Panel 05 through Panel 07: The U.S. Maritime Service Base at Bayboro Harbor (1939-1950)

James Anthony Schnur,
Nelson Poynter Memorial Library.

Follow this and additional works at: https://digital.usfsp.edu/npml_outreach_exhibits

Recommended Citation
https://digital.usfsp.edu/npml_outreach_exhibits/4
In November 1939, two training ships entered Tampa Bay and moored at the U.S. Coast Guard base along Bayboro Harbor. This event marked the beginning of the United States Maritime Service Training Station (USMSTS) in St. Petersburg. From late 1939 until 1941, the Maritime Service ships docked at the Coast Guard base while construction of the training station took place. Dedicated in July 1941, the Maritime Service Training Station served as an important training facility until it was decommissioned in March 1950.

Approximately 25,000 young men trained at the Bayboro Harbor facility. Maritime Service graduates learned the ropes on ships such as the *Joseph Conrad*, *Tusitala*, *Vigil*, *American Seaman*, and *American Sailor*. They later carried supplies to armed forces and supported convoys carrying desperately needed allies to United States allies during the Second World War.

Along with waves of over 120,000 U.S. Army Air Corps recruits and other service personnel, the USMS trainees flooded downtown hotels and took residence in on-site barracks. These cadets faced a rigorous five-week preliminary training session that tested their aptitude in seamanship and boating operations. USMS trainees took classes at the station, as well as at outdoor facilities along the downtown waterfront and on sailing, oil burning, and coal burning ships docked along the harbor.