

IN PEACE AND WAR

\$6



1775

Summer  
2022

AMERICAN

MERCHANT MARINE

EST.

1984



VETERANS

NEWS MAG







***On Memorial Day, WWII Merchant Marine Veteran Dave Yoho served as the Keynote Speaker at the National WWII Memorial ceremony in Washington, D.C. Afterwards, Dave and his wife Carole participated in the Memorial Day Parade. Dave's speech can be viewed at:***



***[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INFWVJWnW\\_4&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=INFWVJWnW_4&feature=youtu.be)***



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#### **Region ONE – FL, PR**

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

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

**Membership** ..... **Lynn Kelly** *Member-at-Large*  
**Christian Yuhás** *Golden Gate Chapter*

**Stephen Synder** *Member-at-Large*

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**AMMV Facebook:** **Capt. Chris Edyvean**  
**AMMV website:** **Capt. Dru DiMattia**

**International Affairs** ..... **Jens Inge Egeland** *Member-at-Large*



# National President Capt. Anthony “Dru” DiMattia



The awarding of the Congressional Gold Medal on May 18<sup>th</sup>, 2022 to all WWII Merchant Mariners has been nothing short of extraordinary! Bravo to all of our WWII Merchant Mariners who finally have been recognized by our government; long overdue! Serving the winning combination, the United States became the *Arsenal of Democracy* delivering the vital

supplies to the war fighters on both sides of the world. We honor those that never made it home along with those who have crossed the final bar in recent years.

AMMV was able to convey a *wish list* in regards to the official CGM ceremony agenda, as the staffers of the House of Representatives worked on having an in-person, restricted group size event in the Statuary Hall of the Capitol Building. This wish list included 10 WWII mariners: George Offenhauser, William Balabanow, Gerard Driscoll, James Lindsey, Charles A. Mills, Bob Ross, James Sciple, Jack Laub, George Shaw, and Dave Yoho. Our wish list also included U.S. Merchant Marine Academy Kings Point Color Guard to provide the Colors and the unique *BATTLE STANDARD* flag. In addition, we heard *HEAVE HO*, sung by the U.S. Navy Sea Chanters vocal quartet. AMMV, which was represented by these 10 WWII mariners, had veterans Charles A. Mills and Dave Yoho featured in the Speaker's agenda.

Hats off to our AMMV volunteers, family, and chaperones who assisted with the events in Washington, D.C. On behalf of the AMMV National Officers, I thank you!

As quoted by Congressman Garamendi; *“This is not the final piece of this; the story of your sacrifice, the story of your service in making it possible for the military in the Pacific and in Europe, in having the munitions, to have the food, to have the supplies; that story will live on. Because it is the story of success, it is the story of sacrifice.”*

As quoted by Congressman Joe Courtney during the ceremony; *“This tribute is not just a walk down memory lane, the future mission of the U.S. Merchant Marine is looming ever larger in increasingly contested maritime domains at a time where over 90% of goods are imported and exported into the United States come by Sea.”*

*IN PEACE IN WAR* our mariners continue to answer the call for supplying the vital materials to our military and are a huge part of the winning combination for our national security and economic prosperity.

As the replica Congressional Gold Medals get shipped out from MARAD to our WWII mariner recipients, there will be continued ceremonies ongoing around the country. Our website and other social media outlets have included the instructions in obtaining the medals for our living mariners. There are details included for posthumous awards as well. We look forward to our members engaging in these future ceremonies capturing the stories and the photos!

During the month of May we honor those that paid the ultimate sacrifice availing our awesome freedoms that are frequently taken for granted. We stop and honor our mariners who never came home from the watery graves around the world. Happy National Maritime Day 2022, as we honor all our mariners who continue to serve in this vital industry playing a huge part in our successes, we realize there is much more that must be done!

As our Summer edition of AMMV News goes to print, there has been one additional co-sponsor of H.R. 39: *Honoring our WWII Merchant Mariners Act of 2021*; can anyone guess who? Our own champion Congressman, John Garamendi, signed May 24, 2022! If that doesn't send a message, I don't know what does.

AMMV needs our members to engage in talking to their congressional representatives and educating them on our battles to gain recognition for our WWII Merchant Mariners, all the way through to current day! Please join this effort, as we will need multiple volunteers engaged both on the field and on the sidelines strategizing this effort! We are talking about H.R. 39, re-introduced in this 117<sup>th</sup>. Congressional Session which started January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021 and goes to January 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2023. *“Rep. Al Green (TX) has once again introduced legislation that, if enacted, would give eligible WWII Merchant Mariners a one-time sum of \$25,000.”*

Get involved and educate your representatives! Learn about H.R. 1819. This bill truly addresses a jobs package and revitalizing American shipbuilding.

There are rumors of an AMMV mini-convention possibly slated for October 2022 in New Orleans. Our Convention Committee will be addressing this schedule and letting our members know if it's possible.

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)





# National Vice President Sheila M. Sova



## How History Will Remember The World War II Merchant Mariners

Seven years has come to fruition in witnessing the Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony in the U.S. Capitol in person. It was seven years ago that I became involved in fighting for the

recognition of the World War II U.S. Merchant Marine. It finally happened. My promise to my father, Orville Lee



*Sheila Sova holds a photo of her dad, Orville Lee Sova, with Rep. John Garamendi at the CGM ceremony.*

Sova, has come true. The Congressional Gold Medal sitting in front of the podium under the watchful eyes of the Capitol Police officers was indeed very impressive to see. All the while, I held my father's photo taken at Sheepshead Bay, in my lap. Photographers were snapping pictures of the "Proud Daughter of a WWII USMM Veteran". Anyone who knows me or had emailed me, has seen that signature at the bottom of my emails.

A reporter asked me what

it was like for me when I learned that the CGM legislation had passed, and I thought back to that day... Sitting at my desk at work, I got word that H.R. 5671 had passed and was awaiting signature of President Trump. Overcome by emotion, the tears started rolling down my face. Time stood still for a brief moment. All the Facebook posts, the Twitter tweets, the letter writing, the emails, the trips to Washington on 'Storm the Hill' crusades, all of these things finally leading up to one signature on a piece of paper that would change the course of how history would remember the WWII USMM. I remember saying out loud and looking up to the Heavens, "We did it, Dad!"

Each and every replica Congressional Gold Medal given out both in D.C. and California was proof that working together for one common goal had paid off. As I looked into the faces of these men, many whom may have trained at Sheepshead Bay like my father, or passed him coming off a ship or at a union hall, represented my father's legacy. Their tears of joy were our tears of joy. Their gratitude filled my heart with joy and love that only a proud daughter or son could feel. I can't imagine what it will be like the day I hold my father's CGM in my hands. I will know it was all worth it. History will be kind to the World War II Merchant Mariners!

Sheila M. Sova  
AMMV National Vice President



## National President's Report

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

As I look at the year gone past and the year ahead, I'm in awe of what we have been able to accomplish, and realize there are battles that will wage on for a lifetime.

As your National President looking at my term of service ending July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023, I hereby remind our membership, including Regional Vice Presidents, to consider submitting your candidacy to me and/or our Administrator, Lynn Kelly, by December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2022.

AMMV is very fortunate to have an army of volunteers continuing to capture the WWII stories! I wish to thank each and every one of them!

Have a good watch!

Captain Dru DiMattia  
Master Mariner  
President AMMV





# National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



Since the Congressional Gold Medal Bill was signed, I have seen a renewed interest in donations made in memory of mariners of all eras and conflicts. What better way to honor someone's life than to make a contribution in their memory to something that meant a lot to them? Many of our members and their families have

put forth great time and energy to achieve the goals which we celebrate today. Whether it was in 1984 when AMMV was founded and the WWII mariners were trying to gain Veterans' status, the fight to have the "war period" extended to December 1946 when mariners were finally done with their war transport duties, the efforts of the past six years to obtain the Congressional Gold Medal, or our current and ongoing efforts to have the MM veterans of WWII recognized at the Memorial Day Ceremonies broadcast on public TV from the Washington Mall, AMMV members

have taken up these challenges and for many, these efforts, on behalf of mariners everywhere, have become an important part of their lives.

AMMV has provisions in place where we process donations made "in Memory of" immediately, and within two to three days send a thank you letter to the donor. If a name and address is provided for the family of the deceased, an acknowledgement letter goes to the family informing them of the donor's name and hometown, with mailing addresses provided upon request. Every two years we will publish the list of donations "in memory of" in our magazine.

We are also happy to accept donations "in honor of" a living mariner to celebrate a milestone event such as a birthday or anniversary. This is a perfect gesture for the dilemma of, "What do you buy a 95-year-old!"

With much appreciation and deep gratitude, we list the "in Memory of" and "In Honor of" recent contributors here.

On behalf of our Board and AMMV Members, thank you for your kind and generous contributions.

Calm Seas,  
Lynn C. Kelly



## DONATIONS IN HONOR OF

### HONOREE

### DONOR

CAROLE & DAVE YOHO ..... STEVEN AND ADELE LIFFERS  
DAVID YOHO  
BRADFORD A. YOHO  
TRACEY MCCORMACK  
DAVE YOHO ..... DIANE & THOMAS HELBING  
ROLAND C. SHAFER ..... STEPHANIE EVANS

## DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF

### IN MEMORY OF

### DONOR

BERNARD FRIEDMAN ..... WILLIAM GUNDLACH  
RUTH THELMA RAN ..... MARC & SUSAN BROWN  
STANLEY BLUMENTHAL  
MARJORIE & ROBERT KOHN  
ALLEN & CHARLIE BLUMENTHAL  
SHIRLEY SCROP & FRIENDS  
JANE & STEVE SHAPIRO  
TERRI & JOSEPH GILBERTS  
JUDY SHAPIRA  
PAULA & ARMAND FRANK  
LAWRENCE SILVER ..... CHRISTINA NAGOWSKI  
CHRISTINE AYARS

GILBERT ACEBEDO ..... CONRAD ACEBEDO  
CATHERINE VEGA  
YOLANDA REYNOSO  
LESTER H. COOPER ..... ARLENE WINGFIELD  
NECHO N. TERRY, SR. .... KATHRYN HINCHMAN & FAMILY  
JAMES C. GREEN ..... DEE JONES  
CHARLES H. ATKINS ..... NICOLE NOWAK  
BRIAN F. REA ..... MARY ANN REA  
H. LEE ZIMMERMAN ..... KIM LEE ZIMMERMAN  
DIANE HINDS ..... WILLIAM "SPEED" HINDS  
GEORGE ENGELBRECHT ..... JAMES ENGELBRECHT  
WILLARD BLAIR ..... KELBY HENSLEY, JAY JENKINS &  
CNB BANK  
THOMAS LIGHTSEY ..... CLINTON L. HUBBARD III  
CHRISTOPHER BARRY ..... JACK MCNULTY  
LILLIAN A. STEVENS ..... REBECCA JOHNSON  
LORRAINE MANN  
GAIL E. TWOMEY  
FRANKLIN FOOTLIGHT THEATRE  
MICHAEL GALLERANI  
TERRY PATTERSON  
SUSAN MCDONOUGH  
DONALD C. HAVENS ..... GREGG HAVENS  
JACK RICHARDSON ..... LINDA JONES



# NEWS Magazine Editor Capt. Christopher Edyvean



Since the spring issue of AMMV News went into print, I've had the pleasure of attending a few significant maritime events.

First, I attended the Council of American Master Mariners (CAMM) annual conference (along with AMMV VP Sheila Sova), which was held at an Embassy Suites Hotel in downtown Chicago from May 4<sup>th</sup> thru 6<sup>th</sup>.

CAMM was established in 1936 and is a national professional organization of active and retired captains, pilots, and maritime associates working for the betterment of the American Merchant Marine.

The theme of CAMM's 3-day conference was "How the Jones Act effects the Great Lakes and other Geographical Areas". Conference attendees enjoyed a wide array of guest speakers, including yours truly presenting on Great Lakes pilotage. Sheila and I also had a chance to speak about AMMV, and we were successful in recruiting several new members.

The highlight of CAMM's event was their 'Closing Dinner'. The Keynote Speaker was Captain William Boyce, who commanded the U.S.-flagged *M/V Green Lake* while he and his crew, on New Year's Eve 2018, performed an amazing rescue of several seafarers from the sinking car carrier *Sincerity Ace*.

In addition to Sheila and myself, the dinner was attended by AMMV Midwest Chapter members Capt. Joe O'Conner (Midwest Chapter President & member of CAMM), Karyn Holm (Midwest Chapter Treasurer), Paula Papamarcos, Tom Carroll, Anne Carroll, Steve Weagant, and WWII Merchant Mariner Robert Weagant. Tom Carroll won CAMM's grand prize raffle of \$800, and afterwards, donated the entire amount to AMMV!

The CAMM event organizers kindly agreed to allow us a few moments to honor Bob Weagant with the Convoy Cup medallion and diploma, which is a joint Nova Scotian and Norwegian form of recognition. Weagant was aboard the *FAC Muhlenberg* when it was attacked by enemy aircraft on 1/10/44 during Operation Shingle in the Mediterranean. Six U.S. merchant mariners and one Navy armed guardsman perished in this attack.

I was also able to join the core AMMV group for the Salute to Congress dinner in Arlington, VA on May 17<sup>th</sup>, and the official ceremony awarding the Congressional Gold Medal to our WWII mariners the following morning. I won't get into event details, as that full report is later in this issue; however, I must personally thank a few people who made these events successful.

First, a sincere thank you to Jim Patti, President of the International Propeller Club, for inviting our AMMV group to attend the Salute to Congress. This was quite an experience for our veterans to be honored by the top people in the maritime community. Much gratitude to all of the maritime unions, coalitions, and organizations who have provided support during recent events: MMP, MEBA, SIU, AMO, MTD, TI, AMC, AMP – thank you all!

Internally, a big shout out to Lynn and Dennis Kelly, who performed an immense amount of work behind the scenes to help facilitate the AMMV events which occurred in D.C. and out on the west coast. And I must acknowledge our hard-working National VP Sheila Sova, who is and always has been relentless when it comes to all-things AMMV. Finally, many thanks to Capt. Dru DiMattia. Coordinating all of the events in D.C. became a fulltime job for Dru in the weeks leading up to the CGM ceremony, and I'm sure this work came with great personal

sacrifice. The AMMV membership is lucky to have such a dedicated leader!

I am still awestruck at having been present at the CGM ceremony, and to see so many high-ranking politicians and maritime industry executives in person. However, the most inspiring thing that I witnessed during the D.C. trip had nothing at all to do with any of those dignitaries or VIP's. During our trip to the National WWII Memorial, a young girl, probably around 17-years old, stopped by to thank our veterans for their service. She then proceeded to hold hands and pray with a few of them. Wow! What a powerful image



*A young girl takes time to pray with our WWII veterans.*

that I will never forget!

Congratulations to our WWII boys on getting some of the recognition that has unfairly eluded them for so many decades.

To echo the words of the late Nelson Cauble: "Together we can, and together we have, made a difference."

Capt. Chris Edyvean  
AMMV News Editor & Past National President





# AMMV at CAMM event



*(L to R) AMMV Midwest Chapter members Paula Papamarcos, Karyn Holm, Robert Weagant, and Steve Weagant*



*CAMM's Keynote Speaker for the Closing Dinner, Capt. William Boyce, with AMMV VP Sheila Sova*



*CAMM's incoming National President, Captain Joe Hartnett, who is a Maryland Pilot. Capt. Hartnett is one of several CAMM members who recently joined AMMV.*



*(L to R) Capt. Christopher Edyvean (Past AMMV National President), Capt. Augusta "Gussie" Roth (CAMM National Secretary/Treasurer), Sheila Sova (AMMV National Vice President)*



*Chicago-area WWII Merchant Mariner Robert Weagant was honored with the Convoy Cup medallion and diploma*



*AMMV Midwest Chapter members Tom Carroll and mother, Anne Carroll*



## American Merchant Marine Veterans Profit & Loss

July 2021 through May 2022

<b>Income</b>	
402 · Contributions	63,019.94
403 · Interest Income & Bank Bonuses	559.00
405 · Mission Advance Support	48,810.06
406 · Gold Medal Fund Support	4,887.94
409 · Miscellaneous Income	18.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	
DAR · Dennis Roland	608.00
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	15,277.00
MWE · Mid West	540.00
NBM · North Bay Mariners	400.00
NOA · North Atlantic	32.00
OHV · Ohio Valley	225.00
ORV · Oswego River Valley	75.00
THR · Three Rivers	600.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues - Other	64.00
<b>Total 410 · Chapter and MAL Dues</b>	<b>19,360.00</b>
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
<b>Total 411 · Convention Income</b>	<b>26,764.60</b>
420 · Magazine Ads	150.00
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>163,569.54</b>
<b>Expense</b>	
540 · Gold Medal Expenses	4,887.94
500 · Fixed Expense	
507 · Telephone	800.52
511 · Svc Charges - Paypal & Square	637.39
<b>Total 500 · Fixed Expense</b>	<b>1,437.91</b>
514 · Convention Expenses	
515 · Convention Events	30,454.44
517 · Convention Misc. Exp	14,017.93
<b>Total 514 · Convention Expenses</b>	<b>44,472.37</b>
520 · Mission Advance Expenses	
521 · Awards	566.51
525 · Mission Support Exp	47,643.55
526 · Internet Initiative	600.00
<b>Total 520 · Mission Advance Expenses</b>	<b>48,810.06</b>
530 · AMMV News Magazine	
533 · Postage	4,781.88
536 · Printing	14,670.28
538 · Layout	3,900.00
<b>Total 530 · AMMV News Magazine</b>	<b>23,352.16</b>
550 · Personnel	
551 · Administration	18,700.00
<b>Total 550 · Personnel</b>	<b>18,700.00</b>
560 · Operating Expense	
564 · Office Supplies	961.16
565 · Postage - Office	766.21
566 · Printing - Office	354.35
567 · Licenses & Fees	997.56
569 · Legal Fees	1,000.00
<b>Total 560 · Operating Expense</b>	<b>4,079.28</b>
<b>Total Expense</b>	<b>145,739.72</b>
<b>Net Income</b>	<b>17,829.82</b>

## American Merchant Marine Veterans Balance Sheet

As of May 31, 2022

<b>ASSETS</b>	
<b>Current Assets</b>	
Checking/Savings	
105 · Chase Bank	398,399.44
<b>Total Checking/Savings</b>	<b>398,399.44</b>
<b>Total Current Assets</b>	<b>398,399.44</b>
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>	<b>398,399.44</b>
<b>LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	
<b>Liabilities</b>	
<b>Current Liabilities</b>	
Credit Cards	
200 · Chase Credit Card	3,836.74
<b>Total Credit Cards</b>	<b>3,836.74</b>
<b>Other Current Liabilities</b>	
315 · Gold Medal Fund	30,119.08
311 · Dues Receivable	1,664.00
312 · Member Recruitment	893.00
314 · Mission Advance Fund	7,355.10
<b>Total Other Current Liabilities</b>	<b>40,031.18</b>
<b>Total Current Liabilities</b>	<b>43,867.92</b>
<b>Total Liabilities</b>	<b>43,867.92</b>
<b>Equity</b>	
32001 · Retained Earnings	336,701.70
Net Income	17,829.82
<b>Total Equity</b>	<b>354,531.52</b>
<b>TOTAL LIABILITIES &amp; EQUITY</b>	<b>398,399.44</b>

On June 4th, WWII MM veterans Bill Balabanow (left) & Bill Kelley attended the dedication of a new monument at the Indiantown Gap National Cemetery in Pennsylvania. A luncheon followed the dedication.





# *Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV*

LAWRENCE ABRAMS.....BIRMINGHAM.....AL  
 RYAN ARMSTRONG ..... CARMICHAELS ..... PA  
 HERVEY "CHIC" THOMAS BROOKS..... FRESNO..... CA  
 ROBERT W. CAMERON ..... BONITA SPRINGS.....FL  
 STEVE DREFAHL ..... CINCINNATI.....OH  
 MELANIE ERNEST ..... MARLTON..... NJ  
 VEDA HANDY ..... PEARLAND ..... TX  
 CAPT. PAUL M. HANLEY..... BALTIMORE.....MD  
 CAPT. JOSEPH J. HARTNETT ..... EDGEWATER.....MD  
 MICHAEL HENNEBERRY ..... ALAMEDA ..... CA  
 HARRY T. KRIM..... GARDEN CITY.....NY

BERNARD LOPEZ ..... STATEN ISLAND ..... NY  
 CAPT. ROBERT LUND ..... CHICAGO..... IL  
 PATRICK K. MOONEY ..... SONOMA..... CA  
 ARTHUR ROGERS ..... NOVATO ..... CA  
 CAPT. AUGUSTA ROTH ..... DICKINSON..... TX  
 J. MICHAEL SHAW ..... CALDWELL ..... NJ  
 JACK STANDLEY ..... BEVERLY ..... MA  
 CAPT. MAX TEARE, JR..... LEAGUE CITY..... TX  
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# Update on historic preservation efforts for the U.S. Maritime Officers Training School, Alameda, CA

Last summer we described the effort to place the U.S. Maritime Service Officers School in Alameda, CA (active 1943-1954), onto the National Register of Historic Places. This site was one of only two schools in the nation during WWII where mariners with at least 14 months of sea experience could come ashore and undergo a rigorous and intensive 4-month training course to become officers. The other was at Fort Trumbull, CT. In April of this year, the nomination was scheduled to be reviewed by the California State Historic Preservation Commission, which would decide whether or not to officially recommend the site to the Keeper at the National Park Service. There were over 80 individual letters of support submitted for the nomination, including a petition with over 1000 signatures. Letters in support mostly focused on the critical and historically neglected role played by mariners in WWII and the Korean conflict.

At the last minute, letters of opposition came in from the Mayor of Alameda and Rep Nancy Skinner (CA State Senate-Berkeley), centered on clearing the way for a developer to begin demolition. Although land use is not in the purview of the State Historic Resources Commission, the State Office of Historic Preservation decided to pull the item from the agenda on the day of the meeting. An appeal was submitted the following week, and the nomination is now scheduled for a new hearing date of Friday, August 5 in Sacramento.

Meanwhile, research has continued at the National Archives and recently discovered historic photographs have been added to the resubmittal to demonstrate the integrity of the site and the specialized training that took place there. Textual records further support communication between the U.S. Maritime Commission and the War Shipping Administration that cemented the critical role of the merchant mariners in advancing strategic plans to supply essential goods to the troops during WWII. The historic site in Alameda was an important west coast location for training officers to lead the Liberty and Victory



*Memorial monument, circa 1949*

ships that were being rapidly constructed in the nearby Kaiser Richmond Shipyards. The school trained over 6,000 officers during this important period in our nation's history. A memorial monument on the site was dedicated to the 51 officers who died in WWII, but until recently no one knew much about the undated monument as its inscription reads, "In memory of the graduates who gave their lives in the service of their country." Records at the National Archives however, uncovered a date of construction of 1946, and included reference to the station's artist, Vale Wright, who designed the monument. In 1949 a pathway around the memorial was completed. After the school was decommissioned and part of the original parcel was sold, the monument was relocated a few yards away on State Park property, formerly part of the softball and recreational field.

As August approaches, we hope more letters of support are submitted. It is our hope that the nomination will finally receive a fair hearing by the Commission.

**Please submit letters of support to:** Attn: Julianne Polanco, California Office of Historic Preservation, 1725 23rd St., Suite 100, Sacramento, CA 95816-7100.

Contact Carmen Reid for more information:  
[carmereid@gmail.com](mailto:carmereid@gmail.com)



*Graduation Bell Ceremony, circa 1944*

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# IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE CROSSED THE FINAL BAR

FREDERICK E. "FRITZ" ALJETS.....Edwardsville, IL

BETTY ANN BALABANOW .....Lititz, PA

JOSEPH RUDOLPH FARMER .....Gonzales, LA

DONALD C. HAVENS .....Spokane, WA

DAVID HENRY MC KEEVER.....Rice, MN

DAVID EUGENE SERGENT.....Jacksonville, OR

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.



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**WW II DIARY:**  
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HARRY G. PIERSON, JR.

**Harry Pierson, Jr.** is a registered professional engineer, retired, who has worked for major consulting and engineering firms, in the steam power generation, petroleum, and pulp-and-paper industries for over thirty years, in the United States and Canada.

Pierson's book is available from Amazon, Barnes and Noble, and WestBow Press.

[\*\*https://www.hgpwwlldiary.com\*\*](https://www.hgpwwlldiary.com)

# Report of AMMV activities in Washington, D.C. (May 16 – 18, 2022)

Our WWII veterans, family members, caretakers, and AMMV officers arrived in Washington D.C. on Monday, May 16<sup>th</sup>. AMMV had secured a room block at the Marriott Residence Inn, only a half mile from the White House. It is notable to mention that the Gary Sinise Foundation donated \$15,000 to help offset the costs associated with events centered around the official Merchant Mariners of WWII Congressional Gold Medal ceremony.

Activities kicked off the next morning with our contracted shuttle service making runs to the National WWII Memorial. Although this was an informal gathering, various maritime interests and local news outlets were present to capture the visit. In addition, Ross Rowlinson of Rowlinson Media Group accompanied the AMMV gang throughout the entire time in D.C. to document all events. Making a surprise visit to join us at the monument was Patricia Garamendi, wife of Congressman John Garamendi who sponsored the CGM legislation. The weather cooperated nicely, and the morning was relaxing and enjoyable.

In the afternoon, a VIP shuttle made a stop at the famous Watergate Hotel, where the American Waterways Operators (AWO) were holding their “2022 Spring Convention and Barge-In”. WWII veteran Charles A. Mills (accompanied by granddaughter Veda Handy), WWII veteran George Shaw (accompanied by wife Helen), and AMMV Past National President Capt. Chris Edyvean participated in this brief visit to allow the AWO group to honor our veterans.

The International Propeller Club’s annual Salute to Congress dinner, which is considered the biggest annual maritime/political event in the nation, was the evening event. Jim C. Patti, President



*The AMMV group awaits the bus to the National WWII Monument.*

of the IPC and organizer of the event, graciously allowed for up to 30 seats for our AMMV group, the cost being sponsored by the SIU, AMO, MMP, & MEBA maritime unions.

The Salute to Congress was held at the scenic Army Navy Country Club in Arlington. An extended cocktail hour on the outside decks overlooking the golf course and club property made for a wonderful start to the evening, with the weather remaining perfect. During the dinner, our WWII veterans received multiple standing ovations and rounds of applause.

The Salute to Congress dinner Keynote Speaker and recipient of recognition was Congressman Joe Courtney of Connecticut, who is the Chairman of the House of Representatives Subcommittee on Seapower and Projection Forces. IPC President Patti stated that “Chairman Courtney has been – and continues to be – a vigorous and persistent fighter on behalf of the maritime industry and has worked tirelessly on behalf of America’s maritime workforce, at sea and ashore.” Unfortunately, Rep. Courtney could not make the function

due to responsibilities requiring his presence on the Hill. Neil McKiernan, Chief of Staff for Rep. Courtney, attended in his absence.

The official Congressional Gold Medal ceremony for our WWII Merchant Mariners began the following morning at 11:00 E.T. at the Statuary Hall at the U.S. Capitol. The bus transporting our



*Dave Yoho with his wife and children; (L to R): David Yoho, Jr., Tracey McCormack, Dave Yoho, Carole King Yoho, Adele Liffers, Brad Yoho*





*WWII Merchant Mariner Bill Balabanow, with sister Linda Lee Davis*

(Commander, Military Sealift Command), Lucinda Lessley (MARAD Deputy Administrator), Rep. John Garamendi, and Rep. Joe Courtney. The Colors were presented/retired by the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point) Honor Guard. The Merchant Marine anthem *Heave Ho* was performed by a U.S. Navy vocal quartet. In total, ten WWII Merchant Mariners were in attendance. Dave Yoho was allowed remarks near the end of the ceremony, and he delivered an emotionally charged message. Speaker Pelosi wrapped up the ceremony, as Dave Yoho and Charles A. Mills accepted the CGM on behalf of the WWII U.S. Merchant Marine.

Others in attendance for the ceremony included the superintendents of our maritime academies, high ranking representatives from maritime unions and coalitions, and other members of Congress who did not have a speaking role.

To the surprise of our AMMV honorees and accompanying family, the replica bronze medals were on hand and presented, in cases, to the ten veterans. Photo sessions lasted for nearly an hour after the ceremony concluded.

The AMMV group was then bussed to MEBA HQ at the Hall of the States building for a special rooftop celebration with food and beverages. Several maritime industry folks made brief closing comments to the group, and more photos were taken. Tomaczek Bednarek, on behalf of the Joey Lowenstein Foundation, presented blanket throws to our veterans which feature Joey's artwork coupled with images of the CGM. Finally, Rita Cosby conducted interviews of our WWII veterans.

The following individuals (**WWII Merchant Mariners**

AMMV group from the hotel received an escort from the Capitol Police.

Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi officiated, and ceremonial remarks were made by Rep. Kevin McCarthy (House Minority Leader), Mitch McConnell (Senate Minority Leader), Vice Admiral Scott Buschman (USCG Deputy Commandant for Operations), Rear Admiral Michael Wettlaufer

**listed in bold face print**) attended both the International Propeller Club's Salute to Congress dinner on May 17<sup>th</sup> and the official Congressional Gold Medal ceremony on May 18th: **William Balabanow**, Linda Lee Davis (sister of Mr. Balabanow), **Gerard Driscoll**, Cynthia Driscoll-Komlos (daughter of Mr. Driscoll & AMMV National Secretary), Russ Komlos (son-in-law of Mr. Driscoll), **James Lindsey**, Dale Howell Lindsey (daughter of Mr. Lindsey), **Jack Laub**, Deborah Lawrence (daughter of Mr. Laub), **Charles A. Mills**, Veda Handy (granddaughter of Mr. Mills), **George Offenhauser, Sr.**, Rosalie Murphy (daughter of Mr. Offenhauser), Vance Murphy (son-in-law of Mr. Offenhauser), **Bobby G. Ross**, Shirley Knight (daughter of Mr. Ross), Crawford



*(L to R): Bill Balabanow, Charles A. Mills, James Lindsey, George Shaw, George Offenhauser, and Gerard Driscoll on arrival day in Washington, D.C.*

Knight (son-in-law of Mr. Ross), **James Sciple**, Rick Wobbe (caretaker of Mr. Sciple), **George C. Shaw**, Helen Shaw (wife of Mr. Shaw), Captain Dru DiMattia (AMMV National President), Sheila M. Sova (AMMV National Vice President), Capt. Chris Edyvean (Past AMMV President & AMMV

News Editor), Tomaczek Bednarek (entertainer & veterans' advocate), and Rita Cosby (Emmy-Award winning TV host, Best-Selling Author, veterans' advocate). In addition, the following individuals attended the official Congressional Gold Medal ceremony on May 18th: **Dave Yoho**, Carole King Yoho (wife of Mr. Yoho), David Yoho (son of Mr. Yoho), Brad Yoho (son of Mr. Yoho), Tracey McCormack (daughter of Mr. Yoho), and Adele Liffers (daughter of Mr. Yoho).

Many AMMV officials assisted with various tasks in the planning and outreach for these action-packed few days, but Capt. Dru DiMattia went above and beyond his duties as AMMV National President to ensure the overall success of such. This involved (just to name a few things) chartering buses and shuttles, establishing contracts with the hotel, coordinating with veterans and caretakers, and serving as a liaison between several of the stakeholders. The entire AMMV family is thankful for the efforts of

Capt. DiMattia and the AMMV National Officers/office staff for all of the hard work and dedication that made this short time in D.C. a success!



*(L to R) Maine Maritime Academy alumni Mike Theberge ('06) & Ann Luken ('05) assisted Capt. DiMattia ('88) during the trip to the National WWII Memorial.*





# National World War II Memorial



*(L to R): Capt. Chris Edyvean, Dave Yoho, Cindy Komlos, Sheila Sova, Rita Cosby, Capt. Dru DiMattia*



*Washington Monument*



*(L to R): Dave Yoho, Patricia Garamendi, Capt. Dru DiMattia*



*(L to R): Linda Lee Davis & Shirley Knight w/ Bill Balabanow & James Lindsey*



*Senator Chuck Grassley with Gerard Driscoll & Jim Sciple*



*Veda Handy & Capt. Chris Edyvean*





*Crawford & Shirley Knight w/ Bob Ross*



*(L to R): Sheila Sova, Dave Yoho, Veda Handy (standing) with Bill Balabanow & Charles Mills*



*Dave Yoho is interviewed by a local TV news outlet*



*Rosalie & Vance Murphy w/ George Offenhauser*



*Dave Yoho (standing) with Jim Sciple*





# Salute to Congress



*(L to R): Augustin Tellez (Executive Vice President, Seafarers International Union), Capt. Chris Edyvean (AMMV Past National President), Jim Patti (President, International Propeller Club)*



*Shirley Knight, Crawford Knight, & Bob Ross*



*George Shaw & Charles A. Mills with the superintendents (RADM's) of our maritime academies*



*Jack Laub and daughter, Deborah Lawrence*



*Sheila Sova (left), and Sara Fuentes (Vice President, Transportation Institute)*



*Russ Komlos with father-in-law, Gerard Driscoll*





*Charles A. Mills with Capt. Allan Post  
(Superintendent, Texas A&M Maritime  
Academy)*



*Linda Lee Davis with her brother,  
William Balabanow*



*(L to R) Charles A. Mills (seated), Capt. Chris  
Edyvean, Rita Cosby, Gerard Driscoll, Veda Handy*



*Kings Point cadets*



*Sheila Sova and Mark Ruge (K&L Gates,  
LLP)*



*Vance & Rosalie Murphy*



# Official Congressional Gold Medal Ceremony



*Speaker of the House Rep. Nancy Pelosi officiates the ceremony*



*David Yoho, Jr., Dave Yoho, former Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao, Carole King Yoho*



*House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy*



*Dave Yoho, Capt. Chris Edyvean, Veda Handy, Carole Yoho, Rita Cosby, & Charles Mills*



*Vance Murphy, Rep. Randy Weber, Rosalie Murphy, and George Offenhauser*





*Charles Mills holds up his medal in the forefront, with a victorious AMMV crowd in the background*



*Jim Sciple displays his medal*



*Heroes of the moment; heroes in history: Dave Yoho and Charles A. Mills*



*George Shaw displays his medal*



# Veterans honored by AWO



*George Shaw and Charles Mills made an appearance to represent AMMV and be honored at the American Waterways Operators (AWO) "2022 Spring Convention and Barge-In". This event was held at the famous Watergate Hotel. The veterans are pictured with the AWO leadership.*



*Veda Handy, Capt. Chris Edyvean, Helen Shaw, Charles Mills, George Shaw*



## Reception at MEBA HQ



*William Balabanow is interviewed by Rita Cosby*



*Tomaczek Bednarek provided blanket throws to all of the veterans, which depict images of the CGM coupled with the artwork of Joey Lowenstein; visit: <https://joeylowensteinfoundation.org>*



*AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia with newly appointed MARAD Administrator RADM Anne Phillips*



*Charles A. Mills with David Hatcher of MARAD/Sealift*



# Trip Report to AMMV for the Nautical Institute Convention

San Francisco, CA; May 18-20, 2022

*Patrick Cotter, AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee*

## Introduction

AMMV representatives attended the Nautical Institute's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Conference that was held at the Marine's Memorial Club and Hotel in San Francisco, CA from May 18-20, 2022. The AMMV delegation was led by Christian Yuhas, and supported by Patrick Cotter, Frank Mendez, Mary Murphy, Dennis Ng, and Justine Wong. AMMV is shown as a Silver Sponsor of the event.

The title of the conference was "What is the Future of the U.S. Merchant Marine?" The conference was attended by about 60 professionals from all facets of the maritime industry. The conference was chaired by Capt. Greg Tylawsky and co-chaired by Capt. Anuj Chopra. Numerous U.S. and international members of the Nautical Institute were in the audience.

The two-day conference was highlighted by a lunch-time award ceremony on May 20 for the Congressional Gold Medal and a citation from the Congressional Record introduced by Rep. John Garamendi. Christian Yuhas introduced Rep. Garamendi to the audience. Nine USMM WWII veterans were honored during the award ceremony, including: Hervey "Chic" Brooks, William Fairfield, Norman Forrest, Gus Guzelian, Donald Kinser (son received awards), John Ed Loughton, Edward Mazzoleni, Frank Mendez, and Claude Perasso. Each WWII veteran and AMMV member at the conference received an AMMV lapel pin. Nautical Institute leadership deeply appreciated the Congressional Gold Medal event!

At a dinner on May 19, a 3'x5' AMMV flag was donated to the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien* to be flown with other honorary flags in



*Dr. Salvatore Mercogliano lectured remotely, discussing the history of U.S. Merchant Marine Acts.*

the ship's forward cargo hold as a reminder of AMMV's support for all U.S. Merchant Marine veterans.

## Opening Session

Senator Lisa Murkowski, on a virtual connection, said the Jones Act is essential to the State of Alaska and our nation needs to invest in its maritime workforce by supporting skilled mariners. Capt. Taylor Lam (U.S. Coast Guard) said that the U.S. needs to recruit and retain is Merchant Marine

workforce that continues to grow and evolve through trade, security, economic importance, and national prosperity. Capt. John Lloyd (Nautical Institute) said the Merchant Marine, U.S. Navy, and U.S. Coast Guard need to work together for global stability of the maritime industry, emphasizing the need for a national strategy for seagoing support for American Merchant Mariners as maritime ambassadors.

## Session 1: History of the U.S. Merchant Marine Acts

Dr. Sal Mercogliano (Campbell University), on a Zoom call, gave a detailed history of the U.S. Merchant Marine

and the U.S. laws that have shaped the present status of the U.S. merchant fleet. He said there is a need for re-establishment of the U.S. Maritime Service to manage all U.S. sea services under one umbrella for war support, protection of the U.S. merchant fleet, and to prevent disruption of the global supply chain.

**NOTE:** He did not address the effects of international maritime

treaties that are under the authority of the International Maritime Organization and their effects on U.S. maritime



*(L to R): Christian Yuhas (AMMV Region # 8 VP), Mary Murphy, Frank Mendez, Dennis Ng (AMMV Interim Region # 3 VP)*

industries. **NOTE:** He did not mention the Federal laws recognizing USMM WWII veterans or the CGM.

### ***Session 2: Does the current regulatory framework support or hinder a robust U.S. Merchant Marine?***

John Kaskin (Navy League) said that a new Merchant Marine Act, based on economic security, is needed to protect U.S. national security. **NOTE:** The Navy League is



*AMMV member Father Sinclair Oubre was the featured speaker at the O'Brien dinner*

pro USMM. AMMV should continue coordination with the Navy League on our issues. Capt. Chopra provided an optimistic assessment of the U.S. maritime industry with the "glass is half full" philosophy, but he cautioned that regulations must be based on reality. He said that the Jones Act is necessary, and it should be updated

as supply chain networks evolve, including opportunities for short sea shipping and transportation cost savings. Rob Quartel (NTLEX) expressed critical views about the Jones Act and its negative effects on the viability of the U.S. merchant fleet and U.S. shipbuilding.

### ***Session 3: Does the U.S. still need a domestic merchant fleet?***

Capt. Sashi Kumar (MARAD's Director for Maritime Education and Training) discussed his budget of \$514M that supports requirements under Merchant Marine Acts and National Security Directive 28 on Sealift capabilities for the U.S. maritime workforce. He mentioned (a) MARAD's Every Mariner Builds a Respectful Culture program, (b) the new National Security Multi-Mission Vessel (NSMV) to replace obsolete training ships, and (c) MARAD's program for American Maritime Centers of Excellence. **NOTE:** I discussed the possibility of Capt. Kumar assisting AMMV in convincing PBS and Capital Concerts to honor USMM WWII veterans during the National Memorial Day Concerts, and during Veterans Day events. He was receptive to the idea. I will contact AMMV leadership to see how Capt. Kumar can collaborate with us on this ongoing concern.

Capt. William Barrere (American Maritime Offices) reminded the audience that the WWII sealift was the greatest in world history and the Allies would not have won the war without the USMM. Today, there are 60 vessels, supported by 650,000 jobs, available for the Maritime Security

Program. The U.S. cannot depend on foreign flagged or foreign manned ships for its security. Sarah Scherer (Pacific Coast Operations' Transport Institute) supports the Jones Act for national and homeland security and environmental protection. She said it is dangerous to depend on China for our supply chain needs. Eric Dawicki (Northeast Maritime Institute) said every great nation is built on maritime trade and commerce, but whatever we think has been working is not working because China is out competing the U.S. He also said the U.S. must "Honor the Mariner." **NOTE:** This three-word phrase could be a good program title for AMMV.

### ***Session 4: Mariners' Perspective***

Speakers provided information on current needs of the maritime academies in attracting and educating merchant mariners. The cost of attending a four-year school is be-



*Capt. Gussie Roth lectured as part of a panel discussing threats to the U.S. Merchant Marine.*



*Dennis Ng in front of the Liberty Ship Jeremiah O'Brien*

tween \$140,000 and \$220,000. Scholarships are needed to assist the students in paying for their training. The academies must address what motivates Generation Z students (born between 1996 and 2005), and preparation for what they will encounter during a career at sea. Sometimes, the





*AMMV donated a banner to the O'Brien. (L to R): Capt. Gregory Tylawsky (NI Conference Program Chair), Patrick Cotter (AMMV Government Affairs Committee), Frank Mendez, Father Sinclair Oubre*



*May 19th dinner buffet aboard the O'Brien*

training conditions do not reflect the great opportunities that are available for a sea career. A strategy needs to be developed to promote the value and opportunities of a merchant mariner's career.

### ***Session 5: What are the existential threats facing the U.S. flag merchant fleet today and tomorrow?***

Capt. R.J. Klein (Council of American Master Mariners) supports a strong Jones Act for thousands of jobs and about \$54B in economic benefits. He highlighted opponents of the Jones Act, including Senators Grassley, Lee, and Cruz; the CATO Institute; the Hoover Institute; and the Mercatus Center. Some of the opposition is based on a 1991 economic study that is out of date. Capt. Philip Schifflin (Seamen's Church Institute) said there is a critical manpower shortage and only 6% of the maritime graduates go to sea. He said we need to find a way to attract and retain merchant mariners. Capt. Augusta Roth (Texas A&M Galveston) said the threats to the USMM are economic needs, ad-

vancement, actually going to sea, incidents at sea, and accidents on a vessel. Aaron Smith, (Offshore Marine Service Association) said that enforcement of the Jones Act and its loopholes are significant threats to the U.S. maritime industry. They have a vessel called the Jones Act Enforcer to document violations.

### ***Session 6: Emerging and unexpected areas where the U.S. maritime industry is adapting and flourishing***

Capt. James Werner (Kirby Marine) said marine transport is the most cost-efficient mean of moving goods. Short sea barges are safe and cheap and battery power is an improving technology. Bo Jardine (SHELL) said that modern technologies such as hybrid ships, drones, fuel cells, and digital tools for ship monitoring are improving maritime commerce. Augmented ships not autonomous ships without crews are the way to go.

### ***Group Discussion about Problems and Solutions***

The biggest problem identified by the group discussions is the lack of awareness of the U.S. Merchant Marine. This concern is something that AMMV has been trying to address through its public awareness campaign for many years. AMMV needs to maintain its goal to honor the mariners, including WWII veterans and all USMM veterans. I received referrals to two congressional staff for continued work to include USMM WWII veterans in the National Memorial Day Concerts and Veterans Day. They are:

Chief of Staff for Rep. Rodney Davis

([Bret.Munley@mail.house.gov](mailto:Bret.Munley@mail.house.gov)), and Chief of Staff for

Rep. John Garamendi ([Bradley.Bottoms@mail.house.gov](mailto:Bradley.Bottoms@mail.house.gov)).

Garamendi's staff rejected my request for assistance after hearing that Rep. Panetta failed to obtain agreement from PBS.





# Nine WWII Merchant Mariners receive CGM in San Francisco



*Gus Guzelian receives his CGM and Congressional Record from Rep. Garamendi (photo credit: Logan Sidel)*



*AMMV Region # 8 VP Christian Yuhas*



*Rep. Garamendi with WWII veteran Norman Forrest & Mrs. Forrest (photo credit: Logan Sidel)*



*William Fairfield receives his Congressional honors*



*The son of WWII Merchant Mariner Donald Kinser accepts the replica CGM from Rep. Garamendi (photo credit: Logan Sidel)*





*(L to R): Ed Laughton, James Mount, Betsy Mount, Steve Laughton*



*(L to R): Frank Mendez, Claude Perasso, Rep. Garamendi (photo credit: Logan Sidel)*



*(L to R): Edward Mazzoleni, Norman Forrest, Rep. Garamendi, Claude Perasso (photo credit: Logan Sidel)*



*Patrick Cotter (AMMV Government Affairs Committee) with Chic Brooks*




*Frank Mendez, who has been deeply involved in AMMV activities for many years, receives his medal from Rep. Garamendi*



## Reunited Again...

"Big John" Ed Laughton and Hervey "Chic" Brooks are two of the WWII Merchant Mariners who received the CGM in San Francisco. Both men are survivors of the attack on the SS *Hobbs Victory* near the end of WWII.

Laughton was serving as Second Officer, and Brooks as Able-Seaman, when the ship was attacked and struck by a Kamikaze on 4/06/1945. The vessel, which had been assigned to transport supplies for the Battle of Okinawa, was a total loss following this incident. A dozen or more crew members were killed, including Alexander W. Harris, one of the "142" U.S. Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point) midshipmen who lost their lives during WWII in service to our country.

The two men were reunited last fall at Laughton's 100th birthday celebration. 



*SS Hobbs Victory*



*(L) Hervey "Chic" Brooks with chaperone Kathy Knight, (R) "Big John" Ed Laughton with granddaughter Betsy Mount*

## Region #1 Activities Report

Congratulations to all our WWII Merchant Mariners, and to all who have worked so hard for so many years to achieve the Congressional Gold Medal!

I'm working with William Dudley, Chairman of the Veterans Council of St. Johns County, for a regional presentation of the CGM to Mr. Ed Trester and Mr. William Prudit.

On Saturday 5/21/22, I was privileged to be a guardian on a First Coast Honor Flight to Washington, DC with James Thomas Lee, a Korean War veteran. We viewed the WWII, Korean, Vietnam, and Tomb of the Unknown Soldier Memorials.

Sunday 5/22/2022 was National Maritime Day. The City of Jacksonville issued a proclamation honoring the maritime industry.

On Memorial Day, I participated in "Taps Across America", at 15:00 to honor those who have sacrificed with their lives, so that we may enjoy our freedoms.

The transfer of our WWII lifeboat to the Museum of Military History, 5210 W. Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway, Kissimmee FL, is a work in progress. Currently, the lifeboat is at a machine shop in Jacksonville for rewelding of the wheel base, so as to facilitate transport to central Florida. Our agreement with the museum is for us to donate the lifeboat for display at the museum, parades, and

off-site exhibits. The museum will transport the lifeboat annually to Jacksonville for use in the Veterans Day Parade, and is paying all costs associated with welding and transport of the lifeboat.

Previously, for the past 26 years, the lifeboat sat for 364 days in a riverfront warehouse and saw the light of day only on November 11th each year during the Jacksonville Veterans Day Parade.

Our hope is that more people will see the lifeboat, and will honor and appreciate those who needed to use a lifeboat for their survival.

Steve Snyder

AMMV Region # 1 Vice President

[ammvssnyder@yahoo.com](mailto:ammvssnyder@yahoo.com) 



*AMMV Region # 1 Vice President Steve Snyder (right) with Korean War veteran James Thomas Lee*



# Midwest Chapter members attend Memorial Day ceremony

On Saturday, May 28<sup>th</sup>, members of the AMMV Midwest Chapter participated in a wreath laying ceremony in Chicago as part of this year's Memorial Day observation. Karyn Holm (Midwest Chapter Treasurer), Paula Papamarcos, and WWII MM veteran Robert Weagant (Midwest Chapter Secretary) were present on behalf of AMMV.

The function was attended by Illinois Senator Tammy Duckworth, City of Chicago Mayor Lori E. Lightfoot, and high-ranking officers of every U.S. service branch. Weagant was listed in the program flyer as being the representative of the U.S. Merchant Marine.

The entire ceremony was captured by ABC 7 Chicago news station, and is viewable at <https://abc7chicago.com/11903825/>. Weagant is introduced at timestamp 9:10 with *Heave Ho* being played by the band.



*Paula Papamarcos, Robert Weagant, Karyn Holm*

*WWII Merchant Marine Veteran Robert Weagant*



## *George Shaw recognized in Canada*

WWII U.S. Merchant Marine Veteran George Shaw was a Guest of Honor at the Battle of the Atlantic ceremony hosted by the Royal Canadian Legion of Lantzville, British Columbia on May 1<sup>st</sup>. Guests and presenters included the mayors of Lantzville and Nanaimo, along with officers from Esquimalt Naval Base and Comox Air Force Base. Royal Canadian Amphion Sea Cadets took turns ringing a bell and calling out the names of Canadian ships lost in battle along with the number of lives lost. Collishaw Squadron Air Cadets stood watch at the cenotaph for an hour, remaining as still as statues.

The Honor Guard was impressive, as were the Air and Sea Cadets, as they took formation in the opposite end of the park and marched up to the Cenotaph. The service was beautiful, as was the park. A yellow search & rescue chopper performed a flyover, with a tilt salute over the park. (A fly-over from Comox Air Force Base had been planned, but there was too much cloud cover.) The service was followed by refreshments inside the Legion Hall, where the centerpiece was a painting of men in a lifeboat, desperately trying to pull others on board. Though it was heart-wrenching, it truly represented the grim reality that so many WWII mariners faced.



*Submitted by Helen Shaw*



# Massachusetts Medal of Liberty Ceremony



*Vincent Cifizzari (U.S. Air Force, ret.) at the podium; enlarged replica MA Medal of Liberty is to the far right*

The weekend of National Maritime Day and Armed Forces Day saw a combination of recognition, patience, and persistence when the families of seven deceased World War II U.S. Merchant Mariners, and the local veterans' organizations that support them, came together on May 21st at the Heritage Hall in Milton, Massachusetts for an event co-sponsored by American Merchant Marine Veterans.

The ceremony — organized by AMMV Veterans Affairs Committee Chairman Robert Lewis, U.S. Navy (1982-1986) & Merchant Marine (1994-1997) — set the scene to posthumously award the Medal of Liberty, which is awarded to Massachusetts servicemen and women who have been killed in action or who died as a result of wounds received in action. It is bequeathed on behalf of the Governor of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, in this case to seven WWII U.S. Merchant Mariners (listed below) who were Massachusetts residents — whose records were found recently.

The posthumous recipients of this year's recogni-



*(L to R): Anthony Diaz (Department Commander, American Legion Massachusetts), Robert Jerdan (District # 6 Executive Committeeman, American Legion Massachusetts, Kyle Knickerbocker (AMMV Region # 4 Vice President)*

tion were Theodore Bunnell, Henry Czupailo, Robert H. Sheridan, Walter Kon, James Costello, Frank Ivone, Dante L. Polcari (all of USMM), and Mark Wolfendale (U.S. Marine Corps). (Editor's note: *The AMMV Editorial Staff currently does not have service details of these individuals.*)

The Medal of Liberty ceremony was well attended by family members of the deceased honorees and by several local dignitaries, such as: Brigadier General Francis B. Magurn II, (Assistant Adjutant General, Massachusetts National Guard), Capt. Elizabeth Simmons (VP of External Affairs, Massachusetts Maritime Academy), Christine Cugini (Veterans Services Officer, U.S. Navy), and the Honorable Cheryl Lussier Pope (Secretary of Massachusetts Department of Veterans Services). All had nothing but words of praise for the deceased, especially considering it was the weekend of National Maritime Day, a time to reflect on those who suffered the most casualties per capita during

World War II — our WWII mariners. Also present were MA State Senator Walter F. Timilty, MA State Senator John F. Keenen, and MA State Representative Tackey Chan. All spoke off script directly to the families as each was



*Robert Lewis (AMMV Veterans Affairs Chairman)*



*Quincy Sea Cadets*



presented with the Medal of Liberty and a citation from the Massachusetts State Legislature.

This event represented AMMV's second annual involvement in the awarding of the MA Medal of Liberty. Last June, two medals were awarded in a ceremony held in Milford, Massachusetts to the families of Diamantino Moreiro Lopes, an Ordinary Seaman from the troop transport ship SS Dorchester, and to Walter Franklin Howe, an Oiler from the freighter SS Summer Kimball. Both men's ships were torpedoed by German submarines during WWII.

Kyle Knickerbocker

AMMV Region # 4 Vice President

[kyle.knickebocker@icloud.com](mailto:kyle.knickebocker@icloud.com)



*MA State Senator Timilty reads the citation to family members of a recipient. To his immediate right is MA Senator Keenan, and to the far right is MA Representative Chan.*



*Many family members of the MA Medal of Liberty recipients attended the ceremony.*



*AMMV National President Captain Dru DiMattia with sister Cheryl Muffoletto and Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger*

## Capt. DiMattia attends Memorial Day ceremony in Maryland

On Memorial Day, AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia participated in a ceremony at the Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens in Timonium, MD. The 2-hour program included a variety of speakers, including Capt. DiMattia, as well as musical and poetry selections. The ceremony specifically paid tribute to three Marylanders who had lost their lives in service to our country during the past year. In attendance was Maryland Congressman Dutch Ruppersberger, who had been an early supporter of the CGM legislation. The Master of Ceremonies was Col. Alan Walden, who had offered remarks at the AMMV National Convention last September, both at the CGM dinner and at the dockside ceremony at the *John W. Brown*.

The entire event is viewable on the Dulaney Valley Memorial Gardens Facebook page at:

<https://m.facebook.com/dulaneyvalleymemorialgardens>.





# Funding boost for Battle of the Atlantic Memorial (BOAM) announced

*(Reprinted with permission)*

Plans to create the UK's national memorial to the Battle of the Atlantic are ramping up after the campaign received a major donation.

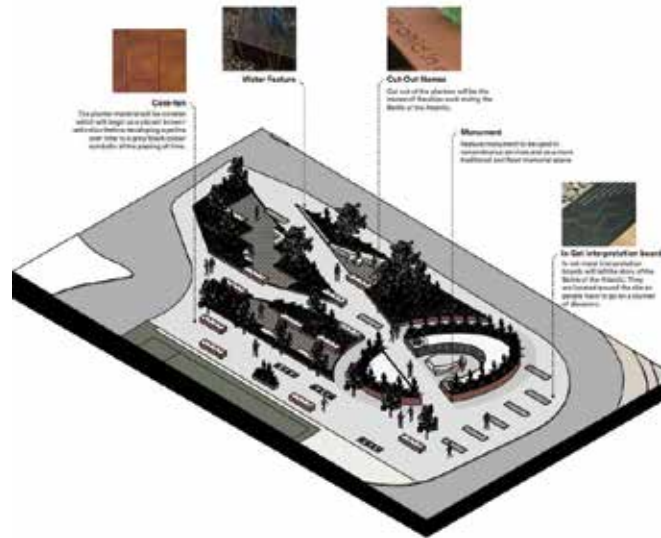
The Merseyside headquartered Battle of the Atlantic Memorial (BOAM) charity says following a long campaign a £1.25million gift has been secured to properly develop a fitting national memorial to the Battle of the Atlantic in Liverpool, the original command headquarters of the battle. BOAM said the funding has been awarded following a successful bid to the Naval Club, which is allocating funds to eight charities following the sale of its premises in central London.

With the injection of new investment BOAM is announcing three new concepts around reflection, innovation and education (see notes to editors 1). The first joins forces with Western Approaches Museum, and its operator Big Heritage, to create a new International Battle of the Atlantic Arboretum at Woodside Ferry terminal. The landscaped BOA Park will be part of wider plans to develop the U-Boat story visitor attraction and replace the ferry landing stage which received £19.6million in levelling up funding in October. In addition, the funding will be used to create a Royal Navy Volunteer Reserve (RNVR) gallery and educational programme at Western Approaches Museum and BOA Park.

The third element to receive funding is Liverpool Parish Church, Our Lady and St Nicholas on the Pier Head, known as the sailors' church. The funding will be used to create a Garden of Reflection to remember the 100,000 men and women who died, and those who served, in the longest running battle of World War Two (see notes to editors 2).

BOAM chairman Gary Doyle said the memorial will serve as a permanent high profile reminder to future generations of the 'incalculable value of peace'.

"We are delighted to receive this donation from the Naval Club to ensure the Battle of the Atlantic is properly recognised and commemorated and thank its team very much," he said. "But after years of work there could not be a more poignant time for us to unveil these plans. The



Russian invasion of Ukraine is showing us tragically that we cannot take peace in Europe or on the Atlantic for granted. World War Two is called the greatest catastrophe in human civilisation and without the success of the BOA Britain and Russia would almost certainly have been defeated. We want the memorial to act as a warning especially now to Russia and future generations of the consequences of conflict in Europe and how brutal dictatorships endanger the world. The war generation fought for peace and our

memorial honours that today more than ever."

Naval Club chairman Simon Wilson said: "The Naval Club was founded in 1946 by members of the RNVR who had fought in the war and wanted a place to socialise and stay in London. Sadly, due to an aging demographic and increasing costs the club was sold last year. Apportioned funds from the sale have been given to eight charities for specific projects. I am delighted that we could support the BOAM charity as the RNVR contributed massively in the battle for our very survival, and a proper national memorial is long overdue. I must declare a personal interest as my father served in the RNVR in the Battle of the Atlantic and was a proud Liverpudlian."

Dean Paton, founder of Big Heritage and Western Approaches director said: "The Battle of the Atlantic was an international endeavour, but so much of the planning and logistics of campaign was centred around the River Mersey. We are delighted therefore to have received this support from the Naval Club to not only create a permanent memorial on both sides of the river, but also to create a new gallery within Western Approaches museum dedicated to the RNVR; an organisation that played a crucial role in the Second World War, but whose story has been somewhat overlooked by history. It will be our honour to tell it to future generations."

For more information on the campaign, sponsorship packages and to make donations visit:

[www.battleoftheatlantic.org](http://www.battleoftheatlantic.org)

[info@battleofatlanticmemorial.org](mailto:info@battleofatlanticmemorial.org)





# Lifetime Achievement Award to Glen Paine by the Marine Society of the City of New York

*submitted by Dennis Ng, DAR Chapter President & Region # 3 Interim VP*

On March 28, 2022, the Marine Society of the City of New York held their 252<sup>nd</sup> annual dinner and bestowed upon Glen Paine their Lifetime Achievement Award. At this tradition-bound event, Mr. Paine was formally recognized for his many significant contributions to the maritime industry.

Mr. Paine earned his Bachelors of Science in Marine Transportation from the United States Merchant Marine Academy (Kings Point) in 1978. He went on to earn his Master's Degree in General Administration from the University of Maryland and he holds a United States Coast Guard license for Chief Mate Oceans of Unlimited Tonnage.

After Kings Point, Mr. Paine began his maritime career sailing for the International Organization of Masters, Mates, and Pilots (MM&P). In 1986, he joined the staff as an instructor of Marine Institute of Technology and Graduate Studies (MITAGS), eventually becoming the department head of the shiphandling department.

In 1998, Mr. Paine was named Executive Director of MM&P Mates Program and, under his leadership over the next 23 years, MITAGS grew to be internationally renowned as a premier maritime training facility.

Mr. Paine has been recognized with numerous awards and distinctions. He received the USMMA Alumni Award for Outstanding Professional Achievement in 2003. He has also been recognized by the Maritime Executive in 2002 and 2007.

Mr. Paine remains highly involved and serves in many leadership roles at a number of professional organizations.

He is both President of the Maritime Industries Academy Foundation and the Ship Operations Cooperative. He is Director of the USMMA Alumni Foundation, Chesapeake Chapter. He has served as advisor of the U.S. delegation to the Standards of Training and Watchkeeping Subcommittee of the International Maritime Organization. He is a member of the Nautical Institute, Propeller Club of Baltimore, the Council of American Master Mariners (CAMP), and the U.S. Coast Guard Merchant Marine Personnel Advisory Committee (MERPAC).

Representing AMMV at the dinner was Dennis Ng, Vice-president of Region # 3. He presented Mr. Paine with

a letter of appreciation, from Captain Dru DiMattia, Master Mariner and President of AMMV, for his support of the merchant mariners, and, in particular, for his support of the "Storm the Hill" team, which has been educating Congress over the past several years for recognition of the indispensable, but underappreciated service of the merchant mariners of World War II.

The effort of the team finally paid off in 2020

when Congress finally bestowed its highest honor, the Congressional Gold Medal, to the merchant marine veterans of World War 2, or their next of kin. As a token of its gratitude, AMMV also gave Mr. Paine a limited-edition World War 2 "Battlin' Pete" service patch, which had originally been designed and produced by Disney.



*Glen Paine (second from right) was recently honored with a lifetime achievement award by the Marine Society of the City of New York. Mr. Paine recently retired from his position as Executive Director of MITAGS/MCC. He has been a big supporter of AMMV causes, having assisted in making four cycles of "Storm the Hill" possible.*







# JUST RECOGNITION

## HOW TO APPLY FOR CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL DUPLICATE



The Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020 authorizes MARAD to award duplicates of the medal to individuals who, between December 7, 1941, and December 31, 1946, were members of the United States Merchant Marine, or other related services. If a qualified individual is no longer available to receive their medal, the Maritime Administration is authorized to issue a smaller duplicate of the medal to the next of kin.

To request a medal, we ask that veterans or their family members or survivors submit:

- (1) Mariner's Full Name
- (2) A copy of the Merchant Mariner's DD Form 214, "Certificate of Release or Discharge from Active duty" with continuation sheet if provided (the DD Form 214 is required to verify Merchant Marine service on vessels during World War II);
- (3) A summary, if available, of World War II sailing history to include the theater(s) of operation and ports of discharge; and
- (4) Book number or United States Maritime Service (USMS) number if available.

Inquires, along with the required documents, can be emailed to Katrina McRae at the Office of Sealift Support: [katrina.mcrae@dot.gov](mailto:katrina.mcrae@dot.gov)

*Also, the medals can be purchased outright as they are now available at the U.S. MINT:*

[https://catalog.usmint.gov/medals/military/?cm\\_mmc=infosite-\\_-coin+medal+page-\\_-merchant+mariners-\\_-medals&\\_ga=2.95430292.986426729.1653048251-1804427309.1650478395](https://catalog.usmint.gov/medals/military/?cm_mmc=infosite-_-coin+medal+page-_-merchant+mariners-_-medals&_ga=2.95430292.986426729.1653048251-1804427309.1650478395)







# JUST RECOGNITION

## Update on AMMV Efforts to Honor USMM Veterans March – May 2022

### Congressional Gold Medal

On May 18, 2022, the highlight of years of work by AMMV leadership to recognize USMM WWII veterans was the award of the Congressional Gold Medal during a ceremony at Statuary Hall in the U.S. Capitol building. If you have not seen the ceremony, you can access a video on Speaker Nancy Pelosi's website: (<https://www.speaker.gov/newsroom/51822>). David Yoho, a USMM WWII veteran and AMMV member, gave an impassioned speech about the USMM veterans without referring to any notes! The honors bestowed upon USMM WWII veterans formed the basis of additional coordination with Federal agencies to influence TV production executives at the Corporation for Public Broadcasting, the Public Broadcasting Service, and Capital Concerts to include some mention of the medal for USMM WWII veterans during the 2022 National Memorial Concert.

### 50th Anniversary Convention for the Nautical Institute

From May 18-20, 2022, members of AMMV attended the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention for the Nautical Institute in San Francisco, CA. The conference topic was "What is the Future of the U.S. Merchant Marine?" Members of the audience were able to discuss issues related to honoring Merchant Mariners when maritime industry leaders and government officials gave their presentations.

On May 19, during a dinner aboard the SS *Jeremiah O'Brien*, AMMV donated our 3'x5' flag to be flown with other commemorative flags in the ship's forward cargo hold showing AMMV's support for the ship. It was a proud presentation for all AMMV members.

On May 20, AMMV members attended a ceremony lead by Rep. John Garamendi to honor nine USMM WWII veterans. This keynote event was part of the Nautical Institute's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Convention. A copy of the Congressional Gold Medal and a new AMMV lapel pin were given to each of the nine veterans. One veteran looked at the lapel pin and ask me if that was all he was getting at the ceremony, "...because if it is, I'm outta here!" I said, "NO! Don't you worry, sir. I assure you that you are going to

receive a medal that is far more important than the AMMV pin" – though the pin looks great if you ask me! One of the important outcomes of the Nautical Institute's conference was the recognition of the need to "Honor the Mariner." This idea applies to WWII veterans as well as USMM veterans from all major military conflicts and sea service.

### Department of Defense

On March 10, 2022, Capt. Dru DiMattia sent a letter to RADM (ret.) John Kirby, Assistant Secretary of Defense for Public Affairs, requesting his assistance to convince the TV production executives to include the USMM flag and anthem (*Heave Ho! My Lads, Heave Ho!*) in the "Salute to Services" portion of the National Memorial Day Concert. As everyone knows, Memorial Day is a day when our Nation honors all those men and women who gave their lives in service to the United States. DOD responded to Capt. DiMattia on April 20, 2022 saying,

*"Because the U.S. Merchant Marine is not one of the six U.S. Military Services that comprise the Armed Forces, in section 101 Title 10, U.S. Code, it would not be appropriate for the official flag and song of the U.S. Merchant Marine to be included in official presentations of the U.S. Armed Forces, including the National Memorial Day Concerts Salute to the Armed Forces."*

It appears that AMMV's request was rejected because DOD considers the "Salute to Services" segment of the National Memorial Day Concert, as shown on the Concert's website (<https://www.pbs.org/national-memorial-day-concert/concert/salute-to-services/>), as a "Salute to the Armed Forces," with the Armed Forces Medley playing as the Joint Chiefs give a salute to each of the six U.S. military services. Be that as it may, we did receive positive support from one of DOD's Public Affairs Officers. He was instrumental in having DOD press reporters cover the Congressional Gold Medal ceremony. He also pledged his support for future recognition of USMM WWII veterans. AMMV will continue to work with DOD Public Affairs as we continue to seek proper recognition for U.S. Merchant Mariners who died during WWII. AMMV is continuing our efforts to honor the USMM WWII veterans and their families.



# JUST RECOGNITION

There appears to be some confusion on the part of DOD with the meaning Memorial Day compared to Armed Forces Day and Veterans Day. Armed Forces Day is observed on the third Saturday in May, as proclaimed by President Truman in 1950. Armed Forces Day is different from the Memorial Day and Veterans Day because the day focuses on those who are currently in uniform and serving in the United States military. Of course, Veterans Day is observed on November 22 to honor all U.S. veterans. USMM WWII veterans have been officially recognized as U.S. veterans under Federal laws. Memorial Day is intended to honor those who gave the ultimate sacrifice for their country. It should be an inclusive not exclusive day of remembrance. Also, May 22 is National Maritime Day that is celebrated by the U.S. Navy and DOT MARAD, with an annual proclamation supporting maritime industries by our President.

## Seeking Help to Honor USMM WWII Veterans

Since I live in California, I attempted to seek help from the two Senators from my State, Sen. Dianne Feinstein and Sen. Alex Padilla, to convince the TV executives to honor USMM WWII veterans during the National Memorial Day Concert. After several attempts to engage the Senators' staff, neither of them has responded with help. AMMV also contacted the Public Affairs Offices of the Department of Transportation, the Maritime Administration, and the White House. Neither DOT nor MARAD responded to Capt. DiMattia's March 30, 2022 letter, and their staff have not responded to any emails or voicemails. I received what amounts to a form letter signed by President Biden on April 12, 2022 that did not even acknowledge the actual subject of the February 7, 2022 letter that Capt. DiMattia sent to the White House Office of Public Engagement seeking help from the White House.

Nahigian Strategies, the strategic communications company working with AMMV on the Congressional Gold Medal, has been kind to help to contact PBS to convince them to honor USMM WWII veterans during the concert. Nahigian Strategies' public information campaign for the Congressional Gold Medal yielded much press coverage. Perhaps their success will be a key factor to convince PBS and Capital Concerts to include the Merchant Mariners. Timing is a significant concern as we approach Memorial Day.

## U.S. Maritime Service Officers' School in Alameda, CA

The U.S. Maritime Officers' School in Alameda, CA prepared more than 6,500 officers to command merchant ships during WWII and future U.S. military conflicts. The school opened in 1943 and closed in 1954. AMMV supports listing the remaining buildings and land at the site in Alameda on the National Register of Historic Places. Capt. DiMattia issued supporting letters to the California State Historic Preservation Commission on March 10, 2022 and April 15, 2022. AMMV was prepared to testify at a hearing in Sacramento, CA on April 29, 2022, complete with a remote presentation, but the City of Alameda pulled the matter off the agenda. AMMV is continuing to coordinate with the Alameda Architectural Preservation Society on future actions regarding the school and its historical importance to the United States and the Merchant Marine.

## Afterword

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

Patrick Cotter

Member at Large

AMMV Government Affairs Standing Committee

[coolenvconsulting@gmail.com](mailto:coolenvconsulting@gmail.com)



*Recently, Sally & Roy Langwah received a "Member Appreciation" plaque from AMMV. The entertainment duo performed at six National Conventions between 2012-2019 and became good friends with many of our veterans and members.*



# Launch of the First U.S.-flagged Great Lakes Bulk Carrier in Nearly 40 years

*Editor's note: The following is a press release from last October, featuring the first brand new freighter (non-tug/barge) that has been constructed for Great Lakes service in the American-flagged Jones Act fleet in nearly 40 years.*

*According to Interlake Steamship's media contact, Chrissy Kadleck, the vessel will be*

*in service sometime this summer. It is slated to be christened on September 1st in Cleveland, OH.*

## **STURGEON BAY, WISCONSIN, Oct. 28, 2021:**

Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding and The Interlake Steamship Company hosted a launch ceremony Thursday, marking the latest milestone for the new 639-foot M/V *Mark W. Barker*.

The first U.S.-flagged Great Lakes freighter to be built on the Great Lakes in nearly 40 years, the M/V *Mark W. Barker* – while still under construction – was “launched” or otherwise floated in the water in the large drydock at the Sturgeon Bay shipyard.

A formal maritime tradition, a launching ceremony honors the first time a boat is transferred from land to water. The public event is a way of celebrating and blessing the new ship and its crew to bring it good fortune on its future voyages.

“Today is truly gratifying for our company to commemorate the first time the completed hull of our new ship has touched water,” said Mark W. Barker, President of The Interlake Steamship Company and namesake of the new vessel, which is the first new ship constructed for the maritime company since 1981.

Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding's Vice President and General Manager Todd Thayse invited all the shipyard crews to attend the short ceremony.

“It is a proud day for the men and women of our shipyard to celebrate the progress made on the M/V *Mark W. Barker*,” Thayse said. “Sharing this launch ceremony with the Interlake Steamship team along with Helen and Ian Sharp makes this day even more special.”

Interlake's office staff was in Sturgeon Bay to be a part

of the launch celebration. For many, it was their first time in a shipyard.

“We are dedicating this historic launch of our new ship to the men and women who have been building these Great

Lakes vessels on our freshwater shores for more than 100 years,” said James

R. Barker, Chairman of The Interlake Steamship Company. “We honor all of the skilled professionals who have worked countless hours, day in and day out, year after year, behind the scenes constructing these tremendous bulk carriers. Their workmanship and talent are welded into every seam of these vessels that go to sail long productive lives on the Lakes, safely carrying mariners and the raw materials that are the building blocks of America.”

In particular, James R. Barker pointed to the contribution of Ian Sharp, Interlake's Director of Fleet Projects, who spearheaded the design of the new build in-house from its conceptual phase to today. Sharp, a native of Scotland, has contributed his talents in ship design and shipbuilding to create a legacy that includes dozens of vessels throughout his more than five-decade career.

His wife and chief supporter of 56 years, Helen Sharp, was selected as the honorary launch sponsor.

“Motor Vessel *Mark W. Barker*, your family name is strong, you are built strong by hard-working men and women and you will work strong. May God bless you and all who sail with

you,” said Helen Sharp as she broke the ceremonial bottle of champagne against the bow of the ship just above the vessel's nameplate.

Tugs in the shipyard blew congratulatory salutes, and then shipyard workers opened the valves in the dry dock to let water flow in. The process of floating the boat took about six hours.

President and CEO of Fincantieri Marine Group Dario Deste offered his congratulations to the teams at Bay Shipbuilding and Interlake. “Well done,” said Deste. “May this vessel demonstrate not only the importance of commerce on the Great Lakes but also the power of partner-





ships between two tremendous companies.”

The ship is expected to be complete and underway in Spring 2022. In the meantime, interior work on the vessel’s accommodations and mechanical and

engineering systems continues.

### **ABOUT THE M/V MARK W. BARKER**

The new River-class, self-unloading bulk carrier is believed to be the first ship for U.S. Great Lakes service built on the Great Lakes since 1983. Measuring 639 feet in length (78 feet W, 45 feet H, 28,000 DWT), the ship will transport raw materials such as salt, iron ore, and stone to support manufacturing throughout the Great Lakes region.

The Interlake Steamship Company, Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, and Bay Engineering jointly designed the bulk carrier, complete with advanced vessel and unloading systems automation. The carrier is being built by FBS’s nearly 700 skilled trade workers and will generate business for partnering contractors, vendors, and suppliers. Major partners for the project include American Bureau of Shipping (ABS); ArcelorMittal, Bay Engineering (BEI); EMD Engines; Caterpillar; EMS-Tech, Inc., Lufkin (a G.E. Company), Kongsberg and MacGregor.

### **Media Contacts:**

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at 715.587.6786

[lynn.loignon@us.fincantieri.com](mailto:lynn.loignon@us.fincantieri.com)

Chrissy Kadleck, Interlake Steamship Company, Director of Communications at 440.935.1275  
[ckadleck@interlake-steamship.com](mailto:ckadleck@interlake-steamship.com)

### **About Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding**

Located in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin, Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding (FBS) is an industry leader in the construction, conversion, and repair of large ships – tracing its rich history back more than 100 years. The diversified FBS portfolio includes all types of vessels, including articulated tug-barge units, dredges and dredging support equipment, automated loading carriers, ferries, and offshore support vessels. On the repair side, FBS is an expert at managing

critical deadlines in the repair and sustainment of bulk carriers and other Great Lakes Winter Fleet ships.

Shipbuilding facilities at the 63-acre plant include a large graving dock, a U.S. Navy-certified drydock, and lifting capacity to meet the most demanding requirements. Erection buildings are climate-controlled and equipped with sophisticated computer-aided manufacturing equipment. Fincantieri’s skilled workforce has extensive shipyard construction experience, in-house engineering, and a management team focused on client satisfaction and on-time delivery.

Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding is an operating unit of Fincantieri Marine Group (FMG), the United States division of global shipbuilding giant Fincantieri.

### **About Fincantieri**

Fincantieri is one of the world’s largest shipbuilding groups and has built more than 7,000 vessels in over 230 years of maritime history. It is a leader in cruise ship design and construction and a reference player in all high-tech shipbuilding industry’s sectors, from naval to offshore vessels, from high-complexity special vessels and ferries to mega-yachts, ship repairs, and conversions, systems, and components production, and after-sales services. Fincantieri operates in the United States through its subsidiary Fincantieri Marine Group (FMG). This company, which serves commercial and government customers in the USA,

including the U.S. Navy and Coast Guard, has three shipyards (Fincantieri Marinette Marine, Fincantieri Bay Shipbuilding, and Fincantieri ACE Marine) located in the Great Lakes.

### **About The Interlake Steamship Company**

As the largest privately held U.S.-flag fleet on the Lakes, Interlake has been carrying the bulk cargoes that have been fueling the region’s economy together with its predecessors for more than 100 years. A second-generation, family-run company, Interlake is propelled by a long-term vision to make its fleet of nine vessels the most efficient and environmentally responsible in the shipping industry. The company has invested more than \$100 million to modernize and improve

its ships to safely and reliably transport 20 million tons of raw materials annually, including iron ore and flux stone for the steel industry, stone for the construction industry, coal for power generation, and salt for de-icing needs on roads and highways. Interlake employs about 400 men and women who live and work in the region, and the cargoes they deliver help generate and sustain more than 103,000 jobs in the eight Great Lakes states.





# LOG: Lifeboat Number Two from *SS Lahaina*

Editor's note: AMMV member Ben Kuckens submitted this story, recalling his father's experience of nearly 10 days in a lifeboat following the sinking of the *SS Lahaina*, of which he was sailing 2<sup>nd</sup> Mate at the time. Ben provided these additional comments about his dad: "My Dad was a Captain from 1935 on, but when he switched to Matson in 1939 or 1940, they had him sail as 2nd Mate to get familiar with the ships and the run. As the war broke out, he soon was sailing as Master again, and in Aug of 1942 brought a new Liberty out of the ship yard, the S.S. Andrew Furuseth, named after the President of the SUP when my father joined the union in 1918. When they launched the ship there was quite a photo gathering, with my father as skipper, and attending amongst many was Harry Lundeborg, who was President when I joined the SUP in 1955."



*SS Lahaina*

## Thursday, December 11, 1941

- 13:40 Latitude 27° 35' N, Longitude 147° 25' W  
Japanese submarine broke surface in the sun on the starboard quarter 1,500 yards distance and fired warning shot at vessel, which landed 500 yards ahead of vessel. SOS sent immediately by Radio Operator.  
Engines stopped and vessel maneuvered to provide lee for launching of lifeboat. Lee boat shot away. All hands in No. 2 lifeboat. Abandon ship signal sounded.  
First shot followed immediately by second shot, both missing. Third shot direct hit amidships directly below No. 1 lifeboat. Shell fragments piercing hull of lifeboat, rendering it unfit for use. Lifeboat No. 2 was lowered under continuous fire by submarine. Approximately twenty-five shots fired, twelve being direct shots above, or on the water line.
- 13:45 No. 2 lifeboat with all hands in life preservers – clear of ship.  
Shell splinters falling all about boat, but none hitting. Submarine maneuvered from original posi-

tion on starboard side of ship to port side of the *Lahaina* and continued firing with the intent to further disable the machinery space of the vessel. Ship afire from incendiary shells.

- 14:10 Submarine departed on the surface, heading in a northeasterly direction.  
Lifeboat No. 2 standing by near vessel. Smooth sea, no wind.  
No injuries sustained by ship's personnel during shell fire. All hands in good spirits – after submarine departed.

## Friday, December 12, 1941

Day begins fine and clear, with smooth sea and no wind. Lifeboat riding sea anchor.

- 02:00 Heavy sheet of flame from midship section of the *Lahaina* – assumed to be explosion of fuel oil in settling tanks.
- 09:30 Lifeboat returned to the *Lahaina* and Captain, Chief Engineer, Chief Officer, First Engineer, Third Engineer, Radio Operator, Deck Engineer, and Second Mate boarded the ship with the intent of salvaging the vessel, but damage was found so extensive by Master and the Chief Engineer that salvage was found impossible. Attempts were also made to salvage No. 1 lifeboat, but it was found to be in such a condition that to reach land in it would be impossible.  
First and Third Engineers inspected engine room and found that the port boiler and main condenser were pierced by shell fire, and the engine room was flooded to the level of the bottom cylinder heads of the main engine  
The following food supplies were placed aboard the remaining lifeboat:  
1 case of eggs, ¼ case of lemons, ¼ case of apples, 25 lbs. of carrots, 1 case of ship's biscuits, 5 loaves of bread, 10 gallons of water. About 15 blankets were also put into the boat and some extra clothing.
- 10:00 All hands returned to lifeboat, due to midship house catching fire, and cleared from vessel, which was listing precariously to port.  
Lifeboat standing by off starboard side of vessel.
- 11:00 Lunch served to crew, consisting of: 1 apple, or 1 carrot, and ½ cup of water per man. No complaints.
- 12:30 *Lahaina* capsized slowly to port and sank. Entire ship's company uncovered and solely gave the *SS Lahaina* her last farewell.  
Master set course immediately for the Hawaiian

Islands; watches set and crew rowing. No wind, gentle westerly swell.

17:00 Dinner served to crew: 1 raw egg and ½ cup of water.

22:00 Heard aircraft. Very pistol fired, but no response. Morale was still high in spite of disappointment.

#### Saturday, December 13, 1941

Fine and clear during night; no wind; gently westerly swell.

08:00 Breakfast served to crew: 1 raw egg, slice of bread and butter and ½ cup of water.

Sail hoisted to help out oars. Wind shifted to gentle westerly breeze.

12:00 Noon position: Latitude 27° 26' N, Longitude 147° 38' W

14:00 Boated oars, under sail only. Proceeding on south-southeasterly course.

17:00 Supper served: 1 ship's biscuit and ½ cup water. Weather fine and clear, becoming overcast in the afternoon. Light westerly breeze. Boat sailing easily and shipping light sprays.

After supper, Hillard Moore, 2<sup>nd</sup> Cook, went out of his mind and became violent, endangering the lives of all hands in the lifeboat. He was secured and lashed to the bottom of the boat. Crew showing signs of restlessness, caused by the ravings of H. Moore.

#### Sunday, December 14, 1941

Day begins cloudy. Wind hauling to the northwest.

08:00 Breakfast served to crew: 1 egg, 1 biscuit, and ½ cup of water.

Moore's condition calm, but still confused – took nourishment.

12:00 Latitude 26° 07' N, Longitude 148° 00' W, by observation.

17:00 Dinner served to crew: 4 ounces raw potatoes to conserve water.

H. Moore calm, but still in a shocked condition. Wind moderating and hauling to the north. High swell.

24:00 High seas and swell; moderate northwesterly breeze, boat making heavy weather and shipping seas.

All hands wet and cold but no complaints.

#### Monday, December 15, 1941

Day begins with heavy swell; moderate rough sea. Moderate northerly breeze overcast with squalls.

08:00 Breakfast served to crew: 1 raw egg, 1 slice bread and butter, and ½ cup water per man.

No complaints from crew, but all hands wet and cold; aching from confined and cramped quarters. H. Moore improved; lashings removed by Master's orders.

12:00 Latitude 25° 10' N by observation, Longitude 149°

00' W by dead reckoning.

17:00 Dinner served to crew: 1 carrot per man to conserve water.

#### Tuesday, December 16, 1941

Day begins overcast with fresh northeasterly wind; heavy swell and rough seas. Boat on a SW heading.

08:00 Breakfast served to crew: 1 slice of bread and butter, 1 raw egg, and ½ cup water.

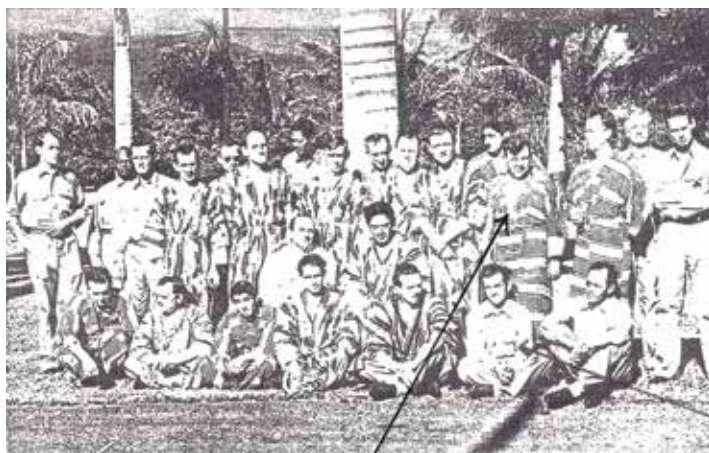
Crew showing noticeable signs of irritation at confinement. H. Moore improving and is much more rational.

12:00 Latitude 24° 08' N, Longitude 150° 30' W by observation.

17:00 Dinner served to crew: 2 ounces raw potato per man to conserve water.

Master talked to all hands and ordered complete silence if aircraft were heard, so that Very pistol could be fired in time.

Moderate sea and swell; fresh northeasterly breeze. Overcast.



BEN KUCKENS

*Survivors of the SS Lahaina after nearly 10 days in a lifeboat*

#### Wednesday, December 17, 1941

Day begins with moderate sea and swell. Breeze moderating and shifting to easterly.

08:00 Breakfast served: 1 slice of bread and butter, 1 raw egg, and ½ cup of water.

Crew restless during night and showing signs of strain from exposure.

12:00 Latitude 23° 18' N. Unable to obtain Longitude for noon position.

15:15 Latitude 23° 12' N, Longitude 151° 50' W, by observation

17:00 Dinner served to crew: 1 raw potato and ½ lemon. Overcast. Heavy, rough sea and swell.

#### Thursday, December 18, 1941

Hilliard Moore suddenly became violent and was



- hastily secured by crew.
- 08:00 Breakfast served: 1 raw egg, 1 biscuit, and ½ cup water.  
Crew restless. Two men became unmanageable and it was found necessary to secure them.
- 12:00 Latitude 22° 22' N. Unable to obtain Longitude for noon position.
- 15:40 Latitude 22° 15' N, Longitude 155° 11' W, by observation.
- 17:00 Dinner served to crew: 1 carrot and ½ lemon.  
Heavy seas and swells. Boat shipping water; crew bailing.

#### Friday, December 19, 1941

- Boat making tremendous speed during night.
- 04:00 Hilliard Moore died from shock and exposure.
- 07:30 More committed to the deep with appropriate ceremony.
- 08:00 Breakfast served to crew: 1 raw egg, 1 biscuit, and 1 cup of water.  
Crew all suffering from exposure. Two men who were secured were released after becoming rational.  
Herman Freedman, A.B., collapsed from shock and exposure.  
Weather in early morning moderating slightly, becoming overcast with squalls in the afternoon; sea increasing from northeasterly, becoming rough with mountainous seas.
- 12:00 Latitude 21° 03' N, Longitude 154° 34' W, by observation. 126 miles distance from Kahului, Maui.
- 17:00 Dinner served: 1 biscuit, ½ lemon (last of lemons), and ½ cup of water.  
Boat shipping seas, crew bailing continuously.

#### Saturday, December 20, 1941

- 04:00 Two men, after drinking salt water, became violent and caused such a commotion in the boat that two heavy combers hit and swamped, and nearly capsized the boat. Crew bailing furiously with anything available. Sail torn at the leash; repaired by A.B.'s.  
Boat swamped once more during morning. Crew bailing continuously.  
Daybreak sighted Mauna Loa (volcano) on the island of Hawaii, 4 points on port bow.
- 08:00 Breakfast served: ½ cup of water, raw eggs (end of eggs, turned bad from heat), and 1 biscuit.  
Herman Freedman's condition steadily growing worse. All hands suffering greatly from exposure and cramped conditions in lifeboat, but also greatly cheered by sight of land in the morning. Mountainous easterly seas compelled a westerly course to be steered. Boat surfing before the seas. Boat swamped in the afternoon. Crew bailing continuously. Boat under shortened sail. Heavy rain



- squalls. Wind Beaufort force 7-8.
- 17:00 Dinner served to crew: ½ cup water, ½ cup raw potato, 1 biscuit with jam. Sea moderating somewhat. Rehoisted sail and SW course.
- 20:40 Albert Lundquist, A.B., with the words, "Now try and stop me", jumped overboard. No rescue could be made because of heavy combers, although sail was doused.
- 23:30 Off Spartan Reef on the Kahului coast of Maui, T.H.

#### Sunday, December 21, 1941

- 01:30 Concezio del Tinto, Oiler, jumped overboard with the intention of reaching shore. Every effort was made to rescue him, but without success.
- 02:30 Cruising off coast of Maui with shortened sail and sometimes under oars, endeavoring to keep position until daybreak.
- 06:00 At daybreak, boat made a landing through a hole in the breaker at F. F. Baldwin's house, Spreckelsville Beach, Maui, T.H.

30 men survived.  
4 men dies.  
Total time at sea: 9 days, 15 hours, 50 minutes.



*Ben Kuckens would later take command of the brand new Liberty Ship SS Andrew Furuseth.*

# DAR Chapter at NWS & AMM ceremony at Battery Park

*submitted by Dennis Ng, DAR Chapter President & Region # 3 Interim VP*

On May 8, 2022, AMMV Dennis A. Roland (DAR) Chapter joined the Scandinavian East Coast Museum at New York City's Battery Park to commemorate the 77<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of V.E. Day. Under an overcast sky, the participants gathered at the "Stone", the Norwegian War Sailor's monument. In WWII, Norway would lose 570 ships and almost 4,000 sailors. Barbara Kristiansen of the Faerder Lodge SON gave the opening remarks, Odd Inge Tangen, Chaplain, Norwegian Seamen's Church of New York read the Sailor's

Psalm, and Heidi Olufsen, Counsel General, Royal Norwegian Consulate in New York offered words of welcome. The first part of the service was concluded with the laying of the wreath, and the singing of the Norwegian National Anthem.

The participants then proceeded to the Memorial for American Merchant Mariners. Victoria Hofmo, the President of the Scandinavian East Coast Museum gave introductory remarks and led in the singing of the Star-Spangled Banner. Dennis Ng, president of AMMV's New Jersey chapter, spoke about the significance of the permanent



*Dennis Ng (left) and David Wold, with MM monument in the background*

the "railway of death", which included the infamous bridge at the River Kwai. While in captivity, Roland acted as a senior American POW, and looked out for his fellow prisoners.

When finally liberated, Roland weighed a mere 68 pounds. While each branch of U.S. military assisted its freed POWs, he received no help whatsoever because he was just a merchant mariner. He was compelled to find his own way home. For all the time he was in captivity, he received no compensation, and, for all his courage and heroism, he was never granted any recognition by our nation's leaders. He died in 1984. ⚓

memorial in the harbor and recounted the services and sacrifices of Dennis A. Roland, for whom the New Jersey chapter was named:

On November 29, 1942, the American Export Lines freighter, Sawolka was attacked and sunk in the Indian Ocean by a German surface raider. Dennis A. Roland, the second officer and the other survivors were picked up and held aboard the raider for 3 months before they were turned over to the Japanese in Singapore. For the remainder of the war, they were forced to build



*Participants gather for the event*



*The "Stone"*



# A Man for all Seasons

By Ned Forney

“It was simply the right thing to do.” - J. Robert “Bob” Lunney

It’s not often that we hear about someone who does the right thing for the right reasons at the right time. But Bob Lunney pulled it off. Again, and again. And it wasn’t by mere luck or circumstance that he made a positive impact on thousands of people. Bob made things happen because he believed that serving others and “helping the least of these” – the words embodied by his parents, teachers, and Merchant Marine captain Leonard LaRue – were the ultimate calling in life.

During Bob Lunney’s rewarding and beautiful life he was constantly on the lookout for the underdog, men and women who had been dealt a tough blow, who carried a heavy cross, or were simply forgotten by society. And when he found them, his Irish stubbornness, wit, and sense of humor took over. Nothing stopped him.

As a devoted son, husband, father, friend, lawyer, US Merchant Marine and Naval officer, he championed causes that were close to his heart. From voter registration drives during the early days of the civil rights movement, to traveling to North Korea to help recover Americans killed during the Korean War, to working tirelessly for 40 years as a board member for Lavelle School for the Blind in Bronx, NY, he never rested.

Just ask his wife, Joan, of 46 years and their son Alex, who frequently traveled with Bob and accompanied him during a trip to Croatia in 2006. Lunney had been invited to a ceremony aboard the USS Enterprise (CVN-65), anchored off the coast of Split, Croatia, honoring Peter Tomich, a U.S. Navy chief who sacrificed his life for his shipmates during the attack on Pearl Harbor and was posthumously awarded the Medal of Honor.

In a saga that spanned decades, the Navy was unable to find Tomich’s next of kin and the sailor’s MOH ended up at the U.S. Navy Museum in Washington, DC. Determined to solve the mystery, Bob spent nine years trying to locate Tomich’s relatives in the Balkans, an odyssey that culminated in a ceremony in which an appreciative and proud cousin received the fallen Navy Chief’s MOH aboard the USS Enterprise. Lunney’s dedication to a fellow American and U.S. Navy veteran had paid off.

I met Lunney in 2016 while doing research for a book I was writing about the Heungnam Evacuation, a little-

known military operation that saved more than 104,000 U.S. servicemen and nearly that number of North Korean refugees during the darkest days of the Korean War. Lunney, a 22-year-old World War II Navy veteran at the time, was there and played a part in what would become the largest American military seaborne evacuation of civilians, under combat conditions, in U.S. history.

Bob had joined the Merchant Marine to earn cash for

college and had been sent to Korea after the Chinese entered the war in late 1950. As an officer aboard SS Meredith Victory, Lunney worked closely with a man who became one of his lifelong heroes: Captain Leonard LaRue.

“He was calm, confident, and caring,” Bob said of the Philadelphia native who would make the decision to load 14,000 refugees aboard his ship at Heungnam, North Korea, a Guinness World Record for the most refugees saved during a single voyage.

Lunney never forgot LaRue and spent decades giving interviews and talks, writing articles, and traveling around the world to pay tribute to his beloved captain and the crew who had helped save so many lives in the bleak winter of 1950.

In my brief time with Bob and Joan at their home in Bronxville, New York, and during our subsequent meetings in South Korea, I was amazed at Bob’s loyalty and dedication to the Merchant Marine captain who after the war became

a Benedictine monk. I was also impressed with the time he spent with me sharing stories of his life and his many passions and projects.

Bob was a man of strong ideals and convictions, and like so many others who were touched by his long life of 94 years, I am grateful that I knew him as a friend and mentor. I will always remember his thoughtfulness, compassion, and generosity.

With the world watching the shocking and heartbreaking scenes of innocent people being killed and maimed in Ukraine, Bob’s message about refugees fleeing during war-time will resonate with millions of people. “The idea of war isn’t just about bombs and bad guys. It’s also about preserving the integrity of a nation and the dignity of its people.”

To J. Robert Lunney (Dec. 15, 1927 - March 22, 2022), a man for all seasons, we salute you.

**Ned Forney** ([ned@nedforney.com](mailto:ned@nedforney.com)) is a writer living in Seoul.



*Robert Lunney, circa 1950*

# NOT ON MY WATCH!

by Sheila M. Sova

AMMV Veterans Affairs Chair Robert Lewis of Massachusetts sent us an email regarding the removal of the US Merchant Marine flag. *"On Saturday May 21st in Canton, Massachusetts, we need someone to assist with the removal of the Merchant Marine Flag, so they can fly the Space Force Flag instead. I will be at the MA Liberty Medal Ceremony."*

Incidentally, the Liberty Medal from the state of Massachusetts is given posthumously to the family of a MA resident killed in action. On this particular day, Robert Lewis representing the AMMV, would be attending the Liberty Medal Ceremony, to honor a WWII Merchant Mariner lost at sea. How ironic that in the same state, the USMM flag would be coming down as a USMM Veteran was being honored posthumously.

Under the Canton, Massachusetts official town website, I found the Veterans Agent. I called him and began quoting statistics and explaining the WWII USMM veteran status to him. He was not aware of any of this. I explained that the Congressional Gold Medal was going to be awarded to these men sometime in May. After all, he would be removing the USMM flag, one day before Maritime Day, May 22nd. How could he even consider taking down the USMM flag after this was pointed out?

Needless to say, he advised me the plans had been in the works for months and that no one had complained. I asked his permission to provide his phone number and email address to those who wrote to me regarding the flag. He said he was happy to speak with anyone that contacted him.

Now, there are times when social media can be a curse,

but sometimes, it does come in handy - and this was one of them. His phone number and email address were placed on several Facebook maritime groups and on Twitter. Through email contacts, an explanation of the plans to remove the USMM flag was sent out and forwarded throughout the AMMV family. Many AMMV members stepped up to the plate and contacted public officials in the Canton, Massachusetts area.

The overwhelming support by AMMV members and complete strangers from social media was tremendous!

Many of the Facebook members posted their letters or sent me a copy of the email they wrote, explaining how their grandfather was on the Murmansk Run or had been torpedoed three times from ships. Some chose to call the Veterans Agent and either spoke to him or left a message.

Nine days later, this email along with this photo, came to me from AMMV member, Robert Lewis of Massachusetts! Education is the key to understanding. That's two down and 8 million more monuments to go!

*"Hi Everyone. Good news, thanks to Sheila's persistence, the Merchant Marine Flag is staying put! I met with the veterans' service officer of the town this afternoon, and he said after various emails to his office, that he decided to educate himself on Mer-*

*chant Marine. He told me that he's adding two flag poles, one for the Space-force and one for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. I'm sending him an invitation to our Medal of Liberty Ceremony next month, and I left him with the recent magazine and other WW2 literature on Merchant Marine."*





From the AMMV Archives:

## "Mills, D'Alesandro, & Pelosi: 1956 & 2022"



*Far left: Charles Mills; second from right, Congresswoman Helen Delich Bentley; seated, Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr. (Congresswoman Nancy Pelosi's father) in 1956.*

This photo was printed in the AMMV News following our 2012 National Convention, of which was visited by retired Congresswoman Helen Bentley. The photo below, taken in 1956, includes our very own Charles A. Mills on the left, and Bentley second from right. However, this edition of "From the Archives" focuses on the man seated and signing a labor bill. This is Thomas D'Alesandro, Jr., who was Mayor of Baltimore at the time, and had also been a Maryland Congressman.

D'Alesandro was also the father of Nancy Pelosi, who, 66 years after this photo was taken, would present Charles A. Mills the Merchant Mariners of WWII Congressional Gold Medal, as Mills and Dave Yoho accepted on behalf of the WWII Merchant Marine.

It's incredible how some things come full circle.



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

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

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

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_ DATE OF APPLICATION: \_\_\_\_\_

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

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

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

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





**RON DESANTIS**  
GOVERNOR

**MARITIME DAY IN FLORIDA**

**WHEREAS**, the United States has always been and will always be a great Maritime Nation, from the founding of our Republic, through every period of peace and conflict since, our U.S. Merchant Marine has been a pillar in this country's prosperity and national security; and

**WHEREAS**, the World War II Merchant Mariner Congressional Gold Medal was officially awarded by the Speaker of the House of Representatives on May 18, 2022 to honor our Mariners for their honorable actions to defend our freedoms; and

**WHEREAS**, during WWII, St. Petersburg, Florida, was home to 25,000 Merchant Marine Officers in training at the United States Maritime Service Training School to help the allied forces; and

**WHEREAS**, during WWII Florida shipyards built over one hundred vessels helping to keep the vital supply lines open; and

**WHEREAS**, home to 15 public seaports, Florida is among America's top ten biggest exporters by state and is the cruise capital of the world; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida continues to invest in our seaports which serve as gateways to the Caribbean, Central and South America, as well as Europe and Asia due to their proximity to the Panama Canal; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida's maritime industry employs 66,000 workers with wages on which one can raise a family and provides opportunities for our Veterans transitioning from Military to Maritime; and

**WHEREAS**, the state's 15 public deep water seaports in Florida support 900,000 direct and indirect jobs, and contribute more than \$117.6 billion to Florida's economy through cargo and cruise activities; and

**WHEREAS**, the Florida Department of Transportation works with all seaports in the state to plan and coordinate infrastructure improvement projects that will create a more efficient supply chain; and

**WHEREAS**, in 1933, Congress declared National Maritime Day to commemorate the American Steamship Savannah's voyage from the United States to England, marking the first successful trans-Atlantic crossing under steam propulsion; and

**WHEREAS**, Florida will continue to celebrate the achievements of our maritime industry and support the nautical needs of the nation.

**NOW, THEREFORE**, I, Ron DeSantis, Governor of the State of Florida, do hereby extend greetings and best wishes to all observing May 22, 2022, as *Maritime Day in Florida*.



**IN WITNESS WHEREOF**, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of Florida to be affixed at Tallahassee, the Capital, this 22<sup>nd</sup> day of May, in the year two thousand twenty-two.

  
Governor

*American Merchant Marine Veterans*

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