



NAUTICAL TERMS & NAVAL EXPRESSIONS

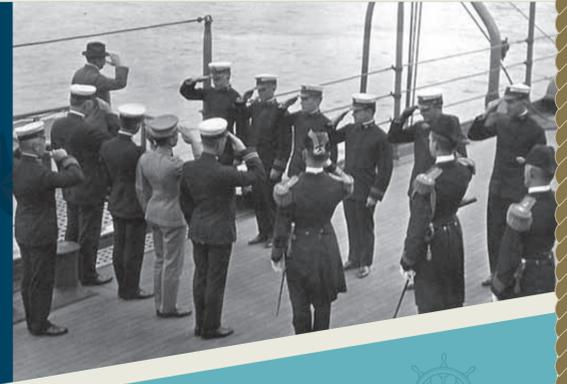
Part One

In this series of infographics, we'll explore the origin of some common and peculiar nautical terms and expressions used in your U.S. Navy

SIDE BOYS

['sīd 'bōz] noun

Historically, the crewmembers who tend the sides of the ship and hoist aboard distinguished visitors. Today, side boys are used in quarterdeck ceremonies when distinguished visitors visit the ship or as part of other naval ceremonies such as retirements and changes of command.



ROPEYARN SUNDAY

['rōp, yārn 'sən-(,)dā, -dē] noun

A half-day off. In the days of the old Navy, the day was used to sew and perform personal tasks. Today, it simply refers to a half-holiday.

FIELD DAY

['fēld, 'dā] noun

A day for general cleaning on the ship. In the mid-18th century, however, the term referred to a military parade. Command leadership usually calls for field days when necessary.



SCUTTLEBUTT

['skə-təl-bət] noun

Rumors or gossip. The scuttlebutt was the drinking fountain (scuttle means drill and a butt is a cask) on the ship, and when crew would gather around for a drink, Sailors would exchange rumors of the voyage. In today's offices, the scuttlebutt takes place at the water cooler.



BOATSWAIN

['bō-sən] noun

From the Saxon word Swine meaning "boy," it's the jack-of-all-trades Sailor. Boatswain's Mate (BM) is the oldest enlisted rate in the U.S. Navy, dating back to the American Revolution. BMs are the backbone of every ship's crew. While they have many duties, BMs also stand watch on the ship's bridge, passing information with the distinctive boatswain call or boatswain pipe.



Want More #USNavy History and Heritage?
visit www.history.navy.mil