

## **Shipbuilder Monument Installed In Alexandria, Virginia**

Installation of The Shipbuilder was celebrated with an unveiling ceremony on October 31<sup>st</sup> in Waterfront Park. Vice Mayor Del Pepper accepted the monument as a gift to the City. Sculptor Michael Curtis, along with members of the Alexandria City Council, pulled the drape and unveiled the statue to the delight of the large crowd that attended the ceremony. The Shipbuilder is a tribute to an industry that has played a critical role in America's proud military and economic history and honors the dedicated men and women who work as shipbuilders in America. The monument is a primary project of Alexandria Arts Safari, a nonprofit organization that supports public art, education and history projects.

Originally intended to commemorate Alexandria's shipbuilding heritage, it quickly became apparent to the project founders that there was no national acknowledgement of shipbuilders or the industry's contribution to the growth of the nation, thus the sculpture now honors shipbuilders nationally. The United States owes much of its success to one of its oldest industries, shipbuilding. The use of the extensive ports for shipping helped to establish America's economic stability and continues to fuel economic growth. The superior work of shipbuilders and naval engineers has resulted in building the worlds' finest navy and continues to play a critical role in the military leadership of the United States.

Installation sponsors included DelGallo Studio, LLC/Eastern Memorials; Haley & Aldrich; HNTB Architects, Engineers and Planners; Miller and Long; Turner Construction Company; United Rentals; and Weston Solutions.

Tax deductible opportunities are still available for substantial sponsors. A gift of \$10,000 includes a listing on the donor plaque permanently installed on the base of the sculpture. A \$100,000 donor will receive acknowledgment on their own plaque permanently installed on the base of the monument. Donors of \$150,000 or more will receive a bronze copy of the statue to be permanently displayed at a location of their choice.

Two-thirds of the \$430,000 cost for the sculpture has been raised through individual and corporate donations, leaving \$150,000 to be funded. The sculpture budget includes costs for production of the clay model, the mold, the plaster cast, the final bronze and the carved granite base; engineering consultations, footings and preparation of the site; awareness-building and fundraising materials; a reduced fee for the artist; and a 10-year maintenance fund required by the City. Funds will also be needed to cover the costs of the educational programs. The project is entirely run by a volunteer committee.

With the installation of the sculpture completed, a number of educational programs are in development in cooperation with partner organizations. Projects include interpretive signage for the statue, a comprehensive web site, an educational pamphlet for visitors, educational materials for schools and youth groups. Partner organizations include American Society of Naval Engineers, Shipbuilder's Council of America, Alexandria Archaeology, Historic Alexandria, area public school systems, and other local groups.

The Shipbuilder commemorates the crucial role the shipbuilding industry has played in the growth and development of the strongest nation in the world, the United States. As a tangible expression of the collective history of a people and a place, The Shipbuilder will restore awareness and pride in the role these craftsmen play in the nation's maritime and military heritage

In these times of increased patriotism and renewed interest in our history, Americans are seeking examples of the successes that made the United States the great nation it is today. It is the monuments, museums and historic sites – permanent structures of significance illustrating our history – that are meeting this need. Monuments such as The Shipbuilder teach our children, our citizens and our visitors our heritage, and help to project a sense of permanence and security.

Visit [www.shipbuildermonument.org](http://www.shipbuildermonument.org) to make a secure, online donation or to learn more about the project. Alexandria Arts Safari is a 501c3, non profit organization, and all donations are tax deductible.