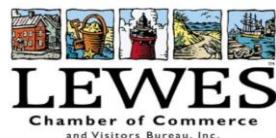


PRESS RELEASE



May 12, 2022



Annual Maritime Day Celebration Returns Following Two Year Hiatus ***Free Public Event to take place at the Lightship Overfalls on the Lewes Canal Waterfront***

LEWES, Del. – Experience and celebrate maritime history and its impact on the region at the annual Lewes Maritime Day celebration at the Lightship *Overfalls* and Canalfront Park on Saturday, May 21, 2022 from 10:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Lewes, known as the First Town in the First State, enjoys a heritage that is rich in both its maritime history and its current maritime interests. Co-organized by the Cape May – Lewes Ferry and the Overfalls Foundation and supported by the Zwaanendael Museum, Lewes Historical Society, the Chamber of Commerce and the City of Lewes, this celebration – complete with events, displays, boat rides, vessel tours and activities – is free and the public is welcome.

A brief Opening and Remembrance Ceremony will be held to start the day at 10:00 a.m. to kick off the event and reopen the Lightship *Overfalls* (LV-118) for the season. The ceremony will include the laying of wreaths to honor and remember local mariners and Overfalls Foundation members who have “passed over the bar.”

“Lewes has a unique place in the annals of American maritime history of which the Ferry is a part,” said Heath Gehrke, Director of Ferry Operations. “The festival is a fun and interactive way to learn more about our maritime history, industry and its many vocations. Come and join us for a great day of activities and exhibits as we celebrate the U.S. Merchant Marine, its historic support of the Nation’s military, and the many careers it offers.”

“Our objective for this Maritime Day is to inform and educate the public about the contribution of maritime resources in the local community and to share the community’s rich maritime history, including that of the U.S. Lighthouse Service and U.S. Lifesaving Service, precursors to the U.S. Coast Guard,” said Michael Safina, President of the Overfalls Foundation. “Lightships played a major role in the safe navigation of ships and their mariners throughout this nation’s history and our guides are excited to help in bringing that story to light. We look forward to having the community help us reopen the ship for the 2022 season.”

The Lightship *Overfalls* and museum property will be open for free tours throughout the day. Various maritime participants will have displays at Canalfront Park, adjacent to the *Overfalls*,

and various vessels will be open for public tours and boat rides. It is a great way for scout groups, school groups, or parents and kids of all ages to spend the day.

Other Maritime Day activities include a life raft demonstration by the Ferry and a water cannon display by the Lewes Fire Boat.. The day's finale will be a featured program about "The Wreck of the DeBraak" presented by and hosted at the Zwaanendael Museum, starting at 2:30 p.m. The program explores the history of the British warship DeBraak which sank off the coast of Lewes in May of 1798 only to be recovered by treasure hunters nearly 200 years later. The museum will also have various nautical displays and demonstrations throughout the day.

The Lewes Historical Society's *Volunteer Wooden Boat Build Crew* will be displaying two unique Delaware vessels: The *Delaware Oyster Sharpie* and the *Delaware Ducker*. Additionally, Lewes Historical Society interpreters will be portraying unique historical figures from the *De Braak* at both Canalfront Park and the *Lewes Maritime Museum-Cannonball House*.

Additional exhibitors include Bowers Maritime Museum, Cape Water Taxi, Cape May Lewes Ferry, Delaware River and Bay Lighthouse Foundation, Fort Miles Historical Association, Freedom Boat Club, Lewes Fire Department Lewes Historical Society, Lewes Public Library, Overfalls Foundation, Groome Church, Henlopen Bait & Tackle, Pilots Association for the Bay and River Delaware, Sea Scouts, University of Delaware, U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, U.S. Coast Guard Auxiliary, and Zwaanendael Museum.

In 1933, the United States Congress declared May 22 as National Maritime Day. The designation honors the contributions of the American merchant marine – civilians who have defended the freedom of the United States since 1775 and who executed the largest sealift the world has ever known during World War II. Observance of National Maritime Day also honors the maritime industry and the benefits it brings Americans in terms of transportation, jobs, goods, and recreational opportunities.

Owned and operated by the Delaware River and Bay Authority, the Cape May – Lewes Ferry is open year-round and has carried more than 43 million passengers since its inception on July 1, 1964. As an integral transportation system connecting the communities and economies on both sides of the Delaware Bay, the Ferry service is a significant catalyst for economic growth and regional tourism activity in New Jersey and Delaware. Its operations sustain over 4,000 jobs while generating tens of millions of dollars in local taxes and hundreds of millions in regional economic activity. For schedules and rates, please visit www.CMLF.com or call 800-643-3779.

The mission of the Overfalls Foundation is to preserve, teach and honor the United States lightship service and the maritime history of our community through the preservation and display of the Lightship *Overfalls* (LV-118) and its collection of associated maritime artifacts.

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