

The Day Book

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A Newsletter for the Supporters of the Hampton Roads Naval Museum



The 74 gun ship-of-the-line, USS Delaware, arrives for the opening ceremonies of Dry Dock No. 1 at the Gosport Shipyard, June 13, 1833. (HRNM photo of a print by Joseph Goldsborough Bruff)

Building a Naval Legacy

The Creation and Construction of Norfolk Naval Shipyard's Dry Dock No. 1

by Joe Mosier

The caisson doors of the new dry dock at the Gosport Navy Yard, opened at 8:45 a.m. June 17, 1833 to admit the 74-gun ship-of-the-line USS *Delaware*. As the ship entered the dry dock, the receiving ship *Java* fired its signal gun. After sufficient water was

pumped out for *Delaware* to sit on the blocks, a second signal gun was fired, followed by a national salute from the Navy yard. Spectators ringed the dock and special seating had been assigned for the ladies on the second story of the engine house. Although no speeches were given, a reception later at Navy yard Commandant Lewis Warrington's house honored the principal guests, Commodores John Rodgers and Charles Morris, commissioners of the Navy Board.

Both local newspapers, the *American Beacon* and the *Norfolk and Portsmouth Herald*, prominently reported the opening day ceremony. This first dry docking in North America was recorded in a print by Joseph Goldsborough Bruff on display in the early federal period gallery at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. In fact, one inaccuracy in Bruff's drawing, the size of the crowd, resulted from both papers incorrectly reporting that the docking of *Delaware* would start at 10 a.m. In the words of the *Beacon*, "The immense concourse of persons that occupied
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The Sweet Time of Summer

The Director's Column

by Becky Poulliot

Summer isn't slow and easy at the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. From Memorial Day through Labor Day, we see the bulk of our visitors. We also take advantage of others' spare time by putting them to work. **Camille Hunt** joined us in May as an intern from Radford University. She is a senior, majoring in history with an emphasis on art history.

While working here, Hunt will be developing a special catalog on the frigate *Chesapeake*, a ship which carries a rich history in the Hampton Roads area. Her publication takes advantage of our important collection of artwork about *Chesapeake* and will serve as an educational tool for visitors.


In June, the museum played host to four public history undergraduates from Old Dominion University. ODU Professor **James Stensvagg** encourages his students to discover what the working public historian faces on a daily basis. Students travel on-site to institutions and observe the daily work routine. Here, the students adopted our curator, **Joe Judge**, as a mentor and spent considerable time with him going behind the scenes in each department.

The Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation continues to recruit sponsors for the museum's exhibits. Recently, the Norfolk Women's Council of the Navy League funded "The Battle of Hampton Roads" exhibit in the museum's Civil War gallery. The Council has shared an ongoing friendship with the museum for many years, participating in fundraising events. The check presentation at the museum was a bittersweet event for the Norfolk Women's Council, since the group has disbanded to merge with the Hampton Roads Council of the Navy League. Sponsorship of the Civil War exhibit leaves behind a legacy for the Norfolk Women's Council. The group is recognized on the new donors' plaque which is located in the museum lobby.



Pictured here, from left to right, is **Edward Wolcott**, President of the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation, **Mrs. Rose McAree**, Vice President of the Norfolk Women's Council of the Navy League and **Maj. Gen. Dennis Murphy, USMC (Ret.)**, Executive Director of the foundation. The Norfolk Women's Council contributed to fund the "Battle of Hampton Roads" exhibit in the museum's Civil War gallery. (Photo by JO3 Ellis)

Another fundraising event, the 1995 Tour of the Jamestown Exposition Homes, was hosted this Spring by the Tidewater Officers' Wives Club. A portion of the proceeds were recently awarded to the Hampton Roads Naval Historical Foundation and will go toward funding the museum's Jamestown Exposition exhibit.

In this issue of *The Daybook*, we turn our attention to the early half of the 19th century. Two events of great historical significance happened in Hampton Roads. First, Dry Dock No. 1, the oldest in the nation, opened at the Gosport Shipyard in June 1833, and five years later the Wilkes Expedition was launched from Norfolk on its way to discover the continent of Antarctica. 

When Duty Calls, the Honeymoon's OVER!

By Bob Matteson

As a result of the United States being plunged into World War II, many young men and women flocked to Armed Forces recruiting stations, Reserve Officer Training Corps (ROTC) programs, joined the merchant marine or went to work at war production plants in very large numbers. No one escaped involvement in the war effort.

Eighteen year old Charles Devine Jr., a second year pre-med student at Washington & Lee University, was no exception. When the United States entered the war, he joined the

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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 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. daily.

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 444-8971, by fax at 445-1867, or write *The Day Book*, Hampton Roads Naval Museum, One Waterside Drive, Suite 248, Norfolk, VA 23510-1607. *The Day Book* is published bi-monthly with a circulation of 1000.

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A Must See Model Now On Display

The Model of the Battleship *Virginia* is a Unique Jewel

by Joe Judge

A beautiful ship model has arrived on the first floor of Nauticus courtesy of the U.S. Navy's Curator of Models and the Hampton Roads Naval Museum. The ship model is USS *Virginia*, battleship No. 13. The ship and its model have interesting stories to tell.

The model is not new to the museum. It was featured at the museum's old location, the Pennsylvania House on the Naval Base, from 1979 to 1982. At that time, the model suffered water damage from a leaking pipe, and was returned to the Curator of Models. The curator decided to completely refinish the model. He and his restoration staff

Virginia was the lead ship in a class of five new battleships. The Navy designed these ships to be sea going battleships that would avoid the problems encountered during the Spanish-American War. The ships were authorized in 1899, and in 1901 the Navy signed a contract with Newport News Shipbuilding and Drydock Co. to build battleship No. 13, to be named USS *Virginia*.



The beautiful *Virginia* model is painted in the standard "Great White Fleet" colors consisting of a red underwater hull, a brilliant white upper hull, a panama buff superstructure, stacks and turrets, purple/brown gun barrels and sanded pine decks. The model is made of wood (mostly pine) and brass. (Photo by Marta Nelson)

took it apart for sanding, painting and repair. During this process, the team discovered a note inside the ship. It read:

*Francis T. Bowles, Chief Constructor
Washington Navy Yard*

Model started July 12, 1901

by E.R. Marceron and H.K. Proseve and James Baker

Edwin Phillips made small boats [etc.]

Painting [etc.] by John Henry Windsor

Charley Charleston

Josh Evans, Quartermaster


this paper put in

model Aug. 8, 1901

& the model closed & glued together

The name Francis Bowles refers to the Chief Constructor of the Navy's Bureau of Construction and Repair and was responsible for the design of the battleship. The workers were Navy employees at the bureau located at the Washington Navy Yard.

Virginia was launched in April 1904 and commissioned May 7, 1906. The ship was sent to Caribbean waters several times in 1906-07, and participated in the opening festivities of the Jamestown Exposition in 1907. Later that year, it joined the "Great White Fleet" for the never before attempted voyage around the world. *Virginia* went to participate in the American occupation of Vera Cruz in 1914. When World War I broke out, *Virginia* served as a gunnery training ship during the war and brought American soldiers home from Europe once the war ended.

The Navy decommissioned *Virginia* in 1920 and in 1923 was transferred to the Department of War for the famous Army Air Service bombing trials in 1923 off Cape Hatteras, N.C. The veteran ship, along with her sister ship *New Jersey*, were sunk by Martin bombers, Sept. 5, 1923. 

Volunteer News & Notes



by Jamie Swanson

The TRT tours that occurred on Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays during the months of April and May were a great success. The evaluations I have received from TRT present our docents with appreciative reviews. On one occasion, according to TRT's communications coordinator, **Cynthia Yusuf**, a young student was so enthralled with the tour that he did not want to leave. TRT hopes to schedule tours with us during the upcoming school year.

Some of our more interesting events in the past few months have included: the Azalea Festival exhibit featuring Lord Nelson, the *Inc.* 500 reception, Home Front Days at the MacArthur Memorial, Educators Night, the 2nd Annual Docent Picnic and **Dr. Charles Devine, Ralph Preston and Miriam Burgess** participation in the Fifth Grade Field Day at Northside Park. These three demonstrated Civil War era field bandaging to some of the students.

One of our model builders has become a celebrity. **Bob Comet** appeared in the May 18 edition of "The Sun," a Suffolk area insert of *The Virginian-Pilot and The Ledger-Star*. The article included a great story, pictures of his handiwork and also a plug for our museum. Bob Comet demonstrates model building on most Tuesdays as well as serenading patrons with concertina (while the glue dries).

As of May 25, the following volunteers became the latest members of the 100 Hour Club: **Leon Chevallay, Ed Cox, Jack Robertson and Mark Sanderson**.

On May 15, **Hunt Lewis** was the first volunteer to reach the **500** hour mark. The 500 Hour Award is a blazer patch. Ironically, Hunt accumulated the hours before the patch was produced.

We plan to have another basic volunteer training class in October. The new class will feature more "exhibit-based" instruction. Please pass on the word to anyone who may be interested.

Honeymoon continued from page 2

Navy's V-12 program, a Navy college program for non-aviators. After graduation in August 1943, Devine, while awaiting to attend medical school at George Washington University, was called to active duty as an seaman apprentice and was stationed at Bethesda Naval Hospital. His assignment was to take blood from patients.

When medical school started, off went the cracker jacks and on went cadet uniforms. "We went full time to med school, that is until the war was over, then [the medical school] decelerated us fast. They gave us six months off, released us from active duty, gave us all reserve commissions as ensigns and assigned us to the inactive reserves," said Devine. The effects of the large scale demobilization following the end of hostilities would come back to haunt the U.S. military just five years later. Following medical school, Devine spent a one year internship at John Hopkins University after which he accepted a fellowship at the Cleveland Clinic. While a fellow at the Cleveland Clinic he met and married Rae Ellis of Warren, Ohio who was a secretary at the hospital.

In 1950, when the Korean War broke out, the United States was called upon to provide the vast majority of armed forces supporting the United Nations effort in Korea. The U.S. Army at the end of WW II had discharged



HRNM docent, Charles Devine Jr., M.D., in a cadet's uniform while in the Navy's V-12 program in 1943. (Photo provided by Charles Devine)

doctors and as a result it took six months into the fighting before they could draft enough doctors to meet the need. To make up for the shortfall, President Harry Truman instructed the Navy to call up its reserve doctors and "lend" them to the Army.

Unfortunately Devine, now Dr. Charles Devine Jr., US Naval Reserve, left his mother the telephone number of the hotel where he and his new wife were honeymooning. Upon his arrival at the hotel, the clerk at the front desk had a message for him from his mother. His orders to active duty had arrived home. The honeymoon was put on hold as the Devines left immediately. After his physical at the Naval Air Station Norfolk, Devine started his two year obligation, "They sent us to San Antonio, Texas to teach us how to be in the Army and we got assigned to Fort Campbell, Ky with the 11th Airborne Division," said Devine. As a lieutenant junior grade, Devine spent the next six months as Chief of Urology at the Ft. Campbell hospital. "After that first six months, the Navy's Bureau of Naval Personnel in Washington, D.C. recalled all the doctors it had lent the Army and gave us our choice of assignments. There was a residency program at the Philadelphia Naval Hospital so that's where I had my final year of residency," said Devine. "That's also where our first child was born, on the Fourth of July, 1951," added Devine. 🐼



This is a somewhat romanticized portrait of Lt. Charles Wilkes, the commanding officer of the U.S. Exploring Expedition (also called the Wilkes Expedition). Behind him is the continent of Antarctica, which his expedition discovered in 1840. The ship to Wilkes' right is his flagship, the 18-gun sloop-of-war, USS Vincennes. (Naval Historical Center photo of a painting by Edward Stephenson)

Due South

A Great Naval and Scientific Triumph Begins in Hampton Roads

by Shayne Whiting

In 1838, one of the great peacetime achievements of the U.S. Navy began in Hampton Roads. On August 18, a squadron of six ships cleared Hampton Roads to search for evidence of a seventh continent in the world's southern waters. For years, there had been many theories about what existed at the two poles. These theories ranged from a big hole in the Earth's surface to the existence of an undiscovered continent.

Due to popular interest on the issue, the U.S. Congress authorized an expedition in 1838 to find out. The U.S. Navy chose an obdurate, but brilliant Naval officer by the name of Lt. Charles Wilkes to lead the U.S. Exploring Expedition, as the journey was officially called. Wilkes was one of the most brilliant navigators and mathematicians ever to serve in the U.S. Navy. Unfortunately, his demeanor was not well liked by some of his fellow officers, and this would have an effect on the outcome of the expedition.


Wilkes officially took command of the expedition in Norfolk during the spring of 1838. Two of his ships were currently being overhauled in Hampton Roads. His flagship, the 18-gun sloop-of-war, USS *Vincennes*, and the smaller 10-gun brig USS *Porpoise* were being repaired and

outfitted at the Gosport Shipyard in preparation for the journey. Over the next few months, four smaller support vessels joined *Vincennes* and *Porpoise* and the expedition cleared Hampton Roads in mid-August. Between the six ships, they carried 345 enlisted men, 85 officers, seven scientists and two artists.

The purpose of the expedition was to aid navigation and to expand scientific knowledge. The exploration of the southern polar regions was just one aspect of the expedition. Surveys and scientific observations were also completed in the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, including the areas around Australia and the Japan and Sulu seas. The expedition collected hundreds of geological, botanical, zoological and anthropological specimens before they turned south in search of land.

Wilkes first sighted land January 16, 1840. From mid-January to mid-February, his expedition followed an unknown part of what is now known as Antarctica for more than 1,500 miles. Wilkes was certainly not the first person to observe land in this part of the world, but he was the first to conclude by field observation that what he had discovered was a seventh continent. Unfortunately for Wilkes, there were many people who were skeptical of his findings and refused to believe him. Wilkes' conclusion was not officially confirmed until several other expeditions were sent some 70 years later.

When the expedition returned to the United States four years later, Wilkes was not hailed as a hero, rather 11 charges were brought up against him by the Secretary of the Navy on behalf of some of the expedition's junior officers. These officers, led by the expedition's Assistant Surgeon Charles Gullous, complained that Wilkes' command was cruel and oppressive. Wilkes was found guilty on only one charge, illegal punishment, and was given a public reprimand.

But despite the expedition's stormy ending, it benefitted the scientific and naval community long after Wilkes' death. Wilkes' charts of the South Pacific were done in such detail, that the U.S. Navy used them up until World War II. The zoological and botanical specimens and drawings which scientists collected on the journey laid the foundation for the Smithsonian Institution's Natural History Museum. The favor has been returned to Wilkes in that 1 million square miles of Antarctica is now known as Wilkes Land. 

Naval Legacy continued from page 1

the spacious area of the Dock Yard, amounting to many thousands, appeared, in their subsequent enjoyment to have forgotten the momentary disappointment of not having seen the ship going in to the Dock ... the highest satisfaction was expressed at the polite attentions received by those who visited this fine model of Naval Architecture, after she was securely set in her splendid *Granite Basin*."

The congressional decision to build a dry dock came in 1827. John Quincy Adams, who had been elected president in 1825, was a naval enthusiast. He strongly desired to continue the build up of the Navy that had started in the aftermath of the War of 1812. Congress, however, refused to make appropriations for any new warships. It did agree to continue spending on the Navy, but only in the form of timber stockpiling and construction of sheds to help maintain existing ships. Most importantly, the building of two Naval dry docks, one north and one south of the Potomac River, was authorized. Congress chose the Gosport Navy Yard and the Boston Navy Yard at Charlestown, Massachusetts for the construction sites.

The technology of the dry dock was not new in 1833. The first dry dock in England had been built in 1495. Congress had twice before, 1799 and 1813, authorized the building of such a dock, but had failed to appropriate sufficient funds for the actual construction. Without a dry dock, work on the portion of a ship normally under water could be done only after ships had been careened or heaved down. This process involved removing the ship's guns and ballast, attaching ropes to the masts and pulling the vessel over onto its side. The ship had to be righted again during high tide to prevent too much water from entering the hull. It was a lengthy and potentially damaging process.

The person given the responsibility for building both facilities was Col. Loammi Baldwin, Jr. of North Woburn, Massachusetts. Although his military rank seems to have had the same validity as that of KFC's Col. Sanders, he was probably the best civil engineer of his day. In 1824, he toured Europe and examined the dry docks in the city of Antwerp. Based on his designs, work commenced on the docks November 1827. A coffer dam was built surrounding the site, and land excavated until a pit 40 feet deep, 340 feet long and about 100 feet wide was formed. The pit was then lined with blocks of granite from Massachusetts. The engine house with steam pumps and a system of piping came next. The inner and outer gates were then installed to complete the dry dock. The final cost to the taxpayers was a hefty \$974,365. 65.

The dry-docking of *Delaware* was an American first, but only barely. A week later, "Old Ironsides," *USS Constitution*, entered the dry dock

at Charlestown. Compared to the opening ceremonies at Gosport, the Charlestown ceremony was far more impressive. Guests of honor included the Vice President, the Secretary of the Navy and the Governor of Massachusetts. President Andrew Jackson was to have been present but had fallen ill during the trip from Washington.

By July 2, 1833, *Delaware* was out of the Gosport Dry Dock with a newly coppered bottom. It was followed shortly by the ship-of-line *USS New York*. In the next decades, the dry dock became an invaluable resource for the U.S. Navy. Although both sides in the Civil War attempted to blow up the dry dock, damage proved minor. The Navy constructed a second dry dock at Gosport in 1889 and a third in 1911. The upsurge in shipbuilding brought on by World War I led to the construction of three more dry docks all completed in 1920.



Pictured here is Dry Dock No. 1 early 1900's. The ship in the dry dock is a flush deck destroyer. (HRNM photo)

At the opening of the Charlestown Dry Dock, Secretary of the Navy Levi Woodbury said of America's dry docks, "Their utility is so fully acknowledged as to justify the expenditure, and their materials are so durable a character and their workmanship so faithful, it is hoped they may prove lasting as the granite of which they are principally constructed." The old stone dock of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard, now called Dry Dock No. 1, is still in use today, fulfilling Woodbury's hopes.

Calendar of Events

July

1, 1862 The Battle of Malvern Hill-While retreating down the Virginia Peninsula, the Army of the Potomac is saved by boats of the James River Squadron. The squadron prevented the Confederates from outflanking the Union army by providing crucial fire support. Among the ships included in the squadron were the ironclads USS *Galena* and *Monitor*.

4 USS *George Washington* (CVN-73) open for public visiting at the Norfolk Navy Base. Call the Navy Base Tour Office at 444-7637 for more information.

18, 1853 The Perry Expedition A squadron of U.S. Navy vessels leaves Hampton Roads en route to Japan. The expedition succeeds in opening Japan up to foreign trade.

22 & 23 The ship's company of CSS *Virginia* will have displays set up in the museum's Civil War gallery.

28 & 29 The Blackbeard Pirate Jamboree-A festival of music, pirate boats and children's activities. To be held at Town Point Park. Call Festevents at 441-2345 for more information.



The Battle of Malvern Hill-Ships of the Union James River Squadron, which included the ironclads USS *Monitor* and *Galena*, are shown here providing fire support for the Army of the Potomac, July 1, 1862. (HRNM photograph of an engraving drawn by C. Parsons)

July Birthdays

Jerry Avenson	George Fleck
Jack Clark	Bob D. Harrop
Joe Curtis, Jr.	Betty Eisele
Peter Watson	Boyd Hupman
Jim Miles	



August

2, 1991 Iraq invades Kuwait-Over the next two weeks, the Norfolk-based warships USS *John F. Kennedy*, *Dwight D. Eisenhower*, *Mississippi*, *San Jacinto* and *Thomas Gates* are deployed to the Middle East as part of Operation *Desert Shield*.

14, 1945 V-J Day-Japan announces it will surrender unconditionally. With the announcement, World War II officially comes to an end.

August Birthdays

Gary Abrams
Raymond Weller
Kenneth Landry
Bill Colona
Luther Beck
Michael Clark
Larry Warren





Ship's Company
of
CSS *Virginia*

July 22 & 23

Visit with the living history troupe 'Ship's mpany' as they portray crew members of the CSS *Virginia*. The crew will display civil war items such as accouterments, weapons, medical equipment and uniforms.