

## STEAM SCHOOL #6

*By: Gregory D. Mucci, Engine Department*



On November 4-6, 2022 Steam School #6 welcomed 15 guests (and now members) aboard the SS John W. Brown for seminars on steam engineering, hands-on experience, and a lot of liberty ship history. The guests were accommodated and provided meals by the Stewards' Department during their stay.



Much preparatory work precedes the arrive of our guests. The Marketing Department sold the Steam School Experience on the September Living History Cruise. Paul Cervenka assembled a very professional binder, with copies of all slides, handouts, and other related information. The Ship's Store prepares a gift package for each guest. Mike Forehand, Harry Pitnof, and Kris Lindberg ensured each guest's room is cleaned and made up in a ship-shape manner. John Jerbi goes shopping at Costco to ensure that excellent meals are available to our guests. The Delegator-in-Chief delegated. And of course, mints-on-the pillow are in order.

Captain Jeff Gumport, and Chief Engineer George Cornelius both provided opening remarks welcoming our guests.

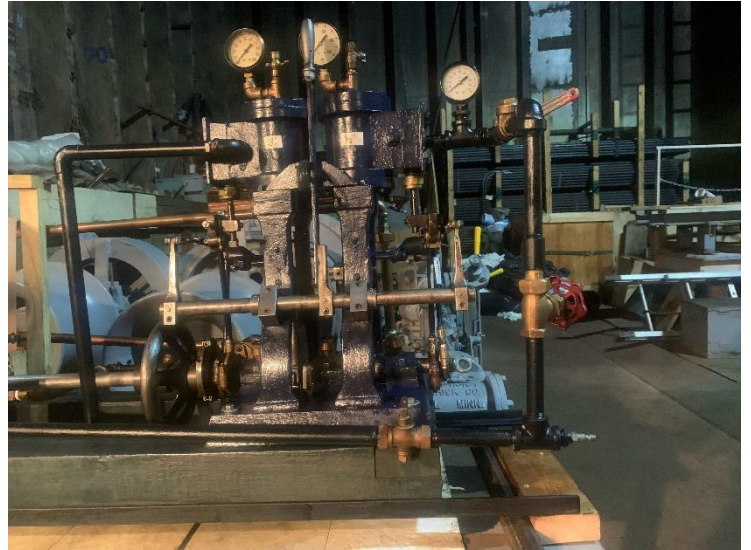
We got down to business. Friday's sessions included introductory remarks, then Denis Mengele kicks it off with Thermodynamics of our steam plant.

Everybody got hands on when we ran auxiliary machinery on compressed air. Denis Mengele discussed how our 120 DC generators and switchgear work. New for this school, we added a discussion and demonstration of our new training compound engine (located in #3 Cargo Hold). After a dinner provided by the Steward's Department, the evening was completed with a ship's tour. As a added bonus, thanks to Hal Raper, everyone got to watch the movie "GREYHOUND" to finish off the evening.



## Saturday:

Our guests always love to get their hands dirty and tear something apart. We have a small duplex reciprocating pump in #3 Hold that we can tear apart and then run (on compressed air). Paul Cervenka led this session, as everyone got to get their hands dirty.



Dick Sterne showed how to insert a torch into the firebox with torch demonstrator. Then, each guest had the opportunity to light a fire in the boiler. Finally this is getting real.





Chief Engineer Cornelius and Lee Seipp showed our guests around our steering gear room, and went through the startup process for the steering gear. Everybody got to try their hand at steering the ship with blinders on. Then we went to pilothouse operations and let the Captain practice driving.



As always, Duff had his flock under his spell as we all were mesmerized by his stories of steam ships and engines.



After a fine meal provided by the Steward's Department, everybody gathered in #1 Tween Deck for our history lesson. Dave Schultze talked about the Seafarer's who sailed the Liberties, some video's were shown, including a video on the riveting conducted in 2014. Then Mike Schneider's presentation of the history of the Liberty Ship.



**Sunday:** Boiler light-off came early at 0500, and steam was raised. At 0900, the day's activities began. The guests were split into two groups, one group on deck operations, and one group in the engine room. Deck operations included cargo loading, and handling. We put live steam on deck to the cargo machinery. We even had rain for a more realistic experience. Each guest got to operate the cargo winches and work together as a team operating two winches to move cargo.

It is amazing how much better all the equipment operates, when operated on steam like it was intended.

In the engine room, the guests rotated through the watches, checked the boiler water chemistry by collecting and analyzing a water sample, and took a turn at the main engine throttle. Everyone had a data sheet to fill out. The main engine was rolled at the dock. Everyone got a chance at the throttle and rolled the engine.



Steam School started as a crazy idea one lunchtime. It has evolved into a three day maritime experience in reciprocating steam engineering and shipboard living, with a mix of history thrown in. Sessions are a mix of classroom presentation and hands-on operation. Each school is unique and is driven by the interest of the participants. It continues to be a unique offering by Project Liberty Ship. Steam School #6 was again a hit! The responses from our guests were very positive, and clearly confirmed that we offer a unique experience.

Steam School #7 is next!

Many thanks to the Engine Department for tolerating my gentle nagging.

### **OUR GUESTS AND NEW MEMBERS!**



### **THE STEAM SCHOOL TEAM**

A big thank you to the Steam School Team, for welcoming our guests, conducting our sixth Steam School and delivering the experience.

**Instructors:** Denis Mengele, George Cornelius, Mike Schneider, Dick Sterne, Kris Lindberg, Joe Sargente, John St. Laurent, Duff Porter, Charles Paris, Claire Gilliland, Dave Schultze, Paul Cervenka, Fred Piercy, Hal Raper, Lee Seipp, Bob Kroohs

**Supporting Staff:** Paul Cervenka, Dick Sterne, Harris Pitnof, Captain Jeff Gumport,

**Watch Standers:** George Cornelius, Denis Mengele, Kris Lindberg, Lee Seipp, John Stratman, Duff Porter, Dick Sterne, Dave Algert, Nick Popovic

**Stewards Department:** John Jerbi, Dan Miller, Harris Pitnof, Glenda Miller

**Delegator in Chief:** Greg Mucci