



MARITIME EXCHANGE  
240 Cherry Street  
Philadelphia, PA 19106

# THE BEACON

Spring 2025  
Volume 35, No.2

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U.S. POSTAGE  
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WILMINGTON, DE  
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## BUSINESS LEADERS FORM PHILADELPHIA MARITIME EXCHANGE

*Over 150 years ago, port leaders convened in the offices of the Commercial Exchange located at 135 S. 2nd Street in Philadelphia to formalize the creation of the Maritime Exchange. They met in the heart of the thriving port city, what we now so quaintly call Olde City, to organize the maritime community under the umbrella of a maritime exchange and to begin collecting and disseminating vessel schedules. The current staff of the Exchange is certain that we, and all the men and women who have dedicated themselves to the organization over the past 150 years, have done justice to the vision these founders conceived on that cold February afternoon in an age of sailing and steam-powered commercial ships. Following are the minutes from that historic meeting.*

### Commercial Exchange Minutes – February 25, 1875

In pursuance of a published call, a meeting was held on the afternoon of February 25, 1875 at 3 o'clock, in the reception room of the Commercial Exchange, by Exporters, Importers, Ship Brokers, and others interested in the commerce of the Port, for the purpose of forming a permanent organization.

Mr. William Brockie was called to the chair and Mr. Edwin Adams acted as Secretary.

Letters were read from Messrs. N & J Taylor Co., and Messrs. H. J. Damon & Co., stating their inability to be present and expressing their concurrence in the movement. A statement was read by the Secretary setting forth the object of the meeting, and naming a few of the advantages to be derived from the proposed organization.

After a few introductory remarks by the Chairman, relative to the desirability of form-

ing a permanent association for the purposes set forth, the following resolutions were offered by Mr. H. L. Gregg.

Resolved first that it is highly desirable that a permanent association be established to increase the commercial interests of the Port of Philadelphia by an organized co-operation of merchants, and other in the transaction of maritime business, the collection, distribution, and perpetuation of reliable information relating thereto, the settlement of differences and the reformation of abuses.

Second, That this association shall be entitled the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange.

The resolutions were taken up separately and after remarks by Messrs. F. L. Neall, Wm. G. Boulton, Geo W. Mears, the Chairman and others, were unanimously adopted.



*The Commercial Exchange, where maritime leaders founded the Maritime Exchange, was sold to the Keystone Telephone Company in 1901. Unfortunately, the building was demolished in the 1970s, and the site is now home to Welcome Park. Prior to the Commercial Exchange, the land was the location of William Penn's residence, known as the Slate Roof House, until 1867.*

*continued on page 16*

## Some Incidents in the History of the Port of Philadelphia Since the Centennial Year

*A letter to the City History Society of Philadelphia, Tuesday, March 21, 1922*

By: George F. Sproule

*The Exchange uncovered in its archives an original letter to the City History Society of Philadelphia from G.F. Sproule, who began working in the port as an employee of the Maritime Exchange when only a boy. He provided a first-hand account of Delaware River port life from 1882 to when he typed the letter in 1922. The following are excerpts from that letter.*

### To: Mr. President and Members of the City History Society of Philadelphia

Dr. Leffmenn has asked me to address you this evening on the subject, "Some incidents in the History of the Port of Philadelphia since the Centennial Year."

It would not be possible for me to date back quite that far. My experience, however, dates back to May 16, 1882, when as a boy I secured a position with the Maritime Exchange. The first duty assigned me was the delivering of manifolded messages of the movements of vessels on the Delaware River and Bay to a route of subscribers extending

along the wharves from Race to South Streets. One year later, I was promoted to be reporter of the Exchange, and in that capacity was brought into close touch with shipping matters and began to know intimately the men "who go down to the see in ships." I have enjoyed an unbroken friendship with these sturdy characters to this day.

In 1884 I was made Vessel Clerk of the Port Wardens and was elected its Secretary in 1888, continuing in that position until the Wardens were abolished in 1907 when I was made Secretary of the Board of Commissioners of Navigation.

It was my pleasure to know such men as the famous Captain Leekey,



*George F. Sproule (5th from the left) later in his career as Director of Wharves, Docks, and Ferries.*

the author of many books on practical navigation and that well known work entitled "Lackey's Wrinkles on Navigation," a copy of which I dare say is on board every ship that floats in both the Navies and Merchant Services of the world. He commanded the British Steamship "British Crown," then running on the American Line between here and Liverpool. I knew John Kelly, the famous Shakespearean scholar, who commanded the Steamship "Brit-

ish King," running in the same service, and recall distinctly an instance of his having appeared on the stage of the old Walnut Street theatre in the place of the leading men with Robert Mantell in "King Lear."

The equally famous Captain Shackford of this service was in command of the "Indiana." Captain Morrison of the "Ohio," Dodge was in the "Pennsylvania" and Sargent in the "Illinois."

*continued on page 20*





# Looking to the Past to Chart the Future

Lord Thomas Babington Macaulay, (B10/25/1800 D 12/28/1859) British Diplomat and historian of the 19th century once wrote “A people who take no pride in the noble achievements of its remote ancestors will never achieve anything worthy to be remembered with pride by its remote descendants.”

The Maritime Exchange’s preparations for this special edition of *The Beacon* and for the upcoming 150th Anniversary Gala were undertaken with those wise words in mind.

To dive into the 150-year history of the maritime trades of the Delaware River and Bay is to peel back the layers of our Nation’s own history. We are still (yet too often forgotten), a maritime nation.

To list what your Exchange staff have discovered through this historical deep dive would take up volumes.

Our historical records were discovered to be spread across varied locations among which

were in the Independence Seaport Museum along the Delaware River itself, in a millhouse alongside Brandywine Creek, at the Hagley Museum & Library (part of what was once the first Dupont family home), and as far inland as the Library of the University of Illinois in Urbana where a large collection of the Maritime Exchange’s annual reports reside dating back to 1901. Each of those reports holds an incredible amount of detail as to what the maritime businesses of the Delaware River were able to accomplish in the prior year. There are 150 such annual reports from the Maritime Exchange.

What quickly became apparent from this research is the depth and breadth of influence, stemming from the Delaware River maritime interests working together, and the extent of that influence across our expanding young nation and into today.

From the Maritime Exchange President’s letter of October 10, 1887 direct to President Grover Cleveland to request the establishment of the nation’s first International Maritime Conference, to the establishment of the first “Uniform Bill of Lading for Water Transport”, eliminating the requirement to show a BL for each of lake, river, and ocean transits, the tri-state maritime interests were very much national leaders. Our maritime ancestors even successfully pushed to increase the depth of the Delaware as far back as 1898 from between 17-24 feet to their goal of 26 feet. Time to start on 50!

From our nation’s first Navy frigate launched from Joshua Humphrey’s Philadelphia shipyard on May 10, 1797, interestingly

named “USS United States,” to the world’s first Nuclear Cargo ship, “NS Savannah,” built in Camden, New Jersey. The uncountable multitudes of naval and commercial vessels of all sizes built, repaired, berthed, loaded or offloaded, safely and efficiently since the birth of our nation, are a testament to the combined maritime capability of the tristate area, one that remains very much a strong maritime influence across the globe and that should not be underestimated.

Even knowing our history, however, the future is now and recent events have made it very clear that we are well into uncharted waters. As it was during such times in our past, it remains crucial that we continue to work as partners to ensure the continued sustainment and expansion of all of our maritime trade partners locally, nationally, and globally.

The Maritime Exchange, together with the membership and supporting public and private partners, continues to clearly demonstrate how great are the benefits of coming together as a team for a common purpose. Competitive yet cooperative to a common vision.

If this author had a single wish for the next 150 years it is that we continue to appreciate what the past has brought us, how our ancestors achieved it and how unlimited our future will be if we continue to work together as a team to common visions. It is amazing how far we get when we are all pushing full steam ahead in the same direction.

*George E. McCarthy*

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# The essential role of the Maritime Exchange of the Delaware River and Bay

A tribute in honor of the Exchange's 150th anniversary

By: Dominic O'Brien, Senior Manager, Marketing  
PhilaPort

How does a newbie come to understand the Delaware River port complex? I mean truly understand; enough to be an actual stakeholder in the Greater Philadelphia port community. The entire port complex is one of the largest in the United States, consisting of three states, over 40 maritime-related facilities, public and private terminals, and moving over 36 million tons of cargo each year. It provides good jobs for tens of thousands of employees and trade gateways for American companies. How can anyone understand something this big, complicated, and diverse?

You can't, really. Old timers in the port still learn something new every day. But you have to start somewhere. As a novice, you take the Exchange's training courses *Delaware River 101* and *102*, and you begin to understand. The Exchange is one of the only organizations that can bring the entire port together, so at these courses you meet people from other parts of the River—people doing entirely different work, and yet all part of the same complex. Someone from a bunkering company meets someone from a freight forwarder. Someone from a ship agent connects with

someone from a trucking company. And your network begins to develop. A few years later, you are taking a specialized Exchange training in safety, or the environment, or a Customs issue, and you realize the depth of their expertise.

You read *The Beacon*, because you must to stay informed. You read its legal and policy articles, technological explainers, national perspectives, and profiles on the personalities of the port. You learn something even from the ads. You have a question about one of the articles, so you call up Michael Fink, and he patiently gives the answer.

Later, you need to know something about a ship that came up the river last month, so you call Laura Miller, and she tells you about Maritime Online. The next year, she helps you run regular ship arrival reports to do your job better. Even later, Paul Myhre helps you get ship totals for a year by terminal, and you begin to understand the Exchange's immense data gathering work.

You check the Exchange Calendar to know what's going on, the Exchange Directory to see who provides that crucial service, the Exchange's Jobs Board to get the new

employee, and the Exchange Federal Register Highlights to find the grant info your job depends on. And you wonder: how does one organization, with a small staff, do so much?

If you are cursed, and had to do government affairs work, you depended on Beverly Ford and the One Who Knows Everyone, Lisa Himber. The Exchange brings together the lobbying power of an entire industry, using best practices from around the U.S., and advocating for the entire port in a patient, informed way. It's like herding cats, but they manage. Getting six U.S. senators lined up is not easy, but when it works, it is a Godzilla-like force in Washington. Oh, and they know what's happening in Harrisburg, Trenton, Wilmington, and in the Federal, state, and local government agencies. So you learn from them.

Comprehending the intricacies of the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers budget, as it relates to the Water Resources Act, as amended, is hard. Getting to know the key voices on the issue locally and in DC is harder. Managing the process without pissing off multiple other stakeholders is herculean. But it's just another day at the Exchange. Our U.S. Foreign Ser-



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Individual

Jackson Fox

Lisa Himber

Aidan O'Sullivan

vice officers could learn about diplomacy at the Exchange.

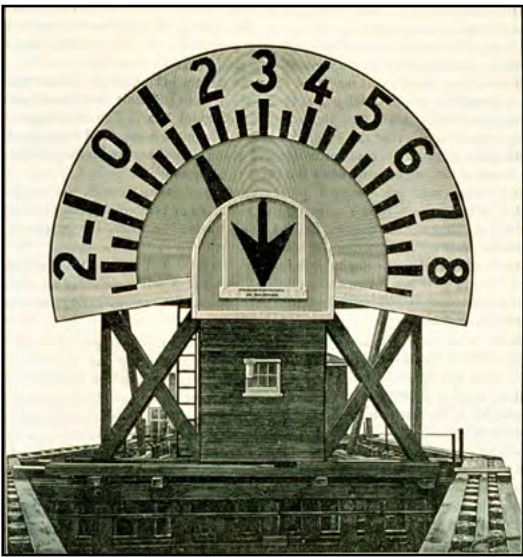
You went to an event of the World Trade Association, or the Maritime Society, or the Traffic Club, and at the reception Lisa Himber – or, if you were fortunate enough to know her predecessor, Dennis Rochford – told you the gossip, the key person to talk to, and a joke to make it fun. Walking into the dinner you hear the U.S. Customs Port Director say, “yeah, we asked the Exchange to help on this.” At your table everyone is talk-

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## Exchange implements first electric tide gauge

Reported in the *Twenty-Seventh Annual of the Board of Directors 1901, The Philadelphia Maritime Exchange*

At the instance of The Philadelphia Maritime Exchange, the United States Coast and Geodetic Survey perfected and installed on August 26, 1901, in the rooms of the Exchange in the Philadelphia Bourse, an Electric Tide-Indicator, by which the exact stage and character of the tide in the harbor can be determined at a glance, by means of a dial electrically connected with the tide station at the foot of Chestnut Street. The tide-indicator was designed and constructed by Dr. G. Hasler, Berne, Switzerland, but in the Coast and Geodetic Survey office, this apparatus has been modified, and has been supplemented by an important device due to Mr. E. G. Fischer, Chief of Instrument Division. The original form of the Hasler indicator only shows the stage of the water on the dial, but as modified by Mr. Fischer



*Tide gauges have come a long way since the turn of the 20th century. While the Exchange does not have a representation of the gauge mentioned in the 1901 Annual Report, this figure depicts the mechanical tidal gauge installed at Reedy Point on the Delaware River.*

the dial not only indicates the height of the tide, but shows automatically whether the tide is rising or falling.

## Gratitude for Unwavering Support

The Maritime Exchange extends its sincere gratitude to the entire membership for its support over these past 150 years. We would be remiss if we did not call to attention those companies that have been members of the organization for more than 100 years!

Interport Pilots Agency (1885)

Weeks Marine (1889)

Pilots' Association for the Bay & River Delaware (1897)

Fox Rothschild LLP (1919)

Moran Shipping Agencies (1919)

Norton Lilly International (1920)

The Board of Directors and the staff of the Maritime Exchange thanks this exclusive group of members and looks forward to another 150 years of cooperation and service.







# In Memoriam



**William Brockie**  
**First President**  
**Maritime Exchange**  
**Died Sept. 12, 1890**

*Excerpt from the Philadelphia Inquirer, September 13, 1890 announcing the death of the Maritime Exchange President.*

Stricken Down on  
Chestnut Street without  
a Moment's Warning

## HIS LIFE A CAREER OF SUCCESSES

Apoplexy struck down William Brockie, the well-known financier and businessman yesterday morning as he was walking down Chestnut Street in company with a couple of friends on the way to his office. He left his house on Tupehocken Street, above Wayne, Germantown, shortly before 9 o'clock. He was evidently in good health and the best of spirits, and there was no premonition of the stroke that was to come.

The death of Mr. Brockie was known almost as quickly in New York as it was about the business center of this city, and a telegram from New York, conveying the condolences of the Maritime Exchange of that city, through its president, Charles S. Whitney, was received by Secretary Sharwood of the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange. The loss of so able a businessman, and such a thorough gentleman, was widely felt.

Mr. Brockie found time outside of his business to interest himself in all sorts of public movements. He was president of the Maritime Exchange ever since it opened its doors. He was an ardent advocate of the Belt Line movement, as of everything else that would increase commercial facilities in Philadelphia. He was one of the most active spirits in the Philadelphia Board of Trade. He was the first naturalized citizen ever admitted to membership in the Union League.

Mr. Brockie was born in Edinburgh, Scotland on December 23, 1834. His ancestors were farmers, both on the side of his father and mother, although the father engaged in banking in Edinburgh. But as his preferences lay in other directions, after his education in the High School of Edinburgh he entered a mercantile house in Leith, Scotland in 1849. That city continued to be his home until 1855, when he removed to Liverpool, where he obtained a position as clerk and subsequently an interest in the old shipping house of Richardson, Spence & Co., of Liverpool.

On the death of a senior member of the firm of Thomas Richardson & Co., in this city, Mr. Brockie was selected to succeed them here. He subsequently became the general agent of the Old Dominion Line of steamers sailing between Philadelphia and Liverpool and when that line was discontinued in 1879 the Allan Line secured his services, which continued to the time of his death.

He was a man who engaged in a vast number of enterprises and spent his enthusiasm for the promotion of every one of them. The display of energy characterized all his work from his school days up, and he could be always polite and firm and positive in his actions and words.

His sudden taking off spread consternation and sorrow in shipping circles. As the news travelled along the river, vessel after vessel, and office after office, half-masted their flags.

# New aid for Ship Reports here

**July 8, 1946 ~ Maritime Exchange will share Cape Henlopen Speaking Station**

The Philadelphia Maritime Exchange announced today that it has reached an agreement with the Coast Guard for joint use of the Delaware Entrance Speaking Station at Cape Henlopen, which the Navy operated during the war as a control station for shipping.

Through this station, built by the army in 1942, the Navy reported ship arrivals, and gave sailing orders to vessels which were leaving the river ports. The Navy has discontinued its use.

The Coast Guard will use the station as a center for its rescue work and will maintain 24-hour radio and telephone contact with its present station at Lewes, Del.

The Maritime Exchange, whose reporting station three miles away on the breakwater was idle throughout the war, will also keep 24-hour watch at the station to report ship arrivals.

The Maritime Exchange reported 13 ship arrivals as follows:

- Froste**, Swedish ship from New York, consigned to Norton, Lilly & Co.
- Cape Charles**, Tecapilla, Lavino Shipping Co.
- Sheldon Clark**, Houston, Sinclair Navigation Co.
- Delaware Sun**, Sabine, Sun Oil Co.
- Fredericksburg**, Beaumont, Charles Kurz Co.
- Nordkyn, Danish Ship**, Oslo, B.H. Sobelman & Co.
- Clyde Austin Dunning**, New York, Norton, Lilly & Co.
- Hannibel Hamlin**, Boston, Norton, Lilly & Co.
- Cape Fear**, New York, Charles D. Devlin
- David B. Johnson**, New York, Dichmann, Wright and Pugh
- Charles M. Cole**, New York, Lavino Shipping Co.
- Helmbard**, Norwegian Ship, Bergen, Dichmann, Wright and Pugh
- Bidwell**, Sabine, Sun Oil Co.
- Gulfwave**, Portland, Me., Gulf Oil Corp.
- Atlantic Ranger**, Las Piedras, Atlantic Refining Co.

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# A TAPESTRY OF MEMORIES AND TESTIMONIALS FROM THE BOARD AND STAFF

How do you capture 150 years of history and memories in a few scant pages and do justice to the people who made the Delaware River and the Maritime Exchange successful? The answer is simple, you cannot. To but scratch the surface of such a herculean task in the next few pages, the Exchange collected a few of the myriad photos it has on file, and with the help of its board and staff, shared some brief thoughts on this long-lived organization.





# John Reynolds

Chairman, Maritime Exchange

My experience with the Maritime Exchange over the last 40 years has been one of the greatest pleasures of my business life.

When I first joined, there were a small group of power brokers who played a big part in the running of the Exchange. Bill Harrison was President, and I can remember him patiently listening to the senior members trying to tell him what he should do. Bill was an outstanding leader who helped shape the Exchange to develop into what it is today.

If we fast forward to today, our Exchange is one of the best in the nation, and it is positioned to continue that way long into the future.

With the recent retirement of our President Lisa Himber, after 36 years of faithful service, we carefully selected Lisa’s successor, Captain George McCarthy, who took over the Watch on January 1, 2025.

I wish Lisa fair winds and following seas and the best of luck to George.

# Robert Degen

Secretary, Maritime Exchange

I first became acquainted with the Maritime Exchange some 50 years ago when I came to Philadelphia to work as a young maritime attorney joining the firm of Krusen Evans & Byrne. In that role I had the occasion to visit the Exchange to gather ship information that was needed in connection with the various cases being handled by the firm as well as Exchange matters being handled by Jim Young who was then Solicitor to the Exchange.

My earliest recollection was visiting the Exchange offices on the mezzanine of the Bourse building, in particular, the big blackboard on which ship arrival and departure information was recorded in chalk. At that point it seemed that the business was being conducted in basically the same manner as in the previous 100 years. Although there may have been more people working at the Exchange, I only recall interacting with Bill Harrison and Eileen Collins.

Fast forward to the early 2000s, I had the good fortune to be appointed Assistant Secretary and later Solicitor on Jim Young’s retirement. By that time the Exchange had changed dramatically over the years. While still serving as an information gathering and disseminating organization, a port action coordinator and a government liaison lead, not the least of which was garnering support for the 45’ channel, the Exchange became a vibrant IT hub providing electronic information services to companies calling on ports along the Delaware River as well as other U.S. ports through Maritime On-Line, a suite of services including ship reporting, CBP cargo clearing, stowage plan information and an integrated automatic identification system. After 30 years handling maritime litigation matters, my horizon expanded to include IT vendor agreements as well as personnel matters, real estate lease issues, and other contractual matters.

Then in 2007, the Exchange was designated to serve as Fiduciary Agent under the Port Security Grant Program. As such, the Exchange was the grantee under the program and was responsible for administering sub-grants to port participants including local governments, agencies and port businesses. For me this opened an entirely new and interesting area of federal grant administration which lasted for the next three years during which the Exchange served in its Fiduciary Agent capacity. I especially enjoyed working with then-Vice President Lisa Himber as the Fiduciary Agent to work through the numerous daily questions concerning the various sub grants which the Exchange was administering. It has been my good fortune to have been involved with the Exchange for over 20 years assisting in the various legal issue that have arisen. I have thoroughly enjoyed the collaborative atmosphere at the Exchange and the sense that we are making a difference in the port.

# Richard Venuti

General Manager  
General Marine & Industrial Services, Inc.

Back in the 1960s, being in a ship service company, we needed to know vessels that were arriving to our port, what agents were handling them, and what berths they docked.

Joining the Maritime Exchange was the answer. We would go to the Exchange, located in the Bourse building, and copy off the blackboard the vessel arrival list in the morning and return to the Exchange in the afternoon and copy the pilot list for the following day. This gave us the opportunity to talk to the agents and send telexes to the ship owners for possible services they would need.

The Exchange was a great way to network with the port authorities.

# Robert Herb

Director  
Terminal Shipping Co. - A Division of John S. Connor, Inc.

It has been a great pleasure to serve on the Maritime Exchange Board for some three decades. I have felt to be a part of a lot of great accomplishments over that period.

There are many highlights, such as post 9/11 when we worked closely with CBP on many security issues. The implementation of the AMS service provider system. Of course, the “Dennis Rochford 45 foot river dredging Project.” The many interactions with USDA and CBP in regards to dunnage, in which the Exchange played a huge part of bringing the shipping lines and government together.

In addition to the above, more than anything, the Exchange has been a unifying force on the river. This I do not see in most other ports. I have most recently served as Treasurer to the Exchange (and I certainly take no credit for this, but feel the “team” has done a wonderful job!) and have seen sustained growth in the organization under the leadership of Lisa Himber and Dennis Rochford. It has been an honor to be part of a great organization.

# Karen Scotton

Operations Specialist, Maritime Exchange

I have worked at the Exchange for over 30 years and have seen many changes in people, places and things.

When I first started William Harrison was president of the Exchange, Dennis Rochford was TRACS Director, and Lisa Himber was in charge of getting the new and upcoming TRACS system up and running. Eileen Collins, Scott Anderson, and Jim Lombardo were holding down the office. And Michael Fink deserves special recognition as he is the glue in our IT dept. Darleen Michalak was also part of getting TRACS up and running, and Donna Stargell was part of the office group—and I know she is one busy gal.

In Operations, we were making plenty of phone calls and faxing our daily reports and tracking down agents for lists of ships expected to arrive. Scott crafted a generic form of ship reporting on the computer, which eventually turned into the reporting we do today.

There was no internet, no AIS, no emails. Back then I thought a windlass had something to do with the wind.

As my knowledge about the shipping industry grew, I realized that the Exchange played a very important role as an information hub. A 24-hour operation put Exchange employees on real time for any unexpected changes in schedules and emergency situations. Canal closures, integral office contacts, tugs, agents and the like were part of our many information sources and are even more so today. Knowing who to call and what to do in any given situation, we truly are here when your ship comes in.

I hope our new president is able to fill Lisa Himber’s shoes. She is smart, effective, interested, funny, and on top of big issues. There is so much more to be said about her work at the Maritime Exchange.

I’d like to recognize the important people that I have worked with at the Tower. Doc Newcomb, his brother Patrick, and Andy Polite patiently trained me when I first started. More recently, Bill Bayard, Craig Milbury, Lou Rickards, Robb Reyes were all long-term dedicated employees for the Maritime Exchange. All reported to the Exchange—rain, sleet, snow, or shine, putting in incredible hours when short staffed and keeping the integrity of the Maritime Exchange alive. As “we” would joke, “We ARE the Maritime Exchange.”

Finally, I’d like to recognize all the newer people that have joined the company. Paul Myhre isn’t so new but took some getting used to as I thought of him as a bull dog sometimes. He is very effective at his job. I now find him to be a very helpful and informed when questions arise. Laura Miller filled the very big shoes of Darleen Michalak and is the heart beat of the company; she manages the foreign lingo of TRACS and other government documents and makes sense of confusion (and solves issues) to keep things ticking. Taylor Kirk and Kenny Johnson also play big roles in this endeavor.

The newest tower staff people I hope will find the Maritime Exchange as rewarding as I have, Sarah Thompson, Michael Smith, and Shawn Garrett. I am sure the changes I have experienced over the last 30 years will also occur in the future.

# Yair Farkas

Administrative Coordinator  
Maritime Exchange

I wanted to be a part of the Maritime Exchange team because I was looking for a small group of mission driven people amongst whom I could learn the industry and settle comfortably into the work. What I didn’t expect was how stimulating and consequential the work would be, or how supportive an environment I was stepping into. In only a few months, my coworkers have provided me with invaluable direction, mentorship, and encouragement so that I can not only settle into my role as I had planned, but I can make my voice heard and truly become a part of the Delaware River maritime community.

## Lisa Reeves

### Partner, Reeves McEwing LLP

My introduction to the Exchange was in 1985, as a new lawyer working under the guidance of the legendary Jim Young, who was then secretary and legal counsel to the Board. At that time, the President was Bill Harrison, another legend in the maritime community. A few years later, the TRACS program was introduced, which brought Dennis Rochford and Lisa Himber, who have steered our organization through several decades. I look forward to continuing to serve on the Board and Executive Committee under the guidance of our new president, George McCarthy.

The Exchange has been invaluable to me on many levels. At any time of the day or night, I can call the operations department and get an update on a ship arrival, departure, and current location. Throughout the years, I have relied on the Exchange leadership and staff to provide critical information and contacts for my client’s needs, or just to bounce around ideas and solutions. Most importantly, I am grateful for the comradery and friendship I have found through my membership and participation in this exceptional organization.

## Sarah Thompson

### Operations Specialist Maritime Exchange

*“The pessimist complains about the wind; the optimist expects it to change; the realist adjusts the sails.”*  
– **William Arthur Ward.**

I had so many thoughts on what to say but I believe William Arthur said enough!

I was fortunate enough to join this industry almost two years ago, and I brag to anyone who’ll listen that it’s the best I have ever been a part of. I have met the most colorful, caring, and fun people—and that’s coming from an Army vet!

In my two years I have learned you literally have to “adjust your sails;” these winds blow in so many directions you have to be ready to take on anything. I am blessed to be part of a team that really gets that and are always willing to teach me how to “Straighten the Mast & Sag the Headstay.”

Those who are gone/leaving will surely be missed. I have many fond memories that I will continue to carry with me throughout this amazing voyage.

## Lynn Krueger Cointot

### CEO, Philadelphia Barge Company

I feel like I have a unique perspective of the Maritime Exchange, having been a member for several years, working as a contractor for them and also now being on the board of directors. I can say each of these roles has both benefitted my company and me as a person professionally. The Exchange and mostly the people that work there are always willing to lend a hand or an ear to assist their members and their friends. It is an honor to have my unique perspective.

## Donna Stargell

### Publications/Office Administrator Maritime Exchange

Working on the annual port directory for the last few decades, it’s been very gratifying knowing I’ve helped, in some small way, port companies working on the Delaware promote their services, especially when it’s a small family-run business. They always express their gratitude when I create a new ad or rework an old one for them. It’s been a pleasure working with the advertisers, some of the same people for years—nothing but kindness from them.

I remember when I first met Beverly Ford who worked with Dennis Rochford in government affairs and membership. I went over to her to introduce myself and, during the course of the conversation, asked her if she had any children. Beverly began to list their names and ages, some different names in there so I thought, okay, maybe she’s a flower child. When she was done, she said, “You realize these are all dogs.” I laughed and immediately knew we would get along as we have a common love of animals and a sense of humor. Anyone who knows Beverly realizes her companion animals are like her children. I learned a great deal from Beverly, sometimes by just watching her interactions with people. She was truly a mentor and I appreciate all the knowledge I gained working with Beverly. One of the smartest people I know!

As many in the port community know, Dennis Rochford worked diligently to get the Delaware River to 45-feet. He would often be on the phone with the Corps of Engineers or meeting with them or our federal delegates. He worked tirelessly to get the project funded. Although many people and organizations helped drive the completion of the project, I’m convinced the channel deepening would not have been so successful without his determined efforts. So much so, I think the Army Corps of Engineers should name the next Delaware River dredging vessel after him.

Bill Harrison pointed forward by accepting TRACS and Dennis Rochford and Lisa Himber took that mandate to heart, growing the Exchange’s use of technology exponentially over the last 30 years so we can provide the best service to our members. Looking forward to see what comes next.

## Paul Myhre

### Director of Operations Maritime Exchange

When I first came to the Exchange, it wasn’t as an employee but as part of an IT firm contracted to work on its systems. Originally, it was just another client, but one in the maritime industry. The industry was not new to me; I was one of several generations in my family to work in it and had worked for the Sandy Hook Pilots in New York. At least I had a clue as to what happened, or so I thought.

That all changed when I heard about an opening at the Exchange that I had to jump on. I joined the team as Director of Operations, and it has been a whirlwind of activity ever since. We have a saying here: other such duties as may be assigned, and boy, is that right.

For such a small team, we certainly do get a lot done, and I have been involved with much of it along the way. I’ve worked on things I never dreamed I would be doing, such as writing stories for *The Beacon*, meeting with legislators, and working so closely with the Coast Guard and other government agencies. I’ve learned much more about the maritime industry than I ever thought possible and proven that what I thought I knew working for the pilots was just the tip of the iceberg.

And while it’s never dull at the Exchange, one thing that stands out is the people. We all work together to accomplish great things; I have never seen a more dedicated group. While some of those people have changed over the years, we still manage to be family.

So, as part of that family, I would like to acknowledge some of the people we’ve lost: Dennis, and Bill; some of the people who have moved on: Lisa, Craig, Darleen, Ed, Scott, Yasmeen, Beverly, and Pat; and the people who continue to serve: George, Michael, Laura, Taylor, Donna, Yair, Candace, Kenny, Kim, Grace, Karen, Sarah, Shawn, and Mike. I would also like to thank Michael and Lisa for everything they have taught me throughout the years.

After spending over 16 years at the Exchange, I plan on staying another 16.

## Captain Rick Iuliucci

### Vice President, Operations Vane Line Bunkering, LLC

Serving on the Board of Directors is important. The ability to be part of the voice regarding how regulations impact the Port is very important to the success of Vane Brothers.

The maritime industry has been my life for 44 years; it has been a wonderful experience. In some small way, participating in the governance of the Exchange allows me to give back to the maritime community that has served me so well over the years.

Having participated over many years, seeing the culmination of the channel deepening project to 45 feet is so rewarding. With the Exchange at the forefront of the project and leading the way for the port of Philadelphia, it was great to be a part of this and to see the many businesses in the Port benefit from this.”

## Kenny Johnson

### Operations Specialist Maritime Exchange

I didn’t have any expectations about the Maritime Exchange job when I first saw it. I didn’t really know much about the maritime industry or what it entailed, but the job seemed interesting and I was willing to learn. The job always having something new to learn and being able to help people was a good hook, and I’m glad I took it.

The year I’ve spent with the Maritime Exchange has opened my eyes to just how many people are involved in the process of moving cargo from port to port. The agents, captains, terminal operators, customs, carriers, pilots, and everyone else that is involved in making sure everything gets to where it’s going. Being a part of the Exchange is like being the last piece that can connect all the others together and that’s pretty cool.











## Candace Stanford

System Administrator  
Maritime Exchange

I wanted to join the Exchange team because the Maritime Industry has always been something that I have been drawn to and understood. Being former Navy, the water, the vessels, and the ports are not unfamiliar territory. It is a passion to work in an industry that does so much to support our way of life in a way that the general public understands so little. I felt drawn to come back to a community that I know to give back in a way I was never able to before.

Taking on the position as a systems administrator for the Exchange has given me an opportunity to support the industry from behind the scenes as well as be socially interactive as well. Not just another face behind a computer or voice on the phone. I have had the opportunity to support every aspect of the industry with technological advances and improvements for our members and for the river. As we continue to make strides in the maritime industry I look forward to getting to be a part of the new generation to lead the way of progress to the ports and the river.

## Kimberley Zumbado

Director of Finance  
Maritime Exchange

Why I chose the Exchange? I was ready to transition from Corporate America and join an organization where my contributions would matter and make a difference. After interviewing with both Lisa and Michael, I was intrigued by the mission of the Maritime Exchange. What stood out to me the most, however, was the long tenure of the team members, which spoke volumes about the organization’s stability and culture. I left the interview knowing that I wanted to be a part of this team and community that drives success.

As I continue to work alongside a dedicated team that consistently demonstrates enthusiasm in supporting our mission, I am confident in our ongoing success and look forward to many more milestones ahead.

Working at the Maritime Exchange has been both challenging and rewarding. I am grateful to be part of the Delaware River maritime community and eagerly anticipate continuing this journey, with the hope of one day retiring from the organization.

## Shawn Garrett

Operations Specialist  
Maritime Exchange

Although my time at Maritime has been comparatively short (I only started in April 2024), the experience had already been enriching, as I’ve come to appreciate the historic position this organization holds and the vital service we provide.

## Laura Miller

Operations Specialist  
Maritime Exchange

Our late president, Dennis Rochford said, “We eat, we drink, and we play with ships.” Count me in!

I started at the Exchange 12 years ago. Coming into a business industry I never knew existed, and I had so much to learn. With a great group of people, Darleen Michalak, Scott Anderson, Paul Myhre, Michael Fink, Donna Stargell, Beverly Ford, Lisa Himber, and Dennis Rochford took me under their wings and guided me into the career that I have today. Can’t forget the impressive tower staff in Lewes that keeps operations running on mornings, nights, and weekends. Karen Scotton, Craig Milbury, Bill Bayard, and Robb Reyes always had a good story and plenty of advice to share.

I’ve experienced things and met individuals I never thought I would all while learning a new and exciting career. When I realized what the Exchange stood for and the great relationships this company had with their members, I knew it was a place I could grow.

Over the years, the Exchange has experienced change, but one thing always stood true is that there is a great group of people that work here, past and present to include Taylor Kirk, Kenny Johnson, Shawn Garrett, Mike Smith, Sarah Johnson, Yair Farkas, Kim Zumbado, and Grace Lee. We’ve shared many memories over my years at the Exchange and hope to continue create new memories as long as I’m employed.

## Michael Fink

Chief Administrative Office & Director of IT  
Maritime Exchange

Working at the Exchange has always been an adventure, something I would never thought of when joining any company as an IT person. I’ve had the opportunity to visit other ports throughout the U.S., meet new colleagues in this region and throughout the country, and stretch way out of my comfort zone with a chance to do web design, graphical arts, desktop publishing, grant writing, public speaking . . . the list goes on.

I had the luck of being hired a few short days prior to the first Marine Day in 1996. In my first week on the job, I attended dinners, receptions, and the event itself at Penn’s Landing. I couldn’t believe my luck! “This is the greatest job ever,” I thought! Of course, I had no idea of the work that went into planning and running the event, but over the next few years I was to find out.

Since then, I’ve never been bored. During my career at the Exchange, I’ve taken more ship and river tours than I can remember, each giving me a deeper appreciation for what maritime commerce means to this country. I’ve met U.S. senators and representatives, hobnobbed with federal administrators, and schmoozed with business owners. I was fortunate to explore the “SS United States,” kayaked with colleagues right up to a glacier in Alaska, and was conscripted to row in a huge whaling boat on the Delaware River... against the current.

Early in my career, I helped a steamship agency out by fixing some computers on a Russian oil tanker in Big Stone Beach anchorage. After I was done, the captain himself poured me a round of vodka as a thank you! That never happens in a traditional IT job!

All of these little (and sometimes not so little) memories build up to make time at the Exchange a treasured one.

But what really sticks out to me is the leadership and comradery at the Exchange. Right from the start, Dennis Rochford and Lisa Himber, then President and Vice President, made me feel valued and gave me the opportunity to grow far beyond the system administrator position for which I was hired. They took me under their wing, introduced me to virtually everyone in the port, mentored me, and provided support over the years. And I already have tremendous respect for George McCarthy as the Exchange’s new leader who seeks to continue that tradition of support and empowerment.

I’ve had the pleasure of working with fantastic people in our office, some gone now, and others still here. Donna, Karen, and I are now the “old timers,” but Paul and Laura are catching up fast. I thoroughly enjoy working with everyone on staff and hope all the few faces will remember us fondly when we pass the torch.

I thought I was pretty lucky 29 years ago when I found this organization. And you know what? I still think that.





# Perspective from the next generation

By: Taylor Kirk, Operations Specialist  
Maritime Exchange

Joining the Operations staff in 2022, I was fortunate to walk into the Exchange knowing familiar faces while the rest quickly made me feel like I’ve known them a lifetime. I was trained by Darleen Michalak and Laura Miller. With the two collectively devoting over 40 years to the Exchange, you could say I was in good hands.

I can still remember early on, Darleen and I sitting in her office for another long, tedious, training session. I’m staring at a hard copy Customs CAMIR thicker than the bible. With this tome propped open on its own wooden stand, I watch her, glasses slid perfectly on the tip of her nose, flipping through worn-down pages like a wizard searching for a spell. She is explaining Customs rules and regulations to me and I remember thinking, “how am I ever suppose to learn all of this?” But that’s just it. You never hit a plateau where you have learned all there is to learn about your job. Even after 30 years, you will come across those sometimes off-the-wall scenarios that you’ve never seen before. And once you figure it out, you’ll add it into a little corner of your brain. Where one day, you’ll come across that same scenario and think “ah, I’ve seen this one before.” You will be learning for the rest of your career here.

While I only spent shy of a year with Darleen at the Exchange before she retired, I will always be grateful for the time she spent teaching me all that she did. As I know Laura is grateful for the 10+ years of overflowing knowledge she received from Darleen. But not only that, someone to turn to for answers and someone to lean on when times get tough. For all that Darleen was to Laura for all those years, I soon realized for me, Laura has turned into what

Darleen was for her. Having a sense of closeness to those with whom you spend 40 hours a week is much more important than one could think. And I’m proud to say the Exchange is filled with it.

While Darleen and Laura are responsible for a huge chunk of who I am as an employee of the Exchange, I cannot give them all the credit. I wouldn’t be where I am without our director of operations and my boss, Paul Myhre. Literally, he hired me. When I sat in my interview with Paul, I remember thinking he could’ve been hired as a spokesperson for this company. The way he talked about what the Exchange is and what it stands for, it was obvious the man loves what he does. When Paul calls you into his office to show you something new, you know it won’t be a brief occasion. He really takes the time to not only explain what he’s doing, but *why* he’s doing it, and I admire that about him. Paul is the type of boss I know I can always turn to, whether it’s work related, car related, or just “I need to vent” related there’s no doubt he’ll be there ready to listen and help.

The Exchange is lucky to have a long list of employees who dedicated decades of their lives to its success. Some I have met and some not. For those I have not, the stories that live on make it seem as if I did know them. One being Dennis Rochford, our late president. Although I have heard countless stories of Dennis and how dearly he is missed by those who served under him, I have only known an Exchange under Lisa Himer and George McCarthy. As Lisa’s tenure came to an end and she began her endeavor on a well-deserved retirement, I am blown away with all she has accomplished during her career. As a young woman, watching her rule and influence in a predominately male industry is something I hold in high regard. She left the bar high, but her successor, George McCarthy, filled her shoes with such grace. As they always do, the Exchange staff welcomed him

with open arms. With a decorated resume in maritime background and leadership roles, George is a perfect match for the Exchange. With the wisdom he holds and the new ideas he brings with him, it is safe to say this company has and will continue to flourish under George. With less than a year in, he has already left his mark on these 150 years.

All employees at the Exchange are their own pieces of the puzzle, leaving us incomplete without one or the other. For those I have not mentioned yet, Michael Fink, our IT director who keeps our company running with Candace Stanford by his side. Donna Stargell, who wears more admin hats than I can count. Yair Farkas, who assisted Lisa, and now George McCarthy, and takes a hat or two off the many they wear. Kim Zumbado and Grace Lee, who keep our finances in order. Kenny Johnson, who we would be lost without in operations. And last but definitely not least, our tower staff in Lewes, Delaware. Karen Scotton, Sarah Thompson, Michael Smith, and Shawn Garrett, who dedicate long nights and sacrifice holidays and weekends to keep us running 24/7, 365 days a year. It takes a village, and I am proud to be a part of ours.

As important as each member of our staff is, none of us would be here without our members. I quickly learned that a member I talk to today is someone I will probably talk to again tomorrow. Whether it’s an agent, TRACS user, pilot, line runner, etc. you get to know who’s on the other end of the phone simply by their voice (unless you are calling us, in which case you will play a guessing game called “is this Laura or Taylor?”). The relationships you build in this industry are like no other. The Exchange and every person who lifts this company up have been better to me than I could ever imagine, and I cannot wait to be a part of it’s next 150 years.



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# How can we improve *The Beacon*?

In this issue commemorating the past, we want to take a moment to think about future issues of *The Beacon*. Is there some content you would like to see in our newsletter that we do not already focus on? Or an improvement you would recommend? If so, please send your suggestions to [DStargell@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:DStargell@maritimedelriv.com). We look forward to your input!

## Role of the Exchange

*continued from page 3*

ing about some new and difficult issue, and someone says, “that sounds like something for the Maritime Exchange,” so you learn what convening means. You realize that the Exchange tackles the problems that don’t fit anywhere else; that effect the whole port.

Once you’ve been around a few years, you join an Exchange committee, because you realize it’s time to give back, and you learn that the real leaders of the port form those committees. You go to a conference on the other side of the country, and

someone praises our Maritime Exchange for their national leadership on fighting tariffs, or ship tracking, or user fees. And you learn to respect them even more.

This tribute is not meant to scare George McCarthy as he takes the torch from Lisa Himber; rather it is intended to inspire him. Because the Maritime Exchange is doing crucial work for a lot of good people. It has performed this vital role for 150 years. George has the best staff in the world to help him learn. And the port community looks forward to working with him – even teaching him, at the beginning – to make sure the Exchange carries on its good work for many more years to come.




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# A Tribute to the Majestic “SS United States”



“SS United States” at layberth in Norfolk, Virginia, 1981



The Hales Trophy Trophy is awarded to the passenger ship making the fastest transatlantic crossing. The “SS United States” won this honor on her first transit across the Atlantic Ocean in 1952.

QUADRUPLE SCREW TURBINE STEAMSHIP  
“UNITED STATES”  
CAPTAIN L. J. ALEXANDERSON  
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.R.

Abstract of Log

Voyage Westbound  
From SOUTHAMPTON to NEW YORK, via LE HAVRE

Left Nab Tower, p.m., C.E.T. 196 Arrived Havre L.V., p.m., C.E.T. 196  
Distance, NAB TOWER to LE HAVRE L.V.: 75 Miles  
Steaming Time: 2 Hours, Minutes — Average Speed: Knots

DATE	LAT. N.	LONG. W.	HOURS	MINUTES	SPEED	WIND	REMARKS
							Departure Havre L.V., p.m., C.E.T.
							Arrived Ambrose L.V., a.m.,

Total Distance, LE HAVRE to NEW YORK: Miles  
Steaming Time: 4 Days, Hours, Minutes — Average Speed: Knots

NOTE: A Nautical Mile is approximately 15 per cent longer than a Statute or Land Mile

“SS United States” Log Abstract form to show speeds made between Le Havre, France and Ambrose Light, New York for each voyage.



Maiden voyage of the SS United States” from New York, 1952.



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# Navy and Marines to bring 250th celebration to Del. River

Homecoming 250 Navy Marine Corps is proud to announce the upcoming celebration of the Navy and Marine Corps’ 250th anniversaries in the fall of 2025. The event will serve as the grand opening of the semiquincentennial and the largest event honoring the military and veterans. It will be the largest celebration in the nation’s birthplace leading up to America’s 250th anniversary in 2026.

“The Navy and Marine Corps were both founded in Philadelphia,” said George Leone, President of Homecoming 250. “Both Philly and Camden were instrumental in building and deploying ships in the Revolutionary War and over the next 200 years. Homecoming 250 wants to honor that history, support those who serve, salute our Veterans, and remind us of what unites us.”

The celebrations will occur in Philadelphia, Camden, and along the Delaware River in October and November 2025. The momentous events will honor the Navy, established on October 13, 1775, and the Marine Corps, founded shortly thereafter on November 10, 1775. Both branches were born in Philadelphia, where they launched their inaugural missions on the historic Delaware River, setting the stage for their enduring legacy.

Festivities for the 250th anniversaries begin October 9 and run through October 16, 2025, with free signature 250th events hosted along both banks of the historic Delaware River, drawing veterans, tourists, educators, and history enthusiasts alike to the tristate area. The opening ceremonies will take place on October 9 with a spectacular parade of ships on the Delaware River. Following the arrival of the vessels, an opening ceremony will take place, featuring a formal blessing of the Fleet.

Watch parties for the parade of ships will be hosted at the Navy Yard, Fort Mifflin, and Penn’s Landing in Philadelphia, as well as at Fort Mercer in New Jersey and the Camden Riverfront.

Throughout the week, a wide array of free events will unfold, offering something for everyone to enjoy. History enthusiasts can explore exhibits showcasing the Navy and Marine Corps’ rich history and achievements at some of Philadelphia’s renowned museums, including the Independence Seaport Museum, the American Swedish Historical Museum, the Library Company of Philadelphia, The African American Museum in Philadelphia, and the Battleship New Jersey Museum and Memorial in Camden, New Jersey. Meanwhile, educators can attend academic symposiums on the 250 years of the Navy and Marine Corps’ history hosted by the University of Pennsylvania and Rutgers University-Camden.



Families can explore an impressive lineup of historic, replica, and active-duty Navy ships, including the cruiser Olympia, battleship New Jersey, and submarine Becuna. In addition to ship tours, visitors can enjoy equipment demonstrations on both sides of the Delaware River and breathtaking area-wide flyovers featuring Navy and Marine Corps heritage and active-duty aircraft. A highlight of the week will be a spectacular flyover by the Blue Angels on October 13, offering an unforgettable display of aerial precision and skill. For Veterans, a special Homecoming 250 All-Veterans Reunion Picnic will be hosted on Independence Mall in Philadelphia, offering a day of camaraderie, remembrance, and celebration. The event will feature various veteran service organizations providing support, resources, and information to honor and assist those who have served.

For those interested in pursuing a career in the Navy or Marine Corps, there will be numerous opportunities to explore potential paths. Maritime workforce outreach coordinators and members of the Navy and Marine Corps will also be onsite to provide valuable insights into the diverse career options available within both branches, from aviation and medical fields to leadership roles and technical expertise, as well as the maritime and shipbuilding industries. The week’s festivities will conclude with ship departures and closing ceremonies on October 16.

To stay updated on the latest Navy and Marine Corps 250th Celebration activities and events, visit Homecoming 250’s website: [www.homecoming250.org](http://www.homecoming250.org).



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# Maritime Society awards six scholarships

With a mission to aid and assist the development of the Port of Philadelphia and its maritime community, the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society sees its scholarship program as a way to meaningfully support the tristate port industry.

“The need for financial support to ensure a strong maritime workforce remains our primary objective,” said Society President Lynn Cointot. “The program has grown in number of scholarships offered and the associated amount of each scholarship. That is all due to our sponsors. Even during the COVID years, we saw growth and support that has led to the success of our program.”

The Maritime Society has been awarding scholarships to Pennsylvania, Delaware, and New Jersey residents and employees seeking education and advancement in the local maritime industry since 2012. The scholarship program offers assistance in three distinct areas: an industry degree for a current or future college/academy student; mariner advancement, which provides tuition toward Coast Guard-required training for an original credential, license, or upgrade; and professional development, which funds participation in a certificated professional development course related to marine, maritime or port-related subject and/or employment.

This year’s roster of award recipients includes five individuals from the merchant marine academies and one person from industry.

**Joshua Bajadek** – Joshua from Massachusetts Maritime Academy wants to ship out as a Third Engineer. Over the past winter, he served as a cadet with Maersk Lines Limited.

**Pierce Mallon** – From SUNY Maritime College, Pierce wants to obtain his Chief Engineer’s license and then decide between sailing on Chief’s li-

cense, a deck license working up to a Captain’s license, or to working as a port engineer in a shipyard.

**Liam McBride** – Also from SUNY Maritime College, Liam wants to work his way to Captain, help raise awareness about the industry, and to help prospects understand about maritime-related opportunities.

**DiMichael Olmo** – The third awardee from SUNY Maritime College, DiMichael is studying mechanical engineering, with the goal of earning both a bachelor’s degree and a Coast Guard engine license. He interned with Philadelphia Barge Company and wants to work on commercial vessels as a third assistant engineer. Long term, DiMichael wants to contribute to advancements in marine engineering.

**Daniel Soma** – Daniel has applied to Maine Maritime Academy in the Small Vessel program, and over the past two summers he worked as an intern with Philadelphia Barge Company. As a recent high school graduate, he is now working full-time and plans to eventually become a Master on PBC’s tugboat.

**Colin Walsh** – From King’s Point Merchant Marine Academy, Colin is studying to earn a Bachelor of Science degree in marine transportation and logistics. He wants to sail deep sea or work on tugboats with the hope of advancing to become a river pilot or docking pilot.

Congratulations to all the recipients! The Exchange wishes you the best in pursuing your maritime careers.

The Society is looking for sponsors for the next round of scholarships to continue to provide opportunities for the next generation of maritime professionals. Please contact the Society at [info@portsofphilamaritimesociety.com](mailto:info@portsofphilamaritimesociety.com) for more information.

## Maritime Exchange takes shape

*continued from page 1*

Mr. H. L. Gregg then moved that no signature for membership be binding unless at least one hundred signatures be secured; after some discussion as to the advisability of the measure M. Gregg requested permission at the meeting to withdraw his motion, which was granted and the motion withdrawn. A statement was then read of the estimated expenses of the proposed organization for the first year, placing them at \$3,500. On motion of Mr. H. L. Gregg, seconded by Mr. E. K. Stevenson, it was agreed that a committee of ten (10) be appointed by the Chair to secure signatures of those desirous of joining the association.

The propriety and advisability of going into immediate organization was discussed by Messrs. C. H. Cummings, H. L. Gregg, F. L.

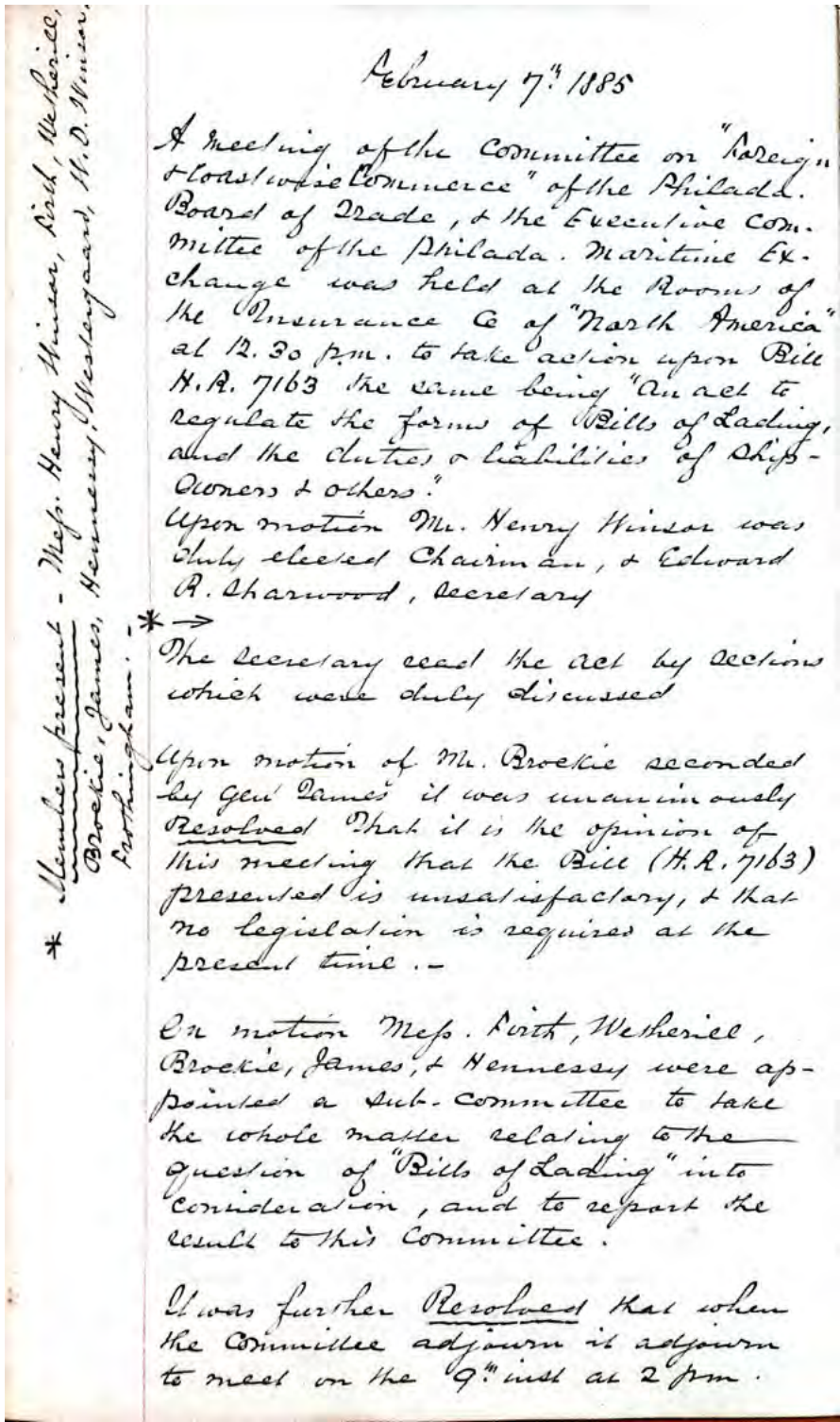
Neal, G. W. Mears, Mr. Vaun and others, after which on motion of Mr. Gregg, a recess of ten (10) minutes was taken. Upon the meeting being again called to order, and on motion of Mr. Geo. W. Mears, the motion of Mr. Gregg to appoint a committee of ten (10) to obtain signatures for membership was reconsidered. Mr. Mears then moved that three (3) committees of five (5) each be appointed as fellows, first on the By-Laws and Constitution, second on Nominations of Officers, & third on Programme Details, Mr Gregg proposed an amendment of fourth committee of ten (10) to obtain signatures. The amendment was accepted by Mr. Mears and the motion was carried. Mr. J. O. McHenry moved the committees be appointed by the Chairman at his leisure, which was agreed to. On motion the meeting adjourned to meet at the same time and place on Thursday, March 4th ‘75, afterwards amended to four (4) o’clock. Meeting adjourned at 4:30.



# Exchange led effort to standardize bills of lading

It is no secret that the Maritime Exchange has been active in the cargo manifest universe since the late 1980's. It actively participated in the initial development of the Automated Commercial System, then later as an early adopter of the Automated Commercial Environment, and most recently as a pilot participant in the Electronic Export Manifest.


But more than 100 years prior, the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange and other Philadelphia commercial interests led efforts to standardize bills of lading across different methods of maritime transportation. The committee, in concert with the Port of New York, was ultimately successful in its endeavor with the Congress of the United States passing H.R. 7163 (as amended) later that year.



The February 7, 1885 Maritime Exchange Bill of Lading Committee minutes are an extract from a journal of similar minutes found in the archives of the Hagley Museum and Library in Wilmington, Delaware.

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The BEACON is the Exchange's free newsletter exclusively dedicated to covering port issues and activities in the Delaware River region and beyond. Each issue is distributed to maritime and trade professionals in Pennsylvania, New Jersey and Delaware and throughout the country.

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# The Heroic Rescue of the Passengers of the “S/S Danmark”

Port of Philadelphia and the Exchange welcome heroes and passengers

In the early spring of 1889, one of the most remarkable sea rescues in maritime history unfolded in the frigid North Atlantic. The Danish steamship “S/S Danmark,” carrying over 650 emigrants—mostly poor Scandinavian families seeking a new life in America—was en route from Copenhagen to New York when disaster struck. The ship’s engine failed in early April, and the vessel began to take on water. Disabled and drifting in rough seas, the “Danmark” faced a dire fate hundreds of miles from land.

The passengers, mostly families with young children, were packed tightly aboard with limited provisions. With the pumps unable to keep up with the flooding, and no power to steer or call for help, the ship was at the mercy of the sea. Captain C.B. Knudsen maintained calm and discipline aboard the vessel, but the situation grew increasingly desperate as days passed.

Hope arrived in the form of the American steamship “Missouri,” a cargo freighter of the Thingvalla Line, commanded by Captain Hamilton Murrell. On April 5, the Missouri spotted distress signals from the “Danmark” and responded immediately. After assessing the gravity of the situation, Captain Murrell made a fateful decision: to attempt a full evacuation of the “Danmark’s” passengers and crew—even though his ship with 45 crew and 4 passengers was not equipped to carry such a large number of people.

What followed was a dramatic and dangerous operation. Over the course of several days,

lifeboats were used to transfer the passengers in small groups, braving icy waters, high waves, and the constant threat of capsizing. The crew of the “Missouri” jettisoned cargo, bales of rags and wool, to make room for the people. Remarkably, every single person aboard the “Danmark” was safely rescued by the “Missouri,” pushing the ship’s population far beyond any reasonable capacity.

With overcrowded decks and limited resources, Captain Murrell charted a course for the Azores, and after a stop there to restock and discharge some of the passengers, the “Missouri” set a new course for the United States. Rather than sailing to New York as originally intended, the ship was diverted to Philadelphia due to health concerns and the sheer number of passengers on board. On April 27, 1889, the “Missouri” arrived in Philadelphia to a hero’s welcome.

Local officials, citizens, and members of immigrant aid societies met the ship at the dock, and the city quickly organized shelter, food, and medical assistance for the weary travelers. The first and then President of the Maritime Exchange, William Brockie, held a reception for the captain in the rotunda of the Exchange building at Walnut and Dock Streets to celebrate the Missouri’s heroic deeds.

The story of the Danmark’s rescue captured international attention, and newspapers across Europe and North America hailed Captain Murrell and his crew as heroes. The Danish King awarded Murrell the Knight’s Cross of the



The Painting “And Every Soul Was Saved,” by Thomas M. M. Hemy, 1889.

Order of Dannebrog, and many of the rescued emigrants wrote letters of thanks expressing their deep gratitude.

More than just a dramatic tale of survival at sea, the rescue of the Danmark’s passengers became a powerful symbol of international solidarity and human compassion. It remains one of the most extraordinary feats of seamanship and humanitarian rescue in maritime history.

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# Royal Viking Line in Philadelphia



Absent a formal cruise terminal, Philadelphia nevertheless handled luxury cruise line operator, Royal Viking Line’s Royal Viking Sky, for a successful September 17, 1987, port call at Penn’s Landing.

Last year, PhilaPort announced that it will commence cruise operations in 2026, welcoming operator Norwegian Cruise Line® to Philadelphia. The “Norwegian Jewel,®” with its capacity to accommodate 2,330 guests, will homeport in Philadelphia from April 16 through October 17, 2026, featuring 24 calls to the city. During the summer 2026 season, “Norwegian Jewel” will offer seven- to-nine-day voyages to Bermuda, where the ship will overnight. When the weather turns cooler, from September 5 through October 7, the “Jewel” will sail 10- and 11-day open-jaw voyages to Canada and New England.



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# History of the port

continued from page 1

All have passed to the great beyond. The craft now in this service are capable of carrying 10,000 to 16,000 tons as against 3000 tons, which was the deadweight capacity of the steamships above referred to.

Captain Enoch Turley, well known as commander of the Cope Line Packet ship “Tonawanda,” who died some fifteen years ago at the age of 100 years, was in my early days active in the services of the marine department of the Delaware Mutual Insurance Company.

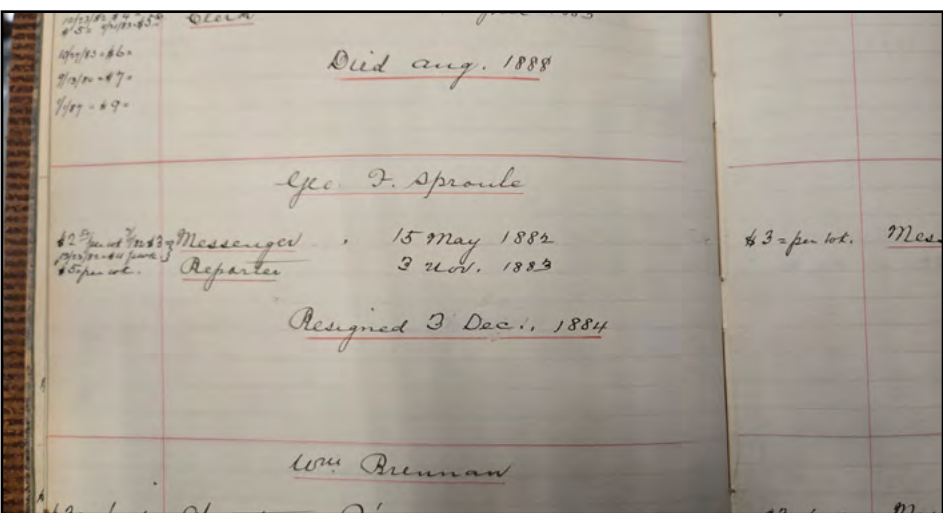
The old Winsor Line, between here and Boston, had in its service in my boyhood days wooden steamships – the “Roman,” Captain Crowell; “Saxon,” Captain Snow; “Norman,” Captain Nickerson; “Tonawanda,” Captain Sherman; “Cath. Whiting,” Captain Briggs; and the “Aries,” Captain Loveland. The latter ship was captured from the English during the Rebellion and was built of iron.

Mention of this old line brings to my memory the fact that the “Cath. Whiting,” Captain Briggs, while enroute here in the eighties, fell in with the old Guion Line steamship “Oregon,” from Liverpool, which had been run into and sunk during a thick fog off Fire Island and she figured prominently in the rescuing of the passengers and crew. Cap-

tain Briggs was afterwards Master of the “Roman,” which he lost on Handkerchief Shoals in August 1887. I was a passenger on the ship at that time.

I am perhaps proceeding a little too rapidly without making some mention of the earlier history of the port. The first attempt to make Philadelphia a port after his settlement and laying out by Penn occurred in 1766, when, by an Act of the Provincial Assembly, there was created a Board or Wardens for the Port of Philadelphia, a Body that continued in existence until 1901, when it was abolished, together with the office of Harbor Master, and there was created in place thereof the Department of Wharves, Docks and Ferries, with jurisdiction only in the corporate limits of Philadelphia; and the Board of Commissioners of Navigation with jurisdiction within the State limits outside the City area, with jurisdiction over the pilots, and having vested in it all the functions heretofore exercised by the Harbor Master.

The records of the old Board of Wardens, under the Act of Assembly of June 8, 1907, were turned over to the Commissioners of Navigation, and are replete with interesting dates regarding the early history of the port. The Wardens were organized in the Old London Coffee House, where they remained until the demolition of that famous building. In these early days the Wardens had control over the aids



The Maritime Exchange handwritten employment record of G.F. Sproule, author of the letter to the History Society. Mr. Sproule, a boy at the time, began his employment with the Exchange on May 15, 1882 at \$2.50 per week.

to navigation, which were turned over to the Federal Government after the Revolution. It is a matter of record that the old Cape Henlopen Lighthouse, still in service, the building of which was begun by the British in 1764, was completed by the Wardens. There are many records in these old Minutes of the difficulties experienced by the Wardens in keeping control over the lighthouse attendant, who, it was reported, frequently permitted the light to go out.

It was lighted by whale oil. The wardens maintained for inspection purposes a shallop called the “Delaware,” commanded by Captain Luke Shields, and so many complaints were lodged as to the unsatisfactory burning of the light that they made a trip

of inspection to the Breakwater, on the “Delaware,” and found upon their arrival that their trusted lighthouse keeper was in a beastly state of intoxication. He was severely reprimanded but was not dismissed. It took the Wardens twelve days to make this trip.

All the old ice breakers at New Castle and Marcus Hook, afterwards taken over by the Federal Government, were built under the direction and at the expense of the Wardens – as well as a number of the wharves. The old powder pier, the remains of which can be seen just south of the Greenwich coal piers, was built by the Wardens and the property afterwards passed into the hands of the Pennsylvania Railroad.

continued next page

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continued from previous page

A PROSPEROUS PORT

Philadelphia, until the Civil War, was one of the most prosperous ports in the United States, and her trade ranked favorably with that of New York. We had our merchants, who owned and operated their own vessels. Indeed this condition continued long after I became associated along the river front. We had such merchants and shipowners as the Scattergoods, Isaac Jeans, both importers of Mediterranean fruits by sailing vessels; the Welshes, Wattsons, and many others in the West India trade.

The first concerted effort to improve the facilities of the port began in 1889, when public spirited citizens such as Joel Cook, then President of the Wardens and a member of Congress when he died in 1910; Wn. R. Tucker, the present Secretary of the Board of Trade; the late Wm. D. Winsor; the late B. Frank Clyde; F. S. Groves, present agent of the Ericsson Line; and others – conceived the idea and successfully carried into effect legislation which permitted of the removal of Smith’s and Windmill Islands. These islands, located opposite the city, were removed by the Government in order to permit of the better development of the facilities of the port.

They were a part of the Fifth Ward of Philadelphia. For many years there

was located on Smith’s Island a pleasure resort and thousands of people visited this locality, being transported across the river by small steamboats. By the removal of these islands, an extension of the Port Warden’s or pier-head line was made possible, also the widening of Delaware Avenue and the extension of the piers into the river for a greater distance. During their existence it was with difficulty that the Pennsylvania ferry boats made their trips to Camden in foggy weather or during the ice season, as they had to pass through a narrow cut between the two islands.

Delaware Avenue, in the old days, were but 50’ wide and much congested with vehicular traffic. At times the passage up and down this marginal street was obstructed by the protrusion across the avenue of the jib-booms of vessels, many of which reached the building line on the west side of the street. This, in the early days permitted of much graft, in that the Harbor Master’s office, then a political one whose officials were allowed under the law to impose fines on ship masters who did not comply strictly with the port regulations requiring the rigging-in of the jib-booms. When the Harbor Master or his deputies were short of money they obtained it through fining Captains for violations of this regulation, but the fines were never made a matter of record - end pocketed.

Delaware Avenue today is 150 feet wide. well paved and is regarded as one of the finest marginal highways along the riverfront of any harbor in this country.

WIRELESS TELEGRAPHY AND ITS BENEFITS

Wireless telegraphy has completely revolutionized the manner of the reporting of the movements of vessels, and to a large extent has removed the anxieties that were once experienced by those having relatives on board craft delayed on their passages by accident or bad weather. In olden days when any of the Philadelphia passenger steamships were overdue it was a pitiful sight to witness the terrible anxiety of the hundreds who assembled at the piers awaiting for some assurances of the safety of their dear ones. This is all a thing of the past, as now noon reports are received by their agents giving their exact position and the time of their expected arrival. If one will notice the daily papers of today they can pick up in alphabetical. arrangement the exact position of all important passenger and freight steamships as of the preceding day at noon ... a wonderful change and a means of doing away with what was at one time known as “speculative insurance.” There were many, particularly in England, who made their living by speculating on the arrival or non-arrival of ships.


TORNADO OF 1885

One of the most peculiar and disastrous storms that ever visited this locality was on August 3, 1885, at 3:30 p.m., when a terrific tornado swept the river front, demolishing buildings and leveling everything within its wake. It crossed from Gloucester to Greenwich and completely disabled the steamboat “Major Reybold,” which was enroute from Philadelphia to Pennsgrove and Salem. Her pilot house was taken off and the pilot was drowned; it then crossed the river again at Kaighn’s Point; swept in through Camden and crossed the Delaware again at Port Richmond, playing havoc in its wake.


PASSING OF THE RUNNER OR WATER CLERK

The runner, or water clerk, was once an important man in shipping circles. These men represented every trade that has to do with ships, and their business was to solicit work from incoming ships, which were intercepted down the Delaware and often in the lower bay. The men were carried in Whitehall boats – boats propelled by oars – this was before the time of power boats. No class of men was subjected to greater hardships or more exposure in all kinds of weather, and it was not infrequently the case that

continued page 23



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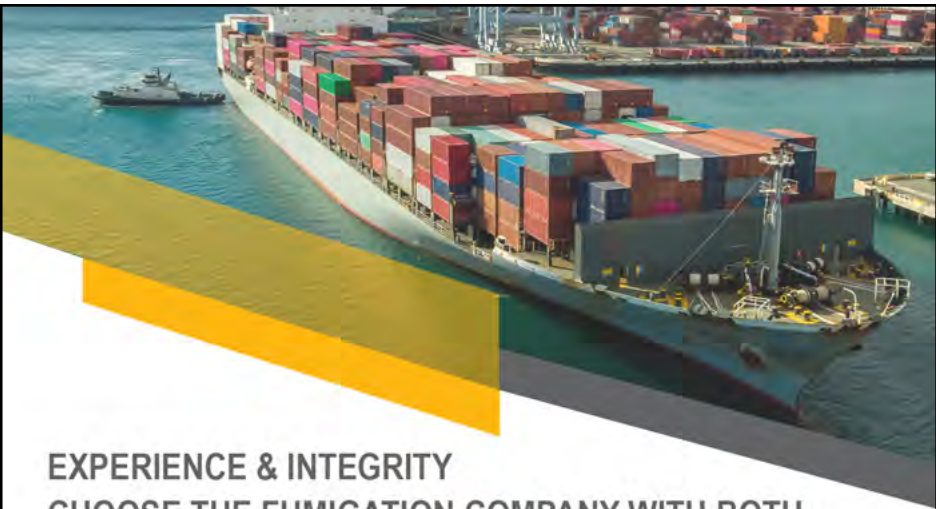
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Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society honors Robert Herb



Colleagues from John S. Connor and Terminal Shipping joined Robert Herb at the Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society Award Dinner in May to celebrate the occasion.

The Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society presented the “Person of the Year” Stephen Girard Award to Robert Herb, Director of Ship Agency, Terminal Shipping Co. - A Division of John S. Connor, Inc. on May 1, 2025. The award recognizes outstanding achievement and commitment to fostering growth at ports in Pennsylvania and New Jersey. His leadership, commitment, and untiring dedication to the port embodies the spirit of the award.

Robert serves as Treasurer on the Maritime Exchange Board of Directors, and he is the President of the Seamen’s Church Institute board of which he been a member for 25 years.

Congratulations, Rob!

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## History of the port

*continued from page 21*

they were unheard from for weeks in their search for business. Included in this class were representatives of the shipbroker, Chandler, stevedore, blacksmith, laundryman, doctor and sailmaker. The three prominent boatmen who were hired by these runners were Red Dick, whose boats were kept at Lombard Street Wharf; and Jeff and Tom Nolan, who had headquarters at South Street Wharf. Instances of narrow escapes and hardships in the prosecution of this business are too numerous to be referred to otherwise than generally.

When outward bound in search of arriving craft these hardy boatmen as a rule hooked the guard rail of some steamships and towed down behind her at such a great rate of speed that only a small part of their boat's stern was in the water. I recall distinctly in the early eighties that George Willar, a runner for Westergaard & Co., Victor Miner and a man known as Jersey Boyd in Tom Nolan's boat, hooked the Reading collier "Harrisburg" outward bound. The weather was stormy as the Bay approached, and they went on board the collier for supper; when they came to return to their boat they found the painter had chafed through and she had gone adrift. Nothing was left for them to do but go to Boston in the steamer. Their boat was picked up and they had been given up as lost when a wire was received announcing their safe arrival in Boston. This is only one, as I said, of their many experiences.

The runner, or water clerk, had now disappeared; this being brought about principally by an Act of Congress that became effective July 24, 1900, which prohibited others than licensed pilots from boarding vessels from foreign ports until they were boarded by the Custom's boarding officials and their Manifests certified to. As the Custom's boarding officers never board vessels below League Island, the runner's vocation was lost. Again, the master of a vessel is not the same free lance he was thirty years ago. Contracts are not made in advance with the various houses for work required, and the graft which was at one time possible has been minimized.

Conditions have changed along-shore since the early eighties. Nearly all the old landmarks and characters have disappeared. A different class of man is now engaged along the wharves. They are nearly all foreigners and the keen rivalry in the solicitation of business no longer ex-

ists. Everything is on a larger scale and arranged by previously made contract. Walnut Street, between Front and Third, and Front and Second Streets, between Chestnut and Walnut, are no longer the homes for shipbrokers, chandlers and sailmakers. Second and Walnut Sts. was once the scene of great activity and the day never passed without a fight of some kind in which policemen were generally or disabled by rough characters or drunken sailors.

On the pavement in front of what was once the offices of S.D. Adams & Co. and L. Westergaard & Co., shipbrokers, 138 S. 2nd Street, can yet be distinctly seen the bloodstains, the result of a fight which took place in 1883 between two men, then prominent in shipping affairs. One was badly slashed in the face by a knife and carried those scars to his grave. This blood was absorbed in the pavement, which is of soft stone composition, and stands as mute evidence of this almost fatal affair. Both participants have since passed away.

In conclusion, I would like to say something of the wonderful growth of the Port of Philadelphia since the days of Dr. Leffmenn's activities as Port Physician:

In 1888, less than 13,000,000 tons of commerce, foreign and domestic, were handled here; while last year the 40,000,000 ton mark was attained. In 1888 there were handled through the port 151,756,812 gallons of oil, while in 1920 - 1,350,000,000 gallons were handled.

In the early eighties the combined value of our import and export trades never attained the \$100,000,000 mark, while in 1920 it was \$750,000,000.

We are going ahead fast and our facilities are kept well on advance of the demands.

Once it was that such ships as the Red Star Line SS "Noordland" and "Walslend" had to leave here 1000 tons short of their carrying capacity by reason of the inadequacy of channel depths, and the old American Line ships had to anchor at Mifflin Bar for high water to pass over shoal areas. These ships drew only 23-1/2 feet of water, and their carrying capacity was but 3000 tons. Today our facilities permit of the operation of ships of from 10,000 to 16,000 tons capacity, drawing 32 feet and upwards, and they navigate our river without the slightest difficulty or delay.

*George F. Sproule*

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# Editorial

## Our Shipping Interests and Commerce – How Can We Revive Them?

(Printed in the Philadelphia Evening Telegraph May 17, 1870)

*Although this article was published in the late nineteenth century, it contains remarkably similar talking points to many of those espoused today, particularly as it pertains to the role of the U.S. on the global stage of maritime trade. This author’s primary competitive concern at the time was England, but these days likely would be China. Supply chains back then had just been profoundly disrupted by the Civil War; in our days, by the COVID-19 pandemic. Whether this fact is reassuring or alarming to our readers it is undeniable that while history may not repeat itself word-for-word, it does often seem to rhyme.*

There is but one opinion as to the necessity of doing something to restore the shipping and commerce of the country. Every American mourns over the departed glory of our former maritime greatness. Ten years ago the tonnage of the United States exceeded that of any other nation. We had over five and a half millions of tons, inclusive of registered, enrolled, and licensed steam and sailing vessels. Now we have less than four millions. This is a decline of over a million and a half tons in less than ten years. The greatest falling off has been in the tonnage employed in foreign trade. The cause of this is well known. The terrible civil war which we lately passed through drove our shipping from the oceans, and transferred both the ownership and the carrying trade to foreigners. But that is not the worst. We have been going behind relatively to other maritime nations, and particularly to England, ever since. Our great maritime and commercial rival has got a long way ahead in the race. She has not been slow to improve the advantages given to her by the war, and considering her resources and facilities for ship-building she will maintain her supremacy, unless extraordinary and wise measure be taken to revive our shipping interests.

What can be done, then, to restore our shipping and commerce? That is the question, and no easy one to solve. But our shipping interests can be resuscitated and we may again take the first rank among maritime nations if proper measures be adopted. We are told, its true, that the wages of labor being so much higher here than in Great Britain and other parts of Europe and interest of money is so much greater, that we cannot compete with foreign shipbuilders. Then they have the materials for building and all the things that enter into fitting up and navigating vessels far cheaper. Nor can it be denied that in Great Britain, and particularly on the Clyde, they have attained a high degree of skill in shipbuilding, as well as having superior advantages in the abundance and cheapness of materials and labor.

In the matter of skill in modelling and constructing vessels we are equal to the British, if not superior, and there could be no doubt about finding within a short time all the skilled labor necessary for any amount of work. Nor can Great Britain beat us in the quality of timber and iron used for shipbuilding, while we have a thousand times over more in quantity. It is, then, simply a question of comparative cost in the price of materials and labor. This we cannot overcome. We cannot bring the wages of American labor, either in preparing the materials or in putting them together to the level of British labor. Nor can we bring the interest of money or capital down to what it is in Europe. It is evident, therefore, that we cannot compete, under such unequal conditions, with Great Britain in shipbuilding.

Committees of Congress have been long and carefully examining the matter as to how the tonnage of the country can be increased and our shipping and commercial interests revived, and there have been a number of propositions made in and to Congress with a view to accomplish this object. But the easiest, most practical, and surest plan seems to be the one that finds least favor. We mean that of changing the Registry law so as to permit our merchants and capitalists to buy vessels abroad where they can get them cheapest and best.

If American merchants were permitted to have vessels so purchased nationalized the same as if they were built here, we should have splendid steamship lines competing with those of England on the ocean. If even the American built vessels which changed their national character and passed into the hands of foreigners during the war were allowed a register again under the old flag, a great many might be repurchased by our citizens, and thus our tonnage increased.

But it is urged that the repeal or change of the Registry law would damage or retard shipbuilding here for a time, if not almost ruin that branch of industry. It might possibly check shipbuilding here at first, but in the end that interest would not be damaged, for the increase of our commerce would develop new wants and give more employment in time even to our own shipyards. Then competition stimulates enterprise, and, with a gradual return to the normal condition of things as they were before the war, our mechanics, investors, iron workers, and shipbuilders would soon learn to rival those of Great Britain.

But, after all, the shipbuilding interest is not the greatest in the country, and in importance does not begin to compare with the interests involved in a large mercantile marine and in the foreign commerce of the country. The interests of a few shipbuilders, of the iron workers of Pennsylvania, and the lumbermen of Maine, are insignificant compared with those of general commerce and the carrying trade. To increase the tonnage of the country, to bring us up to our former maritime greatness and to make the United States the successful rival of England, throw all other questions and local interests into the shade. This is the one supremely important object to be considered.

Among the crude schemes submitted to Congress for increasing our tonnage is that of giving bounties or a direct bonus of money on every ton of ships that may be built. This is the most absurd, ruinous and corrupting scheme ever proposed in a Legislature. It would be a stupendous fraud upon the people and Treasury for the

benefit of a few individuals and must lead to a great corruption. Something might be done, and, perhaps, ought to be done, to help shipbuilding by taking off the duty on iron and other materials actually used in the construction of vessels. The interests of navigation might be promoted also by drawback of the duty on things that are used on board ships. A liberal compensation for mail service to important steamship lines might foster that important branch of the mercantile marine.

But, perhaps, the most effective way to both stimulate shipbuilding and to rapidly increase our tonnage would be to make a difference in duties upon imported merchandise when carried in American bottoms. If ten, fifteen, or more percent of duties were taken off imported foreign goods when carried by American ships, our merchants would very soon import their goods under the flag of the United States. It may be said that such a discrimination in favor of American and against foreign bottoms would give offense to other commercial nations and cause them to retaliate.

Well, we are not afraid of that. They are compelled to seek a market here for their silks, satins, cloths, bijouterie, and luxuries of all kinds, and it would do no harm, if we did not consume so many of these, while our staples of cotton, tobacco, and other things they must have. In fact, they could not retaliate so as to do us any serious harm. Our own shipping and commerce, are first to be considered. To discriminate largely and wisely in favor of American bottoms in the carrying trade between this country and foreign countries would rapidly increase our tonnage. It is to be hoped Congress will drop all the crude and little schemes for reviving the shipping interests of the country, and especially that monstrous one of a bonus on tonnage, and will adopt some comprehensive plan worthy of statesmen.

## Letter to the Editor



Dear Captain George E. McCarthy,

*I hope this letter finds you well and in good spirits. As I sit down to write, it is with a great sense of pride, reflection, and hope that I reach out to you – my thoughts extending across the many decades since the foundation of the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange, now more than 150 years ago. I understand the name has change a few times in the intervening years, though I maintain that the original has an elegance to it. Of course, as the Exchange serves not just Philadelphia, but rather an entire ecosystem of ports and shippers along the River, perhaps I can concede the merit of its current moniker.*

*When I and others founded the Exchange back in 1875, our short-term ambitions were simple: to create a forum for mariners, merchants, and stewards of the maritime industry to gather for mutual benefit and the advancement of the nation’s thriving ports. We were on the brink of an industrial age that would change the world forever, and I had the privilege of standing at the intersection of history as it was being made.*

*I had envisioned that the Exchange would serve not only as a conduit for the exchange of business specifics, but also as a space for collaboration and the exchange of ideas. That mission, I am proud to see, appears to have taken root and flourished in ways I could not have fully imagined.*

*The maritime industry, as you well know, is ever-changing, always adapting to new challenges and innovations, but it remains at the heart of our nation’s economic strength and global connectivity. From the bustling docks along the Delaware River to the vital trade routes that stretch across oceans, the work of the Maritime Exchange speaks volumes about the enduring importance of this institution and the role you and your team play in shaping its future.*

*Looking forward, know that you are now entrusted with carrying forth the vision that began with a handful of committed individuals yet has lasted 150 years thus far. I believe that this Exchange, now expanded and thriving, will be poised to meet whatever challenges are brought by the next century and a half. It is heartening to know that, though the world may look very different from that which I knew, the core principles that guided our early work – collaboration, resilience, and an unwavering dedication to the maritime community – remain as vital today as ever.*

*I trust that the next 150 years will bring forth new opportunities for innovation, sustainable growth, and progress. May the Exchange continue to foster partnerships that not only benefit our region but the global maritime industry at large. May it stand as a beacon of cooperation, strength, and vision for all those whose livelihoods depend on the steady flow of our rivers, ports, and shipping lanes.*

*I wish you, the board, and all members of the Exchange continued success in your important work. As always, I remain hopeful that the future of the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange (terribly sorry, but old habits die hard) will be marked by further innovation and prosperity for all.*

With deep respect and warm regards,

William Brockie  
First President, Philadelphia Maritime Exchange



# Highlights in maritime law since 1874



## Legal Ease

By: **A. Robert Degen, Esq.**  
Law Office of A. Robert Degen

At the time of the conception of the Philadelphia Maritime Exchange in 1874, the port of Philadelphia was already bustling. Steam powered iron ships were rapidly replacing wooden sailing ships and immigrants were arriving to find jobs in the city's manufacturing centers. With the discovery of oil fifteen years earlier, Philadelphia became a major site for storage and refining of petroleum. Already, there were major oil storage facilities and refineries along the Delaware and Schuylkill rivers. Exports included oil and coal as well as lumber and agricultural products. With maritime commerce came litigation.

Article III, Section 2 of the constitution provides that "The judicial Power shall extend to all Cases, in Law and Equity, arising under this Constitution, [and].....to all Cases of admiralty and maritime Jurisdiction." Counsel appearing in court representing maritime interests were Proctors in Admiralty and cases were heard by the court "sitting in Admiralty," originally designated by a silver oar displayed on the bench. Additionally, cases proceeded according to the special Admiralty rules of procedure until 1966 when the Admiralty rules were merged into the Federal Rules of Civil Procedure, which still provide special procedures for vessel arrest, pre-judgment attachment of property and vessel owners' limitation of liability proceedings.

In the past 150 years, there have been over two hundred significant Supreme Court cases in admiralty and maritime law. While an in-depth review exceeds the scope of this article, the following are a few examples of significant historical Supreme Court rulings.

In 1874, the year before the Exchange's founding, the U.S. Supreme Court decided *Steamship Pennsylvania v. Troop*, 86 U.S. (19 Wall.) 125 (1874). On a morning in June 1869, the British Bark "Mary Troop" was underway in dense fog about 200 miles from Sandy Hook. She was sounding a bell fifteen to twenty times a minute. The second mate on the "Mary Troop" believed he heard a foghorn while the captain and mate said it was the whistle of a steamer and within minutes the bow of the "Pennsylvania," proceeding at some seven knots, struck the "Mary Troop," causing her to sink instantly resulting in the loss of all but the mate, cook, and

two seamen. The Rules of the Road for vessels underway proceeding in fog required steamers to sound a fog whistle and sailing vessels a foghorn, while vessels not underway sounded a bell. The trial court and the appeals court disregarded the Bark's violation of the Rules and found the steamer wholly at fault. The Supreme Court reversed holding that where there is a statutory violation the offending vessel must prove not only that the violation did not contribute to the casualty, but that it could not have, a heavy burden. Thus was born the Rule of the Pennsylvania, a case still cited in today collision litigation.

In *Southern Pac. Co. v. Jensen*, 244 U.S. 205 (1917), the Court reversed an award by a New York state court of compensation to the widow of a longshoreman killed in the course of his employment. The Court reasoned longshore work was wholly maritime in nature and that the New York state workman's compensation law was inconsistent with the constitution's grant of exclusive maritime jurisdiction to federal district courts. Nor, they held was the action saved by the Judiciary Act of 1798 which gave suitors the right to pursue a common law remedy in state or federal court as long as there was comparable common law compensation scheme, which there was not. This decision cemented the principle that federal maritime law is supreme, and state laws cannot interfere with its application. It ensured consistent treatment of maritime workers across state lines and international waters.

In the landmark case of *Moragne v. States Marine Lines, Inc.*, 398 U.S. 375 (1970), the Supreme Court overruled *The Harrisburg* 119 U.S. 199 (1896), which denied a right to recover for death of a maritime worker sustained on the navigable waters of a state. In *Moragne*, the decedent was a longshoreman killed in the course of his employment in Florida waters. The lower court allowed the case to be referred to the Florida Supreme Court to determine whether the Florida wrongful death act allowed recovery for unseaworthiness, which the Florida court answered in the negative causing the lower court to dismiss the case. The Supreme Court examined the basis for the holding in *The Harrisburg* and found that the only justification was an English rule adopted without

consideration of much more than the rule's age. The *Moragne* case overruled nearly 100 years of jurisprudence and created a maritime cause of action for death in state waters for unseaworthiness.

In 1854, the Supreme Court decided the case of *The Schooner Catharine v. Dickinson*, 58 U.S. 17 How. 170 (1854), in which the Court was called to assess the degree of damage where both vessels were found to be at fault. In this case of first impression, the Court referred to the "well settled rule in the English admiralty" in holding that dividing the loss was the most just and equitable result, thus establishing the rule of divided damages in collision cases. This was the rule until 1975 when the Court decided *United States v. Reliable Transfer Co.*, 421 U.S. 397 (1975). In that case, the "Mary A. Whalen" a coastal tanker owner by Reliable Transfer grounded partially because of the failure of the Coast Guard to maintain its navigation light on the Rockaway Inlet breakwater. The trial court and the second circuit court of appeals both held that even though the *Mary A. Whalen* bore greater responsibility for the loss than the Coast Guard they were constrained by *The Schooner Catharine* to divide the damages equally. The Supreme Court reversed after reviewing the history of the rule. The Court noted a diversion from the divided



damages rule by a majority of maritime nations and held that when two or more parties have contributed by their fault to cause property damage in a maritime collision or stranding, liability for such damage is to be allocated among the parties in proportion to the comparative degree of their fault with damages allocated equally only when the parties are equally at fault or when it is not possible fairly to measure the comparative degree of fault.

While the above cases provide only a glimpse of the Supreme Court's admiralty and maritime jurisprudence stay tuned for the next 150 years to see if the special place for maritime law within the Court's jurisprudence continues.



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**The Beacon** is the official newsletter of the Maritime Exchange for the Delaware River and Bay. The Exchange encourages its readers to submit letters to the editor at any time in response to articles that appear in *The Beacon* or to address other topics of interest to the port community.

Please direct any correspondence, comments, or inquiries regarding the contents of this newsletter to:

[exchange@maritimedelriv.com](mailto:exchange@maritimedelriv.com)

Maritime Exchange, Attn: Beacon Editor  
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Calendar of Events

05/14

Maritime Exchange Board/Organizational Meeting, 11:00 a.m.

05/21

PhilaPort Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Maritime Exchange 150th Anniversary Gala, 6:00 p.m. - 10:00 p.m.  
The Switchhouse, 1325 Beach Street, Philadelphia, PA 19125  
Contact: Donna Stargell, dstargell@maritimedelriv.com

05/28

Seamen's Center of Wilmington Board Meeting, noon

06/04

Ports of Philadelphia Maritime Society Board Meeting, noon  
Corinthian Yacht Club

Seamen's Church Institute Executive Committee Meeting, noon

06/07

Seamen's Center of Wilmington Annual Tug Cruise, 5:30 p.m.  
Port Wilmington  
Contact: scw@scwde.org

06/10

South Jersey Port Corp Board Meeting, 12:30 p.m.

06/11

Maritime Exchange Executive Committee Meeting, 11:00 a.m.

Maritime Exchange Government Affairs Working Group  
10:00 a.m. – 11:30 a.m.  
240 Cherry Street, Philadelphia, PA 19106  
Contact: Yair Farkas, yfarkas@maritimedelriv.com

06/18

PhilaPort Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

Seamen's Church Institute Annual Board Meeting, noon

06/23

World Trade Association of Philadelphia 7th Annual Jan Fuhrer Golf Outing  
The Riverton Country Club, 1416 Highland Avenue, Cinnaminson, NJ 08077

07/09

Maritime Exchange Board Meeting, 11:00 a.m.

07/16

PhilaPort Board Meeting, 9:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.

07/29

South Jersey Port Corp Board Meeting, 12:30 p.m.

08/06

Coast Guard Birthday Celebration, 11:30 a.m.  
The Union League, 140 South Broad Street, Philadelphia, PA 19102

For a complete schedule and event details, visit [www.maritimedelriv.com](http://www.maritimedelriv.com).



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