



MEBA's 10-acre Memorial Park, was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The Memorial is still a "work in progress" that will further blossom as continued work supplements this stunning new addition to our School.

Memorial Principals Dedicate **TRIBUTE TO FOURTH ARM OF DEFENSE**



The official dedication was distinguished by a series of terrific speeches from several noteworthy speakers. Left to right are RAdm. Richard R. Behn, Director of NOAA's Marine and Aviation Operations Center; John J. Flynn, III, Counselor to Labor Secretary Elaine Chao; MEBA President Ron Davis; Memorial Foundation President Bill Van Loo; Mayor of Easton, Robert Willey; Port of Baltimore Monsignor John Fitzgerald; and Joyce Matthews, Director of MEBA's Training School in Easton, MD where the new memorial is located.



The main feature of the new Merchant Marine Memorial Park is an elevated garden-like retreat that is formed in the shape of a 600-foot merchant ship. The memorial park is open to the public and is wheelchair accessible.



A bagpiper regaled the gathering with a rendition of "Amazing Grace" during the ceremony.



So many people contributed to help realize the Memorial. In the coming years, additional landscaping and fine-tuning of the Park will further enhance this lasting tribute to merchant mariners.

TIMOTHY L. BOHAN
CAPE HORN 2002

PHILIP HELLESTO
CAPE HORN 2002

Within the Memorial retreat, visitors will find brick pavers that are engraved with the names of mariners that have been memorialized by friends and loved ones. Two of our fallen brothers Tim Bohan and Phil Hellesto are memorialized here. Some bricks have names inscribed on them – others have messages such as "In Memory of those Lost on the Poet" or "To MEBA Comrades & Conquerors of the Sea." There are still opportunities for brick tributes in the retreat. Contact Bill Van Loo or Rick Simonson for further details.



NOAA Rear Admiral Richard Behn praised the new Memorial and applauded MEBA's efforts in creating this worthy mark of respect for the Merchant Marine. MEBA members serve aboard the vessels in the NOAA fleet.



The completion of the Memorial was a call for great fanfare. The project had been in the works for several years. Many years ago, former School Director and President Larry O'Toole called for such a tribute. Many members, retirees, companies and other friends of the MEBA were extremely generous and proved critical in the creation of the memorial.

TRIBUTE TO
FOURTH ARM OF DEFENSE



School Director Joyce Matthews proved a key player in guiding the Memorial project to fruition. Addressing the crowd, she noted that the beautiful weather of the day contrasted conditions that marked a few of the memorial's milestones. The propeller had been put in place on a frigid winter day in deep snow, the anchors were installed in the muddy aftermath of a week of showers and the groundbreaking of the memorial had been interrupted by a freak hailstorm.



The Massachusetts Maritime Color Guard were kind enough to take part in the ceremony to help christen the new memorial.



Labor Department Counselor John J. Flynn, III had kind words for MEBA members and retirees past and present. "It is because of the service of U.S. merchant mariners that America sustains the strongest military force the world has ever known. When the history of this (Iraq) war is written, the U.S. Merchant Marine will be remembered - as it has been in every war - as vital to our victory."



Memorial principals and invited guests performed a ribbon cutting complete with oversized scissors.

TRIBUTE TO
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Visitors will easily recognize ship features in the Memorial such as a bow with 5-ton anchors, a ship's bell, and the bronze propeller. All artifacts came from U.S. merchant ships that have since been taken out of service.



In his address, MEBA President Ron Davis hailed the sacrifices of the Merchant Marine saying, "We owe it to the hundreds of thousands of merchant mariners who went before us, the same hundreds of thousands that this memorial is dedicated to, that we will do everything in our power to ensure the continued existence and strength of the American Merchant Marine. We owe it to them that we build upon what they started...The Merchant Marine of today will stand as a living memorial to those we remember here. We cannot, and we will not, let them down."



MEBA Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation President Bill Van Loo who spearheaded the project acknowledged the hard work and generous donations of the members in making the Memorial a reality. He pointed out that the Memorial serves as a tribute to the forgotten service that has proved so important to this country in times of peace and in war.

The Easton High School Marching Band donated their time and talents to the dedication ceremony.





School Instructor Rick Simonson and Baltimore Branch Agent Bill Van Loo helped oversee every aspect of the Memorial project – from funding to construction. Ernie Clements (far right), among others, provided invaluable assistance in securing the propeller. Coincidentally, Van Loo and Simonson were the first two Presidents of the Calhoun Alumni Association and Brother Clements is the current CAA head – or as Van Loo described them – George Washington, John Adams and Thomas Jefferson.



Port of Baltimore Chaplain John Fitzgerald thanked MEBA for its support throughout the years. He provided the blessing and gave entertaining remarks at the ceremony.



Easton Mayor Robert Willey addressed attendees and called the School a good "neighbor and friend to the Town of Easton and Talbot County." He noted that the commitment that MEBA has demonstrated to this project "is an indication that (the) organization is going to be with us for a long, long time and we couldn't be happier."

Please continue forwarding donations to the Memorial Foundation. Your tax-deductible contributions will further enrich this beautiful new addition to the School. There is still more room to place personalized bricks as well.

Donations can be forwarded to:
MMMMF, P.O. Box 2443
Easton, MD 21601

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The six-bladed, 22-foot diameter bronze propeller weighing 47,168 pounds is one of the more prominent features of the Memorial.