

Poros Training Center Visitor Guide

INTRODUCTION

Poros Training Center serves both as a holiday resort for Warrant Officers and Petty Officers of the Hellenic Navy and as a training establishment capable of providing initial military training for newly enlisted personnel of the Hellenic Navy.

The mission of the Center is to provide holiday facilities for eligible personnel and their families, logistical support for a variety of Hellenic Navy activities, and basic theoretical and practical training for conscripts and voluntarily enlisted men and women. Its objective is to ensure their rapid and smooth integration into the Hellenic Navy, thereby contributing to the mission of the Naval Training Directorate.

One of the Center's primary objectives is to facilitate each recruit's smooth transition from civilian to military life.

HISTORY (PART 1: 1827-1878)

The island of Poros occupies a distinguished place in the history of the modern Greek state. In 1827, while the Greek War of independence was still in progress, the first Naval Station of free Greece was established on the island.

Initially, the Naval Station consisted only of makeshift huts and privately owned buildings in the town of Poros, which served as ammunition depots, repair workshops and storage facilities. The demanding task of organising this first naval establishment was undertaken by the Swiss philhellene physician Andreas Ludwig Gosse.

The emblem of the Center depicts an anchor with crossed rifles and a bayonet behind it, symbolising the naval and military character of the training provided to newly enlisted sailors. In 1830 the establishment of the Poros Naval Station was officially announced, as the original logistical facilities could no longer meet the steadily increasing operational requirements of the Hellenic Fleet.

During the reign of King Otto, the Naval Station was continuously expanded and assumed a prominent role in the planning of Greece's maritime defence. The 'Directorate of Naval Affairs' was established, laying the institutional foundations for the organisation of the national navy.

In 1846 the location of the Naval Station was permanently determined. The central building - most probably designed by the Danish architect Christian Hansen - together with accommodation buildings, was erected during this period.

The naval shipyard built 127 vessels of various types, including corvettes, gunboats, cutters and schooners, making Poros one of the principal centres of naval construction in the young Greek state.

Following the deposition of King Otto, the Poros Naval Station continued its uninterrupted operation until 1878, when a Royal Decree ordered its temporary transfer to the Monastery of Faneromeni on Salamis.

This decision marked the end of Poros as the principal Naval Station of the Kingdom of Greece. Nevertheless, the facilities remained in continuous use by the Hellenic Navy, serving successively as a naval training establishment, a complex of naval schools, the Headquarters of the Training Squadron, and the Higher Naval Schools Command.

HISTORY (PART 2: 1878-TODAY)

A Royal Decree subsequently provided for the first establishment of the **School for Naval Boys (Scholi Nautopaidon)** aboard the warship *Athina*.

During the premiership of **Charilaos Trikoupis**, retired and active—duty officers of the French Navy were invited to Greece to reorganise the training of sailors and Petty Officers, as well as the allocation and administration of fleet personnel.

In **1887**, the **Central Preparatory Training School of Poros** was established under the Ministry of Naval Affairs to provide the initial professional training of newly enlisted naval boys in technical trades and naval specialisations.

The armoured barge *Vasilissa Olga* and the sailing vessel *Aris* were permanently assigned to the establishment and were extensively employed for practical seamanship instruction and training cruises.

From that period until **1991**, the history of the Central Preparatory Training School, the Royal Preparatory Training School, and subsequently the **Poros Training Center** evolved in parallel with the history of the School for Naval Boys, the **Permanent Petty Officers' School of the Hellenic Navy (SDYN)** and, later, the **Permanent Non-Commissioned Officers' School of the Hellenic Navy (SMYN)**.

Until **1948**, the Central Preparatory Training School remained the principal training establishment for conscript sailors. Until 1952, it also accommodated the Hellenic Navy's specialist training schools.

By **1918**, no fewer than **twenty-one specialist schools** were operating in Poros, providing advanced instruction to fleet personnel following their initial military training.

By **1924**, Hellenic Navy personnel received specialised instruction in numerous schools located either at Poros or at the Salamis Naval Base.

From **1920** onwards, all training activities conducted at the Preparatory School and the schools based in Poros were supervised by a Flag Officer holding the rank of **Rear Admiral**.

Following the liberation of Greece from the Axis occupation, the institution resumed operation in **April 1945** under the name **Royal Preparatory Training School of Poros**. In **1948**, it officially adopted the name **Poros Training Center**, which it retains to this day.

During the same year, the **'Palaskas' Naval Training Center** was established at the Skaramangas Naval Base.

In **February 1952**, the specialist schools of Poros Training Center were transferred to Skaramangas. A few months later, in **June 1952**, the Preparatory School also relocated there, leaving only the **School for Naval Boys** in operation at Poros.

In **1957**, the legendary armoured cruiser **HS Georgios Averof** was permanently moored at Poros, where she remained until **1984**, becoming one of the most recognisable symbols of the Training Center and of the Hellenic Navy's historical heritage.

DESTROYER HS VELOS (D16)

The legendary **Destroyer HS Velos (D16)** occupies a distinguished place in the modern history of the Hellenic Navy and in Greece's struggle for the restoration of democracy.

The ship became internationally renowned for the courageous stand taken by her Commanding Officer and crew during the anti-dictatorship movement of **May 1973**. While participating in a NATO exercise in the Mediterranean, the commanding officer, **Commander Nikolaos Pappas**, together with a large number of officers and crew members, openly opposed the military dictatorship then governing Greece. The ship was diverted to Italy, where the officers requested political asylum and publicly denounced the regime, attracting considerable international attention and highlighting the Greek people's struggle for the restoration of democratic government.

Following her decommissioning in **1991**, **HS Velas** was transferred to **Poros Training Center**, where she was preserved as a **floating museum**, enabling visitors to become acquainted with one of the most significant vessels in the modern history of the Hellenic Navy.

From **1991 onwards**, Poros Training Center resumed its role as the Hellenic Navy's basic training establishment for conscript sailors. Initial military training was thereafter conducted at Poros, while the **Permanent Non-Commissioned Officers' School of the Hellenic Navy (SMYN)** was transferred to Skaramangas.

CHURCH OF SAINT NICHOLAS

The Training Center's church is a **three-aisled basilica** dedicated to **Saint Nicholas**, Patron Saint of the Hellenic Navy, **Saint Modestos, Patriarch of Jerusalem**, and **Saint Constantine the New Martyr of Hydra**.

Constructed in **1898** within the grounds of the first Naval Station of the modern Greek state, the church was built through the collective efforts of Naval Officers, Petty Officers and sailors.

For more than a century, it has served as a place of worship, spiritual guidance and religious life for generations of Hellenic Navy personnel.

During their initial military training, recruits are given the opportunity to attend regular religious services, preserving a Long-standing tradition that forms part of the spiritual life of the Training Center.

ADMINISTRATION BUILDING

The Administration Building is a **two-storey stone structure**, erected in **1846**, f originally intended to serve as the summer residence of King Otto of Greece.

The ground floor accommodated the **first Fleet Headquarters** of the Hellenic Navy, reflecting the strategic importance of the Poros Naval Station during the formative years of the modern Greek state.

Today, the building houses the administrative services of Poros Training Center, officers' accommodation and guest facilities for Hellenic Navy personnel and their families.

POROS NAVAL INFIRMARY

The mission of the **Poros Naval Infirmary** is to provide medical care and healthcare services to both the permanent personnel and the recruits undergoing training at Poros Training Center.

In addition to supporting the operational requirements of the Hellenic Navy, the Infirmary also provides medical services to the local community of Poros, thereby contributing significantly to the island's healthcare infrastructure.

For many decades, it has served as an important link between the Hellenic Navy and the local population, reflecting the Navy's longstanding contribution to the wider community.

ISLAND HOUSE

The Island House is a stone-built building with a traditional tiled roof, constructed in 1896 and extensively renovated in 2009.

Today it serves as the official residence of the Commander of the Naval Training Directorate, preserving both its historic character and its important administrative role within the Hellenic Navy.

ALEXANDER KOLBE MEMORIAL

Alexander Kolbe (1793-1860) was born in Berlin and served as an officer in the Prussian Army.

Following the Battle of Waterloo, and inspired by the Greek struggle for independence, he travelled to Greece where he devoted himself to supporting the emerging Greek state through his exceptional financial and administrative expertise.

Kolbe became one of the most valuable Philhellenes to serve the Hellenic Navy, contributing significantly to the organisation and financial administration of the country's first naval establishment.

He died in **1860** at Poros. In accordance with his wishes and in recognition of his invaluable service, he was buried within the grounds of the Training Center.

His mortal remains rest beneath the monument erected in his honour.

FRANK ABNEY HASTINGS MEMORIAL

Frank Abney Hastings (1794-1828), the son of a British Army General, entered the Royal Navy at the age of fourteen.

Inspired by the determination of the Greek people to secure their independence, he arrived in Greece in **March 1822** and soon became one of the most distinguished Philhellene naval officers of the Greek War of Independence.

Hastings commanded the revolutionary steam-powered warship **Karteria**, whose construction he personally supervised while financing a substantial part of the project with his own fortune.

Under his command, *Karteria* introduced innovative naval tactics and played a decisive role in several operations against Ottoman forces.

After being seriously wounded during military operations near **Aitoliko**, he died in **1828**, at only thirty-four years of age.

Initially buried on the island of **Aegina**, his remains were transferred to Poros in **1829**. The monument standing within the Training Center was erected in his honour, and his ashes are preserved beneath it.

UNKNOWN PETTY OFFICER MEMORIAL

The **Unknown Petty Officer Memorial** was erected in **1895** to honour all Petty Officers of the Hellenic Navy who gave their lives in the service of their country.

The monument symbolises the devotion, courage and self—sacrifice demonstrated by generations of non—commissioned officers throughout the history of the Hellenic and serves as a lasting tribute to those whose names remain unknown but whose contribution remains unforgettable.

ADMIRAL KONSTANTINOS KANARIS MEMORIAL

The bust of **Admiral Konstantinos Kanaris** was unveiled in **1996** as a tribute to one of the greatest heroes of the Greek War of Independence and one of the most distinguished figures in Greek naval history.

A native of **Psara**, Kanaris achieved international fame through his daring fireship operations against the Ottoman fleet, becoming an enduring symbol of courage, patriotism and naval excellence.

His monument at Poros Training Center commemorates both his outstanding contribution to Greece's struggle for independence and the enduring values that continue to inspire successive generations of Hellenic Navy personnel.

YACHT "EUGENIOS EUGENIDIS"

Brief Presentation

The sailing yacht '**Eugenios Eugenidis**' was built in 1929 by **William Denny & Bros. Ltd.** at **Dumbarton, Scotland**, to a design by the renowned naval architect **George Lennox Watson**, for the British shipowner **Walter Runciman**.

She was constructed as the successor to the famous yacht **Sunbeam**, with which **Lord Thomas Brassey** completed a voyage around the world, continuing the legacy of one of the best-known private yachts of the nineteenth century.

From her launch until **1939**, she served as a private yacht. During the **Second World War**, she was requisitioned by the Allied Forces and employed in support operations.

After the war, she was transferred to **Sweden**, where she served as a sail training vessel under the successive names **Sunbeam** and **Flying Clipper**.

In **1965**, she was purchased by the **Hellenic Ministry of Merchant Marine** and renamed "**Eugenios Eugenidis**" in honour of the great national benefactor Eugenios Eugenidis. For the next 25 years (1965-1990), she served as the training sailing vessel for cadets of the Hellenic Merchant Marine, playing a significant role in the education of generations of merchant navy officers.

Following her decommissioning, she was entrusted to the **Hellenic Maritime Museum**. From **2004**, restoration and conservation work commenced under the supervision of the **Hellenic Navy**.

In **2023**, she was transferred to the **Poros Training Center (K.E. POROS)**, where, through the dedicated efforts of the Centre's personnel, extensive restoration work was carried out, leading to the completion of her restoration and her establishment as a historic vessel open to visitors.

Key Points to Remember During the Onboard Tour

- Built in **1929** in Scotland.
 - Constructed as the successor to the historic **Sunbeam**, with which **Lord Thomas Brassey** completed a voyage around the world.
 - Designed by the renowned naval architect **George Lennox Watson**.
 - Served during the **Second World War**.
 - Bore the names **Sunbeam** and **Flying Clipper**.
 - From 1965, she became the training sailing vessel of the **Hellenic Merchant Marine**.
 - Trained generations of Greek merchant marine officers.
 - In 2023, she was transferred to K.E. POROS, where restoration work was completed by the Centre's personnel.
 - Today, she is one of the most significant preserved historic sailing vessels in Greece.
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International Recognition

- Starred in the motion picture Flying Clipper.
 - Appeared in the film Lord Jim.
 - Participated in the first two Tall Ships Races, held in 1956 and 1958.
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Technical Specifications

Specification	Details
Year Built	1929
Shipyard	William Denny & Bros., Dumbarton, Scotland
Naval Architect	George Lennox Watson
Rig Type	Three-masted Barque
Length	59.66 m
Beam	9.16 m
Draught	5.34 m
Displacement	763 tonnes
Number of Sails	18
Sail Area	1,507 mtrs
Maximum Speed	11 knots
