

# the Deck Log

The Official Newsletter of Historic Ships in Baltimore



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## USS Constellation Cup: Registration Open & Tickets On Sale

The Race and Pier Party Fundraiser will be held on Saturday, 17 October. The race will have two starts; spinnaker class and fin / full keel "pursuit" classes. We encourage all sailors, whether or not you race regularly, to come out and have some fun. Register your boat for the Cup via [www.BCYA.com](http://www.BCYA.com).



Want to participate in the Regatta, but can't find a boat? Volunteer on the Committee Boat! Email Chris at [crowsom@historicships.org](mailto:crowsom@historicships.org)

After the race, join us on Pier 1 for the USS Constellation Cup Pier Party. There will be tons of great food, live music, a silent auction and more!

Support Historic Ships and Earn FREE Party Tickets. Visit the Fundraising Challenge Razoo page to learn more and sign up for the USS Constellation Cup Challenge.

Thanks to the Baltimore City Yacht Association and Houpla Studios for assisting with the organization of the Regatta.

[Additional Race Information »](#)

[Party Information and Ticket Sales »](#)

[Fundraising Challenge Information and Signup »](#)

## USS Constellation Rig Repair Project



Constellation's yards, masts and rigging are under repair at the Cianbro Yard in Curtis Bay. Two of the ship's six yards and all three fighting top platforms are being replaced. The rest of the yards, topmasts, t'gallant masts, and mast caps are receiving new coats of paint and repairs as necessary.

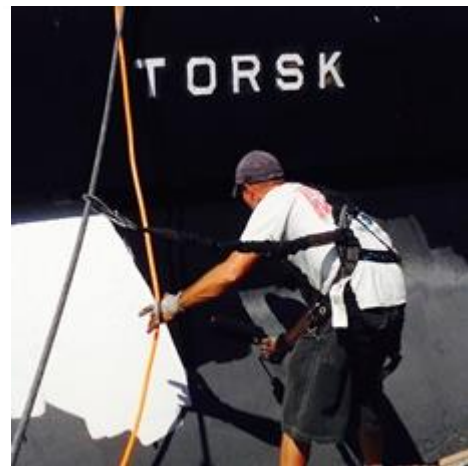
*Constellation* will be moved to Curtis Creek and the Cianbro Construction Yard in late November for re-rigging and will return before the Christmas Holidays.

[Support the Rigging Repair Project »](#)

## USS *Torsk* Gets a Make-Over

In June of last year, Historic Ships staff and volunteers put the finishing touches on the new deck of the submarine USS *Torsk*. This summer, HSB staff have been working to preserve and protect the boat's "sail" and topsides.

Using grinders, growlers and a special tool called a pneumatic piston scaler, years and years of old paint and rusty scale are being removed and the boat is receiving a new coat of protective paint. When this process is complete *Torsk* will be one of the best kept WWII-era submarines in the country!



Special thanks to Rob Howard, Pier 3 Site Manager and Paul Cora, Curator, for their hard work on this very important project.

## Ship's Company Donates \$5,000 to Historic Ships: Funds to Support Restoration of USS *Constellation* Head



On August 22nd, Larry Bopp, President of [Ship's Company](#) - Historic Ship's official all-volunteer living history unit, presented Executive Director Chris Rowsom with a check for \$5,000. The donation will support of the future restoration of the ship's head.

Mr. Bopp commented that the project was not the most glamorous, but probably one of the most important as it would serve to answer one of our visitors' three most frequently asked questions.

Work on the ship's head is scheduled to begin after the rig repair is complete.

## HSB Staff Present at Historic Naval Ship Conference

Historic Ships in Baltimore was well represented at this year's Historic Naval Ships Association (HNSA) Conference, which was hosted by the USS *Iowa* (BB 61) museum in San Pedro, California. Among the 80-plus attendees at the September 16-19 gathering were HSB Curator Paul Cora, Pier 5 Manager Ryan Szimanski, and Museum Educator Greg Williams.

Ryan Szimanski was a featured presenter at the conference. During a very well attended session, Ryan gave a first-hand account of the recent USS *Constellation* hull repair project which described for the attendees the challenges faced, as well as the methods and materials used, not only to re-plank more than 4,000 square feet of the ship's underwater hull, but also the processes of down-rigging the ship prior to dry dock and then re-floating her for the return to the Inner Harbor.



Paul Cora also presented during the final day's "Ship Talk" session on the recent superstructure deck restoration project aboard USS *Torsk*. Among the aspects of the project highlighted were the methods materials used in the steel repair, comparative advantages of various available wood types, and the method of laying the actual deck, along with a sampling of expenses and funding sources.

First-time HNSA Conference attendee Greg Williams took in a wide range of conference sessions and benefited from exposure to unfamiliar topics. "I really enjoyed the session on cathodic protection which was information that I was previously unaware of" he recently

commented. "Specializing in museum education, I had not had exposure to many major preservation issues, and cathodic protection is definitely something to keep in mind for steel hulled vessels. I also enjoyed the session on the use of social media by HNSA members as a way to get new generations interested."

[View Full Article \(above edited for length\) »](#)

## "Student to Shipwright" by Harrison Van Waes



Beneath Constellation's Keel

In the spring of 2014 I was sitting in a classroom in my final semester of college. When graduation day came in late May, I had already worked as a Museum Educator for a little under a month. In late August of 2014, I was approached by Historic Ships management, and asked if I would like to be on the team for the USS *Constellation* Hull Repair Project. Without hesitation I accepted, not really knowing what to expect out of a tall ship dry dock project, but I was just flat out excited for the opportunity and I knew it would be a very meaningful experience.

The project began on October 6th with phase 1: down- rigging the ship. For that first week we remained in the Inner Harbor, taking down what parts of the rigging we could for future repair and replacement. It was at the end of this week that I had the unique opportunity of climbing the shrouds to the fighting top on the mainmast. There is nothing like standing over one hundred feet above deck and thinking to yourself, "Just another day at the office."

A little over two weeks into the project *Constellation* was moved into the former USS *Oak Ridge* (ARDM-1), a floating dry dock ship built during World War II, now located at the United States Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay, MD. The ship was maneuvered into position in front of the submerged *Oak Ridge* and was backed in by three tugboats. Roughly two-dozen yard workers then took over from the tugs, hauling in lines from the wing walls, easing *Constellation* into the dock and centering her over the submerged keel blocks. I cannot say how the whole procedure looked coming into dry-dock, but through a gun port onboard *Constellation* it was a very impressive sight.

In order to ensure successful adhesive and coating application during the winter months, *Constellation's* lower half had been "wrapped". The entire repair operation progressed underneath this enclosure, with roughly three stories worth of scaffolding wrapping around the ship, and over thirty workers. The environment in the enclosure was very busy and very loud, with drills, impact guns, and saws constantly being used. All along the hull there were small teams responsible for different sections and specific layers.

It took several weeks for the demolition work to be completed, taking off the old cold-molded hull material, much of it rotten. In several sections the layers were pristine, and in the same condition that they were in the late 1990s, after *Constellation's* major restoration to her sloop-of-war configuration. Not everything below the waterline was in need of repair - far from it - from the bottom of the keel up some fourteen feet of original white oak planking from 1853 remains. Getting a chance to see the original frames as the cold-molded shell was removed was magnificent.

With the demolition of the hull material in the project area complete, full effort shifted to re-planking the ship... replacing four layers of laminated solid planking with a new system of solid wood and marine plywood - the first and fourth layers are hardwood, with the middle two being plywood sheets. Every piece that was put on fit a little bit differently, needed to be cut differently, and needed a different number of screws or lag bolts. It was a very challenging and painstaking process, but it was truly a labor of love.

In less than nine months, I have gone from being a history student worrying about grades, exams and future job prospects, to being a Team Leader for the USS *Constellation* Hull Repair Project - a role which I would scarcely have imagined as an undergrad. This project will keep *Constellation* afloat for future generations of visitors from around the world and I look forward to one day being able to share this ship with my kids with a great measure of pride. Finally, just knowing that I am part of the reason *Constellation* continues to float in Baltimore Harbor is an incredible feeling of accomplishment.

[View Full Article \(above edited for length\) »](#)

## Upcoming events

### **Saturday, October 3rd & October 17th, 2:00 PM: "Constellation History Tour"**

Take a walking tour through 100 years of naval service! Historian and friend of the ship, John Barnard, leads an hour-long tour that focuses on many of the social changes that took place aboard USS *Constellation* during her century of service. Come aboard and take a close look at the real Old Navy, and see the difference time makes. This presentation is open to all visitors and is included with regular admission. No reservations are required.

### **Saturday, October 17th: [USS Constellation Cup Regatta & Pier Party!](#)**

Join us for a fun filled day on the water. The day kicks off with the Annual USS *Constellation* Cup Sailboat Regatta in Baltimore Harbor and culminates in the Historic Ships' post-race fundraiser from 6:00PM - 9:00PM. Tickets are on sale at [historicship.org](http://historicship.org).

### **Saturday, October 31st; 10:00AM - 4:00PM: [Ship's Company](#)**

USS *Constellation's* own Ship's Company of volunteer sailors and marines come aboard to provide a unique and fascinating view of service at sea. Presentations and hands-on activities throughout the day punctuate the daily routine and focus on day-to-day shipboard life in Mr. Lincoln's Navy. This presentation is open to all visitors and is included with regular admission. No reservations are required.

[View the full Event Calendar »](#)

## Thank you to all of our loyal museum members and supporters!

The work of Historic Ships in Baltimore would not be possible without the support of generous individuals, families, companies and foundations.

[Please visit our website for a listing of our generous supporters.](#)

### Not a member or donor?

We hope that you will consider becoming one today and helping to ensure that the Historic Ships Fleet and the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse are available as educational resources for generations to come. Your support helps to keep the ships afloat!

**Donate  
to Historic Ships**



**Join, Give or Renew  
Membership**

Historic Ships in Baltimore, is a nonprofit 501(c)3 organization dedicated to the restoration and preservation of the USS *Constellation*, USCGC *Taney*, USS *Torsk*, Lightship Chesapeake, and Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse.

Thank you for supporting Historic Ships in Baltimore.

Historic Ships in Baltimore | 301 East Pratt St | Baltimore MD 21202  
[www.historicships.org](http://www.historicships.org) | 410-539-1797 | 410-539-6238 (fax)