

The Ship's Whistle



Winter 2022

An occasional e-mail bulletin of newsworthy information for Members of the **Massachusetts Bay Council**, Navy League of the United States and other friends of the Navy, Marine Corps, Coast Guard and U.S.-flag Merchant Marine. The Navy League is unique among military-oriented associations in that it is a civilian organization dedicated to the education of our citizens, including elected officials and the support of the men and women of the sea services and their families. **(No Jan-Mar 2022 issues)**

Coming Events:

March: Please Don't Come Luncheon (benefit for our youth awards and programs. Mask not required. Invitations in the mail.

May 15. Recognition Luncheon to honor LCDR Genevieve Guimond, NSCC (Ret).



Presentation of MBC gift to Commander John A. Benda, USS CONSTITUTION 76th in Command at his Change of Command. (L to R MBC member Brian Miskell, CDR John A. Benda, outgoing council President Steve Schnitzer, incoming council President Tom Hennessey.)
Commander Benda's next duty will be at the Naval War College, Newport, RI.



Cmdr. Billie Farrell relieved Cmdr. John Benda as commanding officer of USS Constitution during a change of command ceremony, Jan. 21.

Cmdr. Farrell became Old Ironsides' 77th commanding officer and the first woman to serve as the ship's commanding officer in the ship's 224 years of history.

Rear Admiral Richard E. Rumble, USN(Ret) passed away on 1 March at the age of ninety-nine. He was Commandant, FIRST Naval District 1972-1976 and had major roles in the creation of a National Park to replace the old Boston Navy Shipyard, retaining the permanent berthing of USS Constitution in Boston and the founding of the USS Constitution Museum.

We might never have kept the Boston Navy Yard (portion) or even the permanent basing in Boston of USS Constitution.

Admiral Rumble's passing brings back memories of those times. [Sources: from the Editor's collection of emails from RADM Rumble 30 Apr 1998 (edited) and Charlestown Navy Yard Historic Resource Study 2010.]

In 1973, earlier discussed military base closings were announced and the Boston Navy Yard was included. There was also pressure in Washington to relocate USS Constitution to the Washington Navy Yard.

Admiral Rumble wrote:

"Almost from the outset of my tour, I realized the Shipyard had more land than it could properly and cost-effectively utilize. The backlog of essential maintenance was growing with no relief in sight. While the Yard was productive, there wasn't that much activity nor would there be in the foreseeable future that could justify the large plant we had. With the approval of the Shipyard Commander, (Capt.) Russ Arthur, I engaged in a dialog with Ed King, MassPort Director. We agreed in principle on some land swap in South Boston and Charlestown which for the Navy would tighten our operation and for MassPort would give more space for container operations which Ed needed. As our negotiations progressed, I realized I had to obtain approval from Washington (OP04). Also, I had been designated the overhaul manager for CONSTITUTION with some very specific guidelines. I

went to Washington to clarify my position both with regard to the "land swap" and the overhaul. It was at this meeting that I was told of the "base closings" and the fate of the Shipyard and that I was to go back and say nothing until the official announcement from Washington. Of course, the overhaul was still on and, in anticipation, Russ moved all of the wood-working machinery and functions relating to the maintenance of CONSTITUTION to the buildings nearby Drydock #1. We had already set aside the old wood shop for the Museum Foundation."

"Following the official announcement, DOD sent their team of experts to help the City first, then the State, to determine the highest and best use of the excessed property. In order to insure the on-going overhaul of CONSTITUTION, I asked for the portion of the Shipyard involved and prepared be held in reserve. Discussions of use ranged the whole gambit and it was at this point that I thought a National Park would not only secure the future of CONSTITUTION but also preserve and commemorate the early beginnings of the Navy. It would include the drydock, Museum, the quarters, Marine Barracks, and the woodworking buildings - about 30 acres in all."

"Word came that the NPS was not too anxious to take on another project, particularly a Navy Park - they had no experience! We worked up a 5 year plan costing out @\$12million +/- . The NPS did send a survey team from Denver to look over the concept and evaluate the feasibility. We were approached to express our opinion as to the role the NPS would play (it was here that Adm Wylie allowed that "the Park Service could pick up the papers and cut the grass!" I blew my cool and literally ordered Wylie to join me on a trip to the Regional Park Service Hdqts in Philadelphia to apologize and fall on our swords."

"With the help of the Naval Reserve Public Relations Group in Boston, we developed a PR plan which included a "show & tell" presentation. We took this on the road and presented to anyone willing to listen. I made my manners to Speaker McCormack and Senator Saltonstall who both were very interested in seeing this concept come to fruition. I also discussed the concept with Senator Kennedy informally on one of his many visits thru the shipyard. Also, I presented the concept to Speaker O'Neill. "

[N.B. Concurrent was the move to transfer the underused South Boston portion to the Boston Redevelopment Authority and resultant MassPort acquisition.] [Ed. Note: In my recollection of discussion with him, it was RADM Roy Benson, Commandant FIRST Naval District 1967-1968 who originally conceived and planted the idea of disposal of the South Boston Annex and invitation for National Park Service to assume the Charlestown portion of the shipyard.]

Rumble also wrote in another email: "At the time of the base closure announcement there was some pressure from Washington to relocate the USS CONSTITUTION at the Washington Navy Yard. I really had to fight off the "dogs" on this one. The overhaul, as well as the prospect of a Navy Historic Park proximate to where the ship was built, along with the environment (salinity and water temperature of Boston Harbor) won the day. "

"A major concern of the NPS and impediment to the creation of the Park was the fact that the Museum - a private organization - and the Navy - another federal entity would be co-located. The NPS had no previous experience in this kind of arrangement. "

"Another issue was Adm Wylie's initiative to revisit an 'around the world cruise' of Constitution - but, during my tenure, I fought it off using the argument What if the ship was lost in a major storm at sea!"

THANK YOU, ADMIRAL RUMBLE!

AWARDS

USS Constitution Crew Awards: Senior Sailor of the Year 2021

NC1 Kyle Marchese was selected for his critical role in Executive Department and total command involvement. He led 10 Sailors across four departments managing the completion of 16 Career Development Boards, eight Reenlistments and 44 pieces of administrative correspondence. As the Activity Manning Manager, he identified 50 program deficiencies and reduced the administrative burden for Sponsorship by streamlining the process for all gaining Sailors. Additionally his peers elected him as the FCPOA VP. As Sailor 360 Coordinator he led three Sailor 360 training sessions for 72 Sailors

ensure their personal and professional development. His selfless attitude has been the key component in CONSTITUTION's success in 2021.

Sailor of the Year 2021

AO2 Jennifer Jordan was selected for her responsibilities as the Assistant Leading Petty Officer (ALPO) in Exec Department. She ensured the proper routing and filing for 251 pieces of correspondence, 11 End of Tour Awards and 26 evaluations. She has been diligent and accurate in processing 60 command muster reports, 77 Plan of the Days and managing the Triad calendars with Zero scheduling conflicts. Additionally she was directly responsible for two Sailors qualifying Advanced interruptive Historian, one tour board member and leading eight sailors through Command INDOC. As the SCPOA VP, she led 15 Second Classes in three events and volunteered 60 hours this quarter. Her selfless attitude has been the key component in CONSTITUTION's success in 2021.

Junior Sailor of the Year 2021

LS3 Patience Jones was selected for her performance as the GCPC holder. She worked with over 65 vendors and conducted 59 purchases totaling over 100 line items valued over 60k. She serves as the CSADD President, a MWR Restock Agent, and Heritage Committee Member. She volunteered 142 off duty hours of community service. Her selfless attitude has been a key component in CONSTITUTION's success in 2021.

Bluejacket of the Year 2021

AN Megan Kearns was selected due to her hard work as Leading Deck Seaman. She was a valued member of the tiger team and she worked hand in hand with Maintenance and repair restoring the ship. As a member of flags and funerals she rendered 88 funeral honors to fallen veterans in the greater Boston area. As well she sold 19,467 dollars of MWR merchandise which supports the Command. She serves as the CSADD Vice President and Hazwaste Coordinator. She volunteered 179 off duty hours of community service. Her selfless attitude has been a key component in CONSTITUTION's success in 2021.

COMMISSIONINGS

USS Nantucket (LCS 27) is scheduled for commissioning in Boston Aug/Sept 2023. (TBD).

Coast Guard Base Boston continues major re-construction to accommodate the Sentinel Class 154 ft ships. Several to be commissioned in Boston.

USS Massachusetts (SSN 798) still scheduled for commissioning late 2023 and Boston site still pending SECNAV approval.

SEA CADETS

Gosnold Div. and Training Ship Patriot State



In February, Gosnold and TS Patriot State participated in firearms training at the Wareham Rod and Gun Club. Under the watchful eyes of the training/instructor staff of the club, cadets qualified using the .22 rifle and .22 Pistol and League Cadets qualified using air rifles.

Oullette Division



Jan and Feb drills mostly focused on Sea Perch build and design and various skills in knot tying, signal flags/semaphore, and morse code. Enrolled two new cadets.

Sea Perch Is a hands-on project-based engineering program which allows students to build their own remotely operated underwater vehicle. The program is run by the Office of Naval Research through its National Naval Responsibility for Naval Engineering (NNRNE) program. During the construction of their Sea Perch, students learn to use a variety of tools and equipment, including PVC pipe cutters, wire strippers, soldering irons and multi-meters. During a Sea Perch competition, the students maneuver their ROVs through obstacle courses and recover objects from the bottom of the pool.

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