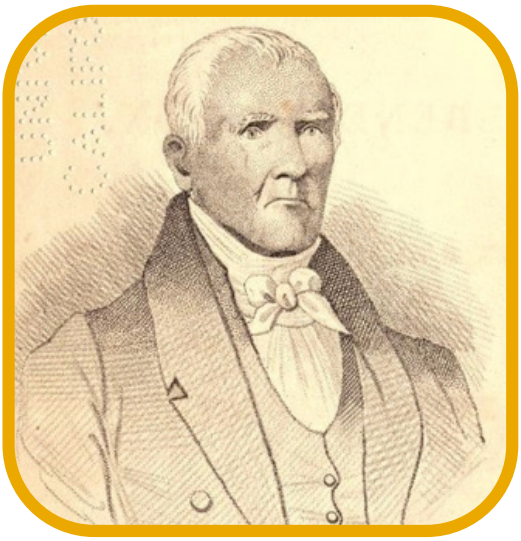
National Museum of the American Sailor

January 2022 Newsletter

A new year may be all about looking forward, but here at the National Museum of the American Sailor, we're taking the opportunity to look back. From memoirs to scrapbooks to yearbooks, sailors take advantage of a variety of mediums to remember and reminisce about their time in service. Those memory-keeping tools allow historians to share their stories with the public. In January, we do that by highlighting a boot camp yearbook from the collection, a blog post about our own Exhibits Specialist's boot camp experience, and a presentation about our 1942 building at the Dunn Museum's History Symposium.

> "Without memory, there is no culture. Without memory, there would be no civilization, no society, no future."
>
> – ELIE WIESEL,
> HOLOCAUST SURVIVOR AND AUTHOR OF *NIGHT*

Sailor Spotlight: Ebenezer Fox



Sailors have enjoyed sharing their sea stories for as long as there has been a Navy. Stories of enlisted sailors from the Revolutionary War era are notoriously difficult to find, but one young man left historians with a lasting tribute to his sea service in the form of a memoir,

Ebenezer Fox joined the Massachusetts State Navy in 1779 at the youthful age of seventeen. He served aboard the *Protector* fighting for American independence for one year, at which time he was captured by the British and held as a prisoner aboard the squalid *Jersey*. To escape the horrid conditions aboard the prison ship, Fox agreed to fight for the British Army, so long as he could avoid fighting his fellow Americans. After a year in Jamaica, fighting for the British, Fox deserted and joined the crew of the American frigate, *Flora*. In 1838, Fox published his memoir, *The Adventures of Ebenezer Fox in the Revolutionary War*. Fox's memoir remains a valuable historical document for its tales of life aboard Revolutionary vessels and as a British POW.

Scuttlebutt and Cup o' Joe
Podcast Series

New year, new scuttlebutt! In 2022, *Scuttlebutt and a Cup o' Joe* debuts on your favorite podcast platforms. Find us on Apple Podcasts, Spotify, and YouTube. New episodes are still posted the first Monday of each month.

In January, take a look back at all of the episodes from 2021 and get excited for new episodes in 2022.

EDUCATION AND EVENTS

New!

Traveling Sea Chest Program
Grades 4-6

NMAS' new Traveling Sea Chest program offers a hands-on learning opportunity that educators can integrate into their own classrooms. Each Sea Chest is filled with artifacts and reproduction items, photographs, documents, and a teacher's guide with suggested lesson plans and historical fact sheets.

Sea Chests are offered FREE of charge to local educators. Reserve one on our website.

Upcoming Events

Lake County History Symposium
Saturday, January 22
At the Dunn Museum, 1899 W. Winchester, Libertyville, IL 60048

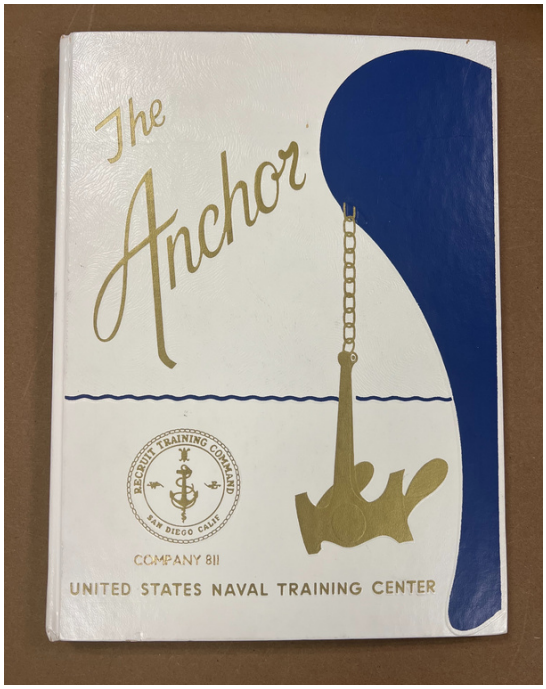
NMAS joins the Dunn Museum for the annual Lake County History Symposium. This year's theme, "The Built Environment: Architecture and Landscapes in Lake County," focuses on the landscapes, architects, city planning, and other topics relating to shaping the way Lake County, Illinois appears.

NMAS' Curator of Education joins the list of presenters for a special talk about the museum's modernist building, the 1942 Hostess House, where sailors gathered with their families, sometimes for the last time.

COLLECTIONS AND RESEARCH

Artifact Spotlight: *The Anchor*, 1974

Raise your hand if you're still holding onto old yearbooks! It's not only former students who enjoy these reminders of the past. Sailors have the option to purchase boot camp company yearbooks too.



This month's artifact spotlight comes from Naval Training Center San Diego in 1974. This issue of *The Anchor*, San Diego's yearbook, details the experiences of Company 811.

The yearbook includes a company photograph, individual headshots of each sailor in the company, and snapshots of the group's training. Mementos like *The Anchor* offer sailors a reminder of their success completing basic training and they offer historians a year-by-year view of life at boot camp.

Blog Post: A Veteran Remembers Boot Camp

For many of our readers, Naval Station Great Lakes brings back memories of their own recruit training experience. From the first buzz cut to the first time an RDC (Recruit Division Commander) yelled, boot camp is an experience like no other.

In this month's blog post, the museum's Exhibits Specialist Ian L. takes you back to his 1991 boot camp days at Naval Training Center Orlando. He shares his letters home, drawings, and personal photographs.

Read the blog on Sailor's Attic

EXHIBITS

Blast From the Past

Over the last two years, the museum's curatorial team has been on a mission to research and build new museum exhibits that better encompass the full history of the enlisted sailor. But every now and then it's fun to remember the stories the museum shared in previous years.

One of NMAS' favorite temporary exhibits comes from 2016. "Colorful Characters" took a close look at the evolution of sailors' uniforms. From bell bottoms to liberty cuffs, the exhibit showcased the full gamut of Navy uniforms. Liberty uniforms are a particular favorite artifact among museum staff because of the subtle nods to a sailor's individualism. The trend of sewing personal images on the inside cuffs of uniforms began with sailors serving in the Pacific. Liberty cuffs may have been prohibited by the Navy but that didn't stop sailors! The image at right shows a dragon cuff that was on display in "Colorful Characters."

VOLUNTEERS AND OUTREACH

Reliving the Glory Days

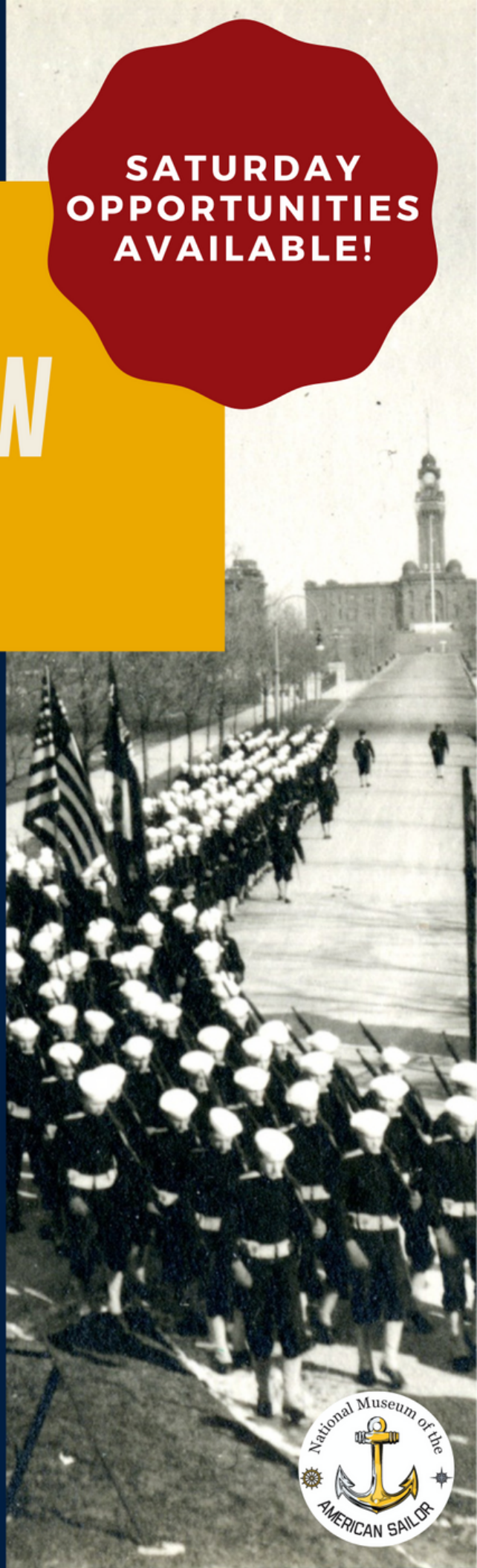
For our veteran volunteers, working at the museum offers a chance to relive and retell stories of their own enlisted service. Whether its working at the front desk, giving tours, or offering support to the collections staff, NMAS' veterans bring a wealth of knowledge about the history of the Navy. Next time you're at the museum, ask the volunteers to spin you some old sailors' yarns. You won't be disappointed!

Are you a veteran? Volunteering at the museum is a great way to remember your service. Visit our website to discover how you can volunteer.

THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF THE AMERICAN SAILOR

SATURDAY OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE!

WE ARE RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS!



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

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