

SAVING OUR SHIPS

PROGRESS REPORT

July has been an exceptionally busy time for our ships. We'll go into greater detail as you read further in the newsletter, but here's just a few of the areas we're tackling. First, our Marine Surveyor RFP is wrapping up, and we'll be moving into the assessment phase within days. A second RFP is being released by the Naval Park to provide us

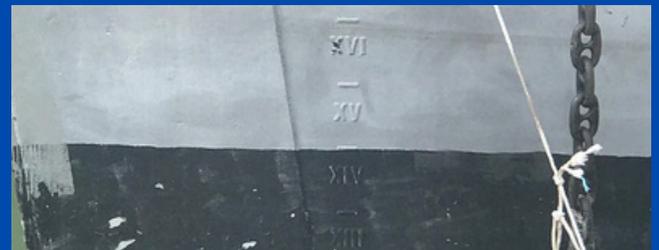
with highly skilled marine emergency flooding responders in the event of major leaks aboard any of our vessels afloat.

While we proceed through the RFP process, we've constructed an interim flooding response agreement with a local marine salvage company, so our ships will have skilled divers and all necessary response equipment on scene within 60 minutes of notification. The agreement is signed and that very necessary protection is in place.

DAILY ROUTINE FOR OUR SHIPS AFLOAT

First thing each morning, a member of our maintenance staff does a series of important checks on each ship. A daily check-sheet is completed that includes recording each ship's draft marks forward, midships, and aft. We recently installed 2 digital inclinometers on each vessel to become quickly aware of any changes in list or trim. That data is also recorded each morning. Then, we do a visual inspection via access trunks leading into the bilges to verify there is no leaking within the hull of our ships. The data is then compared for periodic trend analysis.

**Draft marks are Roman numerals welded into the hull of a ship to measure the weight of the load it's carrying - pictured in the upper right.*



Digital inclinometers pictured here on The Sullivans. Each of our vessels afloat is similarly equipped with 2 of these devices per ship.



GETTING INTO THE DETAILS

NAVAL ARCHITECT/ MARINE SURVEYOR RFP - WHAT IS IT?

As mentioned on the cover of this issue and in the inaugural issue of this newsletter, we've sought the services of the best, most experienced naval architects and marine surveyors in the country. We spent considerable time researching and seeking out those with broad experience in the maritime industry, but particularly those with a successful track record working with museum ships of the vintage of our

three World War II-era warships. Eight candidates in total were chosen to receive our RFP, or request for proposal – a document crafted by the Naval Park and City of Buffalo describing in detail the scope of work we're seeking to have completed, and through which surveyors can submit competitive bids to participate in the work. Once the RFP process is completed, a marine surveyor will be chosen based on a point system, and the work of examining our ships in minute detail will begin shortly thereafter. We anticipate the start date for the work to begin in August, 2022.

POTENTIAL REPAIR OPTIONS FOR OUR SHIPS

Temporary Cofferdam

One possible solution being proposed for the repair work to be completed on our ships is a temporary cofferdam. It's basically a large, open-topped box that's lowered into the water alongside a ship. Water would be pumped out, providing repair workers dry access to areas of the hull that would otherwise be under water. From there, epoxy patching, welding, inspections, and a number of other repair-related work can be conducted.

Full Cofferdam

A permanent and more ambitious potential solution could be a full cofferdam built to surround all three vessels. The benefit would be primarily in form of the protective wall that

would surround the three waterborne vessels as they endure harsh seasonal changes on the eastern edge of Lake Erie. Depending on the cost and complexity, it is also feasible that the water could be drained from inside the cofferdam to provide access to the hulls of the ships for maintenance and repair.

Drydocking

This option would mean the ships are pulled by tug boats to a drydock, where they would be repaired while completely out of the water. They would then be refloated and placed back in permanent berths here in Buffalo.

ONGOING SHIP'S WORK

The month of July, 2022 also saw the return of the 2 twenty-millimeter weapons the Naval Park had in storage while restoration work advanced on PTF-17. The project started in 2019, and a great deal has been achieved since then, thanks to the dedicated volunteers from Linde, Home Depot and Northrup Grumman.



PTF-17 - IS SHE A PT BOAT?

While she has very similar hull lines and profile to the classic PT boats of the Second World War, PTF-17 is a Vietnam-era vessel built in Annapolis, Maryland in 1968. PTF boats were designed to carry special operations forces along coastal routes for insertion and extraction. PTFs were not designed for, nor did they operate in the riverine environment of Southeast Asia with Brown Water Navy craft as is often believed. PTF-17 was homeported in Little Creek, Virginia, where the Navy's elite east coast SEAL teams and Special Boat teams are based.

The boat was very heavily armed as her highly dangerous special operations patrol and surveillance missions would have mandated. She is equipped with a 40mm gun aft, two 20mm weapons on each side of the pilothouse, and a .50 caliber, water-cooled machine gun on her bow for good measure. Add to that the small arms carried by her crew and special forces passengers, the PTF was a formidable weapon indeed. PTF-17 made her way to Buffalo in 1979 via LST (Landing Ship Tank) USS Fairfax County, which was operating in the Great Lakes as part of a post-Vietnam goodwill tour.



PTF-17 as she appears in July 2022, primed and ready for her era-appropriate green hull paint.

JOIN US

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Our ships afloat and the artifacts displayed at the Buffalo Naval Park have important stories to tell, and we invite you to help us share them.

DOCENTS

Our uniformed, trained cadre of docents are the guides and storytellers aboard our ships afloat. They know the histories, battles, sailors, and personal anecdotes related to these ships. If you're interested in becoming a docent, we'd love to hear from you!

MAINTENANCE

If you enjoy working with your hands and have an interest in restoring rare artifacts so essential to American history, we've got an abundance of opportunities! We're especially interested in having skilled metal workers, electricians, plumbers and

carpenters volunteer with us, but all, regardless of skill level are welcome.

COLLECTIONS

Caring for and cataloging our unique artifacts takes a great deal of time, patience, and dedication. Under the direction of our curator, you could help preserve these precious objects so they'll be available for future generations.

EVENTS

The Buffalo Naval Park is the premier location in all of Western New York to celebrate, participate and elevate. Making these events happen in a seamless, organized and timely way requires a committed staff of volunteers to help in setting up, promoting, staffing, organizing, and putting everything away after it's all done so it's ready for the next event.

CONNECT WITH US

Online volunteer form: [Click here!](#)

Email: info@buffalonaivalpark.org

Phone: 716-847-1773

Website: [Click here!](#)

[Buffalo Naval Park Youtube Channel: Click here!](#)