



Brewington Book Prize Awarded to David W. Wooddell

The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore 1857-1980 recounts the history of two city-owned inspection tugboats by the name of “Baltimore,” as well as their meaning for the city’s harbor, the Patapsco River, and the larger Chesapeake Bay.

BALTIMORE, Md. (July 2021) – After careful deliberation, the Maritime Committee of the Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) has awarded the 2021 Brewington Book Prize to David W. Wooddell for [*The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore 1857-1980*](#) (2020, independently published). Chosen from a competitive selection of titles on the Chesapeake Bay and U.S. maritime history published throughout 2020, Wooddell’s book traces the lifespans of two inspection tugboats—once operated by the City of Baltimore to oversee and maintain the harbor—from their respective launches in 1857 and 1906 to their ultimate fates, revealing the tugs’ significance to the region through extensive research and analysis of historic photographs, maps, drawings, and archival documents.

“The Maritime Committee selected this book from 11 candidates published in 2020 for the best combination of importance of the subject, appeal, long-term value, and depth and breadth of research,” said Karl L. Kirkman, Brewington Book Prize Subcommittee Chairman. “The author’s writing style is to collect artifacts and use them to tell his story and this brings fresh insight. The selection of *The Inspection Tugboats Baltimore* was a clear-cut choice by the Brewington Subcommittee.”

David W. Wooddell, previously of Baltimore, Maryland, is a non-fiction writer who retired as a Research Editor from *National Geographic Magazine* in 2009 after 22 years, during which time he specialized in marine archeology, military, naval, and anthropology. Prior to his work with *National Geographic*, David worked as a photojournalist and picture editor for a number of publications. Since his retirement, he has written and published several history books on such topics as 19th century steam locomotives, the Chesapeake Bay in winter, and the Civil War. David currently resides in Pembroke, Ontario, Canada with his wife.

Beginning in 2016, The Brewington Book Prize has been awarded annually by the Maryland Center for History and Culture for the best book on maritime history related to the Chesapeake Bay or the nation. The prize comes with a \$500 honorarium and is named for Marion V. Brewington (1902–1974), a legendary maritime curator and historian from Salisbury, Maryland. During World War II, Brewington was the curator for the U.S. Navy. After the war, he was the maritime curator of MCHC (then known as the Maryland Historical Society), a trustee of the Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, and later held curatorial and administrative positions at the Peabody Museum of Salem, Massachusetts, and the Kendall Whaling Museum in Sharon, Massachusetts. His books include *Chesapeake Bay: A Pictorial Maritime History* and *Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes*.

Previous winners of the Brewington Book Prize include:

- 2020 Donald Grady Shomette, *Anaconda’s Tail: The Civil War on the Potomac Frontier, 1861-1865* (Dunkirk, MD: Millstone Publishing, 2019)

- 2019 Judge John C. North II, *Tradition, Speed, and Grace: Chesapeake Bay Log Sailing Canoes* (St. Michaels, MD: Chesapeake Bay Maritime Museum, 2018)
- 2018 William Fowler Jr., *Steam Titans: Cunard, Collins, and the Epic Battle for Commerce on the North Atlantic* (New York: Bloomsbury, 2017)
- 2017 Donald Grady Shomette, *Privateers of the Revolution: War on the New Jersey Coast, 1775–1783* (Atglen, PA: Schiffer Publishing, 2016)
- 2016 Kate Livie, *Chesapeake Oysters: The Bay's Foundation and Future* (Charleston, SC: History Press, 2015).
- 2015 Tim McGrath, *Give Me a Fast Ship: The Continental Navy and America's Revolution at Sea* (New York: Dutton Caliber, 2014).

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The Maryland Center for History and Culture (MCHC) collects, preserves, and interprets the history, art, and culture of Maryland. Originally founded as the Maryland Historical Society in 1844, MCHC offers a museum, library, and education programs to inspire critical thinking, creativity, and community.

The Museum and H. Furlong Baldwin Library are currently open Wednesday-Saturday. Museum hours are 10 a.m.-5 p.m. and Library hours are 10 a.m.-4 p.m. Learn more at mdhistory.org, including MCHC's [safety procedures](#).

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