



The Cutter

The Newsletter of the Foundation for Coast Guard History
web site: fcgh.org

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If men could learn from history, what lessons it might teach us! But passion and party blind our eyes, and the light which experience gives is a lantern on the stern, which shines only on the waves behind us!
Samuel Taylor Coleridge 1831

HISTORIC PROJECTS IN BOSTON

Captain W. Russell Webster, early member of The Foundation and long time supporter, reports from the First Coast Guard District on a series of projects directly related to the purpose of The Foundation.

Commandant has chosen District One staff as the prototype for the service's first field historians in more than 57 years, budgets permitting. This is a major advance for preserving CG history. The District's operations officer, Captain Webster sees the long-term advantages of finally learning history's lessons and incorporating them into current plans.

The war on terrorism and the need for new technologies has revived some languishing heritage efforts: specifically, finding sunken Coast Guard wrecks. The district is independently exploring new bottom mapping technologies for real-world purposes. As an outgrowth of the districts past association, NOAA and Navy echelons are helping the CG find such historical treasures as RCS BEAR and CGC ESCANABA. The Historian's office has already demonstrated proof of concept when a joint Navy CG team found USS AKRON, a historic dirigible that crashed off the New Jersey coast in 1933.

Captain Webster is working with the Commandant's Office to name the fleet of 47-foot motor life boats after enlisted heroes. Dr. Dennis Noble, one of the original creators (Page 2 please)

MILESTONE

The Foundation for Coast Guard History has achieved a milestone. We now have over 200 members nationwide. There are 35 Life Members, 8 becoming Life Members on the installment plan and 160 annual members, many of whom have been with us for the full three years of our existence. Special thanks to Captain Richard Goode who recommended membership to several of his friends, who have joined. Also thanks to Captain W. Russell Webster who signed up his entire Operations Division in the First District at a special introductory group rate. Get your friends to join and see your name in print, right here.

LIFEBOAT STATIONS 1847

The first appropriation for houses for life boats was made by Congress in 1847. The funds were turned over to the collector of customs at Boston to be used in acquiring boat houses and equipment on Cape Cod for the Massachusetts Humane Society. After 300 wrecks in nine years on Long Island and New Jersey, \$10,000 was appropriated in 1848 for providing "surf boats, rockets, carronades and other apparatus for the better preservation of life and property from shipwrecks on the coast—between Sandy Hook and Little Egg Harbor". Eight boathouses were constructed, one of which still stands at Spermaceti Cove, Sandy Hook.

of The Foundation, offered this idea years ago. The program is “close” to becoming a reality. The First District has already endorsed two heroes: Joshua James, nominated by CG Station Point Allerton and Madaket Millie nominated by CG Station Brant Point.

Rear Admiral Vivien Crea, also a Life Member of The Foundation, recently signed First District History and Heritage Instruction, endorsing a new voluntary unit-level history program for field units. The Instruction provides guidance and encourages development of unit histories in collaboration with local agencies, organizations, communities, CG Auxiliary and Reserve components.

Admiral Crea also co-hosted with the City of New Bedford, the International Lighthouse Conference. The City renamed Waterfront Park, the site of a memorial to those lost in Lightships, “Coast Guard Park” during one of the conferences many events. The City has added two surplus CG buoys and an anchor with appropriate historical signage to the park display. New Bedford plans to add the former lightship LV-114/WAL 536 to the display with greater access and educational information.

A new District-wide program embraces the Library of Congress’ Veterans History Program designed to capture the oral histories of veterans. Several CG Auxiliary Flotillas have captured more than 50 oral histories and will make them available at the Library of Congress or at local libraries. This is “a race against time”.

Finally, thanks to the efforts of Maurice Gibbs, one of our earliest members and an active member of both the Scituate Maritime and Irish Mossing Museum and the US Life-saving Service Historic Association, dialogue continues for mutually cooperative efforts to recognize maritime heroes, promote safety of life at sea, and to promote mutual service/agency heritage.

MASSACHUSETTS HUMANE SOCIETY

Before there was a U.S. Life Saving service, before there was a United States, there was a Massachusetts Humane Society. Commerce was important to the merchants of Boston, it was critical to their existence and to the existence of the colonies. The merchants erected the first light at Boston Harbor in 1716 and shortly after created the Massachusetts Humane Society to assist seafarers who foundered on the New England shores.

After the nation was founded, commerce was equally important to all the uniting colonies, and but was not until 1848 Congress created a life saving system to carry out in other colonies the humanitarian functions of the Massachusetts Humane Society.

FOUNDATION PHOTO CONTEST

As a forerunner to the book The Coast Guard, which the Foundation is preparing, we announced a photo contest. The five winners are:

Coast Guard Chaplain at Ground Zero by PA3 Bill Barry

Cadets on Danmark -WWII by A.D. Young, Jr.

Cadets in Eagle Rigging by Paulette B. Stewart

HO4S Over NYC -1952 by John Scozzafava

Stork Nose-art on JRF-5-Ketchikan 1956 by Kenneth M. Christian

Each winner will receive a copy of the first edition of the book when it is published in 2004.

READING LIST ADDITIONS

One of our members reminds us of his book which we failed to mention in the last issue of The CUTTER. The book is Kicking Tires, Lighting Fires about CG Aviation by CAPT Carl Swickley. Another reader, RADM Bobby Hollingsworth suggests Art of War by COL H.S.Chenoweth, USMCR (Ret.). The section on CG art contains many works of LCDR Anton Otto Fischer, USCGR from the CG art collection.

HISTORY MURAL PROJECT

The Coast Guard Academy class of 1962 is embarked on a project of great significance to the preservation of Coast Guard history. The class has undertaken a project to develop twelve historical murals, covering events from World War II to the present, for placement in a new reading room for cadets at the Academy.

The themes depicted by these murals may be seen in the form of preliminary artistic studies on the website of the class of 1962. Access the studies at <http://raybland.com/cga62/cga62-pod.html>, and click on "Murals." Also depicted at this website are the existing historical murals at the Academy.

The project recently received the enthusiastic support of the Academy superintendent, the academic dean, and the commandant of the Coast Guard.

This project will be funded mainly through contributions of members of the class. Project estimates are being developed further, and significant outside financial support may be required eventually. The murals are to be unveiled in 2007, at the occasion of the 45th reunion of the class of 1962.

The Foundation for Coast Guard History supports this project and encourages donations from members.

For further information contact CDR Carl Burkhardt USCG (Ret.), 864-244-8040,

NAUTICAL LANGUAGE

Binnacle List: The binnacle list is the sick list. It gets its name from the old nautical practice of placing the sick list on the binnacle each morning so it would be readily available for the Captain.

Charlie Noble: The galley smoke-pipe. Although the origin is obscure, it is generally believed to have been derived from the British merchant skipper, Charlie Noble, who demanded a high polish on his copper galley funnel.

FINANCIAL REPORT

The information below a summary of income and expenses for the life of The Foundation. All contributions and membership fees have been or are planned specifically for projects that preserve the heritage of the Coast Guard.

| INCOME | 1999-2001 | 2002 |
|---------------------------|-------------|-----------|
| Membership, Contributions | \$18,795.00 | 6,955.00 |
| Interest | 272.50 | 0.00 |
| Total | \$19,067.50 | 6,955.00 |
| EXPENSES | | |
| Awards | 1,756.42 | 937.38 |
| Oral Histories | 5,000.00 | 3,652.75 |
| Summer Intern | 3,650.01 | 578.37 |
| Other | 126.51 | 150.00 |
| Total | \$10,532.94 | 5,318.50 |
| BALANCE | 8,534.56 | 10,171.06 |

All operating expenses for stationery, brochures, postage, newsletters and other administrative costs have been provided in kind and are not charged to funds acquired from memberships or contributions.

Operating Expenses: \$ 11,410.01 7,381.73

Our Treasurer for the past three years has been Tony Espejo, CWO3, USCG, Ret. He has set us on the right track and we thank him for all his contributions. He is involved in many other volunteer activities and has asked to be relieved. Dean Greenough, CDR, USCG, Ret. has taken over the task, for which we are greatly indebted.

Scuttlebutt: A butt is a cask or hogshead. To "Scuttle" means to make a hole in the ships side which causes it to sink. A "scuttlebutt" in the old days was a cask which had an opening in the side, fitted with a spigot. Well-made casks of oak were utilized to contain fresh drinking water. This old term has survived and now includes any drinking fountain. Since standing around the drinking fountain usually involved an exchange of news or rumors, the term today includes idle chit-chat about any topic.

NEW WEB SITE FEATURE

Our webmaster, Ken Laesser continues to make additions and improvements to the site. His latest addition is the ability to send E-cards, greetings to your friends and relatives. The cards include music and features such as cutters, boats, birthday greetings with more features to be added. Visit fcgh.org to see the latest.

E-MAIL NEWS

If you are receiving this newsletter by e-mail, we have your current e-mail address. If you are receiving this in hard copy through the courtesy of the U.S. Postal Service but would prefer an e-mail copy, send us your e-mail address. Send a message to fredherzberg@isomedia.com and I will insure that you get on our electronic mailing list. The e-mail system will save paper, folding, assembling, addressing, postage, time and will enable you to open it at your leisure with nothing to recycle. Let me know.

You can also access the newsletter through the web site at your leisure or have the web site send it to you automatically. In either case access the web site www.fcgh.org, select the dropdown menu and click on Newsletter. Follow the choices. The machine does the rest.

CAPTAIN KIDDS TREASURE

Conanicut Island, Jamestown, Rhode Island, is the location of America's third oldest lighthouse. Beavertail Point Light was built in 1749. Fifty years earlier, Captain William Kidd went ashore on Conanicut Island on his return from his ill-fated voyage as a privateer commissioned by British Governor Belmont against French vessels. During that voyage, Kidd reportedly became a pirate, attacking any vessels he found. Eventually,

FIRST LIFE SAVING STATIONS

To China goes the honor for organizing the first life saving stations. The earliest traceable Chinese records credit the Pa District with five lifeboat stations in commission on the Min River and two of its tributaries in 1737. This first government lifesaving service came into being through imperial decree and seems to have been paid for out of the general land and rice taxes. In succeeding years, other lifesaving stations were created. Floods and typhoons sweeping out of the China Sea frequently imperiled Chinese shipping and watery deaths were the common lot of Chinese boatmen. Benevolent societies also maintained their own boats after the fashion of many European countries today and as did the Massachusetts Humane Society in 1787. The crews of the boats were volunteers who were paid for their services whenever they went to the assistance of the shipwrecked. The same custom was followed in the early United States, but the volunteers were also paid for time spent in training. In both cultures, special awards were also given to those who displayed exemplary heroism and to lifesavers who succeeded in restoring life to those apparently drowned.

he became the stereotype of piracy. Returning to Long Island Sound, he buried some of his treasure on Gardiners Island off Long Island. Kidd was advised not to go to Boston, but he trusted his friend Governor Belmont, one of his royal partners. For this trust, Kidd was arrested, sent to England, tried, convicted of murder and piracy and hanged.

The Gardiners Island treasure was found in 1699. The supposed treasure on Conanicut Island was never found. Happy Hunting!

FIRST EUROPEAN LIFEBOAT STATION

1786 saw the first European lifeboat station, this at Bamborough Castle, **England**. Archdeacon John Sharp, trustee of Lord Crewe's estate and the castle, motivated by a desire to help the ;shipwrecked, repaired part of the castle, provided a lifeboat and the necessary equipment and ordered a constant watch to be kept from the tower for ships in distress. During storms two men patrolled the nearby coast on horseback to give instant alarm to the castle in case of a ship's coming ashore.

REVENUE CUTTER SERVICE VERSUS REVENUE MARINE

Confusion abounds. The original fleet of boats is called the Revenue Cutter Service by some, the Revenue Marine by others. In reality, the original fleet of 10 boats suggested by Alexander Hamilton had no identifying name. It was merely the fleet of 10 boats that patrolled the Eastern seaboard to prevent smuggling. It is ironic that the colonials who had become expert smugglers to thwart the King, suddenly became criminals for doing the same thing after independence. It was not until 1837 that the name Revenue Cutter Service appeared in any Acts of Congress, although the phrase "revenue cutters" does appear in a letter of November 29, 1808 from Treasury Secretary Gallatin. The first mention of Revenue Marine did not appear in law until a generations later.

The two terms are not synonymous. The Revenue Cutter Service included the boats, officers and crews. Their job was out at sea. The Revenue Marine was the land based, administrative arm of the Treasury Department created to provide shore support for the Revenue Cutter Service. The Revenue Cutter Service was "operations". The Revenue Marine was "headquarters."

TWO IS A COMPANY

During the war of 1812 the two daughters of Keeper Simeon Bates of Scituate Light, repulsed a British invasion. One day in early September 1814, the British man-of-war LA HOGUE, appeared off the Massachusetts coast and anchored off Cedar Point. The two girls and their younger brother were alone at the light. The girls sent the boy into town to warn the inhabitants. Five long boats from LA HOGUE headed for Scituate. Rebecca ran down the steps, grabbed a drum and handed her sister a fife. Then as the steady, measured strokes of the British oars were heard nearing the spit of land where the lighthouse stood, Rebecca began beating the drum and Abigail playing the fife. As the martial strains grew louder and louder to the oncoming British, the oarsmen stopped rowing and listened. Could the Americans be massing for an attack? The commander of LA HOGUE ordered the longboats to return to their ship.

At this point, cheers arose from the assembled citizens of Scituate while at Lighthouse Point, the two girls collapsed in exhaustion from their efforts.

FIRST LIGHTSHIP

The first light vessel, known as the Craney Island Lightship Station, was established in Hampton Roads, Virginia, at the entrance to the Elizabeth River in 1820. Additional vessels were placed in Chesapeake Bay the next year, and the first outside lightship was moored off Sandy Hook in 1824.

The early lightships were decked-over small boats. Later specially designed wooden vessels were used and beginning in 1882, hulls were made of iron. Sails, or no motive power at all gave way to steam and internal combustion engines. Crude whale oil lamps were replaced by kerosene, acetylene, and then electricity. Today they are all gone.