

The War We Commemorate—XIII 2 Able Men Make Difference

By Geoffrey M. Footner

Two able men, civilian Henry Eckford and a senior naval officer, Capt. Isaac Chauncey, slowly turned the Navy's limited role in the disastrous invasion of Canada in 1812 and 1813 into a great American success story in 1814. The U.S. Army opened the war with a poorly executed attack on the British colony of Canada. The Americans discovered too late that the invasion's progress was inhibited by the unavailability of water transportation that would have enabled it to use Canada's only reliable highways, which were the lakes and rivers that form a long boundary between then-undeveloped Canada and the United States.

America's marine presence on the Great Lakes in the early months of the invasion consisted of USS Oneida on Lake Ontario and the Army's armed brig Adams, which was quickly captured by the Canadian Provincial Marine. Capt. Chauncey was ordered to take command of the Great Lakes Naval District in September 1812. His mission was to provide transport for the Army that was hard pressed to keep the invasion from faltering. When Capt. Chauncey arrived on Lake Ontario to establish a Navy base, one of his first acts was to ask shipbuilder Henry Eckford in Brooklyn, N.Y., to come to Sacket's Harbor with his carpenters and artisans to build warships. Eckford, generous, patriotic and creative, built the sloop of war USS Madison at the new base during the autumn of 1812. The leadership of these two men kept the United States from losing control of the Great Lakes, although Chauncey was not certain of that until September 1814.

The Navy's original mission was to assist the American Army with transportation and gun cover on Lakes Ontario, Erie and Champlain. Secretary of the Navy Alexander Hamilton and his successor William Jones had little understanding of Navy ranks and had clipped the broad authority that Chauncey originally received. Hamilton awarded Lt. Thomas Macdonough command of the waterway system that fed into Lake Champlain and instructed the officer to report to him and not Chauncey. Then, Secretary Jones submitted to Master Commandant Oliver Hazard Perry's rude demands to be freed of Chauncey's authority.

The United States was fortunate in this instance. Chauncey was dedicated and hard driving in a Navy that heretofore had been dominated by a self-serving covey of puffed-up peacocks. He had been commandant of the Navy shipyard in New York, so he knew that state's top politicians and all of Brooklyn's highly talented shipbuilders, whose leader was Eckford, heir to Joshua Humphreys' title of America's leading innovative naval architect.

After the American invasive venture into Canada failed, New York Gov. Daniel D. Thompson was quick to understand the danger to his state's future if Great Britain and its aggressive Royal Navy were to gain control of the Great Lakes and the rivers that led into America's heartland—including the Mississippi River's system of navigable waterways that Britain had coveted since the United States gained independence in 1784. Britain's intent was to annex the Great Lakes, which was confirmed by the news of the arrival of Commodore James L. Yeo at Kingston in May 1813. Thompson *(Continued)*



Photos by Lew Diuguid
Candidate Brooke Lierman and a sleepy Ted.

Resident Seeks Election As Delegate to Annapolis

Lawyer Brooke Lierman, 34, a resident for 4 years and active in Fell's Point affairs, has announced that she will run for the 141-member House of Delegates in Annapolis in the June 2014 primary. Her focus is on gaining the support of younger families moving into this heavily Democratic district in recent years. "I'm not running against Pete Hammen," she said, referring to a current delegate, resident in Canton, who is also chair of the Fell's Point Task Force. "I just want to be one of the three delegates from this [46th] district." The other two incumbents are Luke Clippinger of south Baltimore and Brian McHale of Locust Point.

"I am running for delegate because I love Baltimore, and I believe it has enormous potential that is has yet to realize," she said. "Whether you are a born-and-bred Baltimorean or you came to Baltimore as an adult and have decided to raise your family here, we all want it to succeed and to thrive. We want a clean, green, safe and prosperous city. I believe that, with help from the state, Baltimore can become the city we all want."

Brought up in Montgomery County, Brooke was educated at Dartmouth and the University of Texas Law School. Her father was a chair of the Maryland Democratic Party. She is married to real estate lawyer Eben Hansel. They live on Lancaster St., have one boy and both are active in climate issues, while Brooke has done pro bono work for area community groups contesting the licenses of rogue bars. She said "this drew my interest in the role of the state," which controls alcohol sale in the city. She is secretary of the Residents' Association and member of the Red Line Citizens' Advisory Council.

Lierman specializes in labor and business law with Brown, Goldstein and Levy downtown. On May 24, The Sun gave major attention to her representing contract school bus drivers in a wages suit. Lierman has yet to file for the primary but has launched a website at www.brookelierman.com and plans a kick-off party July 25, 6:30 at Max's.

Happenings

The Mayor on the Square

Mayor Rawlings-Blake joined a celebration in the Square on May 30 of Main Street's having hired the Waterfront Coalition to keep the shores of the Patapsco as clean and secure here as it does in the Inner Harbor. The mayor praised the Point's business-oriented organization, under its new president, Mike Maraziti, with having raised \$150,000 to start the service--"neon green teams on foot, bikes and Segways," as the mayor put it. Such services were once the now-strapped city's purview. One-Eyed Mike credited Ron Furman of Max's with being a pioneer in the "cleaning and greening" effort now in fruition.

Mike Hankin of Brown Advisory, who chairs the board of Waterfront Coalition, said his firm came with high hopes and concerns to Bond St. Wharf 11 years ago with about 65 employees, and worked with the city on what became the Partnership in-town clean-up effort 8 years ago. That operation now has a \$2.5 million budget, 60% of it private, and Brown Advisory hires 330 in Fell's Point. His company is among those here that have contributed to the Gold Medalion program--initially supported by Thames St. and lower Broadway merchants. Councilman Jim Kraft, lauded for his role by the mayor, told the crowd of three TV cameras and about 50 onlookers that his Southeast District alone expects to fulfill her announced goal bringing 10,000 new residents to Baltimore.

Furman presented a Tochterman's fishing rod to policeman Ron Starr, retiring after 38 years' service, all of it in Southeast.

Catholic Charity Pursues Suit

Deidre Hammer of Dallas St., whose efforts to limit repeated expansions of the Catholic St. Vincent de Paul Society's Beans and Bread program next door for feeding the homeless, has been called to Circuit Court at 9:30AM, July 10, in a \$150,000 suit by the charity accusing her of misusing the judicial system to harass it. In April, a judge dismissed a companion count of "abusing" the system. Hammer is the long-time leader of Douglass Place Neighborhood Association and has received support from other community groups, particularly Fells Prospect. By now, "I'm spending all of my resources to pay an attorney to fight these allegations," she said. Charging that construction next door has damaged her house, she is gathering documentation for a possible counter-suit.

Schooner Race's Cameron Dies

Yvonne St. George Cameron, a founder in 1988 and veritable admiral of the Great Chesapeake Bay Schooner Race, died April 18. She was the Baltimore chairman, working largely out of the now departed Whistling Oyster bar on the Square and active in Fell's Point.

Jazz Settles Into Bertha's On a Sunday Afternoon

May was the coolest month for one of the least organized but more durable minorities in Fell's Point, its jazz fans--and the musicians who keep them attuned. Ever amiable Tony Norris hosted the prime event upstairs at Bertha's on May 5, or Synco de Mayo, as the featured sextet's e-mail flier billed it. The occasion illustrated how aging swingers can find their way in the community: the group led by Allen Houser, long-time trumpeter among groups frequenting Bertha's bar, played a memorial to photographer/jazz fan Joel Hautof. He died of cancer last year.

Hautof was widely appreciated for his photo exhibits at the Dead End Saloon on Fell and Wolfe Sts.--which sold last year and seems to have died as well. But local developer Larry Silverstein assured it is under renovation to reopen in the fall. The sets at Bertha's started at 1 on that Sunday afternoon--brisk in the bebop algo-rhythms that dominated jazz in the late 1950s and that linger on through the dedication of devotees. There was no charge for the event, with wine on the house, but Houser announced honor-system sales of the group's recordings, and of Hautof's legacy photos, in the back of the room.

The audience seemed as familiar with each other as with the sextet's riffs on tunes such as Duke Pearson's "Jeannine." People came and went, keeping 60 or so seats occupied all afternoon. Play-

2 Able Men - cont. from front

pressed the Madison administration to reinforce the Navy's squadrons to ward off sure disaster should the Lakes Ontario, Erie or Champlain fall to the Royal Navy.

War has a tendency to modify sacred systems if not great egos. The ship-construction race on Lake Ontario involved building warships of proper design for all three commands to establish control over the Great Lakes. Eckford, managing the construction program for the three, also placed himself in charge of the shipbuilding race on Lake Ontario. The Brown Brothers of New York were Eckford's "lieutenants" and managed the shipbuilding program in the Lake Champlain region and on Lake Erie at Presque Island. The states of New York and Pennsylvania supplied the Browns with ship carpenters, artisans and mechanics from New York City and Philadelphia for the warships they constructed for Perry and Macdonough.

Eckford was at Chauncey's base on Lake Ontario to out-build the Royal Navy's Admiral Yeo at his Kingston base, which was an expensive undertaking since each side was determined to build the largest battleship and greatest number of warships. The Royal Navy's supply line stretched back to Portsmouth, England, while lines of wagons from New York, Philadelphia and Pittsburgh brought out the skilled workers and endless wagon-loads of shipbuilding equipment and supplies to the U. S. Navy's three widely separated shipbuilding sites. Nevertheless, it proved worth the effort.

NEXT: Clash of the fleets.



Leaps are in the lingo at New Century, with teachers Lisa Warren and Emily Feinberg attending.



Trumpeter Allen Houser buckles down.

ers included Paul Hannah on tenor, Dough Elliott trombone, Steve Novasel, stalwart bassist of the Washington jazz scene, Howard Chichester drums and Darius Scopen piano.

In a rear corner was pianist Billy Colucci, 73, who gives a twist to the term "house pianist." Retired but for rare appearances, he lives on the third floor of the Norrises on Ann St. He told those greeting him that he would be playing anew on May 23 at Creative Alliance in the Patterson Theater in Highlandtown. About 65 attended, mostly from Fell's Point, for two intense sets--one solo the other with bass and drums. His last appearance was 3 years ago, drawing not quite as many. And he had seemed to this listener more engaged. In response to a suggestion conveyed by Norris, Billy even played his take on a standard, "Lover Man," that seemed to add to the listeners' enthusiasm for his own compositions. Laura Norris, of the classical mandolin, was on her feet, cheering with the rest.--L.D.

Lingo Leap at New Century

New Century, the ex-Mother Seton school on S. Ann St., that immerses 2-to-4-year-olds in Chinese and Spanish, has taken another leap--toward broadening engagement with the neighborhood. It's called Lingo Leap, an after-school program in which Spanish is more at play than dominant. Those classes will be seeking youngsters in September but a summer version is seeking youngsters now. Prices for these one-hour open gym sessions are \$10; \$5 for siblings. A membership card is \$55 for 11 weeks.

Director Lisa Warren of Mount Washington said she and her two colleagues don't know who coined the Lingo Leap name, but do know what they want to achieve: a program that offers students from New Century and from other schools guidance in natural movement and language, dance, sports and Spanish creative movement. The age levels are primary, 3-5, and elementary, 6-8.

The main school ends at 3:30 and Lingo leaps in at 4. In this first year, only about 10 attend, and hence current recruitment efforts. A sideline activity is organized celebration of youngsters' birthdays. A sample of one suggests they are loud but well in hand. The birthday woman is Emily Feinberg, 22, of Station North. Lingo Leap occupies the ground level of the former St. Stan's Church, leased to New Century by developer Larry Silverstein, who redeveloped the St. Stan's campus, and whose son attends New Century. The basement is furnished with a stage, high-design gym equipment for the small set and an office. The third woman is Sharon La Costa, born in Panama and now resident in Dundalk. She markets, coordinates the classes in ballet and sports, and is willing to instruct in Spanish when the currently lagging numbers permit. Her e-mail is coordinator.lingoleap@gmail.com.

The last Friday of each month is date night, on which the class runs from 5:30 to 8 so the parents can go out to dinner, presumably in a Point bistro. Phone 443.687.9386.

Liquor Board Official Targeted

President Victor Corbin of Fells Prospect is seeking other community groups' support for Michelle Wirzberger to replace Sam Daniels as the state's executive secretary of the Board of Liquor License Commissioners. "Michelle currently works for City Council President Jack Young and has worked for Community Law and represented many associations in hearings," said Corbin, mentioning those closing Cheerleaders in Fell's Point. Control of alcohol is the purview of the state and a recent study has found grave deficiencies, often reflecting on the long-serving Daniels. Corbin has written the governor and state senators and asks other groups to do so.

'Private Lives' at Vagabond

Sherrionne Brown directs Noel Coward's "Private Lives" with The Vagabond Players through June 30 at 806 S. Broadway, Fridays-Saturdays at 8, Sundays at 2. Tickets at vagabondplayers.org \$15-17 or at the door \$16-18; special rates for seniors, students, military and groups.

Schedules

Trash and Recycling

Current days for trash pickup are Tuesdays and for recycling are Thursdays. Residents are limited to setting out three 32-gallon cans of waste between 6PM on Mondays and 6AM on Tuesdays.

Neighborhood Meetings

Douglass Place: Third Tuesday of each month at Bertha's, dlh411@gmail.com.

Antique Dealers' Association: Call 410.675.4776.

Community Organization: Second Tuesdays at 606 South Ann St., 443.791.1717.

Main Street: info@fellspointmainstreet.org or 410.675.8900.

Preservation Society: 410.675.6750 ext.16 or preservationociety.com.

Residents' Association: First Wednesdays, 7PM, Bertha's.

thanks!

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