

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE EST. 1984 VETERANS NEWS MAGAZINE

IN PEACE AND WAR

\$6



Spring
2022



Veteran's Last Patrol – page 38



Captain McHale and *Mormacsea* save the gold! – page 16



Continued efforts to recognize
Capt. Hugh Mulzac – page 29



Further push to save historic
Alameda training site – page 22

Events Calendar

State Historical Resources Commission (SHRC) quarterly meeting

(Fate of Alameda historical site of MM Officers Training School to be decided)

April 29th, Sacramento, CA (9:00 a.m.)

AMMV point of contact: Carmen Reid carmereid@gmail.com

Council of American Master Mariners (Camm) annual conference

(To be attended by AMMV Midwest Chapter members)

May 4th – 6th, Chicago, IL

Official Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony

*(Ceremony could be virtual or in-person by special invite,
please monitor AMMV website & social media platforms for updates)*

May 16th (tentative)

International Propeller Club's Salute to Congress

May 17th, Arlington, VA

Nautical Institute – U.S. Branches Joint Conference

May 18th – 20th, San Francisco, CA

Massachusetts Medal of Liberty Ceremony

May 21st, Milton, MA

AMMV point of contact: Bob Lewis robertlewis865@yahoo.com

National Maritime Day

May 22nd

Table of Contents

- 4 AMMV Directory**
- 5 National President Report**
- 6 National Vice President Report**
- 7 National Office Administrator Report**
- 9 NEWS Magazine Editor Report**
- 10 U.S. Merchant Marine memorial Veterans Memorial Area in Cape Coral, FL**
- 11 Region #2 Vice President Report**
- 12 AMMV P&L Statement**
- 12 AMMV Balance Statement**
- 13 Charles Mills Honored**
"Living Legacy Moments"
- 13 Welcome New Members**
- 14 Crossed the Final Bar**
- 14 Glen Chesnut poem**
"On The Hook off Ko Si Chang"
- 15 Julian Smith Speaks at Navy League Event**
96-year-old WWII Merchant Mariner was keynote speaker
- 15 Massachusetts Medal of Liberty Ceremony**
AMMV to co-sponsor ceremony
- 16 Capt. William A. McHale Returns with the Gold!**
Hailed as a "World Hero" for outsmarting the Germans in Norway
- 18 America Needs More Merchant Ships**
By Mark Gleeson
- 21 WWII Veteran George Shaw Receives Top Recognition from Norway**
Awarded Defence Medal by Norwegian Ambassador
- 22 Preserving Our History**
Public hearing on efforts to preserve Alameda, CA Merchant Marine training site
- 24 Monkey Shines in the Indian Ocean**
Excerpt from Gerald Reminick's book "The Merchant Marine Lighter Side of World War II"
- 27 Just Recognition**
Update on efforts to honor USMM Veterans
- 30 AMMV Constitution and Bylaws**
- 38 Veteran's Last Patrol**
Non-profit provides companionship to veterans in hospice care
- 40 From the AMMV Archives:**
"In the Beginning"
- 42 AMMV Membership Application**

HAPPY 100TH BIRTHDAY!

AMMV realized that we missed a name on our "turning 100 in 2022" list on the inside back cover of the winter issue. Happy 100th birthday to Harry G. Pierson, Jr. who reaches his milestone birthday in June!



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AMMV Facebook: **Capt. Chris Edyvean**
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International Affairs **Jens Inge Egeland** *Member-at-Large*



National President Capt. Anthony “Dru” DiMattia



Conditions of COVID-19 continue to improve, and on behalf of our AMMV family, we hope the health of our WWII mariners, along with all families, are doing well!

Last week, I received an email from our own AMMV WWII Merchant Mariner, Captain Hugh Stephens, who rendered his thoughts about the current events; “This attack on Ukraine makes me wonder why I spent all of WWII delivering cargo to

Russia, either via Murmansk or the Persian Gulf. If the people who started these wars only had to fight them.”

Our Merchant Marine has been in every military conflict requiring sealift since the founding of our country. Not to mention the humanitarian missions around the world, inclusive of our mariners, and responding to the 9-11 evacuation of lower Manhattan. Another name for our Merchant Mariners, is “First Responders”!

Many Americans, including all levels of government, are quick to forget or are simply not interested in our nation’s maritime history. The vital supply lines were maintained during WWII earning our Greatest Generation of mariners belated veteran status. AMMV continues advocating for recognition of these WWII mariners. The story of all mariners must be better understood in the public eye. Until then, we have a long way to go in making progress, which is about as fast as the ol’ Ugly Ducklings!

I again, seek support from our membership to simply get involved by calling your representatives. They must be reminded and educated of our maritime sea service and the vital link of maintaining the supply lines! This includes H.R. 39 and H.R. 1819!

The final phase of the Congressional Gold Medal production and release is here! I’ve been informed that the CGM as well as the individual bronze medals will be ready by mid-May. MARAD’s priority is to purchase 3” duplicate medals for living WWII mariners, and 1.5” duplicate medals for families of deceased WWII mariners. Should family members wish, they may purchase 3” duplicates directly from the U.S. Mint, once available.

The AMMV has been invited to convey a wish list to the House of Representatives, assisting with the production of the Congressional Gold Medal award ceremony tentatively scheduled for a virtual ceremony by Speaker Pelosi, on or around the

16th of May.

As of this writing, the Capitol grounds remain closed. We may have an opportunity for an in-person ceremony (by special invite only) depending on conditions being monitored by the House of Representatives. This opportunity is unfolding as we speak. Please monitor the AMMV website and social media platforms for updates on this official ceremony.

We have been in discussions with multiple organizations wishing to honor our mariners in various locations mainly during the month of May. In this edition you will find information on the events of which we are currently aware. Please note that these opportunities may not be available for everyone due to travel restrictions or timing.

We have not set a date for our next National Convention, as we first await the CGM award.

Great work continues with our Government Affairs Committee, chaired by WWII veteran Charles Mills, and spearheaded by our committee member Patrick Cotter, who is requesting to include the playing of the Merchant Marine hymn and displaying the flag along with all the other services during the Memorial Day events produced by PBS in our capitol. It’s that simple!..... apparently not!

We have run into indecisive players involved with putting on this annual Memorial Day event. This campaign is ongoing as this edition goes to print. In a nut shell, the Corporation for Public Broadcasting who puts on the event, follows the protocol of our DOD who sets the agenda. We are reaching out to our supporting Representatives around the country in nudging the DOD to include the WWII Merchant Marine in this Memorial Day event. We hope for a timely and positive outcome to include our WWII mariner service in the 2022 ceremony held on Memorial Day! I want to thank our AMMV officers and members who have contributed in this effort and continue to advocate for this basic understanding of recognition rightfully deserved.

I wish to thank all of our volunteers on the national and regional levels, along with all of our remaining chapters for their hard work in telling the story of our Maritime Service past and present! We must also recognize the hard work of our Editor, Past President of the AMMV, Captain Chris Edyvean for his relentless work with our magazine.

How’s this for size? A big shout out to our very own AMMV WWII Merchant Mariner, Gerard Driscoll for stepping into the President’s position of the Three Rivers Chapter! How’s that for standing the watch! HEAVE HO! Gerard, HEAVE HO! His lovely daughter Cynthia is our National Secretary. We thank them both for their service!

Have a good watch!
Captain Dru DiMattia





National Vice President Sheila M. Sova



Women's History Month (March)

The month of March is designated as Women's History Month. Thanks to *usmm.org* Webmaster Toni Horodysky, I decided to research women of the U.S. Merchant Marine during WWII. In taking my research to *ancestry.com*, I discovered photos and

records which brought faces to these women's names and a human element that had been missing.

These are the women that we have not read about. This is not Clara Gordon Main who is highlighted in the National WWII Museum in New Orleans or the Rosie the Riveters we've heard so much about. Most likely these are the women, like Betty Jackson who, according to the Merchant Marine at War website, wrote a letter to President Roosevelt.

In her letter to the President, Betty Jackson said, "We are not afraid of the dangers..." Her request for reinstatement of women's service aboard merchant vessels was turned down, but official records show that three women were awarded the Merchant Marine Combat Bar after their ships were torpedoed, and four women were POWs.

While Clara Main was the first female POW in WWII, the following women represent some of the other "firsts" in WWII history as well.

Mary Cullom Kimbro of Nashville, Tennessee was a Stewardess aboard the SS *City of Birmingham*. Her ship was torpedoed by U-202 on June 30, 1942 about 250 miles east of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. **Mrs. Kimbro was the first**



Mary Cullom Kimbro



Lifeboat on Liberty Ship named after Kimbro

to abandon ship due to enemy attack.

On National Maritime Day, 1942, New York Mayor Fiorello LaGuardia took part in ceremonies honoring members of the National Maritime Union who had been torpedoed or who were acknowledged as heroes. Among those honored was Stewardess **Miss Carmen Maria Quiñonez** of the SS *Jacinto* who, "Guided a woman and three small children to safety when their vessel was torpedoed. After leaving the vessel she administered first aid to three injured passengers in a lifeboat." (*usmm.org*)

Ancestry.com searches revealed several documents such as a newspaper clipping from the Baltimore Afro American newspaper. Another search found a historical photograph of Mayor Fiorella LaGuardia as

female Merchant Mariner killed in WWII. She was 64 years old. Later, she was posthumously awarded the Mariner's Medal.

On April 6th, 1945, a new Liberty Ship was launched at Panama City, Florida. It was named the SS *Mary Cullom Kimbro*.

Mrs. **Edna T. Johansson**, the first female recipient of the Merchant Marine Combat Bar with star, was a Stewardess aboard the liner SS *Sixaola*. The Seafarers Union member received the star on the bar, given to those forced



Edna T. Johansson

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)



National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



As we prepare for the U.S. Mint's issuance of the Congressional Gold Medal for our WW II Merchant Mariners, which was signed into law by President Donald Trump on March 13, 2020, it brings to mind the atmosphere of our country and the mindset of the American People during the time leading up to the war and nearing the conclusion of the world conflict.

I have an original article from the New York Daily News (from my Mom's scrapbook) published Friday, April 13, 1945. The piece is entitled, "Famous Sayings of Franklin D. Roosevelt". It begins with parts of his speeches dating from 1933 and concludes with his message to Congress March 26, 1945. This article appeared in the Daily News less than three weeks later.

First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933:

"This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly... This great nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself---nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance."

August 14, 1936, At Chautauqua, N.Y.:

"I have seen war... I have seen blood running from the wounded. I have seen men coughing out their gassed lungs. I have seen the dead in the mud... I have seen children starving. I have seen the agony of mothers and wives. I hate war."

At his second inaugural in 1937:

"The test of our progress is not whether we add more to the abundance of those who have much; it is whether we provide enough for those who have little."

October 5, 1937, the President's Quarantine Speech, Chicago:

"America hates war. America hopes for peace. Therefore, America actively engages in the search for peace."

At the University of Virginia, Charlottesville, after Italy's entry in the war:

"On this tenth day of June, 1940, the hand that held the dagger has struck it into the back of its neighbor."

In Boston, in an election campaign speech on October 30, 1940:

"I have said this before, but I shall say it again, and again, and again: Your boys are not going to be sent into any foreign wars. They are going into training to form a force so strong that, by its very existence, it will keep the threat of war away from our shores."

Roosevelt's "moral order" statement on January 6, 1941, before Congress:

"We look forward to a world founded upon four essential human freedoms:

"Freedom of speech and expression---everywhere in the world.

"Freedom of every person to worship God in his own way.

"Freedom from want---economic understandings securing every nation a healthy peacetime life for its inhabitants.

"Freedom from fear---world-wide reduction of armaments so thorough that no nation would be able to commit an act of aggression against any neighbor.

"This is no vision or distant millennium. It is a definite basis for a kind of world attainable in our own time and generation."

War message before Congress, December 8, 1941:

"Yesterday, Dec. 7, 1941---a date which will live in infamy---the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan... No matter how long it may take us to overcome this premeditated invasion, the American people in their righteous might will win through to absolute victory. I believe I interpret the will of the Congress and of the people when I assert that we will not only defend ourselves to the uttermost but will make it very certain that this form of treachery shall never again endanger us."

Fourth Inaugural Speech, January 20, 1945:

"We Americans of today, together with our allies, are passing through a period of supreme test... As I stand here today having taken the solemn oath of office in the presence of my fellow countrymen---in the presence of our God---I know that it is America's purpose that we shall not fail."

Message to Congress, March 26, 1945:

"The point in history at which we stand is full of promise and of danger. The world will either move forward

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 8)

National Vice President's Report

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 6)

he placed the torpedo pin on Miss Quinonez, who lived in Brooklyn, New York at the time.

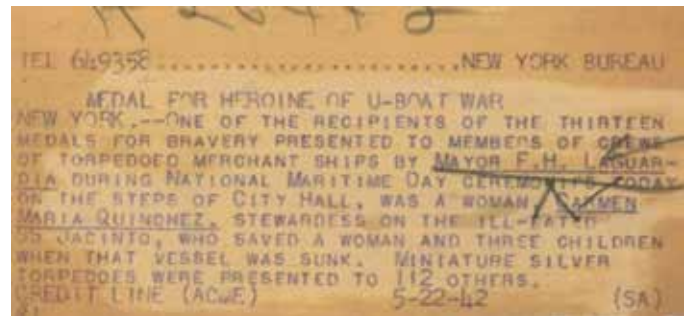
As we continue our research, we will find more brave women who served in WWII as USMM. We can put faces to their names and realize that they were warriors that stood apart from the traditional roles played by women during WWII. They are World War II U.S. Merchant Marine veterans!

Sheila M. Sova

AMMV National Vice President



Article about Miss Quinonez from Baltimore Afro American newspaper



National Office Administrator's Report

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 7)

toward unity and widely shared prosperity or it will move apart into necessarily competing blocs. We have a chance, we citizens of the United States, to use our influence in favor of a more united and cooperative world. Whether we do so will determine, as far as it is in our power, the kind of lives our grandchildren can live."

Although the following was not included in the Daily News article, I would remind our readers of this quote:

President Roosevelt signed the first GI Bill called the Servicemen's Readjustment Act, June 22, 1944 with these words:

"I trust Congress will soon provide similar opportunities to members of the merchant marine who have risked their lives time and time again during war for the

welfare of their country."*

* *Editor's note: As we all know, that didn't happen until 1988 since President Roosevelt passed away before those "similar opportunities" to the merchant marine were enacted.*

Calm Seas (and Peace),

Lynn C. Kelly





NEWS Magazine Editor Capt. Christopher Edyvean



AMMV: On the move!

Following our very successful convention in September, the AMMV Board of Directors was challenged with a hefty decision. Should AMMV start planning the next convention? If so, when? If not, then what?

The September convention finally came a year and a half overdue, thanks to the pandemic. This in turn bumped the traditional convention

timeline out of whack by six months. Another moving target for AMMV has been the formal Congressional Gold Medal ceremony, which although could be virtual or in-person, is finally slated for the third week in May. (The bill was signed into law on March 13, 2020.)

Rather than commit to a large-scale convention so soon, and knowing that many of our veterans and members would be more interested in attending regional CGM ceremonies that will hopefully materialize throughout 2022 and into 2023, AMMV has decided to dispatch key members and officers to attend various maritime related functions across the country. From Illinois to Massachusetts, from California to Virginia, AMMV will have a visible presence in a variety of upcoming events.

However, one does not need to attend a large-scale event to make a difference in recognizing our Merchant Marine veterans or representing the Merchant Marine. With National Maritime Day, Memorial Day, and Independence Day just around the corner, there are opportunities to participate in local events such as parades, memorial ceremonies, television/radio/internet interviews, or newspaper/magazine articles. Does your locality fly the U.S. Merchant Marine flag? Do the marching bands in your county parade play *Heave Ho*? Is the Merchant Marine emblem visible at regional veterans' monuments and memorials?

Longtime AMMV National Officer, the late Nelson Cauble, frequently quoted, "*together we can, and together we have, made a difference.*"

Have you made a difference in recognizing our Merchant Marine veterans?

Remember those who have served,

Christopher L. Edyvean

Capt. Christopher Edyvean

AMMV News Editor & Past National President



AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia (right) and Past National President Capt. Chris Edyvean hold up the Merchant Marine flag during a recent visit to the Brotherhood of Heroes Resource Center & Museum, located at 4522 Del Prado Blvd, S. Cape Coral, FL 33904; website: thebrotherhoodofheroes.com

The United States Merchant Marine

From our shores to every theater of war my ships have carried the troops, guns, planes, and supplies needed for victory.
In the face of devastating losses, my Mariners never gave up and always stayed true to our mission: We will deliver. No distance was too far and no danger too great to keep us from our duty and triumph over the tyrants of the world.
I am the flag of the United States Merchant Marine.

by Jim Willis



Editor's note: Located in Cape Coral, FL which is the birthplace of the AMMV organization, is the Veterans Memorial Area at Four Mile Cove Ecological Preserve. (The physical address of the memorial is 2500 SE 24th Street, Cape Coral, FL 33990.)

In 2019, a dedication was held which officially welcomed the presence of the U.S. Merchant Marine to the existing Veterans Memorial Area. From the initial vision to include the Merchant Marine, to the final dedication of such, it was Capt. Dru DiMattia (serving as AMMV Region #1 VP at the time) who oversaw every step of the voyage.

If you live in the region, or might be just passing by, a stop at the Veterans Memorial Area in Cape Coral would be well worth your time.



Region #1 Vice President Stephen Snyder

02/02

Following is an update on my activities so far this week.

Please use ammvssnyder@yahoo.com as my new email point of contact. I will forward to myself any emails from my other yahoo accounts.

Transfer of Jax Lifeboat to Museum of Military History, Kissimmee Fl. Chris Robertson, Director (407-507-3894) (militarymueseum192@gmail.com).

Charlie Sellers is handling the transfer paperwork. Dru has given me the approval to sign the paperwork as AMMV Region # 1 VP.

Chris Swan is handling redesign of the trailer and transportation for the purpose of returning the lifeboat each Nov.11th for the Jacksonville Veterans Day Parade. The reason behind moving the lifeboat to the museum is to allow the public to view and appreciate this piece of WWII history during the other 364 days of the year.

Currently the lifeboat is in an open riverside warehouse at the North Florida Shipyard. This yard has recently been sold to Fincantieri Marine Systems, a U.S. Naval contractor, to do maintenance and repair work on Mayport Naval Station Littoral Combat Ships. This will involve a \$39 million investment, new dry dock, and security upgrades.

Tom (Sonny) Suneson is in contact with Ryan Smith, CEO of the North America Division, to insure continued access to the shipyard.

I have been searching through archived AMMV magazines for any articles referencing the lifeboat. So far, I have learned that the boat has been in the parade since at least 1996, some 25 years.

Ross Rowlinson, 561-373-4293, USAWarriorStories.org, will capture the recording of the move to the museum on video.

As the transfer develops, I'm hoping to put together a future article for the AMMV Magazine.

Lynn has asked me to be in touch with Padraic E. "Pat" Mulvihill, as President of Rotary Club & Charities, North Jacksonville, 904-534-0035 (pem@axisp.com), (NorthJAXRotary.org). Pat asked me to attend a speaking engagement, to view the existing memorial, and include a Merchant Mariner plaque

of the same shape and size, at Cecil Air & Space Port Chapel, 6112 POW-MIA Parkway, Jacksonville, FL 32221, 904-616-0327 (www.POWMIAMemorial.org). In addition, Pat, as President of North JAX Rotary, has requested a WWII Merchant Mariner as a guest speaker, so I connected him with Ed Trester, who resides

in St. Augustine. Ed is currently recovering from Covid and will be happy to give the Rotary his presentation in the future.

Speaking with Ed Trester about the Congressional Gold Medal, I've learned that the Veterans Council of Saint John's County (Bill Dudley, Chairman) is planning a presentation ceremony to honor Ed and 101-year-old Col. William (Bill) Pruitt once the medals are released. Charlie Sellers and I will attend and participate in the event.

Charlie Sellers has put me in touch with Bob Whitkop,

Capt. USN (Retired) Commander General Naval Order of the United States (bwhitkop@gmail.com) 904-220-5390 (cell). We met this group at last year's Veterans Day Parade. They expressed interest in some type of display in remembrance of the *El Faro*. I will attend their next meeting.

Lynn asked me to get in touch with Blanca Walling in reference to giving her son advice on jobs in the U.S. Merchant Marine. I spoke with her yesterday and have mailed her son information on both the Harry Lundeberg School of Seaman-ship and Sea School.

2/03 Update

As a follow up, Sandy and I this morning attended an Inter-faith Memorial Service honoring the Four Chaplains who were lost in the sinking of the SS *Dorchester* on this date in 1943. The guest speaker was Command Chaplain (Colonel) Eric J. Albertson, who is stationed at MacDill Air Force Base, Tampa FL. The service was held at the Chapel of the High-Speed Pass in JAX.

This location is requesting from AMMV the artwork of the Merchant Marine emblem so as to include it in their interior display. I'll follow up on this shortly.

Stephen Snyder
AMMV Region # 1 Vice President



Regional Vice President Steve Snyder with the AMMV St. John's River Chapter lifeboat, circa 2019. Steve is researching the origins of the lifeboat.

American Merchant Marine Veterans Profit & Loss

July 2021 through February 2022

Income	
402 · Contributions	29,610.83
403 · Interest Income & Bank Bonuses	559.00
405 · Mission Advance Support	36,404.46
409 · Miscellaneous Income	18.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	
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	14,122.00
MWE · Mid West	540.00
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	18,027.00
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	111,458.89
Expense	
500 · Fixed Expense	
507 · Telephone	702.75
511 · Svc Charges - Paypal & Square	534.97
Total 500 · Fixed Expense	1,237.72
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	35,323.56
526 · Internet Initiative	600.00
Total 520 · Mission Advance Expenses	36,404.46
530 · AMMV News Magazine	
533 · Postage	3,754.68
536 · Printing	10,896.18
538 · Layout	2,600.00
Total 530 · AMMV News Magazine	17,250.86
550 · Personnel	
551 · Administration	13,600.00
Total 550 · Personnel	13,600.00
560 · Operating Expense	
564 · Office Supplies	894.18
565 · Postage - Office	708.21
566 · Printing - Office	296.92
567 · Licenses & Fees	789.56
569 · Legal Fees	1,000.00
Total 560 · Operating Expense	3,688.87
Total Expense	116,654.28
Net Income	-5,195.39

American Merchant Marine Veterans Balance Sheet

As of February 28, 2022


ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
105 · Chase Bank	367,439.68
Total Checking/Savings	367,439.68
Total Current Assets	367,439.68
TOTAL ASSETS	367,439.68
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
200 · Chase Credit Card	4,728.67
Total Credit Cards	4,728.67
Other Current Liabilities	
315 · Gold Medal Fund	10,007.00
311 · Dues Receivable	544.00
312 · Member Recruitment	893.00
314 · Mission Advance Fund	19,760.70
Total Other Current Liabilities	31,204.70
Total Current Liabilities	35,933.37
Total Liabilities	35,933.37
Equity	
32001 · Retained Earnings	336,701.70
Net Income	-5,195.39
Total Equity	331,506.31
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	367,439.68



DYK?

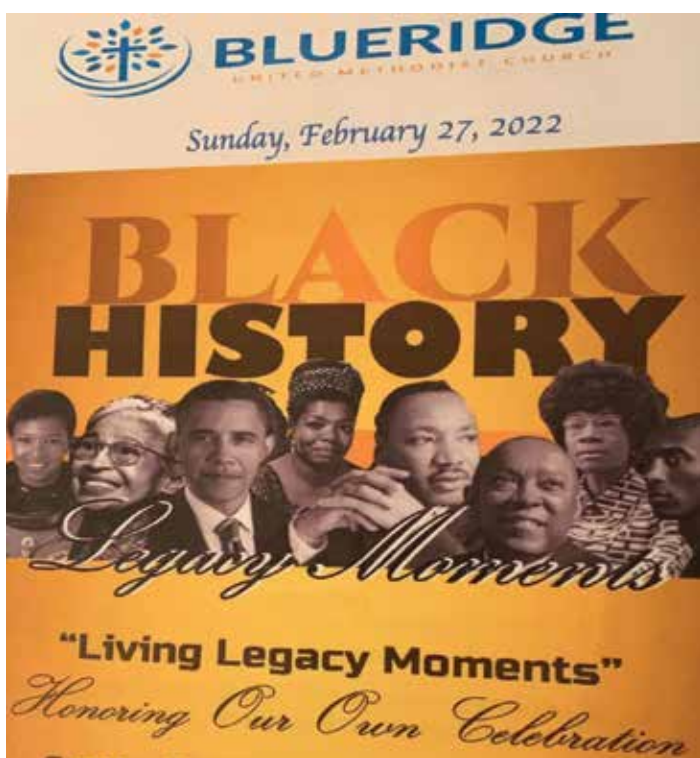
Did you know that Marilyn Monroe's first husband, Jim Dougherty, was a WWII Merchant Mariner who trained at Catalina Island? The couple married when 'Norma Jeane' was only 16 years old in 1944, and divorced two years later.

Charles Mills honored as part of Living Legacy ceremony

Lonestar Chapter member Charles A. Mills was among a small group receiving “Living Legacy” recognition in conjunction with Black History Month. The event took place on February 27th at the Blueridge United Methodist Church with Senior Pastor Reverend Dr. Janice Gilbert. Photo credit: Veda Handy, granddaughter of Mills. 




101-year-old Charles A. Mills



Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

FORREST BOOTH	PIEDMONT	CA
LOUIS CINFICI.....	READING	PA
CAPT. ROBERT COOK	LAMBERTVILLE	NJ
ROBERT T. COYNE	MANCHESTER	MA
ANTONIO HERNANDEZ	BUCHANAN.....	MI
MILTON HILDEBRANDT.....	INVER GROVE HEIGHTS	MN
BENJAMIN LA CRUE	AURORA	CO
RICK LEO.....	MIDDLEBORO.....	MA
CAPT. WILLIAM LORCH.....	POCATELLO	ID
HAROLD WILLIAM WILLEM	VERO BEACH	FL



IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE CROSSED THE FINAL BAR

EILEEN BABIARZ The Villages, FL

EDMUND JOSEPH CAMERON..... Shenorock, NY

WILLIAM CARLSON Robinsdale, MN

ROBERT WAYNE FORNEY..... Burke, VA

CAPT. EDWARD GRAS..... N. Haledon, NJ

CHARLES L. KING..... Memphis, TN

WILLIAM LASKOWITZ..... O'Fallon, MO

JOSEPH S. LENKAY, SR Holland, OH

CAPT. THOMAS N. LIGHTSEY..... Houston, TX

ROBERT J. LUNNEY Bronxville, NY

JOHN J. O'CONNOR..... St. Augustine, FL

JOHN J. RILEY, JR Rye Brook, NY

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.

ON THE HOOK OFF KO SI CHANG

Excerpt from the Written Works of Glen Chesnut

On the hook
off the island of Ko Si Chang.
On deck the heavy tropical heat
and the whine and groan
of cargo winches
hauling up sacks
of cassava flour from barges –
cassava flour for making tapioca.
White dust covers the deck
and cakes white on the sweaty bodies
of the half-naked stevedores.
They appear made up
to perform some primitive,
arcane ritual.

A young deckhand
stands on the railing
of the ship's bridge.
He waves down to me.
then dives in a long rainbow arc
into the turquoise water.
A few minutes later, a loud commotion
from the stevedores on the barge,
and the cargo winches go silent.
They've spotted a shark.
The deckhand kicks full-out
for the gangway.
I watch a lone shark fin
circle the ship.

The smiling deckhand
leaves wet footprints
in the white cassava dust.
The cargo winches start whining again.
All is back to normal.

At supper that evening, the cook,
having a diabolical sense of humor,
serves tapioca pudding
for dessert.

WWII Merchant Mariner Julian Smith speaks at Navy League event



Merchant Marine veteran Julian Smith engages the crowd with his WWII stories

On March 2nd, WWII Merchant Mariner Julian Smith was the keynote speaker at a luncheon held by the Greater Cincinnati Council, Navy League of the United States.

The luncheon was hosted by Steve Drefahl, Captain, USN (Ret.) and held at the famous Montgomery Inn with about 70 persons in attendance. In addition to retired Navy brass, political figures, sea cadets, and supporters of veterans, fellow WWII MM Albert Varhola was present.

Also attending was Pat Allen, who will be working with Chris Rich of the Clermont County Public Library to record interviews for the United States Library of Congress archives. They desire for both Julian and Albert to participate. Pat is very excited about the prospect of having two WWII Merchant Mariners to interview.

Julian gave a captivating speech in recalling his adventures as a Merchant Mariner. He served from 1944 to 1947.

At 96 years of age, Julian still plays piano and practices with other musicians.

The photos and details of the event were provided by William "Speed" Hinds.



Julian with WWII MM Albert Varhola

Massachusetts Medal of Liberty Ceremony

AMMV is co-sponsoring a medal ceremony in Massachusetts at American Legion Post 114, Heritage Hall, 123 Granite Ave, in Milton, Massachusetts on Saturday, May 21st at 1:00 pm. Our Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman, Bob Lewis, will assist the Milford Medal of Liberty Committee in awarding the Massachusetts Liberty Medal posthumously to families of deceased Merchant Mariners of WWII who died in service to our country. The committee has found the records of approximately fifteen WWII MMs who came from Massachusetts and is in the process of locating those families to invite them to the upcoming event.

Two of the MA Liberty Medals were awarded in a ceremony on June 13, 2021 in Milford, Massachusetts to the families of Diamantino Moreiro Lopes, an Ordinary Seaman from the troop transport *SS Dorchester* and to Merchant Mariner, Walter Franklin Howe, an Oiler from the freighter

SS Summer I. Kimball. Both men's ships were torpedoed by German submarines during WWII. Unfortunately, the family of Walter Howe was not able to attend the medal

ceremony. The medal was accepted on their behalf by AMMV's Robert Lewis, US Navy (1982-1986) and Merchant Marine (1994-1997). Many veteran organizations were present to support the Merchant Mariners' families, including the American Legion Riders and the "Young Marines". For complete coverage of the event please refer to AMMV's quarterly news magazine issue Summer 2021.

We encourage our AMMV members to attend the ceremony if they are in the area. For more information or if you wish to be our guest on May 21st in Milton, please

contact Bob Lewis 617-820-8968 or Lynn Kelly 475-470-9200 in AMMV's National Headquarters. We hope to see you there.



Capt. William A. McHale returns with the Gold!

William A. McHale, the captain of the *Mormacsea* commercial freighter in 1940, had a special connection to Byrd School – namely, his daughter, Eileen, was a student there. Eileen's 4th grade teacher, Miss Eleanor Starrs, thought this offered a great opportunity for her students and so a robust letter-writing campaign was begun between the Byrd students and the men aboard the *Mormacsea*. Little did they know but their pen-pals would become an integral part of World War II intrigue as the civilian *Mormacsea* found herself in the middle of the German invasion of Norway, with a hold full of secret gold.

Here's the story, as told by Captain McHale and several of his crew mates. At 4:45 a.m. on April 9, 1940, the *Mormacsea* lay at dock in Trondheim, Norway. McHale's freighter, owned by the Moore McCormick Line, had left New York City with a cargo of medical supplies and clothing for the Red Cross destined for Finland. The ship also carried a variety of military munitions including a large shipment of Thompson machine guns that were offloaded at Bergen in Norway. The U.S. was officially neutral at this time and, as a civilian freighter, the *Mormacsea* was still allowed to ply her trade even with war ravaging Europe.

In that early morning of April 9th, Captain McHale was awakened to find a German cruiser, the *Admiral Hipper*, pulled up alongside the *Mormacsea*. It became clear quite quickly that the Nazis had taken the port of Trondheim and indeed Norway without firing a single shot on land.

It so happened that prior to sailing from New York to Norway, Captain McHale and his Chief Mate Al McKinnon were informed that, in addition to their usual orders to pick up and discharge the scheduled cargo, they were to pick up classified material in Bergen, Norway on the orders of the U.S. State Department. McHale and McKinnon were both Lt. Commanders in the U.S. Naval Reserve. They dropped off the machine guns in Bergen as planned and took on board an unusual shipment: \$4.5 Million worth of gold ingots from the government of Sweden, to be transported back to New York as soon as possible. The gold was stowed in a secret compartment, which was then welded shut and had 800 tons of peat piled in front of it. The ship then proceeded to Trondheim to offload the medical supplies before returning to New York – but the Nazi invasion

interrupted those plans.

Since the gold was entered on the ship's manifest, McHale had plenty to be worried about, especially when he found that the major communication lines in Trondheim had been cut. He was assured by the German command that they would respect the *Mormacsea's* neutrality – they told him that they were only there to protect the Norwegians from the English – but he was uneasy and asked permission to move his ship to Hommelvik, about 12 miles from Trondheim. He was allowed to do so, but he was not able to leave Norway as he was awaiting further orders.

Over the next several days, Captain McHale became increasingly concerned for the safety of his 38 crewmen and the security of his ship as conditions in Trondheim and Hommelvik steadily deteriorated. Large numbers of the local population were fleeing the area to join up with the Resistance forming in the mountains. The concern increased when a Finnish Captain told McHale that the Germans had boarded his ship and removed a piece of his engine and parts of his radio. McHale did not want Germans on his ship for many reasons, not least of which was the



William McHale (left) helping with the raffle at the 1942 Glen Rock IDA Fair

gold hidden on board.

Finally, McHale was given orders to leave; he was also ordered not to take on any passengers and so had to disembark the few U.S. Nationals on board who were not part of the crew. The rationale for not offering transport for U.S. citizens fleeing the conditions in Norway was that it was assumed that the Norwegian waters had been mined and safety could not be guaranteed. The Germans refused to provide a harbor pilot to navigate the ship to safer waters. Luckily, the *Mormacsea's* Engineer, Harold Wood, was able to find an experienced coastal pilot who, for a hefty fee, would guide the ship out. Also in the ship's favor was Captain McHale's service as commander of a British minesweeper during World War I. [McHale was born in England, later immigrating to America and becoming a naturalized U.S. citizen.] On the morning of their departure, on April 14th, the crew – minus the bare minimum required in the engine room – was mustered on deck, near the life rafts. At a speed of five knots, the *Mormacsea* inched her way out of the fjord heading for the open sea. The well-compensated coastal pilot was dropped off on the island of Halten (he had been told that it was possible that he would



Mormacsea 1945 in Manila (photo source: www.armed-guard.com)

have to stay on the ship all the way to New York, and he had accepted this). For the next six hours, Captain McHale remained on the bridge, constantly scanning for mines. He ordered the ship's radio operator to continually broadcast their movement, in hopes that the British might at some point step in to help with mine avoidance. They never got a response. They also never spotted any mines.

The *Mormacsea* arrived safely in New York City on April 25th. In his personal diary, Captain McHale notes: "Throughout this whole trouble, my officers and crew were wonderful. Everybody seemed to want to work together. I think we must all live right!" He printed up copies of his diary and distributed them to the students of Byrd School. After returning from Norway, McHale was re-called to active duty with the U.S. Navy and he served honorably as Captain of the *USS Warren*, an attack transport, planning as well as leading many of the major assaults in the Asia-Pacific theater.

Once the *Mormacsea* was safely home, the story of the hidden gold could finally be told, to a point. Captain McHale was hailed as a "World Hero" for his role in outsmarting the Germans in Norway. In an intriguing twist, there is no verifiable record to indicate that the \$4.5 Million worth of Swedish gold was ever deposited at the Federal Reserve Bank of New York on or about April 25th, 1940. Wartime records do indicate that the Swedish Enskilda Bank in Stockholm received \$4.5 Million from the German Reichsbank in 1940. Sweden was officially neutral for the entirety of World War II. The Enskilda Bank had been suspected of moving looted gold and other German "cloaked assets", identified as Swedish, around the world with some impunity. Someday maybe the mystery will be unraveled when the appropriate records are declassified.

William McHale continued his heroics in the Pacific as a Commander in the U.S. Navy during World War II,

also serving as Chief of Staff for an Admiral before heart troubles sent him into retirement. He gifted the *Mormacsea's* flag to Byrd School. He was also instrumental in securing the bell from the *USS John Lang*, a Naval Destroyer, as a gift from the U.S. Navy to the borough of Glen Rock in 1955. Captain McHale had seen the *Lang* in action firsthand at Iwo Jima, and when it came time for the Destroyer to be scrapped, he brought her bell to Glen Rock, where it still resides today as a monument in Veterans Park.

GLEN ROCK HISTORICAL & PRESERVATION SOCIETY, INC.
Glen Rock, Bergen County, New Jersey

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"I was told that this watch was presented to my Grandfather (Capt. McHale) by the insurance company who insured the gold. I have the watch."

– William Kahn

AMERICA NEEDS MORE MERCHANT SHIPS

By Mark Gleeson

When America is challenged and finds itself in a conflict, it rises to meet the challenge in ways no one would ever think possible. So, it was in WWII when the country found itself dealing with enemies around the world, in desperate need of a way to support our allies and our own forces. While it was possible to fly some needed personnel and supplies in planes with limited range and capacity, the enormous task of supply was resolved by dramatically increasing its merchant marine fleet. In a four-year period, 1941-1945, almost 6,000 ships of all type, excluding naval vessels, were built in 16 shipyards. These workplaces employed over 600,000 workers

– men, women, black and white. But when the conflict was over, America stopped the shipbuilding and sold, gave away, or mothballed most of this great fleet of ships.

At the same time, training camps for seamen and officers were closed, and the minds of Americans started to close on the deeds performed by some 250,000 merchant seamen. Somebody wrote, “Never again will the world see such a fleet of ships, and never again will the world see such a group of men who sailed them.” Many years have passed since WWII ended. The great fleet of ships that carried the American ensign in WWII has dramatically decreased in size. The country is vulnerable if any conflict arises that is not settled in a few days. Presently, there is not enough American ship transport capacity to move millions of men and women around the world, and keep them supplied. There is a need to tell this story of the condition of our present merchant marine, of not enough men and ships, if needed. There is a way to tell the story of merchant ships and their role in defending America.

There has been a merchant marine since the beginning of our country. Armed merchant ships were the basis of our first naval forces. Sea commerce was the way our country grew and helped shape the world economy that exists today. It was as part of the preparation and conduct of both World War I and World War II that the merchant marine took an active role in defense of our country. World War I was short term, but there was a rapid buildup and the arming of the ships that were available. World War II resulted in a critical role for the merchant marine. Not only did the merchant marine transport over 7,000,000 men and women overseas,

keep them supplied, and eventually bring them home, but it also participated in every invasion. This latter role involved 144,900 members of the Naval Armed Guard serving with the merchant crews and manning the guns. It is noted that members of the Naval Armed Guard received 8033 medals and commendations for their service aboard merchant ships during World War II. The merchant seamen, who

served with the Naval Armed Guard on these ships, and helped man the guns, did not.

What do people today know of the life of the merchant seaman in WWII, and what does the average person know about the greatest fleet of



SS Westminster Victory

ships ever built? Not very much. There are some ways this can be changed and help prepare our country to deal with possible conflict in the future.

Despite the outstanding story of the merchant marine participation in World War II, people know little, or nothing of it, or of the men who sailed the ships. Much less is known of the ships they sailed. This has always proved counterproductive to merchant seamen receiving recognition, or for the merchant marine itself. There have been many books written about the maritime service, but none reach the level of Tom Brokaw's *Greatest Generation*. Admiral Land, Administrator of the War Shipping Administration in World War II, was required to submit to Congress each January a report of its activities and achievements. His final report on January 16, 1946, titled *The United States Merchant Marine at War*, tells the remarkable story. What is not included in the report is the fact that the merchant marine was the only volunteer service, 10% of its seamen were black (the other services were segregated), and it had the highest casualty rate of any service. It does say that no ship failed to sail on time due to labor issues. Despite this record of service of men and ships, there is a general lack of interest in their accomplishments and constant antagonism toward efforts to gain recognition for seamen. Efforts to prevent recognition come from select veteran and government sources. **As a result, few people have any real interest in either the maritime service, the past, present and future needs for such a service, and in particular, interest in the men who served, or the number of merchant ships available to serve their country.**

All the major military services have federally supported historical centers to write, research, and inform the public of the activities of their branch of service. The merchant marine has none.

General Darren W. McDew, past commander of the U.S. Transportation Command, had urged maritime industry leaders to keep fighting for what is right and credited them for consistently standing up for U.S. crews and American shipbuilding. He addressed the technological changes in how wars are fought. Although he felt that some adversaries might be technically superior in some respects, he said: ***“We will likely have to transport and sustain dispersed forces over long, contested lines of communication.”*** Many people remember the long lines of supply and troopships across all oceans as we fought World War II, then Korea, then Vietnam, then Desert Storm, and on, and on... Ships and the men who sailed them were and are still needed.

There does not appear to be a coordinated effort at present to inform the public of the existence of the merchant marine, their position in the economy, and in the defense of our country. Congress passed a Joint Resolution in 1933 that made each May 22, National Maritime Day. Each year on that date the President of the United States issues a proclamation extolling the virtues of the merchant marine. It is not a national holiday, so few people pay attention to the service of the merchant marine veterans of WWII when they hold ceremonies to honor their dead. May 23 comes each year, and nothing has really changed in how the merchant marine and its role is generally understood.

American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) was established in 1984 as a nonprofit organization to gain recognition for what the American Merchant Marine had accomplished for our country in war and peace. Included in the vision of the organization are the goals to educate the public about the services which the American merchant mariners have provided to the nation in combat, in preservation of national security, and in contribution to the U.S. economy. Mariners have established memorials across the country, held public programs on Maritime Day, and promoted dialogue with state and federal officials as to the need of a strong American flagged merchant fleet. It is a sad testimony to all these efforts that public attention to a need for a strong and vital American flagged merchant fleet has not been successful.

There is a way to develop more public awareness in developing a strong merchant fleet. It would involve a program our country initiated in WWII to acknowledge Victory-class merchant ships that were named after 150 colleges and universities.

All great efforts that make progress begin in a simple way.

When graduating classes of colleges and universities reach their 50th graduation anniversary, there is the anticipation that the class members will leave a remembrance to their institution. The Westminster College Class of '49 did

something other than leave funding for scholarships. This small liberal arts college is located in New Wilmington, Pennsylvania. The Coordinating Committee for the Class of '49 considered a number of options and chose a unique gift for their contribution to the college. Recognizing that the Class of '49, nationally, was the largest group of veterans to graduate from colleges and universities, they chose to fund a veterans memorial. The memorial is located in the middle of the college quadrangle and includes a flagpole, a large marble stone with an appropriate saying, and six marble benches, one honoring each of the services. A WWII merchant marine veteran was a member of the Coordinating Committee and had one bench included to honor the Merchant Marine of WWII.

A few years later, the head of the college history department, Dr. Gene Sharkey, wrote a book about Westminster College men who had served in the war. There were 44 of these Westminster men who gave their lives in service to their country. Included in the book *When Titans Truly Were* was a short story of a troopship that had been named in honor of the college, the SS *Westminster Victory*. The government initiated programs during the war to involve the public in the total war effort. Victory gardens and the collection of scrap materials are examples of these programs. Another program was the naming of 150 of the 534 new Victory class transport ships in honor of a select group of colleges and universities. These educational institutions were chosen based on their establishment date and had at least 500 students.

Years passed and two merchant marine veterans who attended Westminster College met and decided in 2012 that it would be appropriate for the college to take a prominent and visible role in honoring the memory of the SS *Westminster Victory*. Their plan was to request the college administration secure a model of the ship, and have it displayed where it could be most visible to not only students, but to all who visit the college. The college agreed to the plan and private funding was secured for the purchase of a four-foot model. The background research of the ship provided the mariner who had been on the Coordinating Committee sufficient details to write a book on the ship entitled *The Life and Times of the SS Westminster Victory*. On November 9, 2015, the model of the ship and the first copies of the book were dedicated at the college as part of its annual Veteran's Day Chapel program.

Today, Westminster College is the only educational institution of the 150 that had the honor of having a ship named for it, that has a veteran's memorial in the center of the campus that honors the merchant marine, a model of the ship named for the college, and a book written on the life of the ship. These are simple ways to make known the existence of a merchant marine and its role in the military/economic life of the country.

However, there have been millions of men and women who had experiences with merchant ships during a mili-

tary period, and they will understand the need for more ships when viewing a ship model at their institution. Many Victory-class merchant ships were converted into troop transports at the end of WWII, and there are a few things men and women who have been in the service never forget.

They remember their service number, the date they entered active service, and the date their active service ended. They remember how they were transported to a combat zone or new location and how they returned home. Millions of men and women who served in World War II, Korea, and Vietnam remember the name of the ships they were assigned, how many days it took to go overseas, and how long it took to return to America. They probably never forgot the uncomfortable sleeping arrangements, and the two meals a day aboard ship, when they were able to eat. For over 7,000,000 service men and women who just served in WWII, most of them returned to the United States in Victory ship transports. Many of these returning veterans and their families attended the colleges and universities that had ships named for them.

What of the other 149 Victory ships named for educational institutions? There are three remaining Victory ships of the original 534 launched, but only two are named for educational institutions. They are called museum ships, working historical reminders of the great fleet of ships the world will never see again. The *SS Lane Victory* was named for a small black college in Jackson, Tennessee and is berthed in San Pedro, California. It had a distinguished career. The *SS American Victory* was named for American University in Washington, DC and is berthed in Tampa Bay, Florida. It also had a distinguished sailing career. The *SS Red Oak Victory* is named for a small town in Iowa and is berthed in Richmond, California. The ships have been restored and are maintained in working condition only by private volunteer organizations and contributions.

The Victory-class merchant ship made its first appearance in 1944 and building continued until the end of the war. Many of the ships that had been converted to troopships were reconverted back to bulk carriers as troops were returned home. Victory ships carried many of the items that made the Marshall Plan a success. As with many of the ships from the war, Victory ships joined others in reserve. The Korean conflict brought many of these ships out for service again. The long distances needed for supply created a need for the faster ships. When the Vietnam conflict started, over 100 Victory ships were brought out of reserve and put back into service supplying the troops. An average trip from California to Vietnam was over 8,200 miles, and many ships were involved.

Each year colleges and universities encourage their graduates to donate to their institution. If the opportunity was made known that a contribution could be a model of their Victory ship, this would provide a promotional opportunity to make known the existence of the critical role of



Mark Gleeson's book, *The Life and Times of the SS Westminister Victory*, is available for \$17 by contacting campusstore@westminster.edu or calling (724) 946-7216.

the institution and the maritime industry in WWII and beyond. For an expenditure of about \$5,000, a four-foot ship model would provide a long-term visible contribution to the legacy of the institution, and its participation in WWII. Providing funding for a ship model should not be a burden to many graduates of the institution. The critical issue in promoting ship models is how to get the message out to graduates and to school administrations that there is a merchant marine and to win a conflict, many ships are needed. Most schools and universities have some form of veteran memorial in honor of the military service of their men and women, but only Westminster College has a memorial that honors the merchant marine, a model of the WWII troopship named for the college, and a book about their ship.

To this point, there must be someone who, when made aware of the opportunity, will sponsor a ship model for his or her institution. This will be a challenge to all the remaining educational institutions to honor their special wartime legacy of having a ship named for them, and its participation in the winning the war. It would be an opportunity for others to take the same pride in their institutions' participation legacy in the war. The Victory ship model program would enrich the education of future leaders of our country, and their families, in knowing what their educational institution had done in the war so that they could enjoy a life of freedom. It would remind many who had returned from service in a troop transport of time best forgotten, but of a time they all cherish.

The worst thing that can happen is to do nothing to promote and encourage the development of a needed fleet of merchant ships, so they are available to support our nation in time of need. To do nothing is to ignore our nation's need for adequate maritime ship support in a time of conflict. We could possibly lose a conflict if we are not prepared to support our country. A result - there might be only a few individuals left to ask, "why didn't we build more ships?" **Time will tell if there are people who will donate a Victory ship model to their educational institution, and in turn, support and promote their nation's need for a strong and ready merchant marine.**

Editor's note: Mark Gleeson can be contacted at shamrock127@comcast.net



WWII VETERAN GEORGE SHAW RECEIVES TOP RECOGNITION FROM NORWAY

On March 1st, 2022, the Ambassador of Norway to Canada, H.E. Jon Elvedal Fredriksen, together with



WWII Merchant Marine veteran George Clyde Shaw and wife, Helen

Counsellor Anders Holmen Guldbrandsen, presented the Defence Medal to George Clyde Shaw for his service in the Norwegian Merchant Marine during World War II.

The event was hosted by The Royal Canadian Legion, Branch 76, in Qualicum Beach, British Columbia, represented by Branch Commander Ben Villeneuve, who hosted the ceremony.

Commander Villeneuve requested that the Honour Guard present Colors for the Ambassador's Inspection, then introduced Ambassador Fredriksen to

the audience.

After a brief greeting, Ambassador Fredriksen described Norway's World War II history, noting that many young men who served in Norway's Merchant Marine had no idea that Hitler would seize their ports, meaning that their ships couldn't return home. Consequently, most occu-

pied countries sent their vessels to the U.S., where their crews were supplemented by young merchant seamen like George Shaw. However, the U.S. did not consider merchant mariners as veterans until many years later. Like many others, George went on to work his way through college, completing a Master's Degree, and teaching at Yuba College in California for 25 years, later serving as Dean of Language Arts, and finally retiring as Personnel Director.

Upon discovering George's service on both U.S. and Norwegian vessels (thanks to the efforts of AMMV members Sheila Sova and Jens Ege-land), Ambassador Fredriksen was directed to present the

Defence Medal to George Shaw, as well as the Medal of Honour and a Letter of Commendation from the King of Norway.

In accepting the honors, George expressed gratitude and humility that he had come through WWII unscathed while so many others had lost their lives. He finished by thanking Ambassador Fredriksen, the Qualicum Legion, and special friends who had been invited to attend.



M/S Roseville, on which Shaw sailed during WWII (photo credit: www.warsailors.com)



Shaw receiving Defence Medal from Norwegian Ambassador



Group photo including Qualicum Legion Honour Guard



Shaw's Medal of Honour from the King of Norway



Preserving our History — Important Public Hearing Approaches

(Update on efforts to preserve Alameda, CA historic Merchant Marine training site)

Last year we chronicled grassroots efforts to preserve the last remaining WWII era U.S. Maritime Officers Training School in Alameda, CA. This was one of two such WWII facilities – the other was located at Fort Trumbull in Connecticut – and trained over 6,500 seamen to become officers for service – including Douglass North, who after studying and later teaching at the school won a Nobel Prize in Economics in 1993. During the Korean conflict it was the only Maritime Officers Training School. Located on McKay Avenue – named for famed 19th century shipbuilder Donald McKay – many of the school's buildings were named for clippers he designed, as well as other prominent merchant ships. Recognition for Merchant Marines' contributions during WWII has been

slow in arriving – not until 1988 were they granted veteran status, and in March 2020 they were collectively awarded a Congressional Gold Medal. In that spirit, local supporters in Alameda have filed an application to place the Officers Training School site on the National Register of Historic Places. Around seven acres remain of the original 32 that encompassed the original site due to the encroachment of the surrounding city over the decades. But if local developers prevail, there may not be much left to save.

This challenge began in 2018 when the federal government declared 3.5 acres of the property “surplus”, meaning it can be reverted to local government control. To that end – even prior to the transfer of the land to the city – the City of Alameda granted local developers the rights to demolish the barracks, mess hall, and engineering building which comprise the majority of what remains of the original campus. At issue during summer public hearings was whether developers would be obligated to construct a proposed homeless wellness center within the existing historical buildings, as phrased by a local ballot initiative, or whether



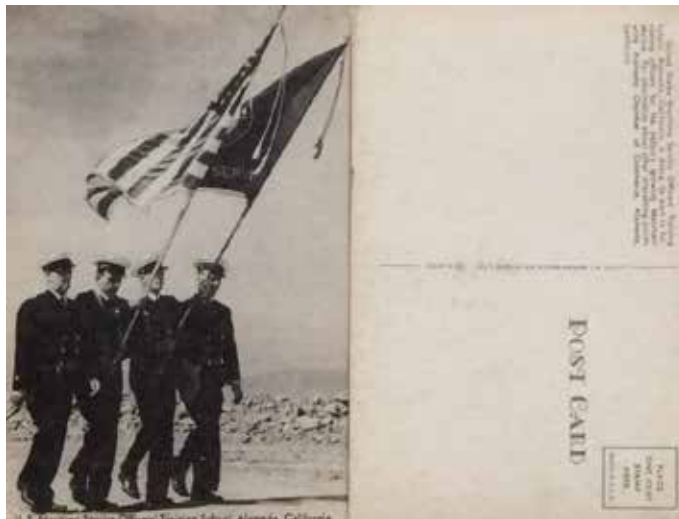
a permit to demolish these buildings would enable them to entirely rebuild the area, removing the footprint and character of the original site. Voters had approved adaptive reuse (but not demolition) of the buildings for that purpose in 2019.

Further complicating the status of the site was a May meeting of Alameda's Historical Ad-

visory Board. On the one hand the HAB confirmed the site as part of Alameda's Historical Buildings Study List, but in the same meeting, voted to approve a certificate of demolition for the buildings on the site. This sent a decidedly mixed message regarding the importance of the site from a local perspective.

As demolition is irreversible, the stakes are high as research continues, and new findings emerge. It wasn't until last summer that one of the great mysteries of the site was resolved, that the primary architect of the project was Harry Bruno, a renowned and prolific California archi-

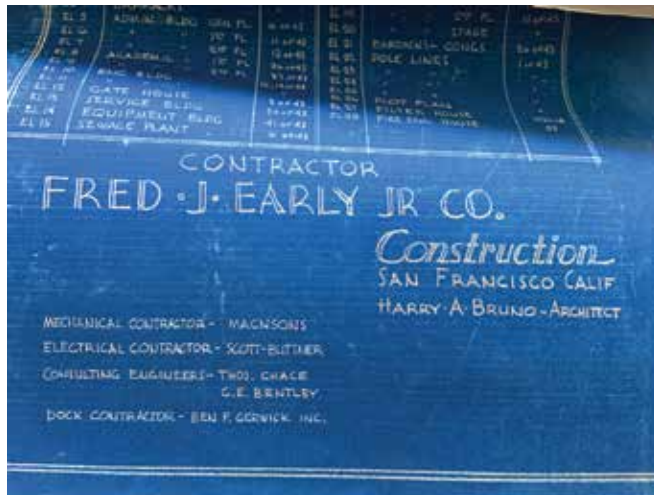
tect. A 1932 UC Berkeley graduate, Bruno was an inducted American Institute of Architects Fellow, whose prolific career included designing the original Jack London Square in Oakland, marinas, schools, and private homes including an expansion of the



personal residence of R. Stanley Dollar, Jr., heir to the Robert Dollar Shipping Company (precursor to American Presidents Line). A local volunteer and researcher unearthed the architect's identity after locating original blueprints in the storage room of the Alameda Museum.

Surprisingly, a prestigious San Francisco architecture firm hired by the federal government in 1996 to research the site was unable to locate these blueprints, leading them to assume that the architect was unknown.

Upcoming on April 29th at 9 AM PT (12 PM ET), there will be a public hearing before the California State Historic Resources Commission to consider the application filed by local Merchant Marine supporters and the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society that the site be added to the National Register of Historic Places, which could recast the discussion about how developers can proceed with reusing the site. Supporters strongly encourage anyone interested in seeing this important piece of history preserved to write a letter



in support of the application to place the site on the National Register. While previous hearings in the past two years were held on Zoom, this meeting will be held in person in Sacramento. **Please send your letters before April 15th to: Julianne Polanco, California State Historic Preservation Officer, 1725 23rd Street, Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816.**

Submitted by Carmen Reid
carmereid@gmail.com



Pictured at the Navy Armed Guard & Merchant Marine Museum group's monthly breakfast meeting on January 15th in Fellsmere, FL are (left to right): Sandy Synder, Stephen Synder (Region #1 VP), Capt. Dru DiMattia (National President), Kimberly King, Capt. Rick Martucci, Ross Rowlinson (Rowlinson Media Group), and Steve Lantz (volunteer/trustee). Currently, the museum's artifacts are displayed at the Museum of Military History in Kissimmee, FL.



Monkey Shines in the Indian Ocean

As a young graduate of Sheepshead Bay, dressed in a nice, clean uniform, wearing a pea coat and wool cap, carrying my sea bag, I was going to conquer the world. A group of us graduates were bused to a hotel in New York City somewhere. On the way to the room the loudspeaker system called my name to report to the front desk. I did this, produced my papers, and after being checked, I signed a release form. The clerk handed me a note with a ship's name, SS *Edward W. Scripps*, the address and a five-dollar bill. I was to take a cab right there, right now. The cab went to Brooklyn somewhere and stopped by a railroad yard. The driver said, "You see that light way over there? Well, that's your ship and you'll have to walk from here."

It was midnight, the weather was terribly cold and snow was beginning to fall. There were no lights in the railroad yard. I felt my way along the tracks scared to death I'd get in the way of a moving train because they were pushing railroad cars here and there. Finally, I saw this ugly ship, a fence, and watchmen's booth and a pier, but no people, no guards, nobody. I climbed the gangplank and stepped on board. I did salute the flag but there wasn't a soul around to greet me.

From this beginning I began to know that one must make do and create the kind of environment to your liking. Though the quarters were small they could be made very nice with elbow grease - soap and water and a little paint. Much depended upon the persons living within. I've seen quarters in superb condition located right beside identical rooms that look like hog pens.

It didn't take long for me to form an opinion about the Merchant Marine on this first voyage. The food is only as good as the cooks who prepared it. The ship was only as neat as the men made it to be. The efficiency of the crew was only as good as the leaders and the morale of the men only a reflection of the mix of personalities. There were many great seamen sailing during the war and a lot that were the dregs of society. This last lot had only three things in mind - booze, gambling and women. Manpower to sail all the ships during the war was in short supply and some of the men couldn't pass a physical exam even if there was

one. As long as you had seaman's papers and belonged to the union you could sign on most any ship and the ship-pers were glad you did.

As the cargo loading progressed on this first trip, I decided that war is a terrible waste. All the bombs were crated with beautiful clear 1 x 12 pine boards. The fighter planes and trucks lashed to the top decks were covered

with gorgeous heavy seamless tarps and great looking boxes loaded with ammunition - it was mind boggling. All that packing going to waste...

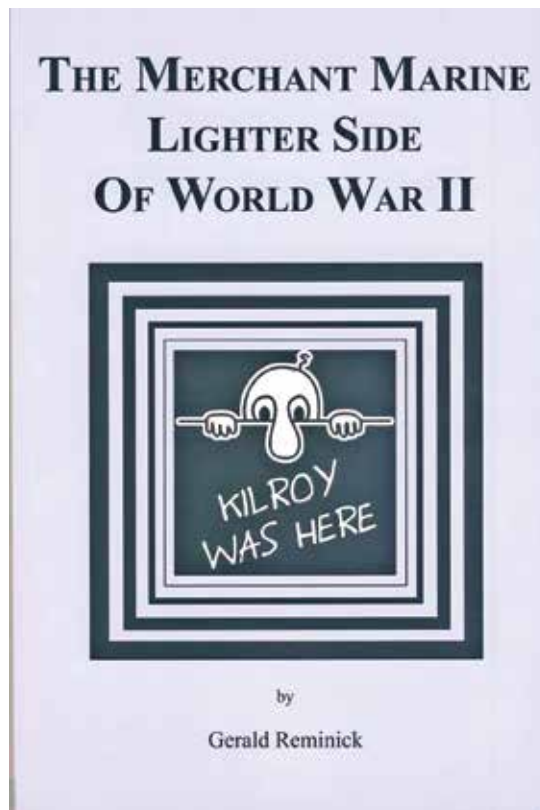
I signed on the *Webb Miller* for the 3rd time on September 4, 1945 and sailed out of Baltimore late in the day. Word got around that we were on our way to India - alone and with no convoy. Next stop was Port Said, Egypt to enter the Suez Canal in about four weeks. The trip was rather uneventful until we got into the Indian Ocean. It was hellishly hot but easy sailing. The sunsets over the ocean were breathtaking and you didn't see another ship anywhere...

Weeks later, we sailed up the Ganges River to Calcutta to unload. Shore leave was in order and my roommate Blacky, who fired the 4-to-8 shift [in the engine room], just had to go ashore. He was a nice enough guy but he couldn't hold his booze. He got drunk and bought a reed basket with a real live cobra in it. When I saw Blacky I just about flipped. He is not aware of how dan-

gerous the snake was and after some strong coffee he was persuaded to return the snake to the kid he bought it from.

A couple of days later Blacky had to go ashore again. This time he bought a tame black-tailed monkey. He brought it to our room, tied it up and passed out. The monkey meanwhile was able to reach all three of our lockers, which he proceeded to open and throw the contents around the room. Next the monkey squeezed all the toothpaste and shaving cream tubes and emptied the other bottles of liquid. Never did I see such a mess. Three days later we were still trying to clean it up but I had made Blacky promise to never to do it again or I was going to the captain.

Cargo was unloading and going well and we had one final shore leave. This time Blacky brought back two pretty



This story is part of Gerald Reminick's book, "The Merchant Marine Lighter Side of WWII", available from Glencannon Press.

parakeets. This I could live with and he hung the cage near a port hole. A few days later I came in to find blood and feathers all over the place. The door had apparently opened; the birds escaped and gotten caught in the electric fan.

We finished unloading and departed Calcutta. Our next stop was Columbo, Ceylon. We anchored out rather than tying up to the dock. Cargo was loaded from barges and shipside. It took several days. Then from shore came a barge with a big box covered with canvas. It looked strange. It was loaded on hold No. 3. Two more strange boxes were loaded on top of hold No. 4 and hold No. 5. The crew had some fun guessing what these boxes were. Finally, the tarps were removed and there stood these bamboo cages all tied together containing 300 wild monkeys all screaming at one time.

The animals were really wild, noisy, and stinky. The purser was in charge of them but he was scared to death even to give them food which was put in metal pans and pushed to the cages. The monkeys would reach through the bamboo to get the food. Think of this - 100 wild monkeys in a cage about 12 x 16 x 8 feet high and there were three cages. The bottom of each cage was off the hatch top so that a hose could wash away the dung. Quarters for the engine crew were next to the door to hold No. 4. Wow, what an awful smell and it got worse.

Also on board were three men attached to the Navy O.S.S. and a German Shepherd dog named Duke. We named the three men "Ugly Americans." "They were mean-spirited, arrogant, self-centered and hateful. I was ashamed they belong to the human race. These ugly guys lived on the fantail quarters where the gun crews used to be so that they were well away from the crew. They would try to hit the oilers with bottles dropped from overhead as the oiler passed through on his hourly check of the last propeller bearing.

We departed Ceylon in early November and three days later all the monkeys escaped from their cages. The

Skipper Warns of Monkeyshines. By Footloose Trio Arriving Here

***Thinks Three Elusive Simians May Abandon Their
Smokestack Hideout and Test Out Legs on Land
at Washington Park; 200 Others in Cages***

Any resident of the Washington Park section who sees three brown monkeys—rhesus variety—in his backyard this morning should contact Capt. Walter H. Townley of the S. S. Webb Miller, battle-scarred Liberty ship tied up at the Municipal Dock at Field's Point.

Up to midnight the monkeys were 'secure' aboard ship in their self-chosen home of the past week—the vessel's smokestack.

But Captain Townley worried last night lest they "jump ship" to test out their sea legs on land for the first time since Nov. 11.

The monkeys are part of a general cargo, including rubber, jute, gunnies and cinnamon oil, aboard the 10,000-ton vessel which arrived here from India yesterday after failing for a week to and a berth in New York City. The ship will unload here.

Consigned to Meen's Brothers, New York animal traders, and scheduled to be used in infantile paralysis experiments, the monkeys numbered 300 when the ship left Calcutta. There are about 200 left, all but the three secure in cages on the ship's deck. The others succumbed to rigorous weather on the trip, except for one which jumped overboard en route.

The Webb Miller, named for the famous war correspondent who was killed during a London blackout early in the war, took on most of her cargo at Ceylon and India.

The day she sailed from Calcutta, about 25 officers and soldiers came aboard. Then the fun began. It was Armistice Day, the boys were on their way home, and it wasn't fit-

Continued on Page 11, Col. 7.

The Providence Journal of January 11, 1946 ran an article describing the Webb Miller's unusual cargo and advising citizens of that city to be on the lookout for monkeys. Courtesy of Allen Kinsinger and the Providence Journal.

crew knew that it was the "Ugly Three," who had picked the locks. (Contrary to the news article that was reported, all the monkeys had escaped, not just fifty, and when we arrived home they weren't more than fifty monkeys alive. And more than one jumped overboard.)

Sometime after the monkeys got loose, they started to get hungry. This was terrible. Liberty ships had no screens on their portholes. Going through the Indian Ocean and Red Sea was hot and we had to keep the portholes closed at mess time because these animals would dash through grabbing food and escape any way they could. If you tried to catch them, they would claw you up and bite you with those big teeth, making a nasty wound."

Well, this was all fun and games for the "Ugly Three" and Duke. Duke would only obey one of the Three. The "Ugly Three" would try to bait a monkey to the open deck and then Duke would take chase. The monkey would run on the gunnel until it got to the bow and with no place to go would leap into the ocean. For the "Ugly Three," this was sport and they kept a tally of how many abandoned ship.

There were other so-called sporting events that the “Three” took part in....

Sometime later a bulletin was posted offering ten cents for each monkey caught. Down in the engine room we had monkeys all over but we didn’t eat anything there so the monkeys didn’t bother us much. As wild as they were, they were real smart. They never got entangled in any of the machinery nor did they go in the shaft alley.

My boss and I decided to catch monkeys. We cut a 50-gallon drum in half, laid it on the deck plates by the condenser, made a stick about 8 inches long and tied a string to the stick. We then set up the 1/2 oil drum (barrel) and put fruit underneath for the starving monkeys. When the monkey went in to get the fruit, we would pull the string and the barrel would fall down with it trapped inside. All around the engine room there were these eyes peeping out. The engine room lights cause the whites of their eyes to kind of glow so it wasn’t difficult to see dozens of them. We set the trap and waited.

You’ll never believe what happened. It took a while for one of the monkeys to work up the nerve to go to the food and we stood a good distance away and we were ready. All of a sudden, a wild monkey jumped out of the bilges and ran to the barrel and then he pulled the string. We did not catch one monkey but we had a lot of fun setting the trap and watching them pull the string. To this day I don’t understand because the animals were starving to death.

I don’t know how many monkeys were captured. The “Ugly Three” and Duke caught some but Duke had them chewed up pretty bad. Anyway, the night after the monkeys were caught, they escaped again. The purser was really on the warpath now.

About this time, we were crossing the Atlantic for New York. It got cold and all those monkeys moved to the smokestack or the engine room. Then they started to get sick and die. The engine room was one stinky morgue. We pulled rotting carcasses from the most imaginable places.

The worst was from between the settling tanks and the hull, a piece at a time. The stench was unbelievable.


Finally, it was payback time. A week before we arrived in New York, the Atlantic put on a show of force. It got very, very, rough and we had no hot food for two days. During this time the “Ugly Three” got major seasick. They spend a lot of time leaning on the rail. The cook disliked them intensely and went out of his way to insure their sickness. We never heard a peep out of them again and when the trip was over, they left the ship quietly. It’s a shame we couldn’t make Duke sick.

We arrived in New York right after Christmas. We anchored quarter mile from the Statue of Liberty. The ship was not allowed to dock in New York. We needed provisions. We all smelled bad. We just wanted this to end. Finally, after more than a week of waiting, the captain told us we were going to Providence. We arrived there in the daylight. I was topside watching the tugboats work a ship to the dock. Not more than ten feet to the dock I noticed monkeys jumping off, at least eight that I saw.

Two days later we were paid off and I went home. Since then, all these fifty-five years, I haven’t told this tale often because the audience thinks I’m fibbing. I knew there was a news report about the monkeys but I was unable to obtain a copy until a year ago. After many phone calls I found a lady who knew where the archives were for that year. She succeeded in finding an article and sent me a copy which I have enclosed for you.

Well, there you have it. I’ve never done this before but I find it to be a good feeling remembering... Alan Kinsinger.

According to the Providence Journal newspaper, the monkeys were to be used in infantile paralysis experiments. Infantile paralysis is commonly known as polio.

(Alan Kinsinger’s story is an excerpt from Gerald Reminick, *The Merchant Marine Lighter Side of World War II*. The Glencannon Press, El Cerrito, CA., Copyright, 2016); reprinted with permission. 

IMPORTANT MESSAGE REGARDING YOUR MEMBERSHIP

Our AMMV Memberships run one year from July 1st to June 30th. Some members choose to renew for more than one year so their individual membership may not expire this June. Please check your membership card to see when your membership expires or call me, 475-470-9200, to ask.

To renew your AMMV Membership please use the preaddressed envelope enclosed in this magazine and mail a check for \$32 to the address on the front of the envelope. That payment will renew your annual membership from July 1st, 2022 to June 30th, 2023. Please be sure to include any changes to your contact information, such as address, telephone number or email. You may also renew online on our website ammv.us with a credit card.

If you are a member of a chapter, please contact your chapter secretary or treasurer regarding renewal of your membership.

Lynn Kelly
National Office Administrator
ammermarvets@gmail.com



JUST RECOGNITION

Update on AMMV Efforts to Honor USMM Veterans

By Patrick Cotter

AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee December 10, 2021 through March 5, 2022

On behalf of AMMV's 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 salute by the Joint Chiefs of Staff for the USMM flag while playing the USMM anthem, *Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!*, during the National Memorial Day Concerts. In addition, AMMV wants to see the USMM flag included in the color guard with the Stars and Stripes and the six U.S. service flags during the concerts. I am also reporting on AMMV's interest in a Senate bill to honor Gold Star families.

The Government Affairs committee has made valuable contacts, obtained positive support, and AMMV members have provided examples of their local efforts to honor USMM WWII veterans on Memorial Day. We still need to receive an affirmative response from the television producers that the USMM flag and anthem will be included in the 2022 television broadcast and all future presentations of the Nation Memorial Day Concerts. Timing is a concern as we approach Memorial Day.

On December 3, 2021, Rep. Jimmy Panetta said he would not provide copies of what were termed "...formal DOD/DOT approvals..." to salute the USMM flag and anthem in the Memorial Day shows. In order to obtain the documents, I contacted MARAD and DOT by email and telephone. Since DOD did not respond, I sent a Freedom of Information Request to DOD's Joint Chiefs of Staff to obtain this brief document. Normally, a FOIA request is legally required to be completed in 20 days, but DOD has nearly 4,000 such requests and they are delayed in responding. I submitted additional information asking for an expedited response because we need the DOD document for negotiations with the Corporation for Public Broadcasting (CPB), PBS, CCI, and Federal agencies responsible for coordination on the show. DOD's anticipated response date is in April 2022, which is probably too late in the 2022 television production scheduled. MARAD has not provided their document either.

I contacted the Executive Director of the Friends of the National WWII Memorial and the Superintendent of the

National Parks Service (NPS) National Mall and Memorial Parks. Both senior managers pledged to honor USMM WWII veterans in speaking engagements and when opportunities are presented to salute the USMM flag and play the anthem at their events. AMMV leadership is very encouraged by their positive responses. The NPS Superintendent contacted the President and CEO of the U.S. Navy Memorial Foundation and recommended that he reach out to AMMV. The CEO spoke to Capt. DiMattia and expressed significant interest in including honors for the USMM at upcoming events at the Navy Memorial in Washington, DC for the *Blessing of the Fleet* (April 9) and the *Laying of a Wreath on Memorial Day* (May 30). Capt. DiMattia is collaborating directly with the Navy Memorial to see that the USMM honors are well represented at the ceremonies, and he expressed AMMV's appreciation for the opportunity to honor USMM veterans at the National Navy Memorial's events.

Since AMMV did not receive a positive result from Rep. Panetta's negotiations and Rep. John Garamendi's staff would not take up the issue with PBS or CCI, Capt. DiMattia decided to contact the Chair of the Board for the CPB. In a January 7, 2022 letter, Capt. DiMattia asked the Chair to work with PBS to reconsider their refusal to include the USMM flag and anthem in the National Memorial Day Concerts. After numerous phone calls and emails, the Chair responded on March 1, 2022, saying "If the Department of Defense determines that the Merchant Marines (sic) are an official branch of the armed services and should be included in the "Salute to Services," we will act accordingly." This response clearly shows that obtaining approval from the Joint Chiefs of Staff should be the focus of AMMV's efforts.

In order to move forward on AMMV's goal, Capt. DiMattia sent a February 7, 2022 letter to the Director of the White House Office of Public Engagement (OPE) requesting assistance in working with Federal agencies responsible for the National Memorial Day Concert, including DOD and the National Park Service. Time is of the essence to get formal approval from PBS and CCI to honor USMM WWII veterans appropriately during the Memorial Day shows. I contacted the Director of Veterans Affairs at OPE



JUST RECOGNITION

and provided several documents to aid in his outreach to DOD. I am looking forward to the assistance from the White House for our goal.

As a result of AMMV's coordination with the Executive Director of the Friends of the National WWII Memorial, she contacted Capt. DiMattia to alert him that Senator Elizabeth Warren and Senator Joni Ernst sponsored a bill on February 2, 2022 titled "Gold Star Families Day Act", to designate the last Monday in September as a Federal holiday. The bill mentions Gold Star families of the Armed Forces, but it does not refer to Merchant Mariners who gave their lives in service to our Nation.

I am working with Capt. DiMattia to send a comment letter to Senator Warren requesting her to add "...or in the Merchant Marine..." in the same section of the bill that mentions the Armed Forces. I am researching the USMM policies and standards for families to display the Gold Star flag that honors loved ones who died in action. An AMMV member with expertise in USMM history has been very helpful in providing references to a 1943 regulation on the Gold Star flag. Also, I contacted a number of military museums and Federal agencies to determine what the accepted standards or policies are for flying a Gold Star flag when a Merchant Mariner dies in service to our Nation. I will keep you posted on AMMV's comments and any changes to the bill.

Fortunately, several AMMV members contacted Capt.

DiMattia and me to express their interest in helping to get the message out about honoring USMM WWII veterans. During the reporting period, I spoke to AMMV members from Pennsylvania (2 WWII veterans), Massachusetts, California (2 members), and South Carolina about their experiences and interest in moving forward on the goal of honoring USMM veterans at public events, veterans' parks, and the television shows. Their historical perspectives and support are what drives AMMV's continuing efforts. My advice for AMMV members' action is to work with your city or town and the local PBS station to demonstrate respect for the USMM veterans of all major U.S. military conflicts. Informing your state and national legislative representatives about the contributions of the USMM is also a very worthwhile activity. The more we educate our local leaders and legislative representatives, the better the contributions of the USMM will be understood.

If you or your USMM friends have additional stories or activities that will help AMMV with our goals and negotiations, I would enjoy hearing from you. Please take a moment to send me an email about your activities. I am happy to provide information if you need support.

Patrick Cotter

Member at Large

AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee

coolenvconsulting@gmail.com



Congratulations!



Recently, AMMV President Capt. Dru DiMattia attended the surprise 75th wedding anniversary celebration of WWII Merchant Mariner George Koch and wife, Jean.

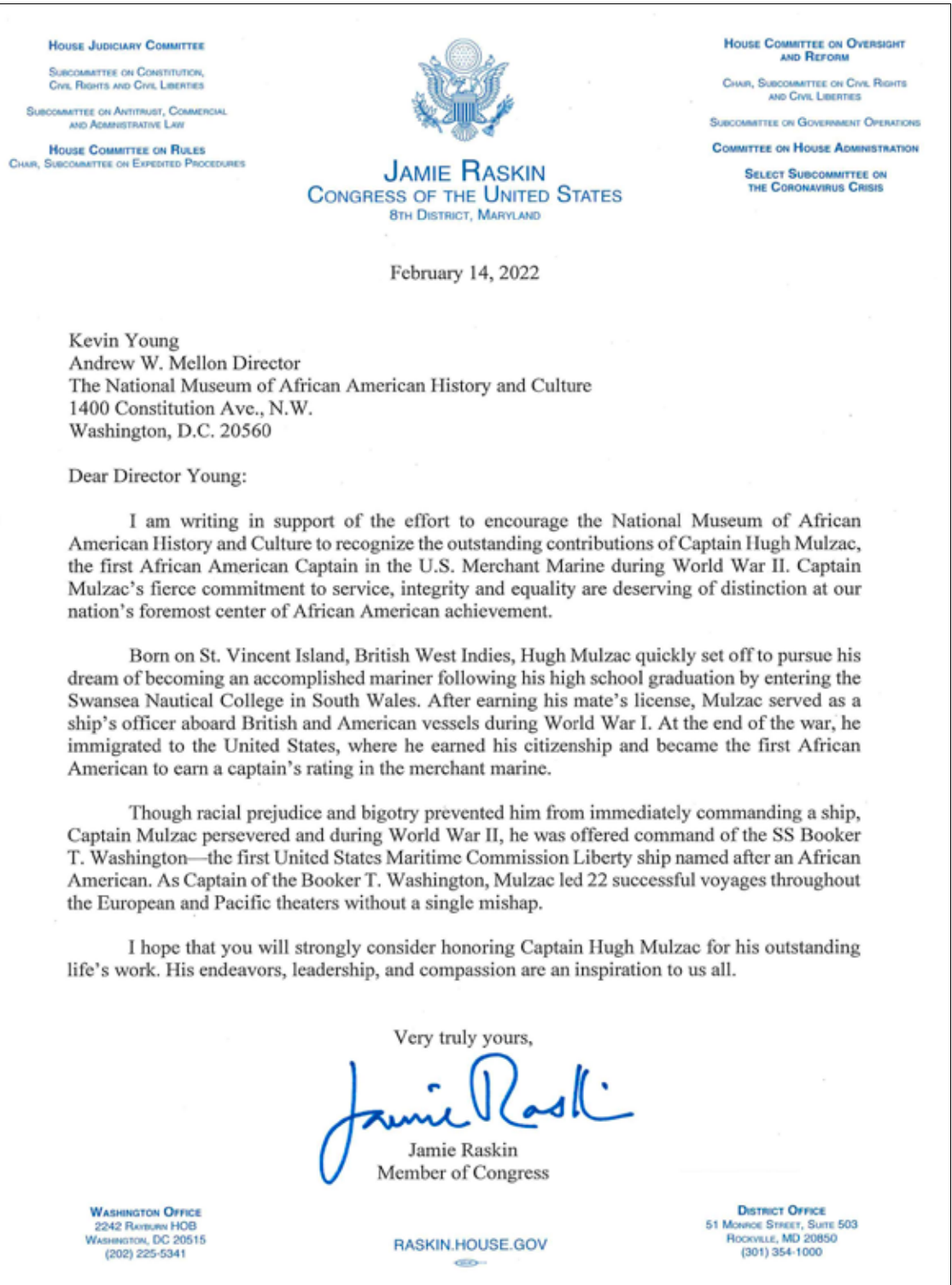


JUST RECOGNITION

Efforts continue to recognize Capt. Hugh Mulzac

Following the recognition bestowed upon Capt. Hugh Mulzac at the AMMV National Convention this past September, efforts continue along several avenues to further memorialize his legacy. Captain Mulzac (1886-1971) was the first African-American to command a U.S. merchant vessel in WWII.

One example is the following letter, sent from Maryland Congressman Jamie Raskin to the National Museum of African American History and Culture.



The following Constitution & By-Laws were approved by the AMMV membership and went into effect on 1/01/2021. In early January 2022, AMMV received notification of the successful transition to a 501(c)(3) organization from a 501(c)(19) veterans' organization.

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS INC.

CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

Preamble

The American Merchant Marine Veterans (AMMV) is a not for profit pro-American organization established to gain recognition for what the AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE has accomplished for our country in war and peace. Our key purpose is to celebrate the accomplishments of the American flagged Merchant Marine and to assist the veterans of the American Merchant Marine and their families, and all veterans of the military of the United States and their families, by providing counseling to veterans, and their widows and orphans, to assist them in legal, financial, and emotional matters resulting in connection with service to our country, and to provide information regarding benefits and services available to them.

AMMV is also dedicated to promoting, and educating the U.S. people and government as to, the services that American Merchant Mariners have provided to the nation in connection with the war efforts and preservation of national security. Further, AMMV is dedicated to promoting, and educating the U.S. people and government as to, the value and importance of maintaining and supporting a strong American Merchant Marine fleet.

CONSTITUTION

Article I - NAME OF THIS ORGANIZATION

The name of this corporation is the "AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS, INC."

Article II - ENABLING LAW

The corporation is organized pursuant to the State of Florida "Not for Profit" Corporation Act.

Article III – OUR PURPOSE IS:

A. To provide counseling to veterans of the American Merchant Marine and all branches of the American military, their widows and orphans, to assist them in legal, financial, and emotional matters in connection with those veterans' service to our country, to provide information regarding benefits and services available to them.

B. To educate the American public about the services that American Merchant Mariners have provided to the nation in combat and preservation of national security, and the continuing importance of the American Merchant Marine fleet.

C. To encourage loyalty to our country's laws and constitution.

D. To do such acts and carry on such business as may be permitted of nonprofit corporations under the laws of the State of Florida, in order to accomplish charitable and educational purposes of the Corporation; and

E. To solicit, receive and administer funds, grants and property for the charitable and educational purposes of the Corporation.

F. There shall be no discrimination by any Officer, Director, or Member against anyone because of race, creed or national origin.

Article IV - MEMBERSHIP

ELIGIBILITY: The following persons are eligible for membership in this Corporation:

Any and all persons who have the desire and interest to support the purpose of the American Merchant Marine industry.

Honorary membership may be offered to any individual who through the Arts and Sciences and/or through his or her efforts has furthered the cause of the Merchant Marine. Such membership must be approved by the Board of Directors. Honorary members pay no dues and will not have a vote in membership elections or other matters.

Each member shall pay annual dues as prescribed by the ByLaws.

Article V - ORGANIZATION

The governing body of this organization shall be a Board of Directors to be constituted as the ByLaws prescribe.

Article VI - MEETINGS

The organization will meet once a year to elect officers and conduct such other business as may be properly come before the membership. This meeting shall be called the National Convention.

In addition to the National Convention, business of the organization may be conducted at regularly scheduled meetings, or at special meetings. Meetings may occur in-person, or by use of any means of communication by which all participants may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting.

The Board of Directors shall convene at the National Convention or at any other time that may be determined necessary by a majority of the Board.

Article VII – AMENDMENTS TO THE CONSTITUTION AND BYLAWS

This Constitution and ByLaws may be amended as provided in Article V of the ByLaws.

AMERICAN MERCHANT MARINE VETERANS BYLAWS

ARTICLE 1 - MEMBERSHIP

All paid up members shall be considered as active members and entitled to privileges of voting and active participation in all activities of the organization.

Application for membership shall be accompanied by national dues. Applicants must meet eligibility requirements as described in the Constitution.

At some future date, life membership may be available upon payment of life membership dues as established by the National Board of Directors.

Membership in this organization shall be suspended for non-payment of dues 90 days after they become due. Names of suspended members shall be removed from the mailing list of the National publication.

The National membership list of names and addresses shall not be released to anyone, public or private concerns. This does not preclude distribution and use of member contact information by Officers and Board of Directors members in the performance of their assigned duties. If any individual Chapter wishes to exchange their membership list with another Chapter, that would be at their discretion.

ARTICLE II - NATIONAL OFFICERS

SECTION 201 – ELECTED OFFICERS AND VACANCIES

- A. The officers of the national organization shall consist of:
1. President
 2. Executive Vice President and a minimum of 7 Regional Vice Presidents.
 3. Secretary
 4. Treasurer
 5. National Directors (all duly elected officers, Past Presidents, Regional Vice Presidents and Executive Officers of each Chapter shall be a National Director.)

6. All AMMV Past Presidents shall serve as an ex-officio director of the Board.

- B. An elected officer may resign at any time. Such resignation shall be made in writing to the Board of Directors.
- C. Any officer, elected or appointed, may be removed for just cause by the Board of Directors by a majority vote whenever the best interests of the organization will be served thereby.
- D. Any vacancy occurring in any office, except that of President, shall be filled by a person receiving a majority of votes of the Board of Directors at a special meeting or by mail poll after proper notification. A vacancy in the office of President shall be filled by the Executive Vice President.

SECTION 202 – ELIGIBILITY, NOMINATIONS, ELECTION AND TERM OF OFFICE.

To be eligible for any National or Regional Vice President office, the candidate must be a member in good standing. A member may hold one elective office and more than one appointive office. Elections for National office will be held on odd numbered years; elections for Regional Vice President office will be held on even numbered years.

All persons seeking National or Regional Vice President office (including those eligible for re-election) shall notify AMMV National Headquarters (Office Administrator) and/or the National President by mail or email by December 31st of the year prior to desired election. Beginning on January 1st of any given election year, no previously undeclared candidate(s) will be considered. Nominations “from the floor” during the National Convention for any National or Regional Vice President office(s) will not be allowed. All elected National Officers shall hold their office for a term of two (2) years commencing at the start of the fiscal year, as stated in Section 209 of the ByLaws, and shall hold office for a term of two (2) years or until installation of their successor, if after the end of their fiscal elected year. Installation shall be before the end of the annual convention at which the officer is elected. In the absence of any duly elected officer, he or she may be installed when represented by any member selected for that purpose. No president can serve over two (2) year terms. However, if the president is elected after absence from office for at least one (1) term, then he or she shall be eligible for two (2) consecutive two (2) year terms.

SECTION 203 – NATIONAL CONVENTION

- A. The National Convention shall be held at least one week prior to, or one week after National Maritime Day, May 22nd. Some flexibility may be allowed for obtaining

favorable rates, with the approval of the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors.

B. The AMMV News magazine (official quarterly publication of the AMMV organization) shall serve as official notice to all members and existing chapters of the National Convention dates, location, and details.

C. The National Convention location should, when possible, be rotated by Region.

D. The minutes from the National Convention will be published in the next regularly scheduled issue of the official publication (AMMV News).

E. The purpose of this convention shall be to conduct business necessary for the efficient operation of the organization.

SECTION 204 – ELECTED NATIONAL OFFICERS – POWERS & DUTIES.

A. PRESIDENT

1. The National President shall preside over all meetings of the Board of Directors and the National Convention. The National President shall work to the best of his ability to further the aims and policies of the organization. The National President shall coordinate and supervise the activities of all National Officers.
2. The President shall be able to receive Expense allowance, to cover the cost of performing his duties in office, not to exceed \$4,000.00 annually.
3. Section 204 (F) details duties of the National President in relation to meeting payment obligations of the organization.

B. EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT

1. The National Executive Vice President shall assist the President and in his/her absence, shall discharge the duties of the National President and shall assume the duties of the President for the remainder of term if the President is absent for any reason, including resignation or inability to serve for any reason.
2. The Executive Vice President shall be able to receive expense allowance, to cover the cost of performing his duties in office not to exceed \$1,500.00 annually.

C. REGIONAL VICE-PRESIDENT

1. The National Regional Vice President shall assist the President and the Chapter Executive Officers (CEO) and Board of Directors in the operations of

their respective districts when needed.

2. They shall be available to each Chapter to arbitrate any Constitution and ByLaws violations.
3. They shall check and screen all Regional District applications for Charter to National. They must adhere to the Constitution and reject any infractions.
4. They shall notify all local Chapters within a Region and the Executive Officer and Board of Directors of a pending formation of same.
5. They shall carry out all assignments as directed by the National President and direct all correspondence to the National Office and a copy of all Chapters in their district.
6. The Regional Vice President shall be able to receive expenses to cover the cost of traveling to Chapters in his region. Also, for the postage and phone expenses while performing the duties of his office. This amount not to exceed \$600.00 annual expense allowance and is to cover the cost of performing his duties in office.

D. SECRETARY

1. The National Secretary shall attend all business meetings of the National Convention and meetings of the Board of Directors and shall be responsible for the minutes of the meetings. The National Secretary shall provide the Editor of the official publication with the edited and typed proceedings of the business sessions of the National Convention within thirty (30) days after the last business session of the National Convention.
2. The National Administrator will receive all monies and deposit them into the National Treasury and shall provide reports of deposits to the National Secretary to include information on all members who paid their dues. The National Secretary shall perform such duties as the National President may from time to time prescribe. The National Secretary shall make a quarterly report of his/her activities to the National President with a copy to the National Executive Vice President. The National Secretary may receive compensation as specified by the Board of Directors.
3. The National Secretary shall notify the Board of Directors of all meetings.
4. The National Secretary shall be able to receive expense allowance, to cover the cost of performing his duties in office not to exceed \$500.00 annually.

E. TREASURER

1. The National Treasurer shall attend all business meetings of the National Convention, and all meetings of the Board of Directors. The National Treasurer shall have custody of all monies, bonds and item of value; and shall compile and maintain a complete set of records to divulge the true financial records (status) of the organization suitable to be audited by a Certified Public Accountant.
2. The National Treasurer shall insure valid signatures specimens are on record at all institutions of deposit. Section 204 (F) details duties of the National Treasurer in relation to meeting payment obligations of the organization.
3. The National Treasurer shall purchase, at the expense of the organization, a fidelity bond covering all officers authorized to sign or countersign checks and any National officers handling monies or securities of the organization. The National Treasurer shall prepare a financial statement for the fiscal year ending June 30th. This fiscal statement shall be published in the August issue of the official publication. The National Treasurer shall prepare for the Board of Directors a quarterly financial report of the 15th day following the end of the quarter.
4. The National Treasurer shall be able to receive expense allowance, to cover the cost of performing his duties in office not to exceed \$500.00 annually.

E. NATIONAL OFFICERS & METHODS OF ISSUING MONIES/PAYMENTS DUE

1. There are two methods in which AMMV will meet its payment obligations. The first method is the longstanding traditional method, in which the National Treasurer shall pay out monies in payment of obligation only on authority given by the National President. If using this payment method, all checks shall be signed by the National Treasurer and countersigned by the National President or any Board Member (when necessary). The second method allows for the National President to directly issue due payments electronically via the use of online banking. If using this payment method, the National Treasurer will be notified by the National President via email with the details of each electronic transaction. The National Vice President shall be copied on such emails.
2. It is understood that the four elected National Officers have the means to set-up an online profile

and to view AMMV's transaction record at any time. On the authority of mutual agreement between the National President and the National Vice President, the National Office Administrator shall have "guest viewing" privileges to access to this online account in order to better perform his/her duties.

3. It is intended that the use of online banking, which allows for the automatic record keeping of payment transactions, will provide a quick and accurate recall of transactions for use in any audit situation. In addition, the separate email records of the National President, Vice President and Treasurer would give auditors additional information regarding the processing of online transactions.

SECTION 205 – NATIONAL BOARD OF DIRECTORS.

- A. The property and business of the organization shall be managed by a Board of Directors as per Constitution Article V. and as constituted per Article II Section 201, 205 and 206 of the ByLaws. A National Board of Directors member, unable to attend a meeting, may appoint, per proxy, a member in good standing to fulfill his duties. The Board of Directors member unable to attend shall submit a Proxy letter to this effect to the National President before said meeting.
- B. As entrusted by the Board, the National President, as Chairman of the Board, will designate an Executive Committee of the Board, consisting of the National Officers, immediate Past President and the Regional Vice Presidents, which will be empowered to act in all capacities of the Board when it is not in session, except for the authority to remove any elected National or Regional officer, or the authority to expend funds beyond an amount that is 10 percent of the approved Annual Budget. All actions of the Executive Committee shall be decided by a simple majority vote. The Committee shall maintain a written record of all of its proceedings and votes taken and render a written report to the Board not later than 10 days prior to the call to order of the National Convention. Two-thirds of the Executive Committee, including the National President, shall constitute a quorum for the transaction of Board of Directors' Business.
- C. The National President shall call a meeting of the Board of Directors not later than the calendar day prior to the call to order of the National Convention. Additional meetings or polling by mail or telephone of the Board, may be called by the National President, or by a majority of the Board whenever the Executive Committee of the Board is unable to act on an issue or is viewed as having exceeded its authority.

- D. A legal quorum shall consist of a majority of the Board of Directors, one of whom shall be either the National President or National Executive Vice President.

SECTION 206 - VOTING PROCEDURES

A. SELECTION OF NATIONAL DELEGATES

Voting procedures (excluding full Board voting) outlined under Section 206 (A), paragraphs 1-4, will apply only for the purposes of voting on organizational Resolutions and/or other incidental business that may arise at the National Convention. Voting for National and Regional officers will be conducted via a mail ballot system as defined in Section 206 (C); voting on proposed changes to the AMMV Constitution and ByLaws shall be conducted as provided in Section 501.

1. Each local Chapter, at a regular meeting prior to the National Convention shall select a delegate or delegates to the National Convention to represent the local chapter members. The delegate or delegates shall represent the voice of their Chapter.
2. The local Chapter Executive Officer shall certify their Chapter delegates to represent the Chapter members and the respective secretaries will authenticate the delegates' credentials letter. The credentials letter of the local Chapter delegates shall list by name each member of the local Chapter they are representing. If the CEO is not attending the convention, a delegate may be designated to serve as a representative of the CEO, for convention Board of Directors business. Such credentials letter shall be initiated by each individual Chapter.
3. Each delegate will present the credentials letter to the Nominating & Credentials Officer prior to the first business meeting of the National Convention. The Nominating & Credentials Officer, with assistance from the National Office Administrator, will verify the credentials letter and determine if each member is in fact a bona fide member.
4. National delegates who have not presented their credentials to the Nominating & Credentials Officer before the Convention has been called to order will not be permitted to vote.

B. VOTING BY INDIVIDUALS

National members-in-good-standing with "Member-At-Large" status, while attending the National Convention, may cast an individual vote in each instance where a vote for an organizational Resolution or other incidental (non-Board) business is called for. Voting for National and Regional officers will be conducted via a mail ballot system

as defined in Section 206 (C); voting on proposed changes to the AMMV Constitution and ByLaws shall be conducted as provided in Section 501.

C. COUNTING AND RECORDING THE BALLOTS BY COMMITTEE

1. On any given election cycle, ballots for National offices or Regional Vice President offices shall be mailed by AMMV HQ to all National members-in-good-standing, regardless of whether such members are members of a chapter or Members-At-Large, and regardless of whether such members are full or associate members.
2. Each ballot will include a return envelope with current address of the AMMV National Officer Administrator.
3. The National Office Administrator will collect and transport all received ballots to the National Convention. All ballot envelopes will remain unopened.
4. A three-person Ballot Committee will be selected during the general business session to officially tally the votes and declare a winner for each contested office.
5. Any member-in-good-standing who wishes to protest and personally review the results may do so in the company of the selected three-person Ballot Committee and at least two officers (National and/or RVP). If such a recount is called for, it must be conducted on the same business day as the original count.
6. If only one candidate for a given office has been established per Section 202 (B), then such candidate will be considered the winner of said office; no counting/tallying will be necessary.
7. On any given election cycle, if all candidates qualifying per Section 202 (B) are unopposed, then such candidates will be considered the winners of their pursued offices.

SECTION 207 – APPOINTED OFFICERS

A. APPOINTED OFFICERS

The President shall, by resolution, appoint the following officers, and said appointments shall be announced by the National President and published in the first issue of the official publication following the National Convention.

1. JUDGE ADVOCATE – who shall be prepared at all times to give such legal counsel and advice as

the National President or National Convention may require. Robert's Rules of Order shall be the authority of all questions of parliamentary law and procedure, unless otherwise specifically provided in this Constitution & ByLaws.

2. CHAPLAIN – the Chaplain may, when possible, be an ordained clergyman and perform such duties as required by the Board of Directors.
3. EDITOR – (Official Publication)
 - a. The official publication shall be known as American Merchant Marine Veterans News. This publication shall be issued at least once each quarter. Any orders, official notices, and the financial reports published in the official publication shall be deemed sufficient and lawful notice to all members for all purposes whatsoever.
 - b. The editor shall be responsible for the publication and distribution of the official publication in accordance with instructions from the Board of Directors and approval of the President.
4. HISTORIAN – the Historian shall compile and maintain a brief history of the activities of this organization during his or her term of office, to be kept as a permanent record of this organization and shall perform such other duties as his or her office may require or the Board of Directors may direct.
5. PUBLIC RELATIONS OFFICER – the Public Relations Officer shall coordinate any and all publicity of the organization.
6. NOMINATING & CREDENTIALS OFFICER – the Nominating & Credentials Officer shall oversee all nomination, election, and Ballot Committee activities in strict accordance with AMMV's Constitution & ByLaws and make any decisions which may arise in such areas.

SECTION 208 – STANDING COMMITTEES

- A. The President shall, by resolution, appoint the following Standing Committees, which shall include at least one member of the Board of Directors. Said appointments shall be announced by the National President and published in the official publication.
 1. VETERANS AFFAIRS COMMITTEE – To compile information that will benefit Veterans, form policies beneficial to Veterans. Establish relations with other Service Veterans' organizations.

2. EDITORIAL COMMITTEE – To assist the Editor of the official publication whenever necessary and submit any policy changes to the Board of Directors.
3. CONVENTION COMMITTEE – The Convention Committee will oversee the planning and execution of our annual National Convention, including all financial duties and the production of the convention program book (aka Memory Book).
4. GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS – This committee shall report on situations which could be detrimental to the well-being of the organization as well as Federal and State legislation pertaining to Merchant Marine Veterans. Also, legislation promoting the growth of the American Flag Merchant Marine.
5. CONSTITUTION & BYLAWS COMMITTEE
6. INTERNET & SOCIAL MEDIA COMMITTEE – This committee shall oversee the official AMMV website and all official AMMV social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, etc. Committee members shall supervise the volunteers who run these sites to ensure that AMMV's views are properly represented.
7. SPECIAL PROJECTS & VETERANS OUTREACH – This committee will work under direction of the National President to facilitate advance outreach efforts and to carry out special projects based upon the needs of the organization.
8. MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE – This committee will work diligently to recruit new members and to retain existing members.
- B. The appointed officers and chairpersons of Standing Committees will prepare, in writing, a quarterly report of their activities to the National President. At the National Convention, an annual report will be rendered by each appointed officer and chairperson of the Standing Committees.

SECTION 209 – FISCAL YEAR

The fiscal year of the organization shall be July 1st through June 30th of the next calendar year.

SECTION 210 – NATIONAL DUES

- A. The National dues shall be established by the Board of Directors, voted on by the membership at the National Convention and published in the official publication. The dues shall include a subscription to the official publication.

- B. Dues are payable by July 1 of the current fiscal year. Member's dues not paid by September 30 of the current fiscal year are removed from the mailing list.

SECTION 211 – BUDGET

The Board of Directors shall recommend and the membership shall approve a budget for the National organization at the annual convention.

ARTICLE III - CHAPTERS

SECTION 301 – FORMATION – CHARTERING

- A. A local Chapter may be formed by the authority of the Board of Directors on the application of not less than ten (10) persons, members of the American Merchant Marine Veterans, Inc., or who have applied for membership. Membership in the National organization is a mandatory prerequisite for valid membership in any Chapter.
- B. The application for a Chapter shall be signed by all elected officers pro-tem and shall list the names of all charter members of the Chapter. The application shall be forwarded to the National Secretary for approval of the Board of Directors. The Chapter shall comply with the National Constitution and ByLaws.
- C. Each Chapter must be self-supporting. Each Chapter shall be responsible for their own assets, property and liabilities. Each Chapter is also permitted to establish their own welfare fund.
- D. The National AMMV shall establish districts within the fifty (50) states. There shall be at least seven (7) districts as per Article II – NATIONAL OFFICERS, Section 201.A.2 of the ByLaws.
- E. These district boundaries may be changed, depending on the total membership in a said district. The National Board of Directors shall set district boundaries at the National Convention based upon the total chapters and the per capita tax for the given year. All Chapters shall receive a true copy of such districts and boundaries.
- F. All Chapters shall display the National logo on all chapter stationery.

SECTION 302 - SUSPENSION AND REVOCATION OF CHARTER.

The charter of a Chapter may be suspended for a period of sixty (60) days for violation of the laws and usage of the National organization. If no appeal is made within the period of sixty (60) days, the Charter of the Chapter may be canceled by a two-thirds (2/3) majority vote by the Board of Directors provided that thirty (30) days before the charter

is suspended, the CEO of the Chapter in question shall have been notified in writing, by certified mail, by the National Secretary of the charges against it.

SECTION 303 – CHAPTER DUES

Each Chapter shall set its own dues.

SECTION 304 – ELIGIBILITY TO OFFICE

National membership shall be a requisite for holding office.

SECTION 305 – VOTING PROCEDURE

Chapter members must also hold National member status to receive mail-in ballots as described throughout Section 206 and in Section 501.

ARTICLE IV – WELFARE FUND

SECTION 401 – PURPOSE

The fund shall be used for the benefit and welfare of the members and their next of kin as a group. Monies accrued from donation, drives, sales of memorabilia, and shall be dispensed by action of the Board of Directors through the National Treasurer.

SECTION 402 – ACCOUNTING

Each outgoing National President shall request an accounting from the National Treasurer of the donations received and funds expended. He or she will then report to National Convention on the reasonableness and propriety of expenditures.

ARTICLE V – AMENDMENTS

SECTION 501 – AMENDMENTS

To amend the Constitution or ByLaws, the board of directors must adopt a resolution setting forth the proposed amendment and directing that it be submitted to a vote of the members. Such a vote of the members may occur at an annual or regularly scheduled meeting, at a special meeting, or via mail balloting. Such meetings may occur in person or by use of any means of communication by which all participants may simultaneously hear each other during the meeting. A vote to amend the Constitution or ByLaws must be preceded by written notice setting forth the proposed amendment or a summary of the changes to be affected by the amendment must be given to the members. The proposed amendment shall be adopted upon receiving at least a majority of the votes cast.

ARTICLE VI – DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION

SECTION 601 – DISSOLUTION OF THE CORPORATION

A. The corporation shall or may be dissolved and its affairs wound up by a majority vote of votes cast of the corporation's voting members.

B. In the event of dissolution, the Board of Directors shall, after paying or making provision for payment of all liabilities of the corporation, dispose of all the assets of the corporation exclusively for the purposes of the corporation in such manner, or to such organization or organizations organized and operated exclusively for charitable, educational, religious or scientific purposes as shall at the time qualify as an exempt organization under Section 501 C... (3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1954 (or corresponding provision of any future United States Internal Revenue Law), as the Board of Directors shall determine. Any such assets not so disposed of shall be disposed of by

C. A court of competent jurisdiction in the country in which the principal office of the corporation is then located; exclusively for such purposes as to such organization as such Court shall determine which are organized and operated exclusively for such purposes.

D. Upon a vote to dissolve the AMMV Corporation, the original records of the history of the organization, the records of the Historian, copies of the AMMV News, photographs, audio tapes, video tapes and any other appropriate historical records shall be turned over to a Maritime museum willing to accept the same, such as the Merchant Marine Academy Museum, Museum Ships, Maritime Museum or a college/university library/archives.

E. All remaining assets shall be distributed equally between the five (5) WWII Merchant Marine Memorial ships:

1. SS Jeremiah O'Brien
2. SS Lane Victory
3. SS American Victory
4. SS John Brown
5. SS Red Oak Victory


ARTICLE VII – GRIEVANCES AND LITIGATION

SECTION 1 – PROCEDURE FOR RESOLVING MEMBERSHIP GRIEVANCES.

A. Every member or officer or chapter or region must follow the following procedure to resolve a grievance:

1. Every member agrees to follow this procedure for resolving grievances as a pre-condition of membership in the American Merchant Marine

Veterans Association.

2. The grievance shall be a written statement setting forth the facts, the identity of the people involved, a detailed account of the grievance, and a statement of how the grievant wants the grievance to be resolved.
3. The grievance must be submitted within thirty (30) days of the date of the occurrence by certified mail, return receipt requested, addressed to the National President at National Headquarters.
4. The written statement must be sworn to in an affidavit form before a Notary Public.
5. Within thirty (30) days of the receipt of the grievance, the National President is to reply in writing to the grievant by certified mail, return receipt requested, stating the solution or resolution to the grievance. The National President may also request additional information.
6. If the grievant is not satisfied with this solution or resolution the grievant is to notify the National President within ten (10) days by CERTIFIED MAIL, return receipt requested, stating the reasons and requesting that the grievance be referred to the National Board of Directors by way of appeal. The National President will submit within Ten (10) days the record of the grievance to the National Board of Directors for a vote by this body and notification to the grievant with thirty (30) days.
7. By becoming a member of the AMMV, a member or officer or chapter or region accepts that the AMMV is a not for profit Florida Corporation subject only to the laws and jurisdiction of the state of Florida and its courts.
8. Under no circumstances is the grievant to resort to any court until the aforesaid procedure has been completed. Therefore, if resort is made to a civil court it must be a Florida court located in Lee County. If the grievant resorts to a Florida court before following the procedure set forth herein said grievant will automatically forfeit membership in AMMV. If the grievant does not obtain a judgment against the AMMV or its officers in the Florida civil court, the grievant agrees to reimburse the AMMV for its legal expenses, attorney fees, and court costs incurred in defending this suit.
9. If the grievant resorts to a court in any jurisdiction other than the state of Florida, said grievant will automatically forfeit membership in AMMV. 

Veteran's Last Patrol

“We Don’t Leave our Veterans in Hospice Behind”



Anyone who has served in the U.S. Military is familiar with patrols. Recon Patrol, Coastal Watch Patrol, Shore Patrol, Combat Air Patrol, Convoy Patrol, and all the other patrols are an integral part of military service. Eventually at end of

life we all will be on our “Last Patrol”. During our military patrols, we served along with our shipmates, our air crew, our foxhole buddies. At Veteran’s Last Patrol we also believe that when a veteran is on their Last Patrol, it should be with fellow veterans.

Veteran’s Last Patrol is a 501(c)(3) non-profit founded in upstate South Carolina in 2019. Veterans share a special bond from our shared military service. This bond stretches across different branches, different eras of service. Marines are famous for the expression “Once a Marine, always a Marine”. This lifelong spirit is a key tenet for all military veterans. Another creed of U.S. military service is “No one left behind”. It’s common that veterans in hospice care are the last surviving family member, or the last military veteran family member. On their Last Patrol this may be the final chance for the veteran to share their military service and even life stories. At Veteran’s Last Patrol, our primary mission is for our veteran volunteers to provide companionship to our veterans in hospice care, both at hospice facilities and home hospice care. Veterans have a special bond that stretches even across different times and different military experiences. Military veterans have a unique way to quickly establish a rapport regardless of how or where they served. It is a Last Patrol volunteer’s great honor to hear their stories of service and often sacrifice. There are occasions where the veteran in hospice can no longer com-



Navy veteran Robert’s Last Patrol wish was to catch “one more fish”. Veteran’s Last Patrol made that happen with the help of Davidson River Outfitters in North Carolina. Robert served on the USS New Jersey during the late ’60s off the coast of Vietnam. (Photo courtesy of Veteran’s Last Patrol)

municate via their voice. Last Patrol volunteers are still there in patrol companionship to let the hospice veteran know that they are not alone.

Veteran’s Last Patrol was founded by U.S. Army Colonel (Ret) Claude Schmid. Colonel Schmid served for 31 years after graduation from Wofford College in Spartanburg, SC. During his service, Col. Schmid commanded a combat brigade in Iraq. Colonel Schmid’s last active-duty assignment was Chief of the Wounded Warrior Evacuation Service, which insured that seriously wounded military personnel returning from combat in Iraq or Afghanistan were welcomed back upon landing in the U.S., with all military support to them and their family organized and ready for the returning hero. Colonel Schmid served thousands of military personnel and observed that these seriously wounded often wanted to tell their stories with companionship of fellow military personnel. After his retirement, Colonel Schmid continued to serve as a volunteer with hospice and recognized that in hospice care veterans have similar feelings while on their “Last Patrol”.

Sometimes Last Patrol’s mission results in a special memory for all involved. Recently, a veteran on his Last Patrol suggested that he had a special last wish, to catch one last fish. Although at that point fulltime in a wheelchair, a fishing trip to the scenic North Carolina mountains was organized, and the veteran in wheelchair was taken to the middle of a beautiful stream. Thanks to the special knowledge of a professional fishing guide, that veteran did catch his one more fish.

Since 2019, the VLP volunteer organization grew quickly to dozens of volunteers across multiple states. But we all know that in early 2020 the pandemic arrived and impacted significantly our companionship mission. During Covid, the general policy of almost all hospice providers was that no person-to-person visitation was allowed. However, like any military operation, Veteran’s Last Patrol adapted, improv-



Honors ceremony for a World War II Merchant Marine veteran. Robert served on Victory and Liberty Ships in the Pacific. He later served in the U.S. Navy. A Veteran’s Last Patrol volunteer, a former Submarine Commander, shakes Robert’s hand. Robert had his Merchant Marine uniform recreated just for this ceremony. (Photo courtesy of Veteran’s Last Patrol)



A Veteran's Last Patrol volunteer visits with a World War II vet in a hospice facility in South Carolina. This Army Corporal was scheduled to come home on Dec. 7, 1941, the day that Pearl Harbor was attacked—he fought in the Pacific theater's many island-hopping battles. (Photo courtesy of Veteran's Last Patrol)

vised, and continued on our mission by organizing honors ceremonies for hospice veterans. In an honors ceremony the hospice veteran can remain in his or her room while a cadre of veterans is assembled outside to conduct the ceremony. Typically, these ceremonies start with a prayer by a designated Chaplain, followed by *The Pledge of Allegiance*, then often some music live or recorded specific to the veteran's service, presentation of Letters of Appreciation from a U.S. Senator or House Representative, or some other prominent person such as a retired Flag Officer.

Before the ceremony concludes each veteran present speaks a few words of respect and thanks directed to the honoree, followed by a Veteran-to-Veteran Present Arms hand salute.

Honors ceremonies have been performed for all branches of the military service, of course including the Merchant Mariners.

As a volunteer, I have experienced personally that hospice is a reflective time for all. But I've also discovered that quite often a volunteer gets a first-hand account of U.S. history from the veteran in hospice. I have met veterans that were at Pearl Harbor on Dec. 7th, 1941, or that had flown in B-29's over Japan. Being a volunteer is a very rewarding, emotional experience and the appreciation received from the veterans and their families is overwhelming. In addition to the missions of companionship and honors ceremonies, Veteran's Last Patrol also gets involved in issues such as emergency support. Not every veteran in hospice is of the financial means to keep up their living bills such as water, electricity, or pets support. When we find a veteran in difficult financial circumstances, we work to solve the issue so that the hospice veteran can focus on their Last Patrol.

Veteran's Last Patrol also has special missions, one being Holiday Salute. In 2021 we organized the collection of 50,000 holiday cards written by schoolchildren and others addressed to "Dear Veteran" with a personal message. Veterans in hospice and senior centers across the nation received these cards. Another mission, which is also a fundraiser, is an "Honor Drive". Convoys of vehicles, often including some historical

military vehicles, are organized to drive by senior homes with the residents ready to view the convoy as it passes. Of course, greetings are exchanged and everyone enjoys the comradeships of veterans and vehicles.

On a personal note, my father, Carey T. Davis of Kentucky, served during World War II in the Merchant Marine. He served extensively on Light Tug *LT-159* as an oiler, and we remember him mentioning serving in Antwerp, LeHavre, and Southampton. On several occasions we have submitted the Merchant Mariner records from his service in 1944 and 1945, primarily training certificates, to have him declared formally a U.S. military veteran. But to date, multiple DD-2168 applications have been declined by the government as we have not been able to provide an overseas ship official crew list with his name as proof of overseas service. Unfortunately, dad passed away in 1979 before we could work with him to find a path to collect such official records as he or his shipmates might have saved.

Veteran's Last Patrol is a rewarding volunteer opportunity. Although we now have well over 250 volunteers in 16 states, it's a very big country and we need volunteers in every community. Veteran's Last Patrol has a website and is also on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter where interested people can follow up for more information and our activities.

Veteran's Last Patrol is a volunteer organization. However, there are expenses in completing our missions. Expenses range from social media site maintenance, postage expenses, and emergency support of hospice veterans with immediate crisis needs. Information is included on the website if you wish to support our mission with a contribution. However, the greatest support need is volunteers to go out on our support patrols.

If Veteran's Last Patrol and our missions are something you want to be a part of, we welcome you and encourage you to contact the organization about our volunteer opportunities. Our website is www.veteranlastpatrol.org.

John T. Davis
jtdavis0202@gmail.com



World War II Merchant Marine Oiler, author's father, Carey T. "Sonny" Davis. He crossed the Atlantic in Convoy NY-118, then served on LT-159 in several European Ports between 1944-45.





From the AMMV Archives: “In the Beginning”

Editor's note: In light of AMMV's recent accomplishment of changing the organization from a 501(c)19 veterans' organization to a simpler 501(c)3 organization, this month's "From the Archives" recalls a December 1989 article which captured a firsthand account of AMMV's formation. This article has not been altered from the original version.

IN THE BEGINNING...

This is a handwritten recollection of the founding of AMMV where the original wording has been preserved as much as possible. Any editorial additions are indicated with a parentheses and deletions with...

From the desk of Robert Lanyon

In January 1983, I received an article about a person Mr. Rapaport from California regarding recognizing American Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII. I sent a letter to him, and he wrote back, "for \$50 I could become a member of his group". I sent the \$50 and he sent me some literature.

We are looking for all who served in the United States Merchant Marine during World War II. The brave deeds performed by World War II personnel of the USMM must be recognized now.

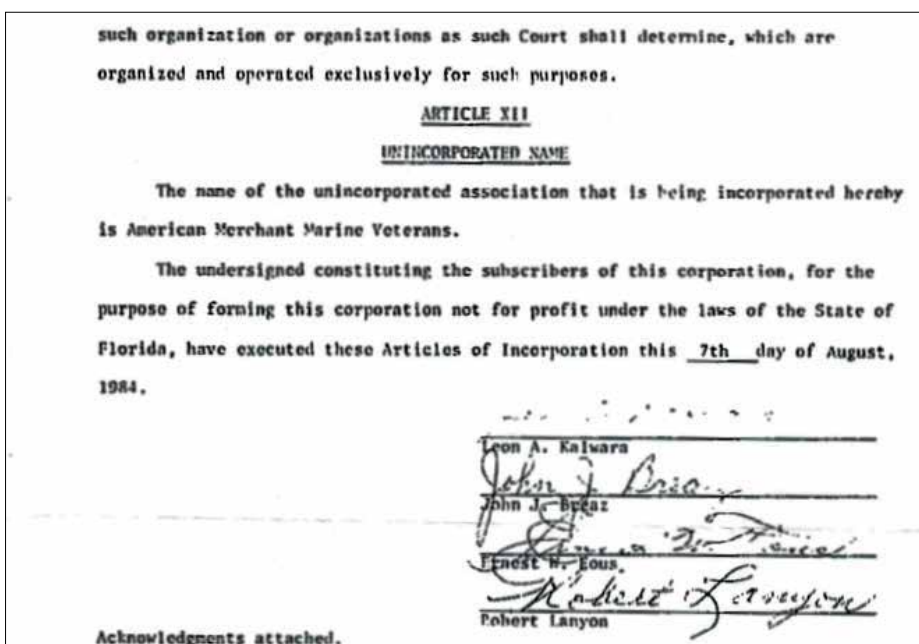
The United States Merchant Marine Veterans of WWII must be organized and our objective is to gain recognition for all U.S. Merchant Seamen who served in the war.

Five men called. Ernie Fous, Leon Kalwara, John Breaz, Sr., Edison Bodden, and Ed Vandburg. After talking to these five men, I recommended to Mr. Rapaport, that Leon Kalwara be the head of our group. After several phone calls by Leon to Mr. Rapaport, it was discovered that Mr. Rapaport had no real organization, and that his son was actually the treasurer, and accounts of the money received could not be given accurately. We then decided to start our own unit and incorporate. The group from California at that time was a splinter group...found out about us from Leon's calls to Mr. Rapaport... (and) they

wanted to join us.

The six of us decided that Leon (was to be) Executive Officer, Robert as Assistant Executive Officer, Ernie as Secretary, and John as Treasurer. We met for several weeks at restaurants, hamburger joints, each other's houses in Fort Meyers, Lehigh Acres, and Cape Coral. We called each other at least three times each week. We put together a program and found a place to meet (at) First Federal Savings and Loan in Fort Meyers. We all reviewed letters and discussed them before they were sent out. We put ads in the Fort Meyers News Press, Lehigh, Cape Coral, and Naples papers. It took about six months before we started to get results. Many "snow birds" coming into the area saw our ads, joined up, went home, and started their own group.

Up until the time we started getting members, we were



Original signatures on AMMV's Articles of Incorporation in 1984

financing our unit, (and) Leon spent most of his (own) money and time putting out a log. This log was written and sent out from his home. We all sent him items to put into the log. We had to have money so we decided to charge \$5.00 per year membership.

When the group from California contacted us, Leon talked with them and was informed of a men and women's social group they had, and they decided they would go in with us.

Leon and myself heard about a submarine club in Cape Coral. They met in a tavern. We thought we would go see how they operated. As we pulled up and parked in front of the tavern, several of the men were out front talking. We told them who we were and they directed us inside. We were introduced inside at the meeting. When we left the meeting, we found the right front tire flat. We found out it was punctured by an ice pick.

We decided to incorporate. We had the meeting to pass a Resolution of Incorporation (on) July 5, 1984. The purpose (was) on voting on a resolution to incorporate under the Florida "Not for Profit" Corporation Act. By this time, we had a large group of local members.

Leon, Ernie, John, and Robert went several times over to Cape Coral to an attorney to draw up the charter.

(On) September 6, 1984, our attorney notified us he had received our papers of corporation from the Secretary

of State of Florida. We now were incorporated. The four of us went over and signed. Application was made to the Internal Revenue Service to secure a "Not for Profit" qualification for our corporation. It was just about a year past when a group of men met and decided to try to establish common cause with our fellow Merchant Seamen. We could not have accomplished the corporation without the active help and support from each one of our members. Ernie Fous had a lot to do with the incorporation of two other organization, so he knew approximately what to do in our case. I believe if you would contact Ernie, because he was Secretary at the time and kept notes, and he is willing, may go on where I left off. He could give you a good idea of what took place regarding the incorporation and how he took care of the IRS transaction. Maybe he will bring you up to date (as) to where the present officers took over. John Breaz Sr. could also be of help. This might help going through your files.

As of March 1st, 1988, 75% of our members have donated one or more years to the organization. I feel some of the other men should step forward and donate at least one year of time.

Signed,
Robert Lanyon





Membership Application for: **MEMBER-AT-LARGE**

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

American Merchant Marine Veterans is an incorporated non-profit group working to promote the history of the U.S. Merchant Marine; membership is now open to any interested persons with a desire to share in our goals. Climb aboard and join us as we strive to educate the public about the role which the U.S. Merchant Marine has played throughout American history!

AMMV aims to obtain overdue recognition for our WWII Merchant Marine Veterans and gain recognition for post-WWII U.S. merchant seamen. AMMV members participate in memorial events and support laws/program which promote our modern U.S.-flagged fleet. Membership includes a full color quarterly AMMV News magazine and an annual membership card.



Join online at ammv.us or complete the following information and send to National Headquarters:

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

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Do you have any connection to the Merchant Marine? (Please explain) _____

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

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

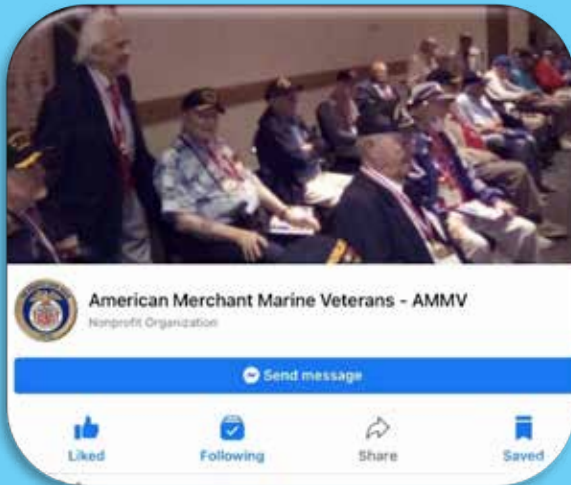
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