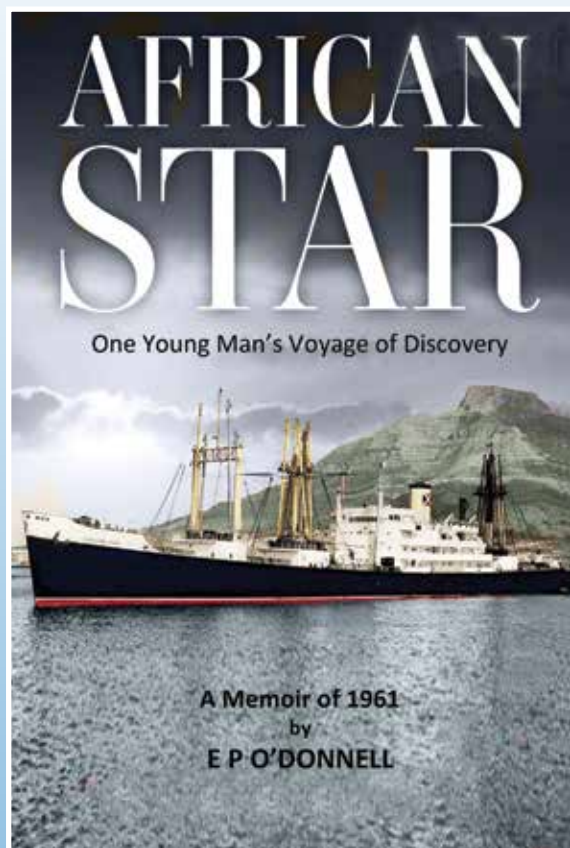


AMERICAN
MERCHANT MARINE
VETERANS
NEWS MAGAZINE



African Star: One Young Man's Voyage of Discovery (book excerpt) – page 12



WWII shipmates "Chic" Brooks & Ed Laughton reunited at Laughton's 100th birthday celebration – page 15



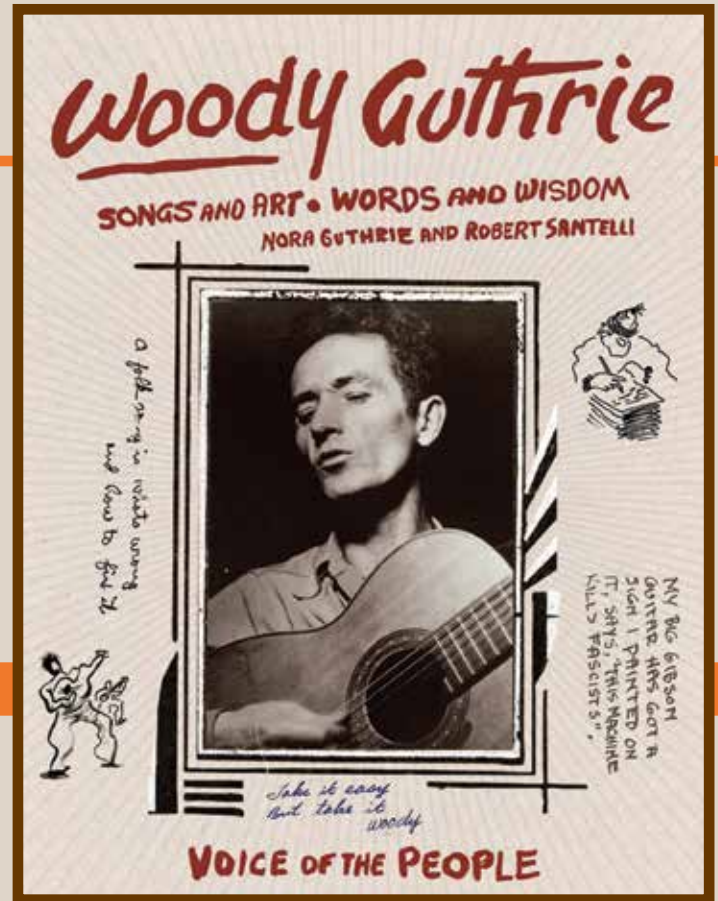
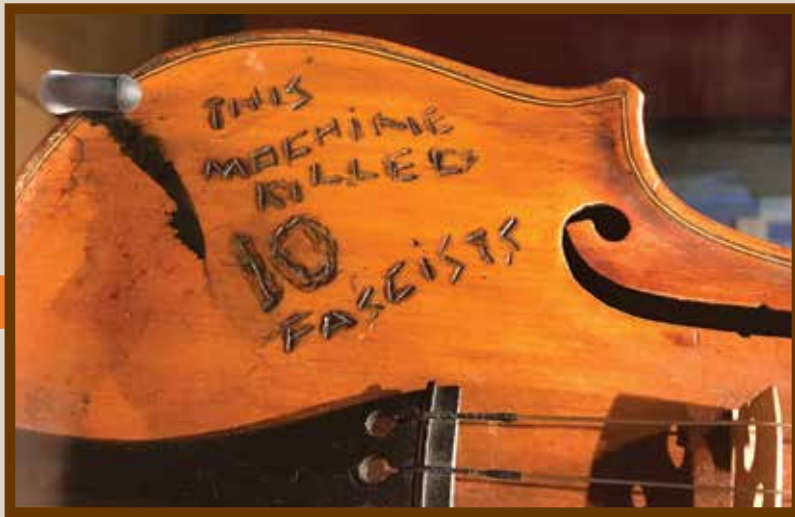
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Woody Guthrie (1912-1967)

Famous singer, songwriter, and poet who served as a WWII Merchant Mariner

Woody Guthrie experienced direct combat as a Merchant Mariner, first aboard the *William B. Travis* which struck an enemy mine, and later aboard the *Sea Porpoise*, which was hit by a torpedo from U-390. He is well known for WWII era songs such as *Sinking of the Reuban James* and *This Land is Your Land*.

The new book “Woody Guthrie: Songs and Art, Words and Wisdom” and Art, Words and Wisdom”, was released in 2021 and is now available at www.woodyguthrie.org



A list of
Woody's
New Year's
Resolutions

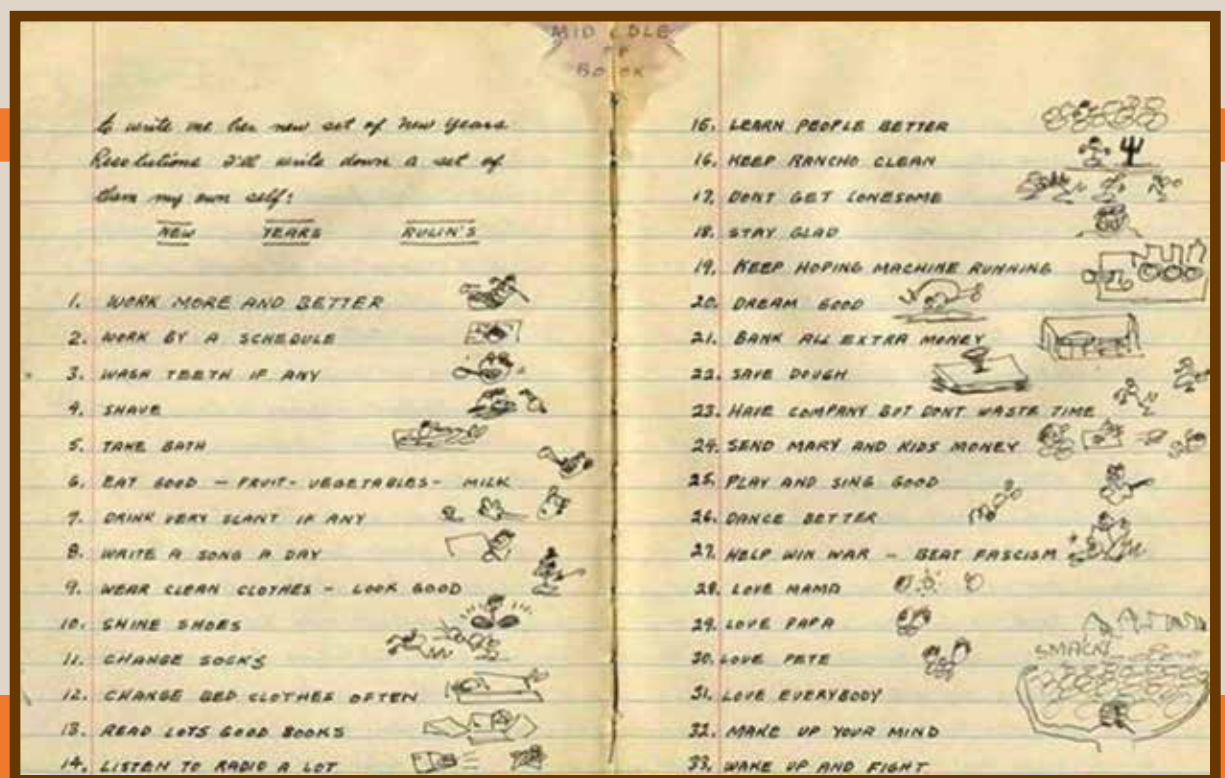


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National President Capt. Anthony “Dru” DiMattia



Smooth seas never made a skilled sailor seaman.

As we embrace 2022, AMMV remains extremely honored to serve our Greatest Generation of mariners! We have more volunteers stepping up and joining this long just cause of recognizing our U.S. Merchant Marine service to our country. The strength of AMMV is in its members.

We continue to persevere in some areas and wage constructive educational dialogue in others. There is no playbook guiding us on how to promote this worthy cause; just folks like you wanting to do what’s right! We embrace change.

Those who are engaged in the maritime industry usually have a good background of those men and women mariners who carved out what it takes to crew our fleets of vessels in both “PEACE and WAR”. But the majority of our public has absolutely no idea what the Merchant Marine has done, and continues to do, in service to our country’s National Security and economic prosperity.

I thank all of the AMMV members who have renewed their memberships and those who have recently joined! We wish to thank our 2021 Convention Contact Membership Committee. I’d like to give a shout out to our Regional Vice Presidents who remain in their posts and to those who have given notice of moving on. This includes WWII Merchant Mariner, Howard Pfeifer of Region Three, who has also served as the President of AMMV Three Rivers Chapter for decades. We thank Howard for his service which included the Murmansk Run, and wish him peace and joy in 2022!

I’ve heard that some of our members who date back to the 1980’s when AMMV was founded, along with younger generations of members, want to know what they get for their dues besides the magazine? Great question! Please note that behind the scenes of our Administrator, Lynn Kelly is a national network of volunteers who engage on a daily basis educating and promoting the cause of our AMMV mission. We are an all-volunteer association which takes pride in knowing what our WWII mariners sacrificed in maintaining the vital link of the supply chain that won the war. We educate the public and stay involved with honoring the legacy of our Greatest Generation. We ask those members wanting to know what else you get besides the magazine to actively join this

endeavor.

You will read the details behind our latest rounds of falling short in getting the Merchant Marine Equity Act 2021 through the NDAA, and the successes of Congressman Garamendi’s support in getting the Duplicate Bronze Congressional Gold Medals authorized for funding. This is a big deal. Rumor has it, that the GGM may be stamped by the end of January, into February 2022! That said, AMMV is discussing with the House of Representatives, the possibility of participating in a virtual ceremony in which the Speaker of the House will officially award the Congressional Gold Medal. Once this medal is officially released by the Speaker, we can plan events accordingly. This virtual ceremony plan has a few moving parts and as soon as we know when and how to proceed, we will be communicating with our members. We have not set a date for our next National Convention as we await the CGM award.

As you may know, the 117th Congressional Session concludes January 3, 2023. H.R. 39 (WWII Merchant Mariner “compensation” legislation) requires sponsorship and a companion bill from the Senate. Our very own Government Affairs Chairman, Charles Mills remains in discussions with Rep. Al Green of Texas who sponsored the bill. It remains in committee and needs your support!

Congressman Garamendi who is a huge maritime advocate also authored H.R. 1819; Energizing American Shipbuilding Act 2021. AMMV members need to get involved. What is going on with current maritime shipping events? The U.S. has had its largest LNG exports this past December 2021 and yet 100% has been exported on foreign built bottoms and crewed foreign. Meanwhile, high spiking prices for energy costs in New England continue to impact LNG prices which have seen spot market trades at \$38/MM Btu. Does anyone recall what the late T. Boone Pickens once said? He called this condition, “the largest transformation of wealth to leave our country for imported oil and gas”. We have our own reserves and continue to get greener with innovations. Garamendi’s bill, would require U.S. producers and exporters to phase-in U.S. built tankers and LNG vessels over time. Can’t we think longer term in a jobs bill where this includes the trades back into high school? H.R. 1819 needs to become law!

We pay our deepest respects and honor all of our WWII Merchant Mariners who have crossed the final bar.

Have a good watch!

Captain Dru DiMattia
AMMV National President





National Vice President Sheila M. Sova



Happy New Year! Sailing into 2022, the future of the AMMV is thriving. Even though the WWII USMM compensation legislation seems to take one huge step forward, two steps back, I want to write about more positive endeavors. Our 2020-21 National Convention was proof that we are a strong organization with over 200

people attending our celebration dinner with the top maritime industry people in attendance. Twenty World War II Merchant Mariners joined us in Baltimore.

This put AMMV on the radar. With social media sites growing more rapidly than ever before, we have caught the attention of top maritime leaders. Some social media numbers might help explain...

The AMMV Facebook page has 4,223 followers. The U.S. Merchant Marine of WWII Facebook group (non AMMV-affiliated) has grown from 600 to over 2,300 followers, just since 2016. The Baby Boomer generation has taken a strong interest in our Greatest Generation and these numbers prove it. AMMV Twitter has grown to over 6,681 followers.



Interesting new members have connected with us who are working fervently to get the official USMM song *Heave Ho, My Lads* played at the PBS Memorial Day Concert.

Another social media user from Texas shared several pictures of Liberty Ships in the Arctic where his father continued to sail after the war. He has been extremely helpful with contacts in Washington DC and in helping us with tweeting. His grandfather, Emanuel Dans, sailed under enemy fire since 1939, making dozens of voyages across three zones, including Murmansk. In 1925, he shipped out stoking coal on tramp steamers to Shanghai and Vladivostok, and sailed the last of 217 voyages as a U.S. Merchant Mariner in 1971.

Perhaps one of the most fulfilling parts of my advocacy for the Merchant Marine is when I receive messages like the ones shown here from Linda and Rudy. Not only are they recognizing the Greatest Generation, but they are helping the sons, daughters, and grandchildren of our veterans learn about the heroism of their loved ones as well as assisting them in obtaining the DD 214 (Honorable Discharge) and World War II medals on their behalf. This is part of the advocacy that encourages me to believe that their MM WWII legacy will be carried on.

Sheila M. Sova
National Vice President





National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



One of the greatest rewards of this position is the pleasure I receive from meeting the many members and families of AMMV. Occasionally, I am “introduced” to a woman in the organization who is an outstanding example of what we, our grandmothers, our mothers, our daughters and our granddaughters can aspire to be. On August 10th in Hernando, Florida, we lost

one of these amazing women at the age of 101. Billie Arlyne Smith D'Entremont was the Chapter Secretary of AMMV's High Rollers Chapter in Las Vegas, Nevada for many years. As with everything she did, her skills and dedication to AMMV were exceptional. According to the current High Rollers Treasurer, Sue Pushard, meticulous in her role as secretary, Billie had the ability to go above and beyond what was expected of her and did it with a smile on her face and kindness in her heart.

Billie was a pioneer. She was in the first group of women sent overseas to serve in the United States Military. As a young woman from Charlevoix, Michigan, while working as a waitress in Loft's Tea Room in New York City, she experienced an air raid. She immediately decided to join the military. She said, “Although the Navy and Marines were popular and more exciting,” she chose the Coast Guard because of growing up in Michigan in the Great Lakes area where the Coast Guard played a major role. On March 26, 1943, during World War II, she enlisted in the Coast Guard as a SPAR. Her boot camp was at Hunter College in NYC and then she completed three months additional training at Oklahoma A&M. Ms. Smith was sent to the Great Lakes as a Coast Guard recruiter. When the first group of Coast Guard women were going overseas to Hawaii, she applied to join

them and became a medical yeoman. This group of women traveled the Pacific knowing that the ship could be attacked by submarines at any time. On the way from San Francisco to Hawaii the troop ship conducted four drills a day to practice racing to the lifeboats in case of air, sea or underwater attack. Billie said, “One day we had two underwater drills, and to this day I think one of those was real, that there was a submarine in the area”. Billie had enlisted for the duration of the war and was discharged Nov 1, 1945.

Billie and several other Coast Guard women decided to stay in Hawaii and she found a job with Andrew Flying Service and School because she wanted to learn to fly. She met a pilot who offered to let her sit in the co-pilot's seat when he flew. He became her husband, Bill D'Entremont, with whom she had four children before he died at age 40. They were married for twelve years. Billie raised four children alone and never remarried.

In 1948 Billie became a licensed pilot, when most women weren't even driving cars. She worked on the Beaver Island and Mackinac Island ferries, was an IRS auditor, a



*Billie at her 100th birthday celebration
(photo credit: Matthew Beck)*

teacher and a camp nature counselor. She was a life-long environmentalist and preservationist. She was one of a small number of women to become a member of the Boy Scouts' Order of the Arrow. A naturalist, she was a docent at the Bishop Museum, an active member of the National Audubon Society, and a key participant in the Eagle Valley Environmentalists. Wherever Billie lived she was involved in veterans' organizations, including serving as part of an honor guard at veterans' burials.

Throughout history there have been many great women who have led. Billie D'Entremont was one to emulate. AMMV was fortunate to have her. We have lost another valuable, dedicated member.

(Special thanks to Sue Pushard, High Rollers Chapter, Las Vegas)

Calm Seas,
Lynn C. Kelly





NEWS Magazine Editor Capt. Christopher Edyvean



March 29th, 2022 will mark the 80th anniversary of one of the greatest and most victorious episodes of WWII, this event having been but just a tiny segment in the overall Battle of the Atlantic.

On that same calendar day in 1942, the *M/S City of New York* was returning from a voyage to Africa. She was a dual passenger/cargo vessel loaded with cargoes vital to the war effort and was protected by one of the early Navy Armed Guard units. Passenger service was slated to be discontinued upon arrival in the U.S., due to the growing threat of U-boats.

Near Cape Hatteras, a torpedo slammed into the *City of New York*. The passengers and crew quickly begun to abandon ship while the Armed Guard crew sprang into action to fight back at the attacking *U-160*.

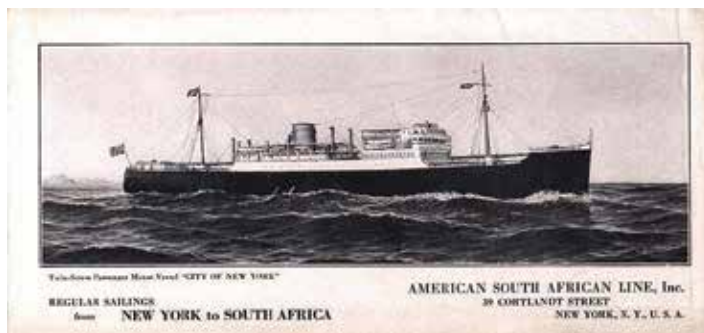
Among the passengers in a struggle for survival were Desanka Mohorovic and her young daughter, Vesna. Desanka was near full-term pregnant, and the shock of the torpedo strike may have been what ultimately set her in labor.

The ship's physician was a documented U.S. Merchant Mariner by the name of Dr. Leonard Hudson Conly. This being his first trip as a merchant seaman, Conly had previously been denied admittance into other branches of the service due to medical concerns. He so badly wanted to serve his country. If only he knew of the implications of the adventure that would soon unfold!

With Desanka and daughter successfully transferred to a lifeboat, it was the Doc's turn to follow. However, Conly fell into the lifeboat and broke his ribs.

A second torpedo struck, and soon the *City of New York* slipped to her watery grave. The Armed Guardsmen were the last off the ship, having fought to the very last second.

Nightfall would bring about more than just darkness. Heavy seas made for a wild ride in overcrowded lifeboats.



Desanka gave birth that night to a baby boy. Dr. Conly had successfully delivered the baby in the crudest of conditions and oversaw the infant's well-being in his early moments of life.

Rescue would come via the *USS Jesse Roper*, a WWI-era battleship. There were totals of 26 casualties and 118 survivors, according to *A Careless Word, A Needless Sinking*. The *Roper* dropped off survivors in Norfolk, and after a short stay, would return to the hunt at sea. *Roper* soon afterward sunk the *U-85*.



Dr. Conly mingling with passengers on the M/S City of New York, presumably before the ship sailed from New York. (Photo provided by the Conly family; his head is circled in the photo.)

The baby was named Jesse Roper Mohorovic, nicknamed the "Lifeboat Baby", and deemed "the baby Hitler couldn't get". The amazing story of life at sea in the face of imminent death was broadcast worldwide to boost the morale of Allied troops. Indeed, Dr. Conly had served his



country well.

I personally became knowledgeable of this story when I met Bill Carlson of Duluth, MN, who was one of the Navy Armed Guard crew. I became fascinated with the story, and have often felt that the Navy Armed Guard were not credited enough for their role in returning fire at the U-boat. They bought time to allow for the evacuation of the passengers and crew.

The 2017 AMMV National Convention (which was held in Reno, NV) marked the 75th anniversary of this event. Dr. Conly had passed away in the 1950's, but AMMV was able to locate his son and grandson.

Seventy-five years to the date of the sinking, the Conly descendants sat at the same dinner table as Bill Carlson. (The Mohorovic descendants had declined AMMV's invitation to attend.)

In a special commemorative ceremony following that dinner, Dr. Conly posthumously received his official status as a WWII Merchant Marine veteran. MARAD was on hand to present a shadow box of medals to the Conly family, which included the Merchant Marine Distinguished Service Medal, the highest form of recognition that can be bestowed upon a U.S. Merchant Mariner. The Conly descendants and Carlson were presented with Senate proclamations from the office of Nevada Senator Dean Heller, and AMMV presented both with the American Legacy Award. It's notable to mention that the Gary Sinise Foundation sponsored Carlson's transportation to this event.

More recently, last summer I was able to attend a special mini-ceremony at the Norwegian Consulate in Minneapolis in which Bill Carlson received the Convoy Cup Award.

Remembering those who have served,

Christopher J. Edyvean

Christopher J. Edyvean

AMMV News Editor & Past National President



Pictured at the 2017 AMMV National Convention on the 75th anniversary of the sinking of the M/S City of New York are (left to right): William (Bill) Carlson, Capt. Dru DiMattia, Glenna Smith (Office of Senator Dean Heller), Darren Conly (grandson of Dr. Conly), and Len Conly, Jr.



American Merchant Marine Veterans Profit & Loss

July through December 2021

Income	
402 · Contributions	28,201.69
403 · Interest Income & Bank Bonuses	559.00
405 · Mission Advance Support	35,550.84
409 · Miscellaneous Income	18.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	
CEC · Central California	1.26
DAR · Dennis Roland	544.00
EOH · Edwin O'Hara	32.00
GLD · Golden Gate	750.00
HIR · High Rollers	250.00
JTS · John T. Schmidt/Palmetto	350.00
LON · Lone Star	157.00
MAL · Members at Large	13,002.00
NBM · North Bay Mariners	350.00
NOA · North Atlantic	32.00
OHV · Ohio Valley	225.00
ORV · Oswego River Valley	75.00
THR · Three Rivers	600.00
Total 410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	16,368.26
411 · Convention Income	
412 · Convention Registrations	3,675.00
413 · Comm. Book Ads	4,500.00
414 · Convention Donations	12,050.00
415 · Convention Dinner	6,089.60
416 · Convention Table	100.00
411 · Convention Income - Other	350.00
Total 411 · Convention Income	26,764.60
420 · Magazine Ads	75.00
Total Income	107,537.39
Expense	
500 · Fixed Expense	
507 · Telephone	637.57
511 · Svc Charges - Paypal & Square	458.80
Total 500 · Fixed Expense	1,096.37
514 · Convention Expenses	
515 · Convention Events	30,454.44
517 · Convention Misc. Exp	14,017.93
Total 514 · Convention Expenses	44,472.37
520 · Mission Advance Expenses	
521 · Awards	480.90
525 · Mission Support Exp	34,469.94
526 · Internet Initiative	600.00
Total 520 · Mission Advance Expenses	35,550.84
530 · AMMV News Magazine	
533 · Postage	2,737.33
536 · Printing	7,616.13
538 · Layout	1,300.00
Total 530 · AMMV News Magazine	11,653.46
550 · Personnel	
551 · Administration	10,200.00
Total 550 · Personnel	10,200.00
560 · Operating Expense	
564 · Office Supplies	747.79
565 · Postage - Office	708.21
566 · Printing - Office	296.92
567 · Licenses & Fees	646.88
569 · Legal Fees	1,000.00
Total 560 · Operating Expense	3,399.80
Total Expense	106,372.84
Net Income	1,164.55

American Merchant Marine Veterans Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2021

ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
103 · Paypal	63.22
105 · Chase Bank	369,085.35
130 · Square	948.00
Total Checking/Savings	370,096.57
Total Current Assets	370,096.57
TOTAL ASSETS	370,096.57
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
200 · Chase Credit Card	300.00
Total Credit Cards	300.00
Other Current Liabilities	
315 · Gold Medal Fund	10,007.00
311 · Dues Receivable	416.00
312 · Member Recruitment	893.00
314 · Mission Advance Fund	20,614.32
Total Other Current Liabilities	31,930.32
Total Current Liabilities	32,230.32
Total Liabilities	32,230.32
Equity	
32001 · Retained Earnings	336,701.70
Net Income	1,164.55
Total Equity	337,866.25
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	370,096.57

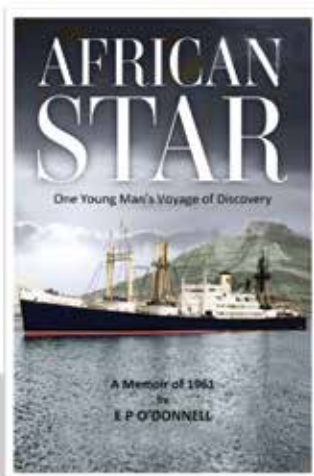
AMMV becomes a 501(c)(3) organization

In October 2020 AMMV sent a letter and two ballots to each member explaining that we no longer qualified for our tax designation under which we had been operating since 1984. The Board of Directors asked our membership to vote to allow changes to the Constitution and By Laws to comply with requirements set forth in IRC Section 501 (c) (3). The membership voted overwhelmingly to do so, and our lawyer filed the necessary papers. Effective January 4, 2022 AMMV has become a 501 (c) (3) non-profit public charity.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE CROSSED THE FINAL BAR

FAME ACADEMIA	Glenmoore, PA
ANGELO AVENA	Palm Coast, FL
RUSSELL S. BAKER, JR.	Cambridge, MD
NORMAN F. BALKO	Missoula, MT
LEONARD T. BLAKE	Whittier, CA
LEONARD F. BOITEUX	Los Altos, CA
WARREN J. BURBINE	Discovery Bay, CA
LEON BUTLER	Jacksonville, FL
CAPT. JOHN V. (JACK) CAFFREY	Mohegan Lake, NY
EUGENE CASTANO	Bellingham, WA
ANGELO F. "FREDDIE" DEMATTEI	Belmont, CA
EDWARD J. DUFF	Naples, FL
GEORGE ENGELBRECHT	Northfield, NJ
CHARLES E. FRENCH.	Slaterville Springs, NY
ELVA ANN GRACEY	Broken Arrow, OK
GLENN GRACEY	Broken Arrow, OK
WARREN F. GRAY, SR.	Middletown, VA
ROBERT GREGGAINS	Fort Lauderdale, FL
THOMAS GLENN HILL	Norman, OK
RICHARD JORGENSEN.	Omaha, NE
JOSEPH KLUSCARITS	Warnersville, PA
C.A. LLOYD	Raleigh, NC
CHESTER MARCELL, JR.	Highland, CA
LORRAINE MEYER.	Minnetonka, MN
CHARLES MONTANARO	Gardnerville, NV
RICHARD C. NUTTING	Arroyo Grande, CA
EDWARD FRED PASCALE	Medford, NY
ARTHUR J. POLLARI, JR.	Myrtle Beach, SC
BRIAN FRANCIS REA	Lincoln, CA
CLYDE RIMMER	Birch Bay, Blaine, WA
MENDELL "PETE" SPARKS	Springfield, MO
DALE PAUL STRAUSSER.	East Aurora, NY
ROBERT JOSEPH WESTRICH	St. Louis, MO
H. LEE ZIMMERMAN	Lawrence, KS

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.



AFRICAN STAR

(book excerpt)

Chapter: Turning Toward Home

The author, aka “Eddie”, writes in the third person as he recalls the young man he once was, many decades ago.

Sure enough, on Friday morning (relief Third Assistant Engineer, or A/E) Rizzo came back aboard, looking less like a tribal chief than a man needing to recover from a colossal binge. Eddie felt sorry for him but was glad he had made it back.

The First Assistant Engineer (John Leslie) told the Third to go sleep it off but be ready to stand watch at 4 p.m. In the late afternoon, the hatches were closed, anchor weighed and the African Star began its return journey. They would revisit the ports of South Africa to take on cargo to be delivered back to the US east coast.

On Thursday, September 29, they tied-up again in Durban to load bauxite destined to be turned into aluminum for automobiles or other manufactured goods. While there Eddie thought about tracking down Sandy and his ring but realized it was a lost cause. A life lesson learned.

With a hold full of the bulk ore, the ship departed on the morning tide. All went well until they crossed the bar which defined the harbor entrance and dropped the pilot. Eddie, who had been in the engine room assisting maneuvering, came up from below. Just then the ship heeled over to port as a large wave hit the vessel broadside. He was almost knocked off his feet and, as he and the ship righted themselves, they were then tilted to starboard. The ship was rolling about forty degrees each way, the most motion experienced as yet on this voyage.

They were in the midst of a series of “cape rollers”, large swells that originated in the waters south of Africa and grew in size as they encountered the continental shelf along the southeast coast. The coastal waters between Durban and East London were notorious for rogue waves that could reach 60 feet in height and sink or damage ships. While these waves were not of that magnitude, they did manhandle the ship and required

good skill on the part of the bridge.

After a number of gut-wrenching rolls, the ship was turned into the swells and the rolling became more a manageable pitching motion as the ship rode up and down the waves.

Just as things had settled down, and Eddie was going to his cabin, a shrill alarm sounded in the passageway. This was the engineers alarm and was the signal that help was needed below. The Chief Engineer (Rommel) and Leslie emerged from their cabins just as the lights flickered and went out.

“That – (relief Third A/E) Decker – he’s losing the plant!” the Chief yelled to the First.

“Come on Gadget, we’ll need you below” Leslie said to Eddie.

The three of them, with (Second A/E) Andy close behind, started down the ladder in near darkness, their way lit only by some emergency lights that had come on.

“What happened?” the Chief shouted as he shined his flashlight on the face of the watch engineer who seemed stricken with fear.

“The generator tripped” Decker said. “I think it was carryover because the fireman lost sight of the water level while we were rolling.”

Apparently, the water level in the boilers had gotten high enough for solid water to flow into the turbines driving the electrical generator which provided power throughout the ship, including the engine room. The turbine and generator then tripped off line plunging the ship into darkness and cutting off power to everything.

The danger now was that the feedwater pumps had also shut down, starving the boilers of water which could cause them to burn up, rendering the ship damaged beyond repair and powerless. They would then be at the mercy of currents which could ground



Author Edward O'Donnell as a Cadet in 1960

the vessel or cause a collision with other ships in the area. The *African Star* was dead in the water.

"Secure the fuel pump and close the throttle" the Chief instructed the other engineers. This would avoid damage to the boilers and bottle up whatever steam remained to get power restored.

Andy moved to shut off the fuel supply and Leslie closed the throttle to the main propulsion turbine. Soon there was an eerie quiet in the engine room. The phone rang and the Chief picked it up.

"We've got a loss of plant skipper" he said to the Captain, who had called from the bridge.

"About an hour if we can get the boilers lit again soon" he advised. "You might want to throw out an anchor."

He was advising the bridge that the ship would be without power for an hour or more and that since they were in coastal traffic, it would be best to anchor the ship.

"Cadet, go up and see if we have water in the boilers" he instructed Eddie. "Take your flashlight and shine it through the gage glass. Shout down whether you can see water."

Fortunately, Eddie this time could both hear the Chief Engineer and understand his instructions. He climbed the ladder to the platform between the boilers and found the water gages. He shined his light through them.

"Nothing showing Chief" Eddie shouted down.

"All right come back here."

"First, get the steam feed pump going" he said to Leslie.

Without electrical power, they could use the steam driven auxiliary feed pump to get water back into the boilers. Then they would restart the fuel pumps, light the boilers and produce more steam to get the generators back on line to provide electrical power. Then the entire plant could be brought back and the ship's propulsion restored.

"Come below with me" Leslie said to the cadet. They reached the steam feedwater pump and Leslie began opening valves that would allow it to send water to the boilers.

"OK all set on the water end, now we'll put steam on her to warm her up."

Leslie then cracked open the steam supply valve, expecting to hear the hiss of steam entering the pump drive cylinders. Instead – nothing.

"What the hell! Where's the steam?" he cried.

Just then the Chief came down and said "What's the holdup?"

"I don't know Chief, no pressure here".

"Are you sure all valves are lined up?"

"Yes, it should have pressure up to the main supply valve right here."

"Well, it been a while since we used this steam pump but we never had a problem with it before."

Eddie who had been listening intently then said, "First, there's a block valve behind the starboard boiler. Maybe it's closed."

The two senior engineers looked at him like he had two

heads. "What are you talking about?"

"Well, I traced out the lines for this system and remember a shutoff valve in the steam supply behind the boiler".

"Show us!" the Chief said in a skeptical tone.

Eddie led them to where the valve was and pointed to it.

"Crack it open."

Eddie did as told and they could hear the sound of steam passing through.

"I'll be damned – open it all the way!"

They went back to the pump and this time, when Leslie opened the steam inlet valve a rush of steam was heard. Soon the pump was in motion, delivering water to the boilers.

"Go back up and tell us as soon as you see a level" the Chief instructed.

Eddie resumed his place by the water gages and after a while, water could be seen slowly rising in the glass.

"We've got water" he shouted down.

"Relight the boilers" Leslie yelled at Andy who got the steam fuel pumps going while the fireman lit the burner with a torch. Soon both boilers were firing again and steam pressure was rising.

After some time, the Chief got the generator running and closed the main supply breaker. Lights came back on.

The rest was now easy. Main feed pumps and other critical equipment were restarted; steam pressure rose to the point that the main turbine could be put on line. The Chief then moved the telegraph to "Standby Engines".

"Ready to go when you are Captain" Rommel telephoned to the bridge.

"Stand by the telegraph" he said to Eddie.

Soon after the anchor was raised, the engine room telegraph signaled Slow Ahead and Leslie cracked open the throttle.

"Let the cadet take the throttle First" the Chief said to Leslie "I think he earned his stripes today."

Eddie took over control of the throttle valve and felt a surge of pride as he responded to the bell commands which Decker, not he, now recorded in the log book.

'Wow, the Desert Fox just gave me a battlefield promotion' he thought. After the ship was again at Full Ahead, the watch duties were turned back to Decker with Andy remaining with him until White relieved them at noon.

Eddie joined the Chief and Leslie in the mess room for lunch.

"That valve must have been put in for some work the last time the ship was in dry-dock" the Chief said to Leslie.

"Right. We were both on vacation and the port engineer didn't mention it when we came back."

"How did you know it was there?" the Chief asked Eddie.

"I had to trace all the systems and make drawings for my Sea Project, so I did that instead of just copying the one in the files."

"Well good thing you did. Otherwise, we'd still be down there trying to get the plant back".

"I'm going to give you a job. Take each of the system diagrams and if you find something that doesn't match what's in the engine room, mark them up with your corrections. We want them to show what's really down there."

'Oh great' Eddie thought 'I bought myself more work.'

But he was pleased that the Chief Engineer, as well as his First and Second Assistants now treated him with more respect as an engineer than they did the Third Assistant Decker who clearly was not someone to be trusted.

African Star: One Young Man's Voyage of Discovery is available at Amazon in hardcopy or in e-format for Kindle. Publication date 8/12/2021.



Engine Room throttles

Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

JAMES BLANCHETTE WINDHAM NH
ELLEN SARKISIAN CHESNUT ALAMEDA CA
THOMAS EMANUEL DANS SUGAR LAND TX
BARBARA HUGHES HONOLULU HI
MICHAEL LOFFA SURPRISE AZ
MARION MAXWELL NELSON DOTHAN AL
BARBARA NUTTING ARROYO GRANDE CA
EDWARD O'DONNELL MAHWAH NJ
JAMES PATTI FREDERICK MD
RANDALL J. SMITH HENDERSONVILLE ... NC
THOMAS SUNESON JACKSONVILLE FL

LOADING COFFEE IN SAN JOSE DE GUATEMALA

Excerpt from "The Written Works of Glen Chesnut"

*The sea, deep blue on the horizon,
comes in green around the anchored ship
and rolls on rising land and swells shoreward,
where bottom-drag and undertow
pull the deeper water back
and bend the lunging foam crests down
to white froth lathering
the black sand beach of San Jose.*

*The ship, straining at the hook,
heaves on the mounting land swells,
as grinding winches hoist
the sacks of coffee up from barges,
swinging them abeam and down
where knotty-muscled stevedores –
barefoot, brown, and naked to the waist –
hump the heavy sacks in the oven heat of the holds.*

*Aft, on the canopied fantail, a seaman
lying on a bed of coiled mooring lines
longs for a cool breeze and for the soft arms
of a girl, he knows in San Francisco.*

Visit: <https://glenchesnut.com>

WWII Merchant Marine veteran is reunited with shipmate at his 100th birthday celebration



A special 100th birthday celebration was held in late October for WWII Merchant Marine veteran & AMMV member, “Big John” Ed Laughton. Over 100 family members and close friends attended the party. Following the AMMV National Convention in September, which

Laughton attended with several family members, representatives from AMMV were also invited to his birthday party.

Laughton was serving as Second Officer on the *SS Hobbs Victory* when the vessel was attacked and struck by a Kamikaze on 4/06/1945. The vessel, which had been assigned to transport supplies for the Battle of Okinawa, was a total loss following this incident. A dozen or more crew members were killed, including Alexander W. Harris, one of the “142” U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point) midshipmen

who lost their lives during WWII in service to our country.

Ed’s granddaughter Betsy Mount and her husband James, who were among the family members with him at the AMMV National Convention, were the primary orga-



Ed (aka “Big John”) Laughton, circa 1945



Ed’s party included an impressive selection of exquisite desserts and a sparkler cake

nizers of the birthday event. The party featured Hawaiian/luau themed decorations and entertainment, with various family members singing and dancing. A huge WWII memorabilia area was set-up in a corner of the room, which included photos from the recent AMMV convention and Laughton’s Convoy Cup medallion, certificate, and letter. The party even had a photo booth and tiki bar! Following dinner and formalities, a D.J. took over and the dance floor came alive.

Representing AMMV were Christian Yuhas (Region # 8 Vice President), Capt. Chris Edyvean (AMMV News Editor & Past National President), and Laura Riddle (Outstanding Volunteer recipient).

Early in the program, the family played a 5-minute video clip of Laughton’s trip to the Baltimore/D.C. area for the AMMV convention. Following the video, the three AMMV representatives were called up to the podium to offer some special presentations to Mr. Laughton. First, he was given a framed letter from the Kings Point



SS Hobbs Victory (source: www.railsoft.com)

Alumni Association, which commemorated his 100th birthday milestone. Next, on behalf of MARAD, AMMV presented Second Officer Laughton with the Mariner's Medal, of which he qualified due to his involvement in combat during the *Hobbs Victory* attack. Finally, he was awarded the *American Legacy Recognition* plaque from AMMV. (These materials were later moved to the memorabilia area for all to see.) The three AMMV reps then each took a few moments to speak to the Laughton family.

However, these pieces of recognition were not the only surprises in store for 100-year-old WWII veteran Ed Laughton. A bit later in the program, granddaughter Betsy announced that there would be a special guest speaker. She introduced Hervey "Chic" Brooks, the only other known living survivor (Able-Seaman) from the *Hobbs Victory* Kamikaze attack in 1945. AMMV Vice President & outreach specialist Sheila M. Sova had located Mr. Brooks and did the initial legwork which resulted in his surprise attendance; Brooks was accompanied by his grandchildren



Ed Laughton's 100th birthday party was luau themed with lots of singing and dancing

Jeremy and Emily.

On his way up to the podium, Chic joked to his former shipboard superior officer, "I wasn't sure why I was supposed

to be here, I thought you were calling me out to wash the decks!" Chic spoke for about ten minutes in telling his own story of his life in the aftermath of WWII and the *Hobbs Victory* attack.

During a later break in the program, AMMV surprised Chic Brooks with the Convoy Cup Award and an *American Legacy Recognition* plaque.

Brooks had brought along a model of the *Hobbs Victory* in a glass case, which was a huge photo attraction.

Towards the end of the party, Brooks and Laughton had a chance to briefly chat. Afterwards, Brooks commented, "He remembers it just the same as I do."



RVP Christian Yuhas presents Chic Brooks with the Convoy Cup medallion



Ed Laughton

Please welcome our new AMMV officials!

Patrick Cotter

(appointed to AMMV Government Affairs Committee)

I am honored that Capt. Dru DiMattia appointed me to AMMV's Government Affairs Standing Committee. I have spent my entire career and educational endeavors working on marine environmental issues, with a high degree



Recently, Patrick Cotter accepted the Convoy Cup Award posthumously for his father, Edward P. Cotter, Jr.

of respect for the maritime industry. I look forward to working with Charles Mills and AMMV leadership to accomplish the organization's mission and goals. Protecting the marine environment and resolving maritime issues have been major components of my career.

In 2013, I retired from

the Office of International and Tribal Affairs located at U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) headquarters in Washington, DC. As an International Environmental Program Specialist, with college degrees in oceanography and marine science, I represented EPA on U.S. delegations to the International Maritime Organization (IMO) based in London, United Kingdom. I worked on: (a) amendments and program operations for the London Convention and Protocol on ocean dumping and a publication to assist member nations in developing their ocean dumping programs; (b) revisions to Annex V of the International Convention for the Prevention of Pollution from Ships (MARPOL) on garbage from ships, including a specific global ban on disposal of plastics from ships; (c) the Antifouling Systems Convention to promote antifouling systems that would not harm the marine environment and guidance on safe removal of antifouling material from ships' hulls; and (d) review of components of the IMO's Polar Code to protect the Arctic marine environment.

It was a privilege to represent our Nation at the IMO and to lead an international working group on global ocean dumping issues. For my work with various U.S. Government colleagues on IMO programs, I was awarded a gold medal and a silver medal from EPA. I also worked

on EPA's team to develop a collaborative ports initiative with colleagues at the U.S. Department of Transportation's Maritime Administration and selected U.S. port authorities. After I retired, I taught three graduate level classes on Managing International Marine Pollution and International Marine Science and Policy at the Middlebury Institute of International Studies in Monterey, CA.

Kyle Knickerbocker

(Region # 4 RVP-Elect)

AMMV Region # 4 Regional Vice President-Elect Kyle Knickerbocker, who in addition to being a year-round resident/native of Connecticut, was a high school Senior Class President and founded his high school's first ever sailing team, and is a first-generation Merchant Mariner since 2010. AMMV's Region 4 represents the New England states and New York.

While Kyle pursues a U.S. Coast Guard instructor endorsement in order to be qualified to teach STCW, he is currently employed full-time at the U.S. Coast Guard Academy as a civilian.

When not shipping out or enjoying the waters off the Connecticut shoreline, Kyle takes the opportunity to keep up with latest industry news and trends, whether it's at-



Kyle Knickerbocker (right), pictured with Capt. Richard Phillips at the AMMV National Convention in September

tending annual events such as the Connecticut Maritime Association's Shipping Conference, Workboat Magazine's International Workboat Show, American Naval Engineers Society's Government Craft Conference, or the American

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 19)

Flying George Fan Club

Helen Shaw recounts the adventures of her husband, WWII Merchant Mariner George Shaw, following their attendance at the AMMV convention in September, and their somewhat rather "long" trip home to Canada.

Prelude

Ah, the best laid plans.... George Shaw had survived the testing obstacles (an absolute nightmare) to fly round-trip from British Columbia to Baltimore for the AMMV Conference in late September. Naturally, he had gotten a bit cocky after climbing backwards down (and back up) the John Brown step-ladders to his WWII home, the Engine Room. Not bad for a 94-year-old...but, unfortunately, the experience had given him delusions of grandeur.... Within a week, he had already driven from BC to California for his yearly visit with family and friends dotted along the route. But that just wasn't enough for George.

Welcome to the ongoing saga of Flying George. Flies over sidewalks in a single leap. Two broken vertebrae? No problem. Blood clot in upper left lung? Got it covered. Sense of humor...well... he began telling awful jokes to the captive hospital staff from Day # 3 until they had to kick him out.

Ship's Log:

— **October 14, 2021**

Having re-lived his Merchant Mariner days, George thought he would try his hand at flying. He did get airborne...briefly... but crashed...badly...at his son's house in Yuba City. He was taken to the ICU at Davis Medical Center in Sacramento. He went through intensive testing and was found to have injured his C2 and L2 Vertebrae... also had slight bleeding between



WWII Merchant Mariner George Shaw had a long trip home from the AMMV Convention after taking an unlucky fall.

skull and brain. Welcome to ICU, George.

He scared the daylights out of everyone for almost a week, as doctors sorted out new injuries from old (a 1952 major lumber mill accident had already broken his C-2 and L-2 vertebrae, and they were NOT happy with the current abuse). He was experiencing atrial fibrillation and had developed a blood clot in his left lung. His left elbow was severely lacerated but not broken. He was really out of it for about eight days, deeply scaring everyone. But then, he began to perk up...dramatically.

— **October 25, 2021**

Finally, he was transferred to a Physical Rehab facility, where the first two days were pretty tough. They were working him hard to rebuild his strength and balance. They were aware that he'd have to make a 900-mile drive back to Canada, getting into and out of cars, hotel beds, bathrooms, and rest stops. In the meantime, his ground crew began cooking up a plan for that. His son had a spacious SUV and would drive

him, while I would follow in our car. He could only have one visitor per day, for only half an hour, so it got a bit lonely for him. On the other hand, he was a very busy boy.

The Physiotherapists were relentless. Every morning, he was strapped into a back brace and had a rigorous workout, lifting each leg with weights strapped on at the ankles, etc. After 2 weeks of this, he was finally let loose alone with his walker, to return to his room from "The Lab" ...SOLO ...NO Air Traffic Control. That was the first time he had walked farther than from bed to bathroom.

We knew that he'd get up



George's wife Helen set up a Facebook page to monitor George's progress after his incident.



and walk out in a heartbeat if he could escape. Luckily, one of my nieces googled a Sacramento bakery that makes buttermilk bars, I found a great place to get chocolate malts, his son brought him crossword puzzles, and his daughter brought him Reece's Pieces. He proved BF Skinner to be correct. **He'll work hard for treats.**

— November 16, 2021


After practicing in the "Flight Simulator" for 2 weeks, George finally flew solo (with brace and walker) when his son and I took him out to breakfast....real curbs, real steps,

real lawn to cross, real tables, real arm chairs. No assistance from George Jr. or from me. (Hovering closely, yes.) He more than exceeded our expectations. When we returned to the Rehab Center, we asked to bring him home the next day. (Sure had been tempting to keep on driving that day.)

— November 17, 2021

Now for the 900-mile drive home. Walker in the car, and suited up in his back brace, Flying George made it to Roseburg, OR the first night and to Bellingham, WA the next night. Handled the rest stops and the hotel bed/bathroom just fine. George Jr. was able to leave for home early the next morning, while his dad and I stayed in Bellingham for an extra night, in hold-

ing pattern, while waiting for Covid test results so we could cross the Canadian Border. We had already practiced for George to transfer into our car for the rest of the trip home, only about 3 hours, including ferry. Landing lights on, gear down.

Hard to recognize George today, compared to how he looked after taking his infamous, albeit signature, Evel Knievel nosedive in Yuba City. No more trying to fly across the Grand Canyon ... or sidewalks. 

Please welcome our new AMMV officials!

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Merchant Marine Veterans National Convention.

While born during the era of Desert Storm, it wasn't until after witnessing Captain Phillips of the *Maersk Alabama* taken hostage by Somali pirates in 2009 that Knickerbocker launched his own maritime career on the inland waters of Long Island and Block Island Sounds. He worked in the Deck Department until 2019 for one of the largest privately-owned ferry companies on the East Coast, better known as Cross Sound Ferry.


In his time as an inland mariner, Kyle learned more about the different opportunities within the U.S. Merchant Marine and soon desired to sail on oceangoing vessels. It wasn't until conducting some research however, that Kyle realized he would need to obtain more than just a Merchant Mariner Credential in order to sail at sea. He conveniently found and applied to the Seafarers Harry Lundeberg School of Seamanship, the maritime industry's leading USCG-approved training school for unlicensed mariners. He successfully completed the Unlicensed Apprenticeship Program in 2015, and went on to serve a total of 1,250 days

aboard inland ferries and oceangoing Military Sealift Command vessels between 2010 and 2020.

During the ongoing Coronavirus pandemic, Mr. Knickerbocker obtained a 100-ton Masters license, pursued an appointment by the United States Coast Guard as a Mariner Credentialing Agent, and is doing business as Knickerbocker Maritime Unlimited amidst an ongoing Mariner shortage.

As the Regional Vice President for Region 4, Knickerbocker will continue advocating for...

(1) Raising awareness of U.S Merchant Marine history, especially the contributions and sacrifices made during World War II, the Vietnam War, and Desert Storm, to the same level as the U.S. Armed Forces during the same time period. (A subject of interest in light of a presentation made by Professor Salvatore Mercogliano during the American Merchant Marine Veterans National Convention in 2021.)

(2) Young people who want to enter the industry, especially historically underrepresented groups, by introducing them to the idea of becoming a hawsepiper. 

What's Happening?????

Editor's note: Mark Gleeson is a frequent contributor to the AMMV News magazine, and has been active for decades in the fight for WWII MM recognition and compensation. In this correspondence, he recalls learning of the end of WWII while he was still in training.

At the end of about six weeks basic training for new trainee seamen, everyone could choose the type of work he wanted to do on board ship. There weren't many choices. The choices were deck, various positions in the engine room, different types of steward's positions, and more specialized activity as a radio operator and purser/pharmacist mate. The training for radio operators was 16 weeks at one of several training schools, and at least 5-6 months for purser/pharmacist mate. I made the decision to apply for radio operator.

There were steps in screening for the radio school. For several weeks after dinner, we attended a course in mathematics. We started with simple math, the next week higher math, and finished with what was really first level algebra. I passed all this and then participated in a morse code skill test. We were fitted with earphones, and quickly learned the code for three letters – I, N, and T, the first three letters in International Code. We were given special marked sheets of paper and a special pencil. A recording started sending code groups of the three letters to write down. Slow at first and increasing in speed until all was a blur. They say anyone can learn morse code, and I passed this part of the test.

The last part of the selection process was an interview with an officer and someone who also taught at the operator training school. I am not sure what they were looking for but since the radio operator was an integral part of the management of a ship, they were probably trying to weed out anything unusual.

All was good and I was notified that I would be going to the radio operator school at Hoffman Island, an artificial island in New York Bay by the end of August, 1945.

Once this decision was made, I was separated from the class I was with since coming to Sheepshead Bay, Section 294. They moved on and started the additional training for the skill levels they chose. I was assigned to a pool of trainees that would await moving on to specialized schools. This pool of men was assigned little things to do to keep them busy. I was assigned to lead a group of four trainees to help keep the grounds clean and orderly, and especially, sweep the sidewalks free of sand. There was sand everywhere as Sheepshead Bay was on the ocean and effort was made to keep sand out of the buildings.

I finished this task and on the morning of Wednesday,

August 15, 1945, reported into the coordinator of "pool tasks" for something else to do. I was told that there was nothing that needed done and I spent the morning helping him type some reports. Following lunch, I reported back to the coordinator, and he said there was nothing to do, but since our group had done nice work in the last task, we had been given a special 6-hour pass that evening if we wanted to go into New York. I took the pass, and said thank you. See you in the morning.

A good friend who was in the pool group and I put on our dress whites and left about 6 pm to catch the BMT into 34th Street Station. The ride was always a pleasant time and took almost an hour. First a bus ride and then the subway.

We got to the 34th Street Station about 7 pm and as we walked through Grand Central Station, we realized something was going on. There was an abnormal level of noise, horns blaring, people shouting, people running around. We exited the station onto Times Square and there were a million people in Times Square having a party. There seemed to be a bottle of beer in every hand, everybody laughing and having a good time. We stood at the entrance of the station for a few minutes. I asked a well-dressed man carrying a briefcase who was coming into the station, **what's happening?** He looked at me for a second and said, "where have you been, the war is over, Japan has given up." He put his hand on my shoulder, and said I could relax now.

Where had we been? In the years before tv and instant cable shows, and radios blasting the news 24 hours a day, we were in a training camp in a world all our own. A few days earlier we had heard that Japan had been hit with some special bomb, but there was no news about any pending surrender. My friend and I had been given a pass to go to New York because we had done simple jobs and people were pleased with the work. We had heard nothing about the surrender all day, nor on the way into New York. Just a normal August day in New York.

My friend and I did not really know what to do. If we got involved in some party somewhere, got into any type of trouble, we would never get back to base on time. We went to some small restaurant and had a bite to eat. Somebody came by and picked up our bill. Everyone was happy, the war was over.

We wandered around Times Square, just being part of something so important and tremendous that was hard to imagine. However, we both were suffering from something called social disorientation, being part of something, with people who were like us, but not being able to participate and be involved as we knew nobody. It made me uneasy.

My friend asked what we should do. I said he could do anything he wanted, but I was going to go back to the base. This was too much for me. He said that was fine, could he borrow \$10. I gave him the money and got back on the BMT.

When I arrived back at the base so early, one of the
(CONTINUED ON PAGE 21)

Tribute to Thomas Glenn Hill

By Sheila M. Sova

Thomas Glenn Hill crossed the bar on November 15th 2021, just months after attending his first AMMV National Convention in Baltimore. Thomas has been doing ship paintings for all of our World War II veterans for the past two conventions. At the most recent reunion, he provided paintings to our veterans as well as to the Mulzac family (descendants of Captain Hugh Mulzac, who was also being posthumously honored by the maritime industry).

In 2016, a Facebook group called U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII caught my attention. The page was run by retired Marine Corp veteran Thomas Glenn Hill. Thomas was dedicated to carry on the legacy of his father Dr. Riley Ambrose Hill, a WWII Merchant Marine veteran who also received the Purple Heart. I joined the group and was given administrative rights to the group because of my association with the AMMV. The group has grown from 600 members to over 2,300 members, some being WWII USMM veterans, but mostly their descendants, wanting to learn more about their loved one's military history.

Thomas' wife, Vivian Ray Hill, who also attended the convention, notified us through Facebook that Thomas went into the hospital for a scheduled surgery but never returned home. It was a shock to everyone who belonged to the group and to those who attended the convention in September. Thomas had recently joined the AMMV and the Baltimore convention was his first.

In 2019 our convention was held in Tampa. Thomas could not attend but offered to do a painting for each of our veterans. He created two paintings of each ship, one going to the veteran and the other being signed and dated by the veteran to be sent back to Thomas. His plan was to donate the signed paintings to a military museum.

At the 2021 AMMV National Convention in Baltimore, Thomas set up a table and greeted each veteran with a painting. You could tell in their faces how excited they were to receive these paintings. Thomas enjoyed speaking with all of these veterans and hearing their stories and putting a name with a ship. Their stories brought a part of history alive for both Thomas and the veteran. For a few short minutes, that Liberty or Victory ship, tug boat, or T-2 tanker had a life of its own.

When the convention was over, the collection of autographed ships from both conventions were donated to convention attendees, as well as to Veterans History Mu-



Thomas Glenn Hill (right) with Henry Mulzac, displaying various artwork in tribute to the Mulzac family

seum of the Carolinas Founder & Curator Emmett Casciato and Vice President Ken Corn.

Having his paintings in a museum is what Thomas Glenn Hill wanted. Fate brought him to the AMMV convention and facilitated his meeting of the veterans, the museum personnel, and a chance to give back to the men who sailed alongside his father in WWII.

Signing off was his wife Vivian, who said it best in her Facebook post.

Vivian Ray Hill: "My Marine has joined the rest of his Marines to guard the streets of Heaven. Rest easy, Thomas Glenn Hill, USMC GySgt Retired. Rest In Peace, Gunny!"



What's Happening?????

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 20)

security guards asked me if there was a problem; was I sick? I told him what I had just left in New York and what I had seen. I told him the war was over. This was news to him, and he called some of the other guards.

The next day, Thursday, August 16, 1945, was almost like any other training day at Sheepshead Bay. Classes continued; people still made plans to go to sea. Nothing really changed. New trainees would continue to arrive. However, in another day there was bad news for trainees planning to go to radio school. In the true American way, when the shooting stops, the country quickly shuts everything down and tries to get everyone home as soon as possible. Get on with your life. Radio school was a sixteen-week course. If a person had completed eight weeks on August 15, 1945, he would continue. If he had not, and this was me, he did not continue in school.

There was a not much to do at this point. I was not interested in the purser/pharmacist course. When a trainee finished basic training, he was discharged from the United States Maritime Service, issued his seaman's paper, and had a choice of which major port city he would like to go to be assigned to a ship. I chose to go to Boston.

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On December 15th, the Greater Cincinnati Navy League Council honored Ohio Valley Chapter WWII Merchant Mariners Julian Smith (left) and Albert Varhola. Also honored but not in attendance was George Griffith.



WWII Veteran Fame Academia (center) served in the WWII Merchant Marine. AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia is on the left. Photo taken at Cape Coral, FL Veterans Day activities.

AMMV Members From



101-year old Charles A. Mills of AMMV Lonestar Chapter, with granddaughter Veda Handy, at the Pearland, TX Veterans Day event.



Group photo at the Pearland, TX Veterans Day gathering



Pictured at the AMMV Golden Gate Chapter annual Christmas party are Regional VP Christian Yuhas, Stig Rasmussen, Frank Mendez, Carol Ann Mendez, Audrey Winn, and Mary Murphy.

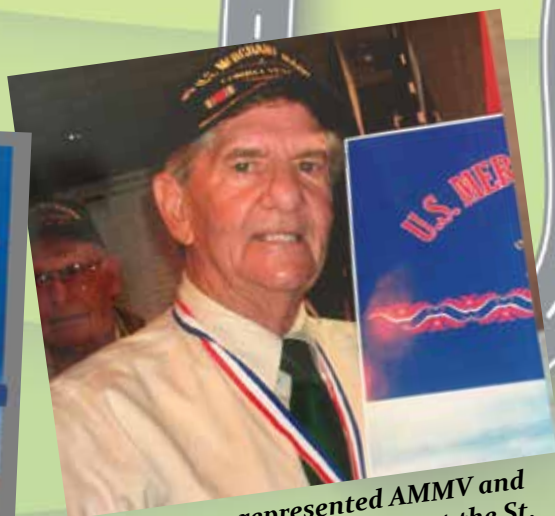


AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia and Kimberly King attended Wreaths Across America in Bushnell, FL.

Coast to Coast



Region # 4 RVP-Elect Kyle Knickerbocker (left) had the chance to meet Dr. Robert Ballard, who located the wreck of the Titanic. The event took place in late October at the URI Graduate School of Oceanography in Providence, RI.



Ed Trester represented AMMV and the U.S. Merchant Marine at the St. Augustine, FL Veterans Day activities. It was estimated that over 1,000 people attended, including Congressman Michael Waltz.



WWII Merchant Mariner Gerard Driscoll waves to the crowd during a Veterans Day parade in Pennsylvania.

Who Loves You, Baby?

By Mark Gleeson

Any person over the age of 70 remembers what television was like in the 1970's. It was full of detective shows and westerns. One of the more popular detective series of five years was *Kojak* starring Telly Savalas. An accomplished actor, he portrayed a detective in New York, sucking on a lollipop, and often using the expression, *Who loves you, baby?* It is an expression that really requires no response. The expression can be used in a few situations. A common usage is a response to a compliment, a greeting, an affirmation, and an expression of excitement. For the merchant mariners who sailed the merchant fleet in WWII, it was a question asked of each other.

I believe it is a compliment to their service to their country.

Specifically, the popular perception of these men during WWII was often negative and demeaning. Some of these perceptions have continued to the present day and could be the reason efforts of these veterans to seek recognition for their services have not succeeded. However, there has been an event that caused the merchant seamen of WWII, the few thousand remaining of the 245,000 that sailed the greatest fleet of ships the world has ever seen, to smile again. It was the placement of the merchant marine seal on the base of the two flagpoles in the National WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C. The merchant marine seal is there along with the seals of the other services, cast in bronze and set in Kershaw granite. Question: How did it get there? How did the merchant marine get placed in the same position of honor as the men and women of the other services when they had faced such negative response from the Department of Defense, the Veterans Affairs Department, and the Veterans of Foreign Wars?

To this point, it did not matter that through the years our presidents have issued proclamations on May 22, Maritime Day, extolling and praising the actions and deeds of the merchant marine in WWII. It did not seem to matter to those generals of the services, authors and historians who would outline how the merchant marine had braved the seas and the enemy and had supplied the military with what was needed to win the war. It did not matter that the merchant marine was intimately involved in every invasion. Each time the merchant marine veterans have sought recognition for these deeds, they have been rejected as not having served in a military way. The placement of their seal on the bases of the two flagpoles in the WWII Memorial, however, placed them on an equal level with other services, thereby recognizing their military service.



The design and construction of the two flagpoles were a part of a long and complicated process. It all began in the late 1980's when it was first discussed by congressional members that a memorial honoring all those who had served during WWII, military and civilian, was needed. Legislation was passed getting the process started that first

determined where such a memorial should be located, and then how it should come about. Many government and civilian groups were involved but primarily the whole project was directed by the National Parks Service, the American Battle Monuments Commission, and the Commission on Fine Arts.

The WWII Memorial project got serious in the late 1980's when there was a solicitation of designs as to what the memorial should

look like. Over 400 responses were received and from these, six were chosen for final review. The design selected for the memorial was submitted by Friedrich St. Florian, a world-renowned architect and head of Friedrich St. Florian Architects. While his design involved an overall concept for the Memorial, the countless details of the Memorial still needed to be designed and approved. For example, the size and shape of various elements, the types of granite to used, landscaping designs, water to be used and where, and the designs of wreaths, bas-reliefs, inscriptions, and finally, the two flagpoles needed to be approved. The discussion and approval of all these design elements was starting to consume so much time and delay that President Clinton became involved. He encouraged the groups to move faster, or all the veterans will have passed on before the Memorial was finished.

Mr. St. Florian began the tremendous task of designing and executing all the sculptor work by engaging Raymond Kaskey, a well-known American sculptor and architect. Mr. Kaskey, in turn, engaged three associate sculptors – Aaron Sykes, Perry Carlsley, and Joanna Blake. Their work on the Memorial took over seven years. All the bronze castings were done off site by a few firms. One man wrote all the inscriptions that were carved in granite in situ. The Memorial itself finally got under construction in 2001 and was dedicated on May 29, 2004.

My quest to find out how it was decided to place the merchant marine seal on the base of the flagpole started when I called the National Parks Service number listed on the WWII Memorial website. A very responsive person, when asked the question of the seal placement, responded that he did not know, but suggested that I contact Dr. Kay Fanning, historian for the Commission on Fine Arts. He

said the Commission would have all the records. I contacted Dr. Fanning, and she reviewed the minutes of the meetings of the National Park Service, the American Battle Monuments Commission (the “ABMC”), and the Commission on Fine Arts. She stated that the ABMC was the Memorial sponsor, and some information should be in the records of its meetings on the Memorial.

Dr. Fanning replied with some information on the flagpoles. In the minutes of the World War WWII Memorial, architectural elements and landscape meeting of the Commission on Fine Arts, July 7, 2000, submitted by the National Parks Service and the American Battle Monuments Commission, on page 9, was a statement by the late Senator Bob Dole who was cochairman of a committee raising public funding. Senator Dole ***“stressed the fact that the memorial honored everyone who had served, not just in the military services but on the home front as well”***.

Further, in the minutes of the World War II Memorial, sculptural elements meeting of the Commission on Fine Arts, March 21, 2002, submitted by the National Parks Service and the American Battle Monuments Commission, on page 2, sculptor Ray Kaskey, in his presentation of the flagpole bases stated, in part: ***“The bronze bases would have a unique design, as did those at Union Station and the Supreme Court building. In this case, the seals of the six services would be incorporated at eye level around the base, dictating a hexagonal shape that would be resolved back into a circle as the shaft went higher.... The flagpole and base design were unanimously approved.”***

What had seemed a mystery was now clear. The sculptors of the Memorial had made the decision to include the Merchant Marine seal on the flagpoles and their decision was approved unanimously by all the individuals working on the Memorial. I also contacted Mr. Perry Carsley, Carsley Art Studio LLC, one of the three associate sculptors. He reinforced Mr. Kaskey’s remarks. He replied that it was the concept of all those people who worked on the Memorial that it was to be inclusive of all the many service men and women and civilians who contributed to the war effort. He stated that when developing the flagpole base design, they wanted to pay tribute to all the branches of the military forces involved at this time in history by displaying each seal of each service. The Merchant Marine was included as it was the supply line that provided virtually everything the Allied armies needed to survive and fight on foreign battlefields – it should be recognized. He stated that they never thought twice about the need to include the seal of the Merchant Marine in the National World War 2 Memorial site.

Regardless of the difficulties the veterans of the WWII Merchant Marine have experienced both in Congress and in their efforts to receive recognition from the Department of Defense for their participation in the war, this is an example of American citizens, good and true, honoring history, ignoring political issues, and acknowledging the role of the Merchant Marine of WWI in the war effort by

placing the Merchant Marine of WWII on an equal level with the other services.

As the days dwindle down to a precious few, as do the number of merchant seamen who sailed the greatest fleet of ships the world has ever seen, these men say thank you to all the people and committees who worked on the WWII Memorial. There is a special thank you to the sculptors who recognized the service of the Merchant Marine and included the Merchant Marine seal on the flagpoles.

On December 7, 2021, a commemoration service was held at the WWII Memorial. This service was one of many held in the country on the 80th anniversary of Pearl Harbor Day. Music for the service was provided by the United States Navy Band. At the conclusion of the service, the band played all the service songs, and included the song of the United States Merchant Marine – *Heave Ho*. The Merchant Marine hymn has always been played by service bands at events at the Memorial, but the Merchant Marine flag has yet to be carried in any of the color guards at Memorial events.

Who loves you, baby? Perhaps more people than we ever knew.



Related to Mark Gleeson’s story about the Merchant Marine seal at the National WWII Monument in Washington, DC, AMMV recently received Facebook correspondence from Rick Chabot, who was a young mariner at the time of these efforts. Chabot recalled the support of Senator Bob Dole and the fundraising efforts of A.J. Wichita (long before A.J. became National President of AMMV). Chabot’s information was verified in an archived issue of the AMMV News (Winter 2002 Edition): *“Today the memorial fund that was started by Byron Hall and Art Costan that has been administrated by Doris Hall, has been presented to Senator Bob Dole, Chairman of the National WWII Memorial, at his Washington DC. office. The presentation was made by Doris Hall. Also participating were Vern and Sandy Hurst, A.J. Wichita with his wife Mary Lib, his daughter, Nisey, and Kings Point graduate, Rick Chabot.”* Pictured below is Chabot with Senator Dole.



The Cadet Midshipman — Helmsman 1945

Submitted by AMMV member Seth R. Schneible, Sr.

On November 27, 1945, at age 17 years old, I signed Articles as a cadet midshipman for my second foreign trip aboard the *S/S Exchequer*. My pay rate was \$87.50 per month. The ship was a C3 cargo ship. She was 492 feet overall and rated at 16.5 knots and owned by American Export Lines. The company took ownership of the first C3 in 1940 and named it the *Exporter*. Sometime during WWII, the *Exchequer* was converted to a troop carrier. There were three decks below the main deck. The two first lower decks were outfitted for the troops. The large lower hold was for overflow gear and materials. For the troops there was not much space between the bunks since they were usually four bunks in a tier. Included on each deck was a latrine that ran forward to aft. It always had running water to flush it. When the ship sent the bow down in a rough sea (called pitching), the last man sitting on the latrine had to be very nimble.

We had arrived in Boston, MA and signed off Articles (a contract between the individual and the company) on the 26th of November. We unloaded the Army Troops that we picked up in Marseille, France, and restocked the ship for the next trip. On the 27th we loaded the Army Replacements destined for Europe, finished restocking, signed on Articles, and took departure from Boston, MA in early evening for Le Havre, France.

Early on the morning after departure from Boston, I joined the 2nd Mate on the bridge deck for a navigation lesson. He would take star and planet sights just before sunrise, as he was the ship's navigator. Unfortunately, we were in some bad weather the morning after departure and the ship's bow was dipping into the sea making our passengers very uncomfortable. The Captain had issued orders in his logbook that when the weather was rough to take the ship out of automatic steering and have the helmsman use the ship's large wheel manually. As I entered the wheelhouse, my hand slipped on the handle, the door slammed shut and the helmsman called "Look out Mr. Mate, they are coming back". The helmsman took off down the ladder, and the Mate said to me, "Take the helm". He gave me the heading and then told me the story.

Apparently, the helmsman was delusional and very confused. He kept seeing his ex-wife, a policeman or two, a judge, and a bondsman. They had been following him

about the ship all night. Since we were over 50 miles at sea, his visitors were not on board. After 10-20 minutes the helmsman came back and said that his visitors were in hiding somewhere in the ship.

The 2nd called the Chief Mate, a man at age 22 (who already had his Masters' License) and the Mate took the helmsman aside. After a short discussion the Chief Mate said to the helmsman "Why don't we go down to the bar and have a drink"? The helmsman agreed that would be nice. We had three holding cells on the ship, one was padded inside. That is where the Chief Mate directed the helmsman and locked the cell door. I now was the helmsman on the 4-8 watch for the entire trip.

I had another assignment that carried over from the previous voyage. I had a trap line of 27 traps. Late in the spring of 1945, the ship ran from England to France delivering replacement troops on a regular basis. As the weather improved, the troops, in typical army fashion were issued, cold weather clothing and supplies of K-rations. By the spring, regular kitchens were set up in Europe and the winter weather and K-rations were deposited in the lower holds. Daily, I would don my boots, gloves, take a battle lantern, cheese and a burlap bag and visit my trap line. As we came back from a voyage, I would place the dead rats in the refrigerator for the health authorities to examine. If the rats passed the test, we were good to go on another trip.

When we arrived in Le Havre, we found that the seas had washed away the cement holding the entrance on the deck to the chain locker. Since we were tied alongside the dock, the anchor was secured in place. However, someone had not secured the watertight door to the paint locker. It took over six hours to lower a trash can into the paint locker and bring it on deck and dump the water.

There were some personnel problems at Camp Lucky Strike in Le Havre, and the Army needed some vehicles from a supply station near Paris. An officer asked me if I wanted to visit Paris. I remember the night vividly. Driving in Paris in a Jeep was spectacular. During the night someone drained the oil from our vehicle and the car seized up about halfway back to Le Havre.

We spent a night in a local village hotel waiting for a replacement vehicle. My breakfast included real milk.



Seth Schneible in uniform as a plebe

About two days underway from the States, the cooks began using powdered milk. Ugh!

We loaded our troops (they were seasoned veterans) many having served over two years in Europe and the majority being combat veterans. We took departure from Le Havre

on the 16th of December planning to arrive in Boston the day before Christmas. The first 24 hours were comfortable. The Army had issued back pay to all the troops before they embarked. Gambling became the main entertainment for our passengers. However, we ran into the North Atlantic weather on the second day and many were too sick to roll the dice. The ship rolled and pitched so that the gamblers had to put blankets on their deck to keep the dice from rolling continually. For those in card games, when the ship pitched into a trough, the cards would come off the deck and float until the bow hit the bottom of the trough. I took an



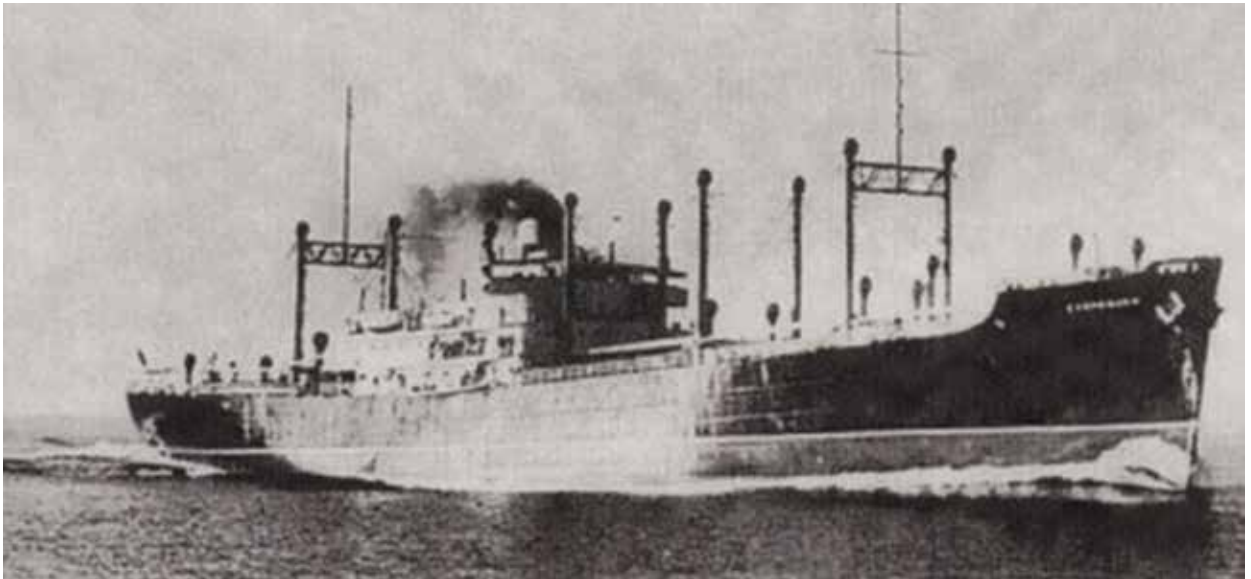
La Havre, France circa 1945

azimuth every day at noon-time when the weather cooperated. About five days out I calculated that even heading into the high seas we were seven miles behind the position I had 24 hours ago.

The waves were

crashing on our foredeck with so much power that they bent the gun tub supports.

On the sixth day we had our radioman tell the Captain that he could not communicate because there was a problem with the antenna. He believed his signals could range about 50 miles. He volunteered to try and see how he could fix it. I was also interested and carried his tools as we climbed aloft. We both had security lines. We climbed upward using the rungs on the mast but could not find anything wrong. It was a little unnerving up on the mast



C-3 cargo vessel S/S Exchequer

watching the ship roll. As it rolled to the port, the ship would be way out on my right and nothing would be below me but angry seas. Then the ship would roll to the starboard and the ship would be on my far left.

The waves were huge, at least 30 feet high, with some even higher. The storm was coming from the south, so I had to hold left wheel and point the bow into the waves. The stern came out of the sea when we plunged into a wave, and I had no control of the rudder. We also had a governor on the propulsion system that controlled the prop when it was out of the water to keep it from spinning wildly.

I believe it was about 7:30 when a rogue wave struck us on the port side. The ship healed over to the right, I almost lost my balance at the wheel, and we descended into the trough. There was a loud crash below as the Captain's bookcase came out of the bulkhead, sailed over his bunk and crashed. We looked at the clinometer afterwards, and it indicated that we had rolled 38-40° to starboard.

On the eighth day one of the cooks decided he would fry some bacon in the early morning even though we were still in the storm. It was a bad decision. The fire alarm went off and I went down to the galley. As I opened the watertight door, the burning grease came and ruined my trousers. In his haste to put out the fire, the assistant cook turned on the fire hose. A chemical extinguisher took care of the fire. The Captain ordered the radioman to send out a message that we had a fire onboard. Someone heard the message and the next day the newspapers ran a story about a fire aboard a troop ship that lost communication. Unfortunately, someone saw the article and called my parents.

On Christmas afternoon we arrived in Boston. About 18 hundred troops lined up by the telephone booths on shore. I went to the Western Union and sent a message to my parents that I was on dry land and not to worry. My sister received the message and went to the church where my parents were.



Full and Down, and Outward Bound

The story of the most versatile and remarkable breakbulk ships ever built under the American flag

In the summer of 1978, our ship was steaming north toward Kaohsiung, Taiwan, our Captain spotted a distress signal in the late afternoon. All hands were called on deck to rescue 87 Vietnamese refugees. Our crusty Chief Engineer tried to dissuade Captain Bob Shearer from rendering aid and to continue steaming to our next port. As the Chief Mate, I was advised to prepare to receive the men, women, and children. We slowed and stopped our engine as the boat came alongside. They boarded our vessel, SS *PRESIDENT POLK*, and were escorted to the stern of the ship. With no food and little water, we quickly helped them with food, water, and toilet facilities. Coincidentally each voyage our crew would purchase and donate clothing for the poor in Kaohsiung---we put the clean clothing to good use for our refugees.

Our company was immediately notified of the rescue. With a flurry of radio messages, we got underway and turned around for arrival in Singapore.

Arriving two days later, we anchored for 36 hours until the United Nations High Command for refugees found a country to receive our refugees. When they were adopted by another country, everyone was elated and soon our refugees were transferred to buses that were bound for the local airport for their host country.

Our Captain did the right thing and exemplified the very best in seafaring. Afterwards and before sailing, Captain Shearer, noticed one of our company's CARGOLINERS were in port. He often mentioned this amazing class of five breakbulk cargo ships that were built in 1968 and 1969 for American Mail Lines and later sold to APL. They were the largest, fastest, and most versatile cargo ships ever built in the U.S.A. Captain Bob sailed these ships as Chief Mate and later as master over ten years. He fascinated me with the amazing features of these 605-foot ships with seven cargo hatches with 20 booms (20-ton capacity), 4 booms (15-ton capacity) and a jumbo boom with a 100-ton capacity at hatches five and six.

She could carry nearly every cargo imaginable:

bagged cargo, bulk grain, containers, liquid cargo, containers, heavy lift cargo and even 12 passengers. They all were named after US PRESIDENTS: ADAMS, CLEVELAND, JACKSON, TAYLOR, and WILSON and all were built by Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company-- known for building the most complex naval vessels in the world, nuclear-powered aircraft carriers. The C-'s vessels were not only fast (20 knots at 24,000 shaft horsepower) but could carry underdeck more than one million cubic feet (bale)—over 400,000 cubic feet



more than any other breakbulk cargo vessel ever built.

The passenger service for these vessels were known as the Grab Bag Run because the destinations were often not determined until about 3 months before sailing and the passenger waiting list averaged nearly four years. The passenger service was priced based upon a voyage of 90 days and should the voyage be shorter, passengers would be reimbursed for the days less than the guaranteed 90 days; should the voyage exceed 90 days, (often a length of 120 days), passenger fare would be not greater than ninety days.

On the C-5's the Chief Mate was considered the most important position and responsible for the safe loading, carriage, and discharge of all the cargo, while maintaining safe stability and trim of the ship. He was responsible for the safety of the deck department, including lifesaving and firefighting apparatus, maintaining the cargo gear (booms, wire rope, and lifting bridles) and cargo oil tanks, in coordination with the deck department work force. Over carriage (forgetting to unload cargo at the



President Taylor

designated port) was another vital responsibility, as well as planning homebound cargo stowage. The 'Mate' was responsible for the cargo carriage outturn as well as the trim and stability of the vessel at all times including determining the sequence of burning out the ship's fuel oil tanks to maintain proper trim and stability.

The export cargo stow plan was the responsibility of the company's shoreside Cargo Planner. It was not uncommon for an ordinary Chief Mate to be promoted to Master when he was not up to the complexities and details of planning cargo stowage, trim and stability of the vessel, avoiding over-stowage, and damage to costly cargoes.

In my experience as Chief Mate (June of 1973 to September of 1979) on breakbulk vessels, container-ships, (non and self-sustaining) Roll-on Roll-off vessel, I realized how vital stability and trim calculations were. Several close calls with many inexperienced shore cargo planners reinforced my assessment that many of these planners lacked formal certification and training in the carriage of hazardous material carriage aboard ship, as well as lack of computerized stability and trim calculations. Typically, with breakbulk carriage, these calculations were infrequent and at best were a 6-9 hour calculation by an already over-worked Chief Mate.

In 1975 I joined the oldest container ship on the U.S. West Coast (vintage 1960), *SS HAWAIIAN CITIZEN*, as Chief Mate. I provided a 'Loading envelop' (much like a cargo stow plan for airfreight) to the longshore clerks in Portland, Oregon. They attempted to follow my requests but basically were confounded by stability calculations. When I showed the preplan to the ship's captain, he blew his stack and in so many words said, 'That's all-hog wash, leave the planners alone.'

Knowing in just days we would call at our final load port, Seattle, I urged the skipper to rethink his comments but to no avail. By the time we docked at our final loading port, we quickly loaded more containers on deck—making our stability much worse than before. When we finished loading, we made fast the forward and after tug lines, singled up our mooring lines (starboard side-to). We had a slight starboard list and after casting off all the mooring lines, both tugs took a strain and began pulling us off the dock. Suddenly the ship flopped from a 2 degree starboard list to a 2 degree port list. The captain and pilot's faces turned pale as they realized that the ship was 'top heavy' (negative

vertical stability) and could roll-over in any slight seaway. Fortunately, the seas were calm during our five-day transit to Honolulu but I was disgusted by his ignorance and incompetence.

In late 1975, Captain Ken Orcutt (later recipient of the *LaLonde Spirit of the Sea Award*) asked me to be his Chief Mate on the container ship, *SS TRANSO-NEIDA* which plied between Oakland and Guam (a round trip of 10,000 miles). She typically only carried loaded westbound containers to Guam and empties eastbound. Matson had just implemented a new feeder vessel service (canned pineapples) from Dole's factory in the Philippines to Guam via a sistership, *SS TRAN-SONTARIO* in late 1975. The shore cargo planners of Matson's Guam had never planned an eastbound cargo (other than empty containers) and the previous voyage was manned by the alternate Master and Chief Mate who solely relied on the Guam planners to load the *TRAN-SONEIDA* to full capacity. After she docked in Guam, the containers were unloaded and the eastbound canned pineapple vans were loaded for Oakland. The mate and master apparently trusted the shore load-out stowage plan--a complete disaster! She was grossly over-loaded (with the vessel six feet down by the bow) and most of the container stack weights exceeded legal maximums. Under way, the ship informed the Matson headquarters of the terrible stowage plan, Matson naval architects and Marine Superintendent, ordered the ship to immediately divert to Honolulu for inspection of the cargo holds and unloading. When she arrived 12 feet by the head (bow) and later unloaded, temporary repairs were made over seven days and she sailed for Oakland, CA. Captain Or-

cutt was directed to relieve the ship's master upon arrival in Oakland, five days later. The Chief Mate was fired, and I immediately relieved him. We sailed two days later for Guam with explicit orders: No repeat performance of the stability disaster departing Guam ever again.

Captain Orcutt had already distinguished himself on the West Coast by developing navigation software with his HP-65 programmable calculator and was even offered a position by Hewlett-Packard to rewrite their navigation software. He turned down the impressive offer. When I joined the *TRANSONEIDA* our marching orders were very clear---plan the eastbound loading perfectly next call Guam. Up to this time, I had written some stability and trim ship software on my HP-65 calculator with some programming tips from Ken Orcutt. Three days after sailing, I demonstrated the program to the Captain — he was thrilled. Now we had two tiny computers ready for the eastbound Guam loading. Three days out from arrival Guam, their planners provided the weights, container ID's, and container types (20-foot, 27-foot, and 40-foot). Using the computer program, we computed the eastbound load out stability and trim. We then telexed the preplan back to Matson Guam and upon arrival they used our computerized pre-plan successfully! The errors of the previous Guam stowage planning were never repeated.

One important tip that Captain Orcutt repeatedly emphasized was the importance of mariners writing software for mariners. After writing several navigational programs, he would solicit feedback by asking the deck officers to test his programs for ease of use. With their feedback, Orcutt would disappear to his stateroom for many hours and improve his software for ease of use by the deck officers. Within five years, this logical feedback was quickly forgotten by shoreside managers who contracted naval architects and shoreside planners to write software; friendly for techies and not necessarily for deck and engine officers. Intuitive software disappeared after maritime software writers retired or became extinct.

When I left Matson four months later, I was hired by American President Lines and assigned to a self-sustaining containership (*PRESIDENT LINCOLN*)

on a six-month shuttle run in Asia. While arriving in Subic Bay, Philippines at 12 knots our captain, Ed Blum, was surprised how tender the ship was turning into the channel. He directed me to investigate the problem. After studying some of the ship's blueprints, I found that the four cargo void tank spaces were clearly marked by the U.S. Coast Guard to be filled with fresh water at all times. After adding back 200 tons of freshwater weight on paper, the computed fore and aft drafts exactly matched the ship's light ship drafts. Our Chief Engineer, George Hebert, was shown the blueprints and the USCG requirement. He said, 'These tanks have always been empty and besides, we have electrical wires and foam insulation throughout those spaces.' When Captain Blum was informed, he concurred with my findings and the Chief reluctantly agreed. Prior to arriving at our next port of Keelung, we ordered a barge of 200 tons of fresh water in and then checked the bow and stern drafts---we perfectly matched the light ship condition and eliminated the previous stability tenderness.

After the six months deployment was completed, I took a long vacation and purchased a RadioShack TRS-80 mini-computer in May of 1977. Once I was assigned to the *SS PRESIDENT POLK*, I began learning to write

programs, including the first trim and stability program for a container vessel in the USA. Captain Ken continued with Matson, writing prolific maritime software on HP-67 and HP-87 programable computers.

Captain Bob Shearer (of the *SS PRESIDENT POLK*) in September of 1978 convinced me to transfer to one of the C-5 breakbulk CARGOLINERS. Marine Superintendent, Captain Carl Larkin was surprised at my request to be assigned as Chief Mate in this fleet but soon realized

how valuable these ships were for training younger container-ship chief mates and masters in the art operating these complex and challenging ships. He then began reassigning nearly all the senior deck officers to the C-5's CARGOLINERS. By the early 1980's when these



TRS-80 Model 1



President Polk

remarkable ships began laying-up, replaced by large container vessels, their breakbulk experience proved invaluable.

My first assignment aboard the *SS PRESIDENT WILSON* was challenging and fascinating. Our captain was Norman Johnson, a very skilled and supportive master in his mid-60's who loved his ship and profession. With 12 passengers, we were fully-loaded with bulk grain from the west coast and with heated tallow oil in deep tanks #5 and #6 (port and starboard tanks). We headed to the Philippine ports of Manila, Iligan and Batangas where we discharged our cargo. We then proceeded to Ulsan, South Korea where we spent ten days loading 50 kg bags

of urea (chemical) fertilizer for discharge in Bangladesh. The remarkable Korean longshoreman carried on their shoulders, 2 sacks (220-lbs) and several of them carried 3 sacks (330-lbs) into the cargo holds. Full and Down: This load out was only the second time in my sea-going career that we were 'Full & Down'; meaning that with the cargo stowed underdeck, we were completely full in our cargo spaces, and 'Down' to our legal load line marks based upon the allowable freeboard according worldwide load line zones (time of the year and physical location of vessel).

We reached Chittagong harbor (Bangladesh) by early January 1979 when I received a telex—a family emergency and I flew home immediately.

By early June, 1979, I was temporarily assigned as Chief Mate aboard the Pacesetter Class containership, *SS PRESIDENT JOHNSON* where I was assigned for 60 days. Our marine superintendent told me that he wished that he had 25 more shipmasters clones of this ship captain. After a very difficult divorce, I was spoiled by sailing with very competent shipmasters. After sailing Seattle for Kobe, Japan, we encountered heavy sea and swells for the first five the days at sea. After one of the 3rd Mates fell sick from the flu, I stood his midnight to 0400 hours sea watch. The Captain's Night Order book insisted that we maintain course and speed through the night. On that night with 35-foot seas, we consistently rolled deeply, including several 43-48 degree rolls. I called the Cap-

tain and told him of our dangerously deep rolls and he instructed me to not alter course since we had to reach Kobe, Japan on schedule and discharge our cargo before going into drydock in the same port and same day. It was miraculous that we didn't roll over and sink that night.

After breakfast the sailors and I had to reinstall the container on deck lashings in a heavy seaway and not once did the Captain slow down. When we reached

Kobe on the 10th morning, the deck containers were offloaded and then when the hatch covers were landed ashore, all the underdeck containers at Row 8 (just forward of the house) had electric wire reels bulge out of the 40-foot container side panels all the



way across the container stack. The longshoremen had to cut open the aluminum tops like a sardine can and then employ portable cranes to offload each wire reel one by one. Allowing the ship to continuously roll deeply without course change directly caused all this damage and delay. In port, I checked with the captain and the shipyard requested partial discharge of the containers until the aft draft was 27 feet and the forward draft not to exceed between 24 or 25 feet. The Captain told me this calculation was impossible; I told him it was feasible and returned to find a special ship stability trimming formula in ten minutes. He had a stunned look on his face. We soon safely reached the drydock and, in a few days, loaded homebound cargo for Seattle.

On August 1st, 1979 I joined the *SS PRESIDENT WILSON* as we loaded tallow in Tacoma and later proceeded to Mazatlán, Mexico to load 10,00 bales of Mexican cotton for the People's Republic of China. Van Smith, manager of APL's C-5 breakbulk cargo handling of the West Coast oversaw the loading and was fascinated to see the C-5 cargo stowage and stability program that I had developed. He was especially keen on the upcoming bulk grain stowage and vessel stability that our ship needed for the grain stowage at the next port in Portland, Oregon for South Korea and then China. On September 23, 1979, we were the second vessel to call China (Lykes Bros vessel called Canton port a few weeks earlier). Our call to Hsinking was notable: the very first discharge and

loading containerized cargo in any Chinese port. Some of the ship's officers and the 12 passengers were able to overnight and visit Beijing during the port stay.

Upon return to Seattle on October 29, 1979, I decided to take a shore job for American President Lines in Oakland, California as the C-5 shoreside cargo planner. My first assignment was to oversee the SS *PRESIDENT CLEVELAND* which had just sailed from San Pedro after loading 55-gallon steel drums of soybean salad oil. As I met the ship in Tacoma, the Chief Mate and Master asked that I look at the cargo holds in hatch #4. Cargo in several of the holds had liquified; apparently the ship deeply rolled from Los Angeles to Tacoma and smashed into cargo drums, beams, and burst and every drum resembled chewing gum attached to the vessel's cargo beams. Main cause was the lack of dunnage on the steel decks and between the steel drums. The ship was out of service for several weeks.

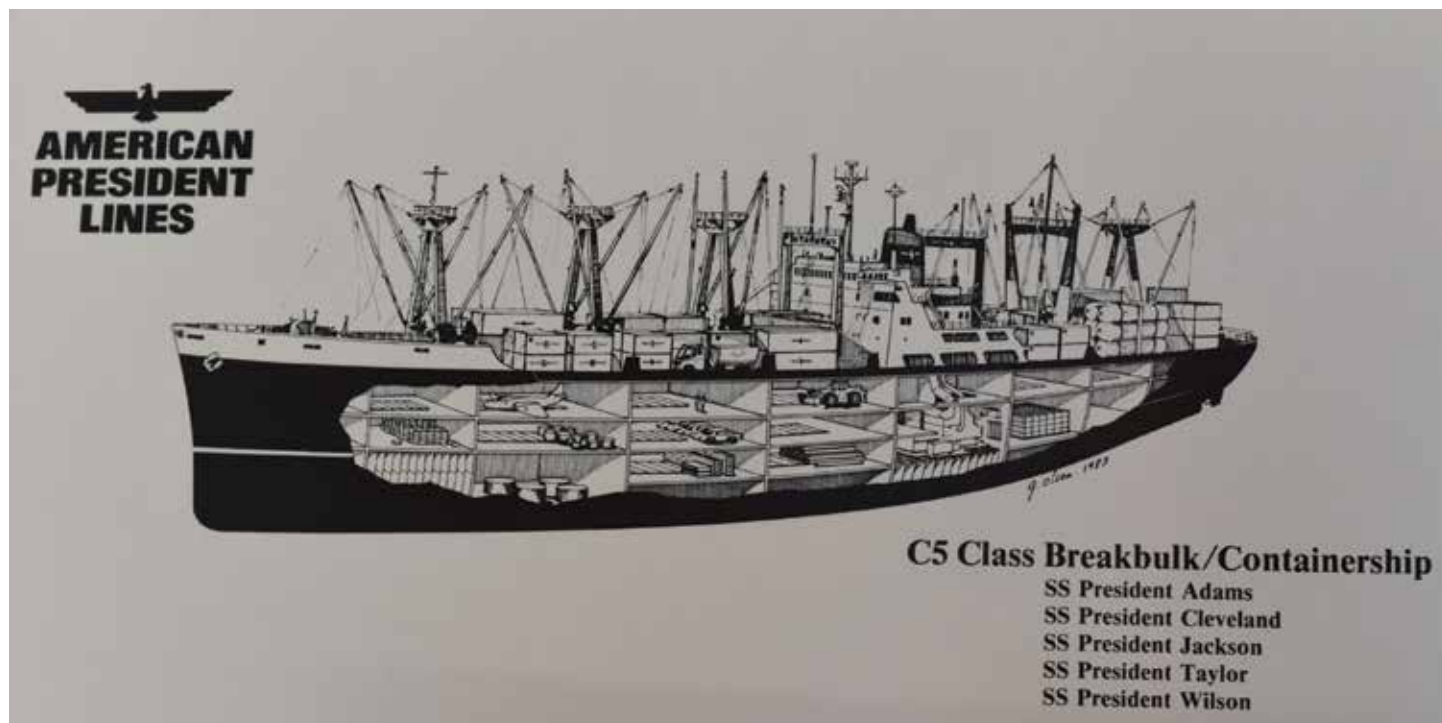
I was charged with also managing the bunkering (fuel) worldwide for the C-5 fleet. In one instance, the Captain of the *President Jackson*, while in Canton, China, had to pump back 6,500 barrels of heavy fuel oil because the ship was loaded too deeply. I was baffled and assumed that each of the five ships when nearly empty had a combined value for crew, stores, & dunnage of 250 long tons. After extensive lightship calculations for this fleet, two ships were found 100 long tons heavier, i.e. 350 long tons and the center of gravity for the extra weight was near the aft end of cargo hold #5 below the waterline. When I casually mentioned this to port engineer,

Dick Bowser (a walking encyclopedia of the C-5 vessels), he replied, 'Oh yeah, when the first two ships were built, they (*PRESIDENT ADAMS* and *PRESIDENT JACKSON*) had a section of the hull plating that was thicker below the waterline in the aft section of cargo hold 5 below the water line than the last three ships built. The shipyard had some thicker steel plating available at no extra cost to the owner, hence the extra weight amounted to 100 long tons for the those first two vessels. Mystery solved.

In April of 1980, my second wife, Martha, urged me to upgrade the C-5 trim and Stability program and rewrite it for the Hewlett-Packard HP-85. At our family cabin near Lake Tahoe, CA. I spent ten hours a day rewriting and upgrading the software for the C-5 Cargoliner trim and stability program. It included a high speed data storage tape reader and writer (for stability data storage), a built-in thermal paper printer, and an external Epson dot matrix printer. After I demonstrated the upgraded hardware and software, APL purchased six systems (one for each C-5 vessel) and one for our shoreside cargo office and I was paid \$3,000 for my program.

In 1991, I was assigned to the SS *CAPE GIRARDEAU* (the former C5 SS *PRESIDENT ADAMS*) as Master during OPERATION DESERT SORTIE. This was of great satisfaction to me professionally: serving as Chief Mate, then cargo planner, and finally Master aboard the remarkable C5 CARGOLINERS.

*Tom Stapleton- Master Mariner Unlimited,
First Class Pilot: LA-Long Beach, Honolulu Harbor,
Captain USNR retired, Colonel USAR retired*



REMEMBERING CHARLES A. LLOYD (C.A.L.)



It is with great sadness that AMMV reports the passing of Charles A. Lloyd, WWII USN Armed Guard. Mr. Lloyd has contributed significantly to the cause of his fellow Armed Guardsmen. He not only founded the USN Armed Guard Veterans Association, but also is respon-

sible for creating the organization's magazine, *The Pointer*.

C.A.L. was born April 1, 1926, in Wake County, 18 miles east of Raleigh, North Carolina. He enlisted in the Navy on September 15, 1944, and was sent to Bainbridge, Maryland for bootcamp. After a 12-day leave, he volunteered for the USN Armed Guard Unit upon the advice of his brother, Whitson, who served as an Armed Guardsman from January of 1942 until May 5, 1945, when he was killed in the torpedoing and sinking of the *S/S Black Point* three miles off Port Judith, Rhode Island.

Charles attended Camp Shelton, Virginia Gunnery School and was sent to the Brooklyn, New York Armed Guard Center. He sailed aboard the *S/S Miaoulis* to England in a convoy with a cargo of food provisions, and over to Antwerp, Belgium in time for VE-Day. He returned to the states in June to learn of his brother Whitson's death, and after a 12-day emergency leave, he was

sent to Baltimore, Maryland, and joined the crew of the *USAT J.W. McAndrew*. The ship soon sailed to Newport News, Virginia, to pick up provisions and 2,800 troops waiting in Naples, Italy, for the Japan invasion. Thanks to President Truman's orders, the atomic bombs were dropped, saving millions of American and Allied lives. The *McAndrew* was loaded with troops and ready to sail when the news arrived. Orders for the troops on board were changed, and they returned to Newport News. Lloyd stayed aboard, and helped bring back two more loads of troops before being removed and assigned to the *S/S Phillip Barbour* until the guns were removed from that ship.

According to Lloyd, his greatest achievements in life were to serve his country in time of need, marry a wonderful person, and rear two wonderful daughters who gave life to three grandsons. He also said it was an honor to serve the City of Raleigh and its people for 23 years and to serve the USN Armed Guard WWII Veterans Association as chairman in an endless task of locating other shipmates. He recorded names and



C.A.L. (circa 1944)

ships into a computer in order to "match-up" shipmates, put together *The Pointer* and mailed out information to over 6,900 of the original 144,970 who served in the Armed Guard.

C.A.L. passed away peacefully at home surrounded by his loving family on November 24th, at age 95.

Archived issues of *The Pointer* are available on the official Armed Guard website:

www.armed-guard.com





JUST RECOGNITION

WWII MM compensation legislation “Out”; authorization to purchase medals “In”

In the AMMV fall News edition, we reported that both the WWII Merchant Mariner compensation legislation (provisions of Rep. Al Green’s H.R. 39) and the authorization for MARAD to purchase duplicate Congressional Gold Medals (provisions of Rep. John Garamendi’s H.R. 104) both passed the House as part of H.R. 4350 (National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2022). Unfortunately, the U.S. Senate did not collectively see fit to approve this version of the NDAA.

Instead, a different version of the NDAA (S. 1605) which had passed the Senate earlier on June 9th, passed the House on December 7th and was signed into law by President Biden on December 27th. This version did not contain the amendment language for the WWII Merchant Mariner compensation legislation. It did, however, contain the language to authorize MARAD to purchase duplicate Congressional Gold Medals for eligible persons.

SEC. 3518. AUTHORIZATION TO PURCHASE DUPLICATE MEDALS.

(a) IN GENERAL. — The Secretary of Transportation, acting through the Administrator of the Maritime Administration, may use funds appropriated for the fiscal year in which the date of the enactment of this Act occurs, or funds appropriated for any prior fiscal year, for the Maritime Administration to purchase duplicate medals authorized under the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020 (Public Law 116– 125) and provide such medals to eligible individuals who engaged in qualified service who submit an application under subsection (b) and were United States merchant mariners of World War II.

(b) APPLICATION. — To be eligible to

receive a medal described in subsection (a), an eligible individual who engaged in qualified service shall submit to the Administrator an application containing such information and assurances as the Administrator may require.

(c) ELIGIBLE INDIVIDUAL WHO ENGAGED IN QUALIFIED SERVICE. — In this section, the term “eligible individual who engaged in qualified service” means an individual who, between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946—

(1) was a member of the United States merchant marine, including the Army Transport Service and the Navy Transport Service, serving as a crewmember of a vessel that was— S. 1605–705

(A) operated by the War Shipping Administration, the Office of Defense Transportation, or an agent of such departments;

(B) operated in waters other than inland waters, the Great Lakes, and other lakes, bays, or harbors of the United States;

(C) under contract or charter to, or property of, the Government of the United States; and

(D) serving in the Armed Forces; and

(2) while so serving, was licensed or otherwise documented for service as a crewmember of such a vessel by an officer or employee of the United States authorized to license or document the person for such service.



Rep. Al Green shows staunch support for WWII Merchant Marine Veterans

Rep. Al Green of Texas was responsible for the amendment in the House version of the NDAA which passed in September (H.R. 4350). Specifically, Green's amendment contained the provisions of what is better known as the WWII Merchant Mariner "compensation" legislation, which if enacted would provide a lump sum of \$25,000 to eligible WWII MM veterans. When it became apparent that a different version of the NDAA would be passed into law on December 7th, Rep. Green did his best to try and see these provisions approved once again. Although his amendment failed, he expressed his disappointment in a letter to his colleagues (printed below).



of appropriations provided in advance by the annual appropriations bill and no other funding source. This simple amendment was the last chance we had to compensate many of our remaining Mariners, all of whom are more than 90 years old, and show them long overdue gratitude for their valiant service to our nation. For removing compensation for the Merchant Mariners and some other amendments that were also rejected from the NDAA, I will not be supporting this bill. I cannot vote for a bill that perpetuates more than 40 years of ongoing injustice against Merchant Mariners.

AL GREEN
9TH DISTRICT, TEXAS
**COMMITTEE ON
FINANCIAL SERVICES**
CHAIRMAN
SUBCOMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND INVESTIGATION
**COMMITTEE ON
HOMELAND SECURITY**

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<http://algreen.house.gov>

Sincerely,

Al Green
Member of Congress

December 7, 2021

Dear Colleagues,

After much deliberation, I have decided not to support the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) this year. While the FY2022 NDAA makes many historic policy changes, it fails to include the simplest no additional cost (discretionary funded) associated amendment that will provide justice to those unfairly treated in the past – our unsung heroes, the World War II Merchant Mariners.

During World War II, our armed forces relied heavily on the Merchant Mariners to ferry supplies, cargo, and personnel between nations. They had no military standing or government benefits, but they possessed unwavering courage and gave their lives for their country valiantly. Even though the Mariners suffered a higher per capita casualty rate than any other branch of the U.S. Armed Forces during World War II, they have yet to be justly compensated for their heroic service. An estimated 8,300 Mariners lost their lives and an additional 12,000 were wounded while providing assistance to our U.S. troops. But their sacrifice has been overlooked for decades. When the war ended, Merchant Mariners were not welcomed back like other veterans, nor were they treated like other veterans. They had no education benefits, no housing benefits, no unemployment benefits, no veterans' benefits, and no recognition. The government failed to even recognize Merchant Mariners as veterans until 1988 and "...it was only under pressure from U.S. District Judge Louis F. Oberdorfer—who ruled that the Air Force had acted "arbitrarily and capriciously" in denying veterans' status for the merchant mariners."¹ By then, the Mariners were unable to take advantage of their lost benefits.

The House and Senate NDAA negotiations rejected a House passed amendment that would justly compensate the fast dwindling remaining Merchant Mariners who are still with us for missed benefits from almost 80 years ago by distributing a **one-time payment of \$25,000**. This *discretionary funding* would be subject to the availability

¹ <https://www.latimes.com/archives/la-xpm-1988-01-30-mn-10163-story.html>



JUST RECOGNITION

Update on efforts to honor USMM WWII Veterans during the National Memorial Day Concerts

December 9, 2021

On behalf of the AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee, I am providing an update on efforts to obtain agreement from the Public Broadcasting System (PBS) and Capital Concerts, Inc. (CCI) to include a presentation of the USMM flag and singing of *Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!* during the National Memorial Day Concerts (the Concerts). There has been a bit of a setback, but senior AMMV leaders and the Government Affairs Committee are seeking other alternatives to work collaboratively and respectfully with PBS and CCI.

After the Fall 2021 edition of the AMMV News Magazine, I received support from several AMMV members, including a report that one member from Utah obtained permission to fly the USMM flag during his town's Fourth of July celebration. I also received support and advice from AMMV members living in New York and Texas, and a longtime national advocate for USMM activities who lives in Virginia. Their support and examples of what can be done on a local level are vital actions that inform our discussions about recognizing USMM WWII veterans. If any other AMMV members have positive examples about flying the USMM flag or singing the theme song in their local area, please send me an email at coolenvconsulting@gmail.com and let me know about your successes.

AMMV National President, Capt. Dru DiMattia, sent a letter to Rep. Jimmy Panetta's office at the U.S. Capitol on October 8, 2021, requesting his personal involvement to convince PBS and CCI to include the USMM in the Concerts. Nearly six months have passed since Rep. Panetta's staff had an initial discussion with PBS and CCI in May 2021. That discussion laid the groundwork for an agreement, but Rep. Panetta's staff involved with the discussions moved on to other jobs and were not able to follow through on their initial actions. Recently, PBS made a negative decision about honoring USMM WWII veterans during the Concerts. In a December 3, 2021 letter, Rep. Panetta said PBS declined to honor USMM veterans in the Concerts because, "Their reasoning for this decision was that the USMM was not an official branch of the military." Copies of both letters have been printed for your review in this

edition of the AMMV News Magazine.

I told Rep. Panetta's staff that the results of their negotiations with PBS were disappointing. PBS's decision appears to be based on outdated, narrow, and exclusionary views regarding the official status of USMM WWII veterans. I reminded Rep. Panetta's staff that USMM WWII veterans are recognized by the U.S. Government in Federal laws. In fact, the Federal law awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to USMM WWII veterans states, "The feats and accomplishments of the Merchant Marine are deserving of broader public recognition" (Public Law 116-125, Section 2, Paragraph 12; March 13, 2020).

In preparation for a new round of discussions, I have reviewed mission statements, goals, objectives, and co-production guidelines published by PBS. These documents clearly show that PBS's decision to exclude the USMM WWII veterans from the Concerts does not comply with their stated policies and commitments to the viewing public. Historical accuracy, the evolution of the Memorial Day celebrations that began in 1868, the Federal Government's acknowledgement of USMM WWII veterans, and the policies of PBS, form the basis of AMMV's continued outreach efforts.

I contacted staff at Rep. John Garamendi's Washington, DC office on December 6, 2021, to ask for their assistance in approaching PBS to reconsider its negative decision. I provided extensive background information for their review. To document the views of two Federal agencies, I included: (a) a July 24, 2020 letter from the DOD Joint Chiefs' Office of Public Affairs supporting recognition of all veterans, and (b) a series of September 2020 emails from the DOT Maritime Administration assuring me that they wanted to correct the error of omitting the USMM flag and theme song from the Concerts. Rep. Panetta's staff has additional corroborating email information from DOD and DOT, but they declined to share the statements with AMMV. Hopefully, Rep. Garamendi's staff can obtain the additional information from their colleagues in Rep. Panetta's office.

As of the drafting of this update report, I am waiting to hear from Rep. Garamendi's staff. In the meantime, I



JUST RECOGNITION

have reached out to the Executive Director of Friends of the National WWII Memorial and a Senior Vice President for Government Affairs at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting for additional recommendations. I let Rep. Garamendi's staff and these senior level contacts know that there is urgency in this coordination process because we do not want to miss an opportunity for the USMM to be included in the 2022 Concert. I know I can count on support and ideas from AMMV members too.

Never Take "No" for an Answer!

dit-dah dit-dit-dit (Standby)

Patrick Cotter

Member-at-Large

AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee

coolenvconsulting@gmail.com



American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc

Serving America in Peace and War

08, October 2021

Honorable Jimmy Panetta
406 Cannon House Office Building
Washington, DC 20515

SUBJECT: Honoring U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans during National Memorial Day Concerts

Dear Rep. Panetta:

I am seeking your support for the presentation of the U.S. Merchant Marine (USMM) flag and theme song during National Memorial Day Concerts. As you know, these outstanding concerts are televised annually by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and are produced by Capital Concerts Inc. (CCI). Unfortunately, the USMM flag and theme song have not been included in the portion of the concert when the Joint Chiefs salute to the colors of our nation's armed forces.

Your reputation as a champion for our nation's veterans and your leadership in Congress are crucial in working with Federal agencies and the producers of the concerts to obtain agreement from all parties to include recognition of the USMM in the show. Patrick Cotter, a member of our organization, has been pursuing this recognition with your staff and Federal agencies since May 2020. He has received positive support from the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Maritime Administration (MARAD), and the Department of Defense's (DOD) Joint Staff Public Affairs Office.

Through Mr. Cotter's cooperative work with Matts Wilcoxon, a former member of your staff, a "formal written approval" was obtained from DOD on May 27, 2021 (see enclosed email). That same day, Mr. Wilcoxon had a positive conference call with "the show's producer and PBS's head of corporate communications." Presentation of the USMM flag and theme song were not possible for 2021, but there is time to finalize the agreement for 2022 and future years.

During the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) 2020/2021 National Convention, held in Linthicum Heights, MD from September 21-24, 2021, our members adopted a "Resolution to Honor United States Merchant Marine Veterans during National Memorial Day Concerts and Other Veterans' Events" (see enclosed copy of AMMV's resolution). As the National President for AMMV, I am certain that Resolution Statement No. 1, which pertains to recognition of USMM veterans during the National Memorial Day Concert, and the other three statements can be achieved with your support.

P.O. BOX 2024 • DARIEN, CT 06820-2024
(475) 470-9200 • ammervets@gmail.com

cont'd.

Pre-production planning for the 2022 National Memorial Day Concert is likely underway now at PBS and CCI. In order to confirm that appropriate honors for USMM veterans will be included in the concerts, I ask that you send a letter to senior executives of PBS and CCI requesting their agreement. I request that you enclose copies of the formal DOD and DOT/MARAD approvals, mentioned in Mr. Wilcoxon's email, with your letter. I recommend that you should request a formal reply from PBS and CCI executives verifying that USMM veterans will be honored during the concerts. I would appreciate receiving copies and enclosures for your outgoing letter and copies of incoming confirmation letters from PBS and CCI for AMMV records.

The American Merchant Marine Veterans appreciate the honor bestowed by the 2020 Congressional Gold Medal that recognizes the valor and sacrifice of our nation's World War II merchant mariners. We consider you one of our nation's champions of veterans' issues. I look forward to "...getting this across the finish line..." If you have any questions on my request for your personal leadership to secure recognition of USMM veterans during the National Memorial Day Concerts, please let me know.

Sincerely,

Captain Dru DiMattia
President American Merchant Marine Veterans
(239) 243-3409
druidimattia@gmail.com
www.ammv.us

Enclosures (2)
cc with enclosures:

Honorable John Garamendi
Gen. Mark Milley, Chairman, DOD Joint Chiefs of Staff
Lucinda Lessley, Acting Administrator, DOT Maritime Administration
Robin Nixon, Chief of Partnerships, NPS National Mall and Memorial Parks

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As per Mr. Cotter's request for copies of the formal DOD and DOT/MARAD approval, there are only internal emails and no official documents. Unfortunately, it is our policy not to publicly share private correspondence with federal agencies and departments.

Thank you for your engagement with my office and service on behalf of your country.

Sincerely,

Jimmy Panetta
Member of Congress

JIMMY PANETTA
20th District, California

CHIEF DEPUTY WRITER

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WAYS AND MEANS

COMMITTEE ON
AGRICULTURE

COMMITTEE ON
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December 3, 2021

Captain Anthony Dru DiMattia
President, American Merchant Marine Veterans
P.O. Box 2024
Darien, CT 06820-2024

Dear Captain Anthony Dru DiMattia:

Thank you for your letter regarding the inclusion of the U.S. Merchant Marine (USMM) flag and song at the National Memorial Day Concert. As you know, the National Memorial Day Concert is televised by the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) and produced by Capital Concerts, Inc. (CCI).

My staff worked diligently with and on behalf of Mr. Patrick Cotter after he requested that the USMM flag and song be included in the National Memorial Day Concert. My staff obtained permission from the Department of Transportation's (DOT) Maritime Administration (MARAD) and the Department of Defense's (DOD) Joint Staff Public Affairs Office to include the USMM flag and song in the concert. My office then engaged with CCI and PBS on May 27, 2021. They informed my office that it was too late in the planning process to include the USMM flag and song in this 2021's National Memorial Day Concert because it was pre-recorded, but they agreed to reconsider the proposal for planning for 2022. While my staff expressed optimism, there was never a formal agreement.

My staff continued to engage and spoke with PBS this past month. Unfortunately, PBS informed my staff that they would not include the USMM flag and song in this upcoming or any future National Memorial Day Concerts. Their reasoning for this decision was that the USMM is not an official branch of the military. While we can continue to advocate for its inclusion, we cannot control PBS and Capital Concerts' editorial decisions. The DOT/MARAD and DOD also do not have the ability to control the editorial decisions of PBS and Capital Concerts; they can only make recommendations.

PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

Following is the text of a letter from AMMV National President Captain Dru DiMattia to Bruce M. Ramer, Chairman of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting.

Dear Mr. Ramer:

Happy New Year as we all navigate these uncharted waters!

I am the President of the American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV). I am also a retired Master Mariner with 30 years sea service. I represent a veteran's organization of men and women who served in the U.S. Merchant Marine (USMM) during World War II (WWII), all of whom have been legally recognized by the U.S. Government as veterans.

These courageous veterans who sailed on merchant ships and braved enemy attacks during WWII received their discharge papers from the U.S. Coast Guard. Our organization also has many family members of living and deceased USMM veterans and members of public organizations. Unfortunately, there appears to be "confusion" at the Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) regarding the status of USMM WWII veterans. Consequently, I am reaching out to you and members of the Corporation for Public Broadcasting's (CPB) Board of Directors to address this inappropriate conclusion during discussions at your upcoming meeting scheduled for February 15, 2022.

One of the primary goals of our organization is to promote and educate people and government officials about the services provided by the American Merchant Mariners to our nation since its founding in 1775. What truly is remarkable was the winning combination of our fighting forces overseas, the manufacturing army here at home (Rosie the Riveter), and the link between them: our U.S. Merchant Marine of WWII. We have also developed programs to make it known that these mariners who helped win WWII are now officially classified as veterans of the United States.

We recently received a letter, dated December 3, 2021, from Congressman Jimmy Panetta (D-Carmel Valley) wherein he states that during a conversation between a member of Congressman Panetta's staff and an individual with PBS, the PBS individual stated that PBS "would not include the USMM flag and song in this upcoming or any future National Memorial Day Concerts" because, per this individual, "the USMM is not an official branch of the military." This narrow and outdated decision is not based on facts and does not comply with the broadcasting standards and guidelines of the CPB and PBS. Though AMMV respects the First Amendment rights of the press, we are concerned that inaccuracy and exclusion of USMM WWII veterans is not justified.

As of 1988, Congress determined that World War II Merchant Mariners are legally classified as U.S. veterans. The Congressional Gold Medal was awarded to these deserving veterans in March 2020 under Public Law 116-125. In addition, the National World War II Memorial in Washington, DC includes the seal of the U.S. Merchant Marine on the two flagpoles along with the other five U.S. military services. This was the result of the unanimous agreement by the National Parks Service, the American Battle Monuments Commission, and the U.S. Commission on Fine Arts, that the U.S. Merchant Marine was a vital military service deserving of an honorable degree of recognition. In an appropriate tribute to the contributions of the Merchant Marine during WWII, the Navy band played the Merchant Marine song

at the recent National WWII Memorial's 80th Pearl Harbor Anniversary remembrance ceremony.

CPB and PBS have a responsibility to our Nation to broadcast national events on the grounds of the U.S. Capitol that meet the mission, goals, objectives, and co-production guidelines published by both organizations. Excluding the USMM flag and song from a national celebration to honor all U.S. veterans does not comply with either organization's broadcasting standards. An inclusive presentation of the USMM flag and song during National Memorial Day Concerts and other such tributes to U.S. veterans is completely justified based on historical accuracy, legal status, and honor bestowed on all U.S. veterans for their valor and sacrifice during times of war and peace. AMMV has supporting documents for recognition of USMM WWII veterans during the National Memorial Day Concerts from Public Affairs officials at the DOD Joint Chiefs and the DOT Maritime Administration. It is clear that celebrations of Memorial Day have evolved significantly since it was first celebrated in 1868. CPB and PBS should also update their policies.

We would appreciate CPB's Board of Directors resolving the above-referenced affront by PBS to the men who died in WWII, and to the service all USMM WWII veterans contributed to our nation and our Allies victory in WWII. Of significant interest, honoring AMMV's request is a "no cost" change to the PBS program – a win-win solution for all parties. I would also appreciate your letting me know when this matter has been resolved so the USMM flag and song can be featured during the 2022 National Memorial Day Concert and all future national events televised by PBS honoring U.S. veterans.

If you have any questions about my request on behalf of AMMV, or you need additional information on the status of USMM WWII veterans, please contact me.

Please consider having WWII Merchant Mariner Dave Yoho who resides in Alexandria, VA and myself visit you in person or virtually to discuss this important matter before the CPB Board of Directors meeting in February?

Sincerely,

Captain Dru DiMattia
Master Mariner
President American Merchant Marine Veterans
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www.ammv.us

cc: Sen. Susan Collins
Sen. Marco Rubio
Sen. Tammy Duckworth
Cedric Richmond, Director, White House Office of Public Engagement
Patricia de Stacy Harrison, President and CEO, Corporation for Public Broadcasting
Paula Kerger, President and CEO, Public Broadcasting Service



From the AMMV Archives: “A New Lease on Life”

Editor's note: The following article appeared in a June 1990 edition of AMMV News, and tells the remarkable story of what was then believed to be the oldest operating U.S.-flagged oceangoing cargo vessel in service, with roots dating back to WWII. The article was written by Don Smith, a ship surveyor who played a part in extending the ship's lifespan. Amazingly, internet records indicate that this vessel sailed until 2006, and was finally scrapped in 2008. AMMV assumes no responsibility for the accuracy of the information in this article.

At 22:00 hours on December 31st, 1989, the 338-foot freighter *Kathleen Percy* sailed under the Golden Gate Bridge bound for Pusan, Korea. Under ordinary circumstances, this happening would be of little note in the history books. As this particular sailing was another chapter in the history of a certain ship, it is worthy of note.

The ship was launched by Globe Shipbuilding of Superior Wisconsin on October 14, 1944, 45-years and 16 days earlier! Christened the *Pembina*, she was one of eleven C-1-MAV-1 ships Globe built for the United States Maritime Commission

in 1944 and 1945. Over 200 nearly identical ships were constructed in other yards around the United States to further the war effort. Of the eleven Globe-built, only *Pembina* survived. Most of the others were sold to South American interests, or scrapped in the years following the war. As of 1989, only three C1-MAV-1 ships were left afloat: The *Pembina*, *Sgt. George Peters*, and *General Wm. Sutton*. (It is understood that *General Sutton* was sunk as a U.S. Navy target in December 1989.)



S/S Kathleen Percy

Pembina was transferred to the U.S. Navy on May 25, 1945. She was christened the *USNS Pembina*, and sailed for Subic Bay in the Philippines by way of the Panama Canal, under the command of Lt. James F. Moore, USNR, on June 21st. She arrived on August 10th, 1945 after an uneventful voyage, according to her log,

and was just in time to celebrate VJ Day.

Pembina then sailed for Oki-nawa, Pusan, and Japan, arriving at Yokosuka on December 31st, 1945. On January 26th, 1946, *Pembina* was loaned to the new Japanese government. Using a Japanese crew and American

officers, *Pembina* sailed inter-port in Japan, Korea, and Okinawa carrying supplies needed in rebuilding the war-torn country.

In June of 1950, *Pembina* was returned to the U.S. government due to the outbreak of the Korean War, and served as a shuttle vessel between Japan, Korea, and Subic Bay. Little is known of this period as the logbooks have yet to be found in the archives.

On March 31st, 1958, *Pembina* was struck from the

U.S. Naval register and returned to MARAD for lay-up in the mothball fleet. Somehow, she escaped the fate of so many Liberty and Victory ships that were sold for scrap, and after ten years of lay-up she was again resurrected for service. She was renamed the *U.S. Army Ship Resolute*, and turned over to the Army Reserve. She spent the next year of her life assigned to the 481st Heavy Boat Company at Rio Vista, California as a training aid for Army stevedores in loading and unloading cargo. She was returned to MARAD in 1978, and again rested in the reserve fleet in Suisun Bay, California.

On October 10th, 1980, *Resolute* and one other C1-MAV-1 were sold to the highest bidder, Coastline Associates for \$651,000. The circumstances of the sale are worth noting here. A law passed by Congress in 1950 stated that U.S. government-built and financed cargo vessels could not thereafter be sold for domestic transportation use, or sold to foreign interests except for scrapping. Again, fate intervened for the *Pembina/Resolute*. Coastline President John MacNamara was a schoolmate of Senator Ted Kennedy, and with his help an unusual bit of legislation was moved through Congress granting a waiver of the law for the two C1 cargo vessels to allow them to be used in the domestic trade or fisheries service.

MacNamara's idea was to start up a coastwise trade on the Atlantic coast, and the two C1-MAV-1 vessels were ideally suited to the trade, being of shallow draft and small crew requirements, which is what they were originally designed for.

Early in 1981, the refurbishing of the *Resolute* was complete. She had a new Certificate of Inspection from the Coast Guard, and her ABS certification. She was ready to sail. Again, fate stepped in to the life of this ship. Coastline received the opportunity to haul a load of grain from Portland, Oregon to Hawaii. Upon reaching Hawaii with her load, the company was dealt a devastating financial blow. A \$95,000 unloading charge was presented by the stevedoring company Castle & Cook. When Coastline was unable to raise the required sum, the stevedoring company seized the company's principal assets, the two ships.

Resolute was sold at a Federal Marshall's sale in San Francisco, in April 1982, to an Oakland, California realtor, Albert Norman. He moved her to the estuary in

Alameda, California where she was tied-up awaiting a potential buyer. There she was to sit until 1989. This was in the era of big container ships and super tankers. No one wanted a small 40-year-old freighter, and she lay neglected for the next six years.

Enter fate once again. Early in 1989, retired Chief Warrant Officer Don Smith, who had served on the *Resolute* during her Army days, came upon the ship in



Senator Ted Kennedy (circa 1980)

Alameda. After a visit with the caretaker, he went home and thought about the ship and what might be done with it. After some thought, he sent a photo of the ship along with a profile plan and a letter outlining his thoughts to a small shipping company in Houston, Texas.

In June 1989, engineers from the company Pearcy Marine arrived in Alameda to inspect the ship. They expected to find a junk pile not worth their efforts, but closer inspection revealed that she was in surprisingly good condition for her age. As one engineer put it, "a 1945 Cadillac with 1,000 miles on the speedometer". After negotiations with the owner, a lease-purchase agreement was forged for an undisclosed sum and once again the *Pembina/Resolute*, now named the *Kathleen Pearcy*, was re-furbished from top to bottom, received new certifications, was loaded with cargo, and sailed out the Golden Gate. As of this writing, she has completed voyages to Korea, Thailand, Subic Bay, Hawaii, and is currently underway for Japan.

It is believed this is the oldest ship in commercial service under the American flag today and the last American-flagged C1-MAV-1 in commercial service!

Post note: (via Wikipedia 2022) The *Kathleen Pearcy* had her name changed (August 1992), back to *Pembina*. In 1996 she was sold to a U.S.-based missionary group called "Friendships". Renamed *Spirit of Grace*, the former *Pembina* hauled supplies and delivered aid to needy people in various part of the world. On a mission trip to Israel in 2006, *Spirit of Grace* burned out a cylinder in her main engine, requiring an expensive rebuild. At the same time, Friendships was offered a newer vessel of similar size, which was accepted and has been renamed *Integrity*. As a result, *Spirit of Grace* was returned to the original donor and subsequently sold to ESCO Marine in Brownsville TX, where she was scrapped in December 2008.





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