 inches tall and 13 feet 7 inches wide. It is inscribed with the date of American Independence written in Roman numerals - JULY IV MDCCLXXVI (July 4, 1776).

To give the sculpture a peaceful appearance, Bartholdi chose to design the right hand holding a torch, which symbolizes progress. The Statue's original torch was replaced by a new copper torch covered in thin sheets of 24 karat gold leaf. Sunlight reflects off the gold during the day and 16 floodlights light the torch by reflection at night. The original torch is currently located in the lobby of the monument. Access to the torch has been closed since 1916 when during an explosion on Black



Tom Island in New York Harbor in the middle of the night shrapnel hit the nearby Statue of Liberty, closing off the arm to future visitors, as noted on a commemorative plaque that remains on the site to this day.

The legacy of this explosion is deeper than just relegating tourists to Lady Liberty's crown. Black Tom had been a center for the production of armaments that were being shipped to Europe to aid mainly Britain and France, both of which were fighting Germany, during World War

I — though the United States was technically neutral at the time. The Germans probably saw that as an act of war. The New York Times reported that the explosion was initially attributed to negligence by those working on the island.

In 1903, Emma Lazarus' poem "The New Colossus" was inscribed on a bronze tablet laid in the statue's pedestal. The poem reads:

*Not like the brazen giant of Greek fame,  
With conquering limbs astride from land to land;  
Here at our sea-washed, sunset gates shall stand  
A mighty woman with a torch, whose flame  
Is the imprisoned lightning, and her name  
Mother of Exiles. From her beacon-hand  
Glows world-wide welcome; her mild eyes command  
The air-bridged harbor that twin cities frame.  
"Keep, ancient lands, your storied pomp!" cries she  
With silent lips. "Give me your tired, your poor,  
Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,  
The wretched refuse of your teeming shore.  
Send these, the homeless, tempest-tossed to me,  
I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"*

### **Statue of Liberty History:**

"La Liberté Éclairant le Monde" or "Liberty Enlightening the World" is the official name given to the Statue the Liberty by sculptor Frederic Auguste Bartholdi and is a symbol of freedom to the entire world. In recognition of the friendship established during the American Revolution, French statesman and writer Edouard de Laboulaye proposed presenting a monument to America as a gift of friendship from the people of France. Today it is more probably thought of as a welcome to immigrants.

The statue was a joint effort between the two countries - Americans would build the pedestal and the French would build the statue - in honor of the centennial of the Declaration of Independence. Bartholdi was commissioned to design the sculpture. Gustave Eiffel, who would later design the Eiffel Tower, designed Lady Liberty's skeleton - four huge iron columns that support a metal framework holding the thin copper skin. Bartholdi chose copper because it was attractive, yet durable enough to withstand the long voyage, and virtually impervious to the salt-laden air of the

New York Harbor. Bartholdi began by creating the statue's right arm and torch, which were exhibited at Philadelphia's Centennial Exposition in 1876. In 1877, the 42-foot-high sculpture was placed in Madison Square Park at Madison Avenue and 23rd Street to raise funds for the construction of the Statue of Liberty's pedestal. The arm and torch remained in the park for seven years.

In France, the completed head and shoulders of the statue were publicly displayed to encourage donations. Various forms of entertainment and lotteries were among the many methods used to raise money. In the United States, in addition to the right arm and torch being displayed to inspire generosity, the American Committee for the statue solicited contributions, and used art and theater benefits, auctions, and prize fights to help fund the project. But it was the efforts of politician and newspaperman Joseph Pulitzer (of the Pulitzer Prize) that generated the most money; Pulitzer used his newspaper, "*The World*," to criticize the wealthy, who had not stepped up to the plate to assist in financing the pedestal construction, as well as the middle class, who relied upon the wealthy. His tactic worked and Americans were moved to donate more than \$100,000. The financing of the pedestal was completed in August 1885 and construction was finished in April 1886. Meanwhile, the Statue was completed in France in July 1884 and arrived in New York in June of 1885 in over 300 pieces, packed in 214 crates. The re-assembly took four months and the Statue was placed upon a granite pedestal on Bedloe's Island, which was renamed Liberty Island in 1956.

The sculpture was dedicated on October 28, 1886. Grover Cleveland presided over the dedication ceremony with over 700,000 people in attendance. The nautical parade began at 12:45 p.m. A French flag covering the face of the sculpture was supposed to be lowered at the end of Evart's speech. Bartholdi mistook a pause in the speech and lowered the flag too early. No members of the public were allowed to the island. The only women granted access were Bartholdi's wife and her granddaughter. The sculpture underwent renovation in 1982 to restore corroded surfaces, and fix the head that was not correctly positioned.

The Statue of Liberty was designated as a National Monument in 1924 and restored for her centennial on July 4, 1986.



# FEATURED SPEAKERS AT THE 33<sup>rd</sup> NATIONAL AMMV CONVENTION

## Tampa, FL – March 20-24, 2019



### JOHN KONRAD

Captain John Konrad is the founder and CEO of [www.gCaptain.com](http://www.gCaptain.com), the world's most visited maritime news website and author of the book *Fire On The Horizon: the Untold Story of the Gulf Oil Disaster*. John is a USCG licensed Master of Unlimited Tonnage, has sailed a variety of ships from ports around the world and is a distinguished alumnus of SUNY Maritime College.

*Fire On The Horizon* was honored by [www.goodreads.com](http://www.goodreads.com) which published this review:

*A real-life thriller in the tradition of The Perfect Storm*

*In the spring of 2010 the world watched for weeks as more than 200 million gallons of crude oil billowed from a hole three miles deep in the Gulf of Mexico.*

*Warnings of various and imminent environmental consequences dominated the news. Deepwater drilling—largely ignored or misunderstood to that point—exploded in the American consciousness in the worst way possible.*

*Fire on the Horizon*, written by veteran oil rig captain John Konrad and longtime Washington Post journalist Tom Shroder, recounts in vivid detail the life of the rig itself, from its construction in South Korea in the year 2000 to its improbable journey around the world to its disastrous end, and reveals the day-to-day lives, struggles, and ambitions of those who called it home.

*From the little-known maritime colleges to Transocean's training schools and Houston headquarters to the small towns all over the country where the wives and children of the Horizon's crew lived in the ever-present shadow of risk hundreds of miles away, *Fire on the Horizon* offers full-scale portraits of the Horizon's captain, its chief mate, its chief mechanic, and others.*

*What emerges is a white-knuckled chronicle of engineering hubris at odds with the earth itself, an unusual manifestation of corporate greed and the unforgettable heroism of the men and women on board the Deepwater Horizon. Here is the harrowing minute-by-minute account of the fateful day, April 20, 2010, when the half-billion-dollar rig blew up, taking with it the lives of eleven people and leaving behind a swath of unprecedented natural destruction.*



### SALVATORE MERCOGLIANO



Salvatore R. Mercogliano has been a professor of History at Campbell University in Bales Creek, North Carolina, since 2010. He teaches courses in Western civilization, U. S. history, American military experience, the Civil War, and world maritime history. He was named Professor of the Year in 2015 and 2011 and honored by his colleagues with the D.P. Russ Jr. and Walter S. Jones Sr. Alumni Award for Teaching Excellence. He has also taught at Methodist University, East Carolina University, Central Carolina Community College, the U. S. Military Academy, the University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill, and the U. S. Merchant Marine Academy.

Dr. Mercogliano has published numerous articles and given presentations on a variety of maritime related topics, with a focus on the role of the merchant marine in national defense. His latest book is *Fourth Line of Defense: Sealift and Maritime Logistics in the Vietnam War*, an excerpt of which is featured elsewhere in this magazine. He holds degrees from the State University of New York, Maritime College (BS in Marine Transportation), East Carolina University (MA in Maritime History and National Archeology) and the University of Alabama (PhD in

Military and Naval History), along with his U. S. Merchant Marine deck license.

Dr. Mercogliano lives in Fuquay-Varina, North Carolina, with his wife Kathy and son Christopher.



**Dave Yoho** – A proud Veteran of World War II enlisted in the U.S. Maritime Service in 1944, and did his basic training at Sheepshead Bay N.Y. He is pictured on the cover of the Recruiting Magazine (circa 1944).

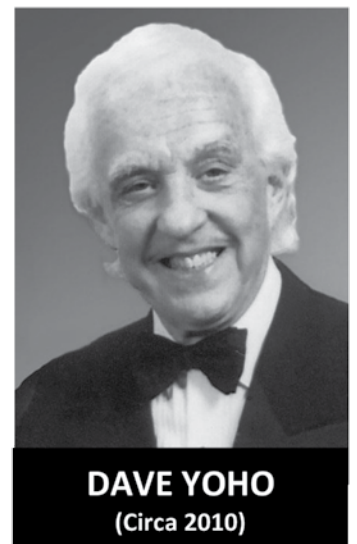
His assigned ship was a T/2 Tanker often referred to as a fleet oiler (support for combat ships), which was sent to the South Pacific. When the war ended (August 15, 1945). It was 4 days prior to his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

He credits his wartime service as one of immediate, though painful, maturation. He still marvels at our country's response to attack by Japan – followed by a declaration of war from Germany a few days later. The U.S. produced a fighting force of 16 million men and women in uniform; 440 thousand of whom died in that 4-year war and hundreds of thousands left with physical and emotional scars that they would carry for a lifetime.

From this foundation, Dave Yoho grew from an inner city kid who left high school in his junior year – to a returning Veteran who graduated high school with a G.E.D. He entered college on a “night school” program; went on to become a top salesman in a national company; moved into upper management and left to form his own company at the age of 28. His company grew into a conglomerate, which created for him, national recognition. While still president of his own company, he began a speaking career, which led him to speak in every state in the U.S. and 22 foreign countries. He is lauded for his unique speaking style, his unbridled patriotism and his constant support of Veterans and their rights.

\*\*\*\*\***BIO DATA**\*\*\*\*\*

- Made over 5,000 paid speeches – in every state in the U.S. & 22 foreign countries
- Written numerous books (2 became Best Sellers)
- 1st American to appear in Sydney Australia's famous Opera House
- Invited to the White House 3 times
- Appeared in over 100 training movies for major U.S. corporations
- Appeared on most TV talk shows including Tonight and Today Shows
- He has received the Oscar of Public Speaking (The Cavett), The Master of Influence Award and the C.P.A.E. (Hall of Fame) designation from his peers
- Dunn's Business Report called him the “SUPERSTAR OF MOTIVATION & TRAINING”
- Frequently quoted in Dunn's Business Report, Entrepreneur Magazine, Forbes, the Wall Street Journal and numerous trade/industry publications **DAVE**



# WHAT THE SS AMERICAN VICTORY IS – AND WHY

## History and Mission Statement

In 1944, 531 ships were built and of those, 414 were cargo ships and the remainder were transports. 272 were 6000 HP engines and the balance boasted 8000 HP. 150 were named after schools and universities, 20 were named after countries and the rest reflected geographic names. On January 12, 1944, the very first Victory Ship, named the SS *United Victory*, was launched.

The world-class SS *American Victory* was built in 55 days and was delivered to the U.S. War Shipping Administration by the California Shipbuilding Yard, at its Terminal Island location in Los Angeles, on May 24, 1945.

Due to her late construction date, during WWII, her first mission to the Pacific Ocean was cancelled; however she transported relief supplies for the United Nations Relief and Rehabilitation Administration to help rebuild Europe after the War.

The ship was laid up for a while from 1947 to 1950 in the Hudson River. Then she was called up to support the Korean War, hauling mostly ordinance into Japan. On her return trip home it carried a number of servicemen killed during that war. The ship was laid up again in 1954 and then

came out during the Vietnam War to haul military cargo.

The *American Victory* went through a \$2.5 million restoration in June 1985. In October, 1996, Captain John C. Timmel learned the SS *American Victory* was earmarked for scrap if not acquired for memorial purposes. Feeling that a museum would be feasible in Tampa, FL and that it would act as a purveyor or maritime memories, the ship was towed from Virginia to its permanent location in the Channel-side District in downtown Tampa.

Currently, the SS *American Victory* is only one of 3 fully-functioning ships in the country.

Aboard the *American Victory Ship and Museum*, visitors can come aboard a fully-functioning 1940s era steamship. They experience an unforgettable voyage of discovery and relive history by visiting cavernous three level cargo holds, radio and gyro rooms, hospital, galley, weaponry, steering stations, flying bridge, signaling equipment, wheelhouse, mess halls, engine room, crew cabins, lifeboats and cargo equipment, then gaze upon photographs, uniforms, medals, documents and naval equipment.

More information can be found at: <http://www.americanvictory.org/> and other sites.



# TAMPA – A HISTORICAL AND ACTIVE CITY

The modern history of Tampa, Florida began when Spanish explorers visited the area in the 1520's. They reported Tocobaga Indian villages on the north shore of the bay and Calusa Indian villages on the south shore. These conquistadors didn't find any gold, so they moved on and left the Indians to themselves.

Tampa history reveals a sparsely settled area for the next couple of hundred years.

In the mid 1700's, during our French and Indian wars and American Revolution, Seminole Indians and Cuban fishermen began to drift into the area.

In 1821 the U.S. acquired Florida from Spain. Shortly after that, the U.S. built a series of forts and trading posts in the new territory. Fort Brooke was established at the mouth of the Hillsborough River near today's downtown Tampa Convention Center. It became the first real settlement in Tampa history.

Tampa was nothing more than a lonely outpost on the frontier until the end of the Seminole Wars. By 1845, Florida had become the 27th state and a couple of years later Tampa was incorporated as the Village of Tampa.

## ***Tampa History in the Civil War***

During the U.S. Civil War, Florida was a Confederate State. The Union Navy set up a blockade around many southern ports to cut off the Confederacy from outside help, and several ships were stationed near the mouth of Tampa Bay.

Confederate blockade runners based in Tampa, Florida were able to repeatedly slip through the blockade to trade cattle and citrus for needed supplies, mainly with Spanish Cuba.

The Reconstruction period after the Civil War was a very hard time in Tampa history. There was no industry and very poor roads to and from the rest of the state. Yellow fever epidemics borne by mosquitos flourished and many residents simply packed up and left.

## ***Three Events That Formed Modern Tampa***

Tampa's resurrection from a virtual ghost town was spearheaded by three fortunate events toward the end of the nineteenth century.

First, phosphate was discovered southeast of Tampa in 1883. The mineral, vital for the production of fertilizers and other products, was soon being shipped out from the Port of Tampa in great volume. Second, Henry B. Plant's railroad line reached Tampa and its port shortly thereafter, connecting the small town to the country's railroad system. Tampa finally had the overland transportation link

that it needed. The railroad enabled phosphate and commercial fishing exports to go north and brought many new products into the Tampa market, as well as its first tourists. Third, the new railroad link attracted the cigar industry. In 1885, the Tampa Board of Trade helped Vicente Martinez Ybor move his cigar manufacturing operations to Tampa from Key West. Nearness to Cuba made imports of tobacco easy by sea, and Plant's railroad made shipment of finished cigars to the rest

of the US market easy by land. To house his workers, Ybor built hundreds of small houses around his factory. His factory and housing development were known as Ybor City, a place still famous in Tampa history. In the peak year of 1929, over 500,000,000 cigars were hand rolled in Tampa.

Tampa was chosen as an embarkation center for American troops in the Spanish-American War. Colonel Teddy Roosevelt and his Rough Riders were among the 30,000 troops who waited in Tampa for the order to ship out to Cuba during the summer of 1898.

In 1904, a local civic association of local businessmen dubbed themselves *Ye Mystic Krewe of Gasparilla* (named after mythical pirate Jose Gaspar), and staged an "invasion" of the city followed by a parade. With a few exceptions, the Gasparilla Pirate Festival has been held every year

since, and is a large part of the celebration of Tampa history. Unchanged since inception, pirate ships, with brightly-colored flags flying and cannons firing, manned by swash-buckling buccaneers sail into Tampa Bay; the Mayor still hands over the key to the city, surrendering it to the pirates, who parade down into the streets of downtown Tampa.

**SEE YOU IN TAMPA FOR THE 2019 AMMV  
NATIONAL CONVENTION!**





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**Tampa, FL – March 20-24, 2019**

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## Heave Ho!

AMMV 33<sup>rd</sup> National Convention  
March 20th – 24th, 2019  
The Westshore Grand, Tampa, FL

# COMMEMORATIVE MAGAZINE SPACE - ORDER FORM

*This is an invitation to offer recognition of the U.S. Merchant Marine and Navy Armed Guard Veterans of WWII. We offer this publication as a means for individuals, chapters, and outside organizations to express recognition and help support our annual reunion. You need not be a member of AMMV to advertise; all are welcome to participate!*

Black & White interior full page ..... x \$150 = \_\_\_\_\_

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*All convention attendees and paid advertisers will receive a copy. This publication will also be posted to our website: [ammv.us](http://ammv.us). Your copy will be mailed to the address provided below:*

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★ Artwork/completed page must be emailed to [shesova@aol.com](mailto:shesova@aol.com); do NOT mail your page ★

★ Full page submittals only (7.5" x 10"); files must be camera ready (no tweaking by us); PDF file preferred ★

★ Deadline to receive submittals is Feb 15<sup>th</sup> ★

**FOR MORE INFORMATION: Sheila Sova [shesova@aol.com](mailto:shesova@aol.com)**

# AMMV 33<sup>rd</sup> National Convention

**Tampa, FL – March 20th – March 24th, 2019**

**Tampa Westshore Grand**

*( Tentative Agenda )*

## **Wednesday, March 20th**

13:00 – 21:00 Early Registration (*Ybor*) & Hospitality Room open! (*Hillsborough*)

## **Thursday, March 21st**

08:30 – 11:30 Board of Director's Meeting (*Poinciana*); Registration (*Ybor*)  
11:30 – 13:30 Lunch break & Hospitality Room open! (*Hillsborough*)  
13:30 – 14:00 Opening Ceremonies (*Poinciana*)  
14:00 – 16:00 Officer Elections; Resolutions; misc. business (*Poinciana*)  
17:00 – 22:00 Hospitality Room Open! (*Hillsborough*) & Registration (*Ybor*)  
17:00 – 17:15 Bus loads for those attending dinner cruise  
18:00 – ??? *Starship I* dinner cruise

## **Friday, March 22nd**

09:00 – 10:15 Dave Yoho – WWII MM Vet & motivational speaker (*Poinciana*)  
10:15 – 10:45 Toni Horodysky – Merchant Marine at War website  
10:45 – 11:30 Business sessions (*Poinciana*)  
11:30 – 13:00 Lunch break & Hospitality Room open! (*Hillsborough*)  
13:00 – 16:00 Business sessions (*Poinciana*)  
16:00 – 18:00 Hospitality Room open! (*Hillsborough*)  
18:00 – ??? PATRIOTIC DINNER (*Bayshore 1 & 2*) - Speaker: Capt. John Konrad, founder of *gCaptain*; AMMV Awards Ceremony; Entertainment: Sally & Roy

## **Saturday, March 23rd**

08:45 – 09:00 Bus loads for *American Victory*  
09:00 – 18:00 *American Victory* interactive day; speaker: Historian Salvatore Mercogliano; other speakers, activities, & luncheon details TBA  
18:00 – 18:15 Bus loads for return to Westshore Grand  
18:30 – ??? Hospitality Room open! (*Hillsborough*)

## **Sunday, March 24th**

### **HOMEWARD BOUND**

Safe travels & see you next year!



# Convention Registration Form

AMMV 33<sup>rd</sup> National Convention

March 20th – 24th, 2019

The Westshore Grand, Tampa, FL

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Affiliation/Chapter: \_\_\_\_\_

Spouse/partner; additional guest(s): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_ State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

## CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEE (required to attend business sessions & hospitality room activities)

☐ SINGLE REGISTRATION (one person) ..... **\$100 = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

☐ DOUBLE REGISTRATION (with spouse/partner)..... **\$150 = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Additional \$25 per extra person in your party (if more than two) ..... **\$25 x** \_\_\_\_\_ **= \$** \_\_\_\_\_

## TAMPA BAY DINNER CRUISE (Yacht *Starship I*) (Thursday, March 21<sup>st</sup>: 6:30 - 9:30 pm)

Dinner Cruise..... # \_\_\_\_\_ @ **\$86 each = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

3 entrée choices (order when onboard) served with Chef's choice of starch and seasonal vegetable:

(1) Boneless breast of chicken stuffed with goat cheese, prosciutto and sun-dried tomato in white wine piccata sauce; (2) Pan-seared Atlantic Salmon with champagne dill sauce; (3) Vegetarian Entrée.

ALL selections include: Mixed greens salad; ice tea & coffee service; choice of dessert (cash bar available). Price includes bus transportation between the Westshore Grand Hotel and the vessel.

## PATRIOTIC DINNER (Friday, March 22<sup>nd</sup>: 6:30pm – 9:30 pm)

Cuban Mojo Chicken ..... # \_\_\_\_\_ @ **\$77 each = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Slow Roasted Pacific Salmon ..... # \_\_\_\_\_ @ **\$80 each = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Filet Mignon ..... # \_\_\_\_\_ @ **\$92 each = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

ALL selections include: InterContinental Salad; artisanal rolls and butter; coffee/tea selections; Chef's choice starch and vegetable; and dessert: Florida Key Lime tartlet with meringue topping (cash bar available).

## S/S AMERICAN VICTORY "interactive" day (Saturday, March 23<sup>rd</sup>)

***Please note that specific activities/times for the American Victory event have yet to be determined. Once details are finalized, you will be contacted by the Registration staff to RSVP; we will accept payment at the door for this portion of the convention. Thank you!***

**TOTAL due for all selections ..... = \$** \_\_\_\_\_

Please make check payable to: **AMMV**

**Mail check (no cash please) with completed form to:**

**AMMV, Attn: Convention, P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024**

# AMMV 33<sup>rd</sup> National Convention

March 20th – 24th, 2019

## Hotel & Reservation Information

# The Westshore Grand

4860 West Kennedy Blvd. Tampa, FL 33609



**Special AMMV rate: \$142 + tax per night**

**Reservations via phone: (866) 912-1041; group code: AMMV 2019**

**To make reservations online, please use this link:**

**<https://www.starwoodmeeting.com/events/start.action?id=1808106579&key=3AA5E33C>**

*24-hour room service available; Shula's Steakhouse onsite for breakfast & dinner; outdoor rooftop heated pool (6 a.m. – 10 p.m.); fitness center 24/7; complimentary guestroom internet; 3.3 miles from Tampa International Airport (free shuttle service 5 a.m. – 12:30 a.m. – call (813) 286-4400, or estimated \$20 taxi ride)*

**Guests can modify or cancel a reservation up to 48 hours in advance; however, please note your original reservation must be made by February 26th, 2019 to obtain our group rate (subject to availability); therefore, attendees are encouraged to not delay in making reservations.**



Membership Application for:

## AMMV MEMBER-AT-LARGE

(To join an organized Chapter, please contact AMMV HQ for further information.)

If you have served in the U.S. Merchant Marine at any time during Peace or War, or are a Veteran of any U.S. service branch, or are a family member/descendent/wife/widow of a WWII MM vet, then you are eligible to become a member of AMMV. Climb aboard and join us as we strive to educate the public about the role which the U.S. Merchant Marine has played throughout American history.

AMMV goals include: working to obtain overdue benefits & recognition for our WWII MM veterans, obtaining Veteran status for post-WWII U.S. merchant seamen, participating in memorial events, and supporting laws/program which promote our modern U.S.-flagged fleet. Membership includes an informative quarterly AMMV News magazine and an annual membership card. *AMMV is an incorporated not for profit group.*



Join online at [ammv.us](http://ammv.us) or complete the following information and send to National Headquarters:

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

D.O.B: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF APPLICATION: \_\_\_\_\_

Do you have a DD214? \_\_\_\_\_ If so, from what service(s)? \_\_\_\_\_

**Member-At-Large Dues are \$32 annually (July 1<sup>st</sup> through June 30<sup>th</sup>). Send check or money order for \$32 to:**

***American Merchant Marine Veterans  
P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024***

Questions? Please call AMMV HQ: (475) 470-9200; email [ammermarvets@gmail.com](mailto:ammermarvets@gmail.com)

# Sally and Roy

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