



NAVY HISTORY MATTERS

May 7, 2019



Compiled by Brent Hunt, Naval History and Heritage Command's Communication and Outreach Division

Welcome to Navy History Matters—our weekly compilation of articles, commentaries, and blogs related to history and heritage. Every week we'll gather the top-interest items from a variety of media and social media sources and then link you to related content at NHHC's website (history.navy.mil), your authoritative source for Navy history.

★ NHHC Opens New Conservation Lab

On May 1, the staff of Naval History and Heritage Command's Conservation Branch officially opened a new artifact conservation lab during a ceremony at NHHC's Collection Management Facility in Richmond, VA. The state-of-the-art lab provides conservators the ability to perform complex, scientific conservation work on many of the more than 300,000 historic artifacts in its holdings. Previously, care for many of the artifacts had to be contracted out. "The conservation lab opening marks a notable shift in our capability as a command, and speaks volumes about the Navy's dedication to proactively preserve the history and heritage of American Sailors," said David Krop, who leads the branch. "Being able to perform critical preservation work on our artifacts in-house means we're better equipped to care for the Navy's collection." To learn more, [read the article](#) by MC2 Mutis Capizzi at [NHHC's website](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/news-and-events/news/2019/conservation-lab-news.html>

★ Needs and Opportunities in the Modern History of the U.S. Navy Published

NHHC's recently released book, *Needs and Opportunities in the Modern History of the U.S. Navy*, is now available for free download as a 508-compliant PDF. The book, edited by Historian Michael J. Crawford, is a collection of eight essays written by experts in each subject area. The essays focus on the most neglected part of history—the decades since [World War II](#) and especially the years since the [Cold War](#). Essay topics include forward presence, operations, personnel, programming and acquisition management, science, social history, strategy, and technology. These are all subjects of interest to the U.S. Navy's leaders, planners, and operators. The Navy's goal in publishing these essays is that in addition to serving as guides for research and writing, "they will stimulate historians to publish studies of the Navy's recent past that will help the Navy make wiser decisions informed by a keener understanding of the historical context."

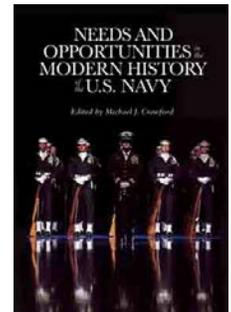


Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/research/publications/publications-by-subject/needs-and-opportunities-in-the-modern-history-of-the-u-s--navy0.html>

★ A Royal Collection

Congratulations to The Duke and Duchess of Sussex on the birth of their firstborn child on May 6. In celebration of the new royal baby boy, NHHC is highlighting some of the "royal babies" from our collections, including a number of letters between naval officers and the British royals. Adm. [Harold Stark](#) was based in London during [World War I](#) and later during [World War II](#) as Commander, Naval Forces Europe. During his time in London, he became acquainted with the royal family and other British dignitaries. In November 1942, King George VI and Queen Elizabeth invited Stark and other American officers to a Thanksgiving reception at Buckingham Palace. To view [Royal Letters: A Selection from the Harold Stark Papers](#), go to [NHHC's website](#). For more about U.S. Navy interactions with the royals, [check out the blog](#) by Laura Waayers and Lisa Crunk at [The Sextant](#).



Photo Link: <https://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/files/2019/04/5.jpg>

★ Even When All Seems Lost, Sailor Toughness and Resilience Make All the Difference

In the latest installment of CNO Adm. [John Richardson](#)'s initiative "Why We Do What We Do," NHHHC Historian Ryan Peeks writes about the [Battle of the Coral Sea](#), highlighting the importance of toughness as laid out in [A Design for Maintaining Maritime Superiority](#). During the battle, [USS Lexington](#) was hit in quick succession by two torpedoes and two bombs. The hits ruptured aviation fuel tanks, flooded three boiler rooms, damaged the aircraft elevators, and started fires. As fires continued to spread and a secondary explosion occurred, the crew's heroic efforts to save the ship were crippled. After more than five hours, the captain gave the order to abandon ship. Although the ship was lost, the crew's damage control and firefighting efforts allowed for an orderly evacuation, saving countless lives because of it. To learn more about damage control efforts and the toughness that occurred during the battle, [read the blog](#) at [The Sextant](#).

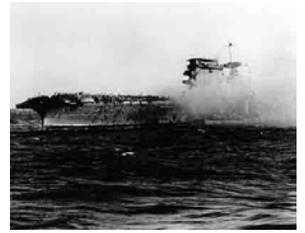


Photo Link: <https://usnhistory.navylive.dodlive.mil/files/2019/05/80-G-7398.jpeg>

★ Happy Birthday, Naval Aviation!

On May 8, 1911, 108 years ago, Capt. Washington I. Chambers prepared the requisition for the first U.S. Navy seaplane, the [A-1 Triad](#), marking the birth of naval aviation. Before the Navy purchased the aircraft, it had a keen interest in aviation. In 1910, the Navy appointed an aviation officer, [Eugene Ely](#), whom Glenn Curtiss offered to train for free at his aviation camp. Ely, whose accomplishments of firsts in [naval aviation](#) are many, demonstrated that an aircraft could take off and land on a ship. From those humble beginnings, the Navy's aircraft inventory has grown exponentially in both size and capability. Naval aviation has been pivotal during peacetime and war, and its capabilities are the envy of the world. Happy Birthday, Naval Aviation!



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nhhc-series/nh-series/NH-52000/NH-52829.html>

★ First Flight Across Atlantic 100 Years Ago

On May 8, 1919, one century ago, Seaplane Division One, comprised of three Navy Curtiss (NC) flying boats, took off from Naval Air Station Rockaway, NY, for Halifax, Nova Scotia, on the first leg of a projected transatlantic flight. They departed Newfoundland for the next leg on May 16, but only NC-4 successfully reaches the Azores. The aircraft later continued the flight, arriving in Lisbon May 27, and flew on to Portsmouth, England, May 31 to conclude [the first transatlantic flight](#). Lt. Cmdr. [Albert C. Read](#); Lt. Elmer F. Stone, USCG; Lt. Walter Hinton; Ensign H.C. Rodd; Chief Mechanic E.H. Howard; and Lt. James L. Breese Jr. made up the crew of NC-4. To learn more about [naval aviation](#), go to [NHHHC's website](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/numerical-list-of-images/nhhc-series/nh-series/NH-53000/NH-53385.html>

★ College Recognizes Navy Pilot Killed at Battle of Midway

A college in Indiana honored one of the school's most decorated alumni thanks to the research done by two history students who attend the school. Students Noah Dahlquist and Kaylee Seabolt put together research on Ensign Norman Vandivier, a Franklin College alumni, who was killed in 1942 during the [Battle of Midway](#). Vandivier was a naval aviator assigned to Bombing Squadron 6 on board the carrier [Enterprise](#) who participated in the bombings at Kwajalein and [Wake Island](#) in the wake of the [Pearl Harbor attack](#). He also provided air cover for the [Doolittle Raid](#) and participated in the [Battle of the Coral Sea](#) before he was killed in action. Vandivier was posthumously awarded the Navy Cross for "extraordinary heroism and distinguished service." [USS Vandivier](#), a destroyer escort who served the Navy from 1955–1974, was named in his honor. "My grandfather fought in the war, and I felt like this guy needed to be recognized for all of his accolades," said Dahlquist. "He was just a really well-respected individual, who touched a lot of people in this community in his short life." To learn more, [read the article](#) at the *Daily Journal*.



Photo Link: http://www.dailyjournal.net/2019/05/03/franklin_college_recognizes_pilot_killed_in_world_war_ii/

★ **These Japanese-American Linguists Became America’s Secret Weapon During WWII**

During [World War II](#), Nisei linguists—who as Japanese-Americans were discriminated against and initially forbidden from serving—became crucial in the Pacific. They were the children of Japanese immigrants who translated crucial documents and assisted with interrogations and interpretations. In 1944, the “Z Plan,” which had been devised by the commander-in-chief of the Japanese fleet, intended to devastate the U.S Pacific Fleet in the Philippine Sea but, when his plane crashed in a typhoon, the plan was lost. Although the Japanese began a frantic search, the documents—unknown to Japan—had already made their way into American hands where they were translated by two Nisei linguists. The documents provided critical information that led to the Japanese defeat at the [Battle of the Philippine Sea](#). To learn more about the Nisei linguists, [read the article](#) at History. To learn more about [Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders in the U.S. Navy](#), go to [NHHC’s website](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.com/news/wwii-japanese-linguists-nisei-internment-camps-plan-z>

★ **BB-64@75: Wisconsin at War, Part 4**

When you first meet Jim Hornshaw, you get the impression he has been around the block a time or two. He is a rough, no-nonsense kind of guy who possesses a sense of humor that is charming. You can also tell he was in the Navy. Like many of his shipmates aboard [USS Wisconsin](#), Hornshaw joined the Navy during [World War II](#). He and his friends went to the Detroit recruiting office where he joined “to go to sea,” and that’s exactly what happened. Throughout the war, he served as a boatswain’s mate onboard USS SC-698 during the [Battle of the Atlantic](#). It wasn’t until 1950 that he came to *Wisconsin*. He remembers he was about to reenlist when he received orders to the battleship. “It was like dying and going to heaven,” he said. To learn more about Hornshaw’s time on the ship, [read the post](#) at the [Hampton Roads Naval Museum’s blog](#).



Photo Link: <http://hamptonroadsnavalmuseum.blogspot.com/2019/04/bb-64-75-wisconsin-at-war-part-4.html>

★ **Military Spouse Appreciation Day—May 10**

On May 10, National Military Spouse Appreciation Day will be celebrated to honor the contributions of the military spouse to keeping our country safe. America’s military spouses are the backbone of support for our nation’s military and are the silent heroes who are essential to the strength of the nation. Their service to the country is as important as the servicemember in that they are there during the mission, deployments, reintegration, and reset. Military spouses embody service to our country and love for the servicemember who carries out the duties to make our country safe. Especially on Friday, May 10, thank a military spouse for his or her service.



Photo Link: <https://www.navy.mil/management/photodb/photos/180507-N-ER806-0671.JPG>

★ **NHHC Webpage of the Week**

This week’s Webpage of the Week is the newly revamped [naval customs and traditions](#) page. Customs and traditions in the Navy can be either official and formal, such as the [precedence of forces in parades](#), or an unofficial rite of passage, such as [crossing the line](#), which is marked by a certificate and ceremony. This page has an abundance of information for both official and unofficial, including [Navy athletics](#), [striking the flag](#), [plank owners](#), the [Navy Hymn](#), [burial at sea](#), and much more. Be sure to check this page out today and learn about all the time-honored traditions the Navy has adopted.



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/browse-by-topic/heritage/customs-and-traditions0.html>

★ Today in Naval History

On May 7, 1934, 85 years ago, the frigate [USS Constitution](#) returned to Boston, MA, after she completed a three-year, three-coast National Cruise stopping at more than 70 ports along the Atlantic, Gulf, and Pacific coasts. *Constitution* and her crew—81 Sailors, officers and Marines—sent entire communities into patriotic frenzies upon arrival. While in port, the crews of *Constitution* and her minesweeper-class tow, [USS Grebe](#), were invited to parties and dances, dinners with local politicians and dignitaries, sporting events, and festivals. In return, the crews gave talks and lectures, made public appearances, and performed radio dramatizations of her most memorable battles. The National Cruise was a public “thank you” to the men, women, and children who, from 1925–1930, helped raise more than \$985,000 to completely restore the ailing ship. To view [scrapbooks](#) Sailors created during the National Cruise, visit the [USS Constitution Museum’s website](#).



Photo Link: <https://www.history.navy.mil/content/history/nhhc/our-collections/photography/alphabetical---donations0/c/ua-458-12-ev-cassagneres-collection-.html>