

Spring 2019

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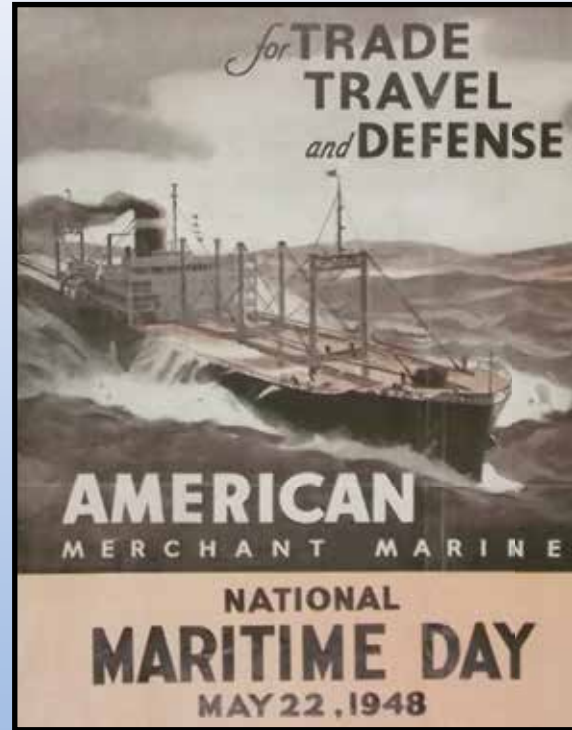
AMERICAN

MERCHANT MARINE

VETERANS



NEWS MAGAZINE



22
MAY

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY





Boarding SAVANNAH

January 6th, Epiphany on the Christian calendar, is also known as Little Christmas, marking the official end of the Christmas season. Epiphany of 1970 saw the arrival of the Nuclear Ship SAVANNAH at the Port of Baltimore. Depicted here at the Cape Henry Pilot Station with the Pilot Boat BALTIMORE in the foreground, SAVANNAH called regularly in Baltimore from 1963 to 1970. The world's first nuclear ship, SAVANNAH was envisioned by the Eisenhower Administration as a demonstration ship, part of the "Atoms for Peace" program. Certainly, one of the most striking merchant ships ever built, SAVANNAH successfully proved the practicality of nuclear propulsion in commercial service. Plans to build additional ships were cancelled however, and SAVANNAH ended her seagoing career in 1970, after only a decade of service. Pilot Boat BALTIMORE would have seven more years of duty at Cape Henry before an honorable retirement, and the small wooden pilot launches like the one shown in the painting would soon be replaced by fast new aluminum hulled boats which would dramatically increase the efficiency and safety of pilot boarding operations. Today SAVANNAH, looking almost brand new, is berthed in Baltimore, awaiting assignment as a museum ship at an east coast port.

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

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



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National President Capt. Chris Edyvean



AMMV Convention

The 33rd National Convention is in the books. It was a wonderful event that exceeded all expectations. Many thanks to our Convention Committee members for managing the finances, outreach, and planning. Convention Chairman Capt. Dru DiMattia personally handled many complex aspects

of this convention and deserves special acknowledgment for his successful efforts.

History...

If there was any theme to the 33rd convention, it was highlighting the importance of preserving U.S. Merchant Marine history. It was long overdue that Toni Horodysky finally be recognized for her efforts in creating and managing the Merchant Marine at War (usmm.org) website for over twenty years. Special tribute was also given to the late Capt. Arthur Moore for his life work in compiling data and authoring *A Careless Word, A Needless Sinking*.

...And legislation

As I wind down my time as AMMV National President, I would like to ask our readers one question: How will history remember the U.S. Merchant Mariners of WWII twenty years from now, fifty years from now, one hundred years from now? Folks, it is imperative that the WWII Merchant Mariner Congressional Gold Medal Act (H.R. 550 & S. 133) be passed this year and signed into law. The time is right and we have a level of momentum that we have not experienced in years. However, we must each do our part to push our Congressperson, Senators, and the Committees holding each version of the bill. To see our WWII Merchant Mariners recognized with the Congressional Gold Medal would go a long way toward solidifying their rightful place in American history. It would also shine a new light on the modern-day U.S. Merchant Marine and the need to support pro-U.S. maritime

laws and programs. Please, do your part.

Please welcoming our incoming officers

As I prepare to turn over the watch to National Officers-Elect John Pitts, Capt. Dru DiMattia, and Dennis Kelly, I can assure our membership that AMMV will remain in good hands. There is not a more qualified team to handle the AMMV ship than these individuals.

Thank you to my officers & crew

There are so many AMMV members and volunteers that I'd like thank for their hard work, dedication, and camaraderie over the past four years, but there is just not enough space to mention everyone. Each of these individuals knows who they are, and of their value to the organization. Your tireless efforts, and above all, fighting spirit, are to be commended. In the words of the late Nelson Cauble, "Together we can, and together we have, made a difference". Thank you all for making a difference.

Christopher J. Edyvean



AMMV outgoing National President Capt. Chris Edyvean was recently recognized by Lodge #12 of the International Shipmasters' Association (ISMA) for his work with AMMV. He was presented with the "Capt. Paul D. Halvorsen" Award. Immediately to the right of Capt. Chris is WWII Navy Armed Guard Veteran William Carlson, who survived the sinking of the M/S City of New York on 3/29/1942. All pictured Lodge #12 ISMA members are also members of AMMV.



National Treasurer John Pitts



May 22nd is recognized as National Maritime Day each year. This is a day to recognize and celebrate the contributions and achievements of the Merchant Marine. Recently, in Tampa, Florida, the contributions and achievements of the US Merchant Marine Veterans were recognized and celebrated at the American Merchant Ma-

rine Veterans annual convention. The convention was a success by all standards and if you were unable to attend, you were missed, and you missed a stellar gathering. I'm sure the details of the convention will be told by other contributors to this magazine. I would like to share with you the comradery that developed at the convention. The well planned and organized events provided for a bonding of the attendees; some Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII; their family members; Merchant Marine Veterans of other conflicts whose efforts have not yet been acknowledged officially; current Merchant Mariners; successful business people; entertainers; friends; and others who share the goal of gaining just recognition for those who served in the US Merchant Marine during WWII and subsequent wars and actions.

In addition to sharing those common goals, something else took place, a bonding of people with like interests who enjoy each other's company based on a common theme. This gathering was a small sampling of what the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization can accomplish when people with common interests make the effort to join forces for the purpose of righting a wrong.

This was the third AMMV convention I've attended and each one expands the circle of knowledge, friendship and respect for the sacrifice and achievement of the US Merchant Marine Veterans and also of those who take their time and effort to ensure that such gatherings not only take place but are entertaining and fruitful as well. I would be remiss to relay any description of the most recent convention without the mention of the 21 US Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII who attended and especially the incoming AMMV Vice-President Captain Dru DiMattia, and Sheila Sova, daughter of a US Merchant Marine Veteran of WWII, without whom the convention would have been much less impressive and dynamic. I could list the names of all the contributors to the success of the convention, but that would simply be a list of names. Each attendee contributed to the

success of the convention, in their own way. That was the resounding message I took away from this convention. Just as on a ship, each person plays an integral part in contributing to the success of the mission.

We are all capable of individually putting forth an effort to ensure an issue we feel is worthwhile, but when we join forces the results are so much more effective and rewarding.

Plans are already being made for next year's convention and for other events important to the success of the AMMV goals in the meantime. Please join us in actively contributing to the accomplishment of those goals.

I would like to offer my sincere thanks to everyone who contributed to making the 33rd AMMV convention memorable and worthwhile and to those who weren't able to attend but continue to make the American Merchant Marine Veterans a worthwhile and successful organization through your membership.

Best wishes for a safe, healthy enjoyable National Maritime Day.

Fair Winds and Following Seas!

Fraternally,

John Pitts

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National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



I just returned from Tampa, having attended another wonderful convention with AMMV. If you were there I hope you enjoyed it. If not, we hope you will join us next year.

We are gearing up for dues collection season. MAL dues are \$32 and are expected by June 30, 2019, which is the membership expiration date. I will be

sending a reminder before June 1st. Some folks have paid for more than one year. If your membership is not expiring on June 30 you will not receive a reminder notice. If you are in doubt of your current status, call me at 475-470-9200, or email me ammermarvets@gmail.com Checks should be mailed to AMMV, P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024. If you are a chapter member please contact your chapter CEO, Secretary or Treasurer and see that your membership is current.

If possible, when you send in your dues, please confirm your contact information by including your phone number and email address along with your check. If your address has changed please let us know.

NEW VETERANS' AFFAIRS CHAIRMAN:

One piece of exciting news I wish to share with you is that effective July 1st we have a new chairman on the Standing Committee called Veterans Affairs. The position has been vacant for many years and I am happy to say our new chair has an impressive background in Veterans issues for over twenty-four years as well as an enthusiastic energy he will bring to the position. His name is Bob Lewis and Bob and his wife Lisa live in Quincy, Massachusetts.

Please join me in welcoming Bob to our AMMV family.

Lynn Kelly

Bob writes:

A Navy veteran during 1982-1986, I served aboard both a destroyer (DD-975), and a fast frigate (FF-1069), as a communications electrician. This sparked, pun intended, my career and in 1988 I joined the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local Union 103 and received my Journeyman license.

In 1994, with job scarcity and advice from a good friend I found myself joining the National Maritime Union. Over the next few years I sailed as an electrician, Fireman/Watertender and Oiler with the following companies; Keystone Shipping, Marine Transport Lines and Farrell Lines. Early on I embraced my fellow comrades and have been an involved member of several veterans' associations. I think my past activities and associations will serve the American Merchant Marines Veterans well.

My affiliations include:

I.B.E.W. L.U. 103 - 30 years

VFW-Life Member since 1995

American Legion 2007

Sons of the American Legion 2012

Commander Morrisette Post 294 2013-2014

Tin Can Sailors association 2014

Benevolent and protective order of Elks 2014

Steady As She Goes (S.S. Jeremiah O'Brien-Liberty Ship) Assoc. 2014

District 6th American Legion Financial Officer 2015

Commander Quincy Veterans Council 2016-2018

American Legion Aide to the Dept of Massachusetts Commander 2018-2019

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or concerns at 617-820-8968 or Robertlewis865@yahoo.com
"Fair Winds and Following Seas"

Bob Lewis





NEWS Magazine Editor Sindy Raymond



A spectacular convention:

Well, the 33rd National convention of the AMMV in Tampa, Florida March 20-24, 2019 is now in the history books. It was a monumental occasion very successfully carried out thanks to the efforts of many. I would like to send a gigantic **THANK YOU** to Captain Anthony

“Dru” Di Mattia, our very enthusiastic and productive Committee Chairman; Kimberly King, Registrar extraordinaire; John Pitts, Master of Ceremonies (and entertainment contributor); Lynn Kelly, National Office Administrator; Sheila Sova and all the other AMMV volunteers who worked so hard and diligently to make our convention delightful and successful. We had wonderful guests and speakers, grand events and great entertainment, with Sally and Roy highlighting the Patriotic dinner show. An exceptional time was had by all, it seems.

It was a pleasure, also, to meet quite a few of our newer members and some of those whom we may have missed at previous conventions.

Later in this *AMMV NEWS Magazine*, you will get a glimpse of the proceedings, which might make you feel that you wish you could have been there. However, there's always next year, perhaps in Baltimore, MD at MITAGS. Hope to see you there!

Thanks, too, to the contributors of the photographs included in this issue. There was some confusion in the submittal process to the *NEWS* but things worked out as you'll soon see. There were oodles of photos taken and if some of yours are not presented, we apologize.

On a personal note, I found it memorable that the last time an AMMV convention was held in Tampa was ten years ago, and some of us were still in shock. The SS *Maersk Alabama* had just been hijacked weeks previously and several of the crew attended that convention and spoke to us. How time doth fly!

On the legislative front:

News has been received that the our House of Representatives bill **HR.550 “WWII Merchant Mariners Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2019”** sponsored by

Congressman John Garamendi of California, as of today, April 12th, has 122 Co-sponsors signed on in support.

We need to keep the pressure on for this legislation and should sign on at least that many more Co-sponsors. So, if you would like a listing of non-signed Congresspersons featuring their district office addresses, telephone numbers and Washington, DC office telephones, so you can write them or call them to urge support, please contact me at (707) 235-6598, email me at saaren@sonic.net or drop me a line. I'll be glad to provide you with updated information.

Hopefully, this is the Congressional session when WWII Merchant Marine Veterans finally get some recognition by Congress. PLEASE HELP achieve our goals.!

Further good news:

Another boost to the successful achievement of our legislative goals has been offered. AMMV National President Captain Chris Edyvean today announced that MITAGS has confirmed sponsorship of our 2019 Storm the Hill gang, which will feature WWII Merchant Marine Vets Charles Mills, Gene Barner, and Gerard Driscoll. Supporting them will be Team Coordinator Sheila Sova with Dennis Ng (Dennis.A.Roland Chapter President), and Outstanding Volunteer Laura Johnson Riddle. The group will be in Washington, D.C. the week of National Maritime Day – May 22nd - and will attend related events in addition to storming the halls of Congress.

Have a very pleasant Spring and enjoy Maritime Day and Memorial Day to the limit.

Full speed ahead,

SINDY RAYMOND

10 YEARS AFTER THE MAERSK ALABAMA HIJACKING: COULD IT HAPPEN AGAIN?

Editor's note: Jon Konrad, originator of www.gcaptain.com attended the AMMV 33rd National Convention, with his daughter Eleanor, in late March, 2019. The following article is from his website, which always contains pertinent and interesting information. It is the top-visited maritime and offshore industry news site in the world. Thank you, Jon, for everything you do.

Ten years ago, at the last Tampa-held AMMV convention, attendees included Mike Perry, Chief Engineer, the 2nd Mate and the 3rd Mate Colin Wright of the Maersk crew. Your Editor couldn't help but think of the emotion that their convention speeches conveyed just weeks after the hijacking.

Per an article on www.gcaptain.com, April 9th, 2019 marked the 10th anniversary of the hijacking of the U.S.-flagged freighter *Maersk Alabama*. It was the first time in more than 200 years that pirates had boarded an American-flagged vessel.

"The immediate aftermath of the attack—the kidnapping by the pirates of Captain Richard Phillips—held the world transfixed for five days. Phillips was held hostage in a covered lifeboat until Navy sharpshooters aboard the guided-missile destroyer USS Bainbridge intervened, killing three of the pirates.

What has changed since April 9, 2009? Could another U.S. ship be hijacked today?

"Absolutely, if we let our guard down," Captain Phillips says. "Now there are cops on the beat—armed security guards aboard ships in addition to international navies patrolling pirate-prone areas—but if that situation changes, it could definitely happen again."

He says "there are so few U.S.-flag ships now that it's unlikely one would be hijacked. But are there still risks for

American mariners? The answer is yes."

Captain James Staples, a security expert who works at the Maritime Institute of Graduate Studies (MITAGS) in Linthicum Heights, MD, agrees.

"The piracy situation has only changed in one geographic area: off the coast of Somalia," he says.

"Piracy globally continues. In Nigeria, it's happening all the time: with people taken, ships taken. The de-escalation has only been in that one area and it's all because of

Captain Phillips. If he hadn't been taken, this wouldn't have happened. The threat is still high in other parts of the world. Rich Phillips was the catalyst; hundreds of sailors had been taken before but it didn't make the news."

Is the key factor the presence of armed

security details? Are there other factors, for example ships traveling farther from the coast, in areas that are harder for pirates in small boats to reach?

"Places like the Singapore Straits and Indonesia you just cannot get far from the coast due to the geography of the area," Staples says.

"You are basically coastwise for days and in close proximity to shoals and other vessels."

"And when you make an entry into a country, you have to cross the demarcation line at some point," he adds.

After the *Maersk Alabama* hijacking, security teams aboard at-risk ships had as many as five components.

"Now companies are down to two or three people, which is not enough to face down, for example, Abu Sayyaf or another terrorist group," Staples says.

He and Captain Phillips believe the terrorist threat to ships—including those flying the U.S. flag—is now greater than the threat of piracy.



Alternative Decoy Vessels On The Alert

Historically, Q-ships, also known as Q-boats, decoy vessels, special service ships, or mystery ships, were heavily armed merchant ships with concealed weaponry, designed to lure submarines into making surface attacks. This gave Q-ships the chance to open fire and sink them.

EARLY USES:

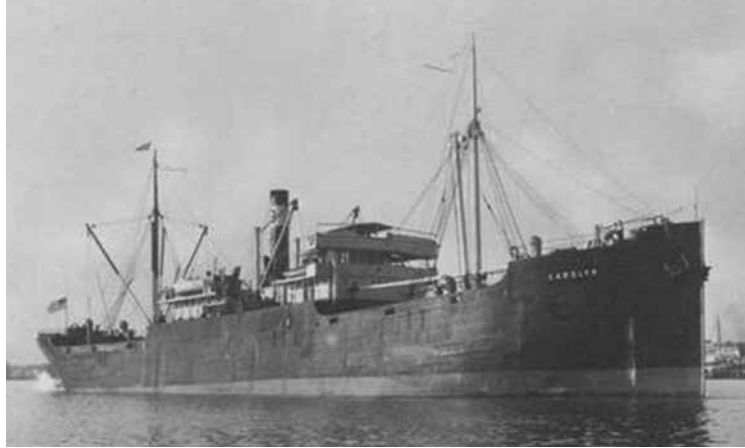
In the 1670s, HMS *Kingfisher* (1675) was specially designed to counter the attacks of Algerian corsairs or pirates in the Mediterranean by masquerading as a merchantman, hiding her armament behind false bulkheads. She was also provided with various means of changing her appearance.

During the French Revolutionary Wars, a French brig disguised as a merchantman, with hidden guns and most of her crew below decks, was beaten off by the privateer lugger *Vulture* out of Jersey.

WORLD WAR I:

In 1915, during the First Battle of the Atlantic, Britain was in desperate need of a countermeasure against the U-boats that were strangling her sea-lanes. Convoys, which had proved effective in earlier times (and would again prove effective during the Second World War), were rejected by the resource-strapped Admiralty and the independent captains. Depth charges of the time were relatively primitive, and almost the only chance of sinking a submarine was by gunfire or by ramming while on the surface. The problem was how to lure the U-boat to the surface.

A solution to this was the creation of the Q-ship, one of the most closely guarded secrets of the war. Their code-name referred to the vessels' home port, Queenstown, in Ireland. These became known by the Germans as a *U-Boot-Falle* ("U-boat trap"). A Q-ship would appear to be an easy target, but in fact carried hidden armaments. A typical Q-ship might resemble a tramp steamer sailing alone in an area where a U-boat was reported to be operating. By seeming to be a suitable target for the U-boat's deck gun, a Q-ship might encourage the U-boat captain to make a surface attack rather than use one of his limited number of torpedoes. The Q-ships' cargoes were light wood (balsa or cork) or wooden casks, so that even if torpedoed they would remain afloat, encouraging the U-boat to surface to sink them with a deck gun. There might also be pretence of "abandoning ship" with some crew dressed as civilian mariners taking to a boat. Once the U-boat was vulnerable,



the Q-ship's panels would drop to reveal the deck guns, which would immediately open fire. At the same time, the White Ensign (Royal Navy flag) would be raised. With the element of surprise, a U-boat could be quickly overwhelmed.

The first Q-ship victory was on 23 June 1915, when the submarine HMS *C24*, cooperating with the decoy

vessel *Taranaki*, commanded by Lieutenant Frederick Henry Taylor CBE DSC RN, sank *U-40* off Eyemouth. The first victory by an unassisted Q-ship came on 24 July 1915 when *Prince Charles*, commanded by Lieutenant Mark-Wardlaw, DSO, sank *U-36*. The civilian crew of *Prince Charles* received a cash award. The following month an even smaller converted fishing trawler renamed HM Armed Smack *Inverlyon* successfully destroyed *UB-4* near Great Yarmouth. The *Inverlyon* was an unpowered sailing ship fitted with a small 3 pounder (47 mm) gun. The British crew fired nine rounds from their 3-pounder into *UB-4* at close range, sinking her with the loss of all hands despite the attempt of *Inverlyon's* skipper to rescue one surviving German submariner.

On 19 August 1915, Lieutenant Godfrey Herbert of HMS *Baralong* sank *U-27*, which was preparing to attack a nearby merchant ship, the *Nicosian*. About a dozen of the U-boat sailors survived and swam towards the merchant ship. Herbert, allegedly fearing that they might scuttle her, ordered the survivors to be shot in the water and sent a boarding party to kill all who had made it aboard. This became known as the "Baralong Incident".

HMS *Farnborough* (Q-5) sank SM *U-68* on 22 March 1916. Her commander, Gordon Campbell, was awarded the Victoria Cross (VC). New Zealanders Lieutenant Andrew Dougall Blair and Sub-Lieutenant William Edward Sanders VC, DSO faced three U-boats simultaneously in the *Helgoland* (Q.17) while becalmed and without engines or wireless. Forced to return fire early, they managed to sink one U-boat and avoid two torpedo attacks. Sanders was promoted to lieutenant-commander, eventually commanding HMS *Prize*. He was awarded the Victoria Cross for an action on 30 April 1917 with *U-93*, which was severely damaged.

Perhaps remembering the early action aboard Q.17, Sanders waited, while his ship sustained heavy shellfire, until the submarine was within 80 yards, whereupon he

hoisted the White Ensign and the *Prize* opened fire. The submarine appeared to sink and he claimed a victory. However, the badly damaged submarine managed to struggle back to port. With his ship accurately described by the survivors of *U-93*, Sanders and his crewmen were all killed in action when they attempted a surprise attack on *U-43* on 14 August 1917.

There may have been as many as 366 Q-ships, of which 61 were lost in WWI. After the war, it was concluded that Q-ships were greatly overrated, diverting skilled seamen from other duties without sinking enough U-boats to justify the strategy. In a total of 150 engagements, British Q-ships destroyed 14 U-boats and damaged 60, at a cost of 27 Q-ships lost out of 200. Q-ships were responsible for about 10% of all U-boats sunk, ranking them well below the use of ordinary minefields in effectiveness.

The Imperial German Navy commissioned six Q-boats during the Great War for the Baltic Sea into the *Handelsschutzflottille*. None were successful in destroying enemy submarines. The German Q-ship *Schiff K* heavily damaged the Russian submarine *Gepard* of the Bars-class on 27 May 1916. The famous *Möwe* and *Wolf* were merchant raiders.

A surviving example of the Q-ships is HMS *Saxifrage*, a Flower-class sloop of the *Anchusa* group completed in 1918. She was renamed HMS *President* in 1922 and served as the London Division RNR drill ship until 1988, when she was sold privately and remains moored at King's Reach on the Thames.

WORLD WAR II

Germany employed at least 13 Q-ships, including the German "Dutch" *Atlantis*, which sank a number of ships with a total tonnage of 145,960t including the Norwegian tanker *Tirranra* on 10 June 1940, and *Schürbeck* which sank the British submarine HMS *Tarpon*.

Nine Q-ships were commissioned by the Royal Navy in September and October 1939 for work in the North Atlantic:

Of these, HMS *Prunella* and *Edgehill* were torpedoed and sunk on 21 and 29 June 1940 without even sighting a U-Boat. The rest of the vessels were paid off in March 1941 without successfully accomplishing any mission.

The last Royal Navy Q-ship, 2,456-ton HMS *Fidelity*, was converted in September, 1940, to carry a torpedo defense net, four 4-inch (10-cm) guns, four torpedo tubes, two OS2U Kingfisher float planes, and Motor Torpedo Boat 105. *Fidelity* sailed with a French crew, and was sunk by *U-435* on 30 December 1942 during the battle for Convoy ON-154.

By January 12, 1942, the British Admiralty's intelligence community had noted a "heavy concentration" of U-boats off the "North American seaboard from New York to Cape Race" and passed along this fact to the United States Navy.

That day, *U-123* under *Kapitänleutnant* Reinhard Hardegen, torpedoed and sank the British steamship *Cy-*

clops, inaugurating *Paukenschlag* (literally, "a strike on the kettledrum" and sometimes referred to in English as "Operation Drumbeat"). U-boat commanders found peacetime conditions prevailing along the coast: towns and cities were not blacked-out and navigational buoys remained lit; shipping followed normal routines and "carried the normal lights." *Paukenschlag* had caught the United States unprepared.

Losses mounted rapidly. On January 20, 1942, Commander-in-Chief, United States Fleet (Cominch), sent a coded dispatch to Commander, Eastern Sea Frontier (CESF), requesting immediate consideration of the manning and fitting-out of "Queen" ships to be operated as an antisubmarine measure. The result was "Project LQ."

Five vessels were acquired and converted secretly at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery, Maine: the Boston beam trawler MS *Wave*, which briefly became the auxiliary minesweeper USS *Eagle* (AM-132) before becoming USS *Captor* (PYC-40),

SS *Evelyn* and *Carolyn*, identical cargo vessels that became USS *Asterion* (AK-100) and USS *Atik* (AK-101) respectively, the tanker SS *Gulf Dawn*, which became USS *Big Horn* (AO-45), and the schooner *Irene Myrtle*, which became USS *Irene Forsythe* (IX-93).

The careers of all five ships were almost entirely unsuccessful and very short, with USS *Atik* sunk on its first patrol; all Q-ships patrols ended in 1943.

American Q-ships also operated in the Pacific Ocean. One was USS *Anacapa* (AG-49) formerly the lumber transport *Coos Bay* which was converted to Q-ship duty as project "Love William". *Anacapa* was not successful in engaging any enemy submarines, although she is believed to have damaged two friendly subs with depth charges when they were improperly operating in her vicinity. *Anacapa* was also withdrawn from Q-ship duty in 1943 and served out the remainder of World War II as an armed transport in the South Pacific and Aleutian Islands.

The Imperial Japanese Navy converted the 2,205-ton merchant ship, *Delhi Maru*, into a Q-ship. On 15 January 1944, she departed from Nagaura (now Sodegaura on Tokyo Bay) on her first mission in company with the submarine chaser *Ch-50* and the netlayer *Tatu Maru*. At 22:00 that evening, the vessels were detected by the USN Navy submarine USS *Swordfish* (SS-193), which launched three torpedoes. *Delhi Maru* was hit by all three on her port bow; following a number of internal explosions, she broke in two, the forward section sinking immediately and the aft section sinking later in heavy seas. Although the *Swordfish* was depth charged by *Ch-50*, she escaped unscathed.

Editor's note: For further reading about these ships, you might be interested in "Q ship vs U-boat:1914-1918": "Q Ships and their Story: a history of Decoy Vessels" or "The Osprey and the Seawolf: the Battle of the Atlantic 1942". All are available on www.amazon.com.



WE NEED YOUR HELP!

National office street address records are updated quarterly with the mailing of our AMMV NEWS Magazine. However, sometimes we do not receive telephone number and/or email updated information from our members. SO, PLEASE, LET US KNOW.

We feel it is very important to keep in contact with our members and as such, we would appreciate it if you will notify us if this information has changed over the years. In these times, many members have discontinued their regular telephones (land lines) and only use cell phone numbers. Email addresses can also be changed easily and are important for communication, too.

Please note: the AMMV By-laws mandate that *“the National membership list of names and addresses shall not be released to anyone, public or private concerns.”*

NAME: _____

Telephone number: _____

Cell phone number: _____

Email address: _____

If your information has changed, please return this form to our National Office Administrator:

**Lynn Kelly
AMMV National office
P.O. Box 2024
Darien, CT 06820-2024**

If you have questions, please call Lynn at (475) 470-9200 or email her at ammermarvets@gmail.com. You can also contact Cindy at (707) 235-6598 or email her at saaren@sonic.net.

Please note: if you are a Member-at-Large, you might consider including your check for \$32.00 for dues for the fiscal year July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020 in the envelope or you can renew online at www.ammv.us.

A GIFT SUGGESTION YOU MIGHT WANT TO CONSIDER

Do you know someone who would be interested in membership in the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV)? Perhaps you could give them a "gift membership".

An AMMV membership is a thoughtful gift for many special occasions, including Father's Day, Mother's Day, Maritime Day, Memorial Day, Birthdays, Entry to a maritime academy, and Graduation from a maritime academy.

A new Member-at-Large application containing contact information is printed later in this NEWS Magazine or you can sign them up via our website: www.ammv.us. The new member will receive an acknowledgement with their new member packet telling them it is a gift from you.

AMMV welcomes members with proof of service who:

- Hold a Certificate of Discharge from ocean voyages (foreign or coastal) or inland waters.
- Can provide proof of service as a seaman on any country's vessels.
- Are members of the U.S. Maritime Service (active or inactive), including Academy cadets.
- Are Armed Guards who served on U.S. Merchant Marine vessels and have a DD-214.
- Are members of any uniformed U.S. Armed Service with a DD-214.
- Are wives or widows of previous AMMV members.
- Are children, grand-children and descendants of previous members.
- Associate membership is available to any and all person who have the desire and interest to support the purpose of the American Merchant Marine industry.

The future of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization depends on continued and increased membership.

MAINTAIN YOUR MEMBERSHIP AND ALLOW YOUR GIFT RECIPIENT TO REAP THE BENEFITS.

Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

CASEY ADAMS	SUFFOLK	VA	OLIVER J. LUA	MONTESANO	WA
SANDRA BARTH	LAS VEGAS	NV	CAPT. TOM MACKAY	DULUTH	MN
FIONA BOYLE	NORFOLK	VA	KRISTIN MANGOLD	INDIAN HARBOUR BEACH	FL
ROBERT BUGARIN	WILMINGTON	CA	CAPT. SHAWN MCKENZIE	SUPERIOR	WI
STEVE M. CANYON	HAYMARKET	VA	THERESA MULLIGAN	STATEN ISLAND	NY
PATRICK W. DUFFY	ENGLEWOOD	FL	JASON MYERS	ROSE CITY	MI
SIDNEY FAULKNER	CASTLE ROCK	WA	LOUIS NICOUUD III	STATELINE	NV
HERBERT FORD	EXETER	CA	LEONARD SCHLADWEILER	RYEGATE	MT
JOHN M. GANDY	BLUE HILL	ME	STEPHEN SNYDER	JACKSONVILLE	FL
JAMES GREEN	GARDEN CITY	KS	CONOR SULLIVAN	WOODMERE	NY
CAPT. DOUGLAS A. HARD	GARDEN CITY	NY	ARTHUR WEBSTER	CARLSBAD	CA
THOMAS HILL	NORMAN	OK	HERBERT WEINSTEIN	GREENVILLE	SC
TIMOTHY HOLM	MOUNDS VIEW	MN	MARY JO WINFREY	ORANGE	TX
BOYD JEWETT	LINCOLN	CA	KIERAN YOUNGBERG	STATEN ISLAND	NY
NATHANIEL K. LAMMERS	SAINT JOSEPH	MI	LEONARD ZALESKI	CHICAGO	IL

At Sea with Woody Guthrie

Editor's note: Singer Woody Guthrie and his friends Jim Longhi and Cisco Houston shipped out in the U. S. Merchant Marine together. Jim Longhi later wrote a book, "Woody, Cisco and Me: Seamen Three in the Merchant Marine", about their experiences. In the prologue Longhi writes:

"it's the spring of 1943, the middle of World War II, Woody Guthrie and Cisco Houston ask me to ship out with them in the Merchant Marine. Me, a certified unadulterated coward, volunteered for the most dangerous job of the war! Here is an excerpt from the book. It is available on www.amazon.com.

Half of our convoy passed through the Strait of Gibraltar, probably bound for our North African bases. The rest of us entered Gibraltar Bay. There were thirty merchant ships at anchor, probably waiting for us to join them in forming a new convoy.

The rock, two miles wide at its base, towered fifteen hundred feet above us. Its steep face, lined and tiered with gun emplacements, made it the mightiest fortress in the British Empire. The English town of Gibraltar clung to the rock. At the edge of the bay was the Spanish port of La Linea, where Franco first landed his rebel forces armed with Mussolini's tanks and Hitler's air force. It had been the start of the tragedy of the Spanish people and the prelude to World War II.

Beyond La Linea, the barren Spanish mountains recede toward the north.

Along the bay's shore we could see five or six beached Allied ships. "That fucking Franco!" Pete Harmon pointed to the crippled ships. "He lets the Nazi frogmen blow up our ships." Pete, who had been to Gibraltar before, explained that at night the German frogmen came from the Spanish side of the bay. They would walk the bottom of the bay and place sticker time bombs on the keels of our ships.

Our anchorage was less than two hundred yards from the Spanish shore, so close that we could smell the orange blossoms. Before we dropped anchor a dozen rowboats swarmed around us. "Brandy! Brandy!" their occupants shouted up to us in broken English. "One carton cigarettes, two bottles brandy!" There would be no shore leave while we were at Gibraltar. Down went the lines baited with cigarettes. And up came the brandy. It was good brandy, thick and smooth on the tongue.

That night, under the stars, we celebrated our safe crossing with the biggest and drunkenest party yet. Woody was the main attraction. Cisco was second, and I accompanied them with my three poor chords, which after several brandies began to sound pretty good to me. Charlie from Ohio took over during our breaks. The men danced hoedowns to Woody's music and jitterbugged to Charlie's.

It was very hot, but the night was beautiful, the brandy

was beautiful, and the British patrol boats watched over us, dropping their depth charges soon after sunset. The charges weren't big enough to kill any German frogmen lurking about. "Don't anybody get any ideas about swimming off the side of the ship," Cisco warned our audience. "Just one of those little depth charges'll turn you into mashed potatoes."

It was a great party. Nobody swam and we danced till dawn.

The next day more ships anchored in the already jammed bay. There was no doubt that we were going to be part of an invasion fleet. The question was, what invasion?

Churchill favored landing in Greece, which he called the soft underbelly of the Nazi "Fortress Europa". The Russians wanted the Allies to invade northern France. Others wanted to attack in the north of Italy to trap the German armies already in the long, narrow peninsula. Invading Sicily was out of the question because although Sicily was only a stone's throw from our African bases, our armies would have to fight every inch of their way up the Italian boot. One well-placed German division would be able to cut up ten of ours. Only Mike Sala wanted us to invade Sicily. The rest of the world knew that it would be idiotic. That morning – the 10th of July – our ship's radio announced that the Allies had invaded Sicily.

Woody shook his head, "Mike Sala must have an awful lot of influence with the Allied chiefs of staff."

Heavy static made it difficult to catch everything the announcer was saying, but it was clear that our forces had landed in the south and the east of the island. The main German forces were at the other end, near Palermo.

The betting was two to one that we would sail the next day, but one week later we were still in Gibraltar. We didn't mind the wait. In fact it was a real vacation. The weather was great, and we could swim off the side of the ship, since the British dropped depth charges only at night. We sunbathed, read, listened to records, practiced guitar, played chess and wrote letters.

Woody wrote for several hours a day, either working on his novel or writing ten-page letters to his wife. "Hell, how can you write to many page?" asked a gunner sitting next to Woody, who was scribbling away on number-five hatch. "I've got to use big letters to fill up one lousy little page. How can you fill so many?"

"Easy, just keep writing."

"What about?"

"Everything. Look at those birds." Woody pointed to dozens of screeching seagulls beating the air over the afterdeck, where Roberto the cook was feeding them coice bits from our leftovers. The gulls jostled and bit each other as they dived to catch the morsels in midair, and hardly ever



Gibraltar Bay

did a piece hit the water. The fastest gull was an old one with one leg. He would dive through the screeching crowd and snatch the food an inch away from an open mouth. Roberto tried to outwit him, but the old bird got far more than his share.

"What do you think of Old One Leg?" Woody asked the gunner.

"He's about the fastest and smartest thief I ever did see."

"Then why don't you write about him?" Woody tore off some sheets from his pad; "And here's a pencil. Start writing, and when you finish with the gulls, tell your folks about the brandy boats and about Roberto's good grub, and how Charlie from Ohio hits those six-string chords."

"No – I think I'll tell 'em about the wind machine first."

"Okay, then I'll write about the seagulls." Woody started to write;

TALKING SEAGULL

*Here on my ship deck standing at the rail
Watching that seagull wiggle his tail
Throw him a little bread out of my hand
(Ain't no bird can fly like a seagull can).
Easy rider. Easy glider. Really handles his business.*

*Look all around. Not a gull in sight.
I throw a piece of bread and I see a sight.
Little gulls flop and the big ones tear
Catching that bread in the middle of the air.
Easy up. Ease over. Catch it. Wing over and gone again.*

*I went to the garbage can and got some meat
Them gulls come a running. Gonna have a treat
Ten pound of meat in a two-pound gull
And he still didn't have his belly full.
Rubber belly. Him a sailing. Really packing a load.*

*Little baby seagull there in the deal
Big ones they all grabbed them a meal
Little one pecked at everything in sight
But the sun went down and he didn't get a bit.
Flying all around us. Begging. Squawking....raising hell.*

*Four men made a run for the kitchen then
And we dumped over the side a garbage can
Little baby seagull filled up his beak
Got enough to last him till about next week.
Mama called him. He flew home. We all stood
around there on the rail of our ship feeling good.*

*We looked out across the ocean foam
Talked about our women and our kids back home
Talked about the war and the freedom fight
Fighting to get all the little ones a bite.
Seagulls. People everywhere. Every color you can think of.*

*Along in the morning towards eight o'clock
Yonder come the seagulls. Great big flock.
One tough guy said, "You're a silly bunch of fools!
Wastin' your time feedin' goddamn gulls!
Work your heads off feedin' 'em bread
Feedin' 'em meat.
What in the hell did the gulls ever give you?"*

*One old boy there really got red
He cussed out at this feller and he shook his head.
"Man! If you had the least ounce of brains,
You'd know them seagulls give us our Spitfire plane!"*

Men of the Merchant Marine

Eleanor L. Neal (Wife of a Merchant Officer)



They are men who go down to the sea in ships,
With courage and faith serene,
Sailing with cargoes on hazardous trips
To the distant battle scene.

In the far-flung theatres of war,
Our allied soldiers pray
That merchant ships with new supplies
Are speeding on their way.

On perilous seas our merchant men
Grimly await their fate.
Silent and tense, their only hope
They will not arrive too late.

Exposed to bombs from the open sky,
And torpedoes hurled through the sea,
Over all the wide sea lanes they sail
In sight of the enemy.

Adrift on rafts, in the lonely seas,
They watch their shipmates die,

Yet fearlessly they carry on,
“Keep ‘Em Sailing” is their cry.

They linger not in foreign ports,
But hurry back for more,
No martial music heralds them
As they step upon our shore.

For them there are no big parades,
No heroes’ welcome gay,
No uniforms, and no applause
To cheer them on their way.

But they are heroes, too, these men
Who sail the seven seas,
Our hats are off to their valiant crews,
For unsung victories.

They are the men who go down to the sea in ships,
With courage and faith serene,
“God Speed You All” is the prayer on our lips,
For the Men of the Merchant Marine.

AMMV
Profit & Loss
 July 2018 through March 2019

Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
402 · CONTRIBUTIONS	5,793.09
403 · INTEREST INCOME	47.42
405 · MISSION SUPPORT FUND	3,569.00
407 · RECRUITMENT MAIL INCOME	747.00
409 · MISCELLANEOUS INCOME	0.00
410 · CHAPTER DUES	
BSM · BIG SKY MARINERS	140.00
AKG · ALASKA GREATLANDS	64.00
BEE · BEEHIVE MARINERS	100.00
CEC · CENTRAL CALIFORNIA	150.00
DAR · DENNIS ROLAND	1,464.00
EOH · EDWIN O'HARA	421.00
GLD · GOLDEN GATE	1,275.00
GUL · GULFSTREAM	425.00
HIR · HIGH ROLLERS	575.00
JTS · JOHN T. SCHMIDT/PALMETTO	450.00
LON · LONE STAR	275.00
MAL · MEMBERS AT LARGE	20,511.00
MALW · MEMBER-AT-LARGE - PAYPAL	1,766.23
MWE · MID WEST	750.00
NBM · NORTH BAY MARINERS	525.00
NOA · NORTH ATLANTIC	425.00
OCA · OCALA CHAPTER	32.00
OHV · OHIO VALLEY	350.00
ORV · OSWEGO RIVER VALLEY	146.00
PUG · PUGET SOUND	175.00
ROR · ROAD RUNNER	275.00
SAR · SARASOTA-MANATEE	425.00
THR · THREE RIVERS	575.00
Total 410 · CHAPTER DUES	31,294.23
411 · CONVENTION INCOME	
412 · CONVENTION - REGISTRATIONS	21,713.00
413 · COMM. BOOK ADS	6,050.00
414 · CONVENTION DONATIONS	32,941.00
Total 411 · CONVENTION INCOME	60,704.00
Total Income	102,154.74
Expense	
500 · FIXED EXPENSE	
501 · BANK CHARGE	190.00
507 · TELEPHONE	292.33
511 · SERVICE CHARGES - PAYPAL	87.32
Total 500 · FIXED EXPENSE	569.65
512 · MEMORIAL EXPENSE	149.88
513 · ADVERTISING	200.00
514 · CONVENTION EXPENSES	
515 · CONVENTION EVENTS	15,736.00
516 · COMM. BOOK EXPENSES	1,501.63
517 · CON. MISC EXPENSES	11,097.60
518 · CON - CRUISE EXP.	6,802.73
519 · CON - HOSPITALITY ROOM EXP.	1,000.00
Total 514 · CONVENTION EXPENSES	36,137.96
520 · MISSION ADVANCE	
521 · AWARDS	2,132.50
525 · MISSION SUPPORT EXPENSE	3,695.75
Total 520 · MISSION ADVANCE	5,828.25
522 · RECRUITMENT & SPECIAL MAILING	1,215.48
526 · INTERNET INITIATIVE	682.86
528 · JCC STORAGE EXPENSE	798.00

530 · NEWS LETTER	
533 · POSTAGE	3,026.79
536 · PRINTING	10,343.29
538 · LAYOUT	3,900.00
539 · EDITORIAL FEE	900.00
Total 530 · NEWS LETTER	18,170.08
550 · PERSONNEL	
551 · ADMINISTRATOR	13,950.00
552 · NATIONAL PRESIDENT	1,530.01
554 · NATIONAL TREASURER	500.00
Total 550 · PERSONNEL	15,980.01
560 · OPERATING EXPENSES	
564 · OFFICE SUPPLIES	412.91
565 · POSTAGE - OFFICE	1,983.06
566 · PRINTING - OFFICE	74.69
567 · LICENSES & FEES	70.00
568 · TRAVEL EXPENSE	475.59
Total 560 · OPERATING EXPENSES	3,016.25
570 · SCAM EXPENSE	5,210.00
Total Expense	87,958.42
Net Ordinary Income	14,196.32
Net Income	14,196.32

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

*Chapter dues should be sent to your
chapter and Member-at-Large dues
in the amount of \$32.00 should be
sent to National Office
Administrator Lynn Kelly.
American Merchant Marine
Veterans (AMMV)
P.O. Box 2024
Darien, CT 06820-2024
Dues for the fiscal year July 1, 2019
through June 30, 2020 are due
July 1st.*

A Long-Awaited Project Coming Together



hard to finish making a long-time AMMV Southwest Florida Chapter's dream come true – a WWII Merchant Marine Memorial in a Veterans Park. The Cape Coral/Fort Meyers/Lehigh Acres location is a perfect place considering:

Cape Coral and the neighboring cities of Fort Meyers and Lehigh Acres were the founding sites of what is now the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization. In March of 1983, Bob Lanyon placed a small ad in the Fort Meyer's News Press which started off: "We are looking for all who served in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II. The brave deeds performed by the Merchant

Marine must be recognized now." Bob was soon contacted and a meeting was held in Lehigh Acres. On July 6, 1983, another meeting was conducted at Fort Meyers. This particular gathering resulted in the birth of a chapter of Merchant Marine Veterans, to be a part of the U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII organization.

Because their aims differed from the parent organization, this group decided to go off on their own only weeks later. They then chose to call themselves the American Merchant Marine Veterans. AMMV soon grew with an affiliated chapter in Wilmington, CA (China Coasters), and continued to steadily recruit members from all over the United States. AMMV incorporated in 1984 with Chapters forming throughout the country.

One of the goals of these founding AMMV members was to obtain Veteran status for U.S. Merchant Mariners who served in WWII; this was achieved in 1988. Another goal was the construction of this memorial in Cape Coral. Founding Southwest Florida chapter members, the late Leo Selvey, the late Calvin Berry and other members, envisioned a memorial to the United States Merchant Mariners and U.S. Naval Armed Guard. Now that dream is finally coming true thanks largely to the efforts of Captain Di Mattia..

Phase one – the Memorial:

Ground was broken in February, 2019, for a picturesque memorial at Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve in Cape Coral. This sensational addition to the park will join several other existing Veterans' monuments along Veterans Memorial Parkway.

The memorial will honor all who served in the U. S. Merchant Marine and Navy Armed Guard during World War II. The American Merchant Marine Veterans, Southwest Florida Chapter, has teamed up with the Southwest Florida Military Museum and Library for the design, construction and installation of the monument.

A flag pole of equal height to others nearby will be the memorial centerpiece along with a granite stone, a bronze wheel and an engraved bronze plaque. The plaque will detail the lost lives of more than 6,000 Merchant Mariners and more than 1,800 U. S. Navy Armed Guards.

Local businesses and contractors have donated time, labor and materials for the memorial.

Phase two:

Just prior to the AMMV Convention in Tampa and during it, Captain Dru Di Mattia and others started the construction of the flagpole footer forms which passed inspection on March 27th.

AMMV NEWS Magazine Editor, Sindy, visited the site with Captain Di Mattia on March 28th, and progress is certainly being made on this very impressive project.

The Merchant Marine flag will be flying very soon and dedication is scheduled for May 26; however, Dru and other are hoping against hope that the memorial will be ready for the dedication ceremony on Maritime Day, May 22nd. Efforts are being made in that direction.

Stop by and view this impressive memorial at 2500 SE 24th Street in Cape Coral when you're in the neighborhood.

A long-awaited dream coming true:

In Cape Coral, Florida, National Vice President elect Captain Anthony "Dru" Di Mattia is working very



RESOLUTIONS SUBMITTED BY AMMV GOLDEN GATE CHAPTER

Three resolutions were submitted at the 33rd National Convention of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) in Tampa on March 23, 2019. They were submitted by AMMV Golden Gate Chapter and read into the record by AMMV National Vice President Christian Yuhas – GLD member. They were passed unanimously by members attending the general business session.

Resolution NC2019-01:

Resolution to support the creation and operation of a Scholastic Merchant Marine Archive.

WHEREAS, in addition to the historical U. S. Merchant Marine documents possessed by the National Archives, unknown important and priceless documents relating to the history of the U. S. Merchant Marine may be possessed by current and past mariners, their families and other organizations; and

WHEREAS, educational organizations have expressed an interest and intention to construct and operate a temperature controlled, fireproof and secure archive to preserve, protect and allow access to an archive designed to house documents relating to the history of the U. S. Merchant Marine; and

WHEREAS, many AMMV members and their families possess valuable and priceless documents relating to the history of the U. S. Merchant Marine, including WWII and other armed conflicts; and

WHEREAS, educational institutions have both the financial and operational support needed to create and operate such an archive;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AMMV will encourage its members and their families to donate or loan documents relating to the history of the U. S. Merchant Marine to any such Scholastic Merchant Marine Archive for safekeeping and access by researchers and future generations.

Resolution NC2019-02:

Resolution to encourage the formation of student chapters.

WHEREAS, membership in the AMMV continues to decline; and

WHEREAS, the AMMV is seeking new members that are students, active and retired merchant mariners; and

WHEREAS, the AMMV currently has no student chapters; and

WHEREAS, students enrolled in the nation's maritime academies will be working in or associated with the U. S. Maritime industry;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AMMV formally support and encourage the formation of student chapters in all six of the nation's maritime academies.

Resolution NC2019-03

Resolution to support the creation of a National Registry of the remaining WWII Merchant Marine Veterans.

WHEREAS, there is no accurate estimate of the number of remaining Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII, and existing estimates vary widely; and

WHEREAS, it is expected that the Merchant Marine Gold Medal Bill (HR.550), its companion bill in the Senate (S.133) and the Just Compensation bill (HR.154) will be passed in the 116th Congress; and

WHEREAS, the contact information, location and documents proving their veteran status would assist Congress in dispersing Gold Medal recognition and a modest financial thank you of \$25,000 to qualified Merchant Marine Veterans who served in WWII;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the AMMV support and encourage the creation of a National Registry of the remaining WWII Merchant Marine Veterans.

I Learned How To Steer A Ship Before Learning How To Drive

Contributed by Melvin Bockelman, Member-at-Large

I grew up on a labor intensive farm, in landlocked Missouri. Horses and six sturdy mules provided power to pull the farm implements that harvested the crops. We thought water was for drinking, growing crops and taking a bath. I soon found out that water was needed in greater quantities. That was for the ship to have a road-way to haul troops and supplies to a war. We couldn't imagine World War II was about to involve the United States.

During World War II, it was possible to learn how to do many things that were not possible to do in peace time; one of those things was the Government's ship building program that produced vast quantities of ships. There were not enough Merchant Marine seamen to man the new ships. The Government wanted our parents to let boys, age 16, sign up and go to sea. I answered the call as a patriotic American. Training was swift, only the basics such as understanding ship board terminology and duties, how to row a boat and how to tie knots used aboard ship. We also learned how to swim thru fire burning oil on water.

My first ship was a pre-war ship we nicknamed "The Ole Rustbucket"; its real name was the SS *West Celeron*. We hauled war supplies to Hawaii and that provided real experience and training for me. The "old time" sailors gradually accepted us 16-year-old trainees as they taught us the basics which we never got in boot camp.

My next ship was a Liberty ship, the SS *David Belasco*. Loaded with war supplies, we sailed for Pearl Harbor, knowing that wasn't our final destination. This time we would be going into a war zone that was unknown to us. We practiced fire drills, shot off the 5-inch guns and 20 MM anti-aircraft guns. My battle station was to carry 20MM shells to the NAG gun-

ners. We even got experience in shooting the 20MM anti-aircraft guns in case the gunner got wounded or killed. This time we sailed in a convoy and things really got serious. We had to maintain "convoy discipline" so the ships wouldn't collide and the position of ships were set to minimize getting hit by an enemy torpedo. We wore battle helmets and the Captain increased our lookouts especially at dawn and sunset, the most likely time for enemy submarine attacks.



T-2 tanker

Saipan:

Our next destination was the Island of Saipan, located near Guam. The U. S. Navy was busy destroying Japan's aircraft carriers and shooting down hundreds of Zero fighter planes in a sea and air battle known as "The Marianas

Turkey Shoot". The Marines and Army combat units were already ashore under heavy enemy fire. Our supply ships were moved up to the shore of Saipan as combat supplies were requested. I went ashore with some supplies while fighting was going on. Enemy troops repeatedly launched banzi attacks against US forces. Japanese Kamikaze air attacks occurred as enemy forces flew down from Iwo Jima. Saipan Island is only 12 miles long, yet the casualties mounted. U. S. killed were 3,000 and 13,000 wounded. The enemy losses were 29,000 killed and 7,000 civilians died: many committed suicide by jumping off "Suicide Cliff", with Japanese family members holding hands as they plunged to their deaths.

One day we looked up to see hundreds of silver-plated B-29 aircraft were getting ready to land and be based at Islay Field, Saipan.

The Philippines:

My third and last ship during WWII proved to be more dangerous and more involved in combat activity. The ship



"Suicide Cliff"

was a T-2 Tanker, capable of hauling over a million gallons of aviation fuel. Our mission was to deliver this fuel to our aircraft carriers in the combat zones of the Pacific. Due to extreme shortages of sailors to man the ships, I took on part of the Helmsman duties and part doing other duties of an Ordinary Seaman. As Helmsman, I would be responsible for keeping the ship on course by watching a Gyroscope. That unit constantly tells the ship's direction in coordination with other ships in a convoy as set by the Captain.

Arriving in the Philippine Islands, we were constantly at battle stations as we moved about, "refueling" the aircraft carriers. We entered Manila Bay where the Captain sent us ashore. We discovered horrible sights, piles of dead Filipinos lying all over the place. Some had had their throats cut; other had been shot by Japanese soldiers in the battle for Manila. The

Japs fought to the deaths while killing one hundred thousand Filipino citizens. I saw a 7 or 8-year old Filipino boy crying for his parents. I took him to the ship, cleaned him up, got him some food and put together some homemade clothes. My plans were to take him home but the Captain said the boy must leave the ship. I took him to the Philippine Red Cross. To this day I often wake up at night, dreaming about this boy crying for his parents.

The Philippine Islands are a tropical zone with many diseases. My hand got infected and swelled up and turned a blue and purple color. A Navy doctor, nicknamed by his medics "Chopping Block Doc", looked at my hand and



Manila

just shook his head saying "Sailor, it's good you came in now; if another week had gone by, I'd have had to probably do major surgery". He gave me the maximum dosage of penicillin (a new drug at that time) and the swelling quickly subsided.

Okinawa:

We went up into the Okinawa Combat area for a short period to deliver

fuel to the carriers. We were exposed to a new form of warfare called "Kamikazes". We never understood why the Japanese wanted to die while we wanted to live. The Japanese Kamikaze air attacks were deadly. Three thousand eight hundred Japanese pilots were killed, seven thousand American sailors were killed and about 30 Navy Destroyers and 2 aircraft carriers were sunk. With our tanks of fuel having been delivered to the carriers, we were ordered to return to Panama to pick up another load of aviation

fuel. Then, to our surprise, a new weapon, the Atomic Bomb, was introduced. It was dropped on Japan, ending the war.

I was discharged and got home in time to enroll in high school. The war obviously changed my personality. First, I learned that I was responsible for myself. But in high school, kids still relied on their parents for making many decisions which I had had



Okinawa

to learn to do for myself. Things high school kids thought were funny, I didn't think were funny. In essence, the war changed my personality, years before those changes would normally have occurred. because I had experienced serious life-threatening situations. Oh, yes, I got my driver's license and learned how to drive.

NEW EFFORTS TO HONOR U.S. NAVY ARMED GUARD AND MERCHANT MARINES

After the recent AMMV convention in Tampa, FL, NEWS Magazine Editor Sindy Raymond visited the NAG/MM Museum and found it very interesting. She was impressed by the organization of the displays and the many contributions to them that have been collected over the years.

The new museum dedicated to the U.S. Navy Armed Guard and the U. S. Merchant Marine at 32 North Broadway, Fellsmere, FL, near Vero Beach, tells the story of a little known service branch during World War II— the U.S. Navy Armed Guard—responsible for defending U.S. and Allied merchant ships from attack by enemy aircraft, submarines and surface ships during WWII and the U. S. Merchant Marine Veterans who were civilian volunteers who transported vast quantities of war materials, supplies, equipment and troops.

When the SS *Dorchester*, a War Shipping Administration troop ship was sunk in the Labrador Sea by a torpedo from a German U-boat on February 3, 1943, she carried 904 on board. Of these, 675 died, including the four United States Army chaplains on board who helped other soldiers board lifeboats and gave up their life jackets so that others could survive. About 10 members of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard perished. The museum serves as a way to remember their loss as well as those of the U. S. Merchant Seamen.

The newly opened museum is run by volunteers including Larry Wapnick, Richard Martucci and others. "Throughout the years, we had meetings in Fellsmere and we had speakers from all over," Wapnick said. "We had POWs, Pearl Harbor survivors, pilots, generals and admirals all in Fellsmere to tell their stories, and we got the idea that we should start a museum to keep things going." However, a prospective change of location in the near future is

being considered.

The men of the U.S. Navy Armed Guard served primarily as gunners, signal men and radio operators on cargo ships, tankers, troop ships and other merchant vessels. Disbanded following the end of the war, the Armed Guard is

not well known or remembered by the general public or even within the Navy.

The U. S. Merchant Marine is collectively those non-naval ships that carry cargo or passengers or provide maritime services as well as the civilian crewmen and officers who sail those ships. They transported the materials the troops needed to fight and win the war. The men of the U.S. Merchant Marines were civilian volunteers who died proportionally in numbers that rivaled or exceeded

any branch of the uniformed military.

The Armed Guard and the Merchant Marines were uniquely dependent upon one another; they were literally in the same boat. One cannot tell the story of one without telling the story of the other.

The long-time efforts of Charles A. Lloyd, Chairman Emeritus of the museum's newly reappearing publication "The Pointer" and C. "Korkey" Korker, President Emeritus, over the years are clearly visible and it was heartening to see the renewed efforts of volunteers who are so successfully resurrecting historical memorabilia as well as the classic newsletter "The Pointer". Charles' dedication to the U. S. Navy Armed Guard and

"The Pointer" for over 40 years is stalwart in itself and has been very much appreciated by all involved in these resurrected efforts – the museum and "The Pointer".

Thanks to all for their efforts in keeping history alive.

For further information, email usnagmm@gmail.com. Call Larry Wapnick, President at (772) 532-8749 or Ralph Oko, Assistant to the President at (954) 557-6226. Or stop by, when you're in the neighborhood and see the facilities for yourself.



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AMMV 33rd NATIONAL CONVENTION

Tampa, FL – March 20-24, 2019

The 33rd National Convention of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) organization opened with early Registration on Wednesday, March 20th. The Registration team was led by Kimberly King with Lynn Kelly and Sindy Raymond assisting. The Hospitality Room was once again generously stocked with drinks and snacks. In addition, Shirley Knight provided a variety of Easter candies.

Many other items and treats were featured. Special challenge coins to commemorate the 33rd Convention, in conjunction with the *SS American Victory* Salute to Service cruise, were provided to all WWII Vets and VIP's. AMMV calendars were given to all paid registrants, and promotional drink cups to support the WWII Merchant Mariner Congressional Gold Medal Act (H.R. 550 & S. 133) were available for all. Form letters in support of H.R. 550, addressed to the committee holding the bill, were signed by all hands. All attendees received a "goodie bag". Through no fault of our own, the shipment of the Commemorative Magazines was not received in time. Copies were later mailed to all attendees and paid adver-

tisers.

One notable surprise was courtesy of AMMV member Thomas Glenn Hill, who provided color posters of vessels for each of our WWII Merchant Mariner attendees. These were individually presented by Sheila Sova, who had done the research to pair mariners with their respective vessels. Hill's late father served in the WWII Merchant Marine.

The annual Board of Directors meeting was held on Thursday morning. Topics discussed included our 501 (c) nonprofit status; membership concerns; timeline and importance our C/MSRB Veteran status application for Korean Conflict U.S. Merchant Mariners; location of the 2020 AMMV convention; and financials. The proposed budget was approved after being amended to include \$4,000 for advertising in the quarterly Kings Point (USMMA) alumni magazine.

Opening Ceremonies commenced after lunch, which included a prayer by AMMV Chaplain & Regional VP Bob Ross, and the performance of *Star-Spangled Banner* and *Heave Ho* by Sally Langwah. Capt. Christopher Edyvean followed with a President's Report. Key topics included membership concerns; social media & website report; the need for more key volunteers;

and WWII Merchant Mariner legislation.

Father Sinclair Oubre from the Apostleship of the Sea – USA provided a progress update on efforts to see Brother Marinus (Capt. LaRue of *SS Meredith Victory*) elevated to the level of Sainthood.

Later that evening, approximately 70 convention guests enjoyed a dinner cruise on the yacht *Starship II* in Tampa harbor. Con-

vention Chairman Capt. Dru DiMatia arranged for big band era music



Fr. Sinclair Oubre



Executive Vice President Christian Yuhas

to be played in the background. After dinner, Sally Langwah sang *Happy Birthday* to AMMV Executive Vice President Christian Yuhas.

Friday morning opened with WWII Merchant Marine Veteran and world-class speaker Dave Yoho appearing for his fourth straight convention. Mr. Yoho dazzled the crowd with another inspiring speech, the theme of which was "Why can't they hear what we are saying?"

Following a coffee break, Past-



Kimberly King, Lynn Kelly, Sheila Sova, Sindy Raymond



Capt. Chris Edyvean and RVP Bob Ross

National President Morris Harvey was surprised with a Board of Directors proclamation bestowing upon him the title of President Emeritus. A framed



Sindy Raymond, Morris Harvey

certificate and a special ballcap (provided by Bob Ross) were presented to Morris.

AMMV President-Elect John Pitts paid tribute to WWII U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran & AMMV member Capt. Arthur Moore, sole researcher and author of "A Careless Word, A Needless Sinking", the detailed chronology of U.S. maritime ships and lives lost during involvement in WWII. Capt. Moore crossed the bar in late 2018. (Pitts also served as Master of Ceremonies throughout the convention.)

Toni Horodysky, creator of the usmm.org website, took the podium next and talked about her website. She highlighted some interesting historical finds while performing research.

After lunch break, AMMV Webmaster Bonnie Dye joined the group to discuss ammv.us. She answered various questions related to the website.

Christian Yuhas introduced three Resolutions which originated from the Golden Gate Chapter. After some minor tweaks, each of these Resolutions was approved by the membership. (These Resolutions are printed elsewhere in this magazine.)

NOAA representatives David Alberg and Tane Casserley played a short DVD of which included footage from interviews conducted with our WWII Merchant Mariners at the 2018 National Convention. This film is part of ongoing efforts

toward east coast sanctuary expansion.

Later that evening, the Patriotic Dinner opened with the Sea Scouts Ship 106 presenting the Colors. The Pledge of Allegiance was recited, then Sally Langwah sang *Heave Ho*. Following the serving of the dinner, gCaptain Founder Capt. John Konrad



Tim Duggan, Walter Broll

delivered an emotional speech which is on par with AMMV's goals and vision for the future. The AMMV Awards

Ceremony followed. Recipients were as follows (not all in attendance): "Member Appreciation" plaques: Scarlett Rose, Christian Yuhas, Capt.



Capt. John Konrad

Scott Nowak, Stanley Blumenthal, Clearance Newcomer, Charles Mills, and E. Douglass Pushard; "Outstanding Volunteer" plaques: Sindy Ray-

mond, John Pitts, Laura Johnson Riddle, Janet Wilzbach, Michael Helbig, Lynn Kelly, Sheila Sova, and Dave Yoho. Capt. Chris also presented Mr. Yoho with a copy of "A Careless Word, A Needless Sinking". Top tier award winners (*Harvey-Wichita Award*) were Capt. Dru DiMattia (AMMV Person of the Year), and Toni Horodysky (Lifetime Achievement).



Sally Langwah, Laura Riddle

Finally, John Pitts surprised Capt. Chris with a Chelsea clock on behalf of the AMMV membership as appreciation for four years of organizational leadership.

Next, the 50/50 raffle was drawn (\$242 prize) with winner being Sandra Barth. Several consolation prizes were raffled off, including items provided by the Gary Sinise Foundation.

Dave Yoho followed with encouraging closing remarks and presented a large donation to the organization.

Entertainer Tomaczek Bednarek performed *God Bless America*. Sally & Roy then took the stage for a spectacular performance.

On Saturday morning, our group was bussed to the Florida Aquarium for a breakfast with guest speaker 3-time Emmy Award winner,



WWII Group at Florida Aquarium

famed TV news reporter, and Veterans advocate Rita Cosby. This event was held in the Mosaic Room, which overlooks the bow of the *SS American Victory*, creating a beautiful setting for the morning. U.S. Maritime Administrator Admiral Mark H. Buzby joined us and provided opening remarks. Rita told the story of her father's experience as a Polish resistance fighter, who was taken as a POW and later rescued by U.S. troops. After her presentation, Rita declared to support legislative efforts for our WWII Merchant Mariners. She kindly allowed time for photo ops with our Veterans.

The weather was absolutely perfect for the day's activities. During the cruise, Rita Cosby interviewed a couple of our Veterans, and later announced and identified each of our Vets by name over the PA system. This was a wonderful way to let the cruise participants be aware of our WWII MM Veterans. Footage of the cruise later appeared on local TV stations.

Early discussions indicate a return to MITAGS (Baltimore) for a 2020 convention. See you there!



Yvette Miles, Chris Edyvean, Charles Mills



Larry Wapnick, Richard Martucci

Our 33rd convention concluded with our gang being part of the *SS American Victory* Salute to Service cruise, which was attended by approximately 650 persons. The cruise included lunch by Mission BBQ and live entertainment.



Charles Mills, Dave Yoho, Eugene Barner



Dave Yoho, Sheila Sova



Dinner Cruise Group



Nayah and Terry Edyvean, Daughter-in-law and son of Capt. Chris Edyvean



Joanne and J. Tom Schmidt



Sally singing to Christian Yuhas



Charles Mills, Gerard Driscoll, Dave Alberg

Breakfast and Cruise on the SS American Victory

March 23, 2019 – Tampa, Florida



Ed Begley, Ken "Sinbad" Delancy



William Kelley, Cynthia Bledsoe, William Balabanow



John Pitts



Capt. John and Eleanor Konrad, Rita Cosby



Dennis Kelly, Ron Campana



American Victory with tug



Dancing aboard the American Victory



William Kelley, William Balabanow, Dave and Carole Yoho



Harold Wellington climbing stairs



Rita Cosby and Harold Wellington



Allie Reep, Crawford and Shirley Knight



Laura Riddle, Charles Mills



American Victory



Dennis Ng

Play Ball!!!

On Saturday, March 23, 2019, Bob Ross of El Dorado, AR and Eugene Barner of Overland Park, KS, representing all the past and present WWII Merchant Marine Veterans, were honored by the New York Yankees at their Spring training game at the George M. Steinbrenner Baseball Field in Tampa, FL.

Bob and Eugene were escorted to the field by the General Manager of the New York Yankees Aaron Boone and Allie Reep, the Great-Granddaughter of Bob Ross. They were introduced to the fans of the N. Y. Yankees and the Toronto Blue Jays, and received a standing ovation. The presentation

also honored our Country and the group joined saluting the flag and singing "God Bless America" with the fans. And they were featured on the "big screen" with their hands over their hearts.

This proud daughter would like to thank Dru Di Mattia for all the work he did to set up this event and make it so special for Veterans and families. Thank you, Mr. Boone, for the baseball caps presented to "our awesome three".

Also, a big thank you goes out to the New York Yankees and fans, as well as the Toronto Blue Jays and their fans.

Shirley Knight



First Step Towards Canonization

U.S. Merchant Marine Capt. Leonard LaRue peered through his binoculars on December 23, 1950 and surveyed a heartbreaking scene from the deck of his ship. Thousands of Koreans — men, women and children — their eyes filled with fear — were crammed onto the docks of the City of Hungnam, desperate to flee the invading Chinese communist forces that were closing in quickly during the early months of the Korean War. Time was of the essence for Capt. LaRue, who after the war became Benedictine Brother Marinus of St. Paul's Abbey here, and the brave crew of his U.S. Merchant Marine cargo freighter, the *S.S. Meredith Victory*, to save as many of those ragged and frightened refugees as possible. Artillery fire roared above them, as they wasted no time in loading their new passengers, who took only what they could, into the ship's hold and on deck and then steamed out of port and imminent danger. Armed with courage and compassion, the captain and crew risked their lives to transport their precious cargo — 14,005 refugees — on a perilous 450-mile voyage through treacherous mine- and submarine-infested waters to the safety of Goeje Island on that Christmas Day. The mission — undertaken against all odds — has been called a "Christmas Miracle."

"I think often of that voyage. I think of how such a small vessel was able to hold so many persons and surmount endless perils without harm to a soul. And as I think, the clear, Unmistakable message comes to me that on that Christmas-tide, in the bleak and bitter waters off the shore of Korea, God's own hand was at the helm of my ship," Brother Marinus, a Benedictine monk at St. Paul's Abbey from 1954 until his death in 2001, said in a reflection.

Bishop opens cause for sainthood:

Recognizing that heroic voyage of Brother Marinus and his crew and his profound faith in God, Bishop Serratelli has opened his cause for sainthood in the Diocese of Paterson. On March 25, the Solemnity of the Annunciation of the Lord, the Bishop signed and sealed a decree that opens "the informative process for Beatification and Canonization" to "study the heroic virtues and reputation of the holiness of the Servant of God, Brother Marinus" — the first step in his cause. With this historic decree, also signed by Sister of Christian Charity Joan Daniel Healy, diocesan chancellor, Catholic faithful can pray to God through the intercession of Brother Marinus, who has been bestowed with title "Servant of God."

In 2017, the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America, a non-profit, private association of Christian faithful, based in Port Arthur, Texas, had petitioned Bishop Serratelli to open his cause for sainthood. Recently, the Bishop announced that he planned to open Brother Marinus' cause during a meeting of the N.J. Catholic Conference — another part of the first step. Bishop Serratelli's signing of the decree,

in part, also recognizes the providence of God, who sent a group of monks from South Korea to Newton in 2001 to save St. Paul's from closing — nearly 51 years after Brother Marinus and his crew of the *S.S. Meredith Victory* rescued those desperate refugees at Hungnam.

"The heroic account of Capt. LaRue saving 14,000 Korean refugees under such perilous conditions is most impressive. That the ship, the *S.S. Meredith Victory*, has been called the 'Ship of Miracles' is truly appropriate," Bishop Serratelli wrote in a letter dated May 9, 2017, to Father Sinclair Oubre, past president of the Apostleship of the Sea of the United States of America and director of the Apostleship of the Sea for the Diocese of Beaumont, Texas, in response to an earlier letter from the priest, suggesting the cause. Later that year, Father Oubre visited the Diocese to meet with the Bishop and the monks of St. Paul's to discuss a cause. "I totally agree with Brother Marinus' later reflection of that voyage: 'God's own hand was at the helm of my ship.' This statement is an example of Brother Marinus' humbleness. I do not think it is a coincidence that Capt. LaRue saved 14,000 Korean refugees and, decades later, Brother Marinus' abbey is saved from closing by the arrival of Korean monks," the Bishop wrote.

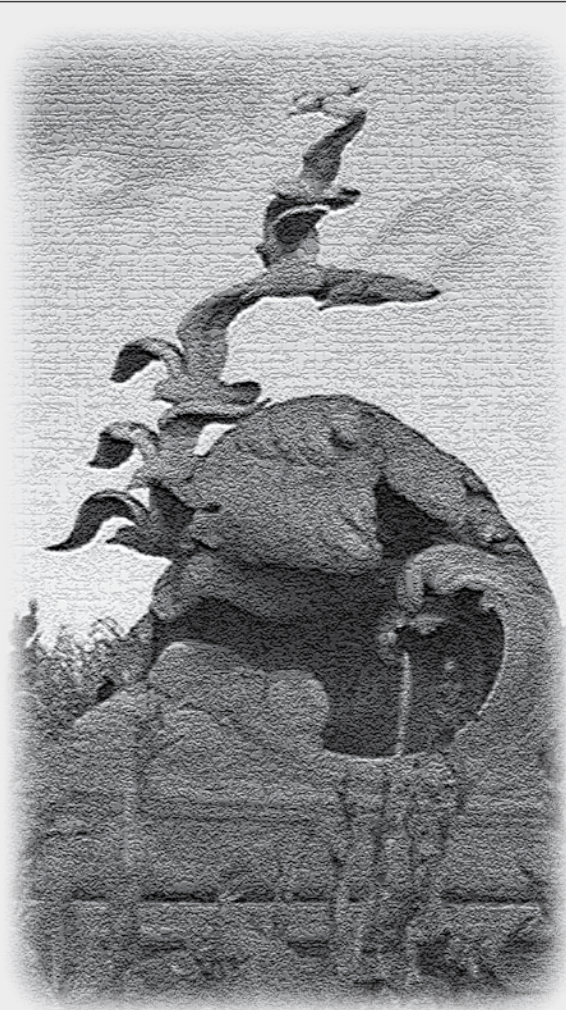
Cause for Sainthood:

The first part into the inquiry of Brother Marinus will involve proving his heroic virtue — "that he was a holy man" — which will include testimony from the three surviving shipmates of the *S.S. Meredith Victory*. If the Vatican accepts that evidence, he will be given the title "Venerable." Then, bishops in Rome will review Brother Marinus' writings for theological errors. If they do not find any heresy, the Diocese will investigate claims of possible medical miracles that took place with the help of Brother Marinus' intercession. The verification of one miracle would qualify him to become beatified with the title "Blessed." A second miracle would make him eligible to be canonized as a saint, said Dr. Mary Mazzarella, diocesan Respect Life coordinator, who has been assisting with the cause.

"I was surprised that we reached the first step so quickly," said Father Oubre, who credited Bishop Serratelli for being receptive to opening Brother Marinus' cause so swiftly. In 2016, Father Oubre devised the idea of promoting Brother Marinus' cause, after reading a book about his heroic voyage, "Ship of Miracles" by Bill Gilbert, and talking with one of his shipmates, retired U.S. Rear Adm. Robert Lunney. "This enables us to move to the next step: building a history of Brother Marinus to send to the Congregation for the Cause of Saints in Rome," he said.

Excerpted from an article written by Michael Wojcik -News Editor of "The Beacon," the newspaper of the Diocese of Patterson, New Jersey and featured in the March 28, 2019 edition.

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.*

BEN BALSAMO
DAVID C. BEAN
HARRY BRUCE BRADLEY
HERBERT LEON COMER
MAURICE F. "MOOSE" DUNNE, JR
JAMES E. EMEL
JACK A. GEISSINGER
JACK GROTHE
HENRY N. HELGESEN
ORVILLE I. "BUD" HOLLE
WALTER M. HOLM
ROBERT HUDSON
EDWARD JACOBSON
CAPT HENRY JOFFRAY
CAPT ARTHUR R. MOORE
HARRY J. PIENTON
WILLIAM J. REDDY
THERON LEON VARVIL

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

Update on Vietnam Era Agent Orange Benefits

Contributed by Michael Helbig, AMMV Government Affairs Committee Co-Chairman

With reference to my email regarding Manuel Valentin/Agent Orange Reforms, The DVA appeals process "simplification" and the latest «Presumption for Agent Orange Exposure» Ships List has been updated. The USNS ships of the nucleus fleet--Military Sea Transportation Service/Military Sealift Command--are the only ships relevant for civil service mariners. For the four named USNS ships see images 26, 38 and 39 on the link: <https://www.va.gov/shiplist-agent-orange.pdf>

Recently Congressman Young of Alaska became the longest serving Representative still standing in the House. And he signed on with two Representatives from Connecticut to the "Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act" H.R. 637 - for this session of Congress. I got his press release and decided to let him know that, while the reforms are welcome, there is another side of the story as yet untold. And that is the side of the merchant marine. Below is my letter to Young. I will be in Young's Anchorage office in May.

25 March 2019
The Honorable Don Young
United States House of Representatives

Dear Congressman Young:

Thank you for sending your latest E-Newsletter which included your Press Release: "Rep. Courtney Reinroduces Bipartisan Agent Orange Exposure Fairness Act." I'm glad to see you joined that effort along with Congressman John Larson as co-sponsors of H.R. 566 and that Senator Blumenthal reintroduced his companion bill S. 332. I certainly hope that these bills, along with Representative John Katko's "Agent Orange Fairness Act" (H.R. 637), will meet with success in this session of Congress. But I have to tell you I am not optimistic about it given the mindless investigations lined-up to overthrow our president which is just a wasteful, foolish time-killer. After decades of Congressional chewing around the edges of the Department of Veterans Affairs' bloated bureaucracy I can't help but notice that its 2018 two-volume CFR is still as thick as the Hartford Telephone Directory. Perhaps Senator Blumenthal—whom I understand is a veteran himself—can save some space in his party's progressive agenda to cut that down by about half this session and still be able to showboat his list of questions for the late Mueller Investigation's witnesses.

I share your view that "It's a shame that many veterans who were exposed to Agent Orange in service to their country have to go through endless hoops to obtain treatment." Well, there have been serious "hoops" but you might also add a "brick wall" for those men of the merchant marine who also served in Vietnam but not in uniform. Allow me to illustrate my point.

I know of a certain veteran of the U. S. Army's Co. F, 2nd Bn., 65th Infantry Regiment who was wounded in action on 21 February 1951. He was born in Puerto Rico on 3 August 1931 which makes him 87 years young. That's good enough for Grand Old Man status, I think you'll agree. Manuel Valentin was briefly a university student in Ponce after discharge from service on 4 January 1954. He then removed to Manhattan where his employments included temporary stints at the VA Hospital and at Trinity Corporation. The latter exposed him to the maritime world of tank ships where he first began his life on an ocean wave.

As is often the case with bored post wartime veterans Valentin heard the "Call of the Wild" and on 10 February 1961 he received an entry-level appointment in Brooklyn as Utilityman with the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS), Atlantic, an operational command of the United States Navy. He was once again in service to his country, this time as a non-uniformed volunteer civilian marine (civil service) employee of the Department of the Navy. As such he became an oceangoing seaman and was assigned number Z-1150420 by the U. S. Coast Guard.

When USNS *Corpus Christi Bay* (T – ARVH-1) was assigned by the Maritime Administration to MSTS after conversion in 1964-65, Manuel was among those 130 chosen few who signed articles of employment to serve in her crew as an oiler in the engine department for deployment to Vietnam. That happened on or about 15 January 1966. His ship had a special mission which was to host over 300 active duty army maintenance and repair troops of the 1st Transportation Corps Battalion's Aircraft Maintenance Depot (Seaborne). Along for the ride was the ship's so-called "military department" which were permanently assigned active duty personnel added to ensure that operations ran like clockwork, militarily speaking. Of course, the ship could have been placed back in

commission with a full Navy crew. But the cost would have been prohibitive with a ship's complement likely to have doubled and no space to billet the extra men. So Uncle Sam realized a cost savings in the bargain with this crew of no frills Coast Guard licensed merchant marine officers and documented ratings.

This ship's regular station was any convenient anchorage along the dangerous South China Sea coast generally between Vung Tau and Cam Ranh Bay. To say the least no active duty U. S. Navy sailor worth his salt would seek as a career move a gig with the black gang in the engine room in the scorching heat of a Vietnamese summer. If so entrapped he would be anxiously ticking off the days on his wilted calendar in anticipation of his next shore side assignment in Norfolk or San Diego. Not Valentin, who stuck it out for the duration, willing to accompany the armed forces to every clime and place where its logistical support necessarily came from over the horizon. His ship came home for good to Corpus Christi Bay on 19 December 1972.

"Back from the wars at last" Valentin resigned from the renamed Military Sealift Command (MSC) on 31 July 1973 with over 16 years of combined federal service. He had, indeed, served his country but would later find himself in another war of sorts, caught up in our merchant mariners' struggle for recognition of their civilian service as equivalent to active duty in the armed forces. His is a classic case which pointedly illustrates our federal bureaucracy's inability or unwillingness to diagnose a problem and apply a correct solution to the benefit of everyone concerned. The active duty personnel assigned to the *Corpus Christi Bay* are eligible upon (other than dishonorable) discharge for DVA service connected benefits under presumption of Agent Orange exposure, given the nature of that ship's mission and history. The civilian marine crew of that ship, Valentin included, are not. That is because their cohort has not yet gained recognition as veterans under regulations prescribed for the Department of Defense Civilian/Military Service Review Board, controlled by the Air Force. Drinking and showering with desalinated water made by the ship's distilling plant—sourced from raw seawater "enriched" by the wash down effluvia of pollutants brought home by helicopters from jungle LZs—the men in green army fatigues are covered but those in blue dungarees are not. Where is the "Agent Orange Exposure Fairness" in this conundrum?

Manuel Valentin has a Combat Infantryman's Badge with a Purple Heart Medal to boot. That is good to go for DVA medical treatment connected to Korean service with 65th Infantry. Subsequently, as a merchant mariner he volunteered to accompany the armed forces on a non-combatant U. S. Naval Ship in direct support of army air-mobile troops. His civilian status is not good to go for DVA medical treatment connected to Vietnam service with MSTs/MSC. Neither Congress nor the DVA seems to recognize this discrepancy and take the initiative toward corrective action to fix it.

Recognized by President Eisenhower as our Fourth Arm of Defense, our merchant marine has been allowed to shrink to almost nothing either in terms of commercial shipping or qualified manpower. The time is rapidly approaching when our federal government will no longer be capable of sustaining any serious foreign intervention involving our armed forces because we no longer have the logistical sealift to make it so. In short, it is lamentable that there are few to no more Manuel Valentins in the pipeline as far as I can see. His Parkinson's diagnosis is an equal opportunity malady that recognizes no uniform and no veteran's status. Certainly in his specific case, it ought to be presumptively linked to Agent Orange exposure as a result of his extended service aboard the *Corpus Christi Bay*.

While there are now plenty of commissioned USS ships presumptive for Agent Orange exposure there are only a few non-commissioned USNS ships so eligible, troop transports built for WWII service that transited the Long Tau River to Saigon. And only the military department active duty personnel of those ships plus the troops they carried are eligible under current law. It was of such type that took the 65th Infantry to Korea and kept the replacement pipeline flowing thereafter. We can thank the civilian mariners for making that happen. Without them we are sunk.

Please exhort your colleagues to enable or otherwise amend legislation which will extend DVA medical care benefits to the merchant mariners who served during Korea and Vietnam. And by the way, how are those "Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act" bills coming along in the House and Senate? Any chance that you and your co-sponsors' staffs might canvass the halls of Congress for signatures this time?

In Sincere Appreciation for Your Past Efforts,

Mike Helbig
Hanshelbig.helbig08@gmail.com
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Fort Richardson, AK 99505
(907) - 244 - 4238 (cell phone)

GERMAN U-BOAT SUNK, THEN FOUND

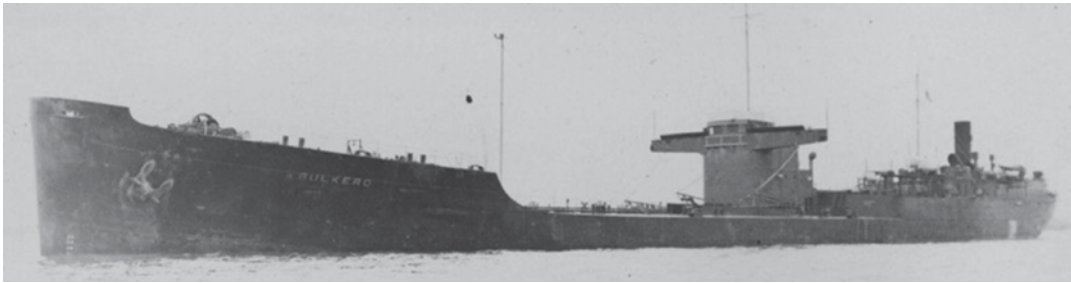
It is a well-known fact that, during World War II, German U-Boats patrolled the Atlantic Coast in numerous numbers. The

stories of the destruction they caused to America's ships are many. One such U-Boat, the U-550 had an interesting, albeit short, "career" before it was sunk on April 16, 1944. She was a member of the Kriegsmarine 10th U-boat Flotilla. She was a long-range Type IXC/40 U-boat constructed by Deutsche Werft shipbuilding company of Hamburg. Built for World War II service, the U-550 was commissioned on 28 July 1943 and placed under the command of Kapitänleutnant Klaus Hänert.

Historical background:

On April 16, 1944, the U-Boat *U-550* put a single torpedo into the huge 10,017-ton American tanker *SS Pan Pennsylvania*. The torpedo struck on port side of the tanker, causing an explosion that blew a large hole in the side, ruptured the #7 tank and disabled the steering gear. The tanker was straggling along after convoy CU-21 consisting of 28 merchant ships. The convoy had left New York City on April 15, 1944 and was bound for England; the *Pan Pennsylvania* was loaded with 140,000 barrels of gasoline and was in deep water approximately seventy-five miles south of Nantucket Island, MA.

Following the torpedo explosion, the *Pan Pennsylvania* took on an immediate list to port. and when a fire, inadvertently set by a ricocheting shell, broke out in the engine room the tanker was abandoned in short order. The master was not able to reach the engine room to order the engines stopped,



SS Pan Pennsylvania

while some of those aboard panicked and tried to launch two lifeboats while the ship was still making headway. The master halted those at one

boat, but the other was launched and capsized, throwing the occupants into the sea. After ascertaining the damage the tanker was finally stopped at 14.20 hours and the remaining men abandoned ship in the last two usable lifeboats and three rafts.

The convoy escorts picked up 56 survivors from the tanker, leaving 25 men missing out of 9 officers, a crew of 41 and 31 Naval Armed Guards. After picking up the survivors from the *Pan Pennsylvania*, the U.S. Navy destroyer escorts *USS Joyce*, *Peterson* and *Gandy* combined their efforts to bring swift and fatal retribution to the attacking submarine.

Picking up a solid contact with her sonar gear, *USS Joyce* closed on the target and made a depth-charge attack that quickly brought the *U-550* to the surface. Gunfire from all three escorts converged on the surfaced submarine as German sailors poured out of her hatches, briefly returning

fire with their own weapons. Meanwhile, *USS Gandy* rammed the submarine aft and the Germans abandoned ship.

A muffled explosion aboard the submarine indicated the crew had set off scuttling charges and *U-550* sank stern first. Twelve survivors from the submarine were picked up by the destroyer escorts, while 44 men were lost. Patrol boats picked up the bodies of three German sailors outfitted with escape gear during the next several weeks: they had apparently

escaped the sunken submarine only to die adrift at sea.

Meanwhile, the *Pan Pennsylvania* capsized and drifted,





100' of bow showing with 10' above the surface. for two days, her cargo of gasoline on fire, before finally being scuttled by "friendly" gunfire by the *USS Sagamore*, the *USCGC General Greene*, the *USS Hazel*, and various other U. S. vessels.

Discovery of the U-550 after many years:

On July 23, 2012, after years of hard work, research and multiple field searches, the final resting place of the World War II German submarine *U-550* was finally discovered. Finding the submarine, one of the last undiscovered German U-boats sunk off the American coast during the Second World War, has been of interest to historians, World War II buffs, and divers for many years.

Previous efforts to locate the wreck, however, have proven unsuccessful. The U-boat was finally located using side scan sonar technology in deep water offshore of Nantucket Island, Massachusetts, some distance from where it was thought she went down.

U-550 was found lying mostly intact on the ocean bottom in an upright position. Photographic and sonar imaging by the expedition team were used to identify the wreck as that of a World War II German submarine, and combined with the wreck's location relative to the historical sinking position, confirm that the find is that of the elusive *U-550*.



75 YEARS AFTER D-DAY

A LOOK AT THE NORMANDY INVASION



June 6, 2019 will mark the 75th Anniversary of D-Day. We should remember what happened there and how important the Merchant Mariners were when needed in that massive effort that changed the course of WWII in Europe. *Editor's note: Excerpted*

from an article by the late Bruce Felknor. It is published in entirety, along with the New York Times article on the website: www.usmm.org. Thank you, Toni

The Plan:

When Gen. Dwight Eisenhower outlined his intentions for the Normandy Invasion, the list began: Land on the Normandy Coast; build up the resources needed for decisive battles in the Normandy-Brittany region.

But the resources were in England -- troops, tanks, artillery, ammunition, gasoline, supplies. Where to land them? Because existing port facilities (Le Havre and Cherbourg) were heavily defended and impossible to seize quickly, Eisenhower took another route, which he described as "a project so unique as to be classed by many scoffers as completely fantastic. It was a plan to construct artificial harbors on the coast of Normandy.

The north shore of Normandy's Cotentin Peninsula juts westward into the Atlantic at the widest part of the English Channel. Churchill called it a "fifty-mile half-moon of sandy

beaches," a hundred miles south of Brighton and Portsmouth.

Five landing sites had been selected on 21 miles of that sandy crescent, the American Utah and Omaha beaches on the west and the British and Canadian Gold, Sword, and Juno beaches to the east.

But that broad expanse of sand presented formidable obstacles to landing there. The ports at either end, Le Havre and Cherbourg, were massively fortified, and the beaches and other major ports, but expected lighter armament lay along the beaches. Even so, the beaches selected ended at a line of bluffs studded with German artillery.

Moreover, that part of the channel was notorious for bad weather. May was the earliest that a few weeks of fairly decent weather could be hoped for. And perhaps worst, 21-foot tides rose and fell there twice a day.

Winston Churchill had addressed that problem in a



May 30, 1942, memo:

Piers for Use on Beaches. . . must float up and down with the tide. . . Let me have the best solution. . . Don't argue the matter. The difficulties will argue for themselves.

The artificial harbors were secretly built in parts -- which German intelligence took to be for blocking their seaports, and towed into position by U.S. merchant seamen in a flotilla of tugs, where they were sunk in place.

These miraculous port facilities would be placed at Omaha and Utah beaches for U.S. landings, and to the east for British and Canadian forces landing at Gold, Juno, and Sword beaches. In combination these harbors would be twice the size of Gibraltar. Through them in a few days would pass the men and machines of history's greatest amphibious operation--156,000 men with all their trucks and tanks and artillery pieces, and food and fuel and ammunition.

Tempestuous weather postponed D-Day from May until June 6. Before dawn, parachutes and gliders began landing two airborne divisions behind German lines on the peninsula. And the building of these fantastic harbors to land



their seaborne counterparts began to take place. During the few days of their construction Allied troops stormed the beaches from LCIs and LCTs with heavy air cover and artillery support from warships in the channel. Behind the guns a massive armada of freighters and troopships--all sailed by merchant mariners--clogged the channel awaiting the new harbors.

The Harbors: Operation Mulberry

The tidal pattern demanded a structure where ocean-going freighters could tie up even at low tide and discharge cargo into smaller craft to be ferried ashore.

The region was susceptible to horrendous and unpredictable weather, featuring wicked winter storms and ferocious summer gales. Constant heavy swells from the north demanded breakwaters.

A sheltered transfer point was needed for LSTs to transfer tanks or trucks to smaller LCTs which could land them on the beach--or on a pierhead at a causeway where they could be driven ashore. Larger freighters needed a pier where they could tie up to discharge cargo, or at least a sheltered anchorage where they could by lighter or their own cargo booms discharge into barges or smaller craft. A strong current along the shore required additional breakwaters right at the shore.

Code names abounded. The Normandy Invasion was **Operation Overlord**. The arti-

ficial harbors were **Operation Mulberry**. Its ingredients were these: **Phoenix** breakwaters with unloading docks on the lee side; **Gooseberry**, off-shore breakwaters consisting of battered old freighters sunk in sheltering arcs; **Lobnitz** pierheads floating with the tide inside a steel frame anchored to the bottom, connected to **Whale** causeways to shore above the high tide mark; **Bombardon**, floating outer breakwaters; **Rhino**, ferries to transfer cargo from ships or Phoenix piers to the beach.

The Allied assault had to be secret; work on the harbors had to await the first landings and go on under fire. Before dawn on D-Day, while paratroopers and glider troops were silently descending behind the German lines on the Cotentin Peninsula, blockships assembled in the Firth of Lorne were on their way south, armed with the usual 3-inch dual-purpose gun forward and 40-mm anti-aircraft guns aft, with six or eight 20-mm anti-aircraft guns in between. The usual 4- or 5-inch anti-submarine stern guns were replaced with the 40-mm anti-aircraft guns, all manned, as usual at sea, by a navy gun crew. (Army gunners manned the guns on the



Army Transport Service tugs.)

A hundred **Phoenixes** with their flotation chambers were ready for tow--two tugs per Phoenix. Ten **Lobnitzes**, their long legs locked in the up position, awaited tugs. Towboats, 176 of them under several flags, awaited the signal. At the beach it took four tugs to maneuver each blockship into position and hold it there against the tide while it was sunk.

In the Channel approaches gathered six battleships, 23 cruisers, and 105 destroyers ready to sail south to neutralize the German shore batteries and send up an anti-aircraft curtain. A thousand smaller warships were poised to sweep mines, neutralize German patrol boats, watch for periscopes, whatever was needed.

Operation Mulberry began and continued under fire, and the most essential parts of the job, started on the evening of **June 7, 1944** were completed on D plus 8, June 14--one day ahead of schedule. "It functioned so smoothly," Lester E. Ellison, first mate on an army tug recalled, "that on 14-18 of June inclusive, an average of 8,500 tons of cargo poured ashore over it daily." This exceeded the design quota of 5,000 tons by nearly 60 percent.

The Storm

Bad luck, in the form of a ferocious summer storm, the worst June gale in 40 years, blew in on June 19 (D plus 13). It came from the north, the worst possible direction, piling up the seas against the beaches, creating a barrier of surf no landing craft could penetrate intact.



In three days of unrelenting fury, it all but demolished the American harbor, tossing smaller vessels athwart the causeways and creating general wreckage. The spuds were ruined, and most of **Mulberry A** was left good for nothing but repair parts for the British harbor. The British port sustained heavy damage too, but, partly sheltered by the Calvados Reef, it was much less damaged than its American counterpart and it was quickly restored to service.

The American harbor was the worst hit. Great seas surged through the gaps torn in the breakwater, drove small craft ashore, and seriously damaged the piers. Caissons [Phoenixes] which had been breached by pieces of wreckage began to crumble away.

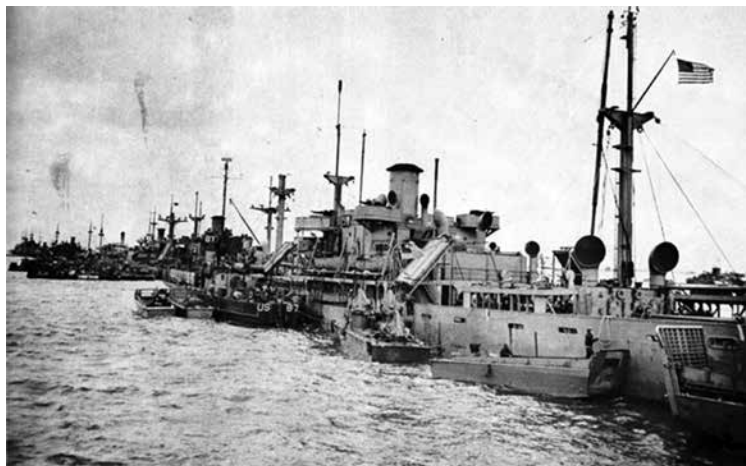
However, the harbor and separate “shelters” were already to a great extent performing the function for which they had been designed. A very large number of ships and craft found sanctuary under the lee of the blockships and within the harbor breakwaters. Ships in distress, which would otherwise have been lost with their valuable cargoes, were saved by the friendly shelter of the artificial harbors. And for three days of appalling weather, while beach unloading was impossible and the Army’s supply situation became extremely difficult, a small but very vitally important trickle of stores went ashore through the harbor. Even on the worst day of the gale, 800 tons of petrol and ammunition as well as many hundreds of troops, were landed at Arromanches over the pierheads.

Great damage was sustained by the American harbor, which lacked the useful shelter which the Calvados reef provided for the British; and to make matters worse many of the components--caissons and lengths of pier -- were lost or damaged while on tow in the Channel during the three days’ gale.

In view of these heavy losses of material it was decided to discontinue work on this harbor, which was now less necessary in view of the capture of Cherbourg. The main structure of the British port had stood up well to the weather, and the harbor was completed--partly with material salvaged from the American one. The work of strengthening its breakwaters is still proceeding.

Meanwhile the port continues in full operation. Within its breakwaters Liberty ships and coasters, under **Operation Neptune**, discharge their cargoes into DUKWs [“Ducks”] and lighters; and against its pierheads other ships unload thousands of tons each day into lorries which carry the stores straight to the Army’s dumps.

Appreciation: Through the two harbors came 73,000



U.S. and 83,000 British and Canadian troops. As the SHAEF report put it, “For the first time in history, a harbor has been built in sections, towed across the sea, and set down, during a battle, on the enemy shore.”

And be it noted: towed across the sea, and set down, during a battle, on the enemy shore by the gallant men of the United States Merchant Marine and Naval Armed Guard, and their British and Canadian counterparts.

Gen. Dwight D. Eisenhower stated: Every man in this Allied command is quick to express his admiration for the

loyalty, courage and fortitude of the officers and men of the Merchant Marine. When final victory is our, there is no organization that will share its credit more deservedly than the Merchant Marine.

And the **New York Times** wrote (in part):

LONDON, June 9, 1944 -- *D-day would not have been possible without the Merchant Marine. Now that the long-awaited day is history and great Allied forces have been landed in France, it is permitted to indicate the part played by these intrepid civilians, whose deeds for the most part have gone unsung.*

Probably it is not generally realized that the Merchant Marine has the largest ratio of casualties of any branch of the services, and many of the names on the list are not classified “wounded” or “missing.” They were those of the men whose grave is the sea.

The whole picture of the merchant marine’s heroic deeds will not be available for some time because of security. Working side by side with the British merchant navy and the Allied fleets, the American merchant marine has reached a new peak of glory, and into this latest venture it has brought all the hard-earned experience of such historic episodes as the African landings and the bitterly fought Arctic runs to Russia.



Memories May Be Lost Near Detroit

Boblo Island Amusement Park, was located on Bois Blanc Island, Ontario, just above the mouth of the Detroit River. Detroiters characterized it as that city's Coney Island. It was operated from 1898 until closure in September, 1993.

The island is a five-minute ferry ride from Amherstburg, Ontario and 18 miles from Detroit. The Detroiters were served by two excursion boats which could carry 2,500 passengers each: the *SS Ste. Claire* and the *SS Columbia*, which were known as the "Bob-Lo boats".

Many Detroiters cherish memories of trips to Bob-Lo Island, where half of the fun was riding the waves of the Detroit River back & forth on the two old excursion steamers.

The *Columbia* built in 1902 and the *Ste. Claire* built in 1910 were designed by the famed ship architect Frank E. Kirby with interiors designed by Louis O. Keil. They are the oldest remaining classic excursion passenger steamers in the country, and they are the last existing vessels from the Detroit, Belle Isle and Windsor Ferry Co who contracted to have them built for the Bob-Lo Island run.

These ships' 81 years of service on a single run is unequalled in U. S. maritime history. They were both laid up after completing their voyages on Labor Day 1991 and never sailed again.

Accidental fire aboard the *Ste. Claire*:

The *Ste. Claire* was ravaged by fire on July 6, 2018, most of her upper structure destroyed. Her burned out hull remains opposite Belle Isle, where she has been stuck deep into a sandbar about 30 feet offshore from Riverside Marina for the past year and a half.

This tragic fire was not the first caused by welders who were working on the ship, but sadly it destroyed what little remained of this once great vessel.

The owner of the *Ste. Claire*, Dr. Ron Kattoo and a partner acquired the dilapidated boat in 2007. In the years that followed, workers cleaned up the hull and repaired defects in it, removed considerable amounts of old wood from the second and third decks and made other improvements.

As he watched the fire last July, he recalled "When we first acquired the boat you couldn't walk on that thing. But we got it to the point where she was very structurally sound. It just breaks my heart."

In the past, Dr. Kattoo used the term "restoration," but from his description of his plans even then he seemed to

be talking about a rebuild. A few years ago posts on his old website – "Boblo Boat Ste. Claire Restoration Project" – stated: "A final determination is being made as to the amount of wood that needs to be left to maintain historical status. The majority of the superstructure will be removed meaning the removal of the fourth and third decks and the



outer rim of the second deck. The superstructure will be completely rebuilt from the second deck and above. The outer supporting ring on each deck which is made of wood will be replaced with steel." Architectural plans posted by Kattoo did not promise a restored *Ste. Claire* but a new modernized interior of

the ship.

After the fire, Dr. Kattoo claims that he can still rebuild her launched a fund raising effort in the amount of \$500,000. (<https://www.gofundme.com/the-official-boblo-boat-restoration>). He says "Thank God it was steel, that can be saved. I just don't know what to do with the rest of it right now." The owners have tossed around dozens of ideas – a haunted house or a restaurant.

One can only hope that there might be some small glimmer of a future for the *Ste. Claire*, but it would seem that this dim dream may gone up in smoke. There could be so much damage to her hull and keel from running into the sandbar, the fire and the extensive weight of the water poured into her. The *Ste. Claire* may be joining the sad fate of many other old steamer ferries. However, Dr. Kattoo stated: "She's a Detroit icon and we are hoping to bring her back." He claims that if it can be salvaged, they will try.

Hope for her sister "Bob-Lo" steamer ferry:

However there is still hope for *Ste. Claire*'s older, bigger sister the *SS Columbia*! *Columbia* is doing well these days and spending time in Buffalo, New York, visited by her followers while awaiting continuance of her journey to New York City for a full, historic restoration by the *SS Columbia* Project group. While it is unfortunate that she is now one of a kind, *Columbia* is expected to revive the grand tradition of excursion steamboats on the Hudson River. Once *Columbia* arrives in New York and finishes her restoration she will be loved for more than just memories of trips to Bob-Lo Amusement Park, but for the opportunity to once again get out on the water for the day with children onboard, once again laughing and playing on her decks.

A HISTORIC ANNIVERSARY – 50 YEARS SINCE APOLLO 11

July 16, 2019 will commemorate the 50th anniversary of Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin's historic landing on the Moon.



Apollo 11 was the first manned mission to land on the Moon. The first steps by humans on another planetary body were taken by Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin on July 20, 1969. The astronauts also returned to Earth the first samples from another planetary body. Apollo 11 achieved its primary mission - to perform a manned lunar landing and return the mission safely to Earth - and paved the way for the Apollo

lunar landing missions to follow.

TIMELINE:

May 25, 1961

- President John F. Kennedy addresses Congress, "First, I believe that this nation should commit itself to achieving the goal, before this decade is out, of landing a man on the Moon and returning him safely to the earth. No single space project in this period will be more

impressive to mankind or more important for the long-range exploration of space; and none will be so difficult or expensive to accomplish."

November 21, 1962 - President Kennedy tells NASA Administrator James Webb, "This is, whether we like it or not, a race. Everything we do [in space] ought to be tied into getting to the moon ahead of the Russians."

May 18, 1969 - Apollo 10 lifts off from Kennedy Space Center, Florida. This launch is a dress rehearsal for Apollo 11. The crew, Thomas Stafford, John Young, and Eugene Cernan, orbit the moon and then return to earth eight days, three minutes and three seconds later.

LAUNCHING:

July 16, 1969 - At 9:32 am EDT Apollo 11 lifts off from Pad A. Launch Complex 39, Kennedy Space Center, Florida. After 2 hr and 33 min in Earth orbit, the S-IVB engine was reignited for acceleration of the spacecraft to the velocity required for Earth gravity escape.

Lunar-orbit insertion began at 75:50 ground elapsed time (GET). The spacecraft was placed in an elliptical orbit (61 by 169 nautical miles), inclined 1.25 degrees to the lunar equatorial plane. At 80:12 GET, the service module propulsion system was reignited, and the orbit was made nearly circular (66 by 54 nautical miles) above the surface of the Moon. Each orbit took two hours. Photographs taken from lunar orbit provided broad views for the study of regional lunar geology.



LUNAR LANDING:

July 20, 1969 - At 1:47 pm EDT Armstrong and Aldrin, in the lunar module Eagle, separated from the CSM.

4:18 pm EDT - "Houston, Tranquility Base here. The Eagle has landed," Armstrong reports as the lunar module lands on the moon's surface at the Sea of Tranquility. The module has only enough fuel to run for 40 more seconds.

The lunar module (LM), with Astronauts Armstrong and Aldrin aboard, was undocked from the command-service module (CSM) at 100:14 GET, following a thorough check



of all the LM systems. At 101:36 GET, the LM descent engine was fired for approximately 29 seconds, and the descent to the lunar surface began. At 102:33 GET, the LM descent engine was started for the last time and burned until touchdown on the lunar surface. Eagle landed on the Moon 102 hr, 45 min and 40 sec after launch.

Immediately after landing on the Moon, Armstrong and Aldrin prepared the LM for liftoff as a contingency measure. Following their meal, a scheduled sleep period was postponed at the astronauts' request, and the astronauts began preparations for descent to the lunar surface.

Astronaut Armstrong emerged from the spacecraft first. While descending, he released the Modularized Equipment Stowage Assembly (MESA) on which the surface television camera was stowed, and the camera recorded hu-



after which they slept.

RE-ENTRY AND SPLASHDOWN:

The ascent from the lunar surface began 21 hours and 36 minutes after the lunar landing. After spending over 21 hours on the lunar surface, the *Eagle* blasted off. Once the LM had docked with *Columbia*, the two astronauts transferred to the CM, and the LM was jettisoned into lunar orbit (the crash site of the *Eagle* on the Moon is still unknown).

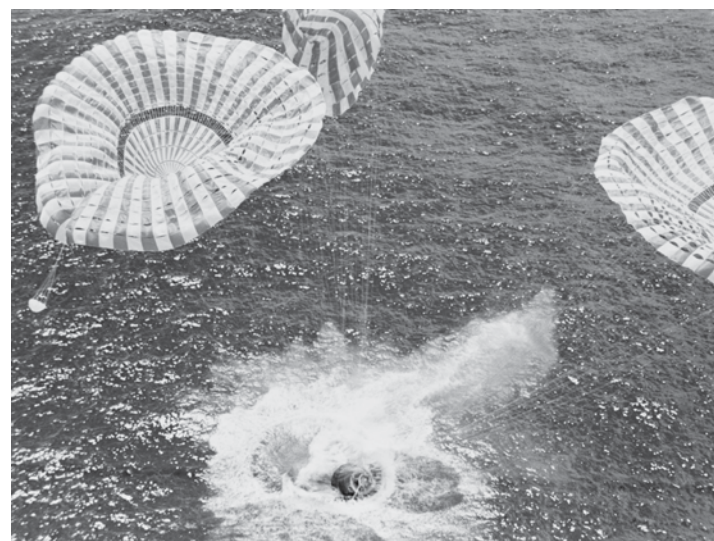
Three days later, just before *Columbia* was positioned for reentry into Earth's atmosphere, it was separated from the Service Module (SM). Re-entry procedures were initiated July 24, 44 hours after leaving lunar orbit. The SM separated from the CSM, which was re-oriented to a heat-shield-forward position.

In trans-earth coast only one of four planned midcourse corrections was required. The CSM entered the atmosphere of the Earth with a velocity of 36,194 feet per second (11,032 meters per second) and landed in the Pacific Ocean.

Apollo 11 splashed down in the Pacific Ocean on July 24 at 5:50 AM local time, after traveling over 950,000 miles in a little more than 8 days. The splashdown point was 920 miles southwest of Honolulu and 13 miles from the primary recovery ship USS *Hornet*.

The *Hornet* quickly maneuvered into place. The Captain, Carl Sieberlich, was a Kings Point grad and known for his ship handling and ship operation skills. He later became the first Kings Pointer to make admiral in the USN. Among his other skills he was an aviator, qualified in lighter than air (blimps), helicopter and fired wing aircraft.

Other U. S. Navy ships positioned in the Pacific for possible service, called Secondary Recovery Ships, were USS *Arlington*, USS *Carpenter*, USS



mankind's first step on the Moon at 109:24:19 GET (pictured at left). A sample of lunar surface material was collected and stowed to assure that, if a contingency required an early end to the planned surface activities, samples of lunar surface material would be returned to Earth. Astronaut Aldrin subsequently descended to the lunar surface.

10:56 pm EDT - Armstrong says, **"That's one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind,"** as he becomes the first human to set foot on the moon.

11:15 pm EDT (approx.) - Buzz Aldrin joins Armstrong on the moon. The men read from a plaque signed by the three crew members and the President, **"Here men from the planet Earth first set foot upon the Moon, July 1969 A.D. We came in peace for all mankind."**

The astronauts carried out the planned sequence of activities that included deployment of a Solar Wind Composition (SWC) experiment, took photographs, and collected 22 kilograms of lunar rock and soil samples. The astronauts traversed a total distance of about 250 meters or .1553 miles. The EVA ended after 2 hours, 31 minutes when the astronauts returned to the LM and closed the hatch of the LM



Goldsborough, USS Hassayampa, on hand to refuel the Hancock, if needed, USS New, USS Ozark and USS Salinan.

Parachute deployment of the CSM into the Pacific Ocean occurred after a flight of 195 hours, 18 minutes, 35 seconds - about 36 minutes longer than planned. The properties of water cushioned the spacecraft enough that there is no need for a braking rocket to slow the final descent.

RECOVERY:

Milt Putnam, a photographer covering the recovery later wrote:

In 1969, civilian press photographers were not allowed to fly in military helicopters. It was my job to photograph the splashdown, the UDT-11 swimmers attaching the flotation collar around spaceship Columbia and crawling into the life raft and Columbia being hoisted out of the sea by the helicopter. And then back aboard Hornet to photograph President Nixon talking with the astronauts.

"Helicopter #66, the primary recovery helicopter, and the photo helicopter #53, approached the splashdown site in pre-dawn darkness to find Columbia upside down and bobbing in fairly calm seas. The astronauts sitting upside down

in Columbia pushed a button to inflate three large flotation balloons to upright their craft.

"At the break of dawn, one of the helicopters with the UDT-11 swimmers hovered near Columbia and three swimmers jumped into the ocean. A second helicopter following closely dropped life rafts and the flotation collar that would be used to help prevent Columbia from sinking. It took only a few minutes for the swimmers to attach the flotation collar and position the life rafts.

"The primary recovery helicopter made a slow pass near Columbia. Navy Lt. Clancy Hatleberg, the senior UDT-11 swimmer, jumped ten feet or so into the water and swam to the command module. The next helicopter used its rescue basket to lower a bag containing four uniforms never worn by space travelers before. The uniforms, biological

isolation garments, were worn by the astronauts and Hatleberg during recovery because it was unknown if the astronauts would return to earth from the moon carrying some kind of germ or virus that would cause harm. Hatleberg slipped into one of the biological isolation garments while the other swimmers in a raft moved 100 feet upwind from Columbia.



"At 6:20 AM, Hatleberg quickly open the command module hatch and tossed in three remaining uniforms and closed the hatch just as quickly. After a short wait, Hatleberg opened the hatch again and out came three moon adventurers covered head to toe wearing biological isolation garments.

Michael Collins and Buzz Aldrin settled at each end of the life raft. Neil Armstrong sat in the middle and watched Clancy Hatleberg closely as he closed Columbia's hatch and locked it down. Hatleberg sprayed a decontaminate over the module and around the hatch. He then wiped down each of the astronauts with a sodium hypochlorite solution to kill any moon germs that may have gotten on their BIG suits before they exited the command module.

"The Apollo 11 astronauts landed on Hornet, thirty-seven minutes after Clancy Hatleberg had opened Columbia's hatch the first time. Helicopter #66 was towed to an elevator and lowered to hangar bay level where the Mobile Quarantine Facility awaited."





Quarantine:

The Mobile Quarantine Facility (MQF) was an Airstream-type trailer. The crew were transferred immediately to the MQF when it reached the hangar bay. President Richard Nixon and other celebrities were already aboard the *Hornet* and

greeted the astronauts through the glass windows.

After the President and other celebrities departed, the U.S.S. *Hornet* continued steaming back to Hawaii, arriving at Pearl Harbor on the afternoon of July 26. The mobile quarantine facility was hoisted off the ship onto a truck for transfer to Hickam Air Force Base a few miles away, pausing briefly to acknowledge the greetings of the mayor and several thousand citizens of Honolulu. At Hickam the trailer was loaded into a C-141 cargo aircraft, which departed immediately for Houston.

Just after midnight the big plane touched down at Ellington Air Force Base, where a large crowd awaited a glimpse of the astronauts. Three hours later the crew and their companions entered their living quarters at the lunar receiving laboratory, which would be their home for at least the next three weeks. On hand to greet them were the

support personnel who had entered the living quarters the week before: a clinical pathologist, five laboratory technicians, three stewards, photography specialist, Brown & Root-Northrop's logistic operations officer, and a representative of MSC's public affairs office.

After a day off to recuperate from the stresses of the preceding two weeks - since July 16 they had been cooped up in very close quarters - the crew began a week of inten-

sive technical and medical debriefings. Periodic examinations and blood tests monitored the physiological effects

of their flight and recovery, while the doctors kept a close watch for any signs of exotic infection or "moon bugs".

At the conclusion of the technical debriefing sessions, less than a week after they returned, they were called upon to comment on operations in the receiving laboratory. Armstrong was noncommittal, saying that so far it had been going "about as well as you can expect." Collins's less tolerant response was, "I want out". However, it would be another 14 or more days before the crew was finally released from the lunar receiving laboratory.





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.

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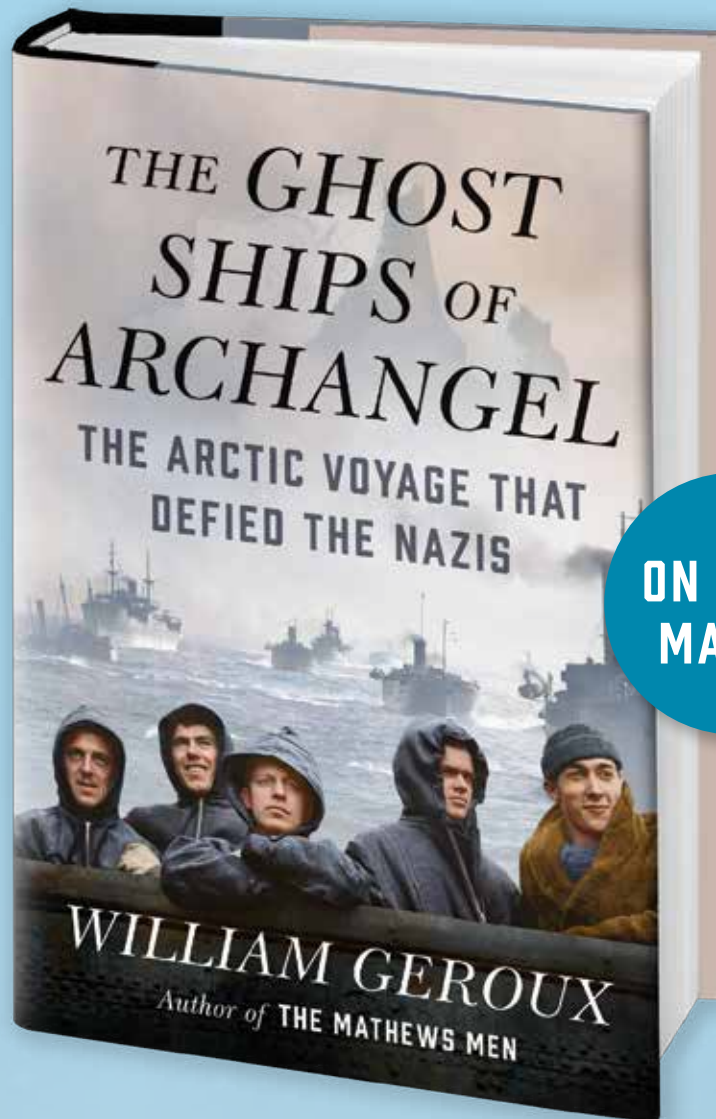
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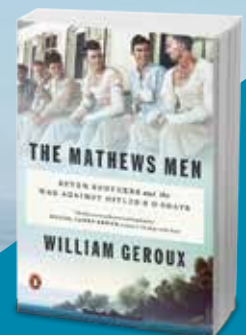
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