the l \bigcap HISTORIC SHIPS in BALTIMORF The Official Newsletter of Historic Ships in Baltimore

USS TORSK DECK PROJECT PRESERVATION UPDATE

Historic Ships staff and volunteers have been working through the winter to repair the steel superstructure and replace the deteriorating deck on board the submarine USS Torsk. To date most of the steel work forward of the "sail" has been repaired, coated and now awaits the laying of the deck. The project is being done in sections so that the boat can remain open during the project. The General Ship Repair Company has been doing most of the "hot work" on the project and we have also had some volunteer support to assist us with the large amount of welding that needs to be done.

The goal of the project is to bring the boat's deck back to its configuration near the end of her sailing career. Over the years, and as a result of earlier repairs, many features were either covered up or lost. This is the case with many of the storage compartment hatches and it is requiring careful inspection of the boat's plans to ensure that what we do is historically correct. Some elements, such as the safety harness rail, are too far gone in places to be restored.



Shipwright Tim Fowler on board USS Torsk (left) drilling holes and restoration intern Xavier (right) doing some clean-up in preparation for fastening the new deck battens.



Pier 3 Site Manager Rob Howard cutting deck battens to fit the forward edge of the "sail" on board USS Torsk.

The research, preservation and restoration required by this project provides an excellent opportunity for developing the historic interpretation program on board the boat. When the project is complete we will have new exhibits on the deck providing detailed explanations of what visitors are seeing, the purpose of specific items on the deck and how they worked and also what may have been there in earlier eras of the boat's history. We are looking forward to the day when the deck is complete, visitors can enter the bridge from the deck, and our interpretation program is in place. This is a very ambitious project, especially since it is being done largely in-house. We expect to have all elements complete by the summer of 2014. In the meantime, we hope that you will come aboard and see the work in progress.

TAX CREDIT OPPORTUNITY: Residents and businesses in Maryland can contribute to this project and receive 50% credit on their Maryland taxes plus their state and federal regular deductions. For more information contact Christopher Rowsom, Executive Director at extension 402 or crowsom@historicships.org. Information on this exciting opportunity to contribute is also available on the website at www.historicships.org. To take advantage of this opportunity your contribution must be received before December 31, 2013.

SAVE THE DATE! July 4th Independence Day Deck Party on board USS Constellation

Deck Log

USCGC TANEY BUILDER'S PHOTOS PRESERVE HER PAST APPEARANCE By Ryan Szimanski

Very few ships can boast that they survived the technological, political, and economic changes of three wars and a fifty year, active service life. However the Coast Guard Cutter *Taney*, commissioned in 1936, and finally decommissioned at the end of 1986, is one ship that can. Visitors aboard Taney get unique insight into what the ship would have looked like during her final years of service. The challenge for the museum is how to research and interpret the preceding decades of monotonous routine and intense military action. To do this, photographic evidence from early in the ship's career is the crucial.

Taney is unique as a museum ship because she went from being an active vessel on December 7th, 1986 to being a on display within a matter of months. Most ships languish for years in the mothball fleet, where they are picked over for spare parts before being scrapped or becoming a museum. Because of this expedited process *Taney* today is set up and equipped exactly the way she was during her last few years of service. The crew knew the ship would be coming to Baltimore as a museum so rather than removing items at decommissioning things were intentionally left for the benefit of future visitors.

This is perfect for displaying and interpreting the ship as she appeared during the 1980's but what about the rest of her service, the equatorial cruises, the wars, and the weather stations? *Taney* went through as many as a dozen different configurations. During World War II alone she had three radically different appearances that coincided with different missions the ship was performing. All of these configurations are at least as historically significant as the one she is in now; however finding information on them is significantly more difficult.



Evidence of *Taney's* many changes is melted into the very fabric of the ship. The hull, deck, and superstructure are covered with old weld marks where pieces have been added and removed. Sometimes it doesn't take any research to tell what used to be there; a six foot oval was once a door, now welded over, a twelve inch diameter circle, was once a porthole. This provides a lot of information on the ship's past, but unlike an archaeological site there is no seriation, the older periods of the ship are not buried deepest. This makes it difficult to tell when the welds were made, and what configuration they coincide with.

Blueprints can answer this question to a certain extent, or they would if all of the ships blueprints for all of her various configurations were available. These drawings, the ones the museum has access to, can only get a researcher so far. They show where certain objects were located and what compartments were used for. This is important because certain spaces have changed considerably during the ship's many alterations. Blueprints don't say much about the ship's fittings, the stuff that was inside the ship.

Eye witness accounts tell us a lot about what the ship did. The museum's curator, as well as the Coast Guard Historian's Office has collected numerous interviews with former crew members. These interviews are invaluable, especially given the rate at which former crew, especially from early in the ship's service, 77 years ago, are passing. An 18 year old plank owner who sailed on the ship in 1936 would be 95 today; World War II veterans are not much younger. Soon there will be no more eye witnesses to question and the only firsthand accounts of the ship's service will be what are already on record. These accounts are extremely good for certain information, but they rarely focus on how the ship looked or how she was equipped.

Photographic evidence is what fills in the gap; pictures give us the missing information that blueprints, memoirs, and weld marks cannot. There is a sizeable collection of photographs of the exteriors of *Taney* and her six sister ships. These tell a lot about the exterior profile of the ship, but there are relatively few showing the interior fittings of the ship. What did the officer's staterooms look like, what was in the armory, and what was in the refrigerator to name a few questions.

Many of these questions can be answered, thanks to a unique, partial set of high resolution photographs taken on board Taney shortly after she was commissioned. These photographs show the ship in her original configuration, fully outfitted. They are called Builder's Photos and they were taken to document the class's appearance after the shakedown cruise and acceptance trials. Taney's Builder's Photos are a compartment by compartment set of extremely high resolution black and white pictures taken by the



Figure 1- The bridge on board USCGC Taney as it appeared in 1937 taken from the captain's chair.





Figure 2 - An officer's stateroom aft of the wardroom. Note the sword hanging above the bed which would have been worn for ceremonial purposes.

Philadelphia Navy Yard to document the ship as it appeared when it was turned over to the Coast Guard. This amazing set of pictures show everything from the aircraft handling equipment to the contents of the paint locker, from the paperwork on the desk of the ship's office to the tools in the carpenter's shop.

The level of detail and resolution of these seventy seven year old pictures is incredible. They show a large majority of both the interior and exterior of the ship. Some parts of the photographic record are so complete they merit special attention. The bridge for example is a space that someone familiar with the ship will find both recognizable and foreign. Unlike the crowded space you can see today through small round portholes the bridge originally was a much larger compartment, surrounded by large square windows, and with a comparatively small amount of equipment contained within. Unlike today the space is not crisscrossed with coils of wires and covered with instrumentation. It is an almost sterile white empty space.

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 Also well represented in these photographs are the various engineering spaces, and senior crew's living spaces. The engine room, boiler room, and workshops all receive ample coverage and numerous pictures are dedicated to each compartment. Unlike the bridge these spaces have not changed much at all in the decades since the ship was first riveted together. In stark contrast to the relatively sparse documentation on hand for the enlisted living spaces are the line officers', warrant officers', and chief petty officers' spaces. Most of the individual cabins are photographed, as are their heads (washrooms), pantries, and other living spaces.

Unlike the other spaces which vary from vaguely familiar to downright recognizable the series of photographs that document the main deck of the ship are nearly unrecognizable. Instead of two small boats on deck, a gun mount, and an elongated superstructure like today the Builder's Photos show a much different appearance. Two large guns, two saluting guns, and two machine guns are shown forward on the ship, six boats are stored alongside truncated superstructure, and the fantail is a long flat area dedicated to operating a floatplane and the crane used to hoist it into and out of the surf.

The series is extremely useful, but unfortunately it is not complete. Large parts of the ship are missing from the photographic record. The crew's living spaces are the most conspicuously absent. No image of the mess deck where the crew ate, the sickbay, the laundry room, or the fireman's head where the engineers showered and used the bathroom, and only one picture of the various berthing spaces where the enlisted men slept is on file.

Also missing are many of the below decks storage spaces such as the inside of the powder magazine and shell room, and the many

Continued on page 4



Figure 3- A picture of the main deck, aft looking forward at the truncated superstructure. A ship's boat is being hoisted with the boom also used to move the ship's aircraft. Crew and shipyard workers are visible standing around the superstructure.

Deck Log HISTORIC SHIPS



Figure 4- One of several interior pictures of the refrigerators beneath crew's berthing shows what provisions were stored when the ship was getting ready to sail for the Territory of Hawaii in 1937. Interestingly some storage spaces like this one are well documented while others are not.

Continued from page 3

of the other storage spaces, both for gear and supplies, such as the film locker, athletics locker, boat gear stowage, issue room, and ship's store. It would be reasonable to believe that small storage lockers like these may not have been included in the photo series, except that other similar spaces such as the paint locker, paint mixing room, canvas locker, engineering stores, armory, dry provisions, and interior shots of the refrigerator are included.

When these pictures are combined with the blueprints, eye witness accounts, and the ship herself we can form a complete picture about one of the ship's periods of service. This period, directly after her construction would otherwise be nearly impossible to interpret. Crew accounts are less reliable and harder to collect as seven decades lie between the memory and the interview, other photographs are less common as the film is prone to deteriorate, and the ship is crisscrossed with so many scars from so many different alterations it hard to find the weld marks that might coincide the 1936 when welding wasn't even the dominant form of shipbuilding yet.

The Builder's Photos give the museum good evidence of what the ship looked like in the 1930's. When you combine this with the ship in her current configuration, which is a good representation of her final years of service, we have great bookends to her career. Although Taney did the same jobs in 1936 and 1986, maritime search and rescue, law enforcement, and drug busting, the ship and the equipment within changed considerably over those fifty years. The museum's ability to showcase both time periods gives visitors to the ship not only an unprecedented look into the ship's final years of service, but a look at her entire service life.

EDUCATION PROGRAMMING -AN OVERNIGHT ON BOARD TANEY

In 2013, through the month of April, the Coast Guard Cutter *Taney* has hosted 20 overnight programs averaging about 49 participants each. Overnight programs are each a little different beginning with the size and type of groups coming aboard which vary in size from 20-to-80, and may be cub scouts, boy scouts, girl scouts, home schoolers, or church groups. They are greeted at the gangway by four-to-eight crew members, (educators) who have trained a long time to be on a *Taney* overnight crew. Crew members lead overnighters from the gangway to their berthing spaces and assign them racks (bunks) where they leave their back packs, sleeping bags, and everything else they brought on board. Next, in groups, they begin



a series of learning discoveries that last through the evening, night, and morning. Tours, demonstrations, hands-on activities, chow, a general quarters drill, and history, history, history fill their new shipboard world to the brim. Finally, at about 2200, (10PM to landlubbers) the overnighters crawl into their racks, each with new thoughts and a first-hand appreciation about what it was like being a *Taney* crew member. The *Taney* magic continues

"Plane Spotting" Activity during The *Taney* magic continues USCGC Taney Overnight Adventure as they drift to sleep in bunks

where heroes slept and amidst newly acquired visions of being at sea in the '30's on a Pacific cruise, or guarding the mouth to Pearl Harbor, or escorting the Atlantic convoys, or dodging attacking aircraft. . . through the night. And then, reveille! "Now here this! Reveille! Reveille!" Abruptly, overnighters tumble out of bunks and begin the blurry-eyed business of collecting themselves and their surroundings. They roll up sleeping bags, re-locate their stuff, re-pack their backpacks, and then, "Now here this! General quarters!" off they hurry to their stations and into a new day aboard ship. More things to see, more things to do, and more experiences to remember, until they head down the gangway, step back on to Pier 5, and leave

behind the *Taney* overnight world. Leave behind? No, nobody leaves the *Taney* world behind. That, they take with them and keep in the form of wonderful, not-to-beforgotten memories and experiences – I think that's the real *Taney* magic. *Stan Berry*



A happy group of overnight campers prepares to depart from LS116 Chesapeake

5

Historic Ships in Baltimore Community Support: September, 2012 through April, 2013

The following individuals, families, corporations and foundations have made generous donations to Historic Ships in Baltimore. Contributions help to preserve the fleet and provide support to educational programs and opportunities for our visitors and for the thousands of school children who come aboard each year. We thank all of you very much for your support and encourage others to come aboard and help to keep the ships afloat!

Our apologies, in advance, for any inadvertent omissions.

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The following companies and individuals have made significant in-kind contributions of goods and services to Historic Ships in Baltimore. Goods and services contributions help Historic Ships save valuable cash so that it can be put towards education programming, restoration and preservation of the fleet. Our apologies, in advance, for any inadvertent omissions.

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Historic Ships in Baltimore is pleased to offer fun, hands-on, immersive overnight education programs on board USS *Constellation*, USS *Torsk*, and USCGC *Taney* for scout, school and youth groups. For more information visit our website: www.historicships.org or contact us directly by phone: 410-396-3453 or via e-mail: sberry@historicships.org

SHIP'S COMPANY MARINE GUARD ON BOARD IN-FORCE!

The last Saturday in April saw the members of Ship's Company, the official all-volunteer living history unit for USS *Constellation* and Historic Ships in Baltimore on board *Constellation* in-force with an exceptionally large complement of Marine Guard. Ship's Company members, who are on board *Constellation* at least once each month, and who represent Historic Ships in Baltimore at several other high-profile events throughout the year, provided a day of hands-on programming for visitors to the ship on April 27th. Visiting *Constellation* when Ship's Company is on board is a special treat for people of all ages. When they are aboard, the ship looks and feels like her old crew has returned!





CALENDAR OF EVENTS

SHIP'S COMPANY ON BOARD!

Saturdays, All Day: 29 June, 27 July, 25 August, 28 September On board USS *Constellation*

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.

USS CONSTELLATION HISTORY TOUR With John Barnard Saturdays at 2pm: 1 & 15 June, 6 & 20 July, 3 & 17 August On board USS *Constellation*

Take a walking tour through 100 years of naval service! Historian and volunteer, 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.

JULY 4TH INDEPENDENCE DAY DECK PARTY!

Thursday, 4 July, 7pm to 10pm on board USS *Constellation* Celebrate INDEPENDENCE DAY with great food, drink, music and watch the spectacular Inner Harbor Fireworks from the deck of USS *Constellation*, high above the Inner Harbor crowds. A July 4th picnic menu, provided by the Classic Catering People will be served with local ale, wine and soft drinks. There will be special tours, cannon firings and more. Reservations

required. For tickets please visit the Historic Ships website or call 410-539-1797 x 422:

"TRAPPED IN THE CHESAPEAKE! - 1812 DAY"

Saturday, 13 July - All Day, on board USS Constellation

The Volunteers from the Ship's Company 1812 living history unit will provide demonstrations depicting the life of the typical sailor aboard an American Ship during the War of 1812. Programming during this event will include two cannon firings, several visitorinvolved hands-on demonstrations, and tours of the ship including our "Powder-Monkey Tour" designed for children and families. In addition, at 2PM there will be a special discussion of the frigate *Constellation's* history during the War of 1812.

Look for up-to-date information on Historic Ships events, presentations and programs at **www.historicships.org** or on our facebook page: **https://facebook.com/#!/HistoricShips**





Pier 1, 301 E. Pratt Street, Baltimore, MD 21202-3134 Phone: 410.539.1797 • Fax: 410.539.6238 www.historicships.org



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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 keep the ships afloat, receive the museum's newsletter, The Deck Log, and enjoy the many other benefits of membership.

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