

## PROGRAM

### COLOR GUARD

54th Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry USCT Re-enactors

### MASTER OF CEREMONIES

Michael Allen, National Park Service, Fort Sumter National Monument

### INVOCATION

Reverend Stephen Singleton, Pastor, Emanuel AME Church

### WELCOME

Robert Dodson, Superintendent  
National Park Service, Ft. Sumter National Monument

### REMARKS

Billy Jenkins on, Co-Chair, S.C. African American Historical Alliance  
Jannie Harriot, Chair, S.C. African American Heritage Commission  
Senator Glenn F. McConnell, President Pro Tem, South Carolina Senate  
Reverend Kenneth F. Hodges, Member, S.C. House of Representatives;  
Pastor, Tabernacle Baptist Church, Beaufort  
Emory Campbell, Chair, Gullah Geechee Cultural Heritage Corridor  
Commission  
Council Member Kathleen G. Wilson, Mayor Pro Tem, City of Charleston  
CW4 Steven C. Brown, Vessel Master, *Major General Robert Smalls*;  
Commander, 203rd Transportation Detachment  
Kitt Haley Alexander, Founder, Robert Smalls Legacy Foundation

### BENEDICTION

Reverend Joseph A. Darby, Pastor, Morris Brown AME Church

### 2:30 p.m. ~ LIBATION CEREMONY

Queen Quet Marquetta L. Goodwine, Gullah Geechee Sea Island Coalition

Special thanks to our participants and others  
whose efforts made this visit and event a success:

Col. Thomas J. Vacarro, Commander, 359th Transportation Battalion  
National Park Service staff and volunteers  
South Carolina State Ports Authority  
University of South Carolina Press  
Charleston Council of the Navy League of the U.S.

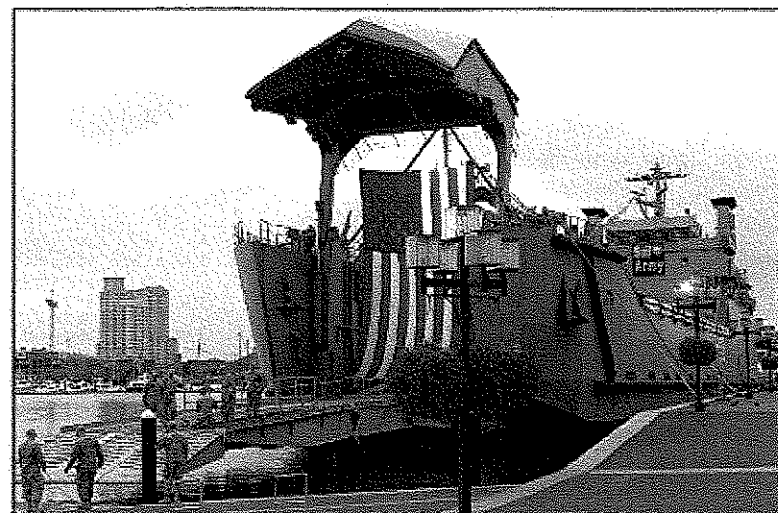
[www.robertsmalls.org](http://www.robertsmalls.org)

CHARLESTON

Ceremony Commemorating  
The Historic Return To Charleston, S.C.  
Of Slave, Soldier, Statesman

Robert Smalls

As A National Hero, Embodied In The Form Of The  
U.S. Army Vessel *Major General Robert Smalls*  
10:00 a.m. ~ June 24, 2008



USAV *MG Robert Smalls* (LSV-8)

First U.S. Army Vessel to Bear the Name of an African-American  
First Army Vessel Named for a Civil War Hero  
Army's Largest Asset



Civil War Hero  
Most Significant Black Participant  
in the Civil War  
First Black Captain of a U.S. Vessel

Robert Smalls  
1839-1915



South Carolina Militia General  
South Carolina State Legislator  
Five-term U.S. Congressman  
U.S. Collector of Customs

Before dawn on May 13, 1862, Robert Smalls, a 23 year-old slave pilot, commandeered *Planter*, a Confederate transport steamer loaded with armaments, from Charleston harbor. With his wife, children, and 12 other slaves aboard he gave the correct whistle signal as he passed the rebel forts in the harbor. He then sailed to the nearest Union blockading vessel and surrendered. Union newspapers hailed Smalls as a national hero and called *Planter* "the first trophy from Fort Sumter." A Congressional bill signed by President Lincoln awarded prize money to Smalls and his associates.

At the request of two Union generals, in August 1862 Smalls met with President Lincoln and the Secretary of War seeking permission to recruit 5,000 black troops. Permission was soon granted.

In the fall of 1862 Smalls conducted a speaking tour in New York to raise support for the Union. There he was presented an engraved gold medal by "the colored citizens of New York...as a token of their regard for his heroism, his love of liberty, and his patriotism."

On April 7, 1863 Smalls piloted ironclad *Keokuk* in a failed Union attack on Fort Sumter. The ship was hit 90 times, 19 at or below waterline and sank the next morning, minutes after the crew had been transferred to a tug.

On December 1, 1863, after an act of bravery under fire, Smalls became the first black captain of a vessel in the service of the United States.

As a delegate to the state constitutional convention in 1868, he offered a resolution for a "system of common schools to be open without charge to all classes of persons." He became a major general in the state's militia, served in the S.C. House of Representatives 1868-1870 and the state Senate 1870-1874.

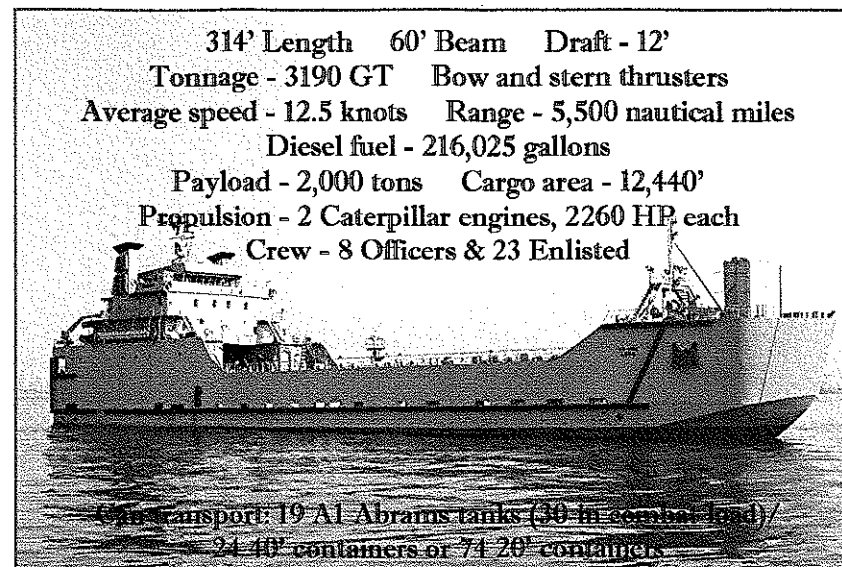
Smalls served in the 44<sup>th</sup> and 45<sup>th</sup> 49<sup>th</sup> U.S. Congresses - 1875-1886. During consideration of a bill to reduce and restructure the Army he introduced an amendment to integrate regiments: "Hereafter in the enlistment of men in the Army...no distinction whatsoever shall be made on account of race or color." The amendment was not considered.

For nearly 20 years, Smalls was U.S. Collector of Customs in Beaufort, S.C., where he lived as owner in the house in which he had been a slave.

Robert Smalls was the most powerful black man in South Carolina for five decades.

Smalls died February 23, 1915. He is buried at Tabernacle Baptist Church in Beaufort. Beneath a bust of Smalls near his grave is this inscription: My race needs no special defense, for the past history of them in this country proves them to be the equal of any people anywhere. All they need is an equal chance in the battle of life." November 1, 1895

## USAV Major General Robert Smalls (LSV-8)



Army watercraft provide logistical and rescue support to U.S. and Allied forces. Logistics Over the Shore (LOTS) operations transport troops, cargo and vessels. In locations lacking port facilities the LSV-8, equipped with bow and stern ramps, can deliver vehicles and cargo to beachheads. It can carry the troops and equipment of a brigade-size unit.

### PLANKOWNERS

[Members of the first crew to serve on a vessel]

CW4 Steve Brown  
CW4 Tom Sleboda  
CW3 Anthony Kreidler  
CW3 John McKinney  
CW2 Michael Carr  
CW2 Richard Conklin  
WO1 Misty Currier  
WO1 Andrew Kostin  
SFC Wilfredo Gonzalez-Valentin  
SSG Roweena Davis  
SSG Patrick Stack  
SGT David Desrosiers  
SGT David Housholder  
SGT John Kinlein



SGT Marlon Mamer  
SGT Cotty Parks  
SGT Daniel Seymore  
SGT Roger Taylor  
SGT Michael Van Dam  
SGT Marvin Woodis  
SPC Alex Arriola  
SPC Justin Davidson  
PFC Christopher Hubbard  
PFC David King  
PFC Matthew Kreidler  
SPC Jeremy Shobe  
SPC Prince Thangaraj  
SPC Michael Zollner

54 Massachusetts Regiment Company I  
Memorial Service of the Assault on Battery Wagner  
Friday, July 18, 2008—3:45 PM  
Morris Island, South Carolina  
Boat Departs the Charleston Maritime Center,  
10 Wharfside Street  
Charleston, SC @ 3:00 pm.  
Price: \$20.00



On Morris Island, hurricanes have leveled the site of the sand fort assaulted by the *54th Massachusetts* on July 18, 1863, but bones of the brave men who fought on both sides that day still rest in the sand hills of the island where they were buried. The beach is nearly identical in appearance to what the men of the 54th would have seen that day and conditions on the Island are identical. Keepers of the Morris Island lighthouse reburied bones found on the eroding barrier island beach in the 1930's. Local relic hunters found such bones following Hurricane Hugo, showing the marks of bone saws from the hospitals. Many soldiers were buried on the now eroded beach, but others were buried in the dunes of the Island. One man died for every yard of the Island taken by the Federal army in 1863. The Star of the West Battery was also located along this section of beach, from which Citadel Cadets fired and what some historians consider to be the first shots of the war against a Federal Supply Ship in January 1861.

Transportation

Transportation by boat is provided. Limited seats available. Please email or phone Joseph McGill for more information and reservations.

**Bring lawn chairs**

54th Massachusetts Regiment  
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