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In this Issue

[Foundation's \\$45k grant will reduce mortgage on Ship History Center](#)

[Family Day brings next generation to SSHSA](#)

[Family, friends gather to recognize Merchant Marine's accomplishments](#)

[Victory ship seeks new leader](#)

[SSHSA President's Message](#)

[Archives improvements make materials more accessible](#)

[Coming up in PowerShips](#)

[SSHSA Chapter news](#)

[Contact us](#)



Family day brings

Foundation's \$45k grant will reduce mortgage on Ship History Center

Christmas came early for SSHSA this year thanks to a Rhode Island organization dedicated to funding capital projects that benefit historic preservation, arts and culture.

SSHSA received a \$45,000 grant from the Champlin Foundation to help pay down the debt on the Ship History Center, a move that further cements our roots here in Rhode Island and shaves more than six months in payments off our mortgage. Overall, the Champlin Foundation committed \$10.2 million in funds to 95 nonprofit organizations.

“For so many of the smaller organizations serving historically marginalized communities, the added work they took on in response to COVID—food distribution, health and wellness education, transportation—was substantial and now it continues at rates that were never imagined,” said Nina Stack, executive director of The Champlin Foundation. “Add to this the challenges of inflation and staffing shortages that all businesses are experiencing, and we see the needs are tremendous. Many of these grants will support their efforts to fully incorporate these added services that have now become standard within their infrastructure.”

SSHSA is grateful for the past and present support from The Champlin Foundation. The group also contributed \$155,000 toward the purchase of the Ship History Center last year and over the years has awarded additional grants totaling more than \$100,000 for much-needed equipment and preservation of key assets in our collection.

The Champlin Foundation supports capital improvements across nine key areas of focus: arts and culture, conservation and parks, education, healthcare,



next generation to SSHSA

The Ship History Center recently welcomed elementary students and their families from Warwick Public Schools Title I Program. This program provides federal funds for family engagement programs to school districts where more than 40 percent of students come from low-income households. Thanks in part to a grant from the Ocean State Charities Trust, SSHSA and Warwick's Title I program teamed up to share the impact of engine-powered vessels, their crews and their passengers with future generations.

Students and families got to tour the Ship History Center with Archivist Astrid Drew and Assistant Archivist Heather Kisilywicz. They saw and explored the archives and collections, the maritime reference library, and our exhibit space.

After their informational tour, the kids sampled one of our fun activities called "[Ship Shape](#)," where kids combine their skills in mathematics and art to design their own ships while learning about shapes. We had a team of educators specializing in early childhood education and art on hand to facilitate this lesson. Thanks to Jordan St. Clair and Kate Frazer Rego, who worked with the students to create some stunning works of art!

Students and families received a free take-home package that included a surplus maritime book of their choosing, an issue of *PowerShips* magazine, and a first look and sample of our coloring book entitled "Color

historic preservation and heritage, libraries, social services, youth services, and welfare of animals. This grant cycle builds on previous funding that was distributed earlier in the year, bringing the total distributed in 2022 to \$20.5 million. Since 1932, the organization has awarded more than \$665 million in grants. For more information, visit www.champlinfoundation.org.

(Photo: Don Leavitt)

Family, friends gather to recognize Merchant Marine's accomplishments

SSHSA was honored to host a celebration last month for local member and World War II veteran Harry Olsen to recognize his service as an integral part of the Allied war effort.

Harry served with the Merchant Marine in the Atlantic Theater, which made him eligible for a Congressional Gold Medal under the Merchant Mariners of World War II Congressional Gold Medal Act of 2020 (HR 5671). The medals were officially awarded this past May, and Harry received his bronze replica this summer. When his family asked him how he wanted to mark the achievement, he suggested a get together with family and friends at the Ship History Center.



The medals were long overdue for merchant mariners who laid their lives on the line during the war. They died in greater percentages than any other branch of the armed forces and still had to fight for nearly 40 years to get veteran status. And even though Congress has finally awarded the medals, it was far too late for many who earned them. It's estimated that there are only about 12,000 Merchant Mariners from this era who are still alive across the United States.

Guests at Harry's party included U.S. Senator Jack Reed, a veteran himself. Reed was on hand for a champagne toast to the man of the hour, and to present a special citation for his service. SSHSA Executive Director Matthew Schulte also presented Harry with an Ambassador of Goodwill certificate.

Harry's story is a fascinating one that he remembers with exquisite detail even at 97 years old. [Click here to read a profile done by the Warwick \(R.I.\) Beacon](#) in honor of his achievements, and [click here if you missed Executive Director Matthew Schulte's Donor Spotlight](#) in the Fall 2022 issue of *PowerShips*.

Caption: World War II veteran Harry Olsen (left) gets a citation and a thumbs up from U.S. Sen. Jack Reed at an event held in November at the Ship History Center. Harry recently received a Congressional Gold Medal for his service with the Merchant Marines.

Our Collections." [Click here to download it now!](#)

Caption: SSHSA Archivist Astrid Drew talks to a group of students during a family day program held at the Ship History Center in November.



Haven't made your gift yet to the Full Ahead! campaign? Click the logo above to make your contribution.

New SSHSA Members

Welcome aboard!

Mr. Richard Barns
Ms. Susan Bianconi
Mr. Thomas A. Brady Jr
Ms. Emily Cleary
Mr. John D'Augelli
Ms. Karen Flynn
Fort Ward Amateur Radio Club
Mr. Bob Gould
CAPT William Gould
Mr. Gary Hansen
Mr. Edward Kendall
Mr. Richard Leach
Ms. Carla Lesh
Mr. Jeff McElroy
Nathaniel P. Hill Library
Ms. Tarra Quinn
Mr. William Ross
Mr. David Smith

Captains' Circle

Victory ship seeks new leader

The Richmond Museum Association is seeking a volunteer executive director to help guide the historic SS *Red Oak Victory*, a vessel with 25 years of military and civilian service that entertains and educates visitors from all over the world as a floating museum.

The San Francisco Bay-based vessel is currently open for tours and special events from March to November, but one of the goals for the incoming director will be to work with contacts in the maritime industry to operate and cruise the ship within the bay. The ideal candidate will also prepare an annual budget and subsidiary budgets, develop policies and procedures with the department heads for all aspects of the ship's operation, and create and present reports to the departments and the association's president and board of directors on a regular basis.



The position is half- to full-time, and those applying must have maritime experience and strong project management and organizational skills. Experience and interest in restoring a historic vessel or structure is a plus. To apply, send your resume and letter of interest to the chief engineer at sealandgreg@gmail.com or to the ship keeper at omaloneyrov@gmail.com.

The *Red Oak Victory* was commissioned as a Navy vessel on December 5, 1944. She was designated as an auxiliary cargo ship and assigned to carry ammunition and supplies for the Pacific Fleet in World War II. Following her military service, she spent 21 years in the Merchant Marine in the Caribbean, the Indian Ocean, and in Korean War service. Her final 13 voyages were to Vietnam from 1965 through 1968 where she was one of 100 World War II Victory ships used by the Military Sealift Command to support operations in Southeast Asia.

Archives improvements make materials more accessible

Autumn has been a productive season for the SSHSA archives team. Between setting up new displays, improving access to our collections, assisting researchers, and developing long-term strategies to ensure the future health of the collections, we have had our hands full in the best possible way.

Recent visitors to the Ship History Center in Warwick may have noticed some changes to our exhibit space. In October, the archives team curated a display featuring notable artwork and artifacts from the [Vincent M. Love](#)

A big Thank You to our Captains' Circle members for their membership and support!

Engineer

Mr. Charles T. Andrews
Mr. James Berwind
Mr. Patrick Dacey
Mr. and Mrs. Donald W. Eberle
Mr. Michael Fisher
Mr. Robert J. Golden
Mr. Webster S. Martin
Mr. Charles W. Moorman
Mr. William G. Muller
CAPT and Mrs. Roland R. Parent
Mr. Art Peabody
Mr. Donald Pomplun
Mr. Thomas C. Ragan
Mr. and Mrs. James W. Shuttleworth
Mr. and Mrs. Stephen Smith
Mr. John S.W. Spofford
Mr. Clinton Strong
Mr. Douglas A. Tilden and Ms. Teresa Keller
CAPT Robert F. Wasson Jr.
Mr. Peregrine White

Commodore

CDR Andrew O. Coggins Jr., USN (Ret.)
Mr. Alexander D. Crary
CAPT Roger Crossland
Mr. John J. Crowley Jr.
Mr. Robert Ian Danic
Mr. Andrew Edmonds
Mr. and Mrs. William Edwards
Mr. Charles C. Fichtner
Mr. John B. Henry
Mr. Scott G. Huston
Mr. Neil E. Jones
Mr. Nicholas Langhart
Mr. and Mrs. Thomas Leuenberger
Mr. Daniel L. McCoy
Mr. William M. McLin & Mr. Samuel J. McKeon
Dr. Laurence and Carole Miller
Mr. Thomas Reed
Mr. William M. Rosen
Mr. John Sleeter
CAPT Cesare Sorio
Mr. Kent Strobel
CAPT and Mrs. Terry Tilton, USN (Ret.)
Mr. Terence Turner

Collection. Items on display include an original first-class deck plan and first-class passenger list from the *Titanic*, as well as some beautiful lithographs and posters of various steamships. This display ties in with our virtual exhibit, which you can visit to learn more about esteemed maritime enthusiast Vincent Love and his collection.

The staff has also been chipping away at processing collections in our custody and making them more accessible. Since September, we have added 80 new periodicals to our catalog, the titles and descriptions of which are available on our Collections Database for public perusal. Additionally, the archives team has been updating many of our finding aids, which act as guides to our collections, with the plan of publishing them for public access within the next few months. Stay tuned for important updates!



Lastly, we have received more than a dozen research requests since September. Those reaching out to us for assistance included a professor researching a new book, a filmmaker adapting a book to the screen, museum officials working on new exhibits, individuals researching their family history, and several writers working on new publications. We love seeing what others are working on and are glad to see a continued interest in ship history. Visit our Collections page on the SSHSA website to learn more about our research services.

Caption: An original first-class *Titanic* deck plan is displayed as part of the Vincent M. Love Collection that can be viewed at the Ship History Center and online at www.sshsa.org.

SSHSA President's Message

By Pat Dacey

As 2022 comes to a close, I want to personally thank all of our members and friends for your generous support over the past year, which will keep us “Steaming into the Future” and able to reach the next generation. If you have not yet made a contribution and believe in our vision and mission, there is still time to donate during our year-end giving campaign, and if this is your first time giving, your donation will be doubled because of the generous donation of our friends and longtime members at the Posner Foundation. We can assure you that every donation we receive gets returned to you through our mission of recording, preserving, educating, and sharing the impact of engine-powered



Commander

Mr. Joseph Bains
Mr. Preston B. Baker
Mr. Martin Bollinger
Mr. Gabriel Caprio
Mr. Christopher P. Cavas
Mr. William D. Comings Jr.
Mr. William Cooper
Mr. Donald Deckebach
CAPT Robertson Dinsmore
Mr. Bruce J. Estell
Mr. Keith Franson
Mr. Mark Gathings
Mr. Gary Gmoser
CDR Michael Greene, USN (Ret.)
Mr. W. Scott Hale Jr.
Mr. and Mrs. Glenn P. Hayes
Mr. and Mrs. Nathan and Helen Hazen
Mr. Han Helders
Mr. Hank Kaminski
Mr. and Mrs. Ross Langill
Mr. Thomas Lavin
CAPT Leif Lindstrom
Dr. Mark P. Macina
Mr. Jeff Macklin
Rev. Armand Mantia
Mr. David L. McColloch
CAPT Warren McDonald, USCGR (Ret.)
CAPT Ronald J. Meiczinger
Mr. W. John Miottel
Mr. Carl R. Nold
Mr. Hollis S. Paige
Mr. Richard A. Proeschel
Mr. William J. Raver
Mr. Roy C. Rose
Mr. Howard Smart
Mr. Shapleigh Smith
Mr. Donn R. Spear
Mr. Alexander Swavy
Dr. Charles U. Walker
Ms. Margaret Jean Wort

Mariner

Mr. Ronald Amos
Mr. Richard L. Barwis IV
Mr. Brian Baum
Ms. Michele R. Berard
Mr. and Mrs. Steve Beringhause
Mr. and Mrs. Charles D. Bieser
Mr. Ted Blank
Mr. A. Pierce Bounds
Mr. Jerry Boyd
Mr. Terry Bryll

vessels, their crews, and their passengers with future generations, in addition to our acclaimed publication *PowerShips*.

In addition to the benefits mentioned, membership is also an opportunity to interact with other individuals with shared maritime interests and maintain contact with other kindred groups. A recent example happened on October 27 when our Delaware Valley Chapter set out on an afternoon excursion aboard SSHSA's 2021 tugboat of the year, the *Sea Dart II*, along with members of the World Ship Society – Port of New York Branch. Together, the group escorted the *Rotterdam* (VII) out of New York on her maiden departure. It was an excellent afternoon for shared camaraderie between ship enthusiasts.



In 2023, we want to expand these interactive opportunities with our members and are planning a 4-night round-trip cruise from Bayonne, N.J., to Halifax, Nova Scotia. Members will have access special rates, activities and benefits, and a chance to gather together for a wonderful time. So please consider joining us and contact info@sshsa.org or 401-463-3570 if you have any questions.

Wishing everyone in our Steamship Historical Society of America family, best wishes for the holidays and the new year.

Caption: Top, SSHSA President Pat Dacey (left) along with former SSHSA presidents Timothy Dacey and Mary Payne (middle and right) onboard *Sea Dart II* during a combined SSHSA Delaware Valley Chapter/WSS-PONY excursion in October. Below, the *Rotterdam* on her maiden departure from New York as seen from the *Sea Dart II*. (Photos courtesy of Pat Dacey).

Coming up in *PowerShips* #324

The next issue of *PowerShips* magazine is in production now and will be mailed in mid-January. There's still time to [renew your membership today](https://www.sshsa.org) - make sure you don't miss it! Here are a few highlights:

Honoring Our WWII Merchant Mariners

World War II could not have been won without the civilian merchant mariners who risked their lives in ships that provided fuel, weapons, men and

Mr. James Burke
 Mr. J. O. Busto
 Mr. Leonard A. Caiger
 CAPT Gerard P. Carroll
 Mr. Charles W. Clarke
 Mr. Steve Cohen
 Mr. Jim Coonrod
 Mr. David Corry
 CAPT David Cox
 CAPT John M. Cox
 Mr. Terry B. Curtis
 Mr. Edward Dietrich
 Mr. Arild Johan Ellingsen
 CAPT J.A. Ellis
 Mr. Jonathan Ely
 Ms. Kathy Farnsworth and Mr. John Teichmoeller
 Mr. Charles Feyler
 CAPT George H. Fisher
 Ms. Karen Flynn
 Mr. Brian J. Fournier
 Mr. Geoffrey Freeman
 Mr. Norman J. Freitag
 Hal and Mattie Fuller
 Ms. Susan L. Gibbs
 Mr. Paul S. Gravenhorst
 Mr. John Gray
 Mr. Robert A. Haslun
 Mr. Albert P. Hinckley Jr.
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 Ms. June Sherry Ingram
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 Moosehead Marine Museum
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 Mrs. Harry Morgan
 Mr. Chris Mosley
 Mr. Richard Muller
 Mr. Brian L. Norden
 CAPT Harry Olsen
 Mr. Patrick D. Ortego
 Mr. Ronald L. Oswald
 Mr. Richard G. Pelley
 CAPT Dave Pickering

material across the globe. But, despite their sacrifice, they were denied the benefits that World War II veterans were given after the war. Eric Pearson sheds light on the issues they faced as well as recent efforts by politicians to correct the mistakes that were made.

Up the Amazon

Jim Shaw offers a fascinating first-hand account of his trip up the Amazon on the *Leopoldo Peres* in the early 1970s. Join him in reliving his comfortable living conditions (hot, stuffy, smelling of mildew and fitted with a washbasin from which flowed no water), delicious meals (large portions of rice and beans served with small portions of fish and meat) and wondrous adventures (miles and miles of gray-green jungle).



Escape from Europe, 1939-40

In 1939-40, war in Europe had begun and many people were stranded when most shipping lines had stopped sailing. In *Lives of the Liners*, William Miller tells of special efforts of some ships to help evacuate refugees, including the *Washington*, *Manhattan*, *Siboney*, *West Point*, *Quanza*, *Serpa Pinto* and *Nyassa*.

My Time in a Southern Shipyard

Don Persson remembers his time working at the Avondale Shipyard in Louisiana while converting the USNS *Watertown* to a tracking and instrumentation vessel. Read about all the twists and turns it took to bring the former Victory ship from a warehouse full of equipment to a craft that was ready to track missile and satellite tests.

SSHSA Chapter News

Delaware Valley

Provided by Steve Loveless, Chapter Chairman

The next Delaware Valley Chapter meeting will take place January 16 at 2 p.m. at the United States Coast Guard Sector Delaware Bay base located at 1 Washington Ave. in Philadelphia, right at the foot of Washington Avenue and Christopher Columbus Boulevard. Elections will be held for a treasurer and secretary, followed by a program on shipping along the Delaware River.

Ms. Lisa Plotnick
 Mr. David L. Powers Jr.
 QMI - Restore The Queen
 Mr. Michael Rector
 Mr. Michael Revnes
 Mr. Robert Ryder
 Mr. Robert H. Savarese
 Mr. John W. Schumann
 Mr. Howard Schutter
 Dr. Robert A. Shea
 CAPT Ron Skaggs
 Mr. Joel A. Slagg
 Mr. Mark Snider
 Mr. John O. Snyder
 Mr. Mark G. Southern
 Mr. Roy L. Spring
 Mr. Alan Stover
 Mr. Jeffrey Sumner
 Mr. Steven Tise
 CAPT Dan Turbeville
 Mr. Daniel A. Uitti
 Mr. Richard Vanaria
 Mr. Chandler Vance
 Mr. Stephen Weaver
 Mr. Chase Welles
 Mr. Jack Wendler
 Mr. Eric Wiberg
 Mr. Ewald Wiberg
 Mr. Steve Winter
 Mr. Kirk Youngman
 Mr. Charles Zilinski
 Mr. Robert Zinman

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Future meetings will be held in the same location on February 20 and March 20. All are welcome. For more program information contact Chapter Chairman Steve Loveless at 215-495-8889 or sldvcsshsa@gmail.com.

Southern California

Provided by Bruce Vancil, Chapter President

What a busy time it has been. I am coming to the end of my term as president and will not be seeking office again. This would frighten me a lot if we had not had the great luck in finding Kate Vescera and having her join the board earlier in the year. She did express interest in leadership roles and has now been selected as the next chapter president, effective January 1, 2023. I am quite impressed in her abilities and qualifications, which include being a partner in a law firm in Long Beach. I feel very good about passing the torch to such a talented and qualified next generation leader and putting myself out to pasture. After about 26 years I feel that new, younger blood will take us further into the 21st century than I could have.

Our *Ocean Times* will now be overseen by Wayne Yanda as the chief editor. He has been teaming with Bill Keene the past few editions and shown some impressive skills.

Expect *OT* to get even better, if that is even possible. Wayne also possesses a delightful, professional-sounding speaking voice that I never get tired of. Go get 'em Wayne! You have big shoes to fill with Bill retiring, but I know you will continue to have his support. You'll be great.

We have paused our board development for the time being to sharpen the process. We are looking to land talents using a focused selection criteria based on skill sets needed for the way we operate in modern times. I will be working with Kate Vescera and Terry Tilton to define and refine our criteria and selection process to ensure that the best available talent is recruited. Keep in mind that a couple more board members will be retiring in the next few years and will need to be replaced.

If you or someone you know would like to join a program/project committee or the board of directors please let us know. People showing interest will be contacted and a discussion begun to determine their qualifications and best placement if accepted.

Lastly, I'd be lying if I said I haven't felt honored to serve as I have in both the chapter and the national organization over these many years. As you can see by my board development work mentioned above, I am not leaving entirely, but scaling back on any long-term commitments. I have enjoyed meeting you at the meetings and even on Zoom. We work to make your membership as enjoyable as possible as we share this hobby we love so much. Smooth sailing to you all, see you out there some time soon.



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The January *Ocean Times*—the chapter’s journal—brings the chapter’s membership and friends a collection of ship type stories.

Gordon Ghareeb explores the handful of Victory ships that were converted into passenger liners in “Cinderella Victories.” It is amazing the quality of the passenger spaces that were shoe-horned into these little liners. Member Kevin Anthoney recounts a “Love Boat” cruise taken on the *Majestic Princess* during the early days of COVID-19 protocols. For our Ship Shot segment, member Don Persson remembers sailing out of New York on the Italian liner *Rafaello* in the summer of 1971. In Tramping Cyberspace, I take note of the 90th anniversary of the *Lurline*’s maiden voyage (it’s not where you think). And, after finding a photo of the wreck of the former *Queen Elizabeth* from 50 years ago, we gathered shots from her long career. This issue also introduces what I hope will be a regular feature, Posted at Sea, and - oh yes - there is a twist.

Want your own email copy of the *Ocean Times*? Join the Southern California Chapter of the SSHSA. Contact Sherrill Smith (ladysherrill@msn.com) for information and a membership form.

Stay safe, stay well, and enjoy maritime history as often as possible.

Caption: A preview of the cover for the January 2023 edition of the SoCal Chapter's *Ocean Times*. Click on the image to visit the chapter's website and sign up for a copy (Photo: Southern California Chapter).

Golden Gate Chapter

Golden Gate Chapter dues are \$6 in the United States and \$9 for foreign addresses. Membership includes six chapter meetings and field trips each year, as well as an 8-page newsletter mailed every two months. For more information, call chapter President Norman Freitag at 510-276-7520.

The *Telegraph* is the quarterly electronic newsletter for members and friends of Steamship Historical Society of America. It is produced in March, June, September, and December.

Bryan Lucier, Editor, *The Telegraph*

SSHSA is a nonprofit 501(c) 3 organization funded by donations from members and friends. SSHSA is dedicated to sharing the maritime heritage of powerful ships, legendary passengers and hardworking crews. Gifts to SSHSA are appreciated and may be considered tax-deductible.

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