



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



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Naval History and Heritage Command

"It is now accepted with naval and military men who study their profession, that history supplies the raw material from which they are to draw their lessons, and reach their working conclusions. Its teachings are not, indeed, pedantic precedents; but they are the illustrations of living principles."

– Rear Adm. Alfred Thayer Mahan, Naval Strategist and Historian, ca. 1907

The Naval History & Heritage Command (NHHC) manages the official history program of the United States Navy, strengthening the Navy's effectiveness by preserving, analyzing, and interpreting the service's hard-earned experience. A professional staff of historians, archivists, curators, librarians, museum specialists, and Navy personnel support historical activities and provide data and resources to the fleet.

Making Navy History and Heritage Accessible

- The NHHC collects, preserves, and makes available the artifacts, documents, and art that best embody our naval history and heritage for present and future generations.
- Extensive [collections](#) include official operational records such as [Command Operations Reports](#) and ships' deck logs; oral histories and personal papers; [artifacts](#) such as ships' bells and uniforms; original works of [art](#); [photographs](#); and [books and manuscripts](#).
- NHHC's [website](#) and social media sites such as [Facebook](#) and [Twitter](#) provide a virtual Navy history presence 24/7.

Chronicling the Navy's Story

- The NHHC advances the [knowledge of naval history and heritage](#) through professional research, analysis, and interpretation, delivering a range of knowledge products and services.
- Historians provide historical analysis and context for Navy leadership and other critical customers.
- [Underwater archaeologists](#) interpret the Navy's experience by applying the science of archaeology to the Navy's sunken ship and aircraft wrecks, and are the stewards of these key facets of the Navy's heritage.

Celebrating our Navy's Heritage and Accomplishments

- The NHHC makes naval history and heritage "come alive" for our Sailors and Marines, enhancing readiness and esprit de corps while reminding America of its need to maintain a strong Navy and Marine Corps to protect its citizens, their freedoms, and the nation's maritime commerce.
- Eleven [museums](#) around the nation educate visitors about U.S. Navy history, customs, and traditions through exhibits and interactive events, special programs, lectures, and musical performances.
- Nationwide [commemorations](#), such as the [Centennial of Naval Aviation](#), highlight important aspects of the Navy's history for Sailors and the public.

Key Messages

- NHHC is the central historical resource for the Navy and acts as the service's institutional memory.
- NHHC informs current operations and future planning by providing in-depth historical research and analysis to fleet planners and policymakers.
- NHHC collects, preserves, protects, and makes available the artifacts, documents, and art that best embody our naval history and heritage for the present and future.
- NHHC plans and executes commemorations to remind America of its naval heritage and the need to maintain a strong Navy and Marine Corps.

Facts & Figures

- The Naval History & Heritage Command traces its lineage to 1800 when President John Adams asked Benjamin Stoddert, the first Secretary of the Navy, to prepare a catalog of professional books for use by Secretaries of the Navy.
- Today the NHHC comprises 321 personnel located in 35 facilities in 15 geographic locations.
- Headquartered in the Washington Navy Yard, D.C., the NHHC includes 11 Navy museums nationwide as well as a detachment in Boston that maintains the Navy's oldest commissioned warship, USS *Constitution*.
- Visit NHHC [website](#) for resources to assist in preparing remarks for Navy commemorations.