

AMERICAN
MERCHANT MARINE
VETERANS

NEWS MAGAZINE



Convoy Cup Awards Coverage – page 36



The fight to save the Alameda, CA WWII Merchant Marine Officers' School – page 22



A Son's Victorious Tribute – page 26



"Doomed to Boom" Part II: Ed "Big John" Laughton recalls *Hobbs Victory* sinking – page 20



JOIN US - at The American Merchant Marines Convention

September 21st - 24th, 2021
Maritime Conference Center (Linthicum Heights, MD)

A Tribute to Merchant Marines & The U.S. Navy Armed Guard



STAND UP!

Dave Yoho – at the World War II Memorial in Washington DC - 1,250,000 viewed this on Fox News. (Search online: “YouTube WWII Memorial Dave Yoho Keynote Speech”)

SPEAK OUT!

A pause at the World War II Monument commemorating – the Murmansk Run



BE PROUD!

There were 250,000 of us recruited. We served in every battle zone in 5 continents. (Less than 2,000 remain)

Keynote Speaker - -

- Joined the U.S. Maritime Service (Sheepshead Bay) 1944
- Served on a T/2 Tanker in the S. Pacific
- Pictured on cover of 1944 Recruiting Magazine
- Rose from F.W.T. to Junior Engineer
- Invited to the White House 3 times
- Written 2 best-selling books
- Made over 5,000 paid speeches – in every state in the U.S. & 22 foreign countries
- Appeared in over 100 training movies for major U.S. corporations
- Appeared on most TV talk shows including the Tonight and Today Shows



DAVE YOHO

*“When you speak with others – tell them about us.
We gave up our yesterday’s for their tomorrow’s”*

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- Committee Member** **Sheila M. Sova** *Member-at-Large*



National President Capt. Anthony “Dru” DiMattia



The month of May sure does resonate when it comes to how and why we enjoy our awesome freedoms that are frequently taken for granted. We honor the ones who have served and sacrificed all, along with the ones who continue to serve our country. We stop and honor our mariners who never came home from the watery graves around the world. Happy National Maritime Day 2021,

as we honor all our mariners who continue to serve in this vital industry playing a huge part in our national security and economic prosperity!

As we reflect on the 77th anniversary of the D-Day landings, when Allied forces stormed the beaches of Normandy, France; (Utah, Omaha, Gold, Juno, and Sword) 06, June 1944, our WWII mariners understand that the U.S. Merchant Marine played a huge part in this winning combination! Over 6,000 tons per hour of materials were being delivered to the theater during the last year of the war.

The battle grounds experienced by our WWII mariners were in sight of our own shoreline, yet the critical supply lines remained intact due to the resiliency and perseverance of our Merchant Marine. Again, a winning combination of a multitude of factors; a large part of which was sheer patriotism! People came together and joined a common cause to rid evil. The Arsenal of Democracy! As it is said: “Necessity is the mother of invention”. That is what our manufacturing army overcame at home. We were building ships faster than the wolfpacks could sink them! Our WWII Merchant Mariners were the “Unsung Heroes”!

Fast Forward to current events; it wasn't long ago that several key players and planners of our U.S.-flag strategic sealift assets and capabilities determined that our current status is pretty much on life support. The state of the MARAD Ready Reserve Fleet (RRF) aged vessels along with MSC Reduced Operational Status (ROS) vessels, when tested during a “Turbo Activation”, received an overall success rate of less than 70%. There is a long list of how the vessels were rated, but to cut to the chase, we simply have too many pieces of major equipment that do not work as advertised! Add to that, a manning shortfall of approximately 1,800 mariners to crew a sustained sealift. This should be alarming

to the same groups of planners who ordered the activation. One of the new buzz words today resolving some of these shortfalls is “Re-capitalization”: the purchasing of foreign-flag vessels that will be re-flagged into our RRF fleet replacing older vessels that have reached the end of their lifespan. Personally, this program disturbs the hell out of me. Our shortsightedness continues to hamper meaningful impact on the root of many of our problems; JOBS, JOBS, JOBS! SHIPS, SHIPS, SHIPS! Someone needs to come up with a long term (+20 years) plan that takes hold!

How do you invigorate this industry when we have WWII mariners who remain Unsung Heroes? Taking care of our veterans is a way to convey the importance of this vital industry past, present and future. Our WWII generation of mariners faced astonishing impossible odds, and yet the story is known to persist; valor without glory! The AMMV mission remains to tell their story.

The three pillars that keep this U.S.-flag industry afloat are the Maritime Security Program, the Jones Act, and Cargo Preference. Another program, Food for Peace, is constantly being eroded. There is major interest in addressing our lack of U.S.-flagged and owned tankers. We do not have the ability to secure a forward deployed presence without relying on foreign-flag tankers. The shortfall is in the neighborhood of 80 such tanker vessels. Can you imagine if the “thinktanks” who can solve real problems by addressing a “jobs package” bill, could re-implement the trades at high school levels of training and build the necessary ships?

It is spoken that for every shipyard worker, that there are four additional workers supplying the necessary products and services required for ship construction. Without a doubt we need to have all parties onboard and discuss the Three P's (public, private, & partnerships) in solving these issues. Strategic planning has to go out 20-30 years in order to have meaningful impacts. This is nothing new in America. We've been there and done that!

As we've recently seen with the grounding of a large container vessel in the Suez Canal and the Ransomware attack on multiple supply chains, the awareness of our critical Merchant Mariners and the maritime infrastructure comes to the forefront. Get involved and educate your representatives! Learn about H.R. 1819.

How many Liquefied Natural Gas (LNG) carriers have we built since the 70's? How many U.S.-flagged, U.S.-built, and manned with U.S. mariners are engaged in non-subsidized trade today? The United States with its Quincy-built

(CONTINUED ON PAGE 6)

(CONTINUED FROM PAGE 5)

LNG carriers were the first scaled fleet of safe operations, globally trading in the market from the mid 70's into the 90's. Now that LNG has come to the forefront as a bridging fuel source lowering emissions, what do we have for U.S.-flagged/built LNG bottoms, with U.S. mariners onboard?

As this summer edition of AMMV News goes to print, there has not been one additional co-sponsor of **H.R. 39**, the Just Compensation legislation for our WWII mariners, which was reintroduced by Congressman Al Green at the start of the 117th Congress. Our WWII Merchant Mariners have been waging these worthy battles for recognition stretching back for decades. H.R. 39 is a worthy bill, but are we a day late and dollar short? Well yes, we are, but we need to keep going until the last man is standing! If enacted, this legislation would give eligible WWII Merchant Mariners a one-time sum of \$25,000. Please join this effort, as we will need multiple volunteers both engaged on the field and on the sidelines strategizing this effort.

The Congressional Gold Medal designs have moved on to the Secretary of the Treasury, Janet Yellen, for final design choice. The U.S. Mint has revised its estimated time of completion to be well beyond its original June date. We look forward to obtaining an update soon, and will post such information on our website.

We have rolled out our new website; www.ammv.us, which is an investment in our future plans and goals at AMMV. Please share your thoughts and utilize this platform to register for the National Convention, renew your membership, or become a new member of AMMV! COME JOIN

OUR CAUSE!

I continue to challenge our members to engage in talking to their congressional representatives and to educate them on our battle to gain recognition for our WWII Merchant Mariners, all the way through to current day!

Amazingly, though the current administration conveyed its support of the Jones Act, we find various economic and national strategic waivers granted to (1) TANKER OPERATED BY VALERO, along with exceptions given to the foreign-flag cruise lines allowed to sail to Alaska, without stopping in Canada. I sure hope someone may have argued contingencies (economic offsets) that benefited our U.S. mariners in some form? I haven't heard of anything yet.

The Convention Committee has been working on our agenda for the September 21st-24th dates. See our Convention Registration Form included with this issue of our summer magazine and on our newly designed website. Also, please register with the Maritime Convention Center as our negotiated block of rooms is quickly selling.

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!

We pay homage to those who have Crossed the Final Bar.

Captain Dru DiMattia
Master Mariner
National President AMMV



VERY IMPORTANT MESSAGE:

AMMV Memberships expired on June 30, 2021. A small number of members have paid ahead by adding additional years so their memberships will expire in 2022 or later. Please check your last membership card which you received upon renewal and make sure of your annual expiration date. If you are in doubt, please call me, 475-470-9200 or email me ammermarvets@gmail.com. I am happy to check for you. If you need to renew for the July 1, 2021 to June 30, 2022 annual membership year send a \$32 check made out to AMMV and mail it to AMMV, P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024. To renew online go to our website www.ammv.us and hit the button on top that says JOIN. When you get to the next page it will give you an opportunity to choose either join or renew. If you belong to a chapter please contact your chapter Secretary or Treasurer. Thanks.

Lynn Kelly

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National Vice President Sheila M. Sova



Taking the seat of National Vice President of the AMMV is indeed an honor. In the past five years I believe that our membership has grown, although many of our veterans have crossed the bar. Something noticeable on social media is the renewed interest in the Merchant Marine of World War II.

Before I joined the organization, the lack of social media was to blame for the

lack of interest in the WWII USMM. Since 2015, the Twitter page has grown to over 7,000 followers including some of the most important names in the maritime industry. We have actually reunited crew members through our tweets. Writers and radio hosts have reached out asking for contact information to interview some of our members. The posting of a photo of the crippled SS *Mary A. Livermore*, hit by a kamikaze plane, led to a VT resident recognizing his own father, a Navy Armed Guardsman, staring ominously at what was left of the Liberty ship. He had never seen that look of fear on his father's face before.

More importantly, we have connected with the sons, daughters, and grandchildren of World War II Merchant Mariners and U.S. Navy Armed Guardsmen. I believe these descendants are the future of the AMMV. I believe it is up to them to carry on the legacy of the Greatest Generation. How do we encourage this effort?

If you are a member of the Greatest Generation, involve your kids and grandchildren in your history. Get them interested in your service time. Repeatedly we hear from descendants of World War II veterans that their fathers and grandfathers rarely spoke of their time in the war. Many have wished they would have asked because now they don't have that opportunity since the veteran has crossed the bar.

That seems to be the number one reason WWII Merchant Mariners' descendants are joining the Facebook groups and following the Twitter page. They want to know more about their relatives' service. Many had no idea of the dangers faced by the World War II Merchant Mariners. Involve your grandkids who are computer savvy, and ask them to help you find pictures of the ships you sailed on. Eventually their interest will peak when they learn of the dangers that you faced. Taking the time to involve them can encourage a desire to carry on a legacy. Buy them a gift of membership for their birthday or invite them to the convention!

One of my fondest memories of the convention in St. Louis was World War II Veteran Jim Coley, who attended with his daughter Crystal Theriot and 12-year-old grandson



Blaise. Blaise's teacher allowed him to miss school as long as he wrote a report on his experience. He will never forget interviewing the late Walter Broll, a survivor of the Bari, Italy explosion. That is a real education that can never be taught in school. It is up

to us to educate our younger generation on the role that the USMM provided in WWII. Involvement is the key.

Sheila M. Sova
National Vice President



Exhibitor tables available at AMMV National Convention

We still have exhibitor tables available at the September convention. An Exhibitor Registration includes a 5' x 2' table, chairs, table cloth & skirting, electricity, and wireless internet, and also includes general AMMV convention registration which covers admittance to our entertainment functions, guest speaker sessions, and into our generous Hospitality Room. Please contact AMMV HQ at (475) 470-9200 for pricing and availability.



National Secretary Cindy Komlos



This Memorial Day, I learned that not everyone understood what this day stood for. Memorial Day is to honor those who have served and made the ultimate sacrifice.

Veterans Day is to honor those who have

served their country, but are no longer active duty.

Armed Forces Day is for those presently serving.

I had heard about an event, *Taps Across America*. At precisely 3:00 p.m. if you know how to play *Taps*, you were encouraged to do so. My father, being a WWII Merchant Marine Veteran, naturally went with us to a nearby nursery where they were doing this. After the musician played *Taps*, she switched to her French horn and played all patriotic music. Very stirring. People were teary eyed. I may suggest next year finding a place where they are participating in this. I'm glad I went!

Cindy Komlos
National Secretary



Welcome Aboard to these New Members of the AMMV

PETER AXELROD	TUSTIN.....	CA
HANZ CHANDLER.....	EDINBURG.....	TX
PATRICK COTTER	PACIFIC GROVE	CA
JIM COX.....	BELLEVUE.....	WA
KATHLEEN COX	LACKAWAXEN	PA
DAVID C. DITTMER.....	GALESBURG	IL
STEPHANIE EVANS	MONTGOMERY	IL
KEVIN FOX	BROOKEVILLE.....	MD
WILLIAM GEORGE	SUFFOLK	VA
MINDA HOSAY	PITTSBURGH	PA
NICOLE S. KOVALCIK	MYRTLE BEACH	SC
JOHN LITTLE	NORFOLK.....	VA
LUKE LORENZ	HERNDON.....	VA
LAURA MC CORMACK.....	MANCHESTER.....	NH
DAVID S. MC FARLAND	BEATTYVILLE.....	KY
TIMOTHY P. MURRAY	STANTON	CA
DAVID NOLAN	VACAVILLE	CA
CHARLES PETRIE.....	PAWCATUCK	CT
GEORGE C. SHAW	LANTZVILLE, B.C.....	CANADA
CURTIS ANDERSON SHORES.....	THOMASVILLE	GA
DAVID SHOWS	BOONE.....	NC
BRENDA SUHAYDA.....	SUGAR GROVE.....	IL
TIMOTHY THOMPSON	STOUGHTON	WI
RITA VALENTINO.....	KENSINGTON	MD



National Office Administrator Lynn Kelly



I would like to introduce guest columnist Capt. Ron Campana, owner and President of Campana Marine Services and the Crazy Italian Restaurant in New Orleans.

History of the U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps

Until 1874, young Americans who wanted careers at sea as officers had to work their way “up the hawsepipe,” learning practical seamanship and navigation as best they could. That

year, Congress authorized the Navy to lend ships to leading U.S. ports “for the instruction of youths in navigation, seamanship.” New York Nautical School was the first to take advantage of the Act, and the only school which survived, eventually becoming State University of New York (SUNY).

In 1891 the Pennsylvania Nautical School started operation, followed two years later by the Massachusetts Nautical School, but both schools limited enrollment to state residents. Other state-funded Maritime schools for the training of officers, were established in California (1929), Maine (1941), and Texas (1931).

In response to a need for officers to man the Emergency Fleet during WW I, the United States Shipping Board set up a crash training program in 1917. The 6 week-long program, limited to men who had at least 2 years sea time, was called Free Training Schools for Merchant Marine Officers. There were 6,300 graduates as WW I ended, and 11,000 by the end of the program in 1921.

Another training program was based on the 1891 Postal Aid Law and 1928 Jones-White Act which mandated that, ships accepting U.S. Government mail subsidies should take cadets for training -- “one American-born boy under 21” for each 1,000 tons gross weight -- to be “educated in the duties of seamanship.”

Unfortunately, the selection and training of “Mail Cadets” was haphazard at best: some cadets only wanted a free trip to Europe and had no intentions of a sea career; others

complained of being given only the most menial chores and no training. Of 1,987 cadets placed with 13 shipping companies between 1932 and 1937, only 100 received licenses. [Two “Mail Cadets” were killed on the Morro Castle in 1934.]

Merchant Marine Act of 1936

The Merchant Marine Act of 1936, provided for establishment of Federal training for merchant marine officers. The U.S. Merchant Marine Cadet Corps was officially founded March 15, 1938 under the auspices of the U.S. Maritime Commission, chaired by Joseph P. Kennedy (father of President John F. Kennedy), a position taken over by Admiral Emory Scott Land.

Initially, training of cadets was given aboard government-subsidized ships under the direction of shore-based Port Inspector-Instructors. In February 1942, administration of the training program was turned over to the Coast Guard, but in July 1942 it was given to the War Shipping Administration.

The need for a permanent shore facility became obvious quickly. After several years of temporary facilities, Congress appropriated funds in 1942 for the purchase of the former Chrysler estate for an Academy at Kings Point, Long Island, New York. At the same time the Merchant Marine Cadet Schools were established at Pass Christian, Mississippi, and San Mateo, California.

The cadets at San Mateo were transferred to Kings Point in September 1947, and the school closed, becoming a junior college, and later, a nature preserve. Pass Christian Cadet School, already suffering severe financial problems, was devastated by a hurricane in September 1947. The school closed in 1950, the facilities turned into a religious college, then a resort.

In 1979 the USMMA New Orleans Alumni dedicated a memorial anchor and plaque on the original campus in Pass Christian, which was now a Baptist Seminary. After numerous hurricanes, the campus was abandoned and torn down after Katrina. In 2013 The USMMA New Orleans Alumni rededicated the original plaque and anchor in a park just north of the Bay St. Louis Bridge.

For more info go to: <http://www.maritimetv.com/EVEN/TS/131012RededicationCeremony.aspx>





NEWS Magazine Editor Capt. Christopher Edyvean



When the 2020/21 AMMV (34th) National Convention kicks off in September, it will have been 2 ½ years since the previous convention, due to 18 months of COVID induced postponements.

The National Convention is a time for gathering to celebrate the legacy of the U.S. Merchant Marine, and to highlight the service of our WWII Merchant Mariners. Coming together at these events

are WWII Veterans with their families and descendants; also, authors, historians, reps from various maritime unions and organizations, and many younger mariners. In fact, AMMV National Conventions over the past several years have included some of the top names in U.S. maritime.

As the AMMV News heads into press, we once again have top-notch guests confirmed, such as world-class motivational speaker & WWII MM Veteran Dave Yoho, Emmy-Award winning TV host Rita Cosby, and maritime author William Geroux. I hope that you, too, have September 21st thru 24th circled on your calendar!

Preserving U.S. Merchant Marine history

At AMMV, our core task is to educate the public about the history of the U.S. Merchant Marine. When it comes to WWII MM history, so many details and individual stories can be easily lost over time. Since the last issue of AMMV News, we have made some strides in preserving history, but have also witnessed a setback.

Several weeks ago, I was contacted by a member of the Council of American Master Mariners (CAMM) who wished to alert AMMV of the pending demolition of the remaining structures of the Alameda, CA WWII Merchant Marine Officer's School. We were directed to Carmen Reid, an Alameda resident, who has spearheaded efforts to save these remaining buildings. Sheila Sova and I quickly became involved. Emails and letters were sent to the Alameda Historical Advisory Board and city officials in attempt to get our point across. Sheila created a petition, which has accumulated over 1,000 signatures. A May 8th decision to proceed with destruction led to an original appeal date of June 15th; however, that date has since been pushed back to July 6th. If this fight is lost, it appears that another droplet of history will evaporate as these buildings will be forever lost.

Please see the full Alameda article later in this issue. If you'd like more information about this particular effort, please get in touch with myself or Sheila.

On the other hand, some positive progress has been made. AMMV President Capt. Dru DiMattia has been instrumental in arranging Florida-based ceremonies to highlight some of our WWII members, with the contracted Rowilson Media Group engaged in collecting interviews and oral histories. In addition, AMMV International Affairs Chair Jens Egeland has overseen the awarding of Convoy Cup honors to many of our deserving WWII members. In fact, dedicated volunteers have recently represented AMMV at ceremonies in Florida, Massachusetts, Texas, Minnesota, and New York. Many thanks to Dru, Jens, and others who have gone above and beyond to honor our WWII Merchant Mariners.

Have a safe and happy summer!

Capt. Chris Edyvean
Past AMMV National President
AMMV News Editor



Pictured are volunteers of the WWII U.S. Navy Armed Guard & Merchant Marine Museum, formerly located in Vero Beach, FL. The museum has relocated and is now reopen as part of the Museum of Military History, located at 5210 W. Irlo Bronson Memorial Highway, Kissimmee, FL, 34746; phone: (407) 507-3894. The photo was taken on Memorial Day.

IN MEMORY OF THOSE WHO HAVE CROSSED THE FINAL BAR

CAPT WILLIAM CROZIER Petaluma, CA

ISSIE DEITSCH Los Angeles, CA

JAMES W. "WALLY" HASSETT Clifton Park, NY

JAMES E. SCHEDER Livonia, MI

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.

Income

402 · Contributions	283,535.64
403 · Interest Income & Bank Bonuses	1,667.33
405 · Mission Support Fund	8,364.28
409 · Miscellaneous Income	16.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	
DAR · Dennis Roland	832.00
EOH · Edwin O'Hara	32.00
GLD · Golden Gate	714.00
HIR · High Rollers	200.00
JTS · John T. Schmidt/Palmetto	600.00
LON · Lone Star	175.00
MAL · Members at Large	17,489.46
MWE · Mid West	510.00
NBM · North Bay Mariners	375.00
NOA · North Atlantic	64.00
OHV · Ohio Valley	300.00
ORV · Oswego River Valley	75.00
THR · Three Rivers	625.00
410 · Chapter and MAL Dues - Other	96.00
Total 410 · Chapter and MAL Dues	22,087.46
411 · Convention Income	
412 · Convention Registrations	300.00
414 · Convention Donations	5,000.00
415 · Convention Dinner	360.00
411 · Convention Income - Other	150.00
Total 411 · Convention Income	5,810.00
Total Income	321,480.71
Expense	
500 · Fixed Expense	
507 · Telephone	358.71
511 · Svc Charges - Paypal & Square	91.67
Total 500 · Fixed Expense	450.38
514 · Convention Expenses	
515 · Convention Events	-200.00
Total 514 · Convention Expenses	-200.00
520 · Mission Advance	
521 · Awards	1,501.41
525 · Mission Support Exp	4,255.33
526 · Internet Initiative	4,108.95
Total 520 · Mission Advance	9,865.69
530 · AMMV News Magazine	
533 · Postage	3,825.70
536 · Printing	12,995.23
538 · Layout	5,200.00
539 · Editorial Fee	600.00
Total 530 · AMMV News Magazine	22,620.93
550 · Personnel	
551 · Administration	17,050.00
Total 550 · Personnel	17,050.00

560 · Operating Expense

564 · Office Supplies	600.10
565 · Postage - Office	1,628.08
566 · Printing - Office	2,602.45
567 · Licenses & Fees	645.32

Total 560 · Operating Expense 5,475.95

Total Expense 55,262.95

Net Income 266,217.76

Request for Collaboration

Submitted by Ian Watts

The Second World War cemented American overseas relationships and brought about new alliances. Allies, both new and old, grateful for the heroic work American Merchant Mariners endeavored on their behalf, have awarded them awards and decorations both during and after the Second World War. However, there is not one, complete reference on the honors bestowed on these brave veterans. For example, in present Maritime Administration publications, only a couple of ribbons from the Philippines and a Soviet commemorative medal are mentioned.

On the eve of D-Day, I began a letter-writing campaign to the embassies of all our old Allies to ask them of the honors they have given our Merchant Marine veterans; however, I would also like to ask the membership of AMMV if you would be willing to share with me your honors or those of your relatives from overseas. I would like to share with the community the many awards and decorations that have gone to Merchant Mariners, and potentially aid those curious in learning a bit more about the ribbons, medals, and certificates hanging on walls or tucked away in old cigar boxes.

I am placing my findings here: <https://ianewatts.org/awards-decorations-foreign/>

For your submissions and collaboration, I may be contacted off of my website's contact page or may be reached via e-mail: ianewatts@gmail.com.



Balance Sheet

As of May 31, 2021

	<u>May 31, 21</u>
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
103 · Paypal	31.97
105 · Chase Bank	394,763.86
Total Checking/Savings	<u>394,795.83</u>
Total Current Assets	<u>394,795.83</u>
TOTAL ASSETS	<u>394,795.83</u>
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Credit Cards	
200 · Chase Credit Card	1,912.50
Total Credit Cards	<u>1,912.50</u>
Other Current Liabilities	
311 · Dues Receivable	64.00
312 · Member Recruitment	893.00
314 · Mission Support Donations	57,143.21
Total Other Current Liabilities	<u>58,100.21</u>
Total Current Liabilities	<u>60,012.71</u>
Total Liabilities	60,012.71
Equity	
32001 · Retained Earnings	68,565.36
Net Income	266,217.76
Total Equity	<u>334,783.12</u>
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	<u>394,795.83</u>



Charles Montanaro (left) and Dick Burbine, the “stars” of our spring AMMV News cover, recently had a chance to meet over breakfast.

AMMV 2020/21 National Convention

September 21-24th, 2021



STEP 1: Register with the Maritime Conference Center (aka MITAGS) for rooms & meals

**** Prices include three buffet style “all you can eat” meals per day ****

You must register directly with the Maritime Conference Center to reserve your desired room nights, which include meals. Please note AMMV Convention registration is separate; see Step # 2.

TO REGISTER: Call (866) 900-3517 or book online at:

<http://book.b4checkin.com/chameleon/mccbwi/rlp/AMMV>



Per night: \$157 single occupancy; \$215 double occupancy, plus 13% taxes

NOTE: For those staying offsite, individual meals are available by purchasing tickets at the front desk.

Your paid hotel stay includes: 3 buffet style meals per day; use of fitness room & swimming pool; free parking; free shuttle service to/from BWI airport; onsite bar/lounge; access to maritime memorabilia room located in academic building. Check-in time is 3:00 p.m., check-out time is 11:00 a.m. (hotel will hold luggage if not departing immediately). No refunds for any unattended meals.

All guests & attendees must comply with MCC's COVID-19 policy/guidelines.

You must register by August 20th to receive the above discounted rate.



Convention Registration Form

AMMV 2020/21 National Convention
 September 21st – 24th, 2021
 Maritime Conference Center
 692 Maritime Blvd.
 Linthicum Heights, MD 21090

STEP 2: Register with AMMV for attendance & Congressional Gold Medal dinner

Name: _____ Affiliation: _____

Spouse/partner; additional guest(s): _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

CONVENTION REGISTRATION FEE (required to attend business sessions & Hospitality Room activities)

REGISTRATION FEE (single or first person in party)..... **\$50 = \$** _____

(For WWII Merchant Marine Vets, write "FREE" in above space; additional guests in party are \$25 per person)

Additional \$25 per person in your party..... **\$25 x** _____ = \$ _____

CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL DINNER (Thursday, September 23rd: 6:00pm – 9:00 pm)

Includes dinner salad, dessert, iced tea & water; cash bar on site.

On-Site guests (registered overnight guests w/ Maritime Conference Center hotel)

Choice #1	Seared Filet Mignon, Bordelaise Sauce	\$30 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #2	Rosemary Balsamic Glazed Chicken	\$30 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #3	Grilled Salmon, Red Pepper Coulis	\$30 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #4	Eggplant Parmesan Lasagna Stack, Pomodoro Sauce	\$30 x _____ = \$ _____

Local or off-site guests (those not staying at MCC facility) (*price includes Hospitality Room after CGM dinner*)

Choice #1	Seared Filet Mignon, Bordelaise Sauce	\$60 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #2	Rosemary Balsamic Glazed Chicken	\$60 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #3	Grilled Salmon, Red Pepper Coulis	\$60 x _____ = \$ _____
Choice #4	Eggplant Parmesan Lasagna Stack, Pomodoro Sauce	\$60 x _____ = \$ _____

TOTAL due for all selections = \$ _____

Please make check payable to: AMMV
 Mail check (no cash please) with completed form to:
 AMMV, Attn: Convention, P.O. Box 2024, Darien, CT 06820-2024

Joining us at the AMMV 2020/21 National Convention...



Rita Cosby is one of the most recognized and respected broadcasters in America who has attained an extraordinary level of success in multiple arenas that few in the media landscape have achieved. She is a renowned **Emmy-winning TV host, veteran correspondent and multiple best selling author**, who anchored highly rated primetime shows on **Fox News Channel** and **MSNBC**, and has secured exclusive interviews with more than twenty world leaders, including eight U.S. Presidents. Selected by **Radio Ink Magazine** as **Female Legend of the Year** for 2018, Rita was chosen among all women on and off air in the radio industry. Having written back-to-back **New York Times Best Selling books**, she was also listed among the Top 200 Most Influential Authors in the World. Her latest best seller, "**QUIET HERO: Secrets From My Father's Past,**"

details her fascinating discovery about her own father, a Polish Resistance fighter, who later became a Nazi prisoner of war, and was ultimately saved by American troops. Because of Rita's "extraordinary journalism and exemplary service on behalf of her community," October 11th, 2010 was officially named "**Rita Cosby Day**" in the State of New York. In 2011, she was recognized by the **U.S. Congress** for her professional and charitable achievements.

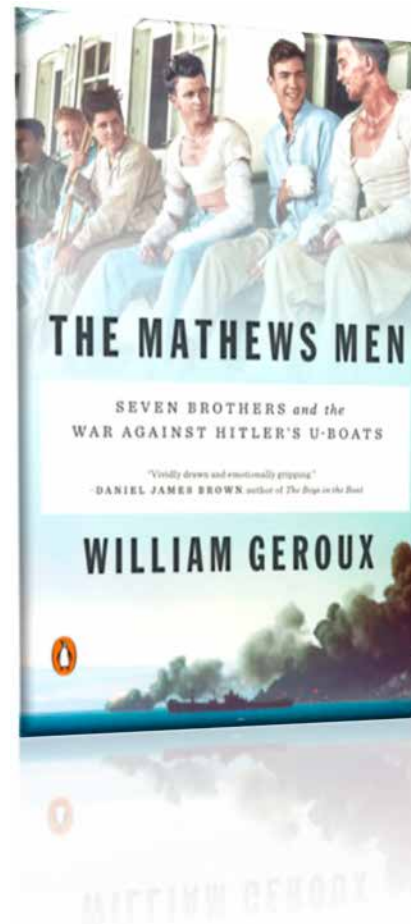
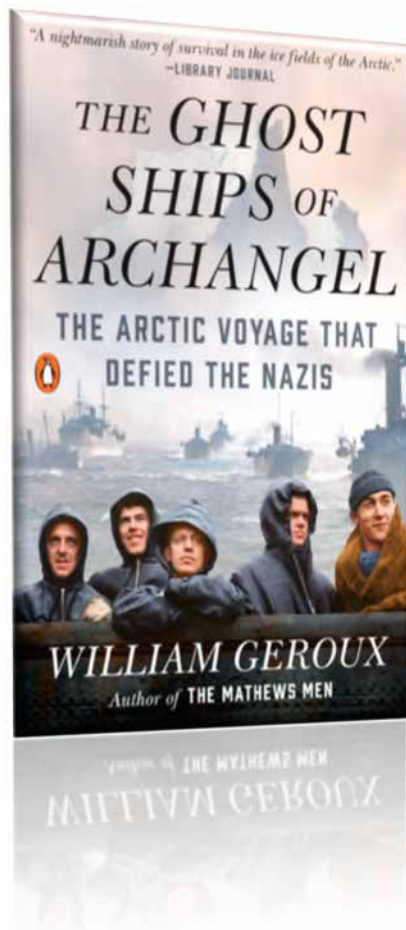
Tomaczek Bednarek is an American singer-songwriter, acclaimed producer and great entertainer who has performed with some real legends. In his early days, he opened for music icon **Frank Sinatra** and did command performances for President's **Nixon, Ford, Carter, Reagan, Liz Taylor**, and more. Having worked with such talents as **Michael Jackson, Cher, Dolly Parton, Tony Orlando**... plus filmmakers as diverse as **Monte Hellman** (Reservoir Dogs) to **Frank Capra Jr.** (The Big Player), Tomaczek was also the principal architect of two back-to-back **New York Times Best Selling Book Campaigns** involving more than 400 media interviews, including **The Today Show, Good Morning America, CNN, CBS, FOX News, Extra, Forbes, Oprah & Friends, AOL** and more. As Director, East Coast of Brave Road Entertainment and founder of Cinestage Media Group, his films and videos have won the **New York World Fest Award, Best Videographer, Producer of the Year**, an **Aurora Award for Best Country Music Video**, the **Tele Award, Gracies Awards** and others. With music and writing as his passion, Tomaczek's countless performances for our military range from the **USS Missouri at Pearl Harbor, the 75th Anniversary of D-Day** in Normandy, France, LIVE in Washington DC singing on the global broadcasts of **The National Memorial Day Parade** and LIVE on **Troopathon**, America's annual TV Telethon which sends care packages to our service members on the front lines.



William Geroux - Author

William Geroux appears at the AMMV 2020/21 National Convention in support of his second book about the WWII Merchant Marine, *The Ghost Ships of Archangel: The Arctic Voyage that Defied the Nazis*, which focuses on the “Murmansk Run” and the story of the fatal PQ-17 convoy. He previously appeared at the 2017 AMMV Convention to promote his first book, *The Mathews Men: Seven Brothers and the War Against Hitler’s U-boats*.

Geroux spent 30 years as a newspaper reporter, much of it covering Hampton Roads for the Richmond Times-Dispatch, writing about numerous topics. He won numerous awards for breaking news coverage, feature writing, and investigative journalism. Later, he worked as a writer for Maersk Line Limited, a Norfolk-based subsidiary of one of the world’s largest shipping lines. He lives in Virginia Beach, VA.



WWII Veteran Is Featured Speaker at Annual Merchant Marine Convention

September 21—24, 2021 – Maritime Conference Center, Linthicum, MD



92-Year-Old Veteran of WWII Who Became a Professional Speaker Continues to Receive Standing Ovations

Dave Yoho, the keynote speaker at the 2021 Merchant Marine Convention has been lauded for his masterful speech making ability. He stopped counting many years ago after his **5000th paid speech**. His use of language, tonality, storytelling and sensitivity have garnered him numerous awards and kudos.

Check out keynote speech at WWII Memorial, click here: [Video-Speech WWII Memorial](#)

Dave Yoho – A proud Veteran of World War II enlisted in the U.S. Maritime Service in 1944, and did his basic training at Sheepshead Bay N.Y. He is pictured on the cover of their Recruiting Magazine (circa 1944).

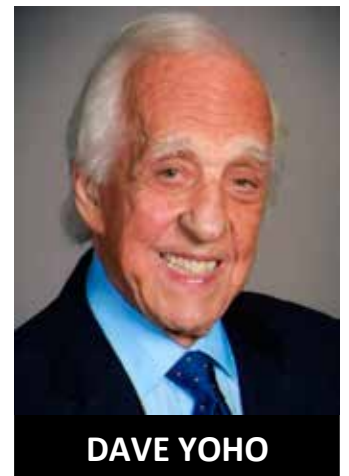
His assigned ship (a T/2 Tanker) often called a fleet oiler (support for combat ships), which was sent to the South Pacific. When the war ended (August 15, 1945). It was 4 days prior to his 17th birthday.

He credits his wartime service as one of immediate, though painful, maturation. He still marvels at our country's response to attack by Japan – followed by a declaration of war from Germany a few days later. The U.S. produced a fighting force of 16 million men and women in uniform; 440 thousand of whom died in that 4-year war and hundreds of thousands left with physical and emotional scars that they would carry for a lifetime.

From this foundation, Dave Yoho grew from an inner city kid who left high school in his junior year – to a returning Veteran who graduated high school with a G.E.D. He entered college on a “night school” program; went on to become a top salesman in a national company; moved into upper management and left to form his own company at the age of 28. His company grew into a conglomerate, which created for him, national recognition. While still president of his own company, he began a speaking career, which led him to speak in every state in the U.S. and 22 foreign countries. He is lauded for his unique speaking style, his unbridled patriotism and his constant support of Merchant Marine Veterans and their rights.

*****BIO DATA*****

- Made over 5,000 paid speeches – in every state in the U.S. & 22 foreign countries
- Written numerous books (2 became Best Sellers)
- 1st American to appear in Sydney Australia's famous Opera House
- Invited to the White House 3 times
- Appeared in over 100 training movies for major U.S. corporations
- Appeared on most TV talk shows including Tonight and Today Shows
- He has received the Oscar of Public Speaking (The Cavett), The Master of Influence Award and the C.P.A.E. (Hall of Fame) designation from his peers
- Dunn's Business Report called him the “SUPERSTAR OF MOTIVATION & TRAINING”
- Frequently quoted in Dunn's Business Report, Entrepreneur Magazine, Forbes, the Wall Street Journal and numerous trade/industry publications



DAVE YOHO

Revised 06/2021

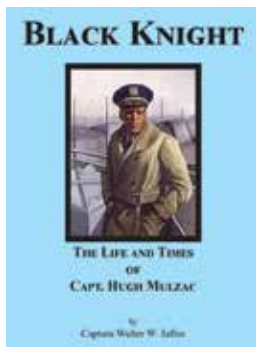


BOOK REVIEWS

Reviewed by Capt. Chris Edyvean, Past AMMV National President

Black Knight: The Life and Times of Captain Hugh Mulzac

(Capt. Walter W. Jaffee)



Maritime author Capt. Walter W. Jaffee has knocked one out of the park in assembling this fine piece of history, which covers the personal and professional trials, tragedies, and triumphs of the first African-American Master in the U.S. Merchant Marine.

Black Knight begins by exploring the genealogy of the Mulzac family and by recalling the life of a young

Hugh Mulzac and his reasoning for going to sea.

Mulzac's early voyages, most of which were peppered in rough times, are thoroughly detailed. From serving on sailing ships in less-than-ideal conditions as a youthful unlicensed seaman, to ascending the ranks to earn his officer's license, the career of Hugh Mulzac is meticulously captured in this work.

Mulzac's luck would run out, as racial discrimination

would keep him out of the wheelhouse for decades. In the meantime, he served primarily in the Steward's Department, but also tried his own businesses ashore. Mulzac was active in the civil rights movement of the day, and was pro-union, often supporting maritime union activities, although the unions did little for him.

The breakout of World War 2 and the massive void of manpower is what led to Mulzac finally being assigned his command aboard the Liberty ship *Booker T. Washington* at the age of 56. His WW2 adventures are vividly relived, as Capt. Mulzac certainly saw his share of action. The *Booker T.* became a well-known ship of that era.

The aftermath of WW2 finds Capt. Mulzac out of a job with the sale of his ship, once again facing the same obstacles and uphill battles as he did earlier in his career, as well as new challenges.

Black Knight is top notch reading and is highly recommended by AMMV. It is available from The Glencannon Press at www.glencannon.com.



“Submerged North Carolina” webinar now viewable online

On May 11th, maritime historian Dr. Salvatore Mercogliano hosted a webinar titled, “*Submerged NC: The Submarine Blitzkrieg against North America and the U.S. Response – December 1941 to August 1942*”. This online event was jointly sponsored by the NOAA Office of National Marine Sanctuaries and the North Carolina Office of State Archaeology.

In this 58-minute program, Dr. Mercogliano discusses how the east coast of the United States became a critical battlefield in the early part of WWII, in which merchant shipping suffered heavy losses. The dynamics of this part of the “Battle of the Atlantic” are explored, with focus on the response of the U.S. and how the tide eventually turned in favor of the Allies.

Dr. Mercogliano is an Associate Professor of History at Campbell University and a former Merchant Marine Deck Officer. He's also a member of AMMV and a frequent contributor to this magazine. Press time update: Mercogliano has just been confirmed as a speaker at the National Convention in September.

The webinar may be viewed at: <https://sanctuaries.noaa.gov/education/teachers/submarine-blitzkrieg-against-north-america.html>.



A CARGO DOOMED TO BOOM

PART II

(Continued from spring AMMV News)

Editor's note: Members of the AMMV Board of Directors recently had the honor of meeting Ed "Big John" Laughton and his family over a Zoom conference call. During the call, Mr. Laughton summarized his WWII training and sailing experiences, and tearfully recalled recovering fellow mariners from the sea while in a lifeboat. When asked what he'd like to say to our reading audience, John replied, "(A trip) down memory lane... We who are in our 90's... We are the offspring of parents who struggled through the depression years of the 1930's... We are the participants of the early 1940's of World War II... We are the parents of the Baby Boomers... We are the grandparents of the "X" Generation, who are and will be in an automated society we never knew... We are, according to Tom Brokaw, THE GREATEST GENERATION." I hope you enjoy Part II of "Doomed to Boom", which captures John Laughton's remembrance of the S/S Hobbs Victory sinking.

Captain Izant came running from the chart room, through the wheel house, and on to the port wing of the bridge catching Big John by the arm and shouting, "Hurry, on the double! Get hold of the chief engineer and tell him to get up a full head of steam. We're getting out of here."

Big John swung into the wheel house, whistled the engine room, and got the Chief on the other end. "Chief, this is

second mate," he exclaimed. "Skipper says bring up sufficient steam to get underway as soon as possible. Ring us on the telegraph when you're ready, got it?" the second mate continued.

"Okay," answered the Chief. Just as Big John rushed out to report to Captain Izant, he witnessed another Zeke coming in on the *Logan Victory*, hitting her broadside amidship, and for a split second, all waited for her to blow sky high.



Ed "Big John" Laughton is on the far left

Instead, boats, rafts, etc., blew into the air. The ship's cargo, which was ammunition, did not blow up immediately because the plane hit her amidship.

The Skipper contacted the First Mate and directed him to pull the pin in the anchor chain locker room, thus losing the anchor to Davy Jones' locker, but at the same time saving valuable time for a slow heaving to of the anchor by the electric windlass. By the time this was accomplished the telegraph from the engine room had responded to stand by. In a record time of some seventeen minutes the black gang had worked feverishly to bring a cold engine plant to full steam, ready for whatever the bridge asked of them.

The attack continued while the four to eight watch was on duty with Big John standing by the telegraph taking orders from Captain Izant who paced from one wing of the bridge to the other. "Slow ahead," ordered the Skipper. "Slow ahead," responded the second mate as he swung the handles of the telegraph all the way to that position. There was a moment of breathless waiting for the engine room to respond before they answered by the indicator on the telegraph. "Helm amidship," ordered the skipper. "Helm amidship," Big John directed Whitey, the A.B. at the wheel. Whitey swung the wheel to the center line and responded to the second mate, "Helm is amidship, Sir." "Very well," answered Big John who in turn shouted out to the wing of the bridge, "helm is amidship, sir." "Very well," said Captain Izant who then ordered full ahead and directed the maneuvering of the ship out of this anchorage. Before clearing the last tiny island, the *Hobbs'* guns were still busy firing at what appeared to be another Zeke hovering in the shadows of the island and getting ready to make a run on the ship. All guns



on the port side opened up on the plane as it tried to gain altitude and in so doing showed its insignia to be one of the U.S. Navy's own Hellcats. Just then the Lieutenant ordered all guns to stop firing but not before the plane was hit and its pilot had bailed out to safety.

The *Hobbs Victory* with its cargo doomed to boom was still afloat and heading for open sea once again, trying to elude these kamikazes if at all possible. This had been a busy day, arriving at the fleet anchorage at 1000, moving to another anchorage, coming under enemy attack, seeing two ships close by get sunk, and seeing the gun crew scratch two planes from the sky – one an enemy plane and one our own. By the time the *Hobbs* cleared Kerama Retto it was 1800. No enemy planes had been spotted for some fifteen minutes when suddenly two Zeke's were seen flying high and out of range almost directly above the *Hobbs*, but they went on south. Attention and guns swung in the direction of the fleet anchorage as a Betty was trying to sneak in on the fleet; however, it didn't have a chance as the fire power of the Navy ships was so terrific that the twin-engine kamikaze just disintegrated in mid-air. In the meantime, the second mate on the port side of the bridge had not lost sight of the two Zeke's seen earlier overhead for they were splitting up down south, and it looked as though one had decided to attack the *Hobbs*. Taking no chances, the second mate hurried through the wheel house to the starboard side and reported same to Captain Izant, who was making sure that the ship would clear a shallow shoal off the last island.

"Notify the Lieutenant, quick," the skipper ordered Big John, who was already up the ladder to the flying bridge where the Lieutenant was directing gunnery operations.

"There's a Zeke four points off the port bow, Lieutenant," shouted the second mate, "just picked him up!" "Thanks, Big John," replied the Lieutenant, "keep your fingers crossed."

All guns on the port side swung about as well as the 3" forward and the 5" aft. There was silence for some five seconds, and then via the intercom the Lieutenant ordered, "Open fire." The next twenty seconds seemed an eternity as the Zeke came in some thirty to forty feet above a fairly smooth sea, swinging like the end of a pendulum, trying to elude the gunfire pouring its way. Tension aboard this bucket of dynamite was at an all-time high. Mouths were dry, and prayers were uttered as the 20 mm tracers poured into the Zeke. Alas! Smoke poured from the underside of the plane,

but it was too late for the momentum carried the kamikaze through the radio shack, where Gordon Brown was on duty. Concussion knocked everyone to the deck; smoke, steam, and fire billowed out of the engine room. Fire enveloped the after part of the midship house and number four hatch. No explosion came other than in the engine room. It seemed a miracle that the ship was still afloat. Orders flew fast and furious, and the injured were laid in the two starboard lifeboats as both port side boats were shattered by the impact of the Zeke.



AMMV Board Members recently spent an hour with the Laughton family via Zoom conference call. The family has decided to attend the AMMV National Convention in September.

Casualty counts were out of the question because the concussion had blasted some of the off-duty watch over the side; others had tripped the life rafts and jumped in after. This was just as well, because by the time the remaining survivors loaded both boats, little room would have been left for more. Captain Izant remained until the last boat pulled away. The *Hobbs* was still under way and unable to be stopped because of complete knockout of the engine room; so, the Captain slithered down a Jacob's ladder into the sea and was picked up by Big John in the motor lifeboat.

"You okay, Skipper?" asked the chief engineer as he helped pull him into the boat.

"Sure, sure, Chief, but let's get out of here," the Skipper answered.

Hopefully he asked, "Were you able to get into the engine room at all?"

"Not a chance; it was a real inferno," expressed the Chief sorrowfully.

As darkness was closing in, the motor lifeboat made its way to the other lifeboat to take it in tow and head for shore some five miles away.

Rescue boats from shore met the survivors coming in and did a tremendous job of finding those still in the water. Not until midnight did it become apparent that of a total crew of ninety-nine, thirteen would never be seen again. And so it was that at that hour the *Hobbs Victory* with its cargo doomed to boom did just that.

Comment by John Laughton (February 11, 1979): My memory fails me at this date of the thirteen who were killed except to say for fact that all five in the engine room (the 2nd engineer, an assistant, a water tender, an oiler, and a wiper), the chief radio assistant, the deck cadet, three Armed Guard crewmen, and three more who I can't remember were killed in the attack.

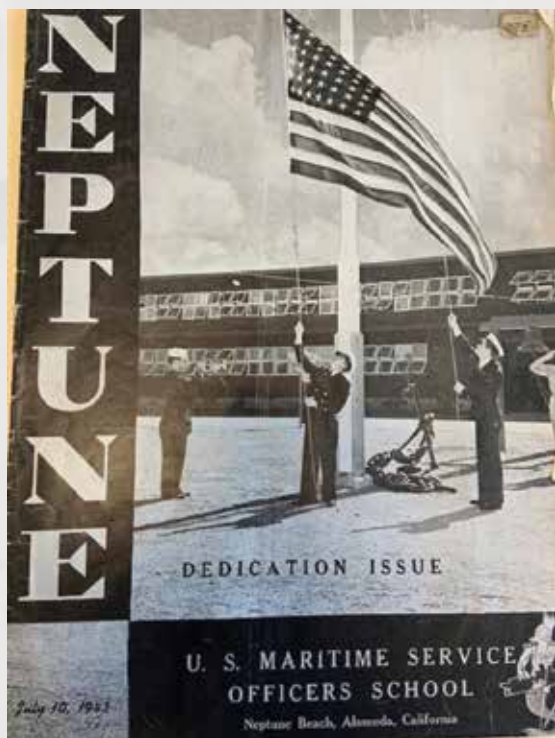
Thanks to Steve Laughton, son of John Laughton, for contributing this story.



Keeping the Flame of Memory Alive: Alameda, CA

Submitted by Carmen Reid

Eager seamen bound off a bus to check in, having recently qualified in San Francisco for the officers' training course in Alameda, California. Past the entrance gate, a



Neptune Magazine, July 1943

group of 30 is assembled on the parade grounds, hoisting semaphores in response to simulated conditions, in what appears to be a choreographed dance. Just beyond, a throng of deck officer candidates huddles around a 50-foot mast, hoisting and lowering signal flags as if they were already in the

South Pacific. Out in the Bay, a clutch of 26-foot surf boats can be glimpsed as candidates learn the basics of sailing, and nearby a rubber-suited seaman plummets 40 feet into a pool below, rehearsing "abandon ship". These are some of the scenes in a 1944 promotional video entitled "*The Life and Studies of an Officer Candidate of the United States Maritime Service Officers' School*" produced and narrated by Captain Malcolm E. Crossman, USMS Superintendent of the School, in which seamen with at least 14 months experience trained to become either Engineering or Deck Officers. The film can be viewed here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dmDmPVuT2Qk>. Unfortunately, the encroachment of the surrounding city is now accelerating, and without a concerted preservation effort, this

film may one day become the only evidence of the critical and historically significant 32-acre training facility that once graced the shores of Alameda.

One of Only Two Such Schools During WWII

Tucked away on a narrow street that ends at a pier in the San Francisco Bay are the last remaining buildings of a WWII era Merchant Marine officers training school. Construction began in October 1942, and the facility opened in January 1943. The Maritime Officers Training School, as it was officially named, trained ambitious mariners in the requisite skills to become officers within 4 months, an accelerated path to efficiently provide the leadership necessary to navigate and lead a crew headed for theatres of war across the globe. During WWII, there were two such training centers, the other being Fort Trumbull in Connecticut. During the Korean Conflict (1950-53), the Alameda facility was the only such training school for officers.



Engineering Room (Neptune Magazine, July 1943)

More than 6,500 officers graduated from Alameda's program during WWII (the larger Fort Trumbull facility graduated over 15,000). These ambitious mariners often manned ships with limited crews transporting sometimes unknown cargo in perilous conditions. U.S. Merchant Marine Veterans from this era like to recount that on the rare occasions when a Liberty ship was transferred to the Navy, its skeleton crew of 50 mariners would be replaced by a much larger contingent of 300+ sailors. Despite sustaining the highest casualty rate during WWII (estimated 1 in 26), these mariners didn't receive full veteran's recognition until 1988, and only in March 2020 was a Congressional resolution adopted to recognize them collectively with the Congressional Gold Medal.



Current view of Sovereign of the Seas Hall, Mess and Galley (Carmen Reid, photographer)



Joseph Esherick and Gardner Dailey working together, 1943 (U.C. Berkeley Environmental Design Archives)

After the War

In 1947, the site was renamed the U.S. Maritime Service Training School. Its purpose was no longer focused on officer training, but encompassed a wider curriculum to support advanced training. The school officially closed in 1953 and was deactivated in 1954. At this time the Government Services Administration (GSA) renamed it the “Alameda Federal Center”, and leased out space to various government agencies including the Food and Drug Administration. The GSA declared a portion of the property as surplus, and in 1961 sold over 20 acres to private developers and one portion to the State to incorporate into the existing Crown Memorial State Beach. At this time, several buildings were demolished, and the GSA retained a 7.6-acre parcel. Many local Alamedans today believe the site was “an FDA lab”, without knowing the original purpose of the surviving buildings.

A Unique Campus

The original campus was built on the site of Neptune Beach, an amusement park popular with Bay Area residents in the 1920’s. The Officers’ Training School comprised 22 buildings across 32 acres, with numerous purpose-built structures specific to the unique training required for deck and engineering officers.

The primary street that runs through the campus was appropriately named McKay Avenue, commemorating Donald McKay, the famed American designer and builder of sailing ships. The campus buildings were all named after famous Clipper ships such as Savannah Hall (Engineering), Hurricane (Barracks), Golden Light (Barracks), and Glory of the Seas (Seamanship).

The Engineering Building, one of the few remaining buildings still standing, had a state-of-the-art gyro lab, a diesel lab littered with numerous diesel engines for training, and a scaled-down reciprocating engine similar to that in the Liberty ships, complete with boilers and turbines. The Seamanship Building included a replica ship’s bridge, with a

broad vista of San Francisco Bay in order to simulate the experience of navigation.

Mystery Surrounding the Original Architect

In terms of design, the campus buildings fall under the “*moderne*” movement of architecture, emphasizing clean horizontal lines throughout the design, incorporating rapid construction methods representing a streamlined International style. One of the characteristics of this design was to maximize space while maintaining a feeling of openness. It is also an excellent example of WWII-era California military architecture, even as a reduced number of the original buildings remain. The buildings are all of one and two-story wood frame construction and concrete foundation,

with cantilevered roof overhangs and had open walkways between the original living quarters (barracks). Simple horizontal lines are accentuated by double, triple, and quadruple rows of rectangular windows that pushed outward. The original buildings were painted dark brown with white trim framing around the windows. The windows in particular are a dominant feature of the International *moderne* style inspired by European architects of the Bauhaus such as Mies Van der Rohe and Walter Gropius. This style was later incorporated into institutional American architecture. Currently the buildings are painted a beige color, with the exception of the Glory of the Seas (Seamanship) which is two-toned in taupe and espresso brown, closer to the original design.

The precise identity of the campus architect is still unknown. The only apparent, and according to this author, facile and likely incorrect, reference comes from a contemporary local newspaper article



Current memorial near the site (Carmen Reid, Photographer)

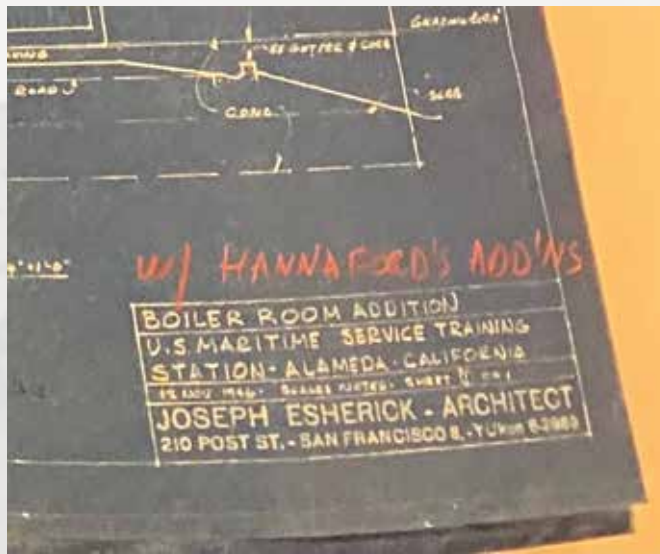
which claimed that design was conducted by a pool of U.S. Coast Guard engineers back in Washington. There are other, tantalizing clues. The design appears to be in the style of Joseph Esherick, Gardner Dailey, Eldridge T. Spencer, and Carl Warnecke, all prominent architects who were very active in west coast military construction at the time. A recently discovered blueprint states Joseph Esherick as the architect of an addition that was made to the facility in 1946. Gardner Dailey designed the U.S. Maritime Service Cadet Training Station in nearby Coyote Point, San Mateo, CA. The Construction Project Manager assigned to work with him was Coast Guard Commander Ambrose Brown, who served in the same role for this project. Learning that the architect was in fact one of the icons of the time could alter the perspective of the National Park Service as to the eligibility of the site for inclusion on the National Registry of Historic Places (there is an application pending). This investigation continues as original drawings and references to the architect have not yet been located since the National Archives and Records Administration (NARA) is currently closed due to Covid-19.

(Press time update)

The original architectural drawings were just discovered, uncatalogued and wrapped in paper in the warehouse of the Alameda Museum. The architect was Harry A. Bruno, a notable and prolific Bay Area architect who designed other significant maritime projects such as Jack London Square, Marina at Ballena Bay in Alameda, Watergate in Emeryville, as well as dozens of private homes in Piedmont, Orinda, Berkeley. His style is consistent with the Second Bay Region, a movement that incorporated and respected the landscape in its designs. This was an exciting find!

Battle over Historical Preservation

At present, about 4 of the 7.6 acres fall on state and regional park land, which includes the Infirmary and distinctive Seamanship building. The remaining 3.65-acre



Blueprint of 1946 addition by architect Joseph Esherick (U.C. Berkeley Environmental Design Archives)

reuse planning, since the site is on the HAB's "study list" of notable properties. However, developers have now changed the design to include demolition of all the buildings on the site. As part of the preservation effort, a petition has been circulated to raise awareness of the pending demolition, you can find the link below. Preservation efforts continue, in order to properly memorialize the crucial role played by the U.S. Maritime Service/ Merchant Marine in WWII. James Hudkins, a local Alameda resident whose father taught Navigation at the Training School

stated in a letter to the Alameda Historical Advisory Board, "We should strive to preserve original elements of the facility and commemorative information be made available onsite. The remarkable history of this group of young mariners should be preserved for future generations."

An Insufficient Memorial

In the middle of what was the baseball field at the training school, now a meadow adjacent to the state beach, rests a concrete pillar with a very generic description:

"In memory of the graduates of this station who gave their lives in the service of their country 1941-1945".

No mention is made as to which branch of service this refers, as some may confuse it with the nearby former Alameda Naval Air Station. This seems hardly worthy of the exuberant, loyal, dedicated, and industrious candidates bounding off those buses during wartime, ready for the challenge and eager to serve their country.



Current photo of Hurricane Hall and Golden Light Hall Barracks buildings (Carmen Reid, photographer)



The new AMMV website is up and running after several months in the making! The web address remains at ammv.us. Past blog content, stories, and photos have been archived, while the site has upgraded to a modern platform with a strong patriotic feel. In addition to joining/renewing online, AMMV members and supporters can now make donations and even register for the National Convention! Many thanks to AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia for his work on this rebrand.

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A SON'S VICTORIOUS TRIBUTE: HIS JOURNEY TO HONOR UNSUNG HEROES OF FREEDOM

Submitted by Tomaczek Bednarek

Joey Lowenstein is an exceptionally talented artist, who embodies the spirit of American youth, and at the age of 24, is a wordsmith and an American patriot who resonates a

vibrant imagination and expressiveness in thought, and in word truly has a great and long career ahead of him. Joey says, "I love painting, for when you paint, (and) allow your consciousness to be free, there is so much untapped potential waiting to be explored. This eventually led me to paint on a canvas where I made some art that I am happy with."

To date, five of Joey's exceptional paintings have been showcased in the esteemed West Palm Beach, Florida gallery of

Roni Lynn Doppelt. Roni said, "I'm overwhelmed as to how Joey has demonstrated his love of colors and expressiveness of lights. So many of the visitors to our gallery were very excited and so thrilled to have Joey's paintings prominently exhibited." She further said, "when people come to my gallery, and see his (Joey's) works, they can't believe his colors, his composition... Joey's work holds such depth and love of family." She said, what's really special, is that, "so many of Joey's colors are happy colors! Which means he is so happy... He is fantastic!"

In February of 2020, several of Joey's first creations, including *Reaching to Space through the Telescope of my Imagination* and his *Red Sun*, were exhibited and drew exceptional attention. Having been painting for a year and a half, Joey has completed some fifteen works of art, including his most recent paintings, which reflect his patriotism and love of country.

Beyond Joey's creative talents as a painter, he is just as adept athletically, in that he is also an exceptionally dynamic and agile snowboarder whose keen eye and inner sense has him fly higher than high as he embraces every moment and every turn streaming down the difficult black diamond slopes of Aspen and Snowmass Mountains in Colorado. Joey is in fact so talented in this regard, that upon snowboard-

ing with Olympic medalist Chris Klug, Joey wrote to Chris, "you are an inspiration to me..." To wit Chris immediately turned, smiled and responded back saying, "Joey... You are

an inspiration to me. In seeing all of the challenges you face every day in life, your dynamic work ethic of one who never stops persevering and more, inspires me to be a better person." Powerfully, when Joey is not skillfully snowboarding down the slopes of Colorado, he is an avid runner. And in fact, is now training for his next 10k marathon race in Florida.

All of this and more is what makes this young man's impactful life an unforgettable inspiration to all who have come to learn about his journey, and have also seen firsthand the enormous

hurdles he has had to face through the years. For what makes Joey's life all the more amazing, is that throughout his achievements in art and athletics, Joey has remained courageously strong, reflective in both his thoughts and words, and exceptionally kind in every regard to all he has come to know through the years. Indeed, just recently writing that, "Love is a vessel that fuels our desires, quenches our thirst, and provides us with true contentment." Clearly the brilliance of Joey's words shine a light upon the journey of a young man who is giving 'voice' as only he can... For although he cannot verbally express himself accurately or speak conversationally... his transformative words, that he so perfectly types, resonate a passionate heart and soul, and a story of a beautiful life 'born' of one on the autism spectrum. Yet, displaying unbridled spirit and tremendous insight, far beyond his years. Joey said, "I don't let my disabilities hold me back."

For years now Joey has come to deeply listen and learn about the extraordinary stories of his own beloved father Norman, who at the young age of 17, become a Naval Gunner, eventually based in Pearl Harbor following the horrific attack on our ships there in WWII. Moreover, at every turn, Joey's wondrously caring, ever insightful mother Roberta has done all to make sure her son has come to understand



Entitled: Highlighted Spirit



Norman Lowenstein joins Navy

and embrace the tremendous selflessness and sacrifice of his dad's service to our nation. His mom has always told Joey of Norman's history, and as such, Joey has deeply come to know that his heroic roots were 'born' of his exceptional mother Roberta, a pilot herself... and his no holds barred father. Norman was a fierce gun-

ner whose keen eye was always at the ready, while onboard his TBM combat aircraft, strapped into a 180° glass turret bubble seated behind his fellow crewman and pilot, flying through the skies, and then landing on the massive aircraft carrier the Corregidor.

Joey also came to learn that his father was severely injured when the pilot of Norman's plane deployed the tailhook coming in for a landing, yet missed the arresting wire (steel cable) to slow and stop the plane. Missing the critical catch line, the aircraft slammed across the deck and almost ran off the entire aircraft carrier. Incredibly, even though the plane was destroyed and Norman's location and position in his gunner's turret was crushed... Miraculously Norman was pulled out of the wreckage and survived the crash.

Extremely injured Norman was extricated from the pieces of the plane and immediately taken into the hospital, where sadly Norman was given the devastating news... that he would never walk again.

After enduring days and days of massive pain, where he lay in a hospital bed, surrounded by his comrades, an interesting story came to be. In the early morning hours, he awoke to the sound of voices, crying out for drinks of water.

Upon hearing this, Norman looked to his left, looked to his right... and not seeing anyone answering the call to bring his injured comrades some water, Norman made his way out of his bed... and actually walked over to bring some water to the bedsides of his Naval mates there at the hospital. So, after weeks of being immobile

and bed ridden, Norman was actually able to walk... motivated by his ever-caring giving heart and solely to serve his beloved injured comrades. This was an incredible moment to behold.

As Roberta says, "Norman was always a man of service. A man who loved his country deeply and always had major respect for all who fought with him." Norman was also always quick to share the importance of the vital supplies needed to fight the good fight. And clearly to this very day, it was the Merchant Marine who made that happen.

When Joey learned about these stories from his mom, he was so proud about his father's service and exceptional patriotic heart. And upon learning so much about his dad, Joey gained a deep appreciation for the role of all the other men and women of service... especially those in the Navy and the Merchant Mariners.

Roberta then took her son out to visit the *S/S American Victory* ship in Tampa, Florida. After touring the magnificent supply vessel, Joey wrote, "Upon stepping foot on the ship, I felt an overwhelming sense of pride for being the son of such a courageous man. Being physically on the ship helped me put the pieces together with the visuals I had imagined for so long in my mind."

Then upon touring though all of the storage areas and seeing firsthand where jeeps, tanks, trucks, munitions and more were all stored onboard ship, Joey went on to write, "Reliving my father's experience through this visit has instilled hope and inspiration for me to achieve what I know is possible and have inherited in my DNA."

Finally, Joey was able to go up to the steerage area of

the ship, look out upon the water, and hold firm onto the ship's steering wheel. From there he was seated at the gunnery position, used to protect the ship during any and every battle. After which Joey profoundly reflected and wrote, "This is a unique and beautiful piece of history to walk in the footsteps of those who served on the U.S. Victory... (this is) such a special experience!"

Upon learning that the WWII Merchant Mariners were finally going to be heralded and receive their long overdue recognition with a Congressional Gold



Joey and Roberta Lowenstein with Friends aboard S/S American Victory


Medal, Joey wanted to play a meaningful role in honoring America's unsung heroes.

He decided to use his artistic skills to highlight the tremendous challenges confronted by the Merchant Mariners on the high seas during wartime in a painting he entitled, **"Through Rough Storms is Clear Sky."** Upon completing this work, Joey then elected to design a very special throw, a blanket which could then be presented to Merchant Mariners and their dedicated families.

In that light, Joey chose to create another exceptional painting to herald our Merchant Mariners who clearly worked together tirelessly and stood strong at every turn, as they delivered extremely critical supplies to support our men and women of service during WWII... including his own father, Naval Gunner Norman Lowenstein.

This work, entitled **Vigorous Victory**, shines a brilliant light upon the "V" amidst the rough seas and always rolling waves. Joey created the "V" to depict a double meaning. The white and black lines of the "V" reflect the Yin and Yang, they represent the forces of the sun and light, the moon and the stars... all of which impact our ships at sea. And most of all, Joey wanted his painting to exude a brilliant "V" for Victory!

Joey and his marvelous mother Roberta Lowenstein will be proudly attending the honors ceremonies at the AMMV Annual Conference to personally present the unique throw and thank our nation's brave men and women for their unwavering service to our citizenry and our country.

This special throw is Joey's incredibly insightful and ever meaningful way to let America's Merchant Mariners know just how much their service meant to his brave dad and his loving mom... and that the incredible sacrifice of these courageous Americans will never, ever be forgotten by future generations and beyond. 



*Roberta and husband Norman Lowenstein,
(embracing their son Joey)*



Entitled: Through Rough Storms is Clear Sky



*Entitled: Vigorous Victory
(In Honor of the Merchant Mariners)*



*Entitled: Never Ending Love
(Joey created this for his mother)*

See You in Liverpool

Alastair D. Macdonald

When the noon gun booms from Citadel Hill
You might stop and think of the guns of war
And convoys that steamed out of Bedford Basin
From Halifax Harbour, bound for distant ports.

They sailed into danger, wolf packs lurking,
North Atlantic fury of seas and gales
They blessed their protectors, the swift Corvettes
They did a seaman's duty, they'd shout from the rail:

"We'll meet again, see you in Liverpool;
In Liverpool, when your ship comes in!"
They loved Vera Lynn, those proud Merchant Mariners
See you in Liverpool, we'll meet again. . .

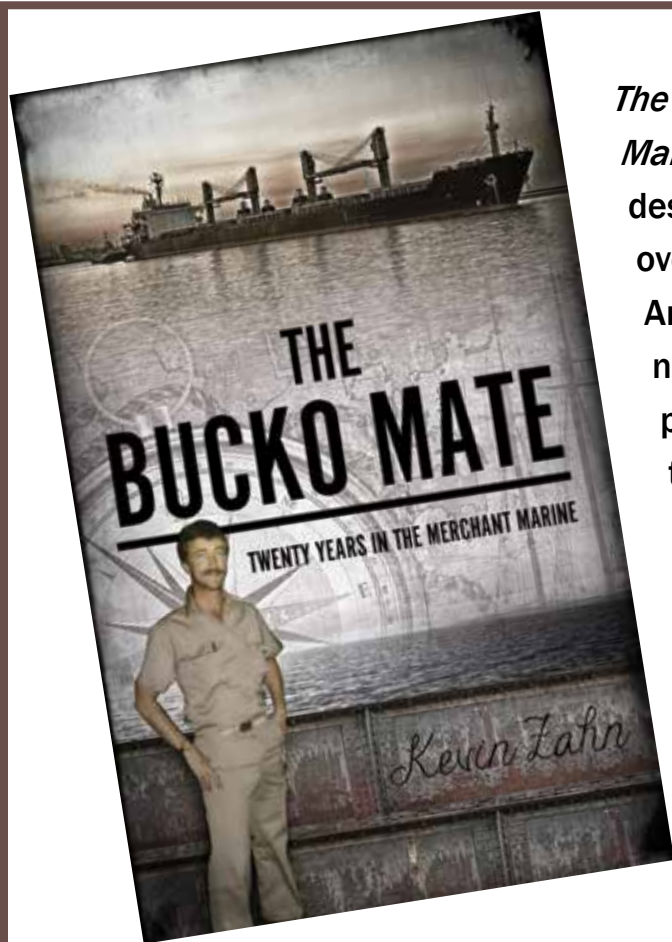
Their thoughts and dreams were of home and family,
They found their hope in the words of her songs

"We'll Meet Again", "White Cliffs of Dover" –
Vera Lynn urged them, 'Hold on and stay strong!'

"We'll meet again, see you in Liverpool;
In Liverpool, when our ship comes in!"
They loved Vera Lynn, those proud Merchant Mariners
See you in Liverpool, we'll meet again. . .

The Corvette, Sackville, escorted convoys,
Still afloat, she holds memories dear:
Merchant ships carried cargoes to war-torn shores
Earned pride in the medals, the old sailors wear

"We'll meet again, see you in Liverpool;
In Liverpool, when the ship comes in!"
They loved Vera Lynn, those proud Merchant Mariners
See you in Liverpool, we'll meet again...



***The Bucko Mate: Twenty Years in the Merchant Marine* (140,000 words), by Kevin Zahn, describes the author's seafaring experiences over two decades sailing as an officer in the American Merchant Marine (1965-1987). This nonfiction, nautical adventure is full of the profane, the dangerous, the drunken, the crazy, the humorous, the romantic and the brave shipmates the author knew. The degeneration of the maritime industry in the United States is paralleled with the disintegration of the abilities and mental stability of a man who had to finally realize that he was burned out at the age of forty. It is available in paperback or eBook from Amazon.com.**

It All Could Have Been So Different!

Submitted by AMMV member Father Sinclair Oubre

In his 2004 book *Ripples of Battle*, Victor Davis Hanson demonstrates how contemporary life would be so different if past battles had turned out differently.

Hanson relates the ancient battle between the Athenians and Boeotians at Delium in 424 BC. Socrates was part of the Athenian army, and when it was routed, Socrates and a few other Athenians made a brave and courageous retreat. As Alcibiades states in Plato's *Symposium*:

“First of all, how much more sensible he was than Laches; and secondly, . . . that walking there just as he does here in Athens, ‘stalking like a pelican, his eyes darting from side to side,’ quietly on the lookout for friends and foes, he made it plain to everyone even at a great distance that if one touches this real man, he will defend himself vigorously. Consequently, he went away safely, both he and his comrade; for when you behave in war as he did, then they just about do not even touch you; instead they pursue those who turn in headlong flight.”

If Socrates had cowardly run away, the Boeotians would have pursued and cut him down. Then there would have been no Plato, and if there was no Plato, there would be no Aristotle, and the West would have been denied its two greatest schools of philosophical thought.

The names Captain Leonard La Rue and the *SS Meredith Victory* are well known to anyone who knows the story of the Christmas Miracle of 1950.

However, in reviewing Captain La Rue's maritime career, things could have been so different if La Rue had stayed longer on some ships, would have been in a different place in a convoy, or would have been overwhelmed by storms.

In this article, I will outline different events in Captain La Rue's 16-year maritime career, and how, if things were just a little different, this servant of God, who did not hesitate to take the *Meredith Victory* into Hungnam and rescue the last North Korean refugees, would not have been there on that fateful day.

Leonard La Rue graduated from the Pennsylvania Nautical School in May 1934, and the next month signed on the Atlantic Refining Company tanker, *SS Francis E. Powell*. The *Powell* regularly traded between the Atlantic Refining Company's Port Arthur refinery and Philadelphia. Over the six months he was onboard, La Rue sailed as quartermaster (helmsman), and signed off in December 1934.

Eight years later, the *Francis E. Powell* was still plying the Port Arthur - Philadelphia route. On January 27, 1942, while

sailing from Port Arthur to Providence, Rhode Island, German U-boat U-130 torpedoed the tanker on the port side, aft of the midship house near the Winter Quarter Lightship at the Atlantic boundary of Virginia and Delaware. The explosion started a fire, and the Master ordered the ship abandoned. Of the 32 crewmembers, four were lost. One of these was AB Joseph Tiriolo. This was the same position that La Rue had held in 1934.

If Captain La Rue had continued his career as an Atlantic Refining Company tankerman, he may have been one of the four lost on January 27, 1942, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

In April of 1935, La Rue signed on the freighter *SS Steel Maker* as quartermaster. After three months, he signed off in June of 1935. This sign off was precipitated by his promotion. The record shows that he signed right back on as 3rd Mate, and signed off in July of 1935.

Seven years later, the *SS Steel Maker*, was torpedoed by U-654 about 350 miles east of Wilmington, North Carolina, on April 19, 1942, while enroute from New York to Iran with 7,660 tons of war supplies. The vessel sank in 47 minutes. Of the 38 merchant mariners, two crew members were killed.

If Captain La Rue had continued his career with Isthmian Steamship Company, he may have been one of the two lost on April 19, 1942, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

In November 1935, La Rue signed on the *SS Steel Voyager*. He spent 25 months onboard as 3rd Mate, signing off in December 1937.

On September 23, 1943, while sailing in Convoy ON-202, the *Steel Voyager* was torpedoed by U-952 enroute from Liverpool to New York. The torpedo struck at the starboard bow, and blew up the forecastle and badly damaged the bow. With the bow down, the Master could not manage the vessel since the rudder and propeller were out of the water. The crew transferred to an escort vessel, and all the crewmembers were landed at St. John's, Newfoundland. There were no fatalities.

If Captain La Rue would have continued his sailing on the *SS Steel Voyager* for another six years, he may have been on the vessel on September 23, 1943. If U-952's torpedo would have struck more astern, and La Rue could have been on the 0800 - 1200 watch, it may have been fatal to the navigation watch, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

In October of 1939, La Rue signed on to the Sword Steamship Company's freighter *SS Dixie Sword*. In March of





1940, he was promoted to 2nd Mate, and signed off June of 1940.

Twenty months later, the *Dixie Sword* foundered in a storm and broke up in Nantucket Sound on February 12, 1942, while enroute from Halifax to New Orleans. Caught in heavy seas, she began to take on water. The Master attempted to make for the safety of Nantucket Sound, but the vessel fouled a buoy in Pollock Rip Channel and sank off Butler Hole, Monomoy. All

hands were rescued. However, without the nearby support that facilitated the rescue, it could have been so different, with consequences that were much more tragic.

If Captain La Rue had continued sailing with the *Sword* Steamship Company, he may have been the 2nd Mate on February 12, 1942, and the fortunate outcome may have been different. Then he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

In June 1941, La Rue signed on as Junior 3rd Mate on the Lykes Brothers' vessel *SS Cranford*.

The next month he was promoted to 3rd Mate, and signed off in December of 1941.

Seven months later, on July 30, 1942, the *SS Cranford* was enroute from Cape Town to the United States when she was attacked by U-155 250 miles ESE of Barbados. A torpedo struck the starboard side, and tore through #2 and #3 holds causing the ship to sink bow first in three minutes. Of the 39 crewmembers, nine mariners went down with the ship. One of those lost Hynne Jorgensen, the 3rd Mate.

If Captain La Rue would have continued sailing on the *SS Cranford*, he would have been the 3rd Mate on July 30, 1942, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

On February 11, 1942, La Rue signed on the *SS Mormacmar* as 2nd Mate. He would be on the vessel for eleven months, and participate in PQ-13 and QP-11. He convoyed from Boston to Scotland, and then on to Reykjavík, Iceland, where convoy PQ-13 formed up for its voyage to Murmansk. Five of the 19-ship (26%) convoy were lost between Iceland and Murmansk. Two were sunk by the Luftwaffe, one by a German navy ship, and two by U-boats. These five vessels were lost over a three-day period, March 28-30, 1942. In all 127 merchant sailors were killed in action.

On April 28, 1942, the *SS Mormacmar* was part of west-bound QP-11. Though only one merchant ship was lost, the *SS Tsiolkovsky*, the convoy was heavily attacked from May 1-May 2 by German navy vessels and U-boats. The convoy arrived in Iceland on May 7, 1942.

If Captain La Rue and the *Mormacmar* had been in a different location in Convoy PQ-13 or QP-11, he may have suffered the same fate of the six sunk merchant ships, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

On July 28, 1950, now Captain Leonard La Rue signed on the *SS Meredith Victory*. Sailing from the James River reserve fleet, through the Panama Canal, the *Meredith Victory* loaded in Oakland, and then sailed on to Yokohama, Japan. At Yokohama, the *Meredith Victory* discharged her cargo, and loaded an "... additional thirty-ton Sherman tanks and two-and-a-half-ton ("deuce and a half") trucks weighing nine tons a piece into the holds. What did not fit below was chained to the deck."

One hour after sailing from Yokohama, Captain La Rue opened his orders, and read his destination: Inchon. The *Meredith Victory* was going to be part of a 19-ship convoy to support General MacArthur's Inchon amphibious landing.

As the convoy sailed from Japan to the west coast of Korea, it was overrun by Typhoon Kezia. During the night of September 13, 1950, the *Meredith Victory* was struck on its port quarter by a gigantic wave that broke the lashings on some of the tanks and trucks on the main deck. These vehicles slid across the deck, and hung on the starboard rail.

As Phillip Lacovara writes:

"Before he (*Burley Smith*) could call the captain in his cabin a deck below, Smith found that La Rue had already braved the violent rolls to climb the ladder and was standing beside him. Silently timing the waves and the motion of the ship for a few moments, La Rue calmly ordered the helmsman, 'Hard left rudder,' and told Smith to order 'Full ahead' on the engine-order telegraph. No one spoke as the ship slowly turned through the perilous point where the seas were on the beam. When the ship steadied on course with a small angle to the wind and waves, the captain ordering 'Slow ahead' to keep the *Meredith Victory* pointing into the sea, waiting out the storm as it moved past."

If Captain La Rue would not have been able to turn the *Meredith Victory* into the seas, she would have capsized with the loss of many lives, and possibly La Rue's, and he would not have been in Hungnam in December 22, 1950.

Of the 23 vessels that Captain La Rue signed on between his graduation from the Pennsylvania Nautical School and the *Meredith Victory*, seven were engaged in enemy actions, or 30.5%.

The Christmas Miracle of Captain La Rue and the crew of *Meredith Victory* rescuing 14,000 North Korean refugees from certain death is truly one of the greatest miracles of all time. But maybe an even greater miracle is that Captain Leonard La Rue survived to make it happen.

If you would like more information about the cause of Captain Leonard La Rue, or would like to join the Guild, contact Fr. Sinclair Oubre at brothermarinuscause@gmail.com.

You may also go to the Servant of God Brother Marinus web page: <https://aosusa.americommerce.com/store/pg/51-Cause-for-Brother-Marinus/Capt-LaRue-clone1.aspx>



Female WWII Radio Officer Honored at Cape Coral, FL Ceremony

On Monday, March 15th, AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia led a ceremony at the Brotherhood of Heroes Resource Center and Museum at Cape Coral, Florida, in which WWII Merchant Marine Radio Officer Dr. Billie Pennings, aka Luella Adels, was honored. Pennings sailed first in the Steward's Department, but later as a Radio Officer, in the Norwegian Merchant Marine (aka "War Sailors") during WWII, and finally in the U.S. Merchant Marine. She obtained her Radio Operator's training at a San Francisco area school and, in total, served at sea for about a decade. During the ceremony, Dr. Pennings was presented a "Battlin' Pete" plaque and a bouquet of flowers from AMMV.

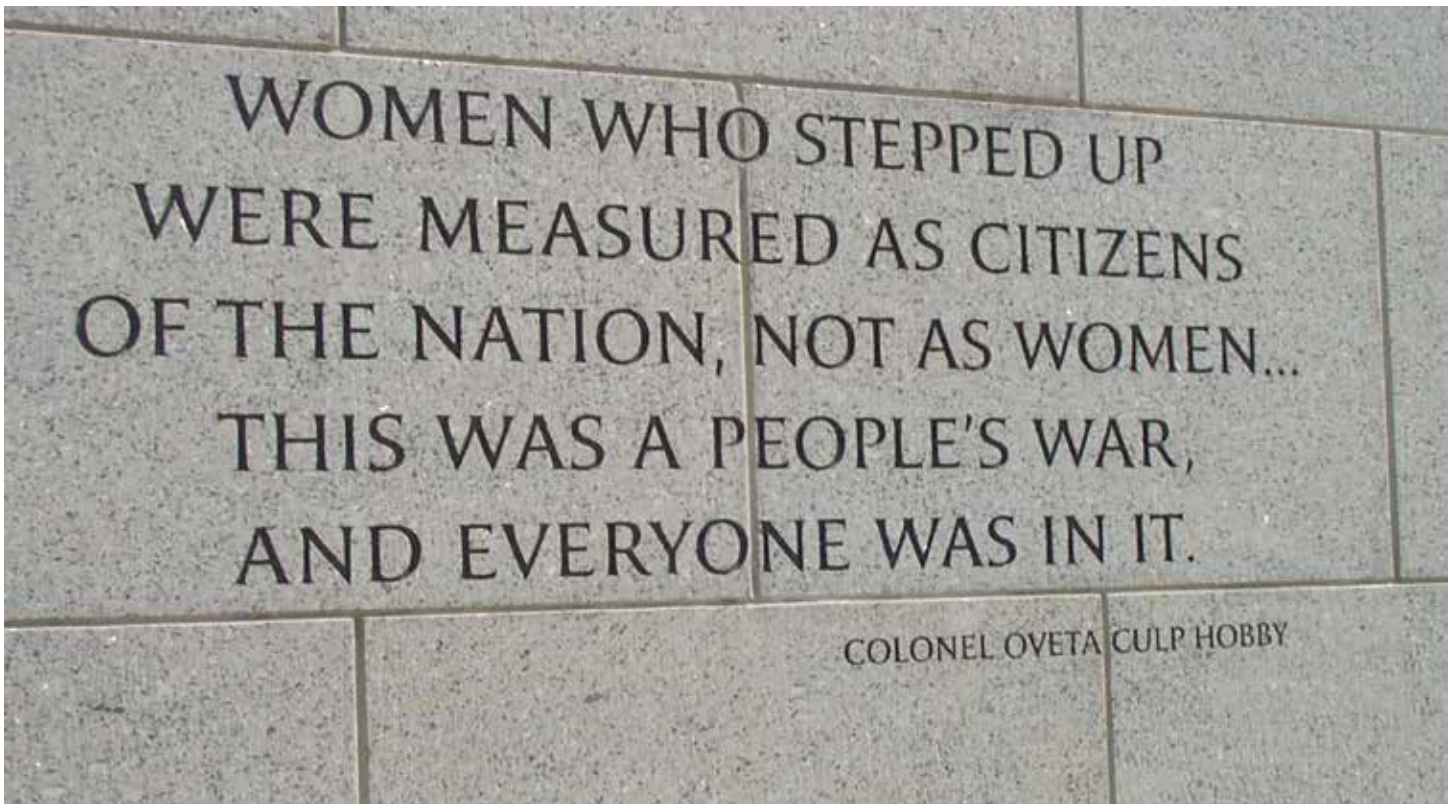
In total, about twenty people were in attendance, includ-



Luella Adels port identification card, circa 1945

ing two WWII Merchant Marine Veterans, George Koch, who sailed on the Murmansk Run, and Jim Sciple, a 2nd Assistant Engineer. Also joining the festivities was Navy League Suncoast Council President Mike Wooster, as well as friends and family of the three WWII heroes. All three WWII veterans were professionally video interviewed by the Rowlinson Media Group. Afterwards, Dr. Pennings had a chance to visit the nearby WWII Merchant Marine & Armed Guard Monument.

Cape Coral is the birthplace of the American Merchant Marine Veterans organization. Please see the National Maritime Day proclamation from the Mayor of Cape Coral on the inside back cover of this issue. [📍](#)





AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia presents Dr. Pennings with Battlin' Pete plaque



Pennings visits the Cape Coral Merchant Marine monument



The Rowilson Media Group was contracted to conduct video interviews with Pennings, Koch, and Sciple



Luella Adela as ship's Radio Officer, circa 1945



L to R: Capt. Dru DiMattia, Mike Finley, Pete Levin, Jim Sciple, George Koch



L to R: Billie Pennings (aka Luella Adels), George Koch, & Jim Sciple

AMMV National continues to produce/document interviews with our Merchant Mariners

WWII Merchant Mariner Jack Laub was interviewed in April by AMMV at his Polo Club in Boca Raton, FL. Laub played NCAA college basketball for the University of Cincinnati Bearcats, and was later drafted into the NBA, where he played on the Minneapolis Lakers and Scranton Miners.

Also recently interviewed was Burley Smith, who was serving aboard the *Meredith Victory* as Junior Third Mate

during the famous Hungnam evacuation. (Please see the related story elsewhere in this issue, regarding Capt. Leonard LaRue of the *Meredith Victory*.)

The Rowilson Media Group has been contracted by AMMV to handle this work. At press time, these two video interviews remain in production status. Please check out the AMMV You Tube page to see many video interviews and other footage of our efforts!



AMMV President Dru DiMattia and Burley Smith proudly display the U.S. Merchant Marine flag



AMMV President Dru DiMattia and WWII MM Veteran Jack Laub hold up "Battlin' Pete" patches



Ross Rowilson and Donna Rowilson make up the brother/sister company, Rowilson Media Group. They have handled several AMMV projects, starting with coverage of the Tampa AMMV National Convention (2019).

AMMV members attend *Texaco Oklahoma* remembrance ceremony

On March 25th, an event recognized the 50th anniversary of the *Texaco Oklahoma* sinking. This ceremony was sponsored by Stella Maris – Diocese of Beaumont, Apostleship of the Sea – USA, the Port Arthur International Seafarers' Center, and the Port of Port Arthur. Father Sinclair Oubre played a large role in the organization of this event; also, AMMV WWII member Charles A. Mills attended.

From Wikipedia: In March 1971, the *Texaco Oklahoma* with a cargo of 220,000 barrels of heavy oil was on its way from Port Arthur in Texas to Boston in Massachusetts.


The ship had left Port Arthur on 22 March. On board were 44 sailors. During the voyage in the Atlantic, the weather deteriorated and on 26 March the ship was in heavy seas. At about 3:30 a.m. on March 27, the ship's hull broke in the area of hold 5 behind the bridge deck when the ship was about 120 nautical miles northeast of Cape Hatteras, North Carolina. The front part of the ship then collided with the rear part, destroying the lifeboat on the starboard side. Both parts of the ship remained floating at first. The front part of the ship was last sighted in the midday hours of 27 March 1971 by crew members who were later rescued on the rear part of the ship.

On the night of March 28, the rear part of the ship began to sink. The crew then left the ship in the early hours of

the morning. Since the lifeboat on the starboard side had been torn away by the overflowing sea, only a life raft and

rafts assembled from empty barrels were available. Due to the oil leaked from the destroyed tanks, the rescue equipment was slippery, so that the sailors could hardly hold on to it. Eventually, the fishing line and life raft and rafts broke away before all crew members could leave the sinking ship. Shortly thereafter, one of the cargo tanks tore open and the contents poured into the sea. The sailors were washed into the sea on the life raft and the rafts. Eleven sailors made it back to the life raft, others held on to floating objects or drifted off. The rear part of the ship finally sank around 06:00 in the morning.

The survivors in the life raft were accidentally discovered and rescued by a passing tanker at around 5:00 p.m. on March 28. As a result of the ship's report to the Coast Guard, a search

operation was launched for further survivors, involving coastguard and armed forces vessels and aircraft, as well as six *Texaco* tankers. During 29 March, two other survivors floating in the water were rescued by another tanker. A total of 13 sailors survived the accident, 31 were killed, 13 of them on the front part of the ship and 18 who were on the back of the ship. 



WWII MM veteran Charles Mills with Father Sinclair Oubre





JUST RECOGNITION

CONVOY CUP AWARDS



The spring season of 2021 saw the Convoy Cup honors bestowed upon several WWII Merchant Marine Veterans and one WWII Navy Armed Guard Veteran. Ceremonies were held across the country to facilitate this heartwarming effort.

The Convoy Cup Foundation is a joint Nova Scotian and Norwegian organization which strives to “perpetuate the memory of the courageous men and women who made possible the convoys, consisting of Merchant Navy and Air Force coverage”. From the Convoy Cup Foundation website:



Honouring those who served... For (many) years, the Convoy Cup Foundation has been promoting and preserving the history, stories, and memory of the sailors, airmen, and merchant marine that secured and preserved peace in our time. As the memory of the Battle of the Atlantic and World War II sink further into the past, the Convoy Cup Foundation, working with our sister foundation in Risør, Norway, is dedicated to making this important part of our history accessible to a new generation. We use the sport of sailing to tell the story of the convoys. The convoys from Halifax and New York provided a lifeline to an entire continent locked in a struggle against unimaginable tyranny. It is our mission to ensure the scope and scale of the sacrifice made to defend liberty and democracy is never forgotten.

CHARLES A. MILLS RECEIVES CONVOY CUP AWARD

On April 12th, Charles A. Mills, a member of the AMMV Lonestar Chapter, received the Convoy Cup medallion and certificate. This event took place at the Seafarers International Union hiring hall in Houston, TX. Father Sinclair Oubre of the Apostleship of the Sea – USA presented the honors to Mills on behalf of the Convoy Cup Foundation. Mills turned 101 years old in June!



Father Sinclair Oubre presents the award to Charles Mills



Charles with granddaughter, Veda Handy



Charles Mills proudly displays his medallion



Members of the Seafarers International Union with Mills

VICTORY IN EUROPE (VE) DAY EVENTS HIGHLIGHTED WITH CONVOY CUP RECOGNITION



WWII Merchant Mariner & former NCAA/NBA basketball player Jack Laub receives the honors



AMMV International Affairs Chair Jens Inge Egeland (left) with Capt. Hugh Stephens



D.A.R. Chapter President Dennis Ng (left) with Convoy Cup recipient Capt. Hugh Stephens

On VE Day (May 8th), at a ceremony held at Battery Park, NY, WWII U.S. Merchant Mariners Jack Laub and Capt. Hugh Stephens were presented with the Convoy Cup award. On hand representing AMMV were Dennis A. Roland Chapter President Dennis Ng, AMMV International Affairs Chairman Jens Inge Egeland, and members of the AMMV Edwin O'Hara Chapter.

Simultaneously in Davie, FL, at the Norwegian Seamen's Church, four additional WWII Merchant Mariners received Convoy Cup honors: Stanley Blumenthal, Dr. Billie Pennings (aka Luella Adels), Jim Sciple, and George Koch.

In addition, Dr. Billie Pennings received the Camp Norway Foundation medallion and certificate for her WWII service in the Norwegian Merchant Maine, aka



Gulfstream Chapter President Mercedes Frassetto with Stanley Blumenthal

“War Sailors”. The history of the Camp Norway Foundation honors (as per Steinar J. Engeset and Jens Inge Egeland, Convoy Cup Foundation Chairman and International Director, respectively) is as follows:

In 1994, we had a reunion at Camp Norway in Lunenburg, Nova Scotia, where veterans came back from both Norway, USA and Canada to meet again. We created the Camp Norway medallion and each veteran received it gracefully with one condition; that we would try to honour as many as we could that served in the Norwegian fleet. We have been privileged to do so! We then started the Convoy Cup Foundation with its own medallion in 2002 because we could honour the people that served among the allied ships



WWII MM George Koch, Jim Sciple, Stanley Blumenthal, and Dr. Billie Pennings

that helped to win world peace back again.

If all of this wasn't spectacular enough, Pennings was also awarded the Defence Medal and Commemorative Medal Coin by Norwegian Honorary Consul General Trond Jensen.

Steinar Engeset also wrote:
I am so happy and thankful to everyone that has been involved in planning the May 8th VE Day ceremony to honour Dr. Billie Pennings, Mr. George Koch, Mr. James Sciple, and Mr. Stanley Blumenthal with their Convoy Cup Foundation medallions and



Defence Medal, awarded to Dr. Billie Pennings



AMMV President Dru DiMattia (left) with Senior Pastor Kjartan Veggeland



In attendance (L to R) was Capt. Richard Martucci, with daughter Denise and wife Kathy, pictured with Dru DiMattia

certificates, as well as the Camp Norway Foundation medallion and certificate to Dr. Pennings. We owe these, and all veterans, our gratitude and thanks for their courageous and brave service during WW2. Without them and their sacrifices, we would not have the opportunity to enjoy the freedom and peace we have today.

WWII MM VET MORRIS BUXTON RECEIVES CONVOY CUP HONORS ON NATIONAL MARITIME DAY



(L to R) Dru DiMattia, London Rotundo, Congressman Byron Donalds, and WWII MM Morris Buxton

On National Maritime Day (May 22nd) at the Cape Coral, FL ceremony, WWII Merchant Mariner Morris Buxton was presented with the Convoy Cups award.

AMMV National President Capt. Dru DiMattia was on hand for this event and helped arrange a special surprise. Congressman Byron Donalds of Florida's 19th District was on hand to personally award the medal to Buxton. From the official website of Rep. Donalds:

On May 22nd, I was honored to participate in Cape Coral's National Maritime Day Ceremony, which honors and celebrates our nation's Merchant Marines. I was also awarded the opportunity to present the Convoy Cup, which recognizes the historical contribution of the Port of Halifax to the convoy lifeline to Europe during WWII, and perpetuates the memory of the courageous men and women of the Merchant Marines.

Also present at the Cape Coral Maritime Day function was London Rotundo (Southwest Florida Director for Senator Marco Rubio), and WWII Merchant Mariners Dr. Billie Pennings, Jim Sciple, and George Koch.



Cape Coral, FL National Maritime Day ceremony



AMMV President Capt. Dru DiMattia addresses to crowd on National Maritime Day

NAVY ARMED GUARDSMAN RECOGNIZED AT CONVOY CUP CEREMONY IN MINNEAPOLIS



Carlson with Honorary Consul Eivind J. Heiberg

On June 18th, at the Honorary Consulate of Norway in Minneapolis, WW2 Navy Armed Guard Veteran William Carlson was awarded the Convoy Cup medallion and certificate.


Carlson was aboard the *M/S City of New York* when it was torpedoed off Cape Hatteras on 3/29/1942. The bravery and quick response of the Armed Guard gun crew, as they fired back at the attacking U-boat, bought time for passengers and crew to abandon ship.

In one of the crowded lifeboats, a pregnant passenger gave birth, at night, in a storm. The ship's physician, documented U.S. Merchant Mariner Dr. Len Conly, delivered the baby after breaking his own ribs trying to embark the lifeboat as the second torpedo slammed into the *City of New York*. The Lifeboat Baby,



With Carlson, (L to R) Capt. Ed Montgomery, Captain Chris Edyvean, Captain Dave Robb

Jesse Roper Mohorovicic, became known as the “baby Hitler couldn’t get”, and the amazing miracle of birth at sea in the face of imminent death was broadcast around the world to boost the morale of Allied troops.

In attendance were members of the International Ship Masters’ Association (Twin Ports Lodge # 12), family and close friends of Carlson, Honorary Consul Eivind J. Heiberg, Vice Consul Britt Ardakani, Consular Officer Ragnhild Hjeltnes, and representing AMMV was Past National President Capt. Christopher Edyvean. Fox Channel 9 News Minneapolis also documented the event. 



Vice Consul Britt Ardakani



M/S City of New York

Veterans Affairs Chair Bob Lewis attends special “Medal of Liberty” ceremony

On June 13th, the Massachusetts “Medal of Liberty” was posthumously awarded to Merchant Mariner Diamantino Moreira Lopes, an Ordinary Seaman from the troop transport *SS Dorchester*, and Merchant Mariner Walter Franklin Howe, an Oiler from the freighter *SS Summer I Kimball*. Their ships were torpedoed by German submarines during WWII. The ceremony was held in Milford, Massachusetts

by the Milford Medal of Liberty Committee, consisting of Vincent Cifizzari, Major USA (Ret), Ronald Howland, Major USAF (Ret), and Jo-Ann DeMaria Morgan. (Both Cifizzari and Howland had fathers who served in the WWII Merchant Marine.) Many veteran organizations were present to support the Merchant Mariners’ families. Unfortunately, only members of the Lopes family were able to attend. The Medal of Liberty for the Howe family was accepted by AMMV Veterans Affairs Chairman Bob Lewis, USN (1982-1986) and Merchant Marine (1994-1997).

The following particulars of the vessels upon which Lopes and Howe served were referenced from “*A Careless Word... A Needless Sinking*”, by Capt. Arthur R. Moore.

- Diamantino Moreira Lopes**, ref. p. 494
- Ordinary Seaman, killed Feb. 03, 1943, was signed on the *SS Dorchester* (troop carrier)
 - Home port: Baltimore, MD
 - Shipping Company: Merchants and Miners Transportation Co, Baltimore, MD
 - Built: 1926 – Newport News, VA; LOA: 351’; Beam: 52’; Gross Tons: 5649
 - Master: Hans Jorgen Danielson (lost)

** Historically known by the 4-U.S. Army Four Chap-



Medal of Liberty

lains who gave up their lifejackets to soldiers. (Featured article appeared in the AMMV Fall 2017 News, p. 28-29)

Ship was torpedoed at 03:55 GCT about 150 miles west of Cape Farewell, Greenland while enroute in Convoy SG-19 from St John’s, Newfoundland, to Narsarsuaq, Greenland. The ship’s complement were 130 crew members, 23

Naval Armed Guard, and 751 passengers. Passengers were U.S. Army personnel, civilian workers, Danish citizens, and USCG personnel; there were only 229 survivors.

The vessel was torpedoed by *U-223* (Wachter). *U-223* (Gerlach) was sunk March 30, 1944, north of Palermo, Sicily by *HMS LAFOREY*, *HMS TUMULT*, *HMS HAMBLEDON*, and *HMS GLENCATHRA*. Ref. p. 77.

Walter Franklin Howe, ref. p. 517

- Oiler, killed January 16, 1944, was signed on the *SS Summer I. Kimball*
- Home Port: Portland, ME
- Shipping Company: Mystic Steamship Co., Boston, MA
- Built: 1943 – Portland, ME; LOA: 441’; Beam: 57’; Gross Tons: 7176
- Master: Harry Atkins (lost)

Freighter was torpedoed by *U- 960*, 900 miles east of Belle Isle Strait while enroute from Hull, England to New York via Loch Ewe, Scotland in ballast. Vessel was part of Convoy ON-219. Her complement were 39 crew members and 24 Naval Armed Guard; there were no survivors.

U-960 was sunk May 19, 1944, northwest of Algiers by *USS LUDLOW* (DD-438) and *USS NIBLACK* (DD-424). The Skipper and 21 of his crew were rescued. Ref. p. 270.





Ronald Howland, Major USAF, retired (left) presents Medal of Liberty to Howe family; accepting on their behalf is Bob Lewis (right).



Vincent Cifizzari, Major, USA, retired (left) and Brigadier General Francis Magurn



Charles Boddy, Jr.



*AMMV Veterans Affairs Chairman
Bob Lewis*



Jo-Ann DeMaria Morgan



Many were in attendance, including the American Legion Riders.



The "Young Marines" also attended the event.

Betsy Ross and the American Flag

Submitted by WWII Merchant Marine Veteran Mark Gleeson

The United States Chamber of Commerce had a survey done in 1960 to determine the number of American families that had an American Flag. The sad answer was only one in ten had a flag. Although there have been times in recent history where flag sales did increase – the Bicentennial, the Iran Hostage crisis, 9/11, the percentage of family flag ownership has remained stable. In addition, with the decrease in teaching civics and American history in schools, fewer people know much about American history and the history of our flag. Some schools begin teaching history only following the Civil War and teach nothing of our country's beginnings.

To this point, a few years ago one of the major tv networks set up in Times Square on the 4th of July and asked visitors why we celebrate this holiday. Only three out of every ten tourists knew the answer. Last year a radio station in Philadelphia set up outside Independence Hall on the 4th of July and asked tourists where Independence Hall was, and why the Hall was important. Only one in every ten knew, and those that did were almost always foreign visitors. Thus, it is not surprising that many people know little or nothing of the history of our flag.

Prior to declaring independence from Britain in 1776, many of the colonies had their own flags. The beginning of a flag for the new country began in 1775 when the Continental Congress was meeting in Philadelphia and a man from Virginia came forth and volunteered to lead the troops then outside Boston. He was Colonel George Washington. Before leaving Philadelphia, Washington took several flags; one his Headquarters' flag and another, the Grand Union, the first (unofficial) national flag of the United States. His Headquarters' flag was all blue with 13 six-pointed stars arranged 3-2-3-2-3. The Grand Union was raised to celebrate the official status of the newly formed Continental Army by Washington, whose camp was then in Cambridge. It was also known as the Cambridge Flag or Continental Colors. This flag combined the British Union Jack in the field and the thirteen red and white stripes signifying colonial unity.

A year later, on July 4, 1776, Congress declared its independence from Britain. From that moment on, the country was fighting for its independence, and its life. The Continental Congress still did not design a new American flag. That flag came about on June 14, 1777 when Congress

passed the first of three major flag acts. The first act stated that "the flag of the United States shall consist of 13 alternating stripes of red on white, with 13 stars on a blue field, forming a new constellation." Left out was whether the stripes be vertical or horizontal, where the blue field was

to be placed, what star pattern would be used, and how many points were to be on the star.

Who designed the flag?

There were no flag companies in those days just making flags. Most flags were made by ships chandlery, who also made sails for ships. In most cases people went to an upholsterer or seamstress to make a flag, and this is where the Betsy Ross legend probably originated.

Besides working on furniture, she made flags and other military equipment. Betsy Ross at that time was making flags for the Pennsylvania Navy. What is not clear is who designed the flag and who actually sewed the flag. Legend thickens a little as one of the signers of the Declaration of Independence, Francis Hopkinson of New Jersey, eventually sent a bill to Congress for two barrels of ale, his charge for his design of the first official flag. At the time there were 17 companies making flags in Philadelphia, among other things.

Francis Hopkinson was not only a delegate to the Continental Congress from New Jersey, he was a member of The Committee on the Marine, today's Secretary of the Navy. He was an artist, poet, lawyer, and had a company making flags for the Navy. Since he was part of the Congress that passed the first flag act, he obviously knew of the need for a flag and became involved.

Regardless of a lack of confirmable facts, the legend lives on that the first flag of the Revolutionary Period is more often referred to as The Betsy Ross Flag, not the Hopkinson Flag. It has been agreed that promotion of the Betsy Ross flag as being the first official flag was due to the presentation of her grandson, William Canby, who in March 1870 spoke to the Historical Society of Philadelphia and told the story of Betsy Ross designing and making the first flag. He said that George Washington, along with two members of the Congress, Robert Morris and George Ross, came to his grandmother with a design and asked her to make the flag. Ross was a relative and probably suggested they see her. She reportedly made several design suggestions, including using a five-point star as it was easier to make and supposedly was asked to make a flag based on



Betsy Ross flag

the design agreed upon.

The pattern of stars on the blue field is known by three names, The Betsy Ross Pattern, The Philadelphia Pattern, or the Single Wreath Pattern. The blue field on the flag also goes by three names – the field, the union, or the canton. Because Congress did not set the specifics of what the field would be or how the star pattern would look like, or how many points the star would have during the period, up until 1912 the stars could be arranged in any manner that a flag maker would choose. It is said Betsy Ross was successful in promoting her version as it was easier to make a five-pointed star than a six-pointed star. The internet has a number of sites that illustrate how easy it is to cut a five-pointed star.

There was another flag developed at the same time, the Bennington Flag, believed by many authorities to be the first Stars and Stripes used by American land troops. It was flown over the military stores at Bennington, Vermont on August 16, 1777 when General John Stark's militia led Americans to victory over a British raiding party. The flag featured a blue field, a semi-circle of 13 white stars and the number 76 in the center of the stars. It also had the red and white stripes.

However, the flag now known as the Betsy Ross Flag, was the new Stars and Stripes carried into the Battle of the Brandywine on September 11, 1777, which was perhaps the first use of the new official American flag and was used in later promotions of the flag.

Congress passed the second Flag Resolution on May 1, 1795 which mandated new stars and stripes be added to the flag when new states were admitted to the Union. This became unwieldy as more new states joined, and in 1818 the third and last Flag Resolution was passed mandating that the alternating stripes of red on white remain at 13 representing the original 13 colonies, but that one new white star would be added to the blue field for each new state.

What was the first Official flag?

It is not determined who actually designed and made the first official American flag: Betsy Ross or Francis Hopkinson, or someone else. In the long run, it does not matter. It could have been designed it at the same time. However, over time it has been part of the legend of our early history that it was Betsy Ross. It is unfortunate that many do not even know of the Hopkinson Flag. Betsy Ross flags have five-pointed stars, Hopkinson

Flags had six-pointed stars. General George Washington's Headquarters' Flag had six-pointed stars.

Are both flags official American flags?

Yes! Official United States flags are always considered living, active flags. From the Betsy Ross/Hopkinson flags to the present 50-star flag, any flag that at some time was the official flag is still considered a living flag to be accorded all due respect. There are now 27 flags considered Official flags of our country.

More Information on our flags

The internet is full of sites dealing with our flags and their interesting histories. One of the more interesting sites is *Betsy Ross Grandson*. This site tells the story of the promotion of the Betsy Ross story by relatives and is full of information on the flag. Betsy Ross spent 50 years making flags.

Another site to be viewed: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag Acts](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Flag_Acts).

Government promotions

As part of the site preparation for a Presidential Inaugural, the front face of the Capital, at the top of the steps leading into the Capital, is covered with four massive American flags. One or two of these are always the Betsy

Ross Flag. These flags provide the backdrop for the President and other speakers as the flags are what is shown behind the speaker's stand.

The flag for the Department of Veteran's Affairs shows an eagle clutching two flags, one a Betsy Ross Flag, the other multi-stars.

The United States Postal Service has issued a number of printings that feature Betsy Ross and the flag:


In 1952, there was a three-cent stamp of the famous painting showing Betsy Ross sewing her version of the flag with George Washington in observance.

In 1968, a six-cent stamp was issued of the Betsy Ross Flag with the phrase *First Stars and Stripes* printed under the flag.

In 1975, a 13-cent stamp was printed of Independence Hall with the Betsy Ross Flag above the Hall.

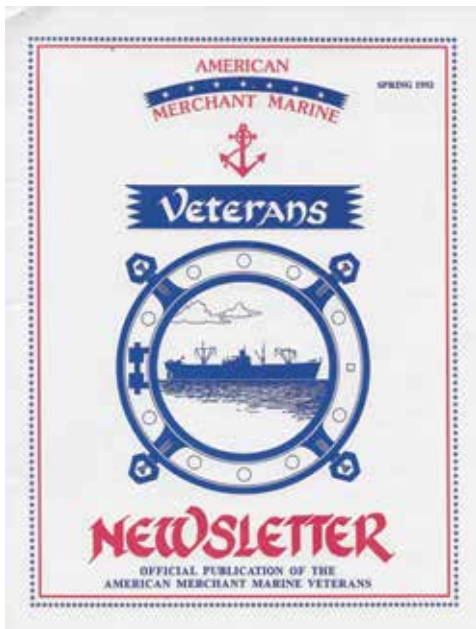
In 2000, there was a 33-cent stamp printed of the Betsy Ross Flag with the phrase *First Stars and Stripes* as the outline.

BUY A FLAG AND FLY THE FLAG EVERY DAY. IT IS A SYMBOL OF AMERICA, THE LAND OF THE FREE AND BRAVE, AND IT IS HERE TO STAY.

Mark Gleeson can be contacted at shamrock127@comcast.net. 



*Posthumous depiction of Betsy Ross in 1893
(Source: Wikipedia)*



From the AMMV Archives: “The Casablanca File”

Editor’s note: This story was originally printed in the AMMV News spring 1992 issue, submitted by then 67-year-old Gulfstream Chapter member Steve Antos.

This rather bizarre incident all started on July 22, 1943 as I signed on the *S/S Delsud*, formerly the

the four walls and a makeshift urinal in one corner. Making it worse, in the middle of the night a fight broke out, which resulted in a serious injury to a British officer. He lay there unconscious for at least 15 minutes bleeding from the mouth and ear before the prison guards got up enough courage and common sense to drag him out by his ankles. His fate unknown...

Salvation Lass, one of the few “Hog Islanders” still operating, captained by a Charles E. Hill. As an Engine Cadet from the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, Kings Point, I was just starting my sea duty as part of the curriculum of the Academy. We were destined for Dakar, French West Africa, but because Dakar did not have the facilities to replenish our fuel and water supply, we had to make port in Casablanca, about 200 miles from Dakar. Upon arrival in Casablanca around August 10, 1943, we were informed that Martial Law had been declared there, and that many establishments and areas, particularly the Old Medina native quarter, were strictly out of bounds for Allied and Military personnel. Unfortunately, myself and two other shipmates had wandered inadvertently into the native market place, out of bounds, and were immediately arrested by a “stripe-happy” U.S.A. corporal.

While being detained by the corporal, two of our U.S. Navy seamen had slipped by him. When two young Moroccan “stoolies” tipped him off, the corporal quickly loaded his rifle, took aim, and ordered them to stop. Unable to draw a bead on the two fleeing sailors, he turned his attention to us, and aiming his loaded rifle at us, hollered, “okay, you wise #@&%”, let’s see someone else try that!” He ordered us back up against the wall. We reluctantly obliged, of course, and waited for an Army transport truck to take us to the local lock-up. We were booked as Prisoners of War, and spent the night there.

There were at least 15 of us in one cell with nothing but

The following morning, we were all ushered out to a waiting Army transport truck which was to take us to a DTC (Disciplinary Training Center), better known as a concentration camp. Here, members of the renown Desert Fox troops (Rommel’s men) were detained; some in solitary confinement consisting of a small 2’ x 2’ x 6’ wooden box with just a small opening in the door for ventilation, and a pass-through for their meager rations. We were put to work pulling weeds throughout the compound, and also pulling



*This painting by an unidentified artist of the Works Progress Administration’s Federal Art Project shows the unloading of the steamship *Delsud* in the Port of New Orleans, ca. 1938.*

nails from discarded lumber salvaged from demolished barracks. We labored 16 hours a day, with only a half hour off for each of three meals.

Finally, after two days of confinement, we were released into the custody of one of our ship’s officers, namely our Chief Steward from the *Delsud*, when he appeared at the Provost Marshall’s office. The *Delsud* had already left its berth and was at anchor when we reboarded via the liberty launch. It was already dusk when we started the return trip to reboard the ship. Enroute, a fight broke out amongst some

of those on the launch, and one of the participants toppled overboard. No effort was made to go back and rescue him. We sailed the following morning for Dakar, unloaded our cargo, and arrived back in the States on September 7, 1943.

It felt good to share glances with “Miss Liberty” again, and to celebrate my 19th birthday. I am 67 now, and still reminisce over the memories of the past.





Membership Application for:
MEMBER-AT-LARGE

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

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

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



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

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

ADDRESS: _____

EMAIL: _____ DATE OF APPLICATION: _____

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

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

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

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

MARCO RUBIO
FLORIDA

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

COMMITTEES:
APPROPRIATIONS
FOREIGN RELATIONS
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SMALL BUSINESS AND ENTREPRENEURSHIP
SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON AGING

May 22, 2021

Dear Friends,

It is with great pleasure that I join the American Merchant Marine Veterans and Brother of Heroes Museum and Resource Center in celebrating National Merchant Marine Day and honoring the Merchant Marine veterans who served our nation during World War II.

Merchant Marines play an invaluable role securing the safe transportation of goods and services in and out of our navigable waters during times of war and peace. Each of you here today have dedicated yourselves to supporting those who served as Merchant Marines in World War II and beyond, as well as ensuring they receive recognition they have earned as veterans of our Armed Forces. I am confident your continued work to help American Merchant Marine veterans will support more of our active and retired Merchant Mariners.

On behalf of the people of Florida, I extend my sincere gratitude to all in attendance today and look forward to hearing of your continued good work in the years to come.

Thank you for your service.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio
United States Senator

CITY OF CAPE CORAL, FLORIDA

PROCLAMATION

WHEREAS: Each year on May 22, our country celebrates National Maritime Day; and

WHEREAS: The United States has always been and will always be a great maritime nation. From our origins at 13 British colonies, through every period of peace and conflict since, the Merchant Marine has been a pillar in this country's foundation of prosperity and security; 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 crossing of the Atlantic Ocean with steam propulsion; and

WHEREAS: Maritime Day is a time-honored tradition that recognizes one of our country's most important industries. Each year ceremonies and celebrations throughout the country recognize Maritime Day and the people our maritime nations depend on; and

WHEREAS: On Friday, March 13, 2020, the President signed into law, H.R. 5671, the "Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020," which provides for the awarding of a Congressional Gold Medal to the Merchant Mariners of WWII, collectively, in recognition of their dedicated and vital service during World War II.

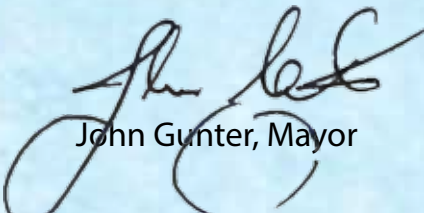
Now therefore, I, John Gunter, Mayor of the City of Cape Coral, do hereby proclaim May 22, 2021 to be

NATIONAL MARITIME DAY

and invite people to observe National Maritime Day by displaying the flag of the United States at their homes or other suitable places.

May 22, 2021




John Gunter, Mayor

American Merchant Marine Veterans

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Please join us at the AMMV National Convention



September 21st thru 24th
Maritime Conference Center
Linthicum Heights, MD

-- full details inside --

