

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS

AMMMV NEWS

MAGAZINE



National Maritime Day
May 22, 2018

IN PEACE AND WAR



1775

SPRING 2018

- ★ A Disaster Page 18
- ★ Convention Report Page 24
- ★ Just Recognition Page 42



\$4.00



A. J. Wichita
September 3, 1927- December 26, 2017
AMMV President 2007-2011



American Merchant Marine Veterans
Official Publication
NEWS MAGAZINE

Published quarterly for the benefit of our members.

Foreign postage additional.

*Subscription included in membership fee
for AMMV members.*

Non-members: \$4.00 per copy.

NATIONAL HEADQUARTERS

American Merchant Marine Veterans

Lynn Kelly

P.O. Box 2024

Darien, CT 06820-2024

(475) 470-9200

ammermarvets@gmail.com

NATIONAL CORPORATE OFFICE

American Merchant Marine Veterans

8055 N. Dacca Terrace

Dunnellon, FL 34433-5413

NEWS EDITORIAL OFFICE

Sindy Raymond

2722 Maynes Ct.

Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Phone: (707) 546-6349

Cell: (707) 235-6598

saaren@sonic.net

The American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc.,
a Florida Corporation, not for profit, assumes no
responsibility for unsolicited material.

Published April 9, 2018

The editor and publisher of this magazine assume no
responsibility for errors in submitted material.

In This Issue . . .

National Officers	4
Regional Vice Presidents	4
Appointed Officers and Standing Committees.....	4
National President Report	5
National Secretary Report	7
National Treasurer Report.....	8
National Office Administrator Report	9
NEWS Magazine Editor Report	10
Editorial Committee & Graphic Design Contributor.....	12
AMMV Profit & Loss.....	13
What They're Saying.....	14
Memorial in Cape Coral, FL	15
Little Known Tourist Spot in San Francisco	16
Steamer <i>New Bedford</i> and its Patriotic Duty in WWII	17
A Disaster on the Great Lakes	18
AMMV Convention – International News	22
Crossed the Final Bar	23
AMMV Convention Report	24
9th Annual Congressional "Sail-In"	28
U.S. Merchant Marine Honored by VFW Post on Saipan.....	29
Welcome New Members	29
AMMV Convention Bus Tour	30
Korean Conflict Merchant Marine Group Application.....	32
What Was The MSTs?	34
The Invasion of Okinawa	36
Chapter News.....	38
National Maritime Day Service	41
Just Recognition.....	42
Can We Make America Great Again?	44
The National Maritime Center Can Help You	45
AMMV Membership Application	46



AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS

National Officers

National President **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*
P.O. Box 41 – Hurley, WI 54534-0041 – (715) 862-2531 – cjedyvean@hotmail.com

National Vice President... **Christian Yuhás** *Golden Gate Chapter*
P.O. Box 867 – Isleton, CA 95641 – (707) 398-5244 – cgyuhás@gmail.com

National Secretary **Shirley Cauble** *Oregon Chapter*
2657 Greyfox Dr. – Sutherlin, OR 97479 – (541) 459-7982 – riverbank2@charter.net

National Treasurer **John Pitts** *Member-at-Large*
21118 Hawaiian Ave. – Lakewood, CA 90715 – (562) 716-2899 – ameucman@aol.com

Regional Vice Presidents

Region ONE – FL, PR

Richard Arcand *Sarasota-Manatee Chapter*
5674 Bay Pines Lake Bl. - St. Petersburg, FL 33708-4513 - 727-392-5648 - rearand12@gmail.com

Region TWO – AL, DE, GA, KY, MD, MS, NC, SC, TN VA, DC, WV

George Bruno *Vulcan Mariners Chapter*
2131 Highway 130 W. - Shelbyville, TN 37160 - (510) 543-0966 - gibruno@pacbell.net

Region THREE - NJ, PA

Howard Pfeifer *Three Rivers Chapter*
2592 Cole Rd. - Wexford, PA 15090-7805 - (724) 935-6465 - howdypfeifer@yahoo.com

Region FOUR – CT, MA, ME, NH, NY, RI, VT

Michael Fiorenza *Member-at-Large*
234 N. Beech St. – Massapequa, NY 11756 – (516) 784-9516 – michaelfo.gr@sunymaritime.edu

Region FIVE – IA, IL, IN, MI, MN, NE, ND, OH, SD, WI

W.F. "Speed" Hinds *Ohio Valley Chapter*
7337 Lawyer Rd. - Cincinnati, OH 45244-3291 - (513) 232-7540 - speedhinds46@yahoo.com

Region SIX – AR, AZ, KS, LA, MO, NM, OK, TX

Bob Ross *Member-at-Large*
111 Stroud St. - El Dorado, AR 71730-5353 - (870) 863-4738 - csknight@suddenlink.net

Region SEVEN – AK, CO, ID, MT, NV, OR, UT, WA, WY

Carole Gutierrez *Oregon Chapter*
3740 NE 135th Ave. - Portland, OR 97230-2712 - (503) 252-8250 - photos.mcg@gmail.com

Region EIGHT – AUS, CA, HI

Larry Starn *Sacramento Valley Chapter*
13973 Gas Canyon Dr. - Nevada City, CA 95959-8802 - (530) 265-8340 - lstarn139@comcast.net

Appointed Officers

Judge Advocate: **Capt. Joseph Byrne** *Member-at-Large*
joe@captainbyrnelaw.com

Chaplain: **Bob Ross** *Member-at-Large*

Editor,

National Magazine: **Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*
(707) 546-6349 – saaren@sonic.net

Historian: vacant

Nat'l Public Relations:... **Sindy Raymond** *North Bay Mariners Chapter*

Nominating &

Credentials:..... **Richard "Ben" Benjamin** *Member-at-Large*
(317) 902-1491 – hoosierben@gmail.com

Standing Committees

Editorial:..... **Capt. Chris Edyvean** *Midwest Chapter*

Sindy Raymond *North Bay Mariners Chapter*

Carole Gutierrez *Oregon Chapter*

Government Affairs:..... **Morris Harvey (Co-Chair)** *Ocala Chapter*
(352) 397-1540 – Morris27@centurylink.net

Michael Helbig (Co-Chair) *Member-at-Large*
(907) 244-4238 – hanshelbig.helbig08@gmail.com

Charles Mills *Lone Star Chapter*

"Beech" Dale *Member-at-Large*

Deborah Rogow *Member-at-Large*

Veterans Affairs: vacant

Constitution & By-laws:.... **Richard Arcand** *Sarasota-Manatee Chapter*

Special Projects &

Veterans Outreach **Sheila M. Sova** *Member-at-Large*
(618) 659-3401 – shesova@aol.com

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

Sindy Raymond *North Bay Mariners Chapter*

Patti Scafidi *Member-at-Large*
(228) 671-6384 – patti.scafidi@gmail.com

Lynn Kelly *Member-at-Large*

Internet &

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

Morris Harvey *Ocala Chapter*



National President Capt. Chris Edyvean

32nd National Convention a Success



The AMMV 32nd National Convention is in the books. Many thanks to the Convention Committee members and our supporting local chapters, with an extra special thank you to Vice Chair Sheila Sova and her family, who went above and beyond for this event. Additional gratitude is expressed to the conference speakers who took time out of their busy schedules

to join us. Finally, I personally wish to thank everyone who contributed to Cindy Raymond's retirement party, which was a very special night! AMMV is already in the process of setting up a Florida-based convention in 2019, with Tampa being the focal point.

WWII Merchant Mariner Legislation

H.R. 154: "The Honoring our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2017" is stalled with 36 co-sponsors, with the most recent add-on being way back on December 7th. Meanwhile, S. 2127: "Merchant Mariners of WWII Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2017" has 17 co-sponsors. Each piece of legislation lacks a companion bill.

While we encourage phone calls and personalized letters to Congresspersons and Senators, a simple option exists via the Navy League's website which supports both bills and sends emails to one's representatives (based on zip code). This link takes only takes a minute to complete: <http://cqrcengage.com/navyleague/app/onestep-write-a-letter?0&engagementId=53252>

2018 Storm the Hill

As we head into press, a 2018 "Storm the Hill" has been confirmed. A five-person team led by Charles A. Mills will be visiting Congress during the week of National Maritime Day. Our group is being graciously sponsored once again by the Maritime Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS) and the Masters, Mates, and Pilots (MM&P) union.

Charles' team will spend four busy days promoting H.R. 154 and S. 2127 in the halls of the House of Representatives and the Senate. Plans also include a "public meeting" (we are trying to avoid the term "demonstration") on Monday, May 21st. The American Maritime

Officers (AMO) union is assisting with appointment scheduling, and the Seafarers International Union (SIU) and affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) have pledged to supply manpower for our public event. All AMMV members within the Washington, D.C. region are urged to attend.

All things considered, this looks to be our strongest efforts in quite a while. Extensive coverage of the 2018 Storm the Hill will be available on the AMMV Facebook and Twitter platforms.

Mathews Men author Geroux nearing completion of second book

William Geroux, author of *The Mathews Men: Seven Brothers and the War Against Hitler's U-boats*, has notified AMMV that his second book featuring the WWII U.S. Merchant Marine is near completion and is slated for release in the spring or summer of 2019. Geroux's new book is about the PQ-17 Convoy and is tentatively titled *The Ghost Ships of Archangel*.

(continued on next page)

Get a FREE Copy of...

PowerShips



THE Ship History Magazine

PowerShips is the ultimate source for stories about powerful ships, spirited passengers and hardworking crews, published quarterly by the nation's oldest ship history organization.

Email info@sshhsa.org or call 1-401-463-3570 and we'll send you a FREE copy and tell you how to subscribe.

STEAMSHIP HISTORICAL
SOCIETY OF AMERICA

INFO@SSHSA.ORG • WWW.SSHSA.ORG



Preserving History

Our National Convention saw a unique mix of WWII Veterans, family members of Vets, friends, and outside organizations unite to celebrate the legacy of the U.S. Merchant Marine. Each person who attended is in some way important to our organization. However, I would especially like to point out those individuals who made the trip to St. Louis with the ultimate goal of helping to preserve our WWII history. Dave Albergh of NOAA, who spoke at our 2017 convention, returned with a four-person film crew and spent a full day conducting video interviews with our Vets. Secondly, author Marcie Sextro, who is the granddaughter of a WWII MM Vet, was in attendance with her husband. Marcie also held interviews with many of our Veterans as part of her research for an upcoming book about Merchant Mariner training on Santa Catalina Island during WWII. If any of our readers know of people/groups who would like to arrange interviews with Merchant Marine Vets, there is no better time or place than at our annual convention. Thank you, Dave & team and Marcie, for your efforts in preserving this vital history.

"Dues will soon be due!"

Your AMMV National Officers wish to keep annual dues amounts at \$25 per chapter member and \$32 per Member-at-Large. However, we spend a great deal of money, time, and effort each year tracking down members for delinquent dues. If you are a Member-at-Large, please think ahead and be proactive by mailing in your dues for the upcoming fiscal year (July 1st, 2018 – June 30, 2019); this assists AMMV in our desire to avoid increasing membership dues.

In closing, I wish a happy spring to everyone!

Christopher J. Edyvean

Capt. Christopher Edyvean
AMMV National President



Marilyn and her twin sister!



Robin Sova, Sheila Sova, Kathy Sova and Juanita Sova



Patti Scafidi



Commodore Martin Connell and Don Scafidi



National Secretary Shirley Cauble

Progress in Florence, OR:

It is time again to check in and report to you. The time has gone by so quickly.



It was my pleasure a few weeks ago to be able to go over to see the progress being made at the Veterans museum in the coastal town of Florence, Oregon. It has been a while since that day that when Nelson and I were first told that there was no room for our Merchant Marine display over there, and that they are still busy getting things

gathered up and displayed in the main room. All who work there are volunteers and could not be nicer. The gift shop of course is ready for your business and we left them some more items to add to what was there. I didn't take anything back home that I had carried over at some point in past visits.

At the entrance to the main room, they now have our newest addition which is a 4 ft. replica of a Liberty ship. They told me that it cost them \$5,000. They were also very busy repainting some of the larger areas, and there seemed to be a lot of new additions all around the room, since we were there several months ago. they all talked about Nelson and have his picture in "our" glass case.

I hope that sometime you will join me for a visit and that, by then, it will be completed. Of course it is always our plan to have a really good sea food dinner before we come home. So, it was a good day and I'm proud

of our efforts to make the Merchant Marine well known. They are, now, doing a good job making sure the Merchant Marine are well represented. .

AMMV NATIONAL CONVENTION:

I am so very proud of the fine, dedicated members of our AMMV who put together another National convention. You have made us all proud and I salute you all for you have done in the months now behind us To bring a convention together is no easy task and it takes willingness to give time, and effort to make it work. I speak from a lot of past experience and applaud all of you who had a part in making our AMMV conventions work for all these years.

I deeply regret that I could not be with you, but please know that my thoughts and prayers were in full force throughout those special days. You can be very sure that I anxiously read the reports of the activities, and was so proud to salute what you put together for these days.

I also wiped my eyes as we must say: "well done" to our most precious one, Sindy. She has been my lifeline for a lot of years and will always be someone who cannot be praised enough for the work she has done for us. Sindy, you are loved! I also must say a grateful thank you to our very special president Chris! What a joy to know him! We are truly blessed to have him aboard and I thank him for his kindness and help to me. So, I'm glad you had a wonderful few days together, laughed a lot, cried a few tears for those not there, and I know that I have been truly blessed to have known you.

I will close this by quoting my favorite scripture which says,
WATCH! STAND FAST IN THE FAITH; BE BRAVE; BE STRONG.

Sincerely,

SHIRLEY J. CAUBLE
National Secretary





National Treasurer John Pitts



A day has been set aside, by Presidential proclamation, to recognize the US Maritime Industry and all those contributing to this industry through their service. The vessels, and those who sail them, are at the heart of this industry, but not to be forgotten are the heroic deeds of those who have preceded us and provided us with the ability to continue to sail under the US-flag. Although currently, there are less working ships under the US-flag than at any time in the recent past, we still do have a presence. That presence is in the memorials dedicated to the contributions and sacrifice of the US Merchant Mariners which grace cities across the United States and, also those US Merchant Marine Veterans, and their supporters, who still clamor for recognition of their efforts in defense of our country and our way of life. These memorials silently tell their story and educate the uninformed.

On January 13, 1988, the American Merchant Marine Veterans China Coasters Chapter, located in Wilmington, California, realized a hard-fought victory when WWII US Merchant Mariners were granted Veterans status. The China Coasters wanted to memorialize the Veterans status as well as the actions and losses of the US Merchant Marine involved in WWII. What started as an idea of placing a block of engraved stone as a memorial developed into a major project culminating in the casting of a bronze statue depicting two Merchant Mariners on a Jacob's ladder, one shipmate pulling the other from the sea.

Bill Schwab, a US Merchant Marine Veteran of WWII and a member of the AMMV China Coasters, and his wife Gertrude, attended Banning High School with Jasper d'Ambrose, a credited, professional sculptor. When Bill and Gertrude explained their plans for a memorial to US Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII, Jasper gladly consented to do some testing and drawings for review by the China Coasters. Plans were put into motion, and it was obvious that this was going to be an undertaking of mass proportions with fundraising, acquirement of City land, permitting, approvals from numerous civic committees, construction and things far beyond the realm of most sailors, and far exceeding a block of engraved stone.

A vote was taken to establish a Memorial Committee to manage the construction and maintenance of the American

Merchant Marine Memorial to be located on the corner of Harbor Boulevard and 6th Street in San Pedro, California, a prime piece of property in the heart of San Pedro which was approved for the site of the Memorial by Mayor Bradley. This committee was Chaired by retired Chief Engineer, Kings Point graduate, and China Coaster, Ted Kedzierski. Although not a Veteran, Ted's efforts were the driving force behind the successful completion of the Memorial site. The American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial was dedicated on National Maritime Day, May 22, 1989.

As years went by, the fact that most Merchant Mariners who were killed at sea, or abroad, had no place of singular recognition for the lives they led and the sacrifice they made, there was no graveyard to visit or headstone to acknowledge them. It was decided to expand the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial by adding 5 black granite Walls of Honor engraved with the names of each US Vessel and Crew, lost to hostile action in WWII. The Vessels and Crew that were lost on them are both listed alphabetically, for ease of location, and span both sides of the Walls which emanate from the center fountain and compliment the original Memorial Statue. These Walls of Honor are the only headstone many of these brave Mariners will ever have.

Since the dedication of the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial on National Maritime Day, May 22, 1989, the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Committee has conducted a Memorial service each year on May 22nd, National Maritime Day. The service lasts about an hour and features speakers which include US Merchant Marine Veterans; local, state & federal government representatives; Rifle salute & TAPS by VFW Rifle Post 2967; Benediction & blessing of wreaths by local clergy. The attendance ranges between 200 and 300 depending on the day of the week and weather. The service is followed by lunch at a nearby restaurant featuring presentations by US Merchant Mariners and representatives of the US Maritime industry.

2018 marks the 29th year that the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Committee will be hosting this Memorial service we hope you will join us in remembering and honoring the service, sacrifice and victory won by US Merchant Marine Veterans.

Fair Winds & Following Seas.

Fraternally,

John Pitts
Chairman, AMMVMC, Inc.



National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly

Dues Are Due:



In the area of Business; I just want to remind everyone that our dues are expected by July 1, 2018 for the next Membership Year, which is **July 1, 2018 through June 30, 2019**. If you are a Member-at-Large please send your check for \$32 for the upcoming year to American Merchant Marine Veterans or AMMV, P. O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024. If you are a Chapter Member please remit your dues to your CEO/Treasurer. If you were a member of a recently dissolved chapter and have not chosen to join another chapter, please know that AMMV now considers you a Member-at-Large and your \$32 dues should be sent to the National Headquarters at the above noted address. For all members, upon submission of dues please note any address changes.

AMMV National Convention:

The obvious subject on which to report is the convention in St Louis. It was wonderful. The speakers were informative, the entertainment so much fun, and, needless to say, the company delightful. Of course, the way our veterans were regarded at Anheuser Busch Brewery was very touching. Our visit to the Chesterfield Veterans' Honor Park was so uplifting. For me, however, the most rewarding part of my first convention was being introduced to some of the most honorable men who ever served this wonderful country. For those of you who were unable to join us I wish to highlight a few of the WW 2 Veterans who attended.

One of our attendees is one of the few remaining survivors of the air raid on Bari, Italy. On Dec 2, 1943 105 German Bombers succeeded in a surprise attack on shipping and personnel operating in support of the Allied Italian Campaign, sinking 28 merchant ships in Bari Harbor. Hits on two ammunition ships caused explosions and a petroleum pipeline on the dock was severed. The gushing fuel ignited causing a sheet of burning fuel to spread over much of the harbor engulfing any previously undamaged ships. Perhaps the most shocking of the details is the fact that the U.S. Liberty ship John Harvey had been carrying a secret cargo of mustard gas (banned in 1925). One thou-

sand military and merchant mariners were killed as well as one thousand civilians, particularly high numbers partially attributed to the mustard gas.

Another of our Vets attending the convention was on the second ship allowed ashore in Nagasaki, Japan after the bomb was dropped. His Liberty Ship crew delivered their cargo as part of the post-war humanitarian relief efforts. I think about how he must have viewed the war.

A third Merchant Mariner, whose story I was privileged to hear, told me he contracted tuberculosis while overseas. When he was sent home to be treated he tried to enter a military hospital in the US. He was turned away because they did not consider him a member of the military. He then went to a civilian hospital where he was turned away because they did not consider him a civilian but a member of the military service. This is so typical of the incidents which have followed the MM Vets for over 70 years. This is why we are here and why people like our newest member, who signed up at the convention, continue to fight for the rights of MM WW2 Veterans. She is the daughter of a Vet who was one of five brothers serving in the Merchant Marines. We need to depend on the help of the next generation (and the next) to continue to right a terrible wrong.

In writing this column you'll notice I did not attribute these tales to any one particular MM Vet. It isn't because I don't know their names but because each story is everyone's story. These are representative of so many of our Veterans' experiences. For me, it was an honor to spend even just a few days with these amazing heroes.

Calm Seas,

Lynn C. Kelly
National Office Administrator



NEWS Magazine Editor Sindy Raymond



Our 32nd AMMV National convention in Saint Louis, MO was the best convention I've ever attended. Now, this may sound a little extreme but for me, personally, it was overwhelming. The accolades that were heaped on me were amazing – the ship's wheel shaped retirement plaque; the special, surprise letter from MARAD Administrator Mark

Buzby; the 2-dozen red roses presented to me, during a business session, by our MidWest chapter; the cards and letters from all over; the "honored guest" dancing and singing with Sally and Roy at the first night's banquet; everything was very, very, very much appreciated by me. And many, many THANK YOUs for all of it. I definitely feel honored.

It's been several weeks now, since then, and I'm still overwhelmed. I'm still re-living it through the over 300 photographs that various people sent us of the event. For all of you who couldn't or didn't attend, later in this edition of the NEWS, there will be many pictures of it all for your enjoyment. If you did attend, I hope you will enjoy the pictures, too.

"Retirement" hasn't really happened quite yet, though:

Maybe my official retirement date, for the National office Administrator portion, was January 1, 2018 but I seem to have been busier with AMMV work since then than I was previously. This is probably due to the efforts on one person who didn't get enough recognition at the Convention – our National President, Captain Christopher Edyvean. Without Chris, our convention Memory Book and the convention itself would, perhaps, not have happened. He spent hours and hours on the minute details of everything; I know, because our email lines were definitely linked.

However, THANK YOU, CHRIS, for all your work and dedicated efforts. They certainly were worthwhile. And a big thank you to all the other volunteers who worked so diligently to make this convention a success; you know who you are and hope you know that you are appreciated.



John Pitts, Sindy Raymond and Capt. Chris Edyvean

My door is always open:

My own plans for the future may be a little flexible, but please be assured that you're not getting rid of me that easily. I'm still going to be editing the quarterly AMMV NEWS MAGAZINE and working with membership recruitment and public relations, where I can. Please feel free to contact me whenever you like. I will get back to you, maybe slowly, as soon as possible.

However, DUES will be DUE by July 1st for our upcoming fiscal year. Members-at-large should send theirs to:

AMMV National Office
P. O. Box 2024
Darien, CT 06820-2024

If you have any questions about dues, please contact our National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly at (475) 470-9200 or email her at: ammermarvets@gmail.com and she'll be glad to help you.

Chapter dues should also been sent, through your chapter, to that office. AMMV NEWS Magazine information should still be sent to my Santa Rosa, CA address.

As we move on:

Our favorite motivational speaker, Dave Yoho, adamantly urged us, at the convention, to "Hell No – We won't go away!" AMMV, as an organization, has moved forward recently, into an up-dated phase, and we all need to help keep the momentum going, in order to "Not go away". Please do what you

can to help in some phase of this forward movement, whether it's legislative activity, Veterans' status attainment efforts, membership recruitment; social networking or attendance at the planned Storm the Hill Rally in Washington, DC on Maritime Day. Let's all work to assure this forward motion continues. As we say, out here in the West, "Forward, Ho!"

FAIR WINDS and SMOOTH SAILING,

Sindy Raymond
SINDY



U.S. Department
of Transportation
Maritime
Administration

ADMINISTRATOR

1200 New Jersey Avenue, SE
Washington, DC 20590

March 15, 2018

Ms. Saaren "Sindy" Raymond
2722 Maynes Court
Santa Rosa, CA 95405

Dear Ms. Raymond:

I would like to take this opportunity to personally thank you for your service to the Nation and to the men and women of the U.S. Merchant Marine as you complete over a decade of service to the American Merchant Marine Veterans. Your dedicated efforts have been key to ensuring that the voices of the American Merchant Marine veterans are heard, that there is a place where their stories can be told, and most importantly that the voices of these brave men and women are not lost to future generations.

Your service as the Secretary for the Just Cause Compensation Committee is equally noteworthy and appreciated. As a proud Merchant Mariner, myself, who had the honor of sailing with, and being instructed by numerous veterans of the Second World War, I hold in high esteem this committee and its dedication to gaining recognition for what the Merchant Marine has done for our Nation. Your efforts to help further that mission are deeply appreciated.

Ms. Raymond, your dedication, loyalty and devotion to duty are most heartily commended and are in keeping with the highest traditions of the U.S. Merchant Marine. All the very best as you chart a course toward your very well deserved retirement.

Yours aye,

*Congratulations
and Thank you!*

Mark H. Buzby

mailed off on 2/26/18 @



Editorial Committee & Graphic Design Contributor **Carole Gutierrez**

Hello Spring – Good Bye Winter!



WOW! What a terrific National Convention; what a success and what fun! Unfortunately, I was unable to attend; I was recuperating from spinal surgery instead. And before I get started here, I want to take a moment to thank all those

who sent their well wishes. It worked! Now down to business.

The 32nd National Convention Memory Book was more popular than ever. In fact, we went over our limit on pages and had to work with our printer to include all who wished to participate. Patti Scafidi, with Captain Chris Edyvean and Sindy Raymond did a whale of a job filling the pages. The submissions, many of them memorials, were very professional and filled with respect.

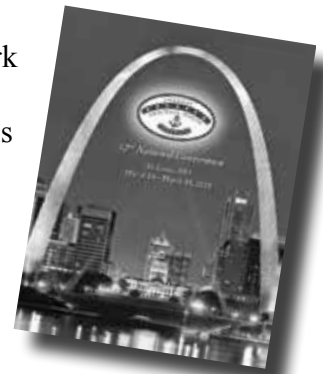
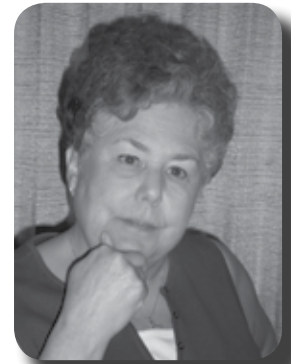
The most difficult part of producing this years book was creating a memorial page for the late A. J. Wichita. I first met A. J. at the 2008 convention held in Portland, Oregon. After producing the Memory Book that year, A. J. sought me out to recruit me for work with National. We became good friends and because my own father had passed, A. J. “adopted” me – I became another of his daughter. When I lost my husband, A. J. had his prayer circle say prayers for both of us and lit candles for Max. He basically held my hand during my early grieving. It was a real honor knowing A. J. and I will miss him.

There has been discussion over the past few years about the future of our national conventions due to lack of attendance and support. This year was very different. Yes, we had many of our member veterans. But also we had descendants of World War II Merchant Mariners who attended to honor their family members who sacrificed so much. That made a real impression and held a promise that AMMV may have a good future.

The business meetings were productive; the dinners had good food, good fellowship, the speakers were interesting and informative. And there was fun with Sally and Roy. But the smiles were abundant during the bus tour. The hit was the visit and tour of the Anheuser-Busch Brewery and some one-on-one time with one of the world-famous Clydesdale horses, those big-footed beauties which are so popular with visitors. AMMV received a warm welcome everywhere, including the airport and the Anheuser-Busch hospitality room with its special welcoming banner, which was given to us when we left. Also, let’s not forget the police and Patriot Guard escort into the Chesterfield Memorial Veterans Park where we were greeted by “Heave Ho” and a television crew.

We also had fun honoring Sindy Raymond in a surprise retirement party. Sindy retired as AMMV’s office administrator at the first of the year. She has, however, remained the Editor of AMMV NEWS. Lucky for us! This is the favorite thing she does for AMMV. It is a difficult task that requires a special talent. Captain Chris put the word out asking folks to send congratulatory cards for Sindy to his home in advance of the convention so we could surprise her with them at her party.

So from the convention, we sail toward the 2018/2019 fiscal year, with challenges and changes that hold promise for our future.



Carole Gutierrez

CAROLE GUTIERREZ

AMMV
Profit & Loss
 July 2017 through March 2018

Ordinary Income/Expense

Income

402 · CONTRIBUTIONS	6,755.62
403 · INTEREST INCOME	41.85
405 · MISSION SUPPORT FUND	6,360.00
406 · DVD SALES	137.00
407 · RECRUITMENT MAIL INCOME	1,360.00
409 · MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	268.00
410 · CHAPTER DUES	
BSM · BIG SKY MARINERS	140.00
AKG · ALASKA GREATLANDS	126.00
BEE · BEEHIVE MARINERS	100.00
CEC · CENTRAL CALIFORNIA	225.00
DAR · DENNIS ROLAND	2,325.00
EOH · EDWIN O'HARA	425.00
GLD · GOLDEN GATE	1,517.00
GUL · GULFSTREAM	675.00
HIR · HIGH ROLLERS	425.00
HUM · HUMBOLDT BAY	250.00
JTS · JOHN T. SCHMIDT/PALMETTO	500.00
LON · LONE STAR	225.00
MAL · MEMBERS AT LARGE	27,774.42
MALW · MEMBER-AT-LARGE - WEBPAGE	1,408.64
MGC · MISSISSIPPI GULF COAST	32.00
NBM · NORTH BAY MARINERS	475.00
NOA · NORTH ATLANTIC	475.00
OCA · OCALA CHAPTER	475.00
OHV · OHIO VALLEY	375.00
ORE · OREGON	650.00
ORV · OSWEGO RIVER VALLEY	75.00
PUG · PUGET SOUND	250.00
ROR · ROAD RUNNER	275.00
SAR · SARASOTA-MANATEE	300.00
SSP · SS SAMUEL PARKER	557.00
SWF · SOUTHWEST FLORIDA	247.00
THR · THREE RIVERS	725.00

Total 410 · CHAPTER DUES 41,027.06

Total Income 55,949.53

Expense

500 · FIXED EXPENSE	
501 · BANK CHARGE	206.88
503 · EQUIP RENTAL	300.00
507 · TELEPHONE	1,828.77
508 · RENT/OCCUPANCY	1,800.00
509 · UTILITIES	600.00

Total 500 · FIXED EXPENSE 4,735.65

512 · MEMORIAL EXPENSE	284.65
513 · ADVERTISING	200.00

520 · MISSION ADVANCE	
523 · DONATION	110.00
521 · AWARDS	1,840.69
525 · MISSION SUPPORT EXPENSE	6,746.18

Total 520 · MISSION ADVANCE 8,696.87

522 · RECRUITMENT & SPECIAL MAILING	1,949.67
526 · INTERNET INITIATIVE	488.15
528 · JCC CLOSING EXPENSE	584.00

530 · NEWS LETTER

533 · POSTAGE	3,526.89
536 · PRINTING	10,906.19
537 · GRAPHIC DESIGN	300.00
538 · LAYOUT	3,300.00
539 · EDITORIAL FEE	900.00

Total 530 · NEWS LETTER 18,933.08

550 · PERSONNEL

551 · ADMINISTRATOR	14,208.35
552 · NATIONAL PRESIDENT	753.70
554 · NATIONAL TREASURER	500.00

Total 550 · PERSONNEL 15,462.05

560 · OPERATING EXPENSES

564 · OFFICE SUPPLIES	1,375.30
565 · POSTAGE - OFFICE	1,356.32
566 · PRINTING - OFFICE	335.20
567 · LICENSES & FEES	25.00
568 · TRAVEL EXPENSE	1,722.67

Total 560 · OPERATING EXPENSES 4,814.49

Total Expense 56,148.61

Net Ordinary Income -199.08

Net Income -199.08

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

*Dues are now to be sent to our new
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 are due
July 1st.*

WHAT THEY'RE



SAYING



Lori Gracey
(Daughter of WWII MM Vet Glen Gracey)

"I have to echo what so many are saying. The convention in St. Louis was more like a family gathering than a mere convention. This was our first time to an AMMV event and I truly hope it is only the first of many yet to come. Our thanks to everyone who helped make it a truly wonderful and memorable experience. Well done!"



David Holmes
(Author; son of a WWII MM Vet)

"Best convention I have ever been to, also felt more like a family reunion."



Marcie Sextro
(Author; granddaughter of a WWII MM Vet)

"Thanks so much for inviting us to the convention. It was so informative, inspiring and a lot of fun. Looking forward to next year."



John Pitts
(AMMV National Treasurer)

"This was so much more than just a convention. Great, informative, productive time. Fabulous job organizing and directing everything..."



Kimberly Jones
(Granddaughter of WWII MM Vet Charles Mills)

"For my first time at an AMMV Convention, I was at awe to see the love, respect, proud. From younger veterans to older veterans... Family and friends to have such great passion for the Merchant Marine Veterans. Truly blessed to be in a room of such."

MEMORIAL IN CAPE CORAL, FL.



Our AMMV Southwest Florida chapter, in Cape Coral/Ft. Myers vicinity, has undertaken a project to install a Merchant Marine Flag and Memorial in our local Veterans Park. I'm aware that many Chapters around the United States have undertaken projects like this and the memorials are beautiful!

Wish to highlight that three WWII members of this chapter; Jim Sciple, Leo Selvey, and Captain John Arens who have worked hard motivating this cause!

If there are any other WWII Merchant Marine Veterans in our SWFL area please shout out to me or go to www.ammv.us to update your contact information! We still share sea stories every third Tuesday at the Military Museum. Members-at-Large and people wishing to get onboard this project should know that we are targeting a ceremony for 22 May 2019.

THE MEMORIAL:

This task was launched in January, 2018 with various support groups hosted by the organization, SWFMM.ORG. Our late, past President Mary Hodges, established this relationship with the Museum. Her late Husband, Frank Hodges, a WW II Merchant Marine Veteran also a SWF Chapter President; he survived (4) torpedo attacks of which the last was a Tanker.

The Veterans Park, (public land), configuration is already established and presentation that is well honored. The Merchant Marine Flag and Memorial is in the final design phase specifically the granite stone, and will soon go before the City Planning and permitting office for authorizations.

One detail that almost derailed this project from the start was the Merchant Marine flag pole height installation in our Veterans Park. The Park layout already constructed and space allowed for this new project, placed a flag pole height parameter on the Merchant Marine compared with our Armed Forces flag height. Statements were implied that we are not an Armed Force/Service. I respectfully disagreed to this position.

The current arrangement is that our Armed Forces flag height is 30 feet, Ensign is at 35 feet. The placement of

the Merchant Marine Flag and Memorial is allocated next to (3) commemorative War flags at a height of 20 feet. Granite Stone is in final stages of layout which will include the NAVAL ARMED GUARD logo and shared senti-

ments.

After much soul searching and receiving words of wisdom from multiple distinguished Maritime leaders, inclusive of our own WWII members, I simply learned a "Way Ahead".

That is, get the Merchant Marine Flag in there! A little bit of something is better than a whole lot of nothing! Flag etiquette states that Armed Service Flags are flown from left to right based on seniority; the Merchant Marine predates the Army by 2 Days!

Please note, all known WWII history of our Merchant Marine, and Naval Armed Guard was reviewed during this project's committee meetings. We did indeed have one of our own WWII Merchant Marine SWFL members in attendance.

Wish to give a shout out to a few heavy hitters that have stepped up donating various items:

-**Brian Orme V.P., Padgett Swann Inc.**, in Tampa is nearing completion of Wheel conditioning and machining of a support stand. The Wheel is scaled down to meet height restrictions of Park.

-**Edward Blot of Blot Engineering Inc.**, in Cape Coral has provided the Structural engineering drawings.

-**MARAD** - has conveyed interest and committed to donating the initial Flag to be flown!

If you would like to take part in this project please consider making a tax deductible donation by going on-line to www.gofundme.com/us-merchant-marine-memorial; or by submitting a check to the Southwest Military Museum, a 501-3-C non-profit corp., at 4820 Leonard Street, Cape Coral, FL 33904-4820. Point of Contact: Captain Dru DiMattia/USMM, 239-243-3409, drudimattia@gmail.com. Attention: Merchant Marine Memorial.

Thank you for your support!

Dru DiMattia

AMMV Shouthwest Florida Chapter

A LITTLE KNOWN TOURIST SPOT IN SAN FRANCISCO

In a little valley ringed by trees on the edge of the Presidio of San Francisco is a lost cemetery containing the graves of hundreds of merchant seamen, buried years ago and virtually forgotten. The graves are unmarked and the names of many buried there are unknown.

Way back in 1875, the Treasury Department built a U.S. Marine Hospital at the Presidio just west of Mountain Lake to provide for the temporary relief of sick or disabled seamen from all around the world. Though located on the military post, the hospital was not run by the U.S. Army.

From 1881 until 1912, sailors who died here and who could not be returned home were laid to rest on a hillside behind the hospital. More than 500 mariners from 30 states and 43 countries were buried here. As the years passed, the cemetery was forgotten and turned into a landfill. It wasn't until 1989 that the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rediscovered the site.

Most of the men interned here were in their 20s and 30s and died of tuberculosis and other respiratory diseases. Other deaths were caused by scurvy, leprosy, malaria, syphilis, cancer, cirrhosis, diabetes, heart disease, pneumonia, and gunshot wounds. In addition to the sailors and marines, the cemetery also includes the remains of a hospital attendant, nurse, gardener, and one of the doctors' stillborn son. The earliest burials were in redwood coffins provided by the hospital, which later built a crematory and buried the ashes of the deceased in bronze urns. The headstones were of whitewashed wood but remained intact until at least 1930.

In 1902, the city of San Francisco passed a law against burials within the city limits. The Marine Cemetery, located in the Presidio, was technically not affected by the law, but in 1912 all U. S. Marine hospitals became Public Health Service Hospitals. The marine burial ground at the Presidio was no longer used and fell into disrepair by the 1930s. During 1952 construction to expand the hospital, the cemetery was to be moved to make way for a dump (Landfill 8), consisting of 16 feet of construction debris and toxic materials. The Veterans Administration took over the hospital and covered the graveyard and the dump above it with a parking lot in 1969.

President Ronald Reagan decommissioned the hos-

pital in 1981, and the National Park Service took over the Presidio from the U. S. Army in 1989. During the transfer, a U. S. Army Corps of Engineers archaeological team discovered that the remains had never been removed and, that under the debris of Landfill 8, the Marine Cemetery was still in place -though some of the graves had been disturbed by the placement of the landfill.

History Meets Nature

Rather than disturb the graves further, in 2011 the Presidio restored the area to its pre-European ecosystem, a dune habitat planted with native grasses and flowers, including the endangered San Francisco Lessingia, which attracts bees, birds, reptiles, and butterflies to the graveyards.

It features a boardwalk and overlook and is connected to the rest of the Presidio by a trail. To recreate the dunes, the Presidio secured 25,000 cubic yards of native sand made available when the underground parking garage was built at the de Young Museum in Golden Gate Park.

Interpretive signs and a stone plaque honor those buried at the Marine Cemetery Vista.

The Marine Cemetery Vista was created to ensure that the long-departed sailors would never be forgotten again.

As with many sites in the Presidio, this is a place where history and nature converge. The vista is located along the Mountain Lake Trail, a boardwalk that snakes through the native dune plants and grasses that now grow and thrive here.

Visit the Marine Cemetery Vista

The Marine Cemetery Vista is immediately behind the former hospital, now a housing community known as the Presidio Landmark. The PresidiGo Shuttle stops nearby. If driving, paid parking can be found on Wedemeyer Street.

Next time you're looking to see something that's on not the hot tourist spots list when you're in San Francisco, stop by and take a view.

Editor's note: Thanks to Frank Mendez of our Golden Gate chapter for reminding us of this hidden historic spot. He recently was speaking to someone at a function and she forwarded him some information which he kindly passed along.



Steamer *NEW BEDFORD* and its Patriotic Duty in WWII

My military service on the SS *NEW BEDFORD* began just after the war in Europe ended. We were recruited by the Army Transportation Corps. (ATC), shortly before completing training at Sheepshead Bay to man small Army vessels in the European Theatre of Operations.

After landing in a troopship at La Havre, France in April, 1945, we headed by train for Cherbourg with orders to take over two small troop carriers from their English crews.

Arriving at Cherbourg, we went by Army truck to a bombed out dock area. There we saw the *NEW BEDFORD* and her sister ship, the *Naushon* for the first time. Being from Ohio, I was reminded of the Ohio and Mississippi riverboats because they were similar in design to these two Fall River Line Steamers.

I was assigned to the *NEW BEDFORD* as an Oiler. After storing my gear, I went down to the engine room where I was greeted by my English counterpart. Tom was one of the skeleton crew left aboard when the *NEW BEDFORD* came over from Southampton, England several weeks earlier. When I asked how the engine ran, he replied in a thick cockney accent: "She runs like a blinking sewing machine, she does."

The interior of the ship had been stripped to the bare bulkheads and then single, cot-type beds were installed and bolted to the deck. It seemed that she had been used as a hospital ship or perhaps as a floating barracks.

After a brief indoctrination by our English friends, we took over the ship. Each day more officers and crew arrived. The final mix had the fresh and inexperienced as well as old salts, such as Scandinavian seamen Captain Ole O. Holme and Chief Engineer Eric Brohman, who had much seetime. While adding crew, we took the time to clean, polish, repair and perform routine maintenance. The deck crew chipped and painted, and in several weeks great progress showed. This transformation made us all a bit more confident about taking the *NEW BEDFORD* to sea.

Unfortunately, the English crew



didn't volunteer much of the ship's history. Several years earlier both the *Naushon* and the *NEW BEDFORD* had been supplied to the English under a lend-lease agreement. On the trip over, manned by British Merchant Navy volunteers, they were part of the famous "Honeymoon Convoy" of eight similar ships. Other ships were the *Warfield*, the *Southland*, the *Northland* and the *Yorktown*. It was reported that the *NEW BEDFORD* and her crew saved a large number of the *Boston* and *New York's* crew when these ships were sunk. Legend has it that the *NEW BEDFORD* even sank one of the attacking submarines.

OUR MAIDEN VOYAGE

Several weeks later, we took the *NEW BEDFORD* on our maiden voyage to Southampton, England. We carried 300 Army personnel going to the U.K. for R & R. This channel crossing was one of the worst. It was extremely rough and many crew and passengers became sea sick. The *NEW BEDFORD* proved to be quite seaworthy, but in heavy seas she pitched and when the splash rail hit the water, everything, including the engine shook and vibrated. After a number of trips one became used to it. But on this first trip it was very disconcerting.

On one trip we carried a load of Army prisoners from Southampton to Cherbourg. Several passengers were convicted murderers headed for Marseille to be executed. This was another rough crossing and many prisoners locked down below

deck became ill, but the MPs guarding the prisoners suffered a similar fates. MPs huddled together on deck and weapons of every description were stacked in piles about the deck.

AUGUST 14, 1945 V.J. DAY

That day found us on our way to Southampton. When the news of the Japanese surrender came over the radio, it was broadcast over the ship's P.A. system. As we sailed into the straits, off the Isle of Wright, ships laying at anchor were firing machine guns with tracer bullets into the air. We tied up to the dock, quickly changed into our dress uniforms and went to town. The Southampton City Center was like Times Square on V.E. Day. All of the resentment between the English and the American military personnel had vanished and the city partied for several days. Everyone in uniform was treated royally.

With the end of the war, we settled into a routine of shuttling U.S. troops from Le Havre to Southampton for their return home. In late October, I too caught a Victory Ship home and arrived in the states shortly before the holidays.

For another two years, I continued to sail aboard tankers, Victory Ships and Liberty Ships but the *NEW BEDFORD* always held a special place in my memory and in my heart. I often wondered what happened to her.

In 1992, I went to the Fall River Maritime Museum and learned much to my surprise, that after the war the *NEW BEDFORD* returned to New England and was put back into service on the Block Island run for several years before being scrapped in the early 1950s. I heard about her sistership and went to see her. While standing on the dock, admiring her, I couldn't help but think back to that day in 1945, when I boarded my first ship, the S.S. *NEW BEDFORD*.

Editor's note: This article, written many years ago by his late Uncle Bert Hinds, AMMV RVP and chairman of the Ohio Valley chapter, was submitted by Bill "Speed" Hinds, himself a very active AMMV member. Thanks, Speed.

A Disaster On The Great Lakes – Worse than the *Titanic* or the *Lusitania*

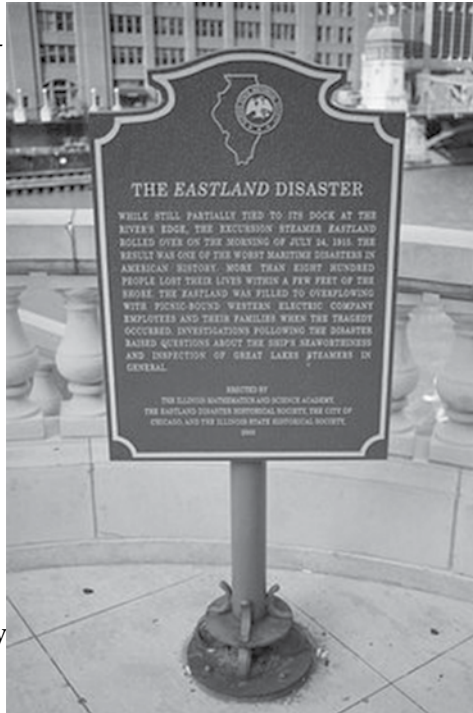
At 7:18 a.m. on July 24, 1915, the crew of the Great Lakes excursion steamer *Eastland* prepared for that morning's journey and hauled in its gangplank, forcing a tardy passenger to leap aboard from the wharf along the Chicago River.

Despite the cool, damp weather, 2,573 passengers and crew crowded aboard the *Eastland*, the atmosphere festive. Known as “The Greyhound of the Lakes” the *Eastland* was one of five vessels chartered to carry Western Electric workers and their families on a day-long outing from downtown Chicago to a park 38 miles across Lake Michigan to the southeast. More than 7,000 tickets had been sold.

This was the social event of the year for many of the young workers—not only a rare Saturday break in the manufacturing and assembling of telephone equipment, but also an opportunity to meet other eligible singles.

The *Eastland* was the first boat scheduled to leave, and employees had been encouraged to get there early. By a few minutes after 7 a.m., men, women and children were boarding at the rate of 50 per minute, with two federal inspectors keeping careful count, per normal practice. The *Eastland* was licensed to carry 2,500 passengers plus crew. As a steady drizzle began to fall, many of the women, especially those with young children, took refuge below decks. In the main cabin, a band played for dancing; on the upper deck, passengers jostled to find seats or leaned against the railing, calling out to arriving friends.

As the *Eastland* filled with passengers between 7:10 and 7:15 a.m., it began to list to port, away from the wharf. The movement didn't seem to alarm the partygoers, but it caught the attention of the harbormaster and some other observers on land.



By the time the late passenger made his last-minute leap, however, the 275-foot-long boat had righted itself, if only briefly.

At 7:23, it listed even further to port. Water poured through the open gangways into the engine room. The crew there, realizing what was about to happen, scrambled up a ladder to the main deck.

At 7:28 a.m., the *Eastland* listed to a 45-degree angle. The piano on the promenade deck rolled to the port wall, almost crushing two women; a refrigerator slid to port, pinning a woman or two beneath it. Water poured into open portholes in the cabins below deck. The most deadly shipwreck in Great Lakes history—a calamity that would take more passenger lives than the sinking of the *Titanic* or the *Lusitania*—was under way.

Few, if any, of the passengers boarding that day noticed that the *Eastland* carried a full complement of lifeboats, life rafts and life preservers. It was in compliance with the law but created a serious hazard.

The 1912 sinking of the *Titanic* gave rise to a “lifeboats-for-all” movement among international marine safety officials. In the United States, Congress passed a bill requiring lifeboats to accommodate 75 percent of a vessel's passengers, and in March, 1915, President Woodrow Wilson signed what became known as the LaFollette Seaman's Act.

During the debate over the bill, the general manager of the Detroit & Cleveland Navigation Company had warned that some Great Lakes vessels, with their shallow drafts, “would turn ‘turtle’ if you attempted to navigate them with this additional





ship Company, which bought the *Eastland* for \$150,000 in 1914, testified at a coroner's inquest a few days after the accident, "I didn't know much about the boat except that we got it at a bargain. All I do is sign blank checks."

Critical to a boat's stability is what is known as its metacentric height. Floating objects are like an upside-down pendulum, with a center of gravity and the ability to roll, or heel, to either side before righting itself. The distance between fully upright and the maximum heel—the point beyond which it will capsize—is its metacentric height.

Referring to the *Eastland*, Hilton wrote: "For such a ship, where the distribution of passengers was highly variable, normal practice would have been to provide a metacentric height of two to four feet, fully loaded." Changes made to the *Eastland* before July 24 had reduced its metacentric height to four inches.

Within two minutes after it listed 45 degrees to port, it rolled over. By 7:30 a.m., the *Eastland* was lying on its side in 20 feet of murky water, still tied to the dock. The vessel rolled so quickly, there was no time to launch the lifesaving equipment. As the boat settled on its side, many passengers simply climbed over the starboard railing and walked across the exposed hull to safety, never even getting their feet wet.

"When the boat toppled on its side those on the upper deck were hurled off like so many ants being brushed from a table," wrote Harlan Babcock, a reporter for the *Chicago Herald*. "In an instant, the surface of the river was black with struggling, crying, frightened, drowning humanity. Wee infants floated about like corks."

About 10,000 people were milling about the riverfront that day—grocery and poultry merchants, their customers,

Western Electric workers waiting to board other ships. Horrified onlookers raced to the rescue, some jumping into the river. (According to one account, a man contemplating suicide at the river's edge jumped in and began saving lives.) Others threw whatever they could grab to provide flotation for those struggling in the water, including boards, ladders and wooden chicken crates. Some of the crates struck passengers in the water, knocking them out and putting them under. Parents clutched children and disappeared together beneath the brown water—or lost their

weight on the upper decks." Too few legislators listened.

By July, 1915, the *Eastland*, which had been designed to carry six lifeboats, was carrying 11 lifeboats, 37 life rafts (about 1,100 pounds each) and enough life jackets (about six pounds apiece) for all 2,570 passengers and crew. Most were stowed on the upper decks. No tests were conducted to determine how the additional weight affected the boat's stability—even though it already had a troubled history.

The *Eastland* was built in 1902 to carry 500 people for lake excursions and to haul produce on the return trips to Chicago. The boat had no keel, was top-heavy and relied on poorly designed ballast tanks in the hold to keep it upright. Repeated modifications increased the vessel's speed and passenger capacity—and made it less stable.

"It was said of her that she behaved like a bicycle, being unstable when loading or unloading but stable when under way," wrote transportation historian and economist George W. Hilton later. Safety inspectors, at the time, focused only on the *Eastland*'s performance while underway, and the boat routinely was certified as safe.

In July 1904, the boat nearly capsized with 3,000 people aboard. Two years later, it listed heavily with 2,530 passengers onboard. The *Eastland* soon developed a reputation as unsafe, a "hoodoo boat," in the slang of the day. "The passengers appeared to recognize the potential dangers of the ship better than the management or the inspectors did," Hilton wrote.

Indeed, an official of the St. Joseph-Chicago Steam-





grip and watched their children sink out of sight. “God, the screaming was terrible, it’s ringing in my ears yet,” a warehouse worker told a reporter.

The crowding and confusion were terrible. Rescuers, emergency personnel and curious onlookers flocked to the scene. By noon, divers and rescue workers finally reached bodies that had been trapped underwater in the portside cabins. After that time all the bodies that came up seemed to be women and children.

Seven priests arrived to hear confessions or administer last rites. “There was little work for them,” one reporter wrote. “The results of the *Eastland’s* somersault could be phrased in two words—living or dead.”

As the casualties mounted, the nearby Second Regiment Armory was converted to a morgue. Corpses were placed in rows of 85 as the identification process began. Just before midnight, the public was admitted, 20 at a time, to look for family members. The morbidly curious elbowed their way in as well, along with some thieves who stole jewelry from the bodies.

When Chicagoans awoke on Sunday, the magnitude of the disaster was nowhere more apparent than in the close-knit Polish, Czech and Hungarian communities near the Hawthorne Works in Cicero. House after house was draped in black crepe and families sat in mourning.

Just 10 weeks earlier, the *Lusitania* had been torpedoed and sunk, with a death toll of 785 passengers. In 1912, 829 passengers had died aboard the *Titanic* (plus 694 crewmembers). Both of those disasters took place on the high seas.

When the *Eastland* rolled, 844 passengers died on a sluggish urban river, 19 feet from the dock. Seventy

percent of them were under the age of 25.

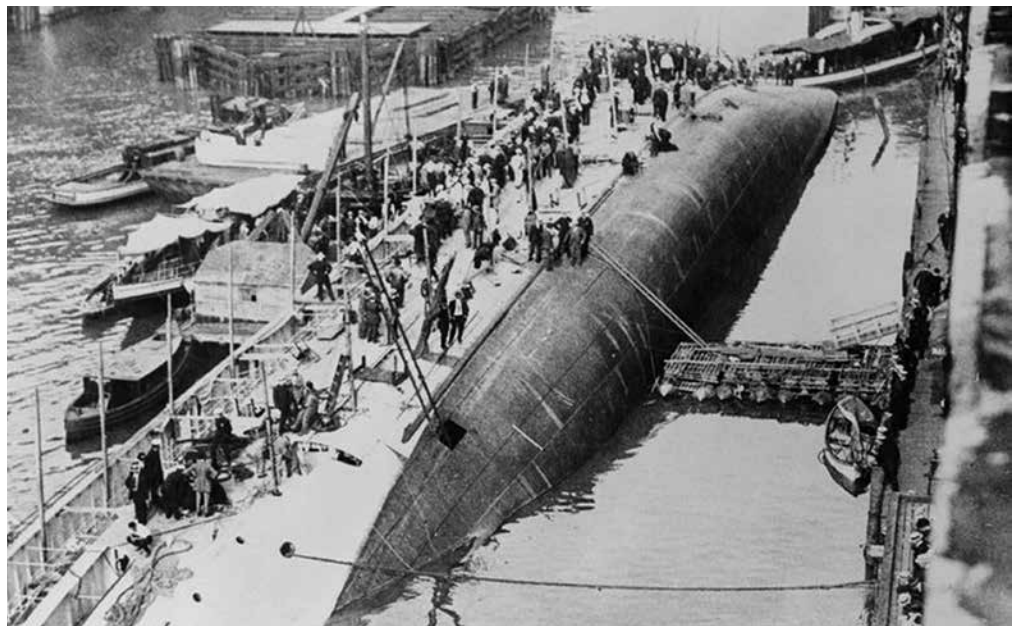
Affixing blame for the accident began immediately. *Eastland* Captain Harry Pedersen, chief engineer Joseph Erickson and other crewmembers were taken into custody on Saturday—in part to protect them from the angry crowd that had gathered at the scene.

Within three days of the accident, seven inquiries were underway. Cook County officials asserted their jurisdiction immediately. After interviewing witnesses and crewmembers, County Attorney Maclay Hoyne told reporters: “The United States [Steamboat] Inspection Service is directly responsible for this disaster. Now is the time to inspect the inspectors. Chicago... should demand that and nothing else.”

U.S. Commerce Secretary William C. Redfield, dispatched to Chicago by President Wilson, seized the *Eastland*, enlisting the help of U.S. District Judge Kenesaw Mountain Landis, in whose courtroom federal proceedings would be heard.

Despite the haste, it would take 24 years to conclude litigation related to the *Eastland* disaster. In the end, blame was pinned largely on Erickson, the chief engineer, for mismanaging the ballast tanks in the hold to right the *Eastland* before it capsized. Erickson, who initially was represented by Clarence Darrow, died as the proceedings dragged on. That made him—according to some - a convenient fall guy. Although evidence strongly suggested that Captain Pedersen had been negligent, he was not prosecuted. Nor were officers of the steamship company. All criminal charges were dropped and the owners avoided any legal findings.

The *Eastland’s* hulk was purchased by the US Navy and converted into the Naval gunboat USS *Wilmette* for reservist training. As such, she carried President Franklin D. Roosevelt and his entourage on a tour of the Great Lakes.





RAISE YOUR HAND RAISE YOUR VOICE RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP



AMMV Membership Dues are due July 1, 2018

Members-at-Large: Mail your check for \$32 to National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly

American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV)

P.O. Box 2024

Darien, CT 06820-2024

Chapter Members, pay your dues to your CEO or Treasurer

AMMV CONVENTION – INTERNATIONAL NEWS

Editor's note: Commodore Martin Connell spoke to those attending the AMMV convention in St. Louis. This article is courtesy of the "Liverpool Business News".

Plans to build Britain's official national monument to the Battle of the Atlantic on Liverpool's waterfront have won top-level support in the US.

The Battle of the Atlantic Memorial campaign (BOAM) launched its effort to build the £2.5m 15-tonne sculpture, in the shape of a Liberty ship split in two, in January. And, as a result of the publicity it has now received, offers of help from two significant American organizations the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) and Project Liberty Ship in Baltimore, Maryland.

BOAM chairman Vice-Admiral Mike Gretton said both organizations reached out after the campaign announced it has received support from British Ambassador to the US, Sir Kim Darroch, for an awareness raising tour to the US in the autumn.

"We are absolutely delighted to make contact with both the AMMV and Project Liberty Ship and see our campaign start to generate momentum," he said.

"An immediate result is that the British naval attache to America Commodore Martin Connell gave a presentation, on our memorial plans, to the AMMV's annual convention in St Louis, Missouri on March 17.

"We are hugely grateful to the AMMV for giving us this opportunity to raise awareness."

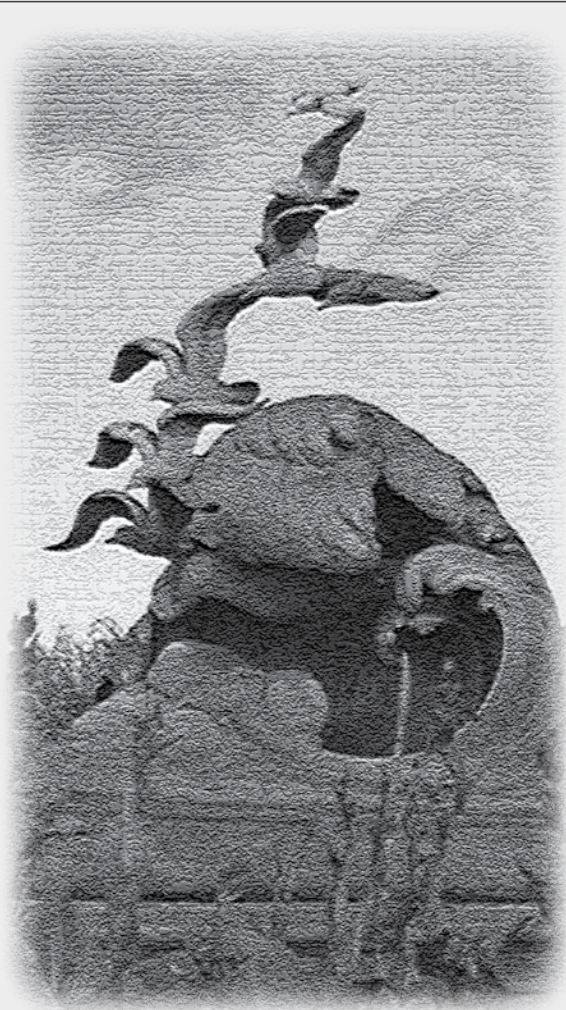
He added: "The American intervention was critical to the outcome of the war and it is precisely the efforts of the merchant navy that we want to highlight in our memorial. In that sense our objectives and those of the AMMV and Project Liberty Ship are very closely aligned."

For more information on the campaign, sponsorship packages and to make donations visit: www.battleoftheatlantic.org email: info@battleofatlanticmemorial.org or call: 01243 545939.



Image of how the Battle of the Atlantic memorial on the Pier Head will look

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.*

JOHN E. BAYIDES
ROBERT BRUMMER
HAROLD L. ENGET
CHARLES EVANINA
JOHN FECHTER
GEORGE FLORIO
JOHN FOMASI
ROBERT L. HUDSON
HARRY INGEBRIGTSEN
JAY L. JOHNSON
ROBERT T. LEARY, SR.
JOHN LUDWICK
ROBERT MC LAREN
CAPT. EDWARD M. O'DONNELL
EVERETT M. OLSON
EDWARD H. PERKINS
JOE QUILICI
LORENZO "LARRY" REA
EDWARD "EDDIE" SEXTON, JR.
MIRLAN L. "JOE" SHARP
JAMES A. SMITH
DR. DAVID J. STEVENS
MEL DALE SWANSON
MEL TUBLIN
JOE VALASQUEZ
A. J. WICHITA
DARRELL CLYDE WILSON

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 06820-9200.

AMMV 32nd NATIONAL CONVENTION

St. Louis, MO – March 14-17, 2018

The 32nd National Convention of the American Merchant Marine Veterans was a stunning success, with total attendance of over 100 people. Attendees and guests represented twenty-five states and fifteen AMMV Chapters. A strong turnout was seen from the St. Louis-based SS *Samuel Parker* Chapter and the Chicago-based Midwest Chapter.

Wednesday, March 14, 2018

Registration opened on the 14th with a "Meet-and-Greet" featuring Sally Langwah as Carmen Miranda. The Hospitality Room featured many



Carmen Miranda and friends in hospitality room

banners and exhibits and was generously stocked with drinks and snacks. Various Merchant Marine apparel and 50/50 tickets were being sold, and form letters in support of S. 2127 (WWII MM Gold Medal Act) were available for all to sign.

The annual Board of Directors meeting was held later that night. The 2018-19 fiscal budget was proposed and approved. Other points of discussion included membership; dues collection issues; organizational non-profit status; and the location of a 2019 convention. AMMV Government Affairs Co-Chair Michael Helbig was in

attendance to answer questions and brief the BOD on the Korean Conflict C/MSRB Merchant Mariner veteran status application. In the category of membership and outreach, it was agreed upon to try and collect addresses for all U.S.-flagged oceangoing vessels to be added to our mailing list.

Thursday, March 15, 2018

Opening Ceremonies were kicked off the next morning,

led by Master of Ceremonies John Pitts. The Colors were posted by the Scottish American Military Society, Post 1821. Next, the Pledge of Allegiance was recited, followed by a touching version of the "Star-Spangled Banner" from Sally Langwah. An opening prayer was read by Bob Ross. A moment of silence was observed, then Richard "Ben" Benjamin performed TAPS. Next, Bob Ross read the Merchant



Michael Helbig, Government Affairs Co-chairman

Marine Flag Creed. Opening Ceremonies concluded with Sally singing "Heave Ho".

National President Capt. Chris Edyvean gave a report of AMMV business and recent activi-

ties. Topics included membership; the need of more key volunteers; social media report; and WWII Merchant

Marine legislation. Many ideas and suggestions were offered in the category of promoting legislation, and the discussion continued until lunch break.

The Ladies' Luncheon was held that day, with twenty-one persons attending. Roy Langwah entertained, playing the



John Pitts, Master of Ceremonies



Karyn Holm, MidWest chapter; "Buddy Holly" Wnuk at ladies luncheon

character of Buddy Holly. Sally joined in as Diana Ross.

During the afternoon business session, the Regional Vice President election was formalized with all eight RVP's maintaining office for the next two fiscal years (July 1st, 2018 – June 30th, 2020). The proposed blanket revision of the AMMV Constitution & By-Laws and the Resolution to support H.R. 1240 "The Energizing American Maritime Act" were both approved. Stanley Blumenthal



Sally sings to Gulfstream ch

of the Gulfstream Chapter submitted from the floor a Resolution to support the construction of U.S.-flagged oceangoing cruise ships, which was also approved.

The banquet speaker for the opening dinner was Mr. Paul Doell, National President of the American Maritime Officers union. Among other topics, Doell spoke of the legislative process and the upcoming maritime "Sail-In" in Washington, D.C., in which representatives of pro-U.S. maritime interests gather to meet with Congresspersons and staffers.



, Marilyn

Following our speaker, Sindy Raymond was recognized with an award for her many years of service to AMMV and the Just Compensation Committee. She also received a framed letter from U.S. Maritime Administrator RADM Mark H. Buzby; a plaque on behalf of the Great Lakes Maritime Academy; and two dozen red roses compliments of the Midwest Chapter.

However, these formalities were just the start of Sindy's retirement party. Sally & Roy entertained with an "employment/work" themed show, of which Sindy was a participant for the entire program. The finale was the song "YMCA", in which other attendees joined Sindy in the spotlight.



Stan Blumenthal, chapter



Paul Doell, A.M.O. and Capt. Chris Edyvean

to mention that a four-person film crew, led by David Alberg of NOAA, conducted video interviews of many of our Veterans on this first full day of the convention.

Friday, March 16, 2018

The following morning opened with a two-hour "open microphone" session. Hap Bledsoe of the High Rollers Chapter presented a series of posters he created

to help educate the public about the service of the WWII U.S. Merchant Marine.



Kim Degrave and Capt. Chris Edyvean

The featured bus tour was next. The first stop was at the Lumiere Casino, in which some attendees grabbed an early lunch while others tested their luck at the slot machines. The second stop was at the Anheuser-Busch facility, where a photo op session with the famous Clydesdale horses awaited. A special banner was created by Anheuser-Busch to thank our WWII Vets; the banner was given to us afterwards and will be displayed at future AMMV events. Everyone on the bus tour was provided a free drink token and a goodie bag which featured a nice



Dave Alberg, NOAA

ball cap from Anheuser-Busch with the lettering "AMMV of WWII, STL 3/16/18" stitched on the back.

The final stop of the tour was the Chesterfield Veterans Memorial Park. This is a relatively new park which,

thanks to the efforts of SS Samuel Parker Chapter members and affiliates, proudly includes the U.S. Merchant Marine flag. The bus met up with local law enforcement vehicles and the Patriot Guard motorcycle riders in a nearby parking lot, who then escorted the bus to the park. The police had streets blocked off and traffic stopped to allow the bus a smooth ride into the park, thus showing respect for the Veterans on our tour.

Upon arrival, Chesterfield Mayor Bob Nation greeted and shook hands with each Veteran. A four-piece band was playing "Heave Ho" as our group disembarked the coach. St. Louis television Channel 5 News (KSDK) was on-scene and filmed the event. (The story was aired that night and watched in our Hospitality Room.) Our Veterans then posed under the Colors for



Dave Yoho speaking at business session on March 17th.

photos. The band continued to play patriotic songs, including a reprise of "Heave Ho" with Sally Langwah joining on vocals. All in all, this stop at the Chesterfield Veterans Memorial Park was truly an event to remember.

Saturday, March 17, 2018

The final day of the convention saw the Hospitality Room decorated in green for St. Patrick's Day, with plenty of beads and other party favors available for all.

WWII Merchant Marine Veteran and famous motivational speaker Dave Yoho kicked off the day with an amazing patriotic speech. His presentation ended with the song "Proud to be an American" playing in the background. Dave received a standing ovation from the crowd, leaving many people in tears.

After a short recess, David Alberg provided an update on NOAA sanctuary expansions on the east coast, an ongoing process of which AMMV resolved at our 2017 convention to support. Alberg was well received and answered many detailed questions from our members.

Commodore Martin Connell, an attaché from the British Royal Navy was welcomed following lunch break. Commodore Connell spoke on behalf of the Battle of the Atlantic Memorial (BOAM). He explained the organization's goals and timeline in regards to constructing a monument in Liverpool that will honor the Merchant Navies and Merchant Marine of all Allied nations of WWII. The BOAM website is: <https://battleoftheatlantic.org/>

The final daytime speaker was RADM Jerry Achenbach, Superintendent of Great Lakes Maritime Academy. Achenbach narrated a power point presentation on the topic of "Merchant Mariner Recruitment

and Retention".

Joining us for the Farewell Banquet was Mr. Brendan Fahey, Deputy Director for U.S. Senator of Missouri Claire McCaskill.

Prior to the serving of the meal, the U.S. Navy Sea Cadets retired the Colors as Sally Langwah sang, "America the Beautiful". Bob Ross recited a prayer, and Sally capped off the formalities with "Heave Ho".

James E. Caponiti, President of the American Maritime Congress was the featured speaker. Caponiti spoke of our declining U.S.-flagged fleet and the projected inability to meet manpower criteria aboard our ships in any

prolonged military crisis.

The 50/50 raffle was won by Hap Bledsoe with his share being \$226. Other consolation prizes were raffled off, including "AMMV family" ball caps, provided by the Ohio Valley Chapter.

The AMMV Awards Ceremony, conducted by President Edyvean, saw

seventeen members recognized for stellar service to the organization. (Not all recipients were in attendance.) In the category of "Member Appreciation", plaques were given to Charles Montanaro; William "Speed" Hinds; Hap Bledsoe; Bob Ross; Bob Weagant; Eugene Barner; John Pitts; and Lynn Kelly. "Outstanding Volunteer" plaques were awarded to Carole Gutierrez; Morris Harvey; Cindy

Raymond; Patti Scafidi; Laura Johnson Riddle; Dave Yoho; and Sheila Sova. The *Harvey-Wichita Award* – AMMV's top tier recognition, which is the equivalent of Member of the Year for "post-WWII members" – was presented to Michael Helbig.

In the category of "WWII member", which is considered a lifetime

achievement award and the highest honor that may be bestowed by AMMV, Charles A. Mills was recognized. Charles, accompanied by family members on the podium, accepted the award as he received a standing ovation.

However, the night was far from over. Dave Yoho provided closing remarks for this 32nd convention, presenting AMMV with

checks totaling \$8,000 in donations.



James Caponiti, American Maritime Congress



Commodore Martin Connell, Speaker, British Embassy



RADM Jerry Achenbach of Great Lakes Maritime Academy, with Blaise Theriot, grandson of WWII Merchant Marine Vet Jim Coley



Laura Riddle, Member-at-large

Sally & Roy performed a wonderful St. Patrick's Day show to finish the night. Afterwards, most attendees flocked to the Hospitality Room to continue the celebration.

Early talks favor a Tampa, FL location for next year's event. See you there!



*Shirley Knight, MAL; John Pitts, Nat'l Treasurer,
Bob Ross, RVP Reg. 6*



*Dennis Kelly, Member-at-large; Lynn Kelly, National
Office Administrator*



Charles Mills, Lone Star chapter & family at Farewell Banquet



*Sheila Sova, Laura Riddle, Sally and
Kim Degrave at the Ladies' Luncheon*



*Tane Casserly, NOAA; "Fritz" Aljets, SSP
chapter, Marilyn Monroe*



George Cearlock, MAL and Cher

MARITIME INDUSTRY HAS A GOOD WEEK

9th Annual Congressional “Sail-In”

On March 20, 2018, more than 115 officers and representatives from U.S.-flag shipping companies, American maritime labor unions, and related maritime organizations and associations went to Capitol Hill for the ninth annual Maritime Industry Congressional Sail-In.

The maritime industry leaders met with Senators, Representatives and staff in 169 Congressional offices to discuss the importance of the U.S.-flag commercial shipping industry and America’s civilian merchant mariners to our Nation’s economic, military and homeland security. They provided these offices with up-to-date information about the programs and policies that enable the U.S.-flag merchant marine and its American crews to continue to meet the commercial sealift requirements of the Department of Defense, including the Maritime Security Program, the Jones Act and the U.S.-flag cargo preference shipping programs.

According to sources at the SIU, the SIU contingent was



(2nd from left) Paul Doell, American Maritime Officers

joined by representatives from every major seafaring union, the Navy League of the United States, various Jones Act companies and organizations, state maritime academies and other allies of

the U.S.-flag fleet. Together, these individuals sat down with members of both the House and the Senate - on both sides of the aisle - and explained how the MSP works in conjunction



(4th from left) Ray Henderson, SIU Port Agent

with programs such as Food for Peace and Food for Progress to help maintain the American merchant fleet, the merchant mariner pool and national security.

Most importantly, they emphasized that as our Nation dedicates its efforts to Buy American and Hire American it must also ensure that American cargo is Shipped American as another means to increase domestic employment, bolster America’s economy, and strengthen America’s commercial sealift capability.

Omnibus and the U.S.-Flag Maritime Community

It was a big week for the Sail-in and the timing was impeccable. During the Sail-in, Congress was in the middle of negotiating an important Omnibus spending bill, in which, was contained legislative proposals for programs that support the U.S. Maritime Industry. The Omnibus was passed by the U.S. House of Representatives on Thursday, March 22, 2018; it passed in the U.S. Senate in the early hours of March 23, 2018, and signed by President Donald J. Trump later in the afternoon.

The Omnibus contains:

- The Maritime Security Program (MSP) is fully funded for Fiscal Year '18. Bicameral support for MSP ensures national security and continued U.S.-flag presence in the international trade led Congressional Members to support the appropriation of \$300 million for the full MSP funding level.
- Congress funds “Food for Peace” at \$1.7 billion in the Omnibus allowing U.S.-Flag ships to take the lead in delivering this important cargo to the impoverished world. Food for Peace helps feed starving Third World nations while providing critical support to U.S. shipping and American farmers.
- Appropriations of \$300 million to begin the long-sought State Maritime Academy Training Ship Replacement Program. Known as the National Security Multi-mission Vessel (NSMV), this program will improve the training and stabilize the production of mariners by the nation’s maritime academies. The state-of-the-art training platforms will each carry 600 cadets and 100 officers and crew. They will also be designed to support the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) as a response vessel in times of national emergency. The first new-build ship is scheduled to replace SUNY Maritime’s (NY Maritime) aging Empire State and that the second ship is scheduled to replace Massachusetts Maritime’s Training Ship Kennedy. The vessels will be built in U.S. shipyards.
- No Jones Act Waivers or Amendments contained in the Omnibus.
- Dredging, Water Resources & Coastal and Inland Waterways Appropriations.

U.S. Merchant Marine veterans honored on Thanksgiving by VFW Post on Saipan

On Thanksgiving Day, Veterans of Foreign Wars Post 3457 honored U.S. merchant mariners as veterans of World War II by posting the U.S. Merchant Marine Crest among the five other sister branches of Armed Services of the United States in the post's clubhouse in Garapan, Saipan. The post also proudly flies the U.S. Merchant Marine flag alongside the other Armed Service flags.

VFW Post 3457 is one of the first VFW posts in the world to honor the U.S. Merchant Marine and its mariners. They have an open door policy that welcomes every member of the U.S. Merchant Marine to enter and enjoy the clubhouse atmosphere. VFW members on Saipan, most of whom are Vietnam veterans, all know and say that nothing can happen in an armed conflict without the U.S. Merchant Marine first "delivering the goods."

This was all made possible by the efforts of VFW Post 3457 Commander Mike O'Kelley, who is a 30-year retired U.S. Navy Master Chief and who earned a Bronze Star with Valor and multiple Purple Hearts during his five tours in Vietnam. Mike joined the U.S. Merchant Marine and



AMO member Chief Engineer Joe Gelhaus, A VFW Life Member through his U.S. Navy Service in Desert Storm and Operation Restore Hope, thanks VFW Post 3457 Commander Mike O'Kelley for his work to gain recognition for the service of U.S. Merchant Marine veterans.

American Maritime Officers in 1997. As an AMO member, he sailed as an assistant engineer on various vessels, mostly in the Military Sealift Command Prepositioning Fleet, and retired a few years ago. He is a tireless proponent of the U.S. Merchant Marine and strives very hard to have VFW leadership accept U.S. merchant mariners who have earned the Merchant Marine Expeditionary Medal to qualify for VFW membership.

The usual hang up is that this medal is not issued by the Department of Defense, but the Department of Transportation, because the U.S. Merchant Marine falls under that department's jurisdiction. However, Mike is persistent and vows never to stop trying to gain recognition for U.S. merchant mariners and their service to their country.

Thanksgiving was a fitting day to install the U.S. Merchant Marine Crest, and I was personally thankful for that. The VFW membership showed up later with a ham and turkey feast to honor the dozens of U.S. merchant mariners, including members of AMO and SIU, who were at the VFW Clubhouse that evening. It was a great day!

Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

PAUL CALLAGHAN	LAS VEGAS	NV
MICHAEL E. CALLIS	GWYNN	VA
JAMES COLEY	BIXBY	OK
BRUCE CORNWALL	ANNAPOLIS	MD
CAPT. JOSEPH CREWS	ARLINGTON	TX
RUSSELL CROCKETT	LAS VEGAS	NM
KENNETH E. DELANCEY	HENDERSON	NV
SAMUEL R. DYER, JR.	INDEPENDENCE	MO
GREGORY GORDON	WINDSOR	CA
MARK HURLEY	SAN PEDRO	CA

RACHEL L. VEZALDENOS MAMAU	GLENDALE	AZ
LYNETTE E. METZ	RICHFIELD	WI
GEORGE RATCLIFFE	DARIEN	CT
MARCIE SEXTRO	MADISON	NE
DANIEL STODDARD	RIO RANCHO	NM
MARTHA TOMINI	ARCATA	CA
JOHN P. (SEAN) TORKELSON	LONG BEACH	CA
GORDON T. WILLIAMSON	WESTMINISTER	CA
MARILYN WNUK	ORLAND PARK	IL

BUS TOUR



Entrance "map"



Chesterfield Mayor shakes hands with Hap Bledsoe while others wait their turn



Dru DiMattia, Southwest FL. Chapter, Chesterfield Mayor, Eugene Barner, Member-at-large



Laura Riddle, Rachel Mamau, Kim Degrave at Anheuser-Busch Brewery



WWII MM Veterans at monument

Including Chesterfield Veterans Memorial Park



Luxury transportation



Members of The Patriot Guard speak with Hap Bledsoe

PROGRESS REPORT:

Korean Conflict Merchant Mariner Group Application

On 2 January 2016 I accepted Capt. Edyvean's offer to serve as Co-Chairman of the Government Affairs Committee. I wrote my first "progress report" on 24 March and it's now been 26 months and I'm still going full steam" at this project.

The question is: "When will you be done with a finished application?" My answer must be: "When I think I've got sufficient evidence to document and substantiate a claim that will not be shot down by either the former Air Force lawyer/executive secretary who acts as doorkeeper or the brigadier general who presides over the Air Force Personnel Council and DoD Board." That's a tall order because when the regulations were rewritten post-Schumacher in 1989 by the Air Force Personnel Council they fixed it so mariner groups would never gain service recognition again. We are facing a similar problem with the Korean group application.

UPDATED PROGRESS:

In the past eight months, since my last report, I've been active with the following:

- Reviewed 814-page manuscript "U. S. Army Transportation in the Southwest Pacific Area, 1941-47" by James R. Masterson and extracted important information on Army "FS" (freight supply) numbered ships. The shipbuilding history of these reveals their later Navy AKL (light cargo ship) numerical designations, 22 of which served with civilian marine (Civil Service) crews as part of the MSTS nucleus fleet. Also found valuable information on the C1-M-AV1 class ships, 11 of which later served with MSTS. I was able to clarify Army names of the N3-S-A2 ("Baltic Coaster") class loaned to South Korea before the Conflict began. One of them was hi-jacked in 1949 by the Korean crew with two American Merchant Marine Officers interned by the Reds but later released.
- Located "Sale of Ships by the Maritime Commission" compiled by MARAD for the U. S. Senate in April 1951. This lists the ships sold under the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 and the commercial shipping company purchasers along with their classifications and cost data. I was able to assign to 64 dry cargo ships on my list the correct classifications not otherwise obtainable.
- Researched the bill "HR-44 Merchant Marine Fairness Act of 1991" and the House hearing of 1 Oct. 1992 including valuable written and oral testimony from a variety of sources. This review revealed the attitude of the Air Force Personnel Council.
- Submitted a Freedom of Information Act (FOIA) request to MARAD for missing Vessel History Database card images for 53 ships. This information was needed to determine (as well as possible) the periods each ship was under bareboat charter or General Agency Agreement in service with MSTS. I was able to clarify service dates for 10 ships. It appears that approximately 20% of the original paper cards that would have been prepared for these public vessels are either missing, out of place, or otherwise not indexed correctly through the online search feature at www.marad.dot.gov/sh.
- Based on the several ships lists I have compiled, I estimated that there could be as many as 1356 documents in custody of MSTS/MARAD needed under FOIA requests to document and substantiate the ships and their periods of hire under time and voyage charter to MSTS, plus the shipping contracts for companies whose ships sailed on berth terms to transport military cargo in direct support of U. S. Armed Forces around the globe. If the records are obtainable, and if fees are not waived, the cost to AMMV of collection by a private research firm might be \$5,000.
- Successfully contacted Capt. John H. Ingraham, USNR (Ret.), who was an Assistant Naval Control of Shipping Officer (ensign) in Pusan, ROK in 1952. He has provided valuable insight that has assisted my understanding of this military control function as detailed in Military Sea Transportation and Shipping Control (NavPers 10829-A) of 1954. He is a New York (SUNY) Maritime Academy graduate and was employed before and after Korea as a merchant marine officer. He and several others I've discovered were Naval Reserve (Merchant Marine Reserve) officers (designation 1108) which is

a plus for us in terms of the factor of “Integration” into the armed forces.

- Received documents from and assisted several AMMV members with records and medals issues. The more of this forthcoming means the better the application will be as to evidence. I need input from those who served during Korea especially as to conditions there and in other ports including Europe.
- Submitted letter requests for courts-martial information to the Army, Navy and Coast Guard Judge Advocates General. Got no written answers from the Army and Navy who apparently are clueless as to civilian mariners under court-martial during the Korean period of war. Did get co-operation from the Coast Guard who at least made the effort to help, even if the associated records weren't located.
- Searched the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) “Guide to Federal Records” online under ten record groups, looking for shipping and court-martial records and military publications such as circulars, bulletins, etc. The results are disappointing in the sense that little of interest was found. That could mean the records are still at the agencies or in storage at federal records centers that can be accessed by them. It is hard to determine because the “guide” is from 1995 and isn't very detailed at a definitive level. Not only that but it is supposed to be updated and it isn't. I found zero records for MSTs HQ in Washington so I have to assume MSC retained their Korean records from the Contracts office. RG 357: Records of the Maritime Administration includes “Actions of the National Shipping Authority concerning vessel operations, 1951-1961.” This could represent National Defense Reserve Fleet ship allocations to commercial lines for service with MSTs, which could be an alternative way to get the identities of those ships that didn't make it to Korea but sailed elsewhere. That information is needed.
- Drafted seven FOIA requests which were subsequently approved at the 32d Convention and submitted on 22 March. The agencies have twenty business days to respond. So far two have acknowledged receipt. One of these submissions went to the Coast Guard asking for a search of records that could lead to a list of names of American Seamen and their civilian marine (Civil

Service) counterparts sailing on MSTs ships, thus demonstrating that they were subjected to military justice (courts-martial) and military discipline, i.e., suspension and revocation of documents.

- Submitted enquiries on 20 February to the NARA facilities at Washington, D.C. and St. Louis, Missouri seeking case records on known, published Summary and General courts-martial, respectively, of an MSTs mariner. The former never responded but the latter did after additional prodding.
- During and after the Convention I spent two-and-a-half days at 1 Archives Drive, Florissant, Mo., reviewing the one Navy and six Army General courts-martial appeal case files which (as it turned out) were part of their extensive holdings in Record Groups 125 and 153. As a result I discovered two more Navy case files referenced in the one Navy file I reviewed and the staff were good enough to bring those two additional files forward for inspection in the public research room. The “good news” on that is the charges against both of the accused were preferred on 19 November 1953 which was almost four months after the Korean armistice was signed. The NARA staff offered to make the finding aid cards for the Navy cases available in the public research room for searching which involves a local microfilming job on their part. But the Army records are more extensive and this process cannot be done because the indexes are organized by name of accused and apparently not broken down by year or period of war. So, there is no way to isolate just the Korean Conflict years for searching. And unless my Coast Guard FOIA yields a list of names there is no practical way to get at the Army's General courts-martial records of merchant mariners, who must be identified by name.

In any event volunteers are needed. I have asked for help from AMMV's SS Samuel Parker Chapter in St. Louis and others will likely be needed in Washington, D.C., and College Park, Maryland. Now is the time for all good men (and women) to step up to the plate and pinch-hit. One player-manager living in North Tonawanda, N.Y. (me) cannot physically do all of the batting and fielding necessary to bring this group application to a happy ending. This is an AMMV initiative and it needs the support of the willing and available membership to succeed.

Submitted 4/3/18 to Editor, AMMV News Magazine, by Michael J. Helbig

What was the MSTs, and what did they do in Vietnam?

The Military Sea Transportation Service was established in 1949 to provide sea transportation to the military as a successor to the Army Transportation Service. MSTs operated a fleet of ships and had charter agreements with commercial shipping firms. MSTs was succeeded by Military Sealift Command (MSC) in 1970.

The Military Sea Transportation Service had the job of bringing war supplies to Vietnam -- 10,000 miles from the Pacific coast. MSTs had four separate customers to serve: the Army, Air Force, Navy and Marine Corps. MSTs ships were staffed by "civilian" crews, but carried 95% of the supplies used by our Armed Forces in Vietnam including bombs and ammunition into combat zones under fire. Crew members were given Navy grades and rank identification in event of enemy capture. During Vietnam, MSTs first utilized roll-on/roll-off ships and container ships which speeded loading and unloading.

MSTs took about 100 Victory ships out of the National Defense Reserve Fleet (mothball fleet), repaired them, and assigned them to private companies for operation to carry ammunition across the Pacific. MSTs carried guns, tanks, trucks, trains, riverboats, barges, helicopters, bombers, fighters, reconnaissance planes, food, fuel, and medical supplies.

Early efforts:

In February 1951 the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTs) aircraft carrier *Windham Bay*, was the first large ship to navigate the Long Tam River since 1925. While the ship was docked at Saigon (French Indochina) 17 hand grenades were tossed at the ship by terrorists.

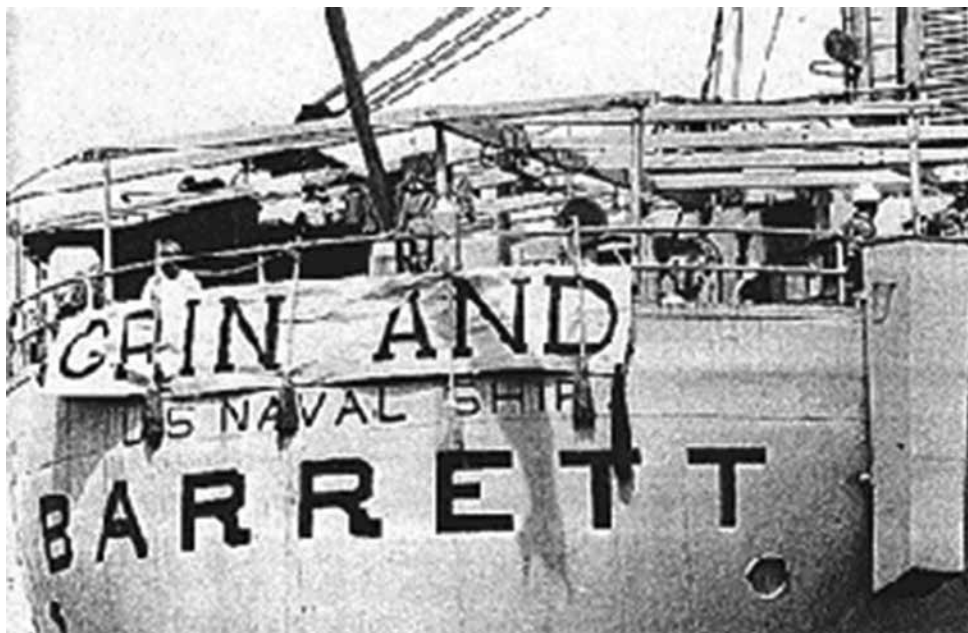
In 1954, after the partitioning of Vietnam, MSTs evacuated Vietnamese



refugees from North to South Vietnam. *USNS Howze* was one of many MSTs ships involved in "Passage to Freedom" bringing 300,000 refugees and 200,000 tons of cargo from North Vietnam.

Early in the Vietnam War, troop ships such as the *USNS Upshur*, *Geiger*, and *Gordon* carried two thirds of U.S. troops to Vietnam; later, most American troops trav-

eled by air. However, Korean troops were transported by MSTs throughout the war, with the first 2,000 coming on the *MSTS Mann* in March 1965. In August 1966 *USNS Patch* and *Darby* carried troops 12,500 miles from Boston to Vietnam, the longest trooplift in U.S. military history. In October 1966 the converted Liberty ship *SS Benjamin Chew* and the *SS Meredith Victory* were added as troop carriers. Men and equipment of the Army 1st Cavalry Division went to Vietnam aboard the baby flattops *USNS Kula Gulf* and *Point Cruz* which were taken out of mothballs to transport the 434 aircraft and other equipment. Other escort carriers which saw WWII duty included the *USNS*





Core, Card, Croatan, and Breton.

Da Nang harbor was the home of the Marine Amphibious Force Logistic Command which handled the gear necessary to support 81,000 Marines. MSTs brought 96% of their war materiel including tanks, airplanes, ammunition, and food -- including ice cream.

Later efforts:

By 1965 MSTs had 300 freighters and tankers supplying Vietnam, with an average of 75 ships and over 3,000 merchant mariners in Vietnamese ports at any time.

Between 1965 and 1969, MSTs carried 7.6 million tons of supplies for the Air Force, about half going directly to Vietnam, the rest to staging areas in the Pacific. MSTs delivered the goods "Special Express" and kept some of its 19 ammunition ships anchored offshore near combat areas as floating warehouses to ease storage problems experienced by the Air Force. SEA Express was the name of the program which delivered other Air Force supplies from Oakland, California to Saigon between 1965 and 1967, in an average of 23 days.



In 1965, US Coast Guard Squadron One, composed of 17 patrol boats was sealifted to the Philippines for Vietnam duty on the *SS Pioneer Myth*, *SS Transcaribbean*, *SS Aloha State*, and the *SS Ocean Cloud*. MSTs delivered bulldozers, cranes, steel and cement for use by Navy Seabees. MSTs and the Merchant Marine transported oil and aviation gas to support Navy fleet operations.

In 1968 MSTs sealifted 19 million tons (39 billion pounds) of cargo to Vietnam for the Army at a cost of \$570 million. The *MSTS Corpus Christi Bay*, which housed an Army aviation-maintenance battalion, was positioned as necessary along the coast of Vietnam to provide aircraft maintenance facilities.

MSTs and chartered ships delivered to many ports in Vietnam during this "War Without a Front." The following were among the 46 precautions to be taken by the crew of the *SS President Garfield* (and other ships) during the particularly hazardous 35 mile river transit to Saigon:

- Bridge personnel in helmets and flak suits.
- Sandbags around bridge. Wheelhouse doors and windows open.
- Grenade screens secured on portholes.
- Engineers to go to full engine speed at first indication of attack without notifying bridge.
- Only necessary persons on duty in Engine Room or on open deck. Off duty crew spread out in alleyways.
- Purser standing by with medical kit.
- Fire fighting equipment ready.
- Bilge and ballast pumps warmed up, ready to use.
- Towing wires ready for tow without assist from ship crew. Both anchors ready for dropping.

In 1975 MSTs – renamed Military Sealift Command (MSC) - helped evacuate refugees from Da Nang and later, Saigon. On March 28, 1975 the *Contender Pioneer Commander*, the *Pioneer* and the Navy's *U.S.S. Miller* evacuated about 10,000 refugees each. Returning the next day when the Communists had already overrun Da Nang, the ships evacuated thousands more.

On May 12, 1975, the *SS Mayaguez* was seized by Kymer Rouge. US marines suffered heavy casualties during the attempted rescue of the 39 seamen and the ship. Six mariner volunteers from the *USNS Greenville Victory* received Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medals for their role during the action.

THE INVASION OF OKINAWA

During the WWII battle in the Pacific, the full potential of kamikaze warfare was demonstrated during the invasion of Okinawa, where thousands of American sailors died in air attacks, mostly by Japanese suicide pilots who put love of country above their own lives and crashed their planes into ships of the invasion fleet. Warships were their prime targets, but freighters supplying the invasion forces were targets, too.



warships of the Allied navies. For surface action, the *Rose* also carried a four-inch/50 gun on the stern.

The accuracy of her defense probably saved the ship from explosion and fire. One attack was chronicled in these words by the Armed Guard commander, Lt. John C. Landis:

“Enemy plane appeared out of clouds astern. Plane circled around to our starboard side and started toward

March 1945:

A vast fleet of 1,300 ships and smaller crafts launched the invasion in March, 1945. Troops and supplies came from Leyte, Guadalcanal, Guam, Tinian in the North Marshalls, Espiritu Santo and other island bases, as well as from U. S. ports on the West Coast. Several hundred Liberty ships, the faster Victory ships, and other types of freighters and tankers carried the bulk of ammunition, food, fuel and other supplies.

Because their navy had been so greatly decimated by this time, the Japanese had no battle fleet or air force capable of contesting the invasion. Their last desperate hope lay in the fanatic devotion of kamikaze pilots eager to die for their emperor.

From the time they arrived at the invasion beachheads, the merchant ships were under almost constant alert. The approach of enemy aircraft was sounded by a line of radar picket ships strung out to the north of Okinawa, and many of these vessels also were kamikaze victims. A suicide plane could dive out of the clouds at any moment. Guns were always ready for action.

At one time, the gunners of the Liberty ship *Uriah M. Rose* were at general quarters for fourteen hours without a break. During the month in Okinawa waters, the *Rose's* gunners, aided by the merchant crew, shot down two kamikazes and assisted other ships in splashing six more. Ships fired on any attacker within range. One of the *Rose's* victims fell into the sea within fifty feet of the ship, a hairbreadth from disaster.

As with most Libertys and Victories, the *Rose's* antiaircraft defense included a three inch/50 multipurpose gun in the bow and eight 20-millimeter Oerlikon guns. The Oerlikon was a Swedish make that performed tremendous serve for the Merchant Marine, as well as

us at about 1,500 yards. Several nearby ships opened up with their guns. Our 2-millimeters started firing at 1,000 yards. Our shells poured into the plane. It roared over us at about sixty feet and then crashed into the water with a loud explosion less than 100 feet away. We fired 450 rounds of 20-millimeter shells to bring it down. Shells well spent.... Merchant marine gunners and loaders did a splendid job.”

For some unexplained reason, Landis had only thirteen men in his gun crew and had to rely on the merchant crew to maintain a full complement on the guns.

Reports of Armed Guard officers, with a few exceptions, were short and factual. There were no dramatic elaborations, no hints of the stark fear that gunners could feel as the faced a bomb-laden suicide plane roaring toward them, closing in on them second by second until, many times, they saw the enemy pilot in his death-seeking dash.

April 6, 1945:

On April 6th, the *Logan Victory* was one of several ships loaded with ammunition at anchorage at Kerama



Retto when three kamikazes roared in to attack. The first pilot dove in LST (landing ship tank) 447 and caused many casualties. The second plane made a run on the nearby *Pierre Victory*, but it was blown to pieces less than fifty yards from its target. The third plane evaded intense ack-ack fire and crashed into the *Logan Victory* amidships. An intense fire resulted and the vessel was abandoned. She drifted for several hours, with ammunition exploding, until she was sunk by gunfire to prevent danger to other vessels. Captain Edson B. Cates, although seriously wounded by shrapnel, was the last to leave his ship. He died two days later on a navy hospital ship.

April 27, 1945:

One April 27th, the *Canada Victory* was attacked while at anchor off Green Beach, Okinawa. A suicide plane, with its engine cut off, used the cover of darkness to glide in to the target unseen. Because its approach was undetected, no guns opened fire and it crashed against the aftermast, fell into number four hold, and exploded. Fire soon spread throughout the after part of the vessel. Two Armed Guard gunners were killed. The ship had to be abandoned, and she sank soon afterward.

The story:

Despite the fury of the kamikaze onslaught on Okinawa, only three merchant ships were sunk, although many



saw action.

The Navy suffered heavily in ships and men. Some 30 ships and small craft were sunk and 368 damaged. More than 5,000 sailors were killed and hundreds wounded.

A total of 44 merchant ships, most of them Liberties, were sunk in the Pacific. Japanese suicide pilots were responsible for the majority of the sinkings; aerial and submarine torpedoes and regular bombers accounted for other.

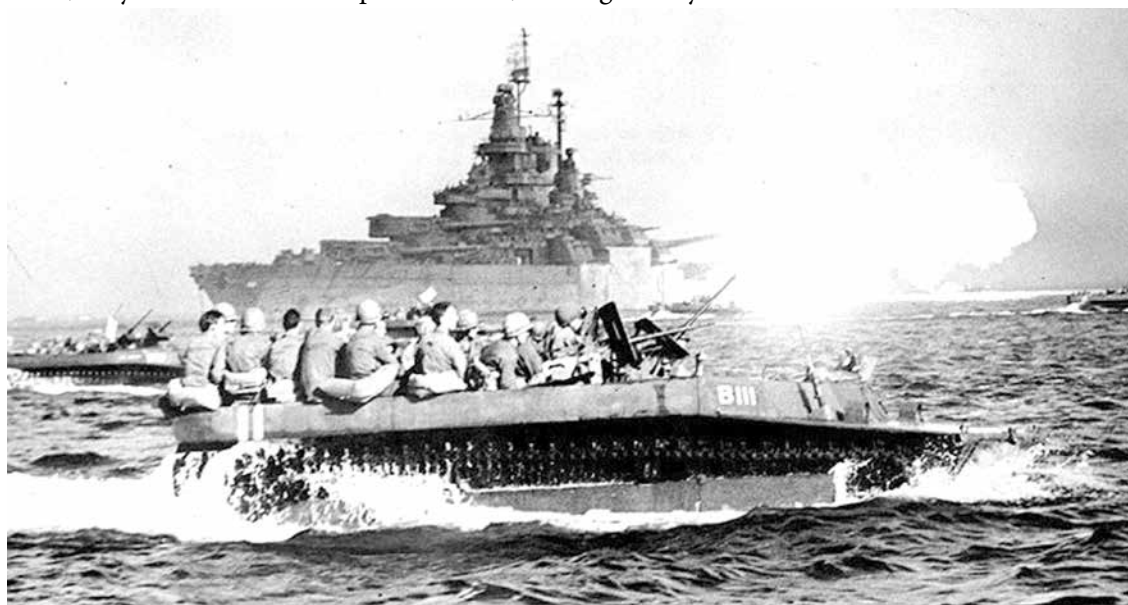
General MacArthur paid this tribute to the Merchant Marine:

"They have brought us our lifeblood and paid for it with some of their own. I saw them bombed off the Philippines and in New Guinea. When it was humanly possible, when their ships were not blown out from under them by bombs or torpedoes, they have delivered their cargoes to us. In war it is performance that counts."

When the bloody battle for Okinawa finally ended and

the island was secured, the Merchant Marine had completed its part in the war of the Pacific. Because of the Merchant Marine's "long haul," U. S. victory throughout the islands of the Pacific has been possible.

Editor's note: Excerpted from the book "Heros in Dungarees" by John Bunker. Copies are available on www.amazon.com.





CHAPTER NEWS

Desert Mariners Chapter

A FAREWELL PARTY

We were all saddened when we decided to close down the Desert Mariners chapter but thought we'd give it a grand sendoff. We held a luncheon last October and honored CEO Bill Keim with a Certificate of Appreciation for his services over the years.





CHAPTER NEWS

Ohio Valley Chapter

MOTHER NATURE ACTS UP

Over the last several years, we have worked very hard to upgrade our Merchant Marine monument that stands by the edge of our local river. You may have seen the story of our efforts and those of local contributing businesses in previous AMMV quarterly NEWS Magazines. However, this year, we're afraid the Mother Nature stepped in and our previous efforts were in vain.

Before it was over the entire monument was submersed. Flood erosion has jeopardized the stability of the monument and the Village of New Richmond, OH., our guardian angel, is assuming responsibility and will fill and seed the affected area. During a recent meeting, Village Administrator, Greg Roberts showed riverscape development and erosion control ideas which are being considered and told of the search for project funding. If they succeed, the natural setting will be enhanced and easier to maintain. And our beloved monument to the USMM will be shipshape again.





CHAPTER NEWS

SS Samuel Parker Chapter



WREATHS ACROSS AMERICA

CEO Jack Grothe (right center) participated, along with member Norman Theismann (left center), in honoring the USMM in the annual Wreaths Across America ceremony at Jefferson Barracks National Cemetery in St. Louis County, MO on December 17, 2017. This was Jack's 5th year at this traditional event which honors fallen service personnel, by placing wreaths on their tombstones at National cemeteries across the Country.

National Maritime Day Service



A Memorial service is conducted each year at the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial in San Pedro, California on May 22nd, National Maritime Day, for the purpose of honoring the sacrifice and contributions made by U.S. Merchant Mariners in WWII and subsequent conflicts.

Please join us and support this historic public Memorial service!

The centerpiece of the American Merchant Marine Memorial is the statue depicting one Mariner pulling another out of the water on a Jacob's ladder which was dedicated in 1989. In 2003, four black granite walls were erected adjacent to the Memorial statue. These walls are engraved with the alphabetized names of each US vessel which was a casualty of WWII, with the names of crewmembers who were lost to hostile action beneath the vessel's name. In addition to names of lost vessels and their crews, the Walls also list the names of: US Merchant Marine WWII Prisoners of War; WWII Maritime Academy Cadets Killed in Action; Recipients of the USMM Distinguished Service Medal; US Merchant Mariners lost to hostile action during the Viet Nam War.

The Memorial service honors the memory of these brave Merchant Mariners through presentations by representatives of: the US Coast Guard; local, state and federal government, with a VFW rifle salute and Taps, as well as a benediction and wreath blessing conducted by local clergy.

The Memorial service is open to the public and begins at 1100 hours on Tuesday, May 22, 2018 and lasts for approximately one hour. A luncheon at nearby Ports O'Call restaurant will follow at 1230 for a cost of \$45 per seat with presentations by US Merchant Marine Veterans and the Maritime Community.

All are encouraged to attend if for no other reason than to see the unique Memorial statue dedicated to US Merchant Marine Veterans and the haunting Memorial Walls which serve as the only headstone marking the sacrifice these brave mariners made in service to their Country.

For additional information regarding the National Maritime Day Memorial observation, advertising in the program, luncheon attendance, or about the American Merchant Marine Veterans Memorial Statue and Walls of Honor, please contact John Pitts at: ameucman@aol.com; 562-716-2899; or americanmerchantmarinevmc.org.



JUST RECOGNITION

Editor's note: WE NEED YOUR HELP! In support of S.2127 - "Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2017", we are asking all of our AMMV members to send this letter to the Senators on the Banking, Housing & Urban Affairs Committee which is considering it in the U.S. Senate. Three of the Committee members have already signed on as Co-sponsors; they are Mike Rounds of SD; Thom Tillis of NC; and Elizabeth Warren of MA. We need to persuade 8 or 10 more on this Committee to sign on as Co-sponsors, mark up the Bill and pass it on to the Senate floor for a vote. PLEASE cut out the letter (opposite), fill out your address information, sign it and SEND THE LETTER(S) TODAY to the district office(s) listed here!

NAME	DISTRICT ADDRESS				
SENATOR SHERROD BROWN	801 W. SUPREME AVE., #1400	CLEVELAND	OH	44113	
SENATOR BOB CORKER	3322 WEST END AVE., STE 610	NASHVILLE	TN	37203	
SENATOR CATHERINE CORTEZ MASTO	333 LAS VEGAS BLVD, S. #8016	LAS VEGAS	NV	89101	
SENATOR TOM COTTON	1108 S. OLD MISSOURI RD. #B	SPRINGDALE	AR	72764	
SENATOR MICHAEL CRAPO	251 EAST FRONT ST. STE 205	BOISE	ID	83702	
SENATOR JOE DONNELLY	205 W. COLLFAX AVE.	SOUTH BEND	IN	46601	
SENATOR HEIDI HEITKAMP	220 E. ROSSER AVE. STE 228	BISMARCK	ND	58501	
SENATOR DEAN HELLER	400 S. VIRGINIA ST. STE. 738	RENO	NV	89501	
SENATOR DOUG JONES	1 CHURCH ST. STE 500-B	MONTGOMERY	AL	36014	
SENATOR JOHN KENNEDY	500 POYDRAS ST. #364	NEW ORLEANS	LA	70130	
SENATOR ROBERT MENENDEZ	ONE GATEWAY CENTER, #1100	NEWARK	NJ	7102	
SENATOR JERRY MORAN	1200 MAIN ST., #402	HAYS	KS	67601	
SENATOR DAVID PERDUE	191 PEACHTREE ST. NE, #3250	ATLANTA	GA	30303	
SENATOR JACK REED	ONE EXCHANGE TERR. STE. 408	PROVIDENCE	RI	2903	
SENATOR BEN SASSE	304 N. 168TH CIRCLE, STE 213	OMAHA	NE	68118	
SENATOR BRIAN SCHATZ	300 ALA MOANA BLVD., #7-212	HONOLULU	HI	96850	
SENATOR TIM SCOTT	2500 CITY HALL LN., 3RD FLR	N. CHARLESTON	SC	29406	
SENATOR RICHARD C. SHELBY	1800 5TH AVE. N., STE. 321	BIRMINGHAM	AL	35203	
SENATOR JON TESTER	2900 4TH AVE. N., STE 201	BILLINGS	MT	59101	
SENATOR PATRICK J. TOOMEY	200 CHESTNUT ST. STE. 600	PHILADELPHIA	PA	19106	
SENATOR CHRIS VAN HOLLEN	1900 N. HOWARD ST., STE. 100	BALTIMORE	MD	21218	
SENATOR MARK R. WARNER	919 E. MAIN ST., STE 630	RICHMOND	VA	23219	

Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs
534 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

20 April 2018

Dear Senator Crapo & members of the 115th Congress Senate Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs:

This letter is in support of **S. 2127: The Merchant Mariners of WWII Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2017**, introduced by Senator Lisa Murkowski (R-AK).

I am a citizen of the United States who is very concerned with our own government's lack of recognition of U.S. WWII Merchant Mariners over the past seven decades. I now ask for your committee to fully support this bill; it is time to finally recognize the men who helped win World War II.

The United States Merchant Marine transported the supplies, fuel, and manpower required to defeat the Axis during WWII. However, this job was not completed without unspeakable losses in terms of both vessels and human lives. Here are some common WWII U.S. Merchant Marine statistics to consider: 250,000 merchant seamen served in WWII; 8,241 of them were killed; thousands more were injured; dozens were captured and tortured as POW's; over 1,500 merchant vessels were sunk (733 of them over 100 gross tons). The U.S. Merchant Marine transported over 7 million servicemen overseas. It was the only non-segregated service and over 10% of the seamen were African-American.

When the war ended, U.S. servicemen arrived home to victory parades and recognition of their efforts. Meanwhile, the Merchant Marine continued the important service of transporting troops home and carrying materials to rebuild war-stricken countries.

Many American seamen joined the Merchant Marine because they were too old, too young, or deemed medically unfit to serve in the military. FDR promised this group Veteran status and benefits similar to the GI Bill, but that promise died with him. It was not until 1988 that our WWII Merchant Mariners were officially recognized as Veterans; however, they were provided only limited benefits.

Non-citizen WWII Filipino Scouts were recognized with cash pay-outs in 2009 and a Gold Medal in the 114th Congress. Meanwhile, our American-citizen Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII still wait. I ask for your support of **S. 2127** for these unsung heroes from World War II.

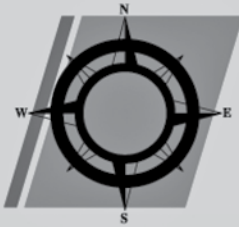
Sincerely,

Can We Make America Great Again?

A synopsis of a resolution submitted by Stanley Blumenthal, Gulfstream Chapter, from the floor of the AMMV National Convention in St. Louis, MO on March 15, 2018. The resolution was approved by Convention vote version.

- WHEREAS,** President Donald Trump has promised to Make America Great Again and Bring Back Our Jobs.
- WHEREAS,** We can help make America Great Again by protecting the Jones Act which manages outsourcing and rust belting ship and ship building jobs for our domestic and foreign trade.
- WHEREAS,** In the early 1950s we built the SS United States, SS Independence and SS Constitution, and we had the largest Merchant Marine Fleet in the world, all flying the American flag after WWII, without outsourcing and rust belting American industry. According to Commander of U.S. Transportation, Gen. Darren McDew, speaking at a Maritime Trades convention, “we had 1,500 U.S. flagged vessels in the ‘50s, 800 or so at 9/11/2001 and we are down to less than 80 now”.
- WHEREAS,** Today all Large Cruise Ships with the exception of ‘Pride Of America’, sailing under the Jones Act in the Hawaiian route, fly foreign flags to evade consumer protections and shelter corporate owners.
- WHEREAS,** The Maritime Labor Alliance consisting of six major maritime unions, are on record as supporting the citizens of Puerto Rico and others, by agreeing to suspend the Jones Act when disaster strikes; and there are not enough Jones Act vessels to aid and carry the necessary cargoes.
- WHEREAS,** America needs the 1920 Jones Act more than ever, to protect ourselves from those who would rust belt our entire fleet and related shipyards, servicing our own local port-to-port trading industry. Consider the loss of American income, tax revenues, and the economies of the communities where these workers live, and a lower GNP for our country, while the foreign economies grow.
- WHEREAS,** To ensure a continuous and high caliber supply of proficient and well trained Merchant Mariners, the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) operates the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy at Kings Point, (USMMA), New York and provides funding to the six State Maritime Academies in California, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, Texas, and New York, all educating Merchant Mariner Licensed Officers.
- WHEREAS,** We do have a small Cruise Ship Industry (protected by the Jones Act) for rivers, coastwise, Alaska with populations of 500 or less. This industry jobs and support jobs, and is integral to all these cities and towns.
- WHEREAS,** According to Wikipedia’s list of largest Cruise Ships, there are 48 under construction for 2018 - 2025, 71 in service now, and 80 out of service; and none scheduled to be built, registered or crewed in the USA.
- THEREFORE,** Be it resolved at the 32nd Annual National Convention of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV), held in St. Louis, MO in March 2018, to go on record to help make America Great Again, by expanding our Merchant Marine, protecting the Jones Act and Homeland Security; and by subsidizing the building, registering and crewing of large ocean going Cruise Ships, proudly flying the USA flag, and protecting its passengers, like when we were great.

Submitted by Stanley Blumenthal of the GULFSTREAM CHAPTER



UNITED STATES COAST GUARD
**The National
Maritime Center**

100 Forbes Drive
Martinsburg, WV

iasknmc@uscg.mil
1-888-427-5662
www.dco.uscg.mil/nmc

The NMC can help you...

On January 19, 1988, under provisions of Public Law 95-202, it was determined that the ocean-going service of the American Merchant Marine during the period of armed conflict from Dec. 7, 1941, to Aug. 15, 1945, shall be considered "active duty" for the purposes of laws administered by the Department of Veterans Affairs.

On Veterans Day, 1998, Public Law 105-368 determined that service during the period of Aug. 16, 1945, to Dec. 31, 1946, shall be considered "active duty" for the purposes of eligibility for burial and interment benefits.

U.S. Merchant Mariners who served in ocean-going service during those dates may be eligible to receive a Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active Duty (DD Form 214) if they meet the eligibility criteria. That criteria can be found on the National Maritime Center (NMC) website at www.dco.uscg.mil/nmc under Record Requests.

Requests should be submitted using the Application for Discharge of Member or Survivor of Member of Group Certified to Have Performed Active Duty with the Armed Forces of the United States (DD Form 2168). This form and directions for submitting it to the NMC can be found on our website at www.dco.uscg.mil/nmc.

For further questions regarding eligibility for WWII Merchant Marine Veterans, you may contact the NMC by calling the Customer Service Center at 1-888-427-5662, by emailing iasknmc@uscg.mil, or by visiting our website at www.dco.uscg.mil/nmc.

The NMC recognizes the valuable and valiant service of WWII Merchant Mariners and would like to thank them for their great sacrifice made to our country.

The NMC is proud to assist WWII Merchant Marine Veterans in receiving a DD Form 214 and an Honorable Discharge Certificate (DD Form 256).



The National Maritime Center
thanks
**all World War II
Merchant Marine Veterans**
for their service.



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 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 1st through June 30th). 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

A Letter From The White House To Dave Yoho

*Last Memorial Day, **Dave Yoho** was honored as the keynote speaker at the World War II Memorial. His incredible speech was seen by over 1,250,000 viewers.*

This speech is now available (condensed to 15 min.) on

YouTube, click here: [Dave Yoho Keynote Speech Memorial Day](#)



A Letter From President Trump to Dave Yoho



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

March 15, 2018

Mr. Dave Yoho
Fairfax, Virginia

Dear Mr. Yoho,

Thank you for your letter and kind words of support. The men and women of our Armed Forces and their families inspire Melania and me each day. Our freedom was won through the dedication, commitment, and sacrifice of service members like you.

By working together, we will keep America safe and strong, and we will set the course of our country and the world for the future.

I am deeply grateful for your service and thankful you took the time to write. May God bless America, and may He continue to bless you and your family.

With very best wishes,

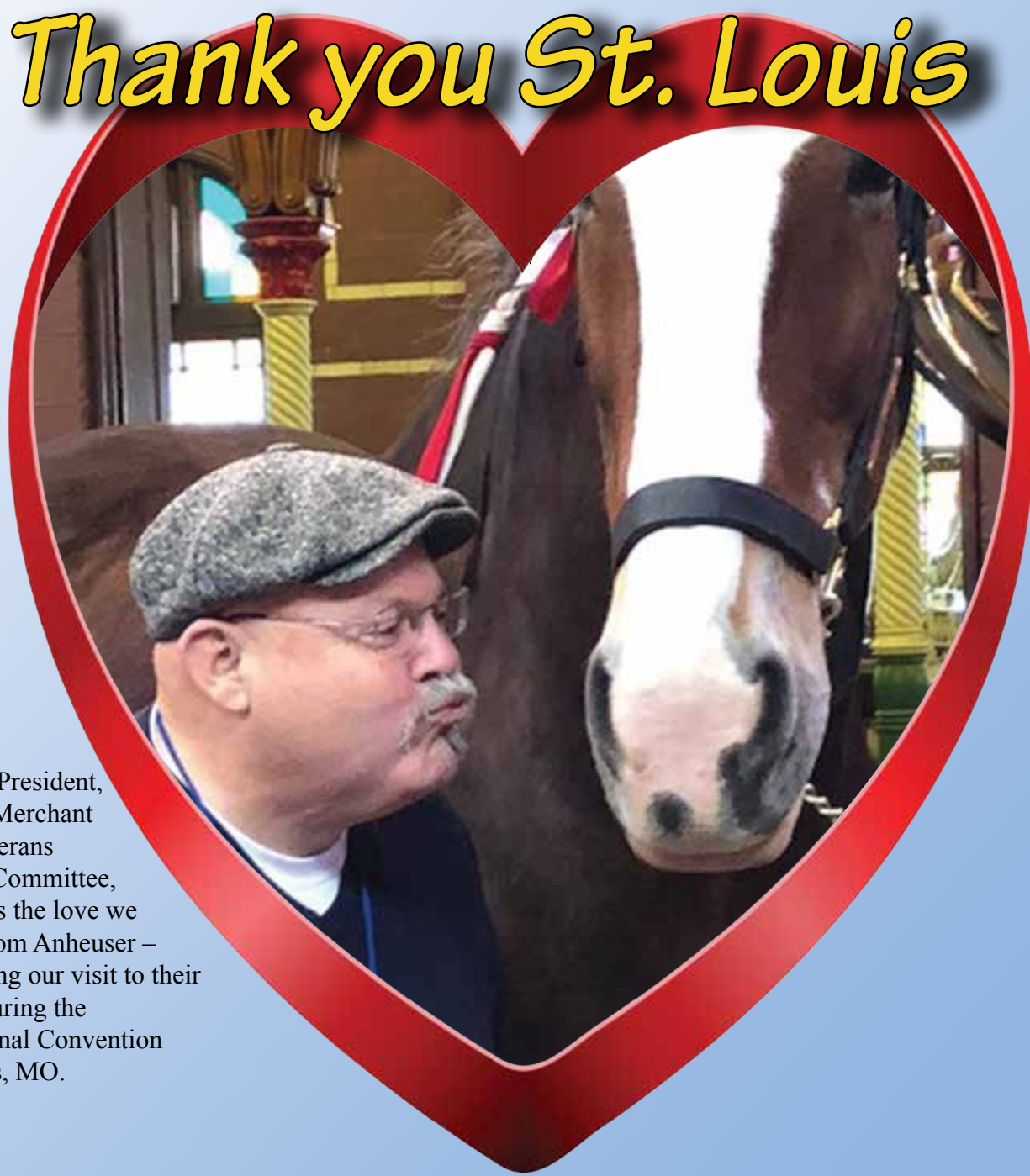
- Dave's speech was for all **Veterans** living or passed and their families.
- The highlights were filmed by the networks. **Fox News** streamed the entire live speech. **Stars & Stripes** (Armed Forces) filmed it. In total, over 1,250,000 viewed it.
- A link was sent to other news outlets and it is now on numerous sites, including **YouTube**.
- Dave's Congressman and Senator received a message and the link—**no response**.
- A letter and link was sent to the **President** — **he did respond**.
- Speech available on **YouTube**, click here: [Dave Yoho Keynote Speech Memorial Day](#)

Support and comfort our Veterans — send this and the link to Veterans and their families — encourage young people to have pride and respect for all Veterans.

American Merchant Marine Veterans
2722 MAYNES CT.
SANTA ROSA, CA 95405-8408

NON PROFIT ORG.
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
SAN ANTONIO, TX
PERMIT #1001

Thank you St. Louis



John Pitts, President,
American Merchant
Marine Veterans
Memorial Committee,
Inc., returns the love we
received from Anheuser –
Busch during our visit to their
Brewery during the
32nd National Convention
in St. Louis, MO.