

CLAUD W. SOMERS

From Captain Gerhard Straub

Let the Sailing Begin!

This year started as a continuation of our Coast Guard dry dock inspection last November. During that inspection, the CG found some rot, very little rot, I may add, in three of our bottom planks, but we still had to replace them. The Boat Shop came to our rescue and offered to replace the planks. So, in early April we sailed over to Cockrell's Marine Railway to be hauled out of the water. It was a beautiful day inland, but not so nice on the bay! Cold, windy (from the wrong direction) and very lumpy. So lumpy in fact that we found a structural issue with the boom when it cracked! In spite of that, we made it to the boat yard relatively unscathed.

Once out of the water the fun really began. There was lots of scraping and painting, and the Boat Shop boys came in force with tools and wood in hand to replace the planks. They did an excellent job. While they worked on that, the crew did the painting and other normal maintenance tasks as well as took care of some other issues the CG wanted us to do. We also repaired the boom by shortening it a bit. We will be able to sail, but we will eventually need to repair or replace the boom to put up the full mainsail. The CG also came by to take a look at the repairs and gave us the OK to go back in the water. After coaxing Spat back to life, we came back to the museum. We still have a few issues to take care of and one more CG inspection to get through, but hopefully the majority of the work is complete.



The Boat Shop Cuts New Planks for a Custom Fit

Our official authorized sailing season is June 1 through October 31. We start this season by once again hosting the Rappahannock Amateur Radio Association on June 1 and 2 for Museum Ships Weekend, which is a worldwide Amateur (Ham) Radio event where museum vessels all over the world participate. It is organized by the Battleship New Jersey museum and gives us some wide spread publicity. We plan to begin public sails as soon as possible after that, pending completion of our inspections. Watch the website for the sailing schedule to be posted. After the schedule is posted, advance reservations for public sails can be made by calling the museum office, and the cost is \$25 for members and \$30 for non-members. Last minute "walk-ons" are also accepted if there is space available.



New Planks and New Paint Ready to go in the Water!

Remember that Claud W. Somers is also available for private charter during our sailing season as well. We typically carry 15 passengers, although we can squeeze in a few more if necessary, and a standard charter is three hours. We can customize any charter to your specific desires. We have hosted everything from cocktail parties and birthday celebrations to college environmental classes where we did actual water quality measurements. We are also always looking for new crew members (no experience is necessary). Get in touch with me or the office if you want to explore the possibilities. Also, follow us on Facebook (Skipjack *Claud W. Somers*) to keep on top of what is happening on board.

See you on the water!