



SEALIFT

U.S. NAVY'S MILITARY SEALIFT COMMAND... WE DELIVER

JULY 2016 ISSUE



The crew of fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) prepare to conduct a small-arms weapons qualification course, May 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

MISSION READY TRAINING FOR USNS ERICSSON MARINERS

By Grady Fontana and Richard Egan, Military Sealift Command

Fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194) is currently on a six month deployment in the Persian Gulf where she is supporting the U.S. Navy Fifth Fleet. Prior to the deployment the ship completed a series of intense preparations which included both equipment training and personnel readiness exercises.

USNS John Ericsson recently completed a comprehensive 56-day Regular Overhaul (ROH) in Sembawang Shipyard, Singapore on April 25, which also included a dry-docking of the ship.

An ROH is a demanding period for any ship and especially for the mariners who crew it, because this is the opportunity to perform required maintenance, repair, refurbishment, inspections, etc.

Since the ROH takes a much needed ship off line for an extended period, the schedule is always tight and demanding. The crew is required to put in long hours, seven-day weeks in order to meet the schedule.



Civilian mariner Erik Chavez, an able body seaman aboard the fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194), demonstrates a take-down maneuver on Christopher Athanas, ordinary seaman, during advance watch stander training, May 6. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

An ROH is also a period in which many of the crew rotate to other ships that need their skills or rotate ashore for earned leave or required training, so that upon completion of the ROH almost half the crew on board will be new faces to those who remained.

Each crew member will have the required credentials and training to fill their position on the ship and will have performed their duties aboard similar ships. However, the Ericsson's Master faces the sizable challenge of developing this group of individual specialists into a cohesive, efficient, and safely operating professional team, even as the ship rapidly approaches the deadline to be full mission ready for tasking in support of the fleet.

Captain Anthony Boudouin, Ericsson's Master, points out that getting it right as a team is critical to avoid getting someone hurt, "Incoming mariners are seasoned veterans; however, crew cohesion and teamwork can make the difference during an emergency situation—something a new crew will still need to foster."

Crew training began immediately after the completion of the ROH and was accomplished within the allotted 10-day period required by MSC policy, which calls for shipboard training that supports attainment of ship readiness to perform assigned missions.

The shipboard training focused on team responses in firefighting, equipment casualties, damage control, medical casualty response, helicopter firefighting, and chemical, biological, and radiological defense (CBR-D). Drills in main space and zone fires, collision and flooding, CBR-D, abandon ship, etc., also focused on team responses.

The MSC Afloat Training Team (ATT) is tasked with the support mission to provide quality shipboard training to assist a ship's Master in attaining mission readiness. Team members from ATT's west coast team from San

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COMMANDER'S PERSPECTIVE DEPLOYMENTS, PEOPLE, MISSION

**Rear Adm. T. K. Shannon, USN
Commander, Military Sealift Command**

I recently spoke at the graduation ceremony at one of our state maritime academies. One of the things I stressed to the graduates is that this is truly a dynamic time in our maritime industry. To be relevant and productive in this industry, you must be flexible, adaptable and know how to work in a change environment.

Throughout your career, you will encounter colleagues who resist, fear or actively work against change. Working outside our comfort zone, however, is the place we all need to be. This is where many new ideas come from.

If you go about your daily work embracing change and figuring out how to be effective in this environment, you will be well positioned for personal and professional success.

This is in line with our Navy's Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority. The fourth line of effort, Achieve High Velocity Learning at Every Level, speaks to our role in learning and training, and adopting processes that are innovative and creative.

You have the green light to think outside the box! We need to accelerate the processes that develop imaginative and resourceful ideas. It's these new ideas and the implementation of them that will give us the edge over our adversaries.

Deployments

Last month, our Expeditionary Fast Transport USNS Spearhead returned to Virginia from a four-month deployment to Africa, working in our 6th Fleet area of operations. In addition to participating in multiple exercises, training events, and community relations programs, she conducted real-world counter-piracy operations, intercepting a motor tanker that was hijacked by pirates. In her third deployment to 6th Fleet, Spearhead and crew provided the tools and training that will undoubtedly have a positive impact on the west African nations. Our EPFs and their crews are proving their value each and every day.

And only a few days later on the opposite coast, our hospital ship USNS Mercy departed for a four-month Pacific Partnership mission. Mercy will visit Timor Leste, Republic of the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Republic of Palau and Indonesia. Her crew will work with partner nations to improve maritime security, conduct humanitarian assistance and strengthen disaster response preparedness. All this good work will be enabled by our mariners, who maintain, navigate and sail this mighty ship.

People

I'd like to highlight one of our team members. Mr. Capers Hamilton joined Military Sea Transportation Service (before we became Military Sealift Command) in 1966. He recently received the 50 years' service award. He served on many many ships over his career and currently serves aboard USNS Amelia Earhart as a boatswain's mate. He is the quintessential shipmate: loyal, superior attitude and impressive worth ethic. Thank you for your service to our nation and the example you have set for your fellow teammates.

Mission

As we continue through these summer months, remain safe, be vigilant, and stay focused on our mission. Take responsibility for yourself and your actions and look out for your neighbor.

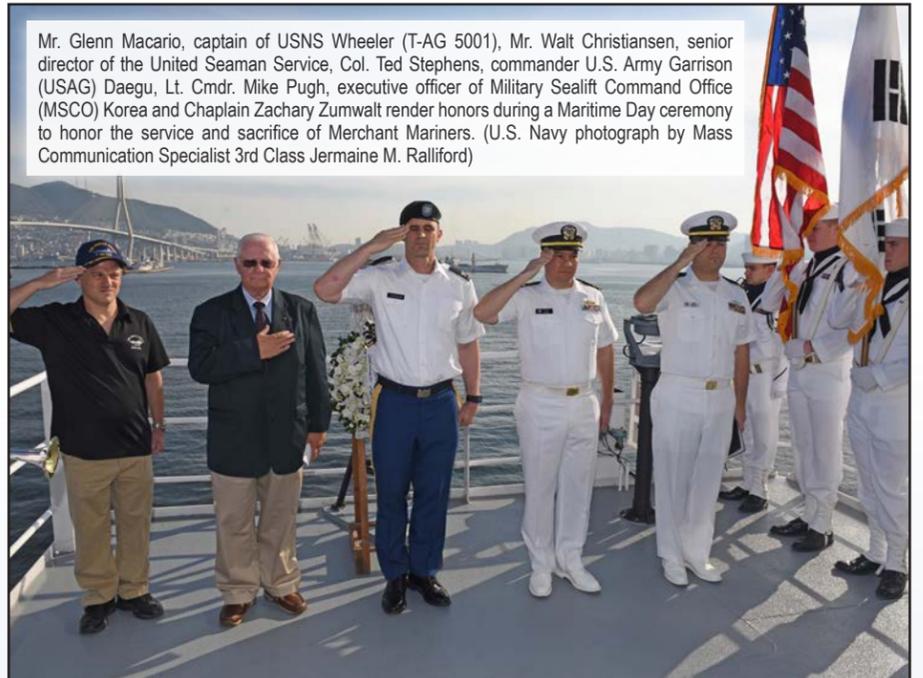
Thank you for all that you do each and every day in service to our Nation, Navy and Military Sealift Command!

Rear Adm. T. K. Shannon, USN
Commander, Military Sealift Command

MSCO KOREA HONORS MERCHANT MARINERS

By Petty Officer 3rd Class Jermaine Ralliford

U.S. Sailors, soldiers, and mariners from across the Republic of Korea gathered to honor the service and sacrifice of U.S. Merchant Mariners during a National Maritime Day ceremony in Busan, May 20. Maritime Day is an annual ceremony that honors Merchant Mariners who have lost their lives at sea. This ceremony marks the 83rd commemoration of the event and featured a wreath-laying aboard USNS Wheeler (T-AG 5001).



Mr. Glenn Macario, captain of USNS Wheeler (T-AG 5001), Mr. Walt Christiansen, senior director of the United Seaman Service, Col. Ted Stephens, commander U.S. Army Garrison (USAG) Daegu, Lt. Cmdr. Mike Pugh, executive officer of Military Sealift Command Office (MSCO) Korea and Chaplain Zachary Zumwalt render honors during a Maritime Day ceremony to honor the service and sacrifice of Merchant Mariners. (U.S. Navy photograph by Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Jermaine M. Ralliford)

"For two centuries merchant mariners have sailed the seas in defense of our country and pursuit of opportunity," said Lt. Cmdr. Mike Pugh, MSCO executive officer. "On behalf of MSCO Korea and the United States Navy, it is my pleasure to honor the seamen and mariners for National Maritime Day."

Walt Christiansen, director of the Busan United Seamen's Service Center, spoke about the sacrifices made by merchant mariners and how essential they are for operational readiness and mission success.

"Merchant mariners are irreplaceable," said Christiansen. "The military has its role, and it is a role that's beyond belief, but our military cannot win a war without the support of those who move ammunition and supplies. That's where merchant mariners fit in."

The support of merchant mariners is not limited to sea services. The U.S. Army also recognizes the importance of their role in the region and the world.

"It takes support from all kinds," said guest speaker Col. Ted Stephens, commander of U.S. Army Garrison Daegu. "The active support of the merchant mariners is crucial to the mission effectiveness and success of the United States."

During the ceremony, Stephens joined Pugh, Christiansen and Glenn Macario, captain of USNS Wheeler, in a wreath laying ceremony to honor the mariners who died in service.

"We're not just here for ourselves," said Christiansen. "We are here to remember the merchant seamen and it is in the memory of the merchant mariners who put their lives on the line, we place this wreath in the harbor."

SPEARHEAD COMPLETES WEST AFRICA DEPLOYMENT

From U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa/U.S. 6th Fleet Public Affairs

The Navy's first expeditionary fast transport vessel, USNS Spearhead (T-EFP 1), returned to her home-port, Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story in Virginia Beach, Virginia, May 5.

Spearhead departed Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story Dec. 29, 2015, to participate in Africa Partnership Station 2016.

"This deployment was a rewarding experience serving in the Gulf of Guinea and significantly impacting the improvement of regional stability and interoperability between partner nations across the maritime theater," said Todd R. Kutkiewicz, USNS Spearhead's chief mate. "The training and support we provided to our partner nations in Maritime Law Enforcement and Security Operations was well received and will ensure continued progression of our African partners to protect the rich and bountiful marine environment that is the Gulf of Guinea."

A U.S. Coast Guard Law Enforcement Detachment (LEDET) embarked Spearhead in support of Africa Maritime Law Enforcement Partnership 2016. AMLEP is companion to and nested within APS and seeks to build maritime security capacity in order to increase maritime safety and security.

"It was a privilege having the opportunity to work alongside our African partner nations in the Gulf of Guinea," said Cmdr. Tim Ferracci, Africa Partnership Station 2016 mission commander. "As the APS mission commander, I had the privilege to work with the Military Sealift Command civil service mariners, A U.S. Coast Guard LEDET, U.S., Spanish and Royal Marines, and sailors with a wide variety of skill sets and backgrounds.

Spearhead was essential in counter piracy operations that liberated motor tanker Maximus. While conducting AMLEP, Spearhead received real world information regarding a tanker in the area that was attacked by a suspected pirate vessel. Through the forward looking infrared system and visual imagery, Spearhead confirmed the ship matched the description of the hijacked vessel. The ship's crew tracked the vessel before handing it off to the Ghanaian Navy vessel Naa Gbewaa, who were able to positively identify Maximus.

"The relationships established and trust forged during this deployment is

a testament to the dedication that we and our partners have in ensuring that those involved in illegal activity will be held accountable," added Ferracci.

Spearhead and its crew of nearly 100 U.S. Navy detachment Sailors and civil service mariners conducted maritime operations in the Gulf of Guinea and made port call visits to Cameroon, Gabon, Ghana, Senegal and Spain.

"Working with the different Western African nations highlighted the impact our forces have had during previous missions," said Lt. Cmdr. Michael Webb, Africa Partnership Station 2016, deputy mission commander. "Providing these countries the tools and training to control their Exclusive Economic Zones will undoubtedly have a positive impact on their local economies. The mission instilled a strong sense of pride in the entire crew, knowing we accomplished our mission of helping the people of Western Africa."

This was the third deployment for Spearhead in the U.S. 6th Fleet area of operations.



Friends and family of U.S. Navy Sailors and civil service mariners attached to Military Sealift Command's Expeditionary Fast Transport class ship, USNS Spearhead (T-EFP 1), wait for the ship to pull into the pier at Joint Expeditionary Base Little Creek-Fort Story, May 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

MERCY ARRIVES IN 7TH FLEET FOR PACIFIC PARTNERSHIP

By Pacific Partnership Public Affairs

Hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) arrived in the U.S. 7th Fleet area of operations May 24 in support of Pacific Partnership 2016. Now in its 11th year, Pacific Partnership is a multilateral, disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the Indo-Asia-Pacific Region.

"Partner nations, who invited Pacific Partnership 2016 to visit, refined our mission's focus this year," said Capt. Tom Williams, U.S. Navy, Pacific Partnership 2016 mission commander. "Over the past several months we have worked side-by-side with a dozen partner nations planning disaster relief, medical and engineering projects and exchanges that will strengthen mutual understanding and partnerships in the region."

Pacific Partnership 2016 will conduct stops in Timor Leste, the Philippines, Vietnam, Malaysia, Indonesia and Palau, with partners from around the Pacific -- including Australia, Japan, New Zealand, Republic of Korea, Singapore, Canada, and the United Kingdom. Non-governmental organizations also participate in the mission including Project Hope, Latter Day Saints Charities, University of California San Diego, Project Handclasp, and World Vets. Medical and civil-engineering teams will collaborate with partner nations in subject matter expert exchanges, disaster relief preparedness exercises and community relations projects.

Pacific Partnership began in response to the December 2004 tsunami that devastated parts of Southeast Asia. Along with other nations, the United States deployed U.S. Navy assets, including Mercy, which later returned to the region in 2006 for the first Pacific Partnership mission.

"This year's mission will operate where natural disasters are a common challenge for all partner nations," said Williams. "Pacific Partnership's aim is to bring partner nations together to prepare in a time of calm so we can effectively respond when a crisis does occur."

Mercy, home-ported in San Diego, is 894-feet-long and is outfitted to provide mobile acute and surgical medical services in disaster or humanitarian relief efforts. Hospital capabilities include a wide range of life-saving surgical procedures and blood bank services to diagnostic x-ray or laboratory services. The team of medical professionals include doctors, nurses, technicians and support staff who provide the full spectrum of care in surgical specialties, internal medicine, radiology, dental prosthetics and eye health among many others.

Sailors assigned to the hospital ship USNS Mercy (T-AH 19) man the rails as the ship transits Pearl Harbor and prepares to moor at Joint Base Pearl Harbor-Hickam. Mercy is deployed in support of Pacific Partnership 2016. Pacific Partnership, in its 11th year, is the largest annual multilateral humanitarian assistance and disaster relief preparedness mission conducted in the region, and was born out of the military-led response to the tsunami that struck parts of Southeast Asia in December 2004. It is designed to improve disaster response preparedness while enhancing partnerships with participating nations in the Indo-Asia-Pacific region. (U.S. Navy photograph by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Johans Chavarro)



S.S. JOHN W. BROWN: HONORING THOSE WHO BUILT, DEFENDED AND SAILED THE LIBERTY FLEET



The World War II Liberty Ship, S.S. John W. Brown, sails up the Elizabeth River to downtown Norfolk, Virginia, May 20. The Brown pulled in to provide public tours and an underway cruise as part of the National Maritime Day celebration. The Brown is one of two remaining operational World War II Liberty Ships. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

The all-volunteer crew of the World War II Liberty Ship, S.S. John W. Brown, sailed the 73-year-old warship into Norfolk, Virginia, for the Maritime Day celebration, May 20-22.

The S.S. John W. Brown is one of two fully operational World War II Liberty ships left in existence and is now a living museum dedicated to honoring those who built, defended and sailed the Liberty fleet.

Clouds of War Looming

Liberty ships were a class of cargo ships introduced in 1941. The U.S. war effort required cargo ships which could be built quickly, affordably and in large quantities.

The resulting ships were commonly referred to as “emergency ships” or “ugly ducklings” because of their basic appearance. This moniker changed, however; when President Roosevelt told the nation that the fleet of ships would bring liberty to Europe. From then on they became known as Liberty Ships.

Mike Schneider, a retired U.S. Navy officer, and a Fireman/Watertender in the Brown’s engine room said, “At the beginning of World War II, before the Americans were involved, the German U-boats (submarines) were wreaking havoc on the Atlantic Ocean and sinking more ships than could be replaced. The United States embarked on an emergency shipbuilding program and a big piece of this program was to build Liberty Ships like S.S. John W. Brown.”

“The United States built 2,710 Liberty Ships which were almost all carbon copies of each other,” said Schneider. “These Liberty Ships transported the majority of their overseas cargo to the war-front and Britain.”

Despite over 200 Liberty ships being lost to enemy combat, fire, collision, or other disasters, the vessels could be constructed inexpensively and on large scale. This enabled continuous supplies to reach the allied forces fighting in the European and Pacific theaters.

S.S. John W. Brown Enters the Fight

“The S.S. John Brown was launched on Sept. 7, 1942, from Baltimore, Maryland, along with six other Liberty Ships,” according to Schneider. “Each of these ships was named after a labor leader, and the Brown was named after John W. Brown, who died in Maryland in 1941.”

“Ships like the Brown were built to make one trip,” said Duff Potter, the S.S. John W. Brown’s spokesman. “The Brown cost the tax payers 1.7 million dollars to build. The government determined that if the Brown could transport 10,800 tons in one trip; the ship would pay for itself.” “The Brown was modified after its initial production to transport both supplies and combat troops and thus spent a lot of time in the Mediterranean Sea,” said Schneider. “The Brown was able to transport an entire military unit to include all of their logistical needs such as trucks, artillery, and ammunition and the unit’s personnel. They would all be transported to the war on the same ship. So as the war shifted across Europe, ships like S.S. John W. Brown moved needed troops and material into critical places and brought prisoners of war back to the U.S.”

The Brown made eight voyages during World War II. Her maiden voyage was to the Persian Gulf carrying military equipment for Russia, which could only be supplied from the Persian Gulf or via convoys to Murmansk, the infamous “Murmansk run.” On this voyage, the Brown proceeded through the Caribbean Sea, through the Panama Canal, south along the west coast of South America and around Cape Horn, across the South Atlantic around the Cape of Good Hope, north along the east coast of Africa, and into the Persian Gulf. Interestingly, the Brown sailed alone and un-escorted for most of this voyage. Her route, especially the portion along the west coast of South America, was planned to minimize the chances of encountering enemy submarines. The Brown returned to North America, making a stop in South America to load a cargo of bauxite which is used in making aluminum products.

Most of the rest of the Brown’s wartime voyages were to the Mediterranean Sea including duty during the Anzio landings. She was also a part of the invasion force of southern France during Operation Dragoon in August 1944. While in the Mediterranean, the Brown typically spent several months moving between ports in North Africa, Italy and southern France, moving supplies, equipment and troops as needed, before finally returning to North America. On all of these voyages, the Brown sailed in convoys.

“The United States learned after World War I that we did not have enough ships to supply the war effort,” said Potter. “In 1936, President Franklin D. Roosevelt passed the Merchant Marine Act which was designed to provide merchant crews with suitable training and a fleet of ships which could be deployed to carry cargo anywhere in the world.”



(U.S. Navy Photograph by Bill Mesta)

“World War II was a global war and countries all over the world were affected,” said Potter. “As such, we required the capability to deliver supplies all over the globe and we needed ships to accomplish this.” “The average building time to build a Liberty Ship was less than 50 days and the Brown was constructed in 45 days. By 1943, the average build time for a Liberty Ship was approximately 20 days,” said added Potter. “We needed to show the world exactly what the industrial might of the United States amounted to.”

The Original Hybrid Crew

The Brown was crewed by approximately 45 civilian merchant seamen. The ship’s weapons were manned by 41 Navy Armed Guard personnel who were assigned to the ship. The size of the merchant marine crew varied slightly from voyage to voyage, depending on the number of troops transported.

The concept of how the S.S. John W. Brown was manned is similar to Military Sealift Commands’ hybrid crew concept which has been implemented on platforms such as USNS Lewis B. Puller (T-ESB 3), USS Mount Whitney (LCC 20), USS Emory S. Land (AS 39) and USNS Comfort (T-AH 20).

“The Brown carried two crews,” said Potter. “One was the merchant crew which consisted of a master, three mates, chief engineer, three engineers and all of the mariners which you would expect to find on a merchant ship.”

The Navy Armed Guard consisted of active duty Sailors who were responsible for the defensive firepower on merchant marine vessels like the Brown.

“The Navy Armed Guard was a separate contingent on board the Brown,” according to Schneider. “The sailors messed and bunked separately from the merchant marines. Depending on the temperament of both the merchant marines’ master and the Navy Armed Guard’s commanding officer, sometimes the relationship was acrimonious and sometimes the two were very cooperative. It just depended on the personalities of the two leaders.”

“However, 99 percent of the time the concept of having the active duty sailors serving alongside civilian merchant marines was very effective,” said Potter. “When they ran into internal difficulties they figured out how to work them out.”

“When it came down to the serious business of war, the mariners and Navy Armed Guard worked very well together,” said Potter. “For example, during ‘General Quarters,’ the mariners, not on watch, would pass ammunition to the Sailors who were manning the guns. The nature of war at sea built a lot of camaraderie between the two cultures.”

Service in the Face of Danger

Serving about Liberty Ships like the Brown during a war was very dangerous and the mariners who crewed these ships were all volunteers.

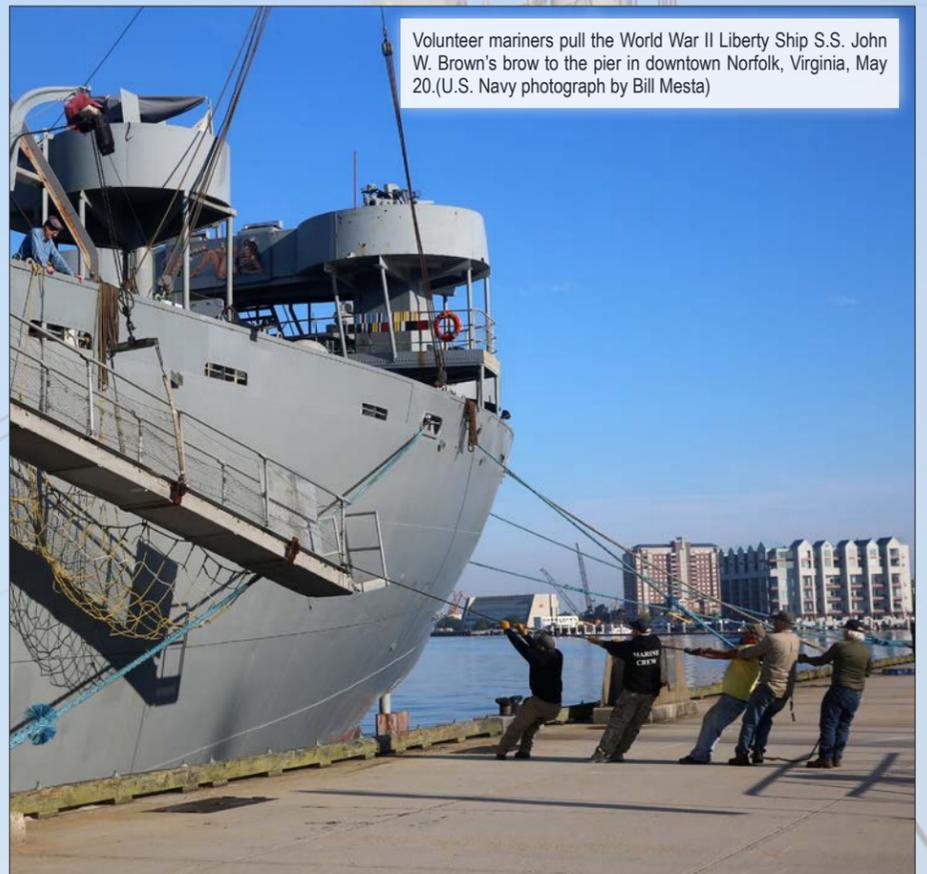
“There were many reasons the Brown’s merchant marines volunteered to undertake such a dangerous duty,” said Schneider. “Many of the volunteers were already professional mariners before the war and because of their experience it made sense for them to serve as merchant marines.”

“The physical requirements to join the merchant marines were less stringent than the armed forces,” added Schneider. “So if you had a patriotic citizen who wanted to serve their country and could not pass a military physical, merchant marine service provided an additional option.”

“Many citizens joined the merchant marines and served on Liberty ships out of a sense of patriotism and a desire for a maritime vocation,” said



A view of the troop berthing area on board the World War II Liberty Ship, S.S. John W. Brown. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)



Volunteer mariners pull the World War II Liberty Ship S.S. John W. Brown's bow to the pier in downtown Norfolk, Virginia, May 20, 1943. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

Potter. “These guys were very patriotic and really wanted to serve their country.”

Though armed with defensive weapons, the mariners and sailors who served on Liberty ships were under the constant threat of enemy attack. “According to mariners who have served in the past, they couldn’t worry about the danger which comes with service at sea,” added Potter.

If you focused on the danger, you could become paralyzed and not be able to do your job,” added Potter. “The way to handle the danger and fear was to stand your watch, do your job and you hope the ship doesn’t get hit. But a bunch of the Liberty Ships did get hit,” said Potter. “The attrition rate during the war for the merchant marines was higher than any other service with the exception of the U.S. Marine Corps.”

Immediately following the war, the Brown carried government cargoes to help rebuild war-torn Europe.

The Roots of Modern Military Logistics at Sea

The Brown was built by the federal government and was under the oversight of the War Shipping Administration. This ship and her many sister-ships were operated under what was known as a general agency agreement by almost 90 different American steamship companies were paid by the government to manage the ships. The cargo they carried and the ports they visited were entirely controlled by the U.S. government.

During World War II, four separate government agencies controlled sea transportation. In 1949, the Military Sea Transportation Service became the single managing agency for the Department of Defense’s ocean transportation needs. The command assumed responsibility for providing sealift and ocean transportation for all military services as well as for other government agencies.

Nine months after its creation, MSTS responded to the challenge of the Korean War. On July 6, 1950, only 11 days after the initial invasion of South Korea by communist North Korean troops, MSTS transported the 24th Infantry Division and its equipment from Japan to Pusan, South Korea, for duty.

During the Vietnam War, MSTS was renamed Military Sealift Command. Project Liberty Ship

Project Liberty Ship is a dynamic, all-volunteer organization with the sole purpose of preserving the Liberty ship S.S. John W. Brown as an operating museum ship with the primary focus of educating people about the nation’s maritime history during World War II and the vital role played by our merchant marine and military veterans.

“When I got out of the Navy, I quickly discovered I missed being on ships and going to sea and being around fellow seamen,” said Schneider. “I found the camaraderie aboard the Brown to be very rewarding.”

“Nobody understands the relationship ‘shipmates’ have except other ‘shipmates,’” said Potter. “And in order to be a shipmate, you gotta’ have a ship. Like many of the Brown’s crew I was drawn to the maritime environment.”

“The volunteers aboard the Brown come from all walks of life,” said Schneider. “We have volunteers who are retired merchant marines and

MSCFE SINGAPORE VOLUNTEERS WITH ‘WILLING HEARTS’

By Marc Ayalin, Navy Region Singapore

Several Sailors assigned to Military Sealift Command, Far East (MSCFE) in Singapore took some time out of their Saturday morning to volunteer at Willing Hearts charity organization May 21, 2016.

The five-man team arrived early at the Chai Chee Community Hub in Singapore where Willing Hearts operates 365 days a year. The charity organization distributes over 5,000 meals daily to more than 80 distribution centers, island wide. Volunteer drivers deliver the meals to a variety of recipients who mostly consist of elderly, disabled and lower-income households.

Of the five Sailors who volunteered, four are reserve-component Sailors undergoing their annual training commitments. According to U.S. Navy Lt. Matthew Sargent, special missions ships officer for MSCFE, this is a great opportunity for these strategic sealift officers, who are undergoing theater-specific training, to be immersed in local culture and give back to the community.

“While they’re here, we like our new Sailors to learn about the culture,” said Sargent. “So we coordinated this community relations event with the Chaplain’s office to help out at the Willing Hearts soup kitchen. It is a great opportunity for a positive cultural experience.”

Throughout the morning, three of the five volunteers prepared and cooked several hundred pounds of white rice by first washing and rinsing it and then cooking it in large trays filled with water. They then loaded the trays in industrial-sized ovens designed to cook multiple items at once. In addition to preparing rice, two Sailors assisted in washing dozens of pots, pans, trays and cooking utensils in order to keep the cooks supplied with clean cookware.

For Willing Hearts founder and director, Mr. Tony Tay, this is a daily grind that cannot work without the valued donations and support from the community. This support includes local schools, military, and corporate, private and governmental organizations along with individual donations as well. According to Tay, much of the support generated comes from word-of-mouth more than anything.

“Once people spread the word about what we do here and who we impact, they all come,” Tay said. “If the birds and fish aren’t worried about eating, why should we? We haven’t missed our daily goal yet.”

For the U.S. Navy volunteers, providing a service such as this is time well spent.

“It feels wonderful to give back and work with the community here but more importantly it’s good to be contributing to something meaningful,” said Lt. Mike Burbelo, an assistant marine transportation specialist with MSCFE and a Daytona, Florida, native.

According to Sargent, this is the first time they’ve conducted this type of volunteer effort. However, with more groups of strategic sealift officers conducting community relations projects throughout the year, they are hoping to build a relationship with Willing Hearts to provide more support in the future.

Meanwhile, the region continues its support for Tony Tay and Willing Hearts’ community-wide food distribution efforts to thousands of needy people throughout Singapore. The region and its tenant commands continuously seek other volunteer efforts and future community relations events throughout the Asia-Pacific.



U.S. Navy Lt. Mike Burbelo, assistant marine transportation specialist, Military Sealift Command Far East (MSCFE), prepares and cooks multiple trays of white rice during a volunteer event at Singapore’s Willing Hearts charity organization and soup kitchen May 21, 2016. Burbelo, a Daytona, Fla. native, along with four other Sailors participated in a community relations event as part of a theater-specific training course with MSCFE. (U.S. Navy photograph by Marc Ayalin)

ROOTS ACROSS THE GLOBE ASIAN, PACIFIC ISLANDER HERITAGE



Dr. Manuel Abuan Hipol, a retired U.S. Navy Captain, addresses Military Sealift Command Sailors and civilian teammates on board Naval Station Norfolk, May 23. Dr. Hipol’s address was part of the command’s special observance honoring Asian American/Pacific Islander Heritage Month. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command hosted a celebration honoring Asian American, Pacific Islander Heritage Month on board Naval Station Norfolk, May 23.

The theme for the 2016 celebration was “walk together, embrace differences and build legacies.”

The keynote speaker for the celebration was Dr. Manuel A. Hipol, MD, a retired U.S. Navy Captain, Medical Corps. Hipol is also the founder and chairman of the United Filipino Organizations of Tidewater.

“Living in the United States for almost 50 years, I have spent most of my productive years serving and working towards the American Dream,” said Hipol. “For all Asian and Pacific Americans, we should always be thankful when the Congress of the United States passed the observance for the month of May as Asian American, Pacific Islander Heritage Month.”

“Since 1977, the month of May has been designated to recognize the achievements and contributions to the American Story by Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders,” said Ms. Frances Vorce, an MSC civilian teammate. “We celebrate the cultural traditions, ancestry, native languages and unique experiences represented among more than 56 ethnic groups, speaking over 100 languages, from Asia and the Pacific Islands, who live in the United States.”

“This celebration recognizes the vitality and power of the fastest growing minority in America,” added Hipol. “Today, the latest U.S. census provides that the Asian, Pacific American population has grown by almost 50 percent during the last 10 years. There are close to 12 million Asian, Pacific Americans living in the U.S.”

“Like many in the Asian, Pacific American community, I have faced multiple challenges in our country such as language and communication barriers,” said Hipol. “To better understand an immigrant, one should know the history of their people and country of origin.”

“While the Asian, Pacific Islander American communities have roots which span the globe, their success stories are uniquely American,” added Vorce. “Generations of Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders have helped develop and defend the United States, often in the face of tremendous racial and cultural prejudice.”

THE HOLOCAUST: HATRED, PREJUDICE AND INDIFFERENCE

By Bill Mesta, Military Sealift Command Public Affairs

Military Sealift Command civilian support staff and service members gathered for a 'Day of Remembrance 2016, Learning from the Holocaust, Acts of Courage' aboard Naval Station Norfolk, May 2. The event, hosted by MSC's Special Emphasis Program, was held to honor the memory of Jewish victims and survivors of Nazi Germany's genocide during World War II.

"The Days of Remembrance for the Holocaust are being observed this year from May 1-8," said Senior Chief Yeoman Nashera Brown. "Today we pause and take this educational opportunity to remind each of us of our personal responsibility to promote equality and inclusion around the world."

The presentation was led by Lisa Cohn and Arlene Kessel, representatives from the Holocaust Commission of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater.

"Prejudice against or hatred of Jews, known as anti-Semitism, has plagued the world for more than 2,000 years," according to Cohn. "However, the Holocaust is the world's most extreme example of this hatred."

"In 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stood at over 9 million," said Cohn. "By 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators had murdered 6 million Jews, nearly two out of every three Jews in Europe."

"The main purpose of the Holocaust Commission is to provide education," said Cohn. "However, our goal is not just to educate about the Holocaust, but to encourage you to think about the consequences of hatred, prejudice and indifference as they can reside deep inside people's hearts and minds. These are perhaps the greatest threats to our civilization."

"When one follows the news, the daily headlines reveal that history seems to be repeating itself," said Cohn. "The survivors of the Holocaust have much to teach us as they experienced the horrors of genocide themselves and were eyewitnesses to a terrifying period of history."

"Although each survivor has a different story, they all share a common thread. A personal struggle involving courage, tenacity, luck and eventually survival," said Cohn. "Each survival story also has an additional bond in that all of their stories begin with a jolt from normalcy, with a sudden upheaval of everyday life."

"Often in the face of immediate danger, there was little time to pack and all that could be taken was what could be carried," said Cohn. "In many cases even the few possessions which were carried while fleeing their homes were lost as well."

"Imagine not even having a photograph to remember what your family looked like," said Cohn. "This was the reality for many Holocaust survivors."

The presentation featured a video recounting of the Holocaust by David Katz, a Holocaust survivor who passed away in 2012.

Katz was born in Leipzig, Germany on Feb. 12, 1930, to parents who were both classical musicians. His family attempted to escape Nazi



Lisa Cohn, a Holocaust Commission of the United Jewish Federation of Tidewater representative, addresses Sailors and civilian teammates attached to Military Sealift Command on board Naval Station Norfolk, May 2. Cohn's presentation was part of MSC's special observance, "Day of Remembrance 2016, Learning from the Holocaust." (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

Germany after Adolf Hitler assumed power in 1933.

"I can remember in 1936, the Hitler Youth throwing stones at us and beating us on our way to the Jewish school," said Katz. "The Gestapo came to our school and instructed the principle to send everyone home. As we were leaving the school, we could see German soldiers removing the Jewish books and religious sacraments and destroying them in front of the building."

"I still remember that morning. There was a loud knock at our door," continued Katz. "Two SS officers with drawn weapons gave my grandparents one hour to pack a suitcase for Poland. I remember crying for them not to leave me but they had no choice. That was the last time I saw my grandparents."

The Katz family was attempting to escape Nazi Germany and emigrate to the United States in 1941 when America declared war on Japan and Germany. The declaration of war brought an end to their hope of moving to the United States.

In 1942, Mr. Katz's parents were sent to a concentration camp located in Auschwitz. David, at age 12 was sent to an orphanage run by a French children's aid organization. He stayed at the orphanage for a year until a Nazi raid on the orphanage forced him to flee.

According to Katz, "the last thing my father did for me was to hand me his violin. He said, 'Keep it safely. You can give it back to me when we are reunited after the war.'"

Mr. Katz never saw his parents again as they were murdered in Auschwitz.

"Nobody should be discriminated against because of their religion, or the color of their skin, or their ethnic or national background," concluded Katz.

CHARLES DREW: TRILATERAL REPLENISHMENT-AT-SEA



Dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) transfers fuel to Japanese helicopter destroyer JS Ise (DDH 182) during a replenishment-at-sea, April 19. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

By Grady Fontana, Military Sealift Command Far East Public Affairs

The dry cargo and ammunition ship USNS Charles Drew (T-AKE 10) conducted a replenishment at sea (RAS), April 19, with three U.S. and foreign vessels that recently participated in exercise Komodo.

The Drew provided fuel and replenishment cargo to the guided missile destroyer USS Stockdale (DDG 106), fuel to the Japanese helicopter destroyer JS Ise (DDH 182), and cargo to Australian frigate HMAS Anzac (FF 150).

The replenishment operation took approximately five hours to complete, while the vertical replenishment of the Anzac occurred simultaneously with the RAS of the Stockdale.

The replenishment-at-sea occurred during transit after the multilateral naval exercise Komodo, which featured 35 navies across the Indo-Asia-Pacific region.



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Diego came aboard Ericsson to conduct the rigorous 10-day training package to build the crew's readiness and foster the camaraderie that takes form when teams train together.

"The basic ATT (package) on large ships is a 10-day package that consists of critical drills," said Dale Krabbenschmidt, team leader from ATT West. "On this particular ship the drills include main engine room fire, pump room fire, berthing space fire in the house, fixed system training, and steering casualty drills."

By the end of the 10-day period, Ericsson's crew had proved to ATT and the Master that they were prepared to quickly and safely mitigate fire, flooding, or casualty damage and promptly resume vital fleet operations should the situation arise.

The training was completed at the Sembawang shipyard; however, the ATT team also got underway aboard Ericsson to conduct additional



Civil Service Mariner Terrence P. Dumas, fire marshal on the fleet replenishment oiler USNS John Ericsson (T-AO 194), fires an M14 service rifle during a small-arms weapons qualification course, May 5. (U.S. Navy photograph by Grady T. Fontana)

training at the Master's request. "We completed the ATT [training package] in Singapore and the ship's captain asked us to take a ride in order to do some additional training," said Krabbenschmidt, . "One thing the captain wanted to get done was small arms training for his security team. They're due for their annual re-qualification."

The five-man ATT team established a small arms firing qualification course on the aft part of the ship, firing from the helicopter landing zone and conducted the firing range while in open seas.

Captain Boudouin, who has been sailing for more than 42 years, emphasized the importance of having a fully qualified small arms team aboard, "It allows me to man up a full pirate and reaction team...It's very difficult for the captain and the chief mate to put all this training together."

According to Krabbenschmidt, the ATT team also conducted training in fall protection and rescue from heights; explosive forklift operator relicensing; food handling safety; and other training that the captain requested, for example, a briefing on the V-22 Osprey helicopter operations.

"With the V-22, there's a lot more safety features and safety hazards than any other aircraft," said Mel Fai, a Damage Control Officer instructor with the ATT West team. "When it comes to helicopters, in general, we'll teach a certain way to fight fires, but the V-22 is a little bit different."

For the crew of the Ericsson, the ATT training they received has abated many of the challenges the crew faced prior to their important mission and provided a sense of accomplishment and professional satisfaction. "The ATT has been instrumental [to attaining mission readiness] and eased an enormous amount of pressure off of us," said Boudouin. "I couldn't have done this as proficiently without them. It would have taken me months to do what they did in 10 days."

S.S. John W. Brown, Continued Reading From Page 5

active merchant marines. We have a lot of volunteers who work in areas such as refrigeration, air conditioning or machinery who just want to go to sea. A lot of our crew volunteers because they are history buffs. The Brown's crew comes from everywhere."

Following her service in World War II, S.S. John W. Brown was loaned by the government to the Board of Education of the city of New York. From 1946 to 1983 she served as a floating maritime high school training thousands of young men to be merchant mariners. Some of those former students have found their way back to the ship and now serve as volunteer crew members.

For more information about the World War II Liberty Ship S.S. John W. Brown, please visit <http://www.ssjohnwbrown.org/> or <https://www.facebook.com/SSJOHNWBROWN/>.



The World War II Liberty Ship, S.S. John W. Brown, pulls pier-side in downtown Norfolk, Virginia, May 20. The Brown pulled in to provide public tours and an underway cruise as part of the National Maritime Day celebration. The Brown is one of two remaining operational World War II Liberty Ships. (U.S. Navy photograph by Bill Mesta)

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Military Sealift Command's Civil Service Mariner Joe Olivares, assigned to the Emory S. Land-class submarine tender USS Frank Cable's (AS 40) deck department, demonstrates proper assembly of an emergent suit to the crew during an abandon ship drill, May 13. (U.S. Navy photograph by Mass Communication Specialist Seaman Apprentice Alana Langdon)

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NEXT ISSUE: INTERNATIONAL MEDEVAC ON MERCY