

the Deck Log

The Official Newsletter of Historic Ships in Baltimore



HISTORIC SHIPS
in BALTIMORE

Historic Ships in Baltimore Hosts Reading and Literacy Camp for Rising Third Graders

From July 6th to August 6th, Historic Ships in Baltimore was manned by 300 Baltimore City second and third graders. Each weekday morning and afternoon, students participating in the SuperKids Camp program, organized by Parks and People Foundation, boarded *Constellation*, *Taney*, *Torsk*, and Lightship *Chesapeake* for history lessons and hands-on activities that reinforced reading and listening skills.

On their first day, campers traveled back in time to the 19th century as they boarded *Constellation*. Immediately, they began to learn shipboard vocabulary including "bow" and "starboard." In addition to a tour of the top deck, campers braced the yards and raised a heavy barrel using the ship's capstan before disembarking for the day.

The second day, campers stepped off the bus and on to the 20th century Coast Guard Cutter *Taney*. Aboard ship, campers learned about the differences between the United States Navy and Coast



Hauling out the 20 pounder Parrott Rifle in preparation to fire

Guard. Campers and educators also discussed shipboard safety and steps to take in an emergency before taking part in a simulated emergency that required the campers to work as a team and barricade a bulkhead using timber and tools from a nearby repair locker in Officer's Country.

On day three, campers explored Lightship *Chesapeake* to learn about aids to navigation and shipboard communication. Campers learned the difference between wig-wag, flag hoist, semaphore, and Morse code. After their lesson, campers tested their decoding skills by translating vocabulary words written in Morse code. The next day of camp took campers beneath the water's surface aboard *Torsk*. Campers toured the boat and discussed the challenges of living aboard such as hot bunking and limited shower use. During their lesson, they learned how to use periscopes and tested different types of ships' buoyancy by creating foil boats designed to carry fishing weights as cargo.

On the final day of camp, campers again boarded *Constellation* and explored her lower decks. Campers also learned how to operate one of the ship's 8-inch chambered shell guns and participated in a live firing demonstration of *Constellation's* 20-pounder Parrott Rifle. After the firing, campers rushed to their shipboard educators for hugs and good-byes and to thank them for memories of a life time.



SuperKids Learn haul the braces on board USS Constellation

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USCGC *TANEY* WWII MEMORIAL DEDICATION

On the evening of September 24, 2009, WWII *Taney* crewmen Jim Kitchen and Dick Phillips unveiled the product of over six months of work and planning: an impressive memorial plaque honoring all who served aboard their ship during the war.

Measuring 56x42 inches overall, the framed plaque lists some 860 Coast Guard officers and crew who served aboard *Taney* from December 1941 to September 1945. The idea behind it had begun nearly a year before when Jim Kitchen examined a document in the museum's files with the simple heading "The following list is of men from the USCGC *Taney* and their home addresses taken from their service records." This listing, most likely created by someone in the ship's office in the fall of 1945, had just over 160 names, but it set Jim Kitchen to thinking. By January of 2009, he had made up his mind to try to create a plaque listing everyone who had been assigned to the ship in World War II.

The next step in the project was to research and obtain copies of the ship's WWII muster rolls. Housed at the National Archives in Washington DC, *Taney's* monthly Muster Rolls list every officer and crewman assigned to the ship, as well as any passengers or members of units from other branches of the service assigned to or carried aboard. The monumental task of going through the muster rolls and then compiling a complete crew listing is where WWII Quartermaster Dick Phillips came in. After receiving scanned copies of the muster rolls, he began with December 1941 and then worked his way through September 1945, carefully marking and tallying those who reported aboard and those who departed for other assignments. After several months of laboring over the rolls, he had a master list which could then be cross-checked by Jim Kitchen.

After finalizing the list, the next task was to decide how to reproduce it in plaque form. With over 860 individuals an engraved metal plaque of some kind clearly was out of the question. Ultimately, they decided on a professionally printed graphic with the names superimposed over a 1944 profile of *Taney*, which would then be matted and mounted inside a custom-built wood and glass frame, all done with acid-free materials. The next step was dealing with the price tag of it all - the total cost was over \$1,300. It was then that Jim Kitchen got on the telephone, talking to as many WWII crewman and their descendants as he could locate, and telling them about the project. "Tell me how much you need, Kitch," was the usual response.

Then came the dedication, set for the evening of Thursday, September 24. Nine WWII crewman and their families attended the special dinner aboard *Taney* that evening that featured the unveiling and presentation of the plaque. Several had traveled from the west coast, and a few more from New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania. That evening, against a backdrop of wartime *Taney* photos projected on a screen, Jim Kitchen and Dick Phillips each took turns at the microphone to talk about what the plaque meant to them, and how they went about creating it.

Though impressive by itself, the large plaque was not all that Jim Kitchen had to present to the museum that evening. During the previous months, he had arranged for the donation of several *Taney* artifacts and he had also created several photo plaques for display aboard the ship. These included a collection of original brass machinery plates salvaged during the rebuilding of *Taney's* boilers in 1982, courtesy of Daniel Coll (FN 1982-84), a ship's clock complete with a Treasury Department label and "Taney" etched on the reverse, courtesy of David Talley (son of WWII Carpenter's Mate George Talley), a photo plaque showing the crew of Mount 52 during the Okinawa Campaign and describing an action in which they downed a Japanese plane, and finally a photo plaque featuring a large group of *Taney* WWII vets who attended the December 1986 decommissioning ceremony. It was a tremendous evening and one that will be long remembered by all those who attended.



USCGC Taney's Crew, 29 September, 2009

SAILORS BRAVE THE COLD FOR FIFTH USS *CONSTELLATION* CUP

October 17 dawned cold and damp with temperatures in the low 40's, a northerly wind and bone chilling rain. On the race committee boat (equipped with heat) we were not quite sure how many boats we would have on the starting line. Despite these adversarial conditions over thirty skippers and their intrepid crews braved the elements and participated in one of our most successful regattas. The after-race party and awards ceremony was a tremendous success as well with over 250 sailors telling stories of the day's experiences while enjoying the dry and cozy confines of a heated USS *Constellation* gun deck.

Winners of this year's race included Bob Stahler on Jubilee IV, spinnaker class; Rascal, a multihull skippered by Jim Parrott; Red Rum with Carl Engle at the helm, fin keel pursuit; and Mike Albert and Encantada taking line honors in the full keel pursuit class. Encantada also took home the first overall trophy

for the pursuit class for the second year in a row!

The annual Spirit award was given to Eamonn McGeady and the crew of *Dun na Gall*. On his way to the race in rough weather the previous evening Eamonn noticed that he was taking on water. He immediately made his course for Tidewater Marina where a quick haul-out revealed a crack in the keel.

The race is a fundraising challenge and Chris White and the crew of *White Hawk* met that challenge head on raising \$1,980, coming in fourth in their class, and taking home the George Colligan Memorial Trophy - THE *Constellation* Cup. Congratulations to everyone who won or participated in the most successful USS *Constellation* Cup on record. The event grossed just over \$21,000 in support of the preservation, maintenance and education programming on board the Historic Ships.

Also special thanks to ALL of our sponsors including: Pussers Rum, Baltimore City Yacht Association, Houpla Communications, Heritage Marine Insurance, Loane Brothers Tent and Party Supplies, Courthouse Copies, Pratt Street Alehouse, Sacha's Catering, Good Old Boat Magazine, H&S Bakery, Bertha's of Fells Point, Wagner and Sons, Peter's Pour House, ABC Rentals, Bill Kautter Photography and Charm City Ice.

We are all looking forward to an even bigger and better event in 2010. More photos of the race can be found at www.ussconstellationcup.org. Photo below by Bill Kautter.



Chris White accepts the 2009 George Colligan Trophy from Executive Director Chris Rowsom

Historic Events

Since 1854

Have Your Next Party, Corporate Function,
Or Special Event on board
USS *Constellation*, USCGC *Taney*
or at the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse
For Information Contact Laura Givens
(410) 539-1797 ext. 432
lgivens@historicships.org

New and Returning Members & Donors

(1 May through 31 October 2009)

Thank you very much to all of the individuals and families, corporations and foundations that have supported Historic Ships in Baltimore during this time.

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Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse: The Keepers

by Paul Cora, Curator



Seven Foot Knoll in its original position at the mouth of the Patapsco River, ca 1945

For most of its history, Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse was manned by keepers of the US Lighthouse Service, and later the US Coast Guard. As an isolated station, Seven Foot Knoll was designed for three keepers - a principal and two assistants - which allowed for regular rotations ashore.

The duties of keepers were often routine but were nonetheless essential. Each night at sundown the beacon lamp was lit and had to remain so until sunrise the following morning - a task which required vigilance and regular maintenance. Each morning, the beacon lens and lamp were thoroughly cleaned and made ready for use that evening. In times of fog, the fog bell had to be sounded continuously which required winding the station's bell machine every 45 minutes until the fog lifted.

Despite the availability of shore leave, many apparently found life at Seven Foot Knoll difficult and the early history of the station is dotted with resignations and appointments of both keepers and assistants. In 1873 for example, the Lighthouse Service received a report that the position of assistant keeper at Seven Foot Knoll had been vacant from July 1, 1872 until March 31, 1873. The difficulty of retaining keepers was echoed again some 40 years later in report by the 5th Lighthouse District Inspector who cited that between January 1913 and May 1916 six assistant keepers had come and gone. "...[T]his difficulty," he

wrote, "is in great measure due to the extremely uncomfortable condition of the station during the winter months on account of cold...it is very much larger in floor area than the usual screw-pile lighthouse...three of the rooms in particular are of very large size....It appears that the station was originally provided with a heating stove in addition to the cook stove, but this has been taken down and the smoke pipe discontinued for the reason that the fuel allowance was insufficient to run two stoves during the winter." On the Inspector's recommendation, the station heating stove was re-installed and the annual coal allowance increased from four to six tons. "This allowance is in excess of that supplied to any other station on marine site in this district," concluded the Inspector, "but it is believed to be entirely warranted by the extraordinary conditions at this station."

During the late 19th Century, at least two keepers had their families with them at Seven Foot Knoll - a practice which was not strictly permitted by the Lighthouse Service at offshore lighthouses. This practice may have been both the cause and result of the staffing difficulties at Seven Foot Knoll. The following letter of resignation from Assistant Keeper Joseph Worthington gives a rare glimpse into the domestic side of life at Seven Foot Knoll:

"Baltimore, February 26, 1870

To George S. Boutwell, Secretary of the Treasury

Dear Sir,

A few days ago I was appointed an assistant light house keeper at the Seven Foot Knoll [when] Edward Bell resigned. I have since understood that Mr. Lucas, the principal lighthouse keeper has his wife and two children living there which is the first time that I ever knew that the government allowed this. As all knoll lights have a principal [and] 2 assistants and all shore lights have 1 man and his family the result [is] that Mr. Lucas and his wife and children live together- that is cook and eat...while the other two men that are put there by the government have to do their own cooking - Mr. Lucas by this way of proceeding will always cause dissatisfaction among the assistants, and it will be hard [to] get any man to stay any length of time because he is violating the rule by having his wife and children living in a knoll light... and the other two men must live in one corner of the lighthouse while him and his wife must play the king and queen in the other part a nice state of things I must confess- when I was on a visit at the knoll in the summer of 1868 there were 3 men who mess together and there was no trouble but since Mr. Lucas has been down there with his wife and children and changing the rules there has been a great deal of trouble about getting a man or men to stay there. My reasons for addressing you this letter is that [I] intend to resign my commission as assistant keeper at the Seven Foot Knoll under the above circumstances and my reasons herein are stated hoping you are enjoying excellent health. I am with the greatest sincerity
Joseph F. Worthington No. 11 N. Central Avenue North of Baltimore St. Baltimore, MD"

Growing Up at Seven Foot Knoll

James T. Bowling (Keeper 1874-1879) also kept his family at Seven Foot Knoll, though it is not known if this was officially sanctioned. Bowling's daughter, Knolie, who was born at the lighthouse in 1875, painted an interesting picture of life at Seven Foot Knoll in the following excerpts from a 1936 Baltimore News story:

"There are five large rooms and we had a piano and a big bookcase with no end of books which occupied our time during the long winter evenings. Mother had been a school teacher and she taught us, because we had no way to get to and from shore for school.

"Father had many friends among the tugboat captains and at rare intervals he would signal one of them to stop and take him to shore.

"Once when a storm blew up and prevented his return my mother tended the light and rang the fog bell all night.

"Part of our equipment was two small boats and in good weather Father would row to the nearest shore We had nets and lines and an abundance of sea food, which we traded with the farmers for vegetables.

"Under the living quarters we had a hog pen and chicken yard and there we kept our coal and wood. Several times our 'barnyard' was swept away by storms, but we always managed to rescue the livestock and keep them in our living quarters until Father could rebuild their home. We even raised some vegetables in boxes on the big balcony, but it was hard work.

"On stormy nights wild fowl would lose their way and fly directly into the light. It was a simple matter in the morning to gather up enough fowl for our larder. Water was caught in rain barrels. In summer we had lots of visitors - fishing parties - but in winter no one came. In spring when the ice broke up it would pile up against the lighthouse, rocking it and scattering our furniture around. That was what made us change our home finally."

Evidence suggests that increasing regulation within the Lighthouse Service by the late 19th Century put an end to the families living at Seven Foot Knoll. In fact, regulations published in 1880 stated that at "isolated stations, where there are two or more keepers, no women or children will be allowed to reside, unless by special permission of the Light-House Board previously obtained."

By the 1930s, the need to retain keepers at Seven Foot Knoll was questioned. "It would appear...that the station is of minor importance as a general aid to navigation since the dredged channel is well marked by lighted buoys and range lights" observed the 5th Lighthouse District Chief Engineer in a January 1936 report. Although the technology existed to automate Seven Foot Knoll's light and fog signal, the Lighthouse Service viewed the lighthouse as more than just an aid to navigation. "[I]n regard to the possibility of making Seven Foot Knoll Light Station unwatched," wrote 5th Lighthouse District Deputy Commissioner C.A. Park in 1936, "...It is noted that local interests would apparently be strongly opposed to such action because of life saving

services rendered in the past by this station...." As a result, Seven Foot Knoll continued to be manned into 1948.

Thomas J. Steinhise Keeper of Seven Foot Knoll 1930-1941

Thomas Jefferson Steinhise was the most well known keeper of Seven Foot Knoll, where he served for ten and half years of his career. He was born September 29, 1878 at Leonardtown MD., and before entering the Lighthouse service, he was a waterman and a blacksmith.

On August 1, 1918, Steinhise joined the U.S. Lighthouse Service as assistant keeper of Tangier Sound Lighthouse in Virginia. He served there with his brother-in-law who was the Keeper. By February of 1919, he had gotten a promotion and was made keeper of the Lower Cedar Point lighthouse on the Potomac River, though for unknown reasons he resigned from the service eight months later. Mr. Steinhise rejoined the Lighthouse Service in March of 1927 and worked at the Ragged Point Lighthouses (all on the Potomac River) before being transferred to Seven Foot Knoll on December 16, 1930.

In August of 1933, a nor'easter hit Maryland and the Chesapeake Bay; a storm so powerful that it cut an inlet through Ocean City, MD. Around 10:30pm on August 20, the tugboat Point Breeze ran into trouble off Seven Foot Knoll. The captain of the tug ordered his crew to abandon ship as the tug went down. Thomas Steinhise heard the shouts of the fourteen men and with the help of his son Earl, prepared his twenty-one foot motorboat to go out and rescue them. As the motor on the boat would not start, he was forced to row the boat through fifteen-foot waves and hurricane force winds to reach the men. By the time another tug had arrived on the scene to assist in the rescue, he had pulled six men from the water and taken them to the lighthouse. Although one of the men had drowned, he had saved five men and for his bravery he was awarded the Commerce Department's Silver Life Saving Medal.

Here is the text of Steinhise's own account of the incident written in a memo to the Lighthouse Service:

About 12:30 a.m. this morning, the Tug Boat Point Breeze went down near this Light Station with fourteen people on board. I went out to save what I could. The men was scattered in all directions, and it was difficult who to save first as most was calling me to come to them. At first I had trouble with [the] engine as it was rough and sea breaking over [the] boat. One man was dead when I pulled him in the boat. I worked on him but to no avail as others was calling for help then. Another tug came and I had six, including the dead man, and taken them to the Lighthouse....

On May 31, 1941, Thomas Steinhise retired as keeper of Seven Foot Knoll citing pain in his back and knees (caused by constant stair climbing) and stomach ulcers as reasons. He died on July 22, 1949.

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SPOTLIGHT ON SHIP'S CREW: ROBIN CAGEY

A couple of months ago, when I was visiting my childhood home New Jersey, my mom brought out a picture of my sister and me in Baltimore. Behind us, perhaps somewhat prophetically, loomed the USS *Constellation*. She knew this picture existed and was thrilled to find it while sorting through some old photos. There I am, holding my "lopper," how I pronounced lobster at that age, and a Life-Savers lollipop with a grin on my face.

I can't say I remember very much from that family vacation to Baltimore in 1989 since I was only about two years old, but the photos my parents have from it show that I loved it here even then. When that picture was taken no one could have guessed I would even go to college in Baltimore, let alone work on the ship behind me twenty years later. My mom loved the idea of recreating the photo and knew exactly where to find my lopper. The Life-Savers lollipop was a bit harder to find but luck was on our side when my parents found it at a rest stop on the way to Baltimore that morning. My mother and father meticulously directed my sister and me to copy the original as closely as possible and the result was perfect.

When I called my mom to help me write this, I started by asking her what I was like as a kid, and she had lots to say. She said, as I'm sure many mothers do, that I was "one-of-a-kind." She remembers how much I loved art, science, and, of course, history. When I was younger I never thought I would be destined for a career in museums, but this is likely less surprising to my mother who knew very well my preoccupation with history books and archaeology.

I used to say I would be an archaeologist, but one day I realized I would rather find ways to share cultural artifacts with the public to help teach them about the people of the past, not just dig them up. Internships at Eastern State Penitentiary Historic Site and The Carroll Mansion would follow during my four years at UMBC. Upon graduation I was working full time at Historic Ships in Baltimore and very happy with the path my education carved for me.



Robin on Her First Visit to
USS *Constellation*

Robin as a member of
USS *Constellation's* Crew

SHIPYARD SCUTTLEBUTT

The repairs to *Constellation's* port side are nearly complete. The crew finished the aft section, and they have moved the scaffolding to the bow. Tim and the gang are doing a great job in spite all of the rot that we found in the solid planking above the gun ports. The amount of wood that we have had to replace has slowed the project somewhat, but we will be finished with the planking and working on the interior repairs before winter sets in.

The Quarter Boats were launched, with much fanfare, on Friday, October 9th on the railway at Douglass - Myers Park. My bad back was acting up, preventing me from going out for a row, but Bruce and Chris reported that the boats row very easily. They are currently in the water alongside the East Harbor Campus, but we will soon be hauling them out for storage until funds for the davits can be raised.



One of USS *Constellation's* Ship's Boats Underway after Launch

On board *Taney*, Paul Cora has had to leave his curator's hat on the hook for a while and he has been working on rust busting, painting, and water proofing projects on the ship's superstructure as well as the wooden overlay decking coatings. On a purely cosmetic project, he's been repainting the Coast Guard emblem on the stack, and it looks great! The base of the gyro compass repeater on the bridge wing has been replaced, fixing an old leak in the Captain's cabin. We also had the pipe stanchion for the port lifeboat winch control panel cut out and replaced, stopping a big leak in the EM Shop. Paul had the luxury of a volunteer crew for a week, and they were able to get most of the superstructure painted.

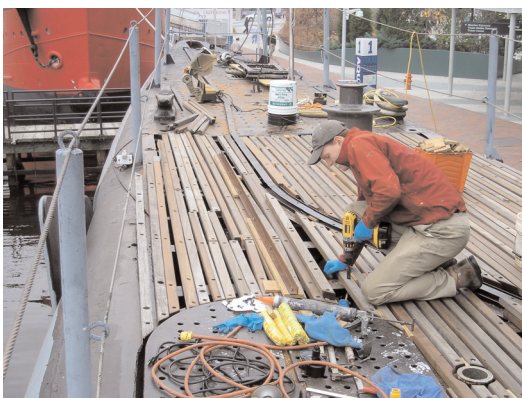
The *Torsk* wood deck batten project is finally in full swing. All of the steel structure has been repaired or replaced, and it has been coated with epoxy primer. TVA volunteers and Seabees from Baltimore Naval Reserve Center Construction Detachment 4 have been a great help on this project. Tim and the carpentry gang from *Constellation* have been helping Jim Reeb get started laying out the wood battens. We are working from original Navy construction drawings, so the deck will look like new when we are finished.

On board *Chesapeake*, Jim has cut out all of the leaky steam pipes, and our steam fitter will reroute and replace it so that our overnights will be all warm and cozy this winter. Captain Greg Krawczyk and the rest of the lightship volunteers have been working on a lot of small projects. Greg has been taking care of all of the electrical system items, and the rest of the gang have been painting, mounting hardware, and repairing cabinetry.

There's not much going on maintenance or restoration wise over at the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse these days, but if you're over that way take the time to check out one of my favorite structures in the Inner Harbor. Built in 1856, the lighthouse is an amazing example of Baltimore's place as a leading center of advanced cast iron architectural technology. Most of the original elements remain in the complex structure of pilings, cross braces, beams and girders all designed and prefabricated to make its assembly out in the waters of Chesapeake Bay a relatively simple operation. Check it out!

As a part of the Deed of Gift through the US Navy's Ship Donation Program, *Constellation* and *Torsk* are subject to annual inspections by Navy engineers. Being on the ships every day, we sometimes miss some of the small problems, so it's great to have additional sets of eyes looking at the ships and making sure that we are doing our jobs. I am happy to be able to report that once again this year they are very pleased with the way that we are maintaining the vessels.

As of the end of October, we have more than 40 volunteers across the fleet, and they have logged over 3000 hours of their time helping with our various maintenance and restoration projects. Without the help of all of our volunteers, we could not keep these sites in the condition our visitors presently enjoy. If you want to volunteer and help preserve our historic vessels, or the lighthouse, contact me, Paul G. Powichroski, at 410-539-1797, extension 448 or via e-mail at pgp@historicships.org.



Elijah Racicot Laying Down the Foredeck of USS Torsk

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

PEARL HARBOR DAY COMMEMORATION AND REMEMBRANCE CEREMONY

Monday, December 7th at 11:30 PM

Please join the board & staff of Historic Ships in Baltimore in honoring those who served during WWII with a memorial tribute by Admiral J.C. Harvey, Jr., Commander, US Fleet Forces, a commemorative wreath drop and special recognition by the St. Andrew's Society of Baltimore. The ceremony will be held onboard USCGC *Taney*, and is open to the public. Light refreshments will follow the ceremony. Please dress appropriately for the weather.

THE KEEPERS OF THE LIGHT (AND THEIR LIGHTS)

Saturday, December 12th at Noon

Join Lighthouse Keeper and historian Paul O'Neil at the Seven-Foot Knoll Lighthouse on Pier 5. Mr. O'Neil will focus on the lighthouse keepers and lights that aided Chesapeake Bay navigation in the 19th and 20th centuries.

NEW YEAR'S EVE DECK PARTY!

Thursday, December 31st, 10:00 PM to 1:00 AM

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. Reservations required. For tickets please visit the museum's website: www.historicships.org or call 410-539-1797 X 422

2010 SECOND SATURDAY SERIES

Please visit the Historic Ships website for updates to the schedule of events, including the Second Saturday Lecture Series.

9TH MARITIME HERITAGE CONFERENCE

HOSTED BY HISTORIC SHIPS IN BALTIMORE AND THE NAVAL HISTORICAL FOUNDATION

September 15 - 19

Held every three years, this conference provides an opportunity for members of local, national, and international maritime heritage and preservation organizations to meet, exchange ideas about issues affecting the broader community, and have a great time while doing so! In the past, many organizations have held their annual meetings in conjunction with the conference and the MHC planning team will work to coordinate these meetings with the overall program. For more information visit the website of the National Maritime Heritage Society at www.seahistory.org and look under the events tab.



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Yes, I would like to become a member of Historic Ships in Baltimore. Please enroll me as a member so that I may help the cause, receive the museum's newsletter, *The Deck Log*, and enjoy the many other benefits of membership.

- | | |
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