



# THE OVERFALLS BEACON

The Newsletter of the Overfalls Foundation

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## Something Old and Something New

Some of the new is obvious, some is less so. Looking closely one sees the mooring bollards and bulkhead that define the new slip. Much of the slip is structural and below the surface but it will serve the ship well for generations to come.

## The Slip is Finished

### Landscaping is Soon to Follow

The first piece of steel sheet pile to build the bulkhead went into the ground on March 30th. While high winds and driving rain made working conditions terrible, it proved the old adage that starting a project in the rain is a sign of success. After that, the weather was beautiful and the Kuhn work crew moved swiftly through their tasks. By the end of May they were finished, more than two weeks ahead of schedule.

The result is marvelous. Even though it remains a "construction site", the keen eye can see what is to come. The ship no longer has a muddy hole but rather a bulkheaded slip with proper mooring bollards.

The next step is landscaping. While the slip was in progress, the Foundation worked with Rodney Robinson, to develop the plan for the grounds. The plan (copy on the web site) went through several iterations as we coordinated with the adjoining and affected property owners until we had a strong consensus that this was it.

The plan and accompanying bid documents have been released to prospective landscaping firms. Bids are due in on June 14th. We want it all done for the big party to celebrate 11 years of success on September 10th.

## Another Opening Party to Remember

On the evening of May 28th, the Foundation celebrated the arrival of summer at its eleventh annual Opening Party. The completion of the ship's new slip added an extra special festive air to the occasion. As they have in all years past, the party committee out did the year before. How do they do this, it might have something to do with countless hours of planning and effort on the part of a lot of dedicated workers. Our thanks to all of them.

For the party goers, it was all fun, good food and high spirits. The wine complemented the prime rib that melted in your mouth and all of the accompanying dishes were equally delicious. We were graced by our political representatives from both sides of the aisle and the conversations among friends and neighbors were nonstop.

The auctions, both silent and live, are always a hit and this year was no different. Before he began the live auction, auctioneer Dennis Forney led the group in *I've Been Workin On the Overfalls* to a familiar tune. Then Dennis shared auctioneering duties with Dickie Bryan who is just back from Nashville where he earned a Ph.D. in auctioneering complete with a black ten gallon hat. He must have studied hard because he got good prices for the items and the purchasers were delighted with their bargains.



Auctioneer Dennis (AKA Willie Nelson) Forney warms up the crowd before leading them in song and telling them about the bargains of the evening.

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## **New Name, Same Energy and Dedication**

On May 14<sup>th</sup>, the Board voted to shorten the name of the Foundation from "The Overfalls Maritime Museum Foundation" to the "Overfalls Foundation". The old name was used only by foundation insiders as everybody else has always used a shorter name. Now the Foundation is going through the process to make the change with state officials as well as a multitude of other administrative changes such as the logo, letterhead paper, web site, etc. Note the altered logo on page #1.

The new name came out of the Foundation's management retreat in February. The retreat mapped new direction to steer the Foundation from a fledgling organization fighting for survival (albeit with great success) to a mature, business like operation.

The findings of the retreat are now being drafted into the second, five-year strategic plan. The first, drafted in 2006, guided the Foundation through an extremely difficult time to today's enviable position. The second will steer us through the years 2011-15 as we put the Foundation on a sustainable course to meet a more complex mission. The retreat group felt that the new mission required a new name, the Overfalls Foundation just had the right ring.

## **VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE**

**Dave Bernheisel, President**



This should be the last time that I use this column to tell you what is to come on our eleven year project to save the ship and put her in an appropriate setting. When *Beacon* goes to press in the fall it will all be over except the celebration. That will be on September 10th on the newly landscaped grounds. Merrill Kaegi, who chaired the big 70th birthday party for the ship in 2008, will be back in the director's chair. This will also be a chance to recognize the folks who have made it all possible. We have never had a reason to celebrate like this before... don't miss it.

With the Foundation's new name (see article this page), will come changes in what kind of an organization we are. A broad framework for the organization was outlined at the management retreat described in the article. However, the real meat of who we are and how we'll operate will unfold over several months. It will entail serious discussions among the Board and committee chairs; we'll keep you abreast of developments and solicit your input as the process moves forward.

As *Beacon* was going to press, the City of Lewes was in the process of drafting a new zoning code. This would classify all of the land on the canal from the Canalfront Park west as Open Space. Similarly, it would classify as Residential, space that would include the Lewes Historical Society's complex on Shipcarpenter Street. The Foundation, as well as the Historical Society, are concerned that such designations may inhibit our ability to meet our missions in the future. We, as well as other similarly affected organizations, are examining the situation to determine how to best protect ourselves as time goes forward. While an argument could be made that we shouldn't worry as we would be "grandfathered", that gives little comfort. Grandfathering can be saying, "we don't like what you are doing, but we will tolerate you because you have always done it". We firmly believe that organizations such as ours enhance the quality of life and are critical to maintaining the fabric of a vibrant community; we should be embraced, not merely tolerated. This is another issue on which we will keep you posted.

Looking forward to fall, on October 8th the Foundation will hold its fourth annual Delaware Maritime Hall of Fame (see Mark Your Calendar on page #4). The nominations for induction with the 2010 group have already closed but if you know of a good candidate, start planning for 2011 now. More information is on the web site. The immediate issue is to make your arrangements for this year because this is an event which always sells out.

Enjoy your summer and watch the developments at the slip.  
Dave

## VIEW FROM THE STERN

Material excerpted from the Lightship Sailor's Association web site

### An Old Girl Goes Home

In the last issue of the *Beacon*, Wayne Kirklin told the story of the U.S. Lightship Museum's (USLM) taking control of the NANTUCKET (LV-112) which had been languishing in Oyster Bay, NY for several years. This column continues that story to a successful conclusion.

After taking control on October 20, 2009, the plan was to move the ship to a new berth in her old home port of Boston, MA as soon as possible. Bob Mannino, USLM president, soon experienced problems similar to those experienced by the Overfalls related to towing an old lightship. After securing a tow company there was the USCG permitting process as well as a myriad of other issues but as warmer weather came to New England everything was finally all set.

Mr. Mannino had planned to have a riding crew aboard for the tow, similar to that which we had on the Overfalls' tow to and from Norfolk. However, the marine surveyor and insurance company felt that safety dictated that the ship not be manned for the trip; Mr. Mannino was able to make the trip aboard the tug.

The date to leave Oyster Bay was set as May 8<sup>th</sup>. The tug Lynx arrived on the May 7<sup>th</sup> and a grand departure celebration was held that night. On May 8<sup>th</sup>, the tug captain decided that high winds required a delay in departure. The wind continued on May 9<sup>th</sup> and, although a bit diminished, was still a factor on May 10<sup>th</sup>. The Lynx had a commitment in Portland, ME on May 12<sup>th</sup>, so despite less than ideal conditions, the tow got underway at 8:15am on the 10<sup>th</sup>. The NANTUCKET arrived at the Charlestown Navy Yard (near the USS Constitution) without incident at 3:00pm on May 11.

That caps off the first chapter but the story will go on for many more chapters. Our foundation wishes Mr. Mannino and his group of volunteers great success as they go forward with this proud ship. For more information see their web site [WWW.NantucketLightshipLV-112.org](http://WWW.NantucketLightshipLV-112.org).

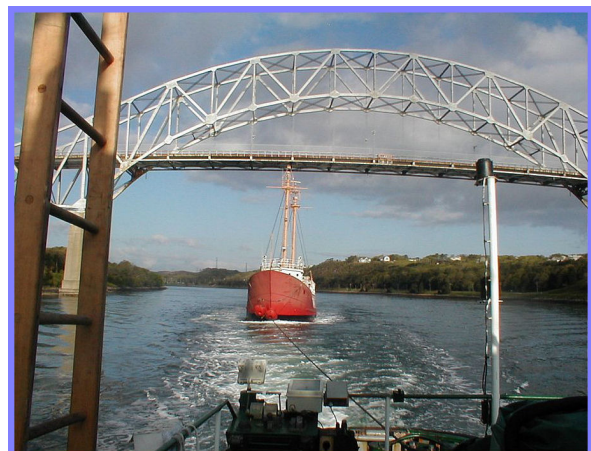
### An Old Girl Looks for a Home

As *Beacon* was going to press, we heard from the U.S. Lighthouse Society, owners of WLV-605 (the last lightship to serve on the OVERFALLS station) that they are putting her up for adoption. Reports are that the ship is in very good condition but the problem is economics, she generates about \$5000 a year in revenue resulting in an annual deficit of \$20-30,000. Jeff Gales, the Society's Executive Director said that what started out to be a 5 year, \$15,000 project turned out to be a 15 year, \$500,000 project. To ensure the ship has the right home, the Society is willing to front a qualifying adopting organization \$10,000 a year for a couple of years to get things off to a good start.

It's a sad situation for a great ship. We wish the Society and WLV-605 well in this crisis.



WLV-605 on the Overfalls station



The NANTUCKET being towed through the Cape Cod Canal on her way home. Photo by Capt. Robertson P. Dinsmore, USCG (ret.)

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### Mark Your Calendar

**\*June 11 7:30 pm Monthly Membership Meeting.** Pres Lee will give an overview of the completed slip construction project and a preview of the landscaping to be done.

**July 4 2:00 pm Independence Day Boat Parade.** We expect to have the ship open for viewing the parade and awarding prizes. If you have a boat, enter the contest...it's free!

**\*July 9 7:30 pm Monthly Membership Meeting.** Evelyn Maurmeyer, Ph.D. from U. D. will discuss wetlands and what the Foundation has to do to mitigate for backfilling the slip out to the bulkhead all around.

**\*August 13 7:30 pm Monthly Membership Meeting.** Rick Dasch & Bill Bolton, former lightship sailors discuss life aboard a lightship from the crew's perspective.

**September 10 5-7:00 pm Overfalls Fest** at the ship. This is the BIG party where we celebrate 11 years of hard work and exceeding everybody's wildest dreams.

**October 8 6:00 pm Delaware Maritime Hall of Fame** at the Lewes Yacht Club. Tickets are \$75.00, check the web site for ticket info (a great event that sells out every year).

\* On the ship or at St. Peters if bad weather.

### Help Complete the Landscaping

Major Lightship donors will be recognized in a formal area of recognition on the grounds. All purchasers of Naming Opportunities or Rivets **before July 1, 2010**, will be recognized on plaques or bricks in this area this summer. These make great gifts – especially for the members of the younger generations who will be the future care keepers of the Lightship Overfalls. Purchase information is available at [www.overfalls.org](http://www.overfalls.org) or contact Elaine at [elainesimmerman@earthlink.net](mailto:elainesimmerman@earthlink.net) or (302) 645-4733.



After a job well done, Kuhn is off to the next one