

CHAPTER 8

HONORS AND CEREMONIES

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Upon completion of this chapter, you should be able to do the following:

1. Describe the procedures for conducting morning and evening colors.
2. Identify the procedures for saluting the national ensign when boarding a ship or when meeting a military formation.
3. Name the individual who is accorded "Hail to the Chief."
4. Describe the U.S. Navy's regulations for gun salutes.
5. Describe the U.S. Navy's regulations for conducting passing honors.
6. Describe the U.S. Navy's regulations for displaying the national ensign, union jack, and distinctive marks of vessels.
7. Describe the ceremony conducted by a ship passing Washington's Tomb.
8. Describe the ceremonies conducted by the Navy on President's Day, Independence Day, and Memorial Day.
9. Describe the ceremony conducted by a ship passing the USS *Arizona* memorial.
10. Describe the procedure for conducting military funerals.
11. Describe the procedure for placing a U.S. Navy ship in commission.
12. Describe a formal change-of-command ceremony.

Honors and ceremonies have been an integral part of military courtesy and naval custom for hundreds of years. As a part of naval custom, we have traditionally rendered honors to ships, to high ranking individuals, and to nations. We often render honors in the form of ceremonies. We make festive occasions of many naval honors and ceremonies at which the Navy is seen at its best. We perform ceremonies as formal acts on public occasions.

The Navy has too many types of honors and ceremonies and too many occasions on which they are performed for us to include all of them in this chapter. Instead, we will discuss some of the more common situations involving a formal ceremony or honor and the behavior required of you during the event. We have used excerpts from

chapter 12 of *United States Navy Regulations* in many sections of this chapter.

HONORS TO NATIONAL ANTHEMS AND NATIONAL ENSIGNS

When naval bands play the national anthem of the United States, "The Star Spangled Banner," they play it in its entirety. They play it as written and prescribed in the official U.S. Navy Band arrangement, which is designated as the official Department of Defense arrangement. The following rules apply to the rendering of the national anthem:

Ž The official U.S. Navy Band's playing of the national anthem of the United States, or of

any other country, as a part of a medley is prohibited.

Ž When a foreign national anthem is prescribed in connection with honors, and performing the national anthem of the United States is also considered appropriate, the national anthem of the United States is performed last.

Ž On other occasions when foreign national anthems are performed, the national anthem of the United States is performed last, except when performed in conjunction with morning colors.

Whenever the national anthem of the United States is played, all naval service personnel not in formation stand at attention and face the national ensign; if the national ensign is not being displayed, they face the source of the music. When covered, they salute at the first note of the anthem. Persons in formation are brought to order arms or called to attention as appropriate. The formation commander faces in the direction of the music or ensign and renders the salute for the unit. Persons in formation participating in a ceremony, on the formation commander's command, follow the procedure prescribed for such persons during colors; persons in civilian clothes comply with the rules and customs established for civilians.

Personnel show the same respect prescribed during the playing of the national anthem of the United States during the playing of a foreign national anthem.

MORNING AND EVENING COLORS

Naval commands ashore and aboard ships not underway observe the ceremonial hoisting and lowering of the national ensign at 0800 and sunset. At 0800, this ceremony is known as morning colors; at sunset, it is known as evening colors. Commands carry out this ceremony as prescribed in *Navy Regulations* as follows:

Ž The guard of the day and the band are paraded in the vicinity of the point of hoist of the ensign.

Ž "Attention" is sounded, followed by the playing of the national anthem by the band.

Ž At morning colors, the ensign is started up at the beginning of the music and hoisted smartly to the peak or truck. At evening colors, the

ensign is started from the peak or truck at the beginning of the music and lowered at a pace with the music so as to be completed at the last note.

Ž At the completion of the music, the bugle call "Carry On" is sounded.

Ž In the absence of a band, "To the Colors" is played by the bugle at morning colors, and "Retreat" at evening colors. The salute is rendered as prescribed for the national anthem.

Ž In the absence of music, a whistle sounds "Attention" and "Carry On" to begin and end the salute. "Carry On" is sounded as soon as the ensign is completely lowered.

Ž During colors, boats underway within sight or hearing of the ceremony lie-to or proceed at the slowest safe speed. Boat officers (or in their absence, coxswains) stand and salute except when dangerous to do so. Other persons in the boat remain seated or standing and do not salute.

Ž During colors, vehicles within sight or hearing of the ceremony stop. Persons riding in such vehicles remain seated at attention.

Ž After morning colors, if foreign warships are present, the national anthem of each nation represented is played. Anthems are played in the order in which a gun salute would be fired to, or exchanged with, the senior official or officer present of each nation. This is provided so that when a ship is in a foreign port, the national anthem of the port is played immediately after morning colors, followed by the national anthems of other foreign nations present.

SALUTES TO THE NATIONAL ENSIGN

Each person in the naval service, upon boarding a ship of the Navy, salutes the national ensign if it is flying. Each person stops on reaching the upper platform of the accommodation ladder or the shipboard end of the brow; faces the national ensign; renders the salute; and then, in turn, salutes the officer of the deck. On leaving the ship, the person renders the salute in inverse order. The officer of the deck returns both salutes.

When passed by or passing the national ensign being carried, uncased, in a military formation, all persons in the naval service salute. Persons in vehicles or boats follow the procedure prescribed for such persons during colors.

The salutes prescribed above are also rendered to foreign national ensigns and aboard foreign men-of-war.

“HAIL TO THE CHIEF”

The traditional musical selection “Hail to the Chief” is designated as a musical tribute to the President of the United States. As such, naval bands do not perform it as a tribute to other dignitaries. Naval personnel give “Hail to the Chief” the same honor as that accorded during renditions of the national anthem or “To the Colors.”

GUN SALUTES

Gun salutes have been a tradition of navies throughout history. The U.S. Navy follows specific regulations concerning gun salutes.

SALUTING SHIPS AND STATIONS

The Secretary of the Navy or the Secretary’s duly authorized representative designates certain ships and stations as “saluting ships and stations.” These ships and stations fire gun salutes as prescribed in *Navy Regulations*. Other ships and stations do not fire gun salutes, unless directed to do so by the senior officer present on exceptional occasions when courtesy requires them.

Gun salutes to the flag of the President or the Secretary of State are carried out as follows:

- A 21-gun salute is fired to the flag of the President by the following:

—Each ship falling in with a ship displaying such flag, arriving at a place where such flag is displayed ashore, or present when such flag is broken

—A naval station when a ship displaying such flag arrives at the naval station or when such flag is broken by a ship present

—A flag or general officer assuming command or, while in command, breaking the flag of an increased grade in the presence of a ship or naval station displaying the flag of the President

- Under the circumstances prescribed, a 19-gun salute is fired to the flag of the Secretary of State when the Secretary is acting as a special foreign representative of the President. Table 8-1 lists the gun salutes rendered to civil officials of the United States when they are on official visits.

AUTHORITY TO FIRE GUN SALUTES TO OFFICERS IN THE UNITED STATES NAVAL SERVICE

As prescribed in *Navy Regulations*, gun salutes for officers and officials entitled to 17 or more guns are fired on the occasion of each official visit of the individual concerned (fig. 8-1). Gun salutes

Officers	Gun Salutes	
	Arrival	Departure
Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff	19	19
Chief of Staff, U.S. Army	19	19
Chief of Naval Operations	19	19
Chief of Staff, U.S. Air Force	19	19
Commandant of the Marine Corps	19	19
General of the Army	19	19
Fleet Admiral	19	19
General of the Air Force	19	19
Generals	17	17
Admirals	17	17
Naval or other military Governor, commissioned as such by the President, within the area of his jurisdiction . . . . .	.....	17
Vice Admiral or Lieutenant General . . . . .	.....	15
Rear Admiral or Major General . . . . .	.....	13
Rear Admiral or Brigadier General . . . . .	.....	11
Other commissioned officers . . . . .	.....	.....

Figure 8-1.—Gun salutes rendered to commissioned military officers of the United States on the occasions of their official visits.

Table 8-1.—Gun salutes rendered to civil officials of the United States on the occasions of their official visits

Official	Gun Salute		Official	Gun Salute	
	Arrival	Departure		Arrival	Departure
President	21	21	Governor General or Governor of a commonwealth or possession of the United States or area under United States administration . . . . .	.....	17
Ex-President or President-elect	21	21	Other Undersecretaries of Cabinet, the Solicitor General, the Deputy Attorney General, and the Deputy Postmaster General . . . . .	.....	17
Secretary of State when acting as special foreign representative of the President	19	19	Members of Congress . . . . .	.....	17
Vice President . . . . .	.....	19	Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary . . . . .	.....	15
Speaker of the House of Representatives . . . . .	.....	19	Minister Resident . . . . .	.....	13
Governor of a state of the United States. . . . .	.....	19	Charge d'Affaires . . . . .	.....	11
Chief Justice of the United States . . . . .	.....	19	Career Minister, or Counselor of Embassy or Legation . . . . .	.....	.....
Ambassador, High Commissioner, or special diplomatic representative whose credentials give him authority equal to or greater than that of an Ambassador . . . . .	.....	19	Consul General; or Consul or Vice Consul when in charge of a Consulate General . . . . .	.....	11
Associate Justices of Supreme Court . . . . .	.....	19	First Secretary of Embassy or Legation. . . . .	.....	.....
US representative to the UN . . . . .	.....	19	Consul; or Vice Consul when in charge of a Consulate General . . . . .	.....	7
Secretary of Defense	19	19	Mayor of an incorporated city . . . . .	.....	.....
Deputy Secretary of Defense	19	19	Second or Third Secretary of Embassy or Legation . . . . .	.....	.....
Cabinet officer other than Secretary of Defense . . . . .	.....	19	Vice Consul when only representative of United States, and not in charge of a Consulate General or Consulate . . . . .	.....	5
Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force	19	19	Consular Agent when only representative of the United States . . . . .	.....	.....
Director of Defense Research and Engineering	19	19			
President pro tempore of the Senate . . . . .	.....	19			
Assistant Secretaries of Defense	17	17			
General Counsel of the DOD	17	17			
Undersecretaries of the Army, Navy and Air Force	17	17			
Assistant Secretaries of the Army, Navy, and Air Force	17	17			

for officers and officials entitled to 15 guns or less are not fired unless so ordered by the senior officer present or higher authority.

GUN SALUTES TO THE SENIOR OFFICER PRESENT

When a flag officer embarked in a ship of that officer's command arrives in port and is the senior officer present or when a flag officer assumes command and becomes the senior officer present, that officer is saluted by the former senior officer present.

The senior officer of one or more ships arriving in port salutes the flag officer who is the senior officer present. The arriving senior officer's flagship fires a gun salute on the following occasions:

- Ž When a flag officer who is the senior officer present assumes command
- Ž When a flag officer who is the senior officer present is relieved of command or is advanced in grade

The senior officer present salutes the relieving senior officer present at the following times:

- Ž When a flag officer embarked in a ship of the senior officer's command arrives in port and is the senior officer present
- Ž When a flag officer assumes command and becomes the senior officer present

When a flag officer who is not the senior officer present assumes command, that officer fires a salute to the senior officer present.

RETURNING GUN SALUTES

United States ships and stations observe the following regulations in returning gun salutes:

- A salute fired to the nation by a foreign ship arriving in port is returned gun for gun.
- A salute fired to a flag or general officer by a foreign ship or station is returned gun for gun.
- A salute fired in honor of the President of the United States or the Secretary of State when acting as a special representative of the President is not returned.

Ž A salute fired by the flag or general officer's flagship or headquarters in honor of the flag or general officer is not returned.

Ž A salute fired in honor of an anniversary, celebration, or solemnity is not returned.

Ž Subject to the provisions of *Navy Regulations*, a salute fired in honor of a United States officer or official is returned with the number of guns specified for the grade of the flag or general officer rendering the salute, or, if not a flag or general officer, with seven guns.

Ž No return salute may be expected in the case of a salute fired by a United States ship or station in honor of the following officials or occasions. Otherwise, a salute fired in honor of a foreign nation or a foreign official or officer is returned gun for gun.

—A foreign sovereign

—A head of state

—A member of a reigning royal family

—A special representative of a head of state

—A foreign anniversary

—A celebration

—A solemnity

—An official visit

Ž No officer, except a flag or general officer, is saluted with guns except in return for a gun salute rendered by that officer.

- No officer of the armed services, while in civilian clothes, is saluted with guns, unless such officer is at the time acting in an official civil capacity.
- No salute is fired between sunset and sunrise, before 0800, or on Sunday except when international courtesy so dictates or when related to cleat h ceremonies. A gun salute in honor of an official or officer

Official	Uniform	Ruffles and flourishes	Music	Guard	Remarks
President _____	As prescribed by senior officer present.	4	National Anthem	Full	Man rail, unless otherwise directed by senior officer present.
Secretary of State when special foreign representative of the President.	..."	4	..."	..."	Crew at quarters.
Vice President _____	Uniform of the day		Hail Columbia	..."	..."
Secretary of Defense, Deputy Secretary of Defense, or Secretary of the Navy; Director of Defense, Research and Engineering.	..."		National Anthem	..."	..."
An Assistant Secretary of Defense, Undersecretary, or an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.	..."		..."	..."	..."

Figure 8-2.-Passing honors between ships and, when practicable, between ships and naval stations.

who arrives before 0800 is fired at 0800 unless the day is Sunday or the officer has departed meanwhile. If the day is Sunday, the salute is fired on Monday; if the officer or officer has departed meanwhile, the salute is not fired. In case of a gun salute at 0800, the first gun of the salute is fired immediately upon the completion of morning colors or the last note of the last national anthem.

PASSING HONORS

“Passing honors” are those honors, other than gun salutes, rendered on occasions when ships or embarked officials or officers pass, or are passed, close aboard. “Close aboard” means passing within 600 yards for ships and 400 yards for boats. These rules are interpreted liberally to ensure that appropriate honors are rendered.

PASSING HONORS BETWEEN SHIPS

Passing honors between ships consists of each ship sounding “Attention” and all persons in view on deck and not in ranks rendering the hand salute. Passing honors are exchanged between ships of the Navy and between ships of the Navy and the Coast Guard passing close aboard.

In addition, a ship of the Navy passing close aboard a ship or naval station displaying the flag of the officials indicated therein renders the honors prescribed in figure 8-2. When a ship displaying such flag passes close aboard a naval station, that station also renders the honors prescribed in figure 8-2 when practicable.

PASSING HONORS TO OFFICIALS AND OFFICERS EMBARKED IN BOATS

A ship of the Navy being passed close aboard by a boat displaying the flag or pennant of the indicated officials and officers renders the honors prescribed in figure 8-3.

Persons on the quarterdeck salute when boats pass close aboard in which a flag officer, a unit commander, or a commanding officer is embarked under the following circumstances:

- When the officer in the boat is in uniform, which is indicated by the display of the national ensign in United States ports
- When a miniature of a flag or pennant is displayed in addition to the national ensign in foreign ports

Official	Ruffles and flourishes	Music	Guard	Remarks
President _____	4	National Anthem	Full	"Attention" sounded and salute by all persons in view on deck. If directed by the senior officer present, man rail.
Secretary of State when special foreign representative of President.	4	..."	..."	"Attention" sounded, and salute by all persons in view on deck.
Vice President _____	4	Hail Columbia	..."	..."
Secretary of Defense; Deputy Secretary of Defense; Secretary of the Navy; Director of Defense, Research and Engineering; Assistant Secretary of Defense; and Undersecretary or an Assistant Secretary of the Navy.	4	Admiral's March	..."	..."
Other Civil official entitled to honors on official visit.				..."
Officer of armed service.				..."

Figure 8-3.-Passing honors to officials and military officers embarked in boats.

SEQUENCE IN RENDERING PASSING HONORS

Ships render passing honors in the following sequence:

1. When the bow of one ship passes the bow or stern of the other, the junior sounds attention when the bow of one ship passes the bow or stern of the other. If the senior is embarked in a boat, the junior sounds attention before the boat is abreast of the quarterdeck.
2. The music, if required, sounds off.
3. "Carry on" is sounded when the prescribed honors have been rendered and acknowledged.

DISPENSING WITH PASSING HONORS

Passing honors are not rendered after sunset or before 0800 except when international courtesy requires. They also are not exchanged between Navy ships engaged in tactical evolutions outside port. The senior officer present may direct that passing honors be dispensed with in whole or in part.

Passing honors are not rendered by or required of ships with small bridge areas, such as sub-marines, particularly when in restricted waters.

CREW AT QUARTERS ON ENTERING OR LEAVING PORT

The crew is paraded at quarters during day-light on entering or leaving port on occasions of ceremony except when weather or other circumstances make it impracticable or undesirable to do so. Ordinarily, occasions of ceremony are construed as visits that are not operational; as visits at home port when departing for or returning from a lengthy deployment; as visits to foreign ports not visited recently; and as other special occasions so determined by a superior. In lieu of parading the entire crew at quarters, an honor guard may be paraded in a conspicuous place on weather decks.

DISPLAY OF NATIONAL ENSIGN, UNION JACK, AND DISTINCTIVE MARK FROM SHIPS AND CRAFT

Ships and craft of the Navy display the national ensign, the union jack, their personal flag

SHIPS OR CRAFTS	NATIONAL ENSIGN DISPLAYED	UNION JACK DISPLAYED	PERSONAL FLAG, COMMAND PENNANT, OR COMMISSION PENNANT DISPLAYED
ACTIVE: In commission In service	Yes Yes	Yes Yes	Yes No ²
INACTIVE: In commission, in reserve In service, in reserve Out of commission, in reserve Out of service, in reserve	Yes Yes No ¹ No ¹	Yes Yes No No	Yes Yes No No
SPECIAL STATUS: In commission, special In service, special Out of commission, special Out of service, special	Yes Yes No ¹ No ¹	Yes Yes No No	Yes Yes No No

¹ National ensign shall be displayed if necessary to indicate the national character of the ship or craft.

² Applies to display of commission pennant only. A flag officer or unit commander embarked may display a personal flag or command pennant.

Figure 8-4.-Display of ensign, union jack, and distinctive mark from ships and craft.

or pennant, or their commission pennant as specified in figure 8-4.

The distinctive mark of a commissioned Navy ship or craft is a personal flag or a command pennant of an officer of the Navy or a commission pennant. The distinctive mark of a commissioned hospital ship of the Navy is the Red Cross flag.

A ship or craft does not display more than one distinctive mark at one time, nor does it display the commission pennant and the personal flag of a civil official at one time.

Except as prescribed in *Navy Regulations* for certain occasions of ceremony and when civil officials are embarked, ships display the flag or pennant day

and night. Ships display the distinctive mark at the after masthead or, in a mastless ship, from the loftiest and most conspicuous hoist.

When not underway ships display the national ensign from the flagstaff and the union jack from the jackstaff from 0800 until sunset. A ship that enters port at night, when appropriate, displays the national ensign from the gaff at daylight for a time sufficient to establish its nationality. Other ships of war customarily display their national ensigns in return.

Unless the senior officer present directs otherwise, a ship underway displays the ensign during daylight from the gaff under the following circumstances. (If the ship has mast-mounted booms and stays that would interfere with the

hoisting, lowering, or flying of the ensign, it displays the ensign on the triatic stay.)

- Ž Getting underway and coming to anchor
- Ž Falling in with other ships
- Ž Cruising near land
- Ž During battle

The union jack displayed from the jackstaff is the size of the union of the national ensign displayed from the flagstaff.

Ships display the union jack at a yardarm to denote that a general court-martial or court of inquiry is in session.

NATIONAL ENSIGN AT COMMANDS ASHORE

The national ensign is displayed from 0800 to sunset near the headquarters of every command ashore. When the proximity of headquarters of two or more commands makes the display of separate ensigns inappropriate, the ensign is displayed at the headquarters of the senior.

DISPLAY OF NATIONAL ENSIGN IN BOATS

Waterborne boats of the naval service display the national ensign at the following times:

- When underway during daylight in a foreign port
- During dress ship or full-dress ship
- When going alongside a foreign vessel
- When an officer or official is embarked on an official occasion
- When a flag or general officer, unit commander, commanding officer, or chief of staff, in uniform, is embarked in a boat assigned to the officer's command or in one assigned for that officer's personal use
- At such other times as maybe prescribed by the senior officer present

DIPPING THE NATIONAL ENSIGN

When any vessel, under the United States registry or the registry of a nation formally

recognized by the United States government, salutes a ship of the Navy by dipping its ensign, it is answered dip for dip. If not already being displayed, the national ensign is hoisted for the purpose of answering the dip. An ensign being displayed at half-mast is hoisted to the truck or peak before a dip is answered.

No ship of the Navy dips the national ensign unless in return for such compliment.

Of the colors carried by a naval force on shore, only the battalion or regimental colors are dipped in rendering or acknowledging a salute.

Submarines, or other vessels on which dipping would endanger the lives of its personnel, are not required to dip the ensign.

HALF-MASTING THE NATIONAL ENSIGN AND UNION JACK

When the national ensign is half-masted, if not previously hoisted, it is first hoisted to the truck or peak and then lowered to half-mast. Before it is lowered from half-mast, the ensign is hoisted to the truck or peak and then lowered.

When the national ensign is half-masted, the union jack, if displayed from the jackstaff, is likewise half-masted. Personal flags, command pennants, and commission pennants are not displayed at half-mast except as prescribed in *Navy Regulations* for a deceased official or officer.

When directed by the President, the national ensign is flown at half-staff at military facilities and aboard naval vessels and at stations abroad. It is flown at half-mast whether or not the national ensign of another nation is flown full-staff alongside that of the United States.

BOW INSIGNIA AND FLAGSTAFF INSIGNIA FOR BOATS

A boat regularly assigned to an officer for personal use carries insignia on each bow as follows:

- For a flag or general officer, the stars as arranged in that officer's flag
- For a unit commander who is not a flag officer, a replica of the command pennant

Ž For a commanding officer or for a chief of staff who is not a flag officer, an arrow

Certain boats display the ensign and the personal flag or pennant of an officer on a staff fitted at the peak with certain devices. A boat assigned for the personal use of a flag or general officer, unit commander, chief of staff, or commanding officer, or on which a civil official is embarked carries a staff fitted with the following devices:

- A spread eagle for an official or officer whose official salute is 19 or more guns
- A halberd
 - for a flag or general officer whose official salute is less than 19 guns or
 - for a civil official whose official salute is 11 or more guns but less than 19 guns
- A ball
 - for an officer of the grade, or relative grade, of captain in the Navy or
 - for a career minister, a counselor or first secretary of embassy or legation, or a consul
- A star for an officer of the grade, or relative grade, of commander in the Navy
- A flat truck
 - for an officer below the grade, or relative grade, of commander in the Navy or
 - for a civil official not listed above and for whom honors are prescribed for an official visit

DRESS AND FULL-DRESS SHIP

Flying the largest national ensign assigned to the ship from the flagstaff with a national ensign displayed at each masthead is known as dress ship. A personal flag or command pennant will not be substituted with a national ensign. The national ensigns displayed at the masthead are of uniform size. When a substantial difference in heights of the mastheads exists, using different sizes of national ensigns is appropriate.

In addition to dressing of the mastheads, displaying a rainbow of signal flags reaching from the foot of the jackstaff to the mastheads and from those points to the foot of the flagstaff is known as full-dress ship. Dress ship and full-dress ship requirements are prescribed in the Navy Department publication *Flags, Pennants, and Customs* (NTP-13A). Peculiarly roasted or

mastless ships make a display as little modified from the rainbow effect as possible.

During dress or full-dress ship in honor of a foreign nation, the national ensign of that nation replaces the United States national ensign at the main, or at the masthead in the case of a single-masted ship. During dress or full-dress ship in honor of more than one nation, the ensign of each nation is displayed at the main, or at the masthead in a single-roasted ship.

Should half-masting of the national ensign be required on occasions of dress or full-dress ship, only the national ensign at the flagstaff is half-roasted.

When full-dress ship is prescribed, the senior officer present may direct that dress ship be substituted if, in that officer's opinion, the state of the weather makes such action advisable. The senior officer present may also, under such circumstances, direct that the ensigns be hauled down from the mastheads after they have been hoisted.

Dress ship or full-dress ship is prescribed for ships not underway from 0800 until sunset. Neither dress ship nor full-dress ship is prescribed for ships underway.

SENIOR OFFICER PRESENT AFLOAT PENNANT

Ships use the "starboard" pennant as the senior officer present afloat (SOPA) pennant.

If two or more Navy ships are docked together in port, the ship in which the senior officer present afloat (SOPA) is embarked displays the SOPA pennant, except when the SOPA's personal flag clearly indicates that officer's seniority. It is displayed from the inboard halyard of the starboard main yardarm.

SPECIAL CEREMONIES, ANNIVERSARIES, AND SOLEMNITIES

Navy ships, stations, and activities perform special ceremonies in honor of certain memorials, solemnities, and events, such as funerals, the commissioning of ships, and holidays. Although they perform special ceremonies for several holidays, they observe all national holidays.

NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

Naval ships, stations, and activities observe the following national holidays and such other days as may be designated by the President:

New Year's Day, the 1st of January

Martin Luther King Day, the third Monday in January

President's Day, the third Monday February

Memorial Day, the last Monday in May

Independence Day, the 4th of July in

Labor Day, the first Monday in September

Columbus Day, the second Monday in October

Veterans Day, the 11th of November

Thanksgiving Day, the fourth Thursday in November

Christmas Day, the 25th of December

Whenever any of the above designated dates fall on Saturday, the preceding day is observed as a holiday; whenever such dates fall on Sunday, the following day is observed.

CEREMONIES FOR NATIONAL HOLIDAYS

On President's Day (the third Monday in February) and on Independence Day (the 4th of July), every ship of the Navy in commission, not underway, displays full-dress ship. At noon each saluting ship and each naval station equipped with a saluting battery fires a national salute of 21 guns.

At noon on Memorial Day (the last Monday in May), all saluting ships and all naval stations

having a saluting battery fire a salute of 21 minute-guns. All ships and naval stations display the national ensign at half-mast from 0800 until the completion of the salute or until 1220 if no salute is fired or to be fired.

When the 4th of July occurs on Sunday, all special ceremonies are postponed until the following day.

SHIPS PASSING WASHINGTON'S TOMB

When passing Washington's Tomb, located in Mount Vernon, Virginia, between sunrise and sunset, Navy ships perform the following ceremony insofar as practicable: The full guard and band are paraded, the bell tolled, and the national ensign half-masted at the beginning of the tolling of the bell. When opposite Washington's Tomb, the guard presents arms; persons on deck salute, facing in the direction of the tomb; and "Taps" is sounded. The national ensign is hoisted to the truck or peak and the tolling ceases at the last note of "Taps," after which the national anthem is played. Upon completion of the national anthem, "Carry On" is sounded.

SHIPS PASSING THE USS ARIZONA MEMORIAL

When passing the USS *Arizona* memorial in Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, between sunrise and sunset, ships execute passing honors (fig. 8-5). To



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Figure 8-5.-Crew members manning the rail of the aircraft carrier USS Kitty Hawk (CV-63) as the ship passes the USS Arizona memorial.

execute passing honors, ships sound "Attention" and all persons in view on deck and not in ranks render the hand salute.

FUNERALS

If no chaplain or clergy is available, the commanding officer (CO) or the CO's representative conducts the funeral service of a Navy member.

Six pallbearers and six body bearers escort the body of a Navy member during a military funeral. The pallbearers are usually of the same grade or rating as the deceased. If a sufficient number of foreign officers of appropriate grade attend the funeral, they may be invited to serve as additional pallbearers.

Those attending a military funeral may wear the mourning badge at their discretion. Escorts for a military funeral wear the mourning badge as prescribed in the *U.S. Navy Uniform Regulations* for their own command.

Boats taking part in a funeral procession display the national ensign at half-mast. If the deceased was a flag or general officer; or at the time of death, a unit commander; or a commanding officer of a ship, that officer's flag or command pennant, or a commission pennant, is draped in mourning. It is then displayed at half-mast from a staff in the bow of the boat carrying the body.

The casket is covered with the national ensign. The ensign is placed on the casket so that the union is at the head and over the left shoulder of the deceased. The ensign is removed from the casket before it is lowered into the grave or committed to the deep.

Persons in the naval service salute when the body is carried past them, while the body is being lowered into the grave or committed to the deep, and during the firing of volleys and the sounding of "Taps."

Three rifle volleys are fired after the body has been lowered into the grave or committed to the deep, following which "Taps" is sounded by the bugle. In a foreign port, when a ship has not obtained permission to land an armed escort, the

volleys are fired over the body after it has been lowered into the boat alongside.

During burial at sea, the ship is stopped, if possible, and the ensign is displayed at half-mast from the beginning of the funeral service until the body has been committed to the deep. Further display of the ensign at half-mast maybe prescribed, depending on the circumstances, by the senior officer present.

Funeral honors are not rendered between sunset and sunrise. When circumstances require burial of the dead at night, such funeral services as are feasible are conducted.

SHIP COMMISSIONING CEREMONY

Although *Navy Regulations* does not specifically prescribe the ceremony for commissioning a Navy ship, custom has established a formal and impressive routine. The crew of the ship being commissioned assembles and stands in formation, headed by the division officer or department heads. Other ship's officers assemble facing the ceremony, usually behind the executive officer. Distinguished guests and participants in the ceremony are seated. The first watch and the officer of the deck (OOD) take their stations on the quarterdeck. Crew members station themselves at the ready, standing by the national ensign, union jack, and commission pennant or personal flag halyards.

The officer making the transfer (usually an officer of flag rank) opens the ceremony by reading the orders for delivery of the ship to the U.S. Navy. "Attention" is sounded by the bugle, the national anthem is played, and all flags, including the personal flag of the officer making the transfer, are hoisted simultaneously. With this act the ship is officially commissioned.

The officer effecting the transfer delivers the ship to the new commanding officer by saying, "I hereby deliver the USS [*name of ship*]." The new commanding officer reads his or her orders and states, "I hereby assume command of the USS [*name of ship*]," and orders the executive officer to "set the watch." The executive officer, in turn, directs the OOD to set the watch, and the ship's boatswain (or chief boatswain's mate in small ships) pipes the watch. The OOD and the other members of the watch take their assigned watch stations.

Customarily the CO delivers a short speech. The speech usually touches on the work of the building yard, the name of the ship, the history of any previous ships of the same name, and other items of interest.

If the state, city, or sponsor intends to make a presentation of silver or another gift, this portion of the ceremony then takes place. A benediction by the ship or yard chaplain concludes the ceremony.

After the ceremony, the officer's wardroom, chief petty officer's (CPO's) mess, and crew's mess host a reception or luncheon to entertain the guests.

This ceremony provides an impressive and fitting way for a new ship to enter the U.S. Navy.

CHANGE-OF-COMMAND CEREMONY

Following *U.S. Navy Regulations*, a commanding officer about to be relieved of command will, at the time of turning over command, call all hands to muster. With the crew at quarters, the commanding officer reads the orders of detachment and relinquishes command to the prospective commanding officer, who then assumes command as directed.

The change-of-command ceremony, which is rich in naval tradition, is quite formal. The turnover of a Navy command is the formal passing of responsibility, authority, and accountability of command from one officer to another.

With all hands at quarters, with officers and crew in ranks, the senior officer participating in the ceremony parades and readies for inspection an appropriate guard. Guests are seated. Although the main purpose of the ceremony is the turnover of responsibility from one officer to another, it provides the outgoing CO the opportunity to say goodbye to the officers and enlisted personnel. It also provides an opportunity for the new CO to greet the crew. Normally, the uniform should be full dress with swords for participants and service dress for military guests. After the reading of orders, the departing CO turns to the relieving officer and says, "Sir

or Ma'am, I am ready to be relieved." The prospective CO steps forward, reads the orders of assignment to command, faces the departing CO, salutes, and says, "Sir or Ma'am, I relieve you." The unit commander, if present, is saluted by the new CO, who says, "Sir or Ma'am, I report for duty." The new CO makes a few brief remarks, usually confined to wishing the departing CO well and stating that all orders of his or her predecessor remain in effect. After the exchange-of-command salute, the old commission pennant is lowered and a new one broken. The old commission pennant is then presented to the departing CO. As with the ship commissioning ceremony, the officer's wardroom, CPO's mess, and crew's mess usually host a reception.

SUMMARY

Few occasions stir the emotions of people more than a formal naval ceremony. Most of these ceremonies instill a great amount of pride in our naval service for all who attend.

In your naval career you will attend many formal ceremonies. No matter what role you fill, take a moment to look around you to reflect on the traditions and customs that have been carried on for many years. These traditions and customs will make you proud to be a part of the greatest Navy in the world.

REFERENCES

United States Navy Regulations, 1990, Department of the Navy, Office of the Secretary, Washington, D.C., 1990.

SUGGESTED READING

Mack, W.P., and R.W. Connell, *Naval Ceremonies, Customs, and Traditions*, 5th ed., Naval Institute Press, Annapolis, Md., 1980.

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ENSIGN

THE NAME GIVEN THE NAVY'S JUNIOR-MOST OFFICER DATES TO MEDEVIAL TIMES. LORDS HONORED THEIR SQUIRES BY ALLOWING THEM TO CARRY THE ENSIGN (BANNER) INTO BATTLE. LATER THESE SQUIRES BECAME KNOWN BY THE NAME OF THE BANNER ITSELF.

IN THE U.S. ARMY THE LOWEST RANKING OFFICER WAS ORIGINALLY CALLED "ENSIGN" BECAUSE HE, LIKE THE SQUIRE OF OLD, WOULD ONE DAY LEAD TROOPS INTO BATTLE AND WAS TRAINING TO THAT END. IT IS STILL THE LOWEST COMMISSIONED RANK IN THE BRITISH ARMY TODAY.

WHEN THE U.S. NAVY WAS ESTABLISHED, THE AMERICANS CARRIED ON THE TRADITION AND ADAPTED THE RANK OF ENSIGN AS THE TITLE FOR ITS JUNIOR COMMISSIONED OFFICERS.

