



# "In Tow"

Quarterly Newsletter of the Coast Guard Tug Association



www.cg-tugs.org

C. G. Tug Association

"SEMPER PARATUS"

Winter 2014

## 2014 CGTA Reunion

**FELLOW TUGGERS!** The initial plans for our **7<sup>th</sup>** Reunion of the Coast Guard Tug Association have been set! The vote of the membership present at our 2012 reunion was heavily in favor of holding our next gathering in **Baltimore, MD** – former home of the *Apalachee*. The committee was unable to find a suitable, reasonably priced accommodation in the immediate Baltimore area and opted to base our operations from the beautiful/historic city of **Annapolis, MD**, with excursions to Baltimore. We hope to bring you another memorable experience.

Dates: **Thursday, 18 September – Sunday, 21 September 2014**

Location: **Annapolis/Baltimore, MD**

We have booked spaces at the US Navy Lodge in Annapolis, with a hospitality suite/meeting room; a block of 20 rooms. Rooms include a small, complimentary continental breakfast. The facility is adjacent to the Navy Exchange & Commissary, and the Academy Golf Course (for our "duffers"). All rooms are essentially suites with bedroom and small galley – patrons are allowed to bring in any groceries as desired.

The cost of the reserved block of rooms is \$75.00 per night (first come – first served); actual check-in time is 1500 – we may be able to move that time earlier and perhaps add some more rooms. The contact number is **410-757-7900, Ext 5**. Identify yourselves with the Group: **Coast Guard Tug Assoc.**

The banquet/meeting will be held at the Fleet Reserve Club in Annapolis. The cost, per person, will be determined shortly. All detailed information will be provided in the next announcement for the reunion in Spring 2014

As at previous reunions, attendees will be responsible for making their own individual hotel reservations, travel to Annapolis, (some) local transportation and events, banquet cost, and any additional, unsponsored events (additional admissions to non-sponsored attractions, etc). The final plans and required payments will be in our next announcement.

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You might be a Coastie if: *members of other services visit your work space and shout, "Wow, I haven't seen one of those in 30 years!"*

Continue p.3



### Coast Guard Tug Association Officers 2012-14

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### “In Tow” Newsletter

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## “From the Editor/Prez”

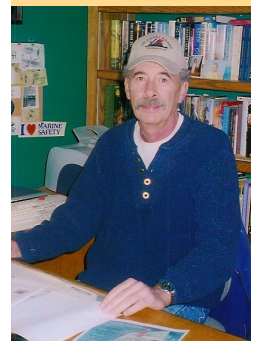
Welcome back to In Tow, the CGTA newsletter; the first (and long overdue) issue of 2014. Your dedicated staff is way behind the curve. We hope to make up for that from this point on.

To bring you all back up to speed, the 2012 Reunion in Erie, PA was a smashing success (there will be more on that later in this issue). We welcomed several new members/participants in Erie and look forward to our 2014 gathering. We hope our 2014 Reunion in Annapolis/Baltimore, MD will be another great success and bring additional numbers. The preliminary announcement for your planning has been sent out on email and is also included in this issue. Future announcements and registration forms will be posted on our web site in early spring. Come and enjoy the beautiful setting of Annapolis and the planned excursions, visit the US Naval Academy and museum, enjoy the camaraderie of our members, and share some sea stories!

As most of you are aware, the Association was very fortunate to acquire the former-USCGC *Apalachee* (WYTM 71) in January 2009, one of the last three pristine, unaltered 110-ft tugs. Our intentions at that time were to restore the “Apple” to her 1986 “retired” status and create a Tug museum and operating training platform. Following our “epic” voyage from Oswego, NY to Cleveland, OH, (see In Tow, Summer 2009 ) we spent the next 3 years cleaning, painting, restoring systems, compartments, and engines; all with volunteer crews and private donations. Unfortunately, the economy and lack of financial support were against us in the long term and we were forced to sell her back to commercial service in November 2011. We had hoped to get her back at some future opportunity! She has since been employed as an assist tug and, yes, a Great Lakes icebreaker—not bad for a 71 year old “girl” with her original 1943 machinery. However, in Feb. 2014 we learned that the current owner is replacing many of the major systems on board (S/S gens, steering gear, switchboards, pilot house systems, deck gear, etc), thereby making her, yet another, lost cutter. We wish the “Apple” a long-continued commercial life with “fair winds and following seas!”

We look forward to seeing you, our members, in Annapolis in Sept. and strengthening the bonds we have built in the Association.

Semper Paratus,  
Sandy



In Tow Prez/Editor,  
Sandy Schwaab

*(From front page)*

### **Tentative Agenda:**

#### **Thursday, 18 September 2014**

0900 – Arrival, registration; packages of local materials, brochures, etc for the area, and agendas. Various optional tours, shopping excursions, and local tourist benefits will be available (TBD). The Hospitality Suite will be open throughout the weekend with camaraderie, sea stories, photos & videos, cocktails, CGTA apparel for sale, and general conversation.

#### **Friday, 19 September**

1000 – Cruise Chesapeake Bay aboard a local cruise vessel (TBD).

Optional shopping in Annapolis, self-planned visits to USNA Museum and local attractions.

1800 - Dinner and biennial member meeting at Fleet Reserve Club Annapolis (TBD).

#### **Saturday, 20 September**

0900 – U/W by bus for Tour of USCG Yard, Curtis Bay, MD; CGCs *Chock & Sledge*. Continue by bus to Baltimore Inner Harbor to visit USCGC *Taney & Chesapeake Lightship*; local shopping optional. Return to Annapolis approx. 1700. Numerous daily local options.

#### **Sunday, 21 September**

Final goodbyes and departure.

As at past reunions, uniforms are an option and encouraged for our events at the Coast Guard venues & Dinner on Friday. With that in mind, any active duty or retired members are welcome to “break out the old sea bag” and attend in their appropriate uniforms (seasonal USCG Uniform of the Day for the area will be provided).

As we are a 501 (c) 3 incorporated Association, we need your help to establish a solid treasury. We need your dues and donations to help us finance our Association’s business, support our reunions, assist in “up front” financing for future events and purchase memorabilia. **Any donations to the “cause” would be greatly appreciated and are fully tax deductible!**

## Our Time Has Finally Come: *Announcement of the National U. S. Coast Guard Museum*

By: C. A. (Sandy) Schwaab, CWO, USCG (Ret)

Friday, 5 April 2013: A watershed day that will live in Coast Guard History – the ultimate decision to develop the National USCG Museum! I had the pleasure to be in attendance, representing the Foundation for Coast Guard History (FCGH), and fulfilling a personal goal of seeing the stage set for this “final” move toward a National U.S. Coast Guard Museum.

Present at this momentous assembly were the primary players: USCG COMDT, ADM Robert Papp, CT Governor, Dannel P. Malloy, New London Mayor, Daryl Finizio, representatives of the CT State and Federal congressional/senatorial districts, major stakeholders in the local area, and a plethora of local supporters.

Since 1997, the U. S. Coast Guard, Historian’s Department, Museum, and historical supporters have been exploring the development and ultimate location of a National USCG Museum. Through numerous plans for a site in New London, CT to a possible venue located at Battery Park in Manhattan, NY, and a return to New London, the Coast Guard has finally come to a decision! New London, IT IS.

It appears to be a “done deal!” The U. S. Coast Guard, the City of New London, and the State of Connecticut have reached an agreement to establish the National U. S. Coast Guard Museum in the City of New London. For most of us in the pursuit of historical Coast Guard recognition, research, and conservation of relevant artifacts, this is a long awaited inspiration.

## Background

Beginning in 1997 (we have no known substantial plans before that time), the Coast Guard measured the building of a National Museum – a tribute to the men and women, the missions and heritage of the U.S. Coast Guard and its predecessors. While there are numerous, small, private museums dedicated to the Coast Guard, including the current USCG Museum (housed in the Coast Guard Academy Library in New London, CT), the Coast Guard Museum Northwest in Seattle, WA, the USCG Heritage Museum in Barnstable, MA, numerous lighthouses and life-saving stations (thanks to the American Lighthouse Foundation and the US Life-saving Service Heritage Association, to name a few), there has never been a National Coast Guard Museum. Lagging behind our

fellow Armed Forces, the Coast Guard yearned for a compatible venue for its heritage. The current museum at the CGA amounts to about 3K ft<sup>2</sup> of display area with about the same area of storage space for cataloged, readily available artifacts. All other large artifacts are housed in the Coast Guard storage facility in Maryland.

The original plan called for a 30K ft<sup>2</sup> display area, with appropriate storage

facilities for both the New London and Maryland deposits and the possibility of attached floating cutters and boats. With the appropriate information, Curator, Cindee Herrick and I, an intern at the museum in 1997-98, penned the initial Business Plan for the National Museum, accounting for display spaces, exhibits, GS positions, and civilian support personnel. The prospective fund-raising of approximately \$4 – 8M was begun at that time, but lagged for several years, almost to extinction. Opportunities for locations at Ft. Trumbull or Riverside Park in New London were considered, but did not meet the needs of the stakeholders and the project languished. An



*ADM Papp & Gov. Malloy clinching the deal*



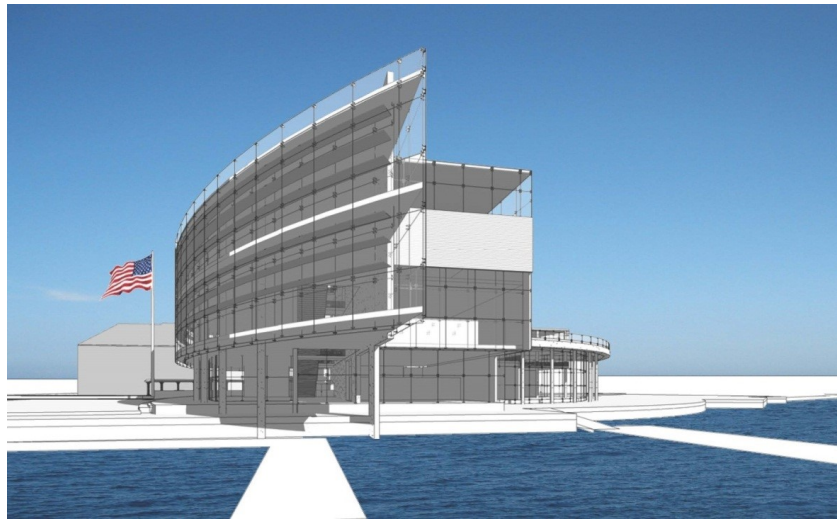
alternative proposal of a location at Battery Park in New York City was tabled as doubtful in the early 2000's. The final location has now been selected at the New London downtown waterfront, between the Union Rail Station and Cross Sound Ferry Terminal – with access to train and ferry service to the City; with inflation and expanded access, the cost now amounts to \$60 – 100M.

### Current Plans and Presentation

At 1000 at the New London Science & Technology High School, the presentation was opened by New London Mayor, Daryl Finizio. A stalwart supporter for the addition of the USCG Museum to the New London waterfront area, Mayor Finizio projected the addition of the museum as a boon to the City and Museum, expecting an annual 250 – 500K visitors to the city to view the museum; via rail, ferry, and general tourism, all included in the downtown venue. The Mayor described a solid connection between the

City and the USCG, beginning with the construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> Revenue Cutter, USRC *Argus* in 1790. Since then, the Revenue Cutter School of Instruction established its first landside Academy at Ft. Trumbull in 1910, and the City donated the land for the present USCG Academy in 1932; a hallmark to the area ever since. From

his presentation, the City will donate approximately ½ acre of waterfront land adjacent to the Union Train Station, Cross Sound Ferries, and the downtown parking garage. The Mayor projected the groundbreaking to begin in one to two years, with the final museum to be completed in less than 4 years. There was even an option to move the USCGC *Eagle* from Ft. Trumbull to the City pier, with availability for other cutters to moor there. He equated the museum as “not only a treasure for the city and our State, but it will also be a national treasure for the entire country – today is a great day.”



*Western View from the Thames River*

According to CT Gov. Malloy, the State of CT will provide \$20M for the construction of a pedestrian overpass from the current parking garage to the new venue of the museum and the Ferry service; “it will pay for [pedestrian bridge] access that will not only take museum visitors safely across the rails, but also to a new planned ferry terminal and access to arriving and departing trains. It will help spur economic growth and create jobs; this is a good, strong investment in the future of a great community.”

USCG Commandant, ADM Robert Papp, had a variety of comments regarding this amazing movement and its relation to the USCG's history and the City of New London; starting with “WOW!” Relating to the 40K+ Coast Guard men and women, he noted that the Coast Guard “is not just a job, it's a lifestyle.” The museum will “serve both as a valued Coast Guard institution and a national treasure that highlights the historical record of the heroic exploits

of the men and women of the Coast Guard and its forebears.” A Norwich, CT native, graduate of the Norwich Free Academy, and the USCG Academy, ADM Papp has a vested interest in this development from both the local and Coast Guard vantages. From those points of view, he noted that “the museum will

be a magnate to bring people to the waterfront and revitalize the city we all love so much.” The COMDT concluded by saying, “I am committed to this and this commitment will go beyond my service in the United States Coast Guard. This museum will be built, it will thrive, and we are going to restore this waterfront to its grandeur.” “There's not a moment to lose.”

With the ultimate vision set, the design teams are in place and preliminary plans are completed. The building design is the work of Urs P. Gauchat of the

firm of Gauchat/Santos Architects. Mr. Gauchat noted that the design of the building and displays “are a celebration of the men and women who make up the Coast Guard and have served our country so well.” He commented that the museum “is designed with a 9<sup>th</sup> grader in mind.” Most of the crowd agreed that if a 9<sup>th</sup> grader could equate to the process, then the design would appeal to adults, as well, and provide a continuing clientele. The museum will include static, dynamic, and interactive exhibits relating to the Coast Guard story since its inception in 1790. The attraction will feature a plethora of exhibits designed by Patrick Gallagher of the Washington, DC-based design firm of Gallagher & Associates. Gallagher and his firm have been successful in numerous museum exhibits, including the creation of the International Spy Museum and the new National Army Museum.



Concluding the opening presentation was the loan of a Revolutionary War, 13-star, U. S. flag from the City of New London and New London County Historical Society by Mayor Finizio to ADM Papp. The flag is one of the last original National colors of its kind and will go on display as the first exhibit of the new museum. According to Edward Baker, Ex. Dir. of the society, the flag will hopefully draw visitors from the USCG Museum to the other historical sites in the New London area. ADM Papp and the Mayor commented at this “surprise” donation that, “we have our first exhibit, now we just need a building to put it in...”

In the words of all the constituents, “There’s no stopping us now.” Let’s make it so...

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#### Notes:

1. Photo New London Day, 5 Apr 13
2. Photo from Gauchat/Santos Architects Museum Preview Package, 5 Apr 13
3. Photo by Sandy Schwaab

*Mr. Schwaab is a member of the FCGH Board of Regents. He is also the President of the Coast Guard Tug Association.*

Notable exhibits will include a place where “you can stand on a platform and see how long you can stand before you get seasick” – with “air bags” provided, just in case (how many of us have weathered this experience!). Simulators will also provide the visitor the ability to “go to a set of controls and pretend to steer a ship on a screen.” Coast Guard cadets, officers, and enlisted personnel “pay” dearly for the opportunity to work their way through such costly, yet accurate simulations of actual boat and shipboard control systems.

How many young people (and their parents) will feel the connection to our nation’s longest, continuous sea-going service and opt for a career in the U.S. Coast Guard? We (veteran Coasties) should all hope that this venue will encourage a revitalization in Coast Guard history and research, support our unique heritage, and give birth to our next generation of stalwart sailors. The banner over the front door should confirm our time-honored motto – “You have to go out, you don’t have to come back.”

“Update: Ground breaking for the National Museum is scheduled for May 2014.”

## The Large Tug That Fought

By Rich Finzer

Alongside the quay at the Port of Oswego, New York, an old warrior stands guard. On her stack, she proudly displays her "kill mark": the silhouette of a fighter plane and swastika. Her twin .50-caliber guns still point skyward. She is U.S. Army large tug LT-5, the *John F. Nash*, originally christened the *Major Elisha K. Henson* and launched on 22 November 1942. During my three-hour tour of the 115-foot tug, I saw everything from the captain's cabin to the spike-mounted "stinger" guns on the small gun deck abaft the pilothouse. It was during Operation Overlord, the Allied invasion of Normandy, that the sailors manning those guns earned the swastika painted on the oceangoing tug's stack.

During World War II, the Army built and commissioned 200 large tugs. The *Major Elisha K. Henson*'s keel was laid in 1943 at the Jakobson Shipyard in Oyster Bay, Long Island, New York. After sea trials, she accompanied a convoy across the Atlantic, where she became part of the 5,000-ship armada that would ferry men and equipment across the English Channel during and immediately after the Normandy landings. After the first waves of troops landed, the *Henson* was assigned to tow supply barges and caissons. These large, hollow concrete boxes were used to construct temporary "Mulberry" portable harbors along the Normandy coast.

The *Henson* bloodied the enemy during one of these relatively mundane missions, when, on 9 June 1944, her group of ships was attacked by German fighters. *Henson* Navy gunners downed one, earning the vessel the distinction of being the only Army tug in the European Theater of Operations to do so. (The *Henson*'s crew included Norwegian deck hands who had fled the German occupation, and the cook, engine crew, and gunners were U.S. Navy sailors. She was commanded by an Army officer.)

The captain's handwritten log-book entry reads: "June 9, 20:30 hours, Planes Overhead! Everyone Shooting! Starboard gunner got a F.W. [Focke-Wulf]." That single act of combat is probably what later saved the *Henson* from being scuttled or melted down for razor blades.

The tug returned to the United States after the war's end and, renamed the *John F. Nash*, was assigned to the Great Lakes Division of the Army Corp of Engineers. Now confined to fresh water, she spent the next 43 years as a harbor tug, towing barges and dredges throughout the Great Lakes basin and St. Lawrence Seaway. The *Nash* was finally retired in 1989. Two years later, the Port of Oswego Authority acquired her.



*The World War II tug John F. Nash, originally named the Major Elisha K. Henson, floats alongside a pier near the H. Lee White Marine Museum's main building in the Port of Oswego, New York. In addition to maintaining the Nash, the museum has indoor and outdoor exhibits, galleries, a gift shop, and other historic vessels, including a canal barge, a schooner, and a fishing boat.*

This survivor of the Battle of the Atlantic and Normandy invasion proudly wears her battle ribbons and carries two other distinctions as well. The *Nash* is the last fully operational World War II, U.S. Army large tug in existence. As such, she has been designated a national historic landmark. A bronze plaque affixed to her portside signifies this status. Ironically, while she soldiered on in relative obscurity, it was the fresh water of the Great Lakes that protected her. Had she been assigned to a coastal port, the ravages of saltwater corrosion might have doomed her to a much shorter working life.

As I stepped aboard with my guide, Ron Wilson, who volunteers at the H. Lee White Marine Museum (owner of the vessel), our first stop was the wheelhouse. It was a journey back in time. From her wooden wheel to her pair of matching brass engine-order telegraphs, the *Nash* is equipped with the latest nautical technology for 1943. Her brass-topped binnacle houses a magnetic ship's compass, and installed on the portside bulkhead is an original sound-powered telephone. This device enabled the bridge crew to speak with the engine room even if the ship's generators had been knocked out. It was considered fairly high-tech during World War II. Directly behind the binnacle, a clinometer is mounted.





Rich Finzer



Left to right: The LT-5's "kill mark," which was earned during the Allied invasion of Normandy when she gunned down a German fighter; one of two brass engine-order telegraphs, cutting-edge nautical technology in 1943; and part of the ship's massive 1,200 horsepower diesel engine.

This device displays the tug's angle of heel/list. After answering several dozen questions that I fired at him, Ron suggested we move on to the captain's quarters.

Directly behind the wheelhouse, the captain's cabin is a cozy refuge from the cold steel of which the rest of the ship is built. The bulkheads are fashioned from teak and mahogany, as are the bunk and secretary. These are the original furnishings. On the secretary's writing platform sits the tug's logbook. But perhaps the greatest anomaly, for me, was the blanket on the bunk. As opposed to white wool emblazoned with the blue Navy anchor, this one was olive drab, an Army color for an Army ship. I snapped a few photos and read a couple of pages from the logbook. Then Ron guided me to the mess.

Befitting the tug's crew of 11, the small mess area includes a massive diesel-fired stove. It's still used on a regular basis: Every Sunday morning, a dedicated group of eight volunteers comes aboard to maintain the engine and generators. They are Navy veterans with years of diesel-engine experience. A ninth, a retired Navy cook, prepares breakfast using that same stove. But it's on the bulletin board where you will find the mess's most interesting details. One of the original brass gun sights from the Nash's pair

of .50s is mounted here, along with her two remaining rounds of belted .50-caliber ammunition.

Next we descended a steep companionway, emerging near the engine room, the largest part of the ship's interior. It houses three electrical generators and a monstrous 1,200-horsepower Enterprise DMG -8 diesel. The engine dominates the space. It's so large that I could not frame all eight cylinders in a single photo. I'd estimate it to be 20 feet in length, and each of the cylinders is about 18 inches in diameter. Everything about the power plant is big, including the 400-gallon oil tank that keeps the motor continually topped off.

The engine room also houses a gyrocompass and a parts crib. As there are only about 400 original Enterprise diesels still in operating condition, the volunteer crew spends an inordinate amount of time painstakingly maintaining the engine. With no ability to simply order spare parts from the manufacturer, when something breaks, the replacement has to be custom-machined by hand. Also, because World War II warships were not generally designed with a keen eye toward fuel efficiency, the Nash burns 2½ gallons of diesel fuel per minute. At a top speed of 13 knots, that works out to roughly 12 gallons a



mile. But because she carried 40,000 gallons of fuel, the Nash was still capable of crossing the Atlantic without refueling. She probably could have traveled much farther, since during her convoy duty, her speed would have been restricted. No vessel in a convoy was allowed to steam faster than the slowest ship. That could be five knots, making Atlantic convoys prime targets for U-boats.

Ron shepherded me ashore as we left the engine room. My time on board was up, and another tour was about to begin. I bid farewell, thanking him for the individual attention. I hated to leave this old warrior tug as we were just getting acquainted. So as a parting gesture, I pivoted, braced, and presented her with a regulation salute.

Upstate New York resident Rich Finzer has published numerous newspaper, magazine, and Internet articles. His books are the award-winning *Maple on Tap: Making Your Own Maple Syrup* (Acres USA, 2012) and the e-novel *Taking the Tracks* (Amazon Digital Services, 2013).

#### **H. Lee White Marine Museum**

**End of West First Street Pier P.O. Box 101, Oswego, NY 13126**

**Phone: 315-342-0480**

**Open Mon.–Sun., 1300–1700;**

**extended hours July–Aug., 1000–1700;**

**LT-5 open for touring mid-May–30 Sept.**

**Admission: adults \$5; 16 and under free**



Miss Apalachee—Homecoming Queen 2009  
Starboard side to CG Moorings Cleveland Ohio

## WILD WINTER Throughout North America Creates Ice Breaking Jobs Galore

James Flynn, Historian, Coast Guard Tug Association

For those who live where it's warm and may have missed most of the fun of the winter of 2014, with more ice and snow than we've had in recent memory, here are a few pictures which are worth thousands of words. As spring approaches on the Great Lakes and on the waterways of northern rivers and harbors, the Coast Guard has been hard at work clearing pathways through the ice to allow commercial vessels to operate.

From the red hulled *Mackinaw*, which is the current heavy weight of the Great Lakes fleet of Icebreakers to the tug fleets little brothers of the 65-foot *Capstan* class shown below, on the Huson River in early 2013 as they celebrated their 50th year of exemplary service. Much thankless activity continues on the ice covered waterways of America.



And on the following page you can get an idea of the ice on the lakes and a look at their big sisters, the 140-foot *Bay* class icebreaking tugs. So, while you watch for the first robin of spring and long for the warm winds of summer, which promise to follow, remember the contribution of the Icebreaking fleet and the hard working vessels and Coast Guard Tuggers who have braved the cold and ice during this Wild Winter.

For those who are Veterans of the old 110-foot tugs, yes some things stay the same.





The Coast Guard Cutter Biscayne Bay, a 140-foot ice-breaking tug, sails the waters near Chicago and toward the shores off Indiana, Feb. 12, 2014. The Biscayne Bay helped break ice on the southern part of Lake Michigan to assist commerce. | U.S. Coast Guard)



The crew of Coast Guard Cutter Katmai Bay powers through the ice-covered St. Marys River in Sault Ste. Marie, Mich., March. 20, 2014. The Coast Guard is ice breaking in the river to prepare for the scheduled opening of the Soo Locks, March 25. (U.S. Coast Guard photo by Petty Officer 2nd Class Levi Read)



## CGTA Reunion 6, Oct. 2012 Erie, PA

Thursday, Oct 4 – Sunday, Oct 7, 2012

By: Sandy Schwaab

(Photos from: Shirley Schwaab & Jim Flynn)

You might ask? "What's the CG Tug Association doing in Erie, PA for a reunion?" Historically, there were no tugs stationed in Erie. The nearest tugs in that vicinity (110s) were in Buffalo, NY (*Ojibwa*) and Cleveland, OH (*Kaw*). Both ships spent a lot of time in and out of Erie. Well, the choice of Erie came from two angles: the former-USCGC *Apalachee* (WYTM 71) was working out of Erie as a commercial tug, and the USCGC *Neah Bay* (WTGB 105) [from Cleveland] offered to come to Erie specifically to support the reunion – pretty simple decision! Unfortunately, the *Apalachee* was unavailable, but the *Neah Bay* was a pleasantly surprising participant. So – here we are!

With that said, our 6<sup>th</sup> Reunion was a resounding success! Accommodations and hospitality suite were provided by the Wingate Hotel in Erie, right off I-90. This was a great base of operations and worked out well for all, given the access to the Interstate, major shopping and dining, and direct connection to downtown Erie.



Shirley pointing the way (Note the USCG Flag).



BMC Staples on watch.

The weekend plans included a wide variety of excursions and options for the attendees, beginning with "reporting aboard." As is our usual program, the doors opened Thursday morning with day one devoted to registrations, meet & greet, "sea stories," and camaraderie. We were met this year by many new crew members and spouses, along with our usual list of suspects, for a good turnout of over 40!



Officer's Call (minus 3): l-r George, Ed, Bob, and Garry



Hanging Out

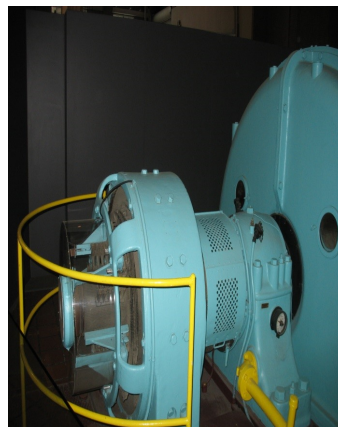


Sea Stories...



Vinny does a few laps in the hotel pool

Friday's events began at 1000 with a guided tour of the Erie Maritime Museum and the Brig *Niagara*. Unfortunately, the *Niagara* was in the process of getting underway, so we were limited to a dockside view, but the museum truly made up for the shortfall. Upon entering, the engineers in the crowd had a short flashback: a major display of a steam-driven turbine powering a large, industrial generator from the old Erie power plant.





From there, we walked through displays of the Erie area and its contribution to the War of 1812, the Brig *Niagara* and other vessels, along with numerous maritime artifacts. The highlight was a scaled replica of the masts, bulwark and gun deck of the USS *Lawrence*, Commodore Oliver Hazard Perry’s flagship. Part of the tour was for a crew of “landlubbers” to man a 9-pounder gun; little did they know they had a gun crew of Coasties (with no GMs in the group). A fine time was had by all “firing” these vintage weapons!



Main Mast &amp; Mizzen Mast



Basic display of gun crew



9 –pounder gun display





CGTA Gun Crew

Friday afternoon is a bit unusual for our typical banquet & meeting, but the opportunity for a dinner cruise around Erie Harbor/Presque Isle Bay was hard to resist. So – at 1400, we boarded the M/V *Victorian Princess* for a luxurious voyage, meeting, and buffet dinner around the Bay.

M/V *Victorian Princess*





Garry in his “official” 1812 Uniform



Bob, Helen, Ed, Sandie, &amp; Linda standing by

Once on board, we settled around the comfortable, interior lower deck of the *Princess*. Following some welcome aboard remarks by the *Princess's* manager, your president opened the ceremonies by welcoming our new members, recapping the CGTA's activities over the last two years and an update on the *Apalachee*, still working as a commercial tug since our unfortunate 2011 sale.

As always, we make an effort to recognize our deserving members. When Bob Gesking and I stripped out the Apple of our gear before the sale, one of the prized possessions we grabbed were the six new, brass belaying pins I had had made for the flying bridge hal-yards (which Bob had painstakingly re-rigged). The pins were presented to the current CGTA officers in appreciation for their support throughout the *Apalachee* movement and restoration; I kept the last of the original pins for our archives. The only deal was, if we should regain the Apple or another tug, that the pins come back to go back on board. The second presentation went to CWO Bob Gesking. For his outstanding performance for nearly three years as our *Apalachee* Port Engineer, he was awarded the Coast Guard Tug Association Port Engineer Meritorious Service Maedal (hung from an appropriate black & blue ribbon). He wore it on his ball cap for the rest of the weekend.







Belaying Pins to l-r: Bob, Ed, George, Garry, Jim, Doug



"Black & Blue" Bob

The luncheon buffet was a big hit.







Following lunch, our biennial meeting was conducted. Among other general topics, the election of officers resulted in the following: Pres. Sandy Schwaab, VP Justin Vandenheuval, Sec. Garry Domnisse, Tres. Bob Gesking, & Hist. Jim Flynn. The final point of business was to plan the location for our 2014 Reunion. Chosen by the members was Baltimore, MD. We returned to the dock at 1600 and the rest of the day and evening was spent in individual excursions and the hospitality suite.

Saturday was a blast from the past for most of our attendees. We were treated to a two-hour cruise aboard the CGC *Neah Bay*. While the sailors milled about "sharply" on an active duty, U/W cutter, many not since they retired or were discharged, the spouses got to see what our lives involved while living together in cramped spaces, constant noise, and the wonderful aroma of diesel fuel in the morning (a highlight for the "snipes"). The galley was open for light refreshments while the "old salts" got to visit the bridge, engine room, and other spaces of our modern icebreaking tugs and swap sea stories with the young crew. We wish to extend a hearty BZ and our thanks to CO, LT Molly Waters and her crew for joining us at this reunion and the extraordinary opportunity to relive the past.





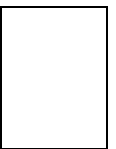
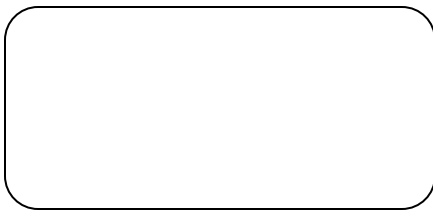
USCGC *Neah Bay* (WTGB 105) at the pier in Erie

The remainder of Saturday was spent, as usual, in a final evening of camaraderie and cocktails. In general, a good time was had by all and we packed up our bags to depart on Sunday. We hope that our next outing in 2014 will go as well and we look forward to seeing as many of our “crew” that can be present.

Semper Paratus!

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Chug-A-Lug Tug  
Greenland Waters 1940



TO:

A large rounded rectangular box for the recipient's name and address.

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