



John DeMaio, New Providence, New Jersey

*Angus MacMillan*

DOUGLAS C. MACMILLAN

1912–2001

Elected in 1967

*“Ship design development.”*

BY ALLEN CHIN

SUBMITTED BY THE NAE HOME SECRETARY

DOUGLAS CLARK MACMILLAN, noted naval architect and marine engineer, former president of George G. Sharp, Inc., naval architects and marine engineers, died in East Orleans, Massachusetts, on October 26, 2001, at the age of 89.

He was born July 15, 1912, in Dedham, Massachusetts. He attended the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he received a bachelor of science degree in naval architecture in 1934.

He joined Federal Shipbuilding and Drydock in Kearney, New Jersey, in 1934 and left in 1941 to work for George Sharp. In 1951 he was elected president of the company and in 1969 he became chair of the board. During his years at Sharp he played a major role in quite a few first-of-a-kind designs, including the following:

- The first nuclear-powered merchant ship, the *NS Savannah*, for the Maritime Administration, US Department of Commerce, constructed by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation. President Eisenhower wanted to demonstrate the peaceful use of the atom and empowered the Maritime Administration to accomplish this goal by designing and building a nuclear-powered merchant ship.

- The first integrated tugbarge, the MV *Carport*, built for Cargill, Inc. by Christy Shipbuilding Corp.
- The first cellular containership, the SS *Gateway City*, converted for Pan-Atlantic Steamship Company by Mobile Ship Repair for US domestic trade.
- The first roll-on/roll-off vehicle carrier, the USNS *Comet*, built for the Military Sea Transport Service by Sun Shipbuilding and Company.
- The first roll-on/roll-off containership, the MV *New Yorker*, built for Containerships, Inc. by Maryland Shipbuilding and Drydock Company.

In all of these Doug MacMillan was very innovative and played a major role in the conceptual, preliminary, and contract designs.

He was also prominently involved in the Massive Emergency Ship Construction Program during World War II, during which more than 600 ships were built to Sharp's plans—more than 400 Victory merchant ships and numerous Naval auxiliaries, including 50 CVE escort aircraft carriers, the “baby flattops” of Pacific fame.

His contributions were recognized by his election to the NAE in 1967, and in 1969 he received the Elmer A. Sperry Award “for his direction and engineering contributions to all aspects of the preliminary studies and final design of the NS *Savannah*.” The Society of Naval Architects and Marine Engineers (SNAME) also recognized his accomplishments in naval architecture and marine engineering by awarding him in 1969 the coveted, prestigious David W. Taylor Medal, which is given for “notable achievements in naval architecture and/or marine engineering.”

Doug was a fellow and vice president of SNAME and was active on many of its committees as well as those of the US Coast Guard relating to the safety of nuclear merchant ships. He was also a member of the American Society of Naval Engineers and a trustee of St. John's Guild in New York City.

After his work at Sharp, he became a consultant naval architect, assistant to the general manager at Quincy

Shipbuilding. He was on the board of directors of the Atomic Industrial Forum and a member of the advisory committees of the US Navy and the US Coast Guard.

His son Douglas, remembering his father, wrote:

After retiring he embarked on a mission to do extensive research on his family genealogy. He traveled to Scotland and learned that his family emigrated in 1806 from the Isle of Colonsay, Argyllshire, to Prince Edward Island, Canada, on the ship *Spencer*. A naval architect by profession, he was intrigued with the possibility of finding the characteristics of the *Spencer*. His research was successful. The genealogy of the MacMillans and MacNeills was published. A copy is housed in a museum on PEI.

More than anything, he loved spending time with his family on the Belgrade Lakes, Maine. He designed and helped build the cabin on Great Pond. Doug enjoyed being on the lake canoeing and sailing. On his seventy-fifth birthday, he sailed his Catamaran the sixteen-mile length of the lake and onto the ramp one last time! From then on he was content to watch the sunsets on his much loved GOLDEN POND.

Doug also liked gardening, woodworking, and travel. At the time of his death, he was survived by his wife Dorothy (Chase) MacMillan; sons Douglas S. MacMillan of Doylestown, Pennsylvania, and John R. MacMillan, of Eagle, Idaho; brother John and sister Gertrude, both of Dedham; four grandchildren; and a niece.