

Tour of the [N. S. Savannah](#)

Tuesday October 24, 2006 - 3:00 PM EST
[Colonna's Shipyard](#) - 400 East Indian River Road - Norfolk, VA
[Directions](#)

followed by a talk by

Mr. Erhard Koehler
Manager, N.S SAVANNAH Programs, United States Maritime Administration (MARAD)

Tuesday October 24, 2006 - 6:00 PM EST
[Hell's Kitchen](#) - 124 Granby St - Norfolk, VA
[Directions](#)

[Download Mr. Koehler's Presentation](#) [2.1 MB]



The [N.S. Savannah](#) was the world's first nuclear-powered cargo/passenger ship, built by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation at Camden, New Jersey. The NS Savannah was one of only three nuclear-powered cargo ships ever built (the others are the NS Otto Hahn and the Russian container ship Sevmorput).

First proposed in 1955, the Savannah was part of President Eisenhower's "Atoms for Peace" initiative. Congress authorized the construction in 1956 as a joint project between the Maritime Administration of the Department of Commerce

and the Atomic Energy Commission. Savannah was launched in March, 1962. Designed to carry 9,400 tons of cargo, 60 passengers and 124 crew, NS Savannah was capable of cruising at 21 knots and traveling 336,000 miles on a single fuel load.

NS Savannah demonstrated the technical feasibility of nuclear propulsion for merchant ships and was not expected to be commercially competitive.

Savannah was designed to be visually impressive. The hull was streamlined to look more like a luxury yacht than a bulk cargo vessel. The NS Savannah was equipped with 30 air conditioned staterooms, each with an individual bath, a dining facility that could seat 100 passengers, a lounge that could double as a movie theater, a veranda, a swimming pool and a library. Even her cargo handling equipment was designed to look good. Maritime historians often comment that she was "the prettiest merchant ship ever built."

She was a fast ship with incredible range. With her 20,000 horsepower nuclear engine her top speed was 23 knots. Savannah was capable of circling the earth 14 times at 20 knots without refueling.

After the tour of the N. S. Savannah, we will reconvene at the nearby restaurant [Hell's Kitchen](#) (124 Granby St - Norfolk, VA) for the social and dinner. After dinner, **Mr. Erhard Koehler** will give a talk about the N. S.

Savannah, her past and her future. Erhard Koehler is employed by the United States Maritime Administration (MARAD) in Washington, DC. As Manager, N.S SAVANNAH Programs, Erhard is responsible for all activities related to this ship; including ship custody and husbanding, routine radiological surveillance and monitoring, the nuclear decommissioning project, and the SAVANNAH historic preservation program. Erhard also serves as the Senior technical Advisor, N.S SAVANNAH, a position designated by the Maritime Administrator and responsible for all licensing matters before the Nuclear regulatory Commission.

A 1987 graduate of the State University of New York Maritime College at Fort Schuyler, Erhard came to MARAD in 1991 from the late, great Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Among his other duties at MARAD he is broadly responsible for performance of MARAD's state maritime academy schoolship maintenance and operations programs, and serves as the agency's Ship Operations Historian.

