



National Maritime Day is observed on May 22, the date that the American steamship Savannah sailed from the United States to England. This event marked the first successful crossing of the Atlantic Ocean using steam propulsion. On May 20, 1933, Congress declared May 22 as National Maritime Day. During World War II more than 250,000 members of the American Merchant Marine served their country, with more than 6700 giving their lives, hundreds being detained as prisoners of war and more than 800 ships being sunk or damaged.