



# National Museum of the American Sailor

June 2023  
Newsletter



The Women's Armed Services Integration Act turns 75 years old this June. Signed by President Harry Truman in 1948, the Act made women permanent, peacetime members of all branches of the military. Over the last seventy-five years, women have served with distinction in all ranks and rates of the U.S. Navy. In this month's newsletter, NMAS shines a light on these women in the form of a Sailor Spotlight, a new blog post, and an Artifact Spotlight.

"Our debt to the heroic men and valiant women in the service of our country can never be repaid. They have earned our undying gratitude."

PRESIDENT HARRY TRUMAN

## Sailor Spotlight: War Correspondent Barbara Miller Finch



Admiral Nimitz "entered the room with a 'Good morning, gentlemen...!' and with those words, my work as a naval correspondent had begun." This is how Barbara Miller Finch recalled the beginning of her historic career as a war correspondent in 1944. She was serving as the first woman to ever receive journalist credentials from the U.S. Navy. Over the next year, Miller Finch clocked in several more "firsts." On March 2, 1945 she landed on Iwo Jima, the first female reporter and first American to do so. In April of that year, she headed to Okinawa and in May, she was granted access to the submarine *Spadefish*, at a time when subs were tightly closed to journalists. Miller Finch was tenacious in her goals to report on the war, no matter her gender. Even though female correspondents were forbidden to travel to combat zones, Miller Finch found the loophole that allowed her to do so. To get combat zones, Finch Miller traveled aboard unarmed hospital ships and flights.

## Upcoming Events

### **Battle of Midway Commemoration** **Wednesday, June 7 at 10:00 AM**

Remember the Navy's greatest victory, with a special ceremony. This event is hosted in partnership with Naval Station Great Lakes.

**EDUCATION  
AND EVENTS**

## New This Summer: Fridays at NMAS

### **Guided Museum Tours** **Every Friday at 12:00 PM and 1:00 PM**

Come see the museum galleries in a new light! Docent-led tours are now available every Friday at 11:00 AM and 1:00 PM. These 30-minute gallery walks include stories not shared in the exhibit panels, behind-the-scenes stories of creating these exhibits, and an opportunity to ask your burning Navy questions.



### **Sea Stories** **Every Other Friday from 1:30 to 3:30 PM**

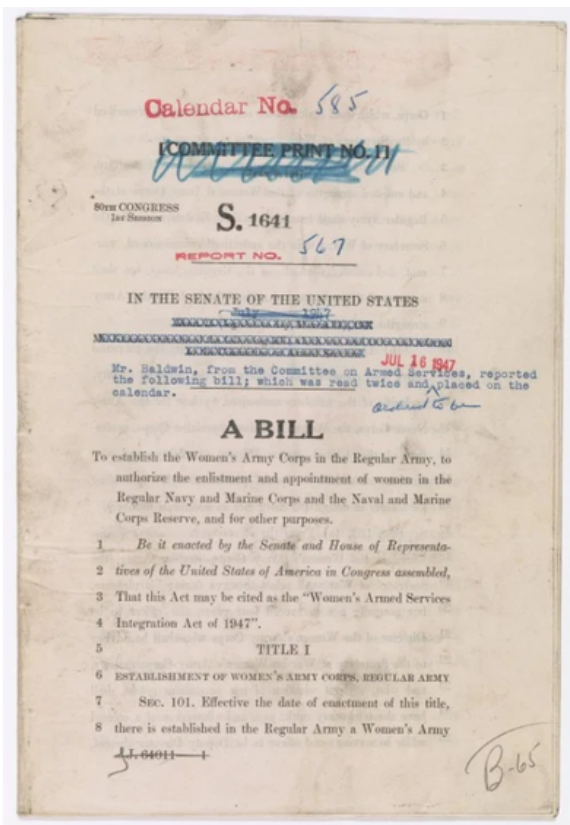
Sailors are known for their elaborate stories from their travels around the world. Now is your chance to hear those stories straight from the horse's (err goat's?) mouth. Every other Friday, Navy veterans and active duty sailors are on duty to share their stories with you. Ask them about their bootcamp days, their favorite ports, the food; the possibilities are endless.

### **Drop Anchor Programs** **Every Other Friday from 1:30 to 3:30 PM**

Get hands on history with our new Drop Anchor programs. For kids, and kids at heart, these interactive activities teach sailor skills, including knot tying and the all-important hardtack recipe. Participants make and take a project each program.



## Blog Post: "Women Must Be Given Permanent Status"



In honor of the 75th anniversary of the passage of the Women's Armed Services Integration Act, this month's blog post is exploring the history behind that historic policy change. Who advocated for this act? How did it come into being?

These questions and more are answered in "Women Must Be Given Permanent Status" by Curator of Education Tricia M.

Read the blog on Sailor's Attic.

COLLECTIONS  
AND  
RESEARCH

## Artifact Spotlight: Photograph, 1951

After the Navy was gender integrated in 1948, the first female bootcamp was opened at Naval Station Great Lakes. The first class of peacetime female sailors graduated from basic training in October 1948. The majority of this training was identical to their male counterparts; however, women were still prohibited from serving aboard ships so some elements of their training was adjusted. At the end of their training, the new female sailors participated in a pass-in-review alongside the men who were



also graduating that week. Throughout the years female recruit training took place at Great Lakes, this review was a signature event on Ross Field. The female bootcamp at Great Lakes quickly proved too small for the influx of female recruits so the Navy moved women's basic training to Bainbridge, Maryland,

## A New Interactive in Development

Boatswain's Mate Third Class. Machinist's Mate Senior Chief. Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy. Say what??

For civilians, the rank and rate structure of the Navy's enlisted sailors can be extremely confusing. To help explain this system, the museum is working with Luci Creative and Ravenswood Studios to design an interactive exhibit component.

The digital station will feature information about historic rates, a breakdown of how sailors rise through the ranks, and an explanation of ratings badges. This exhibit component is currently in development. Look for it in the permanent galleries sometime next year.



EXHIBITS

## VOLUNTEERS AND OUTREACH

### NMAS On The Road

With summer kicking off, the Outreach team is hitting the road! Check out the team at local community events and Midwestern Navy Weeks.

The year's first Navy Week was Navy Week St. Louis, where the team shared sailor history at several locations around town. NMAS will be in Milwaukee in mid-July.



**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**

