



# The Day Book

Volume 2, Issue 6

September-October 1996

A Newsletter for the Supporters of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum



The frigate USS Constitution, along with the ships USS Argus, Enterprise, Siren and Intrepid and several gunboats, on loan from the King of Naples, give the American response to the pirates' demands for more tribute, August 1804. (U.S. Navy photo of an oil painting by Michel F. Corné)

## Hampton Roads' Oldest Enemy

*Ever since America became an independent country, it has been in conflict with the states of North Africa, most notably Tripolitania/Libya. The Naval bases, ships and crews of Hampton Roads have been principle players in operations against these countries. The first article discusses the early 19th century campaign against the pirates of the Barbary Coast. The second article discusses the "Freedom of Navigation" maneuvers and strikes by Norfolk-based warships against Col. Gadhaffi's forces 185 years later.*

### *"Hand to Hand is Not Child's Play": 1801-1806*

by Joe Mosier

On May 14, 1801, Yusef Karamanli, Bashaw of Tripoli, sent men to chop down the flagpole in front of the American Consulate. In land barren of trees tall enough for replacements, this was the accepted way to declare war. Tripoli, together with Tunis, Algiers and Morocco, comprised the Barbary States. Although nominally ruled from the Ottoman capital of Constantinople, each was in effect a sovereign country. For years one of the principal sources of income along the Barbary coast of North Africa was the seizure of foreign ships and the sale of their Christian crews and passengers as slaves. Following the American War of Independence, U.S.

*Barbary continued on page 6*

### *Return to Tripoli:*

### *Sixth Fleet vs. Libya, 1986*

by Matt Burchfield

Commodore Edward Preble wrote to the Secretary of the Navy in 1804 that "[the Barbary States] are a deep, designing, artful, treacherous set of villains, and nothing will keep them so quiet as a respectable naval force near them." One hundred and eighty-two years after Preble wrote these remarks, the situation between the two powers had not changed that much.

During the 1980's, the dictator of Libya, Col. Mamommar Gadhaffi, had planned and sponsored a series of incidents and acts of terrorism against the West, in an attempt to gain more prestige and influence among his Arab neighbors. Among his more blatant attempts was the claiming of the Gulf of Sidra, the body

*Libya continued on page 8*

### **Inside The Day Book**

<b>Director's Column.....</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>Builder's Half-Models.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>NADEP Exhibit.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Volunteer News &amp; Notes.....</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Museum Sage.....</b>	<b>11</b>

# Where in the World is the Hampton Roads Naval Museum?

## The Director's Column

by Becky Poulliot

We recently embarked on an ambitious public relations and marketing plan to make residents of Hampton Roads aware of our existence. In June, the first phase of the plan was implemented. A local research firm conducted a phone survey of 325 respondents to determine aided and unaided awareness of our museum. We fared poorly on unaided awareness; no one listed us independently when asked to name museums in south Hampton Roads. However, when prompted, or aided, 58% knew about us. The military and civilian population were evenly split along awareness lines.

The findings, which are 90% statistically accurate, contain a wealth of useful information to guide us in future marketing efforts. It is a benchmark to measure against, and a foundation to build upon. Work is certainly needed in the area of military awareness, which we had hoped would be much higher. It is our goal to imbue a sense of ownership for the region's only

museum operated by the Navy.

We start by targeting interested segments of the audience. Military personnel will soon find advertisements in their bags when shopping at the Exchange or Commissary. These advertisements will double as coupons and allow those who validate them at the museum to get discounts at local restaurants and entertainment

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facilities. These coupons will also be inserted into the *Flagship*, the Naval Base's official newspaper.

We also began the distribution of informational videos, mentioned in the last issue, to target military organizations, both active duty and

retired. Modified videos will go to schools, civic groups, corporations and individual sponsors. The new Speaker's Bureau brochures should be mass mailed to area civic groups by the year's end.

Look for an advertisement campaign in the local newspaper in the upcoming weeks, which will make good use of a crisper logo and tag line. We are keeping the sloop-of-war USS *Cumberland* as the museum's logo because of its significance to our mission. For those of you who are not aware of it, *Cumberland* fought in the Civil War's Battle of Hampton Roads and was rammed by the ironclad CSS *Virginia*. The museum is the only repository of its artifacts, which were uncovered through an underwater archaeology excavation.

To ensure the professionalism of our product, the museum is seeking the help of the American Association of Museums through their Museum Assessment Program. Peers from the field will examine how we discover, interest and evaluate our audience. Before their visit, we are conducting an in-house survey to determine visitor response to the permanent exhibits. That effort is being assisted by docent **Harold Anten** and summer interns **Josh Brown** and **Matt Burchfield**.

With all these efforts, we should see an improved awareness level when a second telephone survey is conducted next year. We'll keep you informed of how these projects go. Please drop in and examine the written reports concerning the survey and the marketing and public relations plan. 

### About *The Day Book*

*The Day Book* is an authorized publication of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum (HRNM). Its contents do not necessarily reflect the official view of the U.S. Government, the Department of Defense, the U.S. Navy or the U.S. Marine Corps and do not imply endorsement thereof. The HRNM is a museum dedicated to the study of 200 years of naval history in the Hampton Roads region. The museum is open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

*The Day Book's* purpose is to educate and inform readers on historical topics and museum related events. It is written by the staff and volunteers of the museum. The newsletter takes its name from a 19th century Norfolk newspaper.

Questions or comments can be directed to the Hampton Roads Naval Museum editor. *The Day Book* can be reached at (757) 444-8971, by fax at (757) 445-1867, or write *The Day Book*, Hampton Roads Naval Museum, One Waterside Drive, Suite 248, Norfolk, VA 23510-1607. The museum can be found on the World Wide Web at <http://xroads.virginia.edu/~VAM/vamhome.html>. *The Day Book* is published bi-monthly with a circulation of 1,000.

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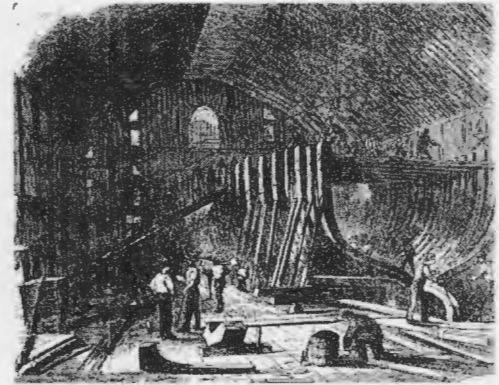
# Shipbuilding and Design with Half a Hull

## The Museum Collection of 19th century Half-Models

by Dana Wagner and Joe Judge

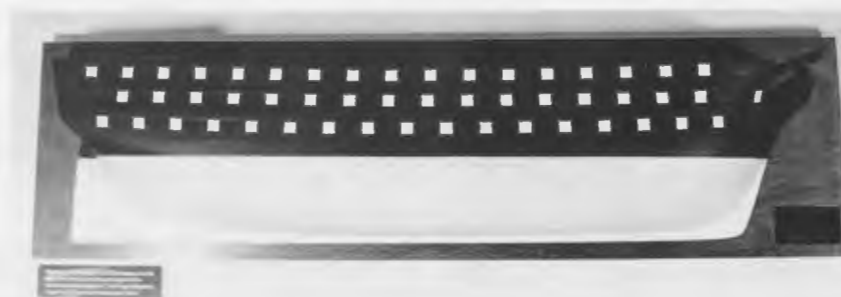
Of the many ship models in the Hampton Roads Naval Museum's collection, the most important are "builder's models." Builder's models are ship models used by naval architects as an aide in design and production of the ship itself. Naval design and policy makers can use such models to debate features of a ship. Two examples of these builder's models at the museum are the battleship

out of thick laminations of wood call "lifts." Pine was a popular wood used to make these lifts. Sometimes the designer alternated woods and used, for example, pine and cedar lifts. For larger vessels, lifts were planned down to represent one or two feet of thickness on the hull of the real ship.



the ship of the half model's hull by drawing it full sized on the mould loft floor. These skilled craftsmen easily noticed errors in smooths, or fairing, at this stage. Thin planks were cut and pieced together to match the lines on the floor, creating full-sized patterns called "moulds." These moulds were taken out to the shipyard to guide the cutting out of the ship's frames. The entire process is known as "lofting."

After lofting, the half model had served its purpose. Some became kindling on chilly mornings at the shipyard. Other were nailed or glued back together for display in the yards or in designer's offices. Many have



USS *Virginia* (BB-13) and the aircraft carrier USS *America* (CV-66).

A special kind of builder's model is a "half-model." Half models represented half of a ship's hull, usually the starboard side. The museum has two excellent examples of half models in its collection: the 74-gun ship-of-the-line USS *Delaware* and the 12-gun brig USS *Truxtun*. Half-models like these were important design tools for a ship's hull. Hull design established the speed, capacity, safety and reliability of a ship. The earliest recorded half model used in the United States was that of the ketch *Eliza*, built in 1794. The *Delaware* model dates from 1817 while the *Truxtun* was commissioned in 1843. These half models are easily the oldest ships models in the museum exhibits.

The half-model, like its modern counterpart, was part of the design process for the ship, and the ship designer personally carved the half model to a specific scale. In most cases, the scale was a derivative of one inch, so that one inch might equal eight feet or four feet or two feet on the original ship. The designer made the models

*Shown above is a builder's half model of the 74-gun ship-of-the-line USS Delaware. Loftsmen would build a ship by reproducing a full-size copy of the model. The model itself is only about three feet in length. But, it was detailed for workers to be able to produce a hull several hundred feet long. The final product of the above half-model is shown below.*



The designer relied on his practiced sense of touch to carve the model and scrape it smooth. Then the model was brought to a large room, often the upper floor of a warehouse with an unobstructed flat floor called a "mould loft." Here workers called loftsmen disassembled the model lifts. Using dividers and long battens, strips of wood used to fasten canvas, as measuring devices, loftsmen recreated

survived to this day, including the two examples in the museum.

Both *Delaware* and *Truxtun* are mounted on backboards. Originally backboards were carved out, or relieved, to accept the model. This relief process helped to hold the lifts together and aided the measurement work in the loft. Some models that did not have backboards had them added

*Half Models continued on page 4*




This is the builder's half-model of the brig USS Truxtun. Both half-models of Truxtun and Delaware are currently on display in the museum's Age of Sail gallery. (HRNM photo)

### Half Model continued from page 4

later, often with sternposts, keels, stacks, stubs, masts, propellers and deck detail added to give a more realistic effect. One very rare type of half model is known as the "hawk nest" style, in which the hull represented by frames overlaid with battens, gives a lattice-work appearance.

The naval revolution from wooden to iron ships did not eliminate the value of half models. During the 1840's half models called "plating model" were used to determine the size and curvature of the iron (and later steel)

plates used to make metal hulls. The plates were drafted in India ink on the surface of the half model, sometimes with written notations as to size and plate thickness. Plating half models became prevalent during the 1880's when ship design required advanced computations and scientific methods. With the advent of computers in the early 1960's, half models became obsolete as design tools. Ship models are still used in the ship design process, but they are primarily full-hulled models used in hydrodynamic testing.

Half models are testimony to an age when as much art as science went into ship design. They are practical and beautiful reminders of our maritime history. 

*The editor would like to thank Dana Wagner for his contribution to this issue. Mr. Wagner is the U.S. Navy's Curator of Models and is responsible for the care and maintenance of the Navy's collection of ship models. He works for the Naval Sea Systems Command in Patuxent River, MD which is responsible for research and development of future Navy warships and systems.*

## NADEP, Norfolk Exhibit Now on Display

by Joe Judge

A new exhibit utilizes material given to the museum by the Naval Aviation Depot, Norfolk (see last issue). The exhibit, entitled "Without Us, They Don't Fly" is primarily a photographic retrospective of the aircraft facility's history from 1917 to the present day. The exhibit illustrations begin with views of the canvas hangers, home to the aircraft and workers who came to the Norfolk waterfront in the infancy of aviation. It follows the story through World War II, when the Assembly and Repair Department worked two ten hour shifts, seven days a week. Two other sections treat the Cold War-era

and the last two decades, when work on the A-6 Intruder bomber and F-14 Tomcat fighter won the Depot praise



from all quarters. The exhibit features examples from the Depot's decal shop, which produced colorful logos for commands and squadrons over many

years. The biggest artifact in the exhibit will be a 1"=1' scale model of an A-6 under repair, built by Mr. Jim Ryan.

The exhibit is mounted on the outside wall of the museum, which is graciously being made available by the National Maritime Center. The exhibit opens for the official Sept. 25 decommissioning of the Depot, and will remain in place until February of 1997.

The Hampton Roads Naval Museum invites all former NADEP employees, their friends, families, or anyone interested in Naval aviation to view the exhibit "Without Us, They Don't Fly."



# Volunteer News & Notes

by Edward Lane

## Thanks for the Help

This summer, museum staff have had the assistance of two interns: **Matt Burchfield** and **Joshua Brown** both of Catholic High School. Matt is here for his second year of volunteer service. The two of them have been a great help, especially with conducting the museum visitor survey. We hope to have them back next year.

We would also like to thank **Leo Grudinski**, **Jenro Lambaiso** and **Charlie Devine** for their participation in the "Yes We Can" program.

Thanks also to the docent picnic committee for helping put together yet another successful annual summer picnic. **Harold Anten**, **Preston Turpin**, **Tom Duggan** and **EMI Francis Cannon** were the volunteer members.

## Awards

There is only one award this issue and that goes to the before mentioned summer intern **Matt Burchfield** who has achieved his pin for 100 hours of volunteering.

## Birthdays! September

**Al Petrich**  
**Jack Robertson**  
**Matt Burchfield**

## October

**Robert Deegan**  
**Bob Tye**  
**Bob Comet**  
**Tom Duggan**  
**John Simanton**

## Upcoming Events

On Sept. 4, **Dr. Harold Langley**, Curator of Naval History at the Smithsonian Institute's Museum of American History and author of *Medicine in the Early U.S. Navy*, will discuss the perils and health hazards of shipboard life. He will focus on the years 1790 to 1842 in relation to Norfolk. This will take place at 7:00 p.m. in the Galley Restaurant at Nauticus.

On Oct. 16, well known historical artist, **Tom Freeman**, will present a discussion on how he researches his paintings and researching in general


when painting historical scenes. This will take place at 2:00 p.m. outside the Nauticus Theater.

The next quarterly docent meeting for the docents will be **Sept. 26**. This will take place at 9 a.m. at the 232 Main Street, downtown Norfolk. We hope to have as good a turn out for this one as we have had in the past.

## Jefferson Award

Volunteer docent **Hunt Lewis** has been nominated for the Jefferson Award. This award is a prestigious national honor to recognize individuals throughout the country for performing great public service. The award is given out by the American Institute for Public Service.

## Final Note

We are working on a new lecture series for 1997. This series plans to offer nationally known speakers in a lunchtime or other daytime format. More details of this exciting new project will be forthcoming in the months ahead. 



# Medicine in the Early U.S. Navy

**Dr. Harold Langley**, Curator of Naval History, Museum of American History of the Smithsonian Institution and author of *Medicine in the Early U.S. Navy*, will discuss the perils and health hazards of shipboard life, focusing on the years 1790-1842 in relation to Norfolk. Make it a point to attend this memorable presentation. Free and open to the public.

**Wednesday September 4th 7:30 pm**  
**Nauticus Theater**

Presented by the Hampton Roads Naval Museum.  
For additional information please call 444-8971

### *Barbary continued from page 1*

ships had lost the relative immunity they had enjoyed while still apart of the British Empire. As more captures occurred, newly elected President Thomas Jefferson decided to send an American squadron to the Mediterranean to protect our country's shipping.

Capt. Thomas Truxton was initially given charge of this squadron but resigned in a huff from the Navy after being refused a flag captain to oversee *President* while he held overall squadron command. Portsmouth, Virginia-born Richard Dale was appointed in his stead, and the 44-gun *President* departed Hampton Roads on July 2, 1801. Other ships in this first Med squadron were the frigates *Philadelphia*, 38, and *Essex*, 32, and the fast schooner *Enterprise* of 12 guns.

Dale met immediate success on his arrival at Gibraltar when the two largest Tripolitan corsairs were discovered fitting out nearby. While they could not be captured in neutral territory, the watch on them was so tight that they were effectively removed from the war. Dale's plan was to maintain a blockade of Tripoli with one frigate while convoying American merchant ships with the others. President Jefferson felt that even though Tripoli had declared war on the U.S., the Congress had not authorized war against Tripoli. As a result, Dale was forbidden to take prizes and any captured Tripolitans were to be placed ashore as quickly as possible. In an extreme example, Lt. Andrew Sterrett commanding *Enterprise* had captured the corsair *Tripoli* off Malta on 1 Aug. following an intense three-hour battle. Given his orders, however, Sterrett released the ship after he completely stripped it. On March 10, 1802, Dale departed for America, arriving at Hampton Roads on April 14.

Capt. Richard V. Morris was appointed to command the next Mediterranean squadron. In addition to his flagship, the frigate *Chesapeake*, Morris' squadron consisted of the frigates *Constellation*, *Adams*, *New York* and *John Adams*. Morris' primary qualification for the job seems to have been the fact that his brother, Vermont Congressman Lewis R. Morris, had cast



*Lt. Stephen Decatur avenges his brother's death by dispatching the gunboat captain who shot him during the assault on the Tripoli gunboat squadron. Behind Decatur, the sailor Reuben James stops a pirate from slicing Decatur's head off. See page 7 for more on this heroic act. (Original 19th century engraving in author's possession.)*

the vote that broke the tie between Jefferson and Aaron Burr and gave the former the presidency. If Dale's performance had been only moderately effective, Morris' tenure was to prove disastrous. The commodore's mobility was hampered by the fact that *Chesapeake* was in terrible material condition following a period in ordinary at Gosport Navy Yard. Far more detrimental to the performance of Morris was the presence onboard of his wife and son. Mrs. Morris, referred to by *Chesapeake's* officers as "the Commodore's," was described by Midshipman Henry Wadsworth. "Her knowledge of geography, history, etc. are extensive & a passion for reading is predominant. Her person is not beautiful, or even handsome, but she looks very well in a veil." The problem lay in Morris' overly solicitous attitude toward his wife's comfort, particularly after she became pregnant in October. As a result, *Chesapeake* spent little time at sea. Before returning to the United States in April 1803, the frigate was in harbor 65% of the time and appeared before Tripoli for only five days.

As galling as this inactivity was to Navy Secretary Robert Smith, he was even more upset by Morris' failure to keep him informed. Smith wrote Morris

on May 4, 1803, "I have not heard from you since the 30th Nov 1802...It is a serious concern that we have not heard from you. I presume it would be superfluous to remind you of the absolute necessity of your writing frequently and keeping us informed of all your movements."

In April 1803, Morris, now with *New York* as flagship, finally gathered his forces for a close blockade. Ironically, just as Morris finally began to campaign in earnest, Secretary Smith decided to relieve him. Morris was relieved by Capt. John Rodgers. A Court of Inquiry found that he "did not conduct himself, in his command of the Mediterranean squadron, with the diligence or activity necessary to execute the important duties of his station." President Jefferson then dismissed Morris from the Navy. His replacement, Commodore Edward Preble in *Constitution*, departed Boston for the Med on Aug. 15.

Commodore Preble's squadron reflected the lessons learned in blockading by the first two squadrons. In addition to the frigates, *Constitution* and *Philadelphia*, there were the smaller and hence more useful brigs *Siren* and *Argus* as well as two schooners built on *Enterprise's* lines, *Nautilus* and *Vixen*. *Enterprise* herself would once again be retained in the Med. At the time of Preble's arrival, the Emperor of Morocco had begun to send out corsairs against American shipping. To deal with both threats simultaneously, Preble sent *Philadelphia* and *Vixen* to continue the blockade of Tripoli, while the remainder of the squadron as well as Rodgers now in *New York*, descended on Tangiers. The Emperor quickly reasserted his affection for the United States and re-signed the peace treaty of 1787 between the two countries. Preble was enroute to Tripoli when he received the disastrous news that *Philadelphia* had run aground and been captured off that city on Oct. 31.

The presence of *Philadelphia* in enemy hands created a new set of concerns for Preble as the frigate could be repaired. Some 307 Americans in the Bashaw's dungeons gave Karamanli great negotiating strength. Cutting out or destroying the frigate looked impossible as it was moored under the castle's guns. Fortunately, the *Enterprise*, now commanded by Lt.

*Barbary continued on page 7*

## The War Against the Barbary Pirates: 1801-1806



### Barbary continued from page 6

Stephen Decatur, captured an enemy ketch, *Mastico*, which Preble renamed *Intrepid*. This vessel offered the possibility of entering Tripoli harbor and attacking the frigate in secrecy. Decatur volunteered for the job. A survey board had found *Enterprise* rotten and not seaworthy during the winter months. This meant he and his men were available for the raid. *Intrepid* sailed from Syracuse in the company of the brig *Siren* commanded by Decatur's childhood friend, Charles Stewart. The ketch was manned by 75 sailors and marines led by four officers and loaded with sufficient

combustibles to burn the *Philadelphia*. Although the two ships approached Tripoli on Feb. 8, heavy gales blew them off station. The next week was a horror story for those onboard *Intrepid*. In a small ship in heavy seas, with no room to move about, sleeping literally on top of the barrels of combustibles, the men were further depressed to discover that the rations provided were rotten. Amazingly then, when the winds finally abated on 16 February, *Intrepid* was able to enter the harbor at Tripoli, tie up alongside *Philadelphia*, board it, set it on fire and withdraw to the open sea without suffering any losses. News of the action

caused a sensation when it reached the United States. Decatur was promoted to Captain (at 25 the youngest ever to hold the rank in the U.S. Navy) and presented a sword in the name of Congress.

Preble arranged for the loan of six gunboats and two bombards (mortar-equipped vessels) from the King of Naples. In mid-July *Constitution*, *Nautilus* and *Enterprise* departed Syracuse with the gunboats in tow. On the morning of Aug. 3, each gunboat was manned by 15 Neapolitan and 25 American sailors. The boats were divided into two divisions of three boats

Barbary continued on page 10

## Who Saved Decatur?: The Hero Question

One of the U.S. Navy's most enduring stories of heroism and self-sacrifice occurred during the first gunboat battle before Tripoli on Aug. 3, 1804. Lt. Stephen Decatur, jr., in command of Gunboat Nr. 4, led a boarding party into a fierce struggle to capture a Tripolitan gunboat. Decatur ended up wrestling on the deck with a much larger enemy captain. A Barbary sailor tried to aid his captain by striking Decatur in the head with a scimitar. An American sailor, although already so badly wounded as to be unable to use his arms, saved Decatur by blocking the sword thrust with his own head. Decatur, who had the good sense to come to a sword fight armed with a pistol, then shot the Tripolitan captain and the enemy defense collapsed.

The historical question arising from this incident is which American sailor actually saved Decatur? The candidates are Reuben James and Daniel Frazier. James was a 27-year old Quartermaster from Sussex County, Delaware. Seaman Daniel Frazier was in reality James North of Dorchester County, Maryland. Both men were crewmen on the United States Schooner

*Enterprise* which Decatur had commanded since November 1803. Both were helping to man Gunboat Nr. 4 during the attack.

James' chief support appears to come from Decatur himself. Decatur apparently told his friends it had been James who saved him. Decatur is unlikely to have confused James for Frazier. Historian Alexander S. MacKenzie seems to have relied particularly on the remembrances of one friend, Charles Stewart, in writing this section of his 1841 biography of Decatur. MacKenzie adds in an appendix to the work that he became convinced of James' heroism "after examining all the testimony on the subject, and having recently conversed with officers, who had the particulars of the encounter from Reuben James himself, and who saw the deep wound in the head, which he received on the occasion."

The best documentary evidence supports Daniel Frazier. Norfolk-born Lewis Heerman was surgeon aboard the schooner *Enterprise*. In his medical report after the battle, he lists Frazier as receiving "two incised wounds on the head, one of

them severe; one bad wound across the wrist and seven slightly about his hands" wounds that fit the popular recounting of the act. James is not listed on the report. A more direct denial of James' role comes in Ned Myers "as-told-to" autobiography written by James Fenimore Cooper in 1843. Myers had met James while both were patients at the Naval Hospital in Washington in October 1838. According to Cooper, Myers said, "[James] had the credit of saving Decatur's life before Tripoli; but he owned to me that he was not the person who did it. He was in the fight and boarded with Decatur, but did not save his commander's life." The only difficulty in trusting Cooper's writing is his long-standing and bitter feud with MacKenzie which may have given him a personal agenda in this instance.

Perhaps both sailors deserve commendation and remembrance. There is some hint of this in a letter written a month after the battle by Purser Noah Morris of *Constitution* who stated "[Decatur's] life was twice saved by his gallant tars." It may be that both James and Frazier were responsible for saving Decatur. ~J.M.

**Libyans continued from page 1**

water bordering the Libyan coast, as his own. This claim led to incidents between U.S. Navy carrier aircraft and Libyan fighters. The most famous of these being the 1981 "U.S. 2, Libya 0" incident, named for the *Time* magazine headline which reported the skirmish, in which two F-14 *Tomcats* shot down two Libyan SU-22 *Fitters* after the *Tomcats* were fired upon.

Tensions skyrocketed as Gadhaffi began to sponsor a series of terrorist strikes against the West. These had included the seizing of the cruise ship *Achille Lauro* in which a Jewish-American was murdered and the hijacking and bombing of a TWA flight in Lebanon. Tensions reached a climax after two very bloody bombings at a Rome and Vienna airport.

In January 1986, the United States heeded Preble's advice and began to assemble a very respectable Naval force under the command of the Sixth Fleet. This force included the Norfolk-based aircraft carriers USS *Coral Sea* (CV-43), USS *Saratoga* (CV-60) and USS *America* (CV-66), the state-of-the-art *Aegis*-type cruisers USS *Ticondergoa* (CG-47) and *Yorktown* (CG-48), twenty other warships and over two hundred



Along with three aircraft carriers, the Sixth Fleet also had in its inventory, for their premier usage in combat, the revolutionary *AEGIS*-type cruisers USS *Ticondergoa* (CG-47) (shown above) and USS *Yorktown* (CG-48). *Ticondergoa* formed the centerpiece of a surface group which first crossed Libya's so-called "Line of Death." *Yorktown* sunk a Libyan missile corvette with Harpoon anti-ship missiles on March 25, 1986. Both were homeported in Norfolk. (U.S. Navy photo)

an imaginary line which Gadhaffi used to claim the Gulf of Sidra as his own. Gadhaffi announced that his forces would attack anything that crossed it.

On the first day of the maneuvers, March 24, Libya held fast to its words. Upwards of six Soviet-made SA-5 surface-to-air missiles (SAMs) were fired at F/A-18's from a site in Sitre, Libya. The *Hornets* had little trouble evading the missiles as they were fired at extreme range. That night, a French-made *La Combattante*-class missile corvette,

warship. A few hours later, A-6's from *Coral Sea* and *Saratoga* attacked and sunk three more missile corvettes/gunboats using Harpoons and Rockeyes. The next day, a fifth gunboat was dispatched by USS *Yorktown* using two Harpoon missiles. In relation for the SAM attack, A-7 Corsairs from *Saratoga* launched a night attack against the SAM sites. Using HARM anti-radar missiles, the *Corsairs* disabled the sites.

It should be noted that Libya did have quite a significant military. Gadhaffi had more than just missile corvettes, SAMs and fighter aircraft in his inventory. He also had at least eight Soviet-built *Foxtrof* submarines. However, the United States had four nuclear attack submarines in the area which deterred the Libyans from sortieing their boats.

Success had seemingly been grasped by the Americans. Little had occurred since the attacks of March 24. The United States maintained its firm strength by keeping many of the Sixth Fleet ships below the "Line of Death." Libyan contacts had been at a minimum. Most of the contacts were curious MiG-25's and MiG-23's fighters were promptly shooed away by F-14's and F/A-18's without incident.

The situation seemed to be completely resolved. On April 9, the majority of the task force made plans either to return home or to make liberty calls in Spain. A bombing of a Berlin nightclub, in which two American servicemen were

**Libyan continued on page 9**



The "Ageless Warrior," the Norfolk-based USS *Coral Sea* (CV-43), conducts operations off the coast of Libya during Operation El Darando Canyon. This was *Coral Sea's* ninth deployment to the Mediterranean and ninth combat deployment in its historic 44 year career. (U.S. Navy photo)

aircraft. It was the largest battle fleet ever assembled in the Mediterranean since World War II.

By late March, the fleet had assembled off the Libyan coast. Called "Freedom of Navigation" maneuvers, the Sixth Fleet began to move ships southward into the Gulf of Sidra and Gadhaffi's so-called "Line of Death" at the mouth of the gulf,

armed with Exocet-anti ship missiles, approached the western part of the fleet. With the rules of engagement having been satisfied, the U.S. responded to the hostile approach of the Libyan corvette. An A-6 Intruder from *America* fired a Harpoon anti-ship missile and dropped a Rockeye cluster bomb on the corvette. Both struck home and crippled the enemy



**Libyan continued from page 8**

among the dead, changed all plans to relax. Based on an intercepted Libyan telex, which gave its congratulations to the terrorists for a "successful" attack, the United States decided to attack Libya proper. Ships and aircraft began to re-arm, pilots were re-qualified for daylight and night landing and a target list was drawn up.

The *Saratoga* battlegroup had already returned home having been at sea for a very long time in the Indian Ocean before being called into action. This left only two carriers for the strikes. However, the carriers were backed up by the availability of U.S. Air Force FB-111 *Aardvarks* based in England. As the crow flies, it is not that far from England to Libya. Unfortunately, not all of America's allies, most notably France, agreed with the strikes and refused to allow the FB-111s to fly over their air space. As a result, the FB-111s had to fly to Libya via the Straits of Gibraltar. They would have to refuel six times in the air each way. The Sixth Fleet decided to use the veteran A-6 aircraft to strike the Benina Airfield outside the city of Benghazi. The Air Force bombers would strike two barracks and an airfield in Tripoli.

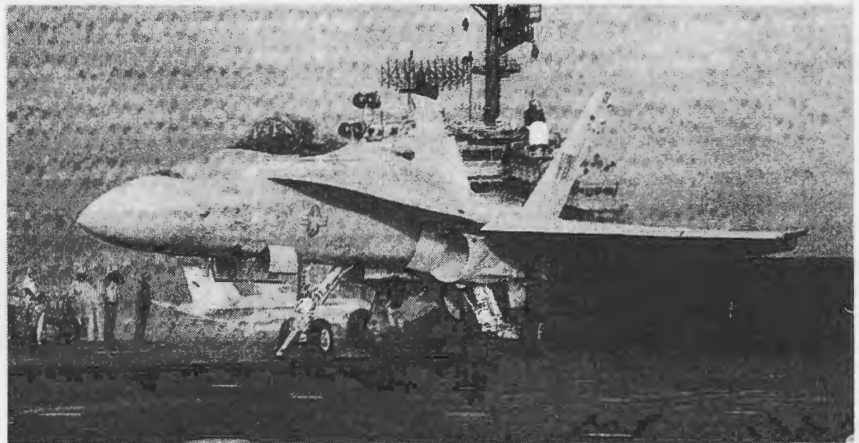
The Sixth Fleet counted on the element of surprise to pull off a successful attack with minimum losses. This element, however, was severely compromised and undermined by media reports that leaked the target list and the times of attack. As a result of the leak, Naval commanders seriously considered

a postponement of the attack, but decided not to in the end.

During the early hours of April 15, over 30 aircraft roared off the decks of *Coral Sea* and *America*. *America's* A-6s raced towards Benghazi while F/A-18s from *Coral Sea* provided air and SAM suppression cover for the incoming FB-111s. Despite the leak and much to the relief of Navy commanders, the element of surprise had been preserved. No Libyan aircraft challenged the assault and the streetlights in Benghazi were still lighted.

The attacks went very well as all

been struck. Four MiG-23s, two IL-76 early warning aircraft, two helicopters and two prop planes were destroyed on the ground as a result of the airfield attacks. Unfortunately, so were more than 100 civilians were killed or hurt, including one of Gadhaffi's adopted sons, an incident which the dictator used to maximum propaganda value. A few foreign embassies in Tripoli located near targets had also suffered light damage. But, with loss of only one FB-111, due to an engine malfunction, the attack was declared a success. Both the *Coral Sea* and *America* battlegroups



*A Marine Corps F/A-18 Hornet from the VFMA-314/"Black Knights" squadron, prepares for launch aboard USS Coral Sea (CV-43) during Operation El Darando Canyon. The strikes against Libya was the first use of the F/A-18s in combat where they successfully fired HARM anti-radar missiles at surface-to-air missile sites and intercepted Libyan MiGs. (U.S. Navy Photo)*

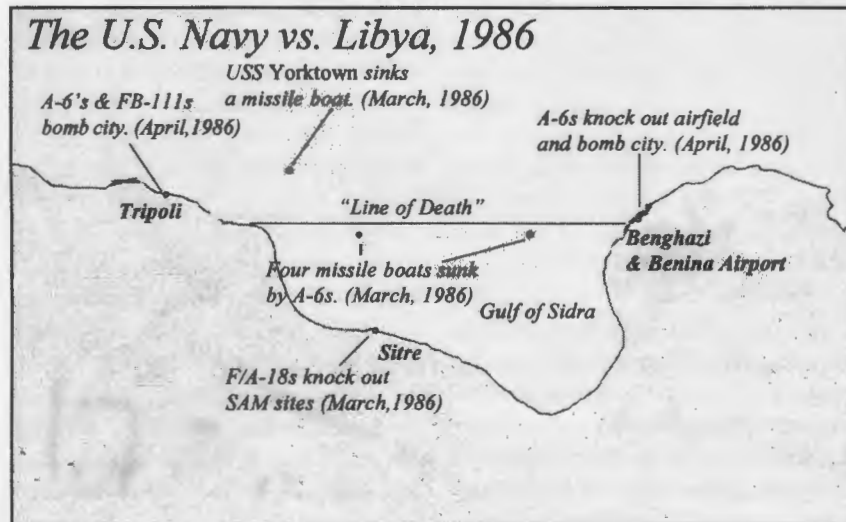
targets were hit and suffered light to moderate damage. A-6 pilots reported that the Benina airfield was last seen ablaze. Other pilots reported several SAM sites were left smoldering and targets in Tripoli and Benghazi had

headed for Hampton Roads on April 18. The operation was over.

News of the strikes surprised the world. The attacks caused some short-term strain between the United States and its allies. However, this was the price for the United States taking a strong stand against Gadhaffi and his policy of state-sponsored terrorism. The number of terrorist attacks connected to Libya dropped off significantly in the years to come.

The statement that the United States made in 1986 still echoes today. Gadhaffi is still in power. Recent reports state that he is building a nerve gas facility deep inside a mountain away from the watchful eyes of U.S. Navy aircraft. The 190-year conflict with the Barbary pirates is far from over.

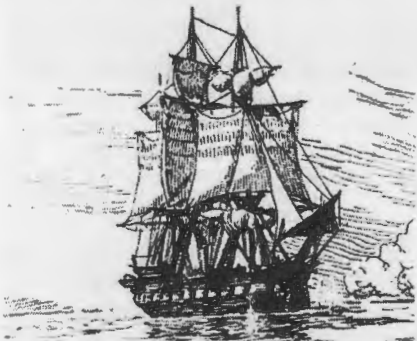
*Matt Burchfield has been a summer intern at the museum for the past two years. He is a 10th grade student at Catholic High School in Virginia Beach.*



**Barbary continued from page 7**

each, the first under Master Commandant Richard Somers of *Nautilus* and the second under Decatur. At 1430, Preble made the signal to commence the attack. The two bombards commanded by officers from *Constitution*, located on the west end of the battle line, began high trajectory firing at the castle. The Tripolitan gunboats were divided into three divisions, numbering nine in the van, seven in the center and five in the rear.

By 1500, the American boats were in close action with the enemy. Three of the American gunboats, No. 6 (Lt. John Trippe), No. 2 (Lt. James Decatur, Stephen's younger brother) and No. 4 (Lt. Stephen Decatur), succeeded in closing with and boarding enemy vessels. In each case, the combat was the stuff swashbuckler movies are made of. Trippe suffered eleven wounds in hand to hand combat with the captain of the boat he had boarded. James Decatur had just gone aboard a boat which had struck its flag in surrender when the enemy



Pictured here is the pride of the Gosport Shipyard, the 36-gun frigate Chesapeake. Chesapeake served as the flagship of the second expedition against the Barbary Pirates in 1802 under the command of Capt. Richard Morris.

skipper mortally wounded him with a pistol shot and then veered away. Decatur had already seized one gunboat when word came to him of his brother's treacherous murder. He turned over the prize to his second in command and sailed in pursuit of the fleeing enemy. He managed to close with it and boarded with a party of ten American sailors. The ensuing struggle lasted twenty minutes. It featured one of the enduring acts of heroism in U.S. Navy history (see page 7). In the end the Americans captured the boat at a cost of three men wounded

compared to 17 Tripolitans dead, four wounded and three taken prisoner. As Decatur wrote to a friend after the battle; "I find hand to hand is not child's play, 'tis kill or be killed."

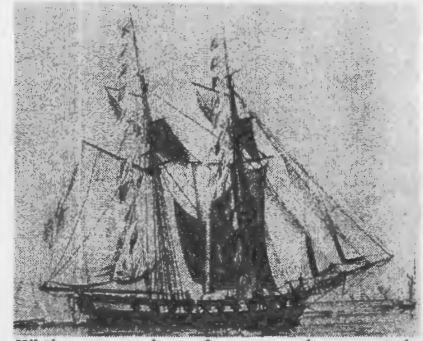
For the next month Preble continued to pressure Tripoli using the gunboats and bombs. Tripolitans seemed to have learned that the Americans could buckle swash with the best and refused any further engagement with their boats. On Aug. 7, the attack concentrated on the batteries to the west of the town. In the artillery battle that ensued the Americans lost Gunboat No. 9 with 10 killed and 6 wounded. In the early morning hours of Aug. 24, the squadron again bombarded Tripoli. The fourth attack occurred on Aug. 29 when each of the American boats fired more than 40 rounds closing to within 600 yards of the castle. A final general attack was conducted on Sept. 3 after Tripolitan galleys and gunboats appeared to the east of the town. Preble sent his gunboats after them while simultaneously committing the bombs to an attack on the castle. The Tripolitan vessels quickly withdrew, and, after a sudden change in the wind, the American vessels were recalled. Peace initiatives from Preble were ignored.

Preble now knew that a new squadron under Hampton-native Commodore Samuel Barron was on its way to the Med. Desperate to achieve success before losing command of the squadron, Preble agreed to a plan to convert *Intrepid* into a floating bomb. Loaded up with 100 barrels of gunpowders and 150 shells, Lt. Richard Somers and crew sailed into the harbor. Somers and the other officers swore before that if they were boarded they would blow themselves up to prevent the munitions falling into enemy hands. At 2147 on Sept. 4, only shortly after *Intrepid* had entered the harbor, it prematurely blew up in a gigantic explosion that killed all thirteen aboard. Whether this was accidental or intentional remains one of the great mysteries of the U.S. Navy.

Dispirited by the loss of *Intrepid's* crew, low on ammunition and with harsh winter weather expected, the squadron returned to Syracuse. With the arrival of Barron's command, the frigates *President*, *Congress*, *Essex* and *Constellation*, American strength reached an all time high. "Preble's Boys," as the junior officers of that squadron

became known to history, had gained great experience and were still ready to fight. Unfortunately, Barron arrived very sick and the pace became less active.


U.S. Naval Agent William Eaton convinced Barron of the advantages of using Yusef Karamanli's brother Hamet to



While not nearly as famous as the twentieth-century aircraft carriers bearing the same name, the 12-gun schooner Enterprise, dignified itself during the Barbary campaigns by serving as the chase ship for the American blockade. (1806 etching by Baugean)

threaten the Bashaw. Leading a force of Arabs, Greeks and Americans, Eaton was able to convince Karamanli to negotiate a peace. U.S. Consul Tobias Lear, anxious in turn to show up Eaton, obtained peace with Tripoli on June 4, 1805 by paying \$60,000 to the Bashaw.

Bey Hamuda of Tunis saw the potential for good profit in taking up the fight against the Americans and sent his cruisers to sea. These thoughts quickly died when a squadron of 16 warships, including 4 frigates, under the command of Capt. Rodgers appeared off the coast of Tunis. The Bey made peace in June 1806.

With peace now secured, American operations began to wind down. The remnants of Preble's squadron were ordered home. The remaining American ships began a round of port visits and cruising that would seem familiar to today's sailors. In early June 1806, the entire American squadron departed from Gibraltar for the United States. The Mediterranean Squadrons under Dale, Morris, Preble, Barron and Rodgers were crucial to the later success of the U.S. Navy. The campaign introduced the American frigate, arguably the most powerful in their class, to the navies of Europe. It also served as the schoolhouse for the officers who would make their fame during the War of 1812. Most of all, they provided the traditions still valued in today's American Navy. 



### Ooops...

The sage apparently jumped the gun a little when he mentioned two issues ago that the model of the attack submarine USS *Norfolk* (SSN-714) was going to be put on display. Well, with the curator's and exhibit specialist's assurance, the sage can now safely say that the model is on display.

What is this a model of, you may ask? USS *Norfolk* is the 26th member of the highly successful *Los Angeles*-class of nuclear attack submarines. Its keel was laid down by Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Company in 1979, launched in 1981 and commissioned into the fleet in 1982.

*Norfolk* is homeported at the Norfolk Naval Station along with 21 other submarines. It displaces over 6,900 tons and is about 300 feet in length. It has a speed of about 32 knots, has four torpedo tubes and carries 26 weapons. These weapons include the Mk 48 torpedo, *Harpoon* anti-ship cruise missile and the *Tomahawk* anti-ship/land attack cruise missile.

More information about this class of submarine and the submarine force in general can be found in the "Keepers of the Undersea" article in the 1996 Jan.-Feb. issue of *The Day Book* or several other books we have here at the museum.

The 1852 seaman's jacket is also now on display in the museum's Age of Sail gallery.

# The Museum Sage

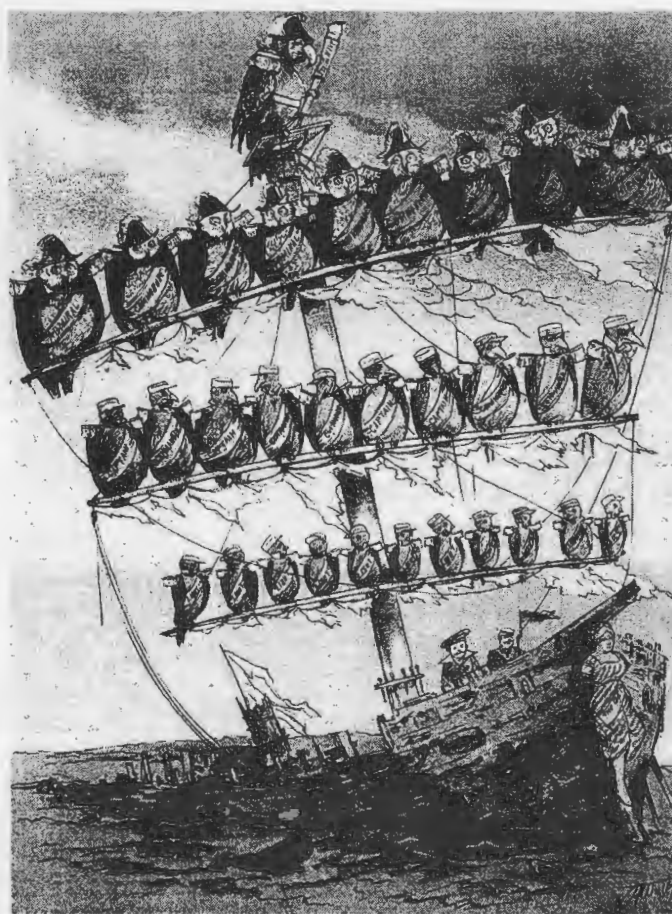
## Time for Another Sage Stumper!

The all-wise Sage has a doozie of a trivia question on Hampton Roads Naval history. Here it is:

During the early stages of the Spanish-American War, the U.S. Navy based a squadron in Hampton Roads consisting of the battleships USS *Massachusetts* (flagship of the squadron) and *Texas*, the cruisers USS *Brooklyn*, *Minneapolis* and *Columbia*, along with several torpedo boats,

torpedo boat destroyers and *Monitor*-type coast defense vessels. It was called "The Flying Squadron." Why was it called by this name?

If you know the answer, call the sage at (757) 444-8971, ext. 122. The first two correct answers will get, as always, a beautiful Hampton Roads Naval Museum coffee mug, courtesy of the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation.



### On the Lighter Side of Things...

The above cartoon appeared in an 1881 issue of *Puck* magazine and shows several U.S. Navy officers, drawn as birds, commanding one sailor and one marine on an obsolete wooden sailing ship. The cartoon, titled "Our Top-Heavy Navy, A Roost for Useless Birds," is a criticism of the post-Civil War Navy which went from over 600

ships down to 60 in less than ten years. However, many of the officers who served in the Civil War retained their commissions for many years after the war and as a result, the officer corps was severely bloated. The cartoon also was attempting to shed light on the current state of the fleet which lacked modern, steel warships and weapons.