

## NATIONAL REGISTER ELIGIBILITY ASSESSMENT VESSEL: M/V *James McHenry*/ex-*Paul Bunyan*



The heavy-lift ship *James McHenry* at the Maritime Administration's James River Reserve Fleet, Fort Eustis, Virginia in May 2009. Maritime Administration photograph.

### Vessel History

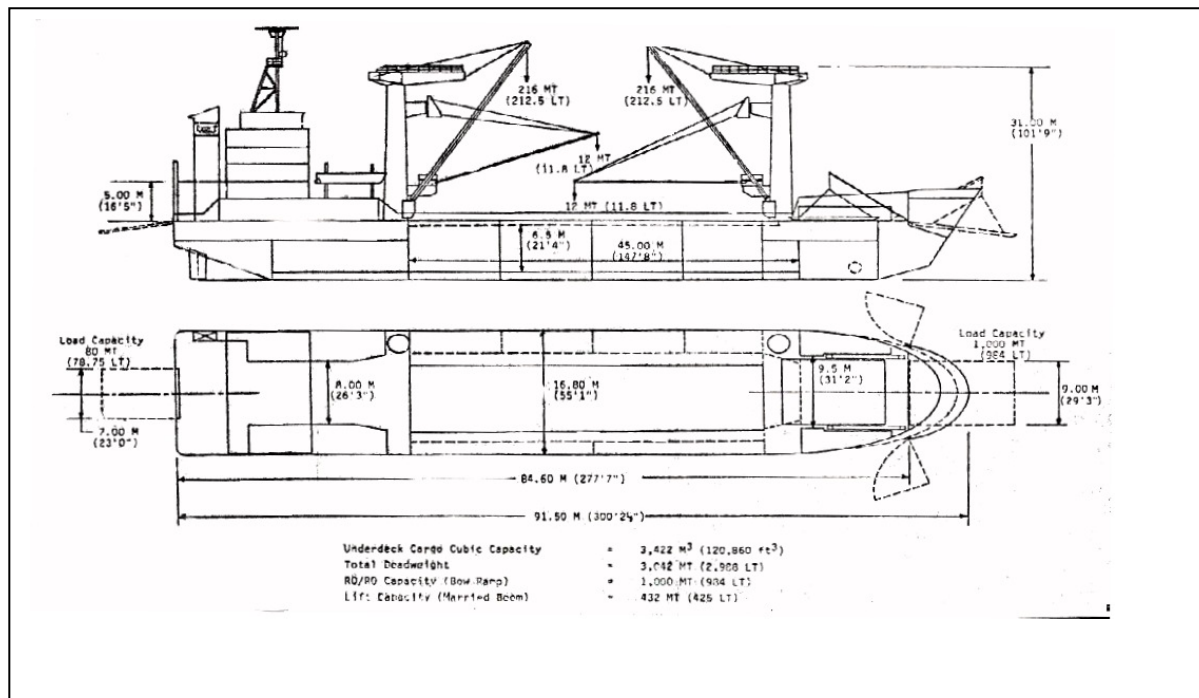
M/V *James McHenry*, formerly named *Paul Bunyan*, is one of two special purpose built heavy-lift ships constructed at Peterson Builders in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin in 1979. *Paul Bunyan* and its sister ship, *John Henry*, were built under Maritime Administration (MARAD) design C1-MT-123a.

*Paul Bunyan* served in commercial trade with American Heavy Lift Lines until the company traded the ship in to MARAD in 1987. The ship entered MARAD's National Defense Reserve Fleet (NDRF) at Beaumont, Texas on February 26, 1987. Section XI of the Merchant Ship Sales Act of 1946 established the NDRF to serve as a reserve of ships for national defense and national emergencies.

On September 4, 1987 MARAD transferred the ship to the U.S. Army Transportation Center at Fort Eustis, Virginia where it was used as a training platform. The ship was renamed *James McHenry* (HLS-1) for the American patriot, member of the Continental Congress, and Secretary of War under both Presidents George Washington and John Adams. Fort McHenry in Baltimore is also named for him. The army returned the vessel to MARAD's James River Reserve Fleet (JRRF) in September 1993 where it remained in a retention status until the vessel was downgraded to non-retention in February 2008.



***Clockwise from top left: Stern ramp closed aft of the ship's superstructure; Heavy lift boom near the ship's bow; Stern ramp closed; Heavy lift boom; Ship's bow, which also opens on either side to access the bow ramp. Maritime Administration photographs.***



Capacity drawing of the heavy-lift vessel *James McHenry*. The army used the vessel for training.

## Description/Characteristics of Vessel Type

**Type:** Heavy lift, roll on/roll off vessel  
**Design:** C1-MT-123a  
**Hull Number:** HLS-1  
**Official Number:** 602272  
**Previous name:** *Paul Bunyan*  
**Builder:** Peterson Builders, Sturgeon Bay, WI  
**Year:** 1979  
**Sister Ships:** *John Henry*  
**Location:** James River Reserve Fleet  
**Length (overall):** 300.2'  
**Length between perpendiculars:** 278.10'  
**Beam (maximum molded):** 55.13'  
**Depth:** 27.1'  
**Draft, full load:** 16.11'  
**Displacement, loaded:** 5,590  
**Deadweight:** 2,953 LT  
**Gross Tonnage (GRT):** 2,647  
**Net Tonnage (NRT):** 1,772  
**Main Engine:** Twin diesel  
**Shaft horsepower:** 2,800  
**Designed Sea Speed:** 13.4 knots

*James McHenry* is a relatively small, special-purpose heavy lift ship with additional roll on/roll off (Ro/Ro) capability. Heavy lift ships are designed, as the name implies, to handle very heavy cargo that might otherwise exceed the cargo handling capacity or

hatch sizes of conventional ships. Cargo of this type is often referred to as “project cargo” and may include large agricultural and earth moving equipment; industrial refining and factory components and equipment; rail cars and locomotives, etc. Conventional cargo ships, particularly those designed and built in the United States in the late 1960s and through the mid-1970s, may have included one or more heavy lift booms in their cargo handling equipment. These booms were typically of the Stulken rig, with a lifting capacity of 60 tons and could serve two cargo hatches. Three Lykes Lines ships of the C4-S-66a classification (out of a class of 10) were each fitted with two Stulken booms to service three hatches; the two booms could be paired to make extra heavy lifts of about 100 tons to service the hatch between them.

Project cargo and other heavy lift shipments fit into a niche market, and the conventional C-3 and C-4-sized cargo ships in service in the 1970s were often poorly sized to fit that market. This led to the development of the specialized heavy lift ships of the C1-MT-123a class. These ships were intended to better fit niche markets, and were equipped with Ro/Ro capability in order to extend their usefulness. The heavy lift booms are of a modified Stulken rig, and are offset to the port side to permit the full length and width of the main deck to be loaded without obstructions. The booms each have a capacity of 216 metric tons and can be married to essentially double their lifting capacity. Flush watertight hatches in the main deck allow cargo to be loaded into the hold below; bow and stern ramps are provided to allow direct access to the main deck by Ro/Ro cargo.

The superstructure is completely aft to afford an unobstructed deck for cargo stowage. Accommodations for crew and officers are provided in the superstructure, along with all service facilities. The engine room is also fully aft and is situated beneath the superstructure.

### **Statement of Significance**

M/V *James McHenry* is one of two special purpose built heavy-lift ships constructed at Peterson Builders in Sturgeon Bay, Wisconsin. It is a specialized vessel type that fit into a small market niche, for which there was and remains little domestic need. The vessel’s heavy lift and Ro/Ro capabilities did make it militarily useful and the vessel was used by the U.S. Army for five years to train its personnel. *James McHenry* remained in MARAD’s NDRF in a retention status as a military-useful vessel for 15 years; however, it was not activated for service after it returned to the JRRF in 1993. Although these vessels were unusual in U.S. domestic service and there never was a large population of this type, vessels of this design and type were and are not unusual in foreign trade. The U.S. vessels are reflective of contemporary foreign practice.

## **Historical Integrity**

The vessel was originally constructed in 1979 and did not undergo any substantial modifications during its service life. The vessel retains its historical integrity, being substantially unchanged from original construction. The vessel is in fair condition. It has been out of service since 1993 and has been in the fleet for 19 years.

## **National Register Eligibility Statement**

*James McHenry* is not yet 50-years-old and does not possess the exceptional importance as a property that has achieved significance within the past 50 years under the National Register's Criteria Consideration G. The vessel does not possess the significant historical or technological characteristics, or integrity of design and materials necessary for listing, nor is the vessel associated with the lives of persons significant in our past, other than its namesake.

**Date:** 20 June 2012

**Determination:** NOT ELIGIBLE

## **Sources**

Coble, Wendy. *M/V James McHenry/ex- Paul Bunyan Ship History*, 2009.