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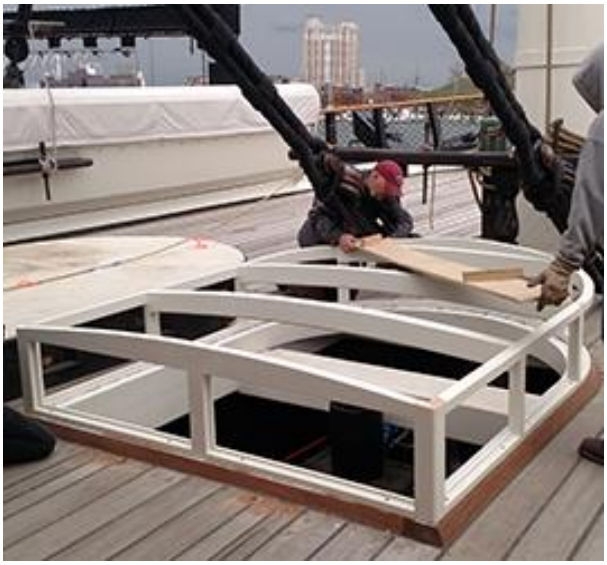
the Deck Log

The Official Newsletter of Historic Ships in Baltimore

IN THIS ISSUE

New Galley House Installed on USS CONSTELLATION



Historic Ships staff install the galley hatch

Following on the CONSTELLATION galley stove project which was completed in 2017, a new galley house has been fabricated and installed on the ship's spar deck directly above the stove. The new house conforms much more closely in overall form and details to the one seen in historic CONSTELLATION photographs from the late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Using spar deck photos that typically show training evolutions at Newport, R.I., museum curator Paul Cora was able to piece together details of the original house which could be seen from various angles. Unlike the galley house which was fabricated during CONSTELLATION's 1996-99 restoration, the original stood nearly two feet tall overall, was crowned along the longitudinal center, and featured glass port lights with protective copper bars, much like the skylight over the Captain's Cabin. The new house is some ten inches taller overall, and incorporates all the visual features noted in the original. This grant-funded project was designed and built by Arthur Drought, a Baltimore custom cabinet maker, who began by creating a 3-D CAD drawing based on

sketches created by the museum from photographic research. Due to its extreme rot resistance, Drought chose Spanish cedar as the primary material for the galley house, which was fabricated with a combination of epoxy adhesive and screws. The top of the house is covered in fiberglass cloth soaked in epoxy, which was later sanded smooth and painted.

To complete the visual effect of the original galley house will require the design and fabrication of a replica stove pipe, referred to in the age of sail as the "Charlie Noble." This pipe would have been made of riveted iron plating, and would have projected a dozen feet or more above the galley house. It was secured in place with prominent iron turnbuckle stays attached to iron eyes protruding vertically from each corner of the galley house.

For now, the new galley house, which is visually much closer to the original is a vast improvement on the its 1990s predecessor. Further improvements, such as the a replica "Charlie Noble", will be featured in THE DECK LOG as they come to pass.

Independence Day Deck Party on CONSTELLATION

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Historic Ships Honors the Secretary of Commerce

Historic Ships in Baltimore honored Maryland Secretary of Commerce Mike Gill at this year's Captain's Jubilee fundraising event on board USS Constellation. Mike Gill was this year's recipient of the ADM Royal E. Ingersoll Award, presented to a person or organization which has made a significant contribution to the advancement of the mission of Historic Ships in Baltimore.

Board Chair Tony Whitman and DIrector Chris Rowsom present the Ingersoll Award to Secretary Gill

Secretary Gill's support has largely centered around his and his team at Maryland Tourism's support of Historic Ships in Baltimore's largest event, Maryland Fleet Week and Airshow Baltimore. This year's Fleet Week will feature an international fleet of ships, USCGC EAGLE, plus the USAF Thunderbirds and other incredible airshow demonstrations.

The keynote speaker at the Jubilee was MGEN Merdith "Bo" Temple, formerly Acting Chief of Engineers and Commanding General of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. MGEN Temple spoke about the Army Corps work in the Port of Baltimore over the course of many years. 190 people attended this year's Jubilee and the event raised nearly $30,000 to support preservation projects and education programming at Historic Ships.

Thank you for supporting the Captain's Jubilee!

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USCGC TANEY and Operation Troll

By Paul Cora, Curator of Historic Vessels

USCGC TANEY arriving in Honolulu, March 1955

On March 1, 1954, the largest nuclear weapon the United States would ever test was detonated at the Bikini Atoll in the mid Pacific Ocean. The March 1954 hydrogen bomb test at Bikini, codenamed "Operation Castle Bravo," was intended to be secret, but the unanticipated power of the blast and its subsequent consequences became controversial world news with far-ranging results. For the US Coast Guard Cutter TANEY, engaged in routine peacetime duties, the debate over nuclear testing and its effects spurned by the Castle-Bravo detonation would bring on one of the most unusual chapters in the cutter's history in which the USCGC TANEY would play a key role in normalizing relations between Japan and the United States.

The March 1954 Castle-Bravo test introduced a new and powerful form of nuclear weapon known as the hydrogen bomb. American nuclear scientists were shocked by the power of the 15-megaton blast which was nearly three times the power that its designers had predicted. The nuclear fireball from Castle-Bravo was visible in Kwajalein some 250 miles away, and within one minute its mushroom cloud had reached a width of seven miles and a height of nearly 50,000 feet. Test equipment placed miles from the blast site was damaged, and test crews were forced to take emergency shelter until residual radiation diminished. Ultimately some 7,000 square miles of ocean around the Bikini Atoll became contaminated by radioactive fallout and in the days following the explosion several populated islands in the Marshall chain were evacuated.

On the morning of the Castle-Bravo detonation, a Japanese tuna fishing boat, ironically named "Lucky Dragon Number 5", was cruising on the extreme northern fringe of the test area. Although well outside of the range of blast damage, the boat was well within the range of fallout - radioactive ash and dust particles produced by the explosion - and a short time after the test, the fisherman aboard "Lucky Dragon Number 5" began to observe a strange ash-like substance accumulating on the topside of their boat. By the time they returned to Japan on March 14, everyone aboard was suffering from acute radiation sickness, and one crewman died a short time later.

Though the test was a military secret, once the plight of the crewmen on "Lucky Dragon Number 5" became known, the story became international news, and relations between Japan and the United States quickly became strained. In subsequent months, further revelations of the spread of radioactive fallout from "Castle-Bravo" fueled a growing international debate over the atmospheric testing of nuclear weapons. Markedly increased atmospheric radiation levels were detected in Australia, India, and even the southwestern United States in the weeks after the blast.

Nuclear weapons testing ("atomic" in the language of the day) had become commonplace in the Cold War. While the United States continued to develop the technology after World War II, the detonation of the Soviet Union's first atomic bomb in 1949 spurred the rapid experimentation with a wide range of nuclear weapons. Not only were large bombs tested by the US in places like the Bikini Atoll during the late 1940s and early 1950s, but smaller "tactical" weapons were detonated at testing ranges in remote parts of Nevada. After the effects of the "Castle-Bravo" test made the headlines, public speculation about the impact of elevated radiation in the atmosphere became increasingly prevalent. Not only were the direct effects of exposure a matter of public discourse, but questions about the impact of radiation on the weather, the production of crops, and the health of the seas became frequent subjects for the international media.

Japan was particularly sensitive to the issues surrounding weapons testing, not only in the wake of Hiroshima and Nagasaki at the end of World War II, but also in the context of the extensive Japanese fishing industry. In the summer of 1954 Japanese scientific surveys in the Pacific reported elevated radiation levels linked to testing at Bikini.

How much residual radiation from the "Castle-Bravo" test persisted in Pacific waters and how far was the contamination spread by prevailing ocean currents? These were questions which the US Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) was charged with studying in early 1955 as international pressure mounted. "Operation Troll," the extensive survey of the Pacific by atomic scientists and oceanographers, was conceived by the AEC as a means of obtaining scientific data about the spread of radiation in ocean currents.

On February 1, 1955, Captain Albert J. Carpenter, Commanding Officer of the USCGC TANEY, was notified by Coast Guard Headquarters in Washington D.C. that his vessel would shortly be detached from routine ocean weather station, SAR and law enforcement duties, to take on a scientific survey party and embark on an extensive cruise of the Pacific during the coming months. For the nearly 20-year old cutter TANEY, a veteran of a wide range of duties in peace and war, this would be a new and unique chapter in the ship's versatile history. During the AEC survey, she would revisit numerous Pacific destinations from her earlier career, though on a mission born of the nuclear age.

Departing San Francisco on February 25, CGC TANEY's normal compliment of officers and men was augmented by scientists from various fields. These included Dr. John H. Harley, the Chief of the AEC's Health and Safety Laboratory, Dr. Warren Wooster of the Scripps Institute of Oceanography, Mr. Allyn Seymour of the University of Washington Applied Fisheries Laboratory, along with several technicians from each agency. Bound initially for Hawaii, their mission over the next 9 weeks would be to collect samples of water, fish and plankton throughout the Pacific, and to record the levels of radiation detected. To accomplish this, the ship's weather office and weather balloon shelter were converted into radiochemical laboratories, and a muffle furnace (used by chemists for isolating the elements of various materials from the byproducts of combustion) was set up on a nearby balloon release catwalk.

Throughout the cruise, TANEY's officers and men would use their various skills to facilitate the survey. This was particularly true for Lieutenant Mark F. Mitchell, the ship's Navigator, who would be called on to guide the Cutter to scores of precise destinations over thousands of miles throughout the Pacific. Other personnel, including several Boatswain's Mates and Seaman from the deck force, would augment the technicians in the collection and preparation of samples aboard the ship, or from small boats launched in various places.

On March 5, 1955, TANEY arrived in Honolulu where final preparations for the survey were made. After refueling and rigging the various scientific gear over two days, the ship departed on a west-south-west course toward Kwajalein collecting survey samples and data.

The first category of sampling, hydrographic observation, involved the use of the ship's oceanographic winch and Nansen bottles (devices used for collecting water samples at various depths known as Nansen casts) to gauge the temperature, salinity and radioactivity of ocean water. At 180-mile intervals throughout the cruise, a series of Nansen casts at twelve different depths down to 600 meters was made, and the samples analyzed and recorded. The examination of plankton and fish for signs of radioactive contamination was another method of inquiry at each of the survey locations. Using a towed net, plankton were collected, half of which was saved for zoological study by the Scripps Oceanographic Institute, and the remainder either underwent shipboard radiochemical analysis or was saved for later study by the Applied Fisheries Laboratory at the University of Washington. Fish caught from the cutter were examined for traces of radioactivity as well. These primarily consisted of flying fish and sharks, although several yellowfin tuna were purchased from fishing vessels during the survey. Samples of reef fish were also obtained at Truk, Guam, Douglas Reef, and Okinawa. Lastly, throughout the entire voyage, a specially constructed scintillation probe was towed astern of TANEY for continuous recording of ocean radiation levels.

As a detailed AEC survey report for "Operation Troll" outlined: The survey of water and plankton samples began on March 9 at 12N, 176E and continued until arrival at Kwajalein on March 12. The TANEY refueled and on March 13 left Kwajalein to traverse the waters about Eniwetok and Bikini. The first samples of flying fish were obtained here in addition to the scheduled samples. On March 20, a small boat was put off to obtain samples of reef fish and coral from one of the northern islands of Truk Atoll.

The survey continued to Guam where the TANEY arrived on March 22. During March 22 and 23, reef fish were collected, and a preliminary report of the survey was written and sent to HASL [AEC Health and Safety Lab]. From Guam, the course was northwest to about 22N, 139E, then southwest. A collection of fish and invertebrates was made at Douglas Reef on March 27. From the Philippine Coast, the ship cruised south to Moratai, then turned northward to Okinawa. Here, another collection of reef fish was made.

On April 9 the TANEY departed from Okinawa and its course lay north toward Japan. At Yokosuka, Japan, where the TANEY arrived on April 14, the scientists aboard went ashore to attend an informal meeting in Tokyo with some members of the Japanese Science Council to discuss some of the data from Operation Troll.

On April 12, 1955, the results of "Operation Troll" were made public when the US Embassy in Tokyo issued a formal press release. As reported in the Tucson, Arizona DAILY STAR the embassy "said a coast guard cutter had found minute traces of radioactivity in Pacific waters from H-bomb tests. It said the radioactivity is far below the level dangerous to health." The story further reported that cutter TANEY "has 'traversed wide reaches of equatorial and north equatorial currents. The Taney found that radioactivity from thermonuclear tests at Bikini has 'greatly diminished in intensity in accordance with the known laws of radioactive decay and through mixing with large volumes of ocean water. Minute traces of radioactivity being found in the water by the Taney expedition exist in proportions predicted by oceanographers.'"

The scientific data on radioactive contamination collected during "Operation Troll" had a direct impact on thawing Japanese-American relations. Scientists and oceanographers from both countries were able to analyze the data collected during USCGC TANEY's two-month voyage across the Pacific and assuage the worst fears about the presence of residual radiation from the Castle Bravo test. The controversy surrounding the Castle-Bravo lingered on however, and inspired a growing international debate over the effects of atmospheric nuclear testing. In 1962, the United States, the Soviet Union, and the United Kingdom signed the Partial Nuclear Test Ban treaty in which the signatories agreed to carry out only underground nuclear tests, rather than atmospheric detonations such as Castle-Bravo.

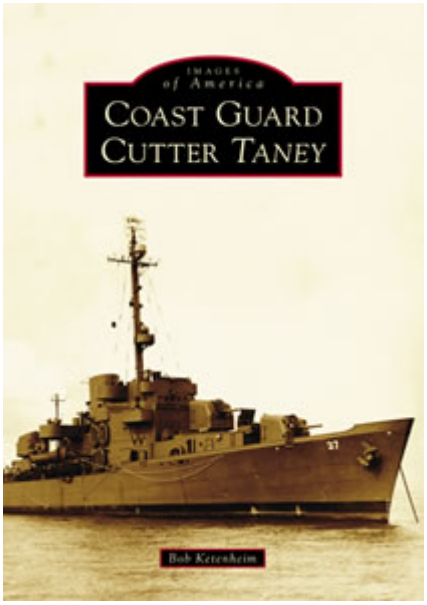
NEW: Coast Guard Cutter Taney history book by Bob Ketenheim

Want to learn more of USCGC TANEY's story? Check out the new book by Bob Ketenheim.

The latest of the Images of America series from Arcadia Publishing, this 128 page, paperback book contains more than 200 images of TANEY and her crew spanning her 50 years of service.

Coast Guard Cutter TANEY by Bob Ketenheim is available for purchase at the Historic Ships online store, as well as at the stores on Pier 1 and on board USCGC TANEY.

Buy Coast Guard Cutter TANEY Online »



USCGC TANEY Hull Preservation Fund

USCGC Taney while last dry docked in 2003

In conjunction with the 2016 National Park Service Maritime Heritage Grant for USCGC TANEY, Historic Ships in Baltimore has begun fundraising for grant matching funds. The $152K NPS grant for dry docking and preserving the ship's hull is to be matched with private donations, donated services and grants from other agencies to furnish a total of some $300K to repair, stabilize and coat TANEY's underwater hull body.

The TANEY Hull Preservation Project which is planned to commence in the spring of 2019 will involve dry docking, hull cleaning, steel repair, zinc anode renewals, and several coats of epoxy hull paint to preserve the ship's underwater shell plating. TANEY was last dry docked for a similar project in 2003 at the US Coast Guard Yard, Curtis Bay. TANEY's hull, which was extremely well built by the Philadelphia Navy Yard in 1935, requires periodic maintenance and paint renewal for long term preservation.

A huge thanks to the individuals who have recently kicked off the fundraising effort with donations to the project:

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St. Andrews Society of Baltimore

Adopt a Rivet Donors: $500 - $999
Mr. Daniel F. Dent
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Mr. Alexander Callaghan

For more information, and to CONTRIBUTE to this worthwhile project, visit:
www.historicships.org/TaneyHull.html

John Davis and the Battle of Cienfuegos

by Paul Cora, Curator of Historic Vessels

When Lieutenant Commander John Davis finished his tour aboard USS CONSTELLATION on May 31, 1945, he had the distinction of being the longest serving Commanding Officer in the vessel's history with some five years on board. Davis' tenure as CONSTELLATION "Skipper" at the Naval Training Center, Newport, Rhode Island, had been a fitting cap to a Navy career which had been extended out of retirement just before World War II. At Newport during World War II, Davis had seen the ship used not only as the relief flagship of the Atlantic Fleet but also as a focal point of Navy heritage for new recruits and visitors to the station. While it had been eventful Davis experienced the most exciting times of his naval career nearly a half century earlier during the Spanish-American War in which he was awarded the Medal of Honor.

LCDR John A. Davis at the Ship's Wheel of USS CONSTELLATION

In 1898, 20-year-old Gunner's Mate 3rd Class John Davis, who had been born Germany, was serving aboard the cruiser USS MARBLEHEAD (C-11). In April of that year, the United States went to war with Spain following the mysterious explosion that sank the cruiser USS MAINE in Havana harbor - the capital of the Spanish colony of Cuba. After declaring war, the United States moved to intervene in the ongoing Cuban insurrection against Spanish rule and American naval and land forces were dispatched to the island to fight the Spaniards. USS MARBLEHEAD, which had been conducting training cruises in the Caribbean, was at Key West when war was declared and was quickly sent to waters off Cienfuegos, Cuba, where she shelled Spanish ships and shore installations as part of the American blockade of the island.

On May 10, 1898, Captain Bowman H. McCalla mustered his crew on the quarterdeck of the cruiser MARBLEHEAD and outlined a daring plan for the following morning in which sailors and marines from the ship, in company with others from the nearby gunboat USS NASHVILLE, would approach the shore off Cienfuegos in small boats, and then locate and cut a series of underwater telegraph cables effectively cutting off communications between the Spanish garrison and Havana. He outlined that the work would have to be done under fire from Spanish artillery and small arms, and casualties were expected to be heavy, before asking for volunteers. Among those who stepped forward for the mission was Gunner's Mate John Davis.

At dawn on May 11, the volunteers took to their boats and departed MARBLEHEAD and NASHVILLE making for the shallow waters off Cienfuegos. The boats carrying the cutting parties were towed toward the shore by steam launches which then withdrew several hundred yards off the beach to cover the work boats with Marine sharp shooters. Locating the submerged telegraph lines was the first part of the task and the boat crews were forced to move within yards of the shore until they could visually spot the cables in the shallow water. Once located, the sailors would haul them up using grappling hooks so that they could be severed with hand tools.

Working so close to the shore, the cutting parties and the covering steam launches were in easy range of Spanish infantry who opened up with rifles as the sailors strained to haul in the first cable. Bringing up the cables was back-breaking work as the heavily insulated copper weighed in at over five pounds per foot. As the crews worked on the first cable, casualties from Spanish bullets began to mount, and soon enemy artillery began dropping among the boats. The Spanish fire was answered by the big guns from MARBLEHEAD and NASHVILLE which bombarded the shore and levelled a small switch house from which the cable emanated, and also from where electrically fired Spanish mines, seen floating near the first cable, were controlled. It took the cutting parties nearly an hour to locate and cut the first cable before moving on to the second. At one point, a large group of Spanish infantry had taken positions on the beach to fire on the Americans but they was driven off by the US Revenue Cutter WINDOM which speeded toward the beach, opening fire with its deck guns in the nick of time. A direct predecessor of the modern US Coast Guard, the Revenue Cutter Service operated alongside the US Navy during fighting in the Spanish American War. The cutter WINDOM was later renamed COMMANCHE and often operated in the Chesapeake bay region from its home port of Arundel Cove -the present day US Coast Guard Yard.

When the cable cutting parties finally returned to MARBLEHEAD and NASHVILLE some three hours after setting off, seventeen sailors and marines had been hit by enemy fire - two were killed, and fifteen were wounded. Gunner's mate John Davis had taken a Spanish bullet in the leg during the action and was among the 52 naval personnel who were awarded the Medal of Honor, the United States' highest award for valor, for their part in cutting the Spanish telegraph cables at Cienfuegos that morning.

At the time of his death in 1970, Lieutenant Commander John Davis was the last living American Medal of Honor recipient from the Spanish American War. Undoubtedly, the choice assignment of commanding USS CONSTELLATION at Newport during World War II had been fitting way of rounding off the career of this naval hero.

The Missing Lightship LV-95

By Jordan Ciesielczyk-Gibson, Ship's Crew

LV-95 with refit light on station outside Milwaukee, Wisconsin
Courtesy of Wisconsin Marine Historical Society

Lightships generally have comparatively unglamorous and quaint histories, yet these vessels were vital to maritime commerce, marking hazards far from shore were it either too expensive or too impractical to build a permanent light structure. Their purpose was to safeguard other vessels, anchored in open water exposed to the elements, a purpose they served along the American coast for some 150 years. Being a Wisconsin native, working aboard LV-116 "Chesapeake" opened the door for research into LV-95, a lightship that safeguarded the waters of my former home. Both lightships had similar purposes; LV-116 marked the entrance and approach into the Chesapeake Bay, and LV-95 marked the entrance and approach into the port of Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Much like LV-116 and the fourteen other American lightships currently on display, LV-95 was once slated to become another museum ship after decommissioning, but for reasons that are not entirely clear, this never materialized and the ultimate fate of LV-95 is unknown.

The story of LV-95 essentially began in 1882 with efforts to improve the port of Milwaukee by constructing a massive breakwater around the entrance to the Kinnickinnic River. At that point Milwaukee had two lighthouses, the longstanding North Point Lighthouse, which stood on a bluff overlooking the harbor, and the Milwaukee Pierhead light which was along the north shore of the Kinnickinnic River. The construction of the new breakwater, which continued into the early 20th Century, spurned the re-evaluation of aids to navigation for the port and for more than a decade funding was sought for an improved light structure for the breakwater and port. In 1907, the North Point Lighthouse was discontinued due to visibility problems, and the following year Congress finally appropriated money for the construction of a lightship to mark the entrance into Milwaukee Harbor. In the meantime as the work on the breakwater continued, a series of small beacons were placed at its end each time it was extended further into the lake.

The contract to build Milwaukee's lightship, which would be designated as LV-95, was awarded to the Racine-Truscott-Shell-Lake Boat Company. LV-95 was the third in a series of six lightships built by the company for the Lighthouse Service. The Racine-Truscott-Shell-Lake Boat Company was a complex merger of several small ship and boat building companies located in both Wisconsin and Michigan. The company struggled financially and contracts to build lightships for the Lighthouse Service were essentially what kept it afloat. Eventually the Racine-Truscott-Shell-Lake Boat Company went out of business in 1915 after delivering one last vessel, LV-98.

Construction of LV-95 did not begin in earnest until 14 June 1910, two years after the Congressional appropriation. The vessel was steeled hulled, 108 feet long, 23 feet at the beam, drew 11 feet of water, and displaced 368 tons. She was outfitted with a 200 horsepower steam engine powered by two according to the USLHS design specification for LV-95 the vessel was powered by two Scotch marine boilers (Scotch boilers were squat, cylindrical steam boilers with a furnace in the bottom and fire tubes that passed through a tank of water; they were a common type of marine boiler valued for their compactness and efficiency). Like many Great Lakes lightships, LV-95 was also initially had a riding sail rigged from the aft mast that would keep the bow of the ship pointed into the wind while at anchor. LV-95 was initially lit with a large diameter lantern housing an electric incandescent lamp. The lantern mast was hollow with an enclosed ladder to allow servicing the light during heavy weather. LV-95's light had a focal plane 52 feet above the water and produced two flashes every ten seconds by way of a revolving parabolic reflector.

The designed compliment of LV-95 was four officers and five crew - much smaller than that of LV-116. The interior layout of LV-95 was similar to LV-116 even though the construction of both lightships was separated by 18 years and lightship construction was not yet standardized. The officers' quarters, mess, pantry and chart room on LV-95 were located aft while crew quarters and galley were located forward of the machinery. Great Lakes lightships like LV-95 were constructed differently than their seagoing counterparts with a sharper, shorter hull to better cope with the short wave intervals on the Great Lakes and also to help with ice during the winter months.

LV-95 sunk at its dock
Courtesy of the US Coast Guard

On 26 December 1911 the nearly complete LV-95 sunk during a winter gale at its dock in Muskegon, Michigan. The vessel was not raised until 20 February 1912 and was finally delivered to the government, unfinished, on 12 September 1912. By 30 November LV-95 was on station three miles out into Lake Michigan from the port of Milwaukee. In 1916 the vessel received new beacon apparatus in the form of a duplex 375mm electric lens lantern in place of her distinctive original light tower. At some point during LV-95's early history there was a wooden pilothouse added to its superstructure that was similar to the one that the Coast Guard would add later, though this was subsequently removed.

The crew of LV-95 were among the last persons to see the steam powered railroad car ferry SS Milwaukee during a 22 October 1929 gale. Milwaukee had passed the lightship at 3:30pm while fighting tremendous seas on its way to Grand Haven Michigan. The crew of the ferry realized the storm was too much and attempted to turn the ship around and return to the safety of Milwaukee. During the storm Milwaukee had sustained damage to her sea gate which protected her railroad car platform from the sea. When they had turned back for Milwaukee, waves broke through the sea gate and the vessel sunk with all hands.

During the 1920's improvements to the breakwater from the southern shore of Milwaukee Bay were carried out, and the extension of the north breakwater by another 10,000 feet marked the completion Milwaukee harbor. After many requests the Milwaukee breakwater lighthouse was finally constructed and lit in 1926, and for six years both the breakwater light and LV-95 worked in tandem. The LV-95 served on station for a total of twenty years until 1932 when the Milwaukee lightship station was deemed to be redundant by both the breakwater light and the installation of a radio beacon inside of the Milwaukee Pierhead light. This radio beacon could be used to guide ships into the harbor much more safely and accurately then a lightship ever could and was a portent of things to come.

In 1933 LV-95 served briefly as a relief lightship for the Great Lakes district, relieving lightships like Huron LV-103. The vessel was transferred again in 1934 to the Coast Guard third district on the east coast (from Rhode Island to New Jersey). LV-95 was immediately laid up in October, but a year later transferred to the Coast Guard fourth district (Delaware Bay). Throughout her career afterward LV-95 was based variously at Edgemoor, Delaware, Staten Island, New York, and Cape May, New Jersey. LV-95 continued working as a relief lightship for Barnegat, Five Fathom, Overfalls and Delaware. In 1936 LV-95 was re-engined with a 6 cylinder
200 horsepower diesel engine and when the US Lighthouse Service merged with the Coast Guard in 1939, she received her new Coast Guard designation of WAL-519 (or WLH) Relief. In 1944 while on station the fleet oiler USNS Paoli (T-AO-157) collided with LV-95 and the lightship was laid up for two years while repairs were undertaken. These repairs included modifications to her hull and the addition of a pilothouse giving her a unique "double-stacked" appearance. LV-95's home portwas transferred to Cape May, New Jersey but she would continue to operate variously out of Staten Island and Edgemoor.

According to her crew in later years, LV-95's age and original design limitations showed in comparison with newer lightships; she was cramped, leaky and still outfitted with an oil-fired galley stove (unlike LV-116, for example, which was built with a more modern electric range). It took two men to steer LV-95 at her top speed of 6 knots as chains were attached directly from the rudder to the helm. Despite these shortcomings, LV-95 was still regarded as very seaworthy having weathered hurricane Edith in 1963. While larger, more modern lightships like LV-116 either parted their anchor chain, or were blown off station, while LV-95 weathered the storm.

LV-95 at Coast Guard Station Cape May
Courtesy of the U.S. Coast Guard

LV-95 continued being used as a relief lightship until it's decommissioning in January 1965 where it was placed "Out of Commission special" and kept temporarily at its base in Cape May. On 21 May 1966 the former LV-95 was donated to the now defunct Victorian Village Development Corporation of Cape May to be put on display as a museum ship much like LV-116. After this transfer, records of her ultimate fate become murky.

LV-95 was never placed on display in Cape May. In my personal correspondence with the current president of the Lightship Sailor's Association there is some vague and contradictory information regarding the ship's final disposition. One scenario

has LV-95 traveling to the Coast Guard Yard in Baltimore where she was deemed unsafe as a museum ship and was scrapped. An even more curious scenario offered is that the ship was sunk purposely or accidentally somewhere between Cape May and Curtis Bay. In attempting to research possible vessels that may have towed LV-95 to its final destination, I have arrived at two possibilities: USCG tug Sauk (WYTM-99) which appears in an 1960s image with LV-95 at Curtis Bay, or the USCG tug Messenger (WYT-85009) which was the yard tug for Curtis Bay shipyard. In searching the deck logs of the Sauk it was found that that she put in for repairs at Curtis Bay in 1963 the same year that LV-95 also put in for routine maintenance. The vessels happened to be pictured in the same place at the same time. The Sauk never towed LV-95 to her final destination, though it had towed her for routine maintenance in 1961. The Messenger remains a possibility, although deck logs for 1965-1966 remain elusive.

In a sense, LV-95 has simply disappeared; no records yet discovered state what ultimately became of her. She may have been scrapped or sank, or perhaps is sitting in a boatyard somewhere; all scenarios are equally plausible and therein lies the mystery. Previous historians have gone as far as determining that she was decommissioned and donated for use as a museum. The question of this vessel's mysterious fate is what continues to drive this research because the former LV-95 may still be extant somewhere waiting to be found. The next step in my inquiry will be to look through the records of the Curtis Bay Coast Guard Yard.

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TANEY Ship's Manager Transfers to USS NEW JERSEY

Ryan Szimanski on USCGC TANEY

After more than 11 years with the organization, Ryan Szimanski of Historic Ships in Baltimore, moved on to a senior position in Camden, NJ aboard the Battleship USS NEW JERSEY (BB63) in December 2017.

Ryan began his tenure at HSB as an educator and tour guide aboard USS CONSTELLATION in 2006 as a summer job while in high school. During his studies at the University of Maryland Baltimore County, he remained with the organization on a part-time basis and conducted numerous tours, public programs and overnight scout encampments aboard USS CONSTELLATION, USS TORSK, and USCGC TANEY.
After receiving his Bachelor's Degree in history, Ryan became HSB's Museum Technician where he undertook a variety of new duties involving exhibit planning and fabrication and museum collections management; he was a 2014 recipient of the Henry Vadnais Award from the Historic Naval Ship's Association (HNSA) for excellence in this field. Ryan's next advance at HSB was to step into the ship's manager position for USCGC TANEY and also for the Seven Foot Knoll Lighthouse. During some three and one-half years in this position, Ryan carried out a wide variety of projects and endeavors in areas of preservation and maintenance, restoration work, and ship's interpretation. In 2016 he played a key part in the creation and installation of the exhibit "To Patrol and Interdict: USCGC TANEY in Vietnam" helping fabricate and install new display vitrines, and created the graphic panel layouts used by the graphics contractor for the exhibit. In the winter of 2014-15, he was also one of those selected by HSB to work on the 5-month CONSTELLATION hull repair project.

At the end of 2017 Ryan's work experience served him well when the Battleship NEW JERSEY museum created the position of Assistant Curator for which he applied and succeeded. Ryan rounded off his term of service with HSB on 15 December. We wish him many successes in the years to come.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, June 2nd & 16th, 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, June 23rd, 7:00PM: "Civil War Medicine" on USS Constellation - Part of the Evening Mariner Series

Delve below decks to the sick bay aboard the USS Constellation and serve as "assistant surgeon" in a simulated surgery as you learn about naval medicine during the Civil War. Ship's surgeon Brad Stone will describe various medical theories and practices used during the War, how they affected sailors and how they relate to today's medicine. Buy Tickets to this Program

Saturday, June 30th; 10:00 AM - 4:00 PM: 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.

Saturday, June 30th, 7:00 PM: "Lightships in the US: a brief history and a review of their service in the Chesapeake Bay from 1820 to 1965" on Lightship Chesapeake - Part of the Evening Mariner Series
Did you know that for almost a century-and-a-half lightships, not lighthouses, were the primary aid to Chesapeake Bay navigation? Join Capt. Greg Krawczyk, USN (ret) aboard the Lightship 116 Chesapeake and learn more about the MANY lightships that served on the 17 Lightship Stations throughout the Bay - where they served and how long each station was needed. Buy Tickets to this Program

Wednesday, July 4th, 7:00 PM - 10:00 PM: Independence Day Deck Party on USS CONSTELLATION

View the full Event Calendar»

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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.