

# the Deck Log

The Official Newsletter of Historic Ships in Baltimore



## IN THIS ISSUE

[Constellation Rigging Repair Project](#)

[Article: USS Torsk Snorkel](#)

[Support the Annual Appeal](#)

[USS Constellation Cup Race Report](#)

[Education Program Update](#)

[Photo Exhibit at World Trade Center](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Thank you to our supporters](#)

## USS Constellation Rigging Repair Project Update



*Constellation Fighting Tops*

Repairs to the masts, yards and rigging of USS *Constellation* continue both at the Cianbro Yard and at the Douglass-Myers Maritime Park. At Cianbro, the masts and yards have received repairs and are being painted. The ship's running and standing rigging is also receiving attention here. The ship's fighting tops are being rebuilt at the Maritime Park. Materials being used are ipe and tiger wood,

both hardwoods with extreme resistance to rot. Down in South Carolina, the ship's new main and fore tops'l yards are being built by Dow Woodworks, with delivery scheduled for early November. Re-rigging of the ship at Cianbro is anticipated to take place in December.

In addition to the ship's running and standing rigging being restored, Historic Ships staff, with the assistance of General Ship Repair and Allied Steel, are building new davits for *Constellation* from which to hang the ship's three small boats. The davits are like cranes which, when equipped with blocks and tackles, allow the ship's crew to hoist boats out of the water. The ship's boats, two transom stern cutters and a lapstrake double ender, were built a few years ago, and have been used for educational programs, but they have yet to hang from *Constellation* as they would have during her sailing days. We anticipate installation of the davits after the rig repair is complete and boats to be hanging this spring.



*Constellation* with davits and ship's boats (HSB Collection)

**[Donate in Support of the Rigging Repair Project »](#)**

## *"Snorkel is a Defining Characteristic for USS TORSK"*

When USS TORSK was commissioned in December 1944, she was among the newest and best equipped submarines in service with the US Navy. Her TENCH class design benefited from years of wartime experience and refinements that gave her advantages over her GATO and BALAO class predecessors such as greater designed range, deeper test depth due to a thicker pressure hull, and quieter submerged operation due to the use of direct-drive propulsion motors that eliminated the need for reduction gears.

Advanced as she was, TORSK still shared one limiting characteristic of all US Fleet-type submarines: her submerged endurance was strictly a function of battery charge and breathing air for the crew, typically maxing out in 24 hours and sometimes less. Most World War 2 submarines were really "submersibles" - they were capable of diving for limited periods of time, but were designed to operate mostly on the surface. While surfaced, submarines were more vulnerable to detection and attack, especially from aircraft equipped with radar - a fact which largely accounts for the decimation of the German U-boat force by Allied anti-submarine measures during the war.



USS TORSK underway in February 1945. Note the bridge and exposed periscope shears of her original design. (Courtesy of the National Archives)

Immediately after World War 2, the US Navy sought ways to make the numerous diesel-electric fleet submarines left over from the war more survivable and effective - in short, quieter, faster, and able to stay submerged longer than their original designs had allowed. After studying captured wartime examples of Germany's most advanced U-boats, as well as copious experimentation and refinement, the Navy instituted a modernization effort for its World War 2 subs known as the "GUPPY" program (which stood for "Greater Underwater Propulsive Power").

[Click Here to Read the Full Article »](#)

## Annual Appeal for Donations

Historic Ships in Baltimore needs your support more than ever. With the recent unrest and negative effects on the City's tourism numbers, it has been a tough summer. Please follow the link below to read the whole story and see how you can help.

[View Appeal Letter »](#)

## USS Constellation Cup Regatta Race Report

30 boats crossed the starting line at this year's USS Constellation Cup Regatta. The day was cool and breezy with winds gusting towards 30 knots at times. Soon after the start, and just as the first boats had rounded the windward mark by Fort McHenry, a heavy black cloud descended on the fleet bringing with it gusty winds and excitement on deck. From the committee boat we watched as crews tried to manage their spinnakers on the downwind leg. Due to the exciting conditions only 20 boats officially reached the finish line but all had a great day on the water.



Dianthus

This year's party was a great success raising over \$21,000 to help keep the Historic Ships fleet afloat. The list of finish times and winners can be found at [www.usconstellationcup.org](http://www.usconstellationcup.org). The spinnaker class was won by Bill Carruth, Captain aboard Peregrine. The full-keel class in the pursuit race was won by David Wallace and Owaissa. Winning both the fin-keel class and first overall in the pursuit race and getting the first over the line gun from USS Constellation was Dianthus, skippered by David Tabor. This was the first Constellation Cup race where a fin keel boat took overall honors.



Bob Sopka and Steve Reid with the Colligan Cup Trophy

For the second year in a row, Team Infrared, skippered by Dr. Bob Sopka, won the George Colligan Memorial Trophy, THE USS Constellation Cup. The trophy is awarded for a combination of fundraising off the water and racing performance on the water. Bob and his team raised \$1,250 and placed 3rd in the fin keel pursuit class. Thank you VERY much Team Infrared!

The winner of the Spirit Award for having the most fun year after year was Ted Diehl and the crew of Second Chance.

Thank you to everyone who supported the race and the fundraising efforts! Special thanks to M&T Bank and RK&K Engineers along with Sascha's Fine Catering, Atlantic Stage Lighting, Loane Brothers Tent and Party Supplies, Hull Street Blues, and all of our food and beverage sponsors.

## Education Program Update



Historic Ships in Baltimore hosts many schools for overnight programs.

Pictured, Oak Grove Classical Christian School tours USCGC *Taney's* bridge with educator Emily Ward.

Historic Ships in Baltimore hosted 324 scouts, students, and parents in September and October.

On Wednesday, September 30, Historic Ships hosted Chesapeake Public Charter School on board USCGC *Taney*. This school sends its 7th graders every year to experience "life on board ship". While on board *Taney*, the students learned how to fix the ship during an emergency by practicing Damage Control, received a complete tour from stem to stern including an investigation of the ship's propulsion systems, and enjoyed a scavenger hunt to finish off their evening of fun. After that it was lights out and

the group occupied the ship's bunks in Main Berthing and Engineering Berthing below the Mess Deck.

After each program we ask the teachers and group leaders to provide an evaluation of their experience. After this program, one teacher wrote, "Excellent job [crewmembers] Greg, Candi, and Frank. You accommodated our needs and interacted well with our students. Your energy, enthusiasm, and knowledge were amazing. You kept our students engaged in the activities! We look forward to bringing our 7th grade group in the spring!" Education Programs, including Overnight Adventures, are available for groups year-round.

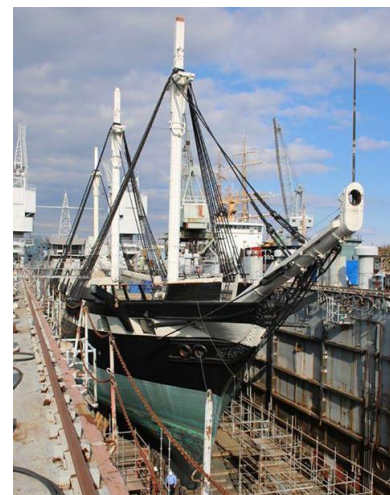
[Learn more about Historic Ships Education Programs »](#)

## Photo Exhibition at World Trade Center

Photographer and artist David Ehlers documented the dry docking of USS *Constellation* and he has assembled his images into an exhibition now being shown at the World Trade Center, 401 E. Pratt Street.

The photos show the entire sequence of events from the initial movement of the ship to Curtis Bay, to the removal of her masts and rigging, and then through the dry docking project and launch. The images tell a great story and provide a great insight into the enormity of the project and the skill of the people who did the work.

To view the exhibit, enter at the Top of the World Observation Level entrance. There is no charge to see the collection. The exhibit will be in place through the end of November.



USS *Constellation* in dry dock  
by Dave Ehlers

## Upcoming events

### **Saturday, November 14th, 2:00 PM: "US Marines in the Civil War"**

Join volunteer historian John Barnard in the Captain's Cabin of USS Constellation to learn about the role of the United States Marines during the Civil War. Marines' lives aboard ship as well as their role in land engagements will be discussed. This presentation is open to all visitors and is included with regular admission. No reservations are required.

### **Monday, December 7th, 12:00 Noon: Pearl Harbor Day Memorial Ceremony**

The annual Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony will mark the 74th anniversary of the December 1941 Japanese Attack on Hawaii and honoring those who served during WWII. This year's Key Note speaker is Vice Admiral Robin Braun, Commander, United States Navy Reserve and Chief of Navy Reserve Force. VADM Braun is the first woman to command the Navy Reserve or any reserve component of the Armed Forces. The Pearl Harbor Memorial Ceremony, will be held on board the US Coast Guard Cutter TANEY, and is open to the public at no cost.

### **Thursday, December 31st; 10:00 PM - Friday, January 1st: 1:00 AM:**

#### **[Annual New Year's Eve Deck Party](#)**

Ring in the New Year, sip champagne, & watch the Fireworks from the deck of USS Constellation, high above the Inner Harbor crowds. A twilight menu provided by Charles Levine Caterers will be served with local ale, wine, mulled cider and coffee. There will be music, special tours, cannon firings and more. **[Tickets are available for purchase online.](#)**

**[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.

### The following donors have contributed to Historic Ships in October.

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### 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.

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