

CHESAPEAKE

THE
NATIONAL PARK
SERVICE LIGHTSHIP
FOR ENVIRONMENTAL
AWARENESS

WELCOME ABOARD
THURS. — SUN.
10 A.M. — 4 P.M.
SOFT SOLED SHOES
RECOMMENDED



WELCOME ABOARD LIGHTSHIP CHESAPEAKE

A proud ship has retired with a new mission.

After 40 years of distinguished service off the eastern seaboard in the coastal waters of the United States, the lightship CHESAPEAKE has found a new home in Southwest Washington, D.C., where she is alive and active as ever. The ship is manned by area Sea Scouts and operated by the National Park Service as an environmental exhibit. Her bright red hull and beacon lantern—a welcome sight to ship captains for so many years—now serve to warn of the danger of pollution. The ship with marine exhibits is open to the public and facilities are available for use by students in the study of Potomac River ecology.



DISTINGUISHED SERVICE

The CHESAPEAKE was built in 1930 at Charleston, South Carolina, for the Bureau of Lighthouse Service. On August 17, she departed Charleston for Norfolk, Va. on her maiden voyage; her first duty station was off Fenwick Island, Delaware.

On July 17, 1933, she began a tour of duty that spanned the war years, encountering many dangerous storms and involving endless hours of routine duty at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. One severe storm which lashed the ship for days in 1962 resulted in loss of half the pilot house ripped away in high seas.

The CHESAPEAKE served with distinction for over 29 years on the bay. She began her tour under the Lighthouse Service as LS-116, but, in 1939, when the service was absorbed by the United States Coast Guard, the CHESAPEAKE received a new designation as WLV-538. During World War II, she was pressed into service of the U.S. Navy and activated off Sandwich, Massachusetts. Relieved by the Navy in the summer of 1945, she returned

to her Chesapeake Bay station and served there until September of 1965.

Other service included marking the entrance to Delaware Bay, where she assumed the name—"Delaware"—the name of her duty station.

In addition to marking harbor approaches and important shipping channels, the CHESAPEAKE also served to gather meteorological data and aided with oceanographic studies.

RENOVATION AND CONVERSION

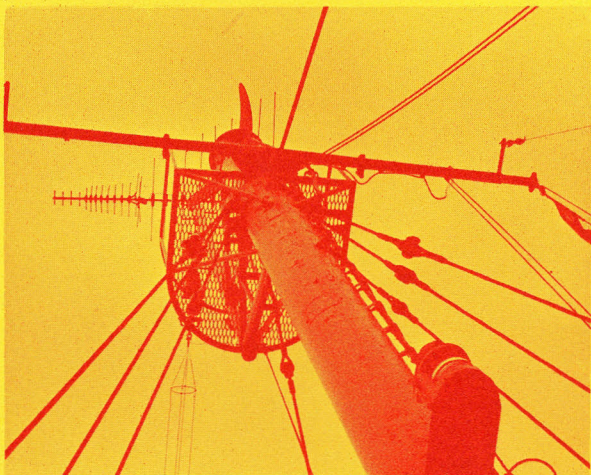
Many lightships like the CHESAPEAKE have been retired and gradually replaced with modern, automated navigation aids such as "super buoys" and steel tower structures like the one now at the mouth of Chesapeake Bay. Following her decommissioning in 1971, the CHESAPEAKE was acquired by the National Park Service for conversion to a floating environmental exhibit to supplement existing Park Service programs in education, history, ecology and recreation.

Complete rehabilitation in the Baltimore shipyards and the Washington Navy Yard was finished in the fall of 1972, when the CHESAPEAKE moved to her permanent mooring facilities off East Potomac Park in the Washington Channel.

Designed for maximum seaworthiness while riding at anchor under high sea and wind conditions, the vessel is 130-feet-long, displaces 630 tons and has a 350 horsepower, diesel-electric engine capable of maintaining a maximum speed of 9 knots. Her high bow, rounded stern and high freeboard are distinctive characteristics in ships of her class. Other unique features of the ship include the "mushroom" anchor in the bow close to the waterline and the bright double lantern at the top of the masthead. Living accommodations on board include one cabin, five single and five double staterooms.

The National Park Service has added several aquariums which depict the complex eco-system of typical marine and estuarine life, and an environmental laboratory equipped with microscopes and necessary instrumentation for marine life studies.

Welcome aboard!



STUDY AND VISITS ABOARD THE CHESAPEAKE

The Public is invited to tour the ship's facilities and view ecology exhibits. The CHESAPEAKE is open for tours every Saturday and Sunday from 1 to 4 p.m. There is no admission charge.



Washington Area Elementary School Students come aboard each weekday with their teachers to examine, first hand, problems confronting their environment—and to discuss possible solutions. Visiting as a class, the students move through a series of stations including a water analysis and a water cycle exhibit, designed to increase their awareness and involvement in the environment. The program, which includes pre-site and post-site material, was developed jointly by National Capital Parks of the National Park Service and D.C. Public School science teachers and aids. It focuses on the current state of the Potomac Watershed area.

Students Toward Environmental Participation (STEP) is a program which gives metropolitan area high school students a unique opportunity to examine in depth a selected environmental study area (ESA). By systematically monitoring an area in the Potomac River Basin, these students gain an insight into the different factors that interact and are interdependent in their ESA.

Environmental studies currently include marine biology, marshland community relationships and water quality analysis. Students have access to the ship's laboratory and all other equipment necessary for the project.

College Students on the graduate and undergraduate level supplement their regular classroom studies with projects in environmental education and ecology of the area. Students presently involved in this independent work represent Georgetown University, American University, the University of Maryland, and Washington Technical Institute.

Sea Explorers from the Washington area spend their weekends aboard the CHESAPEAKE and serve as her crew. The ship is homebase for their scouting program and provides them with a wide range of learning experiences including welding, navigation, electronics, and interpretive work in the National Park Service.

VISITING HOURS

Saturday and Sunday 1-4 p.m.

**June-Sept.
Tuesday, Thursday,
Saturday and Sunday 1-5 p.m.**



The ship is administered by the National Capital Parks of the National Park Service, U.S. Department of the Interior. A director is in charge of operations and a captain in immediate command. For additional information, write Lightship CHESAPEAKE, 1200 Ohio Dr. SW, Washington, D.C. 20242; or call 426-6897.

National Park Service
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