

National Museum
of the American
Sailor
April 2023
Newsletter

It can be easy to get lost in the seriousness of Navy life, so sailors find ways to add levity to almost any situation. From pranks played on shipmates to off-color jokes, sailors have plenty of ways to lighten the mood while on deployment or to get through a long work day. This month's newsletter highlights sailors, artifacts, and even food that bring a smile to sailors. Discover the "funniest serviceman in America," the Navy's infamous s#! on a shingle, and an early Navy game.

Why do they actually prefer non-swimmers in the Navy?

THEY DEFEND THE SHIP WITH A LOT MORE ENTHUSIASM.

Sailor Spotlight: Master-at-Arms Gary Owen



Dubbed the "funniest serviceman in America," Master-at-Arms Gary Owen joined the Navy in 1991, fresh out of high school. After completing A School as a Master-at-Arms, Owen was stationed in San Diego, where he started making the rounds at comedy clubs while on leave. His big break came in 1997 on BET's *Comic View*, when Owen was still on active duty in San Diego. In his standup, he jokes, "a couple months [after filming *Comic View*], I'm literally on TV and waving cars on the base at the same time." Owen was just six months away from the end of his six-year enlistment when he was offered a hosting gig with BET. In his standup, he describes the comical end of his Navy career where he told the warrant officer he'd do whatever it took to get out of his service early, including doing drugs on the officer's desk!

[Listen to Owen's hilarious recollections of his naval service here.](#)

Volunteers Wanted for Sea Stories

Are you a Navy veteran or active duty sailor who loves regaling your friends with sea stories? We've got the job for you! Beginning this spring, Sea Stories volunteers will be sharing their experiences with recruit graduation families on Fridays.

To join this group, please contact NHHC_NMAS@us.navy.mil.



SEA STORIES
WITH A NAVY VETERAN

**EDUCATION
AND EVENTS**

Upcoming Events



Doing Both: Pageant Queen and Navy LT Friday, April 14 at 6:00 PM

What does a former pageant queen and current social media influencer have in common with a Navy officer? Turns out, everything!

LT Kellie Sbrocchi gives an inspirational talk about how she does it all, serving as a mentor and leader for a 21st century Navy.



Image courtesy of the Bess Bower Dunn Museum,
Lake County Forest Preserves

German WWII POW Camps of Chicago Saturday, May 13 at 1:00 PM

Did you know the American military imprisoned over 4,000 German POWs in camps around Chicagoland during World War II? Of the local camps, Fort Sheridan was by far the largest.

Archaeologist James Meierhoff explores this local history through an archaeological lens.

Blog Post: S#! on a Shingle

Galley food doesn't always get compliments from sailors, but one Navy staple has been a favorite for over a century. S#! on a shingle, or SOS for short, is an easy and delicious meal that many sailors ask for even after they've left naval service.



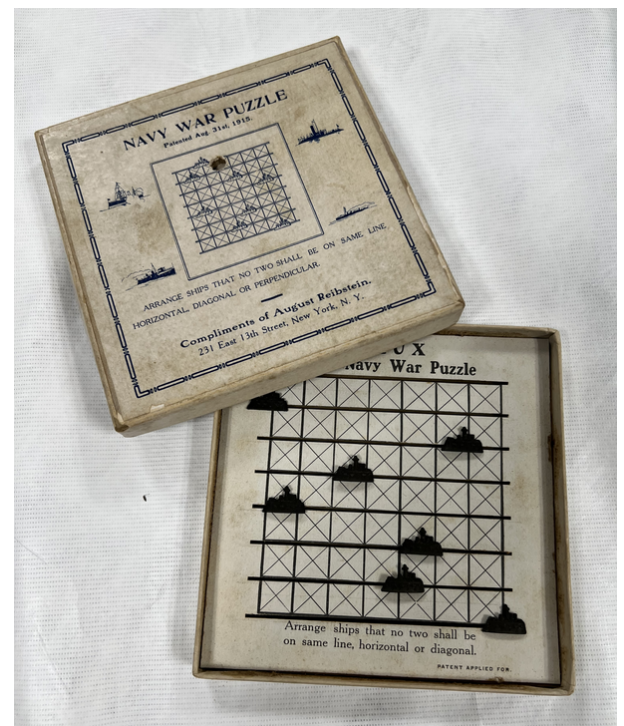
So what's in SOS? And how did it get such a unique name? Find out in this month's blog post, from Deputy Director Kelly D.

[Read the blog on Sailor's Attic](#)

Artifact Spotlight: Navy War Puzzle Game, ca. 1915

If you loved playing the classic game *Battleship* while growing up, this Navy War Puzzle game is for you! Businessman August Reibstein patented his Navy-inspired puzzle in 1915. According to the patent, "The object of the invention is to provide a new and improved puzzle, which is simple in construction, easily manipulated, and arranged to afford an enjoyable pastime and to require considerable skill for properly solving the puzzle."

The puzzle has six parallel lines located virtually and six located horizontally on the platform. The goal is to move the eight ships in such a way that no two ships are in alignment with another. A sort of *Battleship* and *Rubik's Cube* mashup, this mind-bending game could keep children (or sailors!) busy for hours on end.



We're Ready for a Facelift

The museum's largest artifact is actually the building itself and it's a constant work in progress to take care of this historic building. Built in 1942, the wood-sided structure has seen its share of changes. But one thing that hasn't changed over the last 80+ years is the siding! What was once a beautiful modern structure has become a favorite landing site for every woodpecker in



northern Illinois. As a result, the siding is in dire need of replacement. Over the next year, the original wood siding will be replaced with practical, sustainable cement board that mimics the look of the original wood siding. While this work is going on, the contractors will also switch out the square windows with rectangular transom windows, just like architect Gordon Bunshaft originally installed in 1942.

This project is expected to impact museum operations, so keep an eye on the museum's website and social media for any restoration-related closures.

It's Volunteer Month!

In case you missed it, April is National Volunteer Month (with Volunteer Appreciation Week being April 16th-23rd this year) and the National Museum of the American Sailor wants to say a big "thank you" to all of our volunteers! We're especially appreciative of all of the support we received for our annual SeaPerch competition last month. Thanks to the hard work of 41 volunteers, we were able to welcome 40 teams to the 2023 competition! Bravo Zulu, shipmates!



**VOLUNTEERS
AND
OUTREACH**

EXHIBITS

**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF
THE AMERICAN SAILOR**

WE ARE RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS!

**SATURDAY
OPPORTUNITIES
AVAILABLE!**

Help us tell the story of the United States Navy's enlisted sailor! The National Museum of the American Sailor has a wide variety of positions available to volunteers. There are several new and exciting volunteer opportunities. We're currently in need of volunteers to help as:

- Exhibits and Facilities Assistant
- Front Desk Greeter(s)

INTERESTED IN COMING ABOARD?

**REACH OUT TO US AT:
(847) 688-3154 X215 OR
NHHC_NMAS@US.NAVY.MIL**

