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NEWS:

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

SANTA MARIA, SPACE SHIP

NEW YORK WORLD'S FAIR, Oct. 5 -- Christopher Columbus was an individualist, a nonconformist who had vision, persistence and the aggressiveness to do something about his ideas.

These reasons inspired Lawrence H. Vineburgh to arrange for the construction of the authentic replica of the Santa Maria, Columbus' flagship, for display in the Lake Amusement Area of the New York World's Fair.

"Columbus was the space man of his day", says Vineburgh. "Contrary to popular notions, most thinking people of the Fifteenth Century thought the world was round, but they couldn't see how a ship could sail up from below the horizon. It was Columbus who knew it could be done and did something about proving it," Vineburgh says.

To produce the replica now on exhibit, Vineburgh tapped the knowledge and research of Captain Jose Maria Montinez-Hibalgo, curator of the Barcelona Maritime Museum in Spain, who is considered the greatest living authority on Fifteenth Century naval archeology. Col. Howard I. Chapelle, head of the Naval Section of the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D. C., was loaned by the Smithsonian to supervise construction in Barcelona.

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Historians are now certain that the Santa Maria was not a Caravel, as were the Nina and Pinta. It was a Nao, a larger vessel, rigged differently, and including an aft cabin. As a result, it was the type of vessel used for royal missions. At 110 tons, the Santa Maria was probably the first "Rent-a-Ship," since it was leased by the great mariner from Juan de la Cosa, a Spanish sea captain and trader. Only its anchor was ever recovered and it is now on view in the Smithsonian.

Today, Columbus is the hero in the Fair's Lake Amusement Area where his flagship, the Santa Maria, represents the "space capsule" of almost 500 years ago. There it takes visitors back to the beginning of a heritage of individualism that helped establish the Western Hemisphere.

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