



Honoring U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans and National Maritime Day

**Presidio of San Francisco, CA
May 22, 2025**



U.S. Maritime Administration



National Maritime Day 2025

Capt. Dru DiMattia
AMMV President



On National Maritime Day, celebrated annually on May 22, Americans honor the courageous accomplishments of all U.S. Merchant Mariners, in peace and war, and the essential contributions to our nation's economy lead by the U.S. maritime industry for hundreds of years. During the ceremony to dedicate a new monument at the West Coast Memorial in the Presidio of San Francisco, AMMV will honor U.S. Merchant Mariners who were killed in action while serving in the Pacific Theater of World War II. The new monument is a fitting tribute to Merchant Marine officers and crews who gave their lives for the freedom of the world. At the ceremony, AMMV will salute the service of five living U.S. Merchant Marine World War II veterans, including: John "Ed" Laughton, Frank Mendez, Charles Mills, Claude Perasso, and Dave Yoho.

The United States Congress created National Maritime Day on May 20, 1933 to commemorate the SS SAVANNAH's voyage from Savannah, GA to Liverpool, UK that began on May 22, 1819. The SAVANNAH was an American hybrid sailing ship/sidewheel steamer that accomplished the first successful crossing of the Atlantic Ocean with steam propulsion. The voyage took 29 days and 11 hours to reach Liverpool on June 20, 1819. The SAVANNAH's arrival in Liverpool was cheered by large crowds for the crew's historic Atlantic Ocean trip.

In addition, AMMV is proud to celebrate the 250th anniversary of the birth of the United States Merchant Marine on June 12, 1775 when patriot merchant mariners captured a British warship, HMS MARGARETTA, during a battle in Machias Bay, ME. The battle was called the "Lexington of the Seas."

AMMV is grateful for the support of a number of maritime industry participants and sponsors at the Presidio of San Francisco event, including Rep. Nancy Pelosi, Rep. John Garamendi, the American Battlefield Monuments Foundation, and the Walt Disney Family Museum.



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