



The Friends of the PNSM
The Wheelhouse

Volume 2, No 1

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January 1, 2023

**Welcome to the
Fourth Issue of The
Wheelhouse,**
a Newsletter
published quarterly
by **The Friends of the
Portsmouth Naval
Shipyard Museum**

Please visit the
Museum and see our
website for additional
information.

<https://www.friendsofportsmouthnsm.org/>

In this issue we bring
you messages from our
**President, Gary
Bahena**, a History
Column from our **1st
Vice President, Steve
Milner**, a Report from
our **Treasurer, Robert
Fogel**, and a synopsis
of the December 7
Speaker program by
RADM Mark Hugel

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Renée M. Russell**

**The Friends of the
Portsmouth Naval
Shipyard Museum**

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President's Message

Greetings, Friends.

In this issue of The
Wheelhouse, we bring
you updates on the
"State of the Shipyard"
Roundtable Discussion
(our December 7
Speakers Series
presentation), and
about three new and
exciting Museum
Exhibits. We also
highlight the first two
Speakers Events for
2023.

The Friends. We're
back.

Treasurer's Report

As of December 31,
2022, The Friends had
\$111,622.33 on hand.
During the next 9
months, we are funding
continuation of the Oral
History Project with the
IC Norcom CTE TV
Production students,
textile conservation of
old uniforms, and the
installation of a new air
conditioner in the
Lightship.

THE FRIENDS OF THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD MUSEUM

Norfolk Naval Shipyard (NNSY) History

By: Steve Milner, First Vice President

NNSY participated in French Hero's visit in 1824

Norfolk Naval Shipyard, in addition to its
earlier namesakes, has hosted United States
presidents, royalty and other distinguished
visitors. And one famous person on this list was
the **Marquis de Lafayette**, a close aide to
General George Washington during our
Revolutionary War against England. He also
fought alongside our troops and was wounded
at the Battle of Brandywine near Philadelphia.
Lafayette was commissioned as a major general
in the Continental Army and served without pay.

He attended the British surrender at Yorktown,
Virginia, in 1781.

More than 40 years later after the British
surrendered at Yorktown, Lafayette returned to the
U.S. on a year-long farewell tour. Revered for his
Revolutionary War service, he was honored by
appreciative American citizens and former
battlefield comrades in many cities, and in all 24
states that existed at that time. There were
numerous social and community events, some of
which included the dedication of new buildings and
war memorials.

Lafayette was in his late 60s when he toured
America, and would live another ten years after
returning to France.

When he stopped in Portsmouth, as NNSY was then
known as the Gosport Navy Yard. In doing so this
French hero traveled by boat from Norfolk to

(Continued, Page 2)

Upcoming Speaker Series 2023 Events (See more detail page 4)

Wednesday, March 22, 6-7 PM, Churchland Branch Library; author **Amy Waters
Yarsinske** about the Navy capital of the world

Wednesday, June 14, 6-7 PM, Churchland Branch Library, **Allie Marie** will speak
about her research on the German Village at the NNSY



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NNSY participated in French Hero's visit in 1824

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Portsmouth, where military formations and civilians honored him at a triumphal arch constructed for his visit. It featured French and American flags, tastefully decorated with roses and evergreens.

Following these ceremonies, which were held at the intersection of High and Court Streets, Lafayette and others boarded barges that took them a short distance to the Gosport Navy Yard. There, they toured the ship of the line, USS North Carolina, a 74-gun vessel built at the Philadelphia Navy Yard four years earlier. Among his honors, this ship's enthusiastic crew shouted "three cheers," and its cannons rendered a 15-gun salute to the beloved French general, whom they had previously only read about in school. It was a memorable, once-in-a-lifetime historical experience for this crew to see one of the last surviving heroes of the American Revolution.

Shipyards Commandant Lewis Warrington, and an honor guard of Marines and dignitaries, welcomed him. And following Lafayette's shipyard tour he visited Warrington's on-site home for refreshments, before the entourage returned to Norfolk later in the day. (NNSY's Quarters A home for its commanding officers wouldn't be built for another decade.)

Note: Some of the information in this article was documented in Marshall W. Butt's book, "Portsmouth Under Four Flags, 1752-1970," a publication that's available in the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum gift shop. This writer also gathered facts from early newspaper stories and personal recollections, archived in the History Room of Portsmouth's Main Library on Court Street.



gilbert-de-motier-marquis-de-lafayette

Lafayette Memorial in Portsmouth

Awarded by the Daughters of The American Revolution, Fort Nelson Chapter, in 1834, the Monument can be found in Portsmouth City Park.



Photograph By Cynthia L. Clark, August 31, 2011

Updates from PNSM Portsmouth and the Great War

The history of Portsmouth in the Great War, is now featured at the Museum in an overhauled display. Come meet members of the Armed Forces as they would have appeared in 1918, in the museum's first full-scale diorama illustrating the history of Portsmouth's involvement in "The Great War."

Also highlighted are photo ID's from the Yard, Trophies and Medals issued to Portsmouth troops, and discover the story of a Portsmouth native who left his position as an electrician at NNSY to serve on the Western Front.

Come check out these new Exhibits at PNSM.

More info is available at:

https://portsvacation.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/12/PM_NEWSLETTER_W23_WEB.pdf



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Speaker Series:

December 7 Event – The State of the Shipyard –Senior Leader Roundtable
By Mark Hugel,

Our **December** Speaker's Series event was a Panel Discussion. It was held on Wednesday, December 7, at 6 PM, at the Churchland Branch Library.

Approximately thirty folks attended the event to hear a three-person panel discuss the NNSY transition from Lead Shop Management to Project Management – a time span that covered management in the yard from the post-Civil War period until today.

The panel was moderated by **RADM (ret) Mark Hugel** (former Commanding Officer NNSY, a Member of Portsmouth City Council, and a current Member of the Friends of PNSM). He was *joined by Mr. James Shoemaker*, (author of History of the Norfolk Naval Shipyard and former senior production civilian), and the current Shipyard Commander, **CAPT Dianna Wolfson**.



Jim Shoemaker kicked off the discussion with some history of shipyard management tracing back to

Quartermen in the days of wooden ships, and winding through the technological advances of steel hulls, steam propulsion, introduction of the aircraft carriers and submarines to the NNSY workload, and

eventually to the development of repair capabilities for nuclear-powered ships. He shared that it was the nuclear repair capability and, at the insistence of Naval Reactors, that led the yard to transition to Project Management.



Admiral Hugel picked up from that point and discussed the challenges of consistently implementing Project

Management, from ship to ship and from shipyard to shipyard. He discussed the introduction of mainframe computing and, eventually, personal computing and the role those tools played in enabling Project Management. From regular repair schedule updates to implementing near real-time earned value management, he shared how data and datamining offered new and deeper insights into the challenges and associated performance improvements of repairing and modernizing our nuclear Navy.



At that point, **Captain Wolfson** joined the conversation, relating her own shipyard history, starting as a member of the

Reactor Department aboard USS GEORGE WASHINGTON (CVN 73) during a drydocking availability for which Jim Shoemaker was the

Project Superintendent and Admiral Hugel was the NNSY Waterfront Operations Officer. She continued by sharing her experiences as a Project Superintendent, a Waterfront Operations Officer and, finally, as a Shipyard Commander at both Puget Sound Naval Shipyard and Norfolk Naval Shipyard. Her discussion was about the challenges the Navy's yards face today, particularly the struggle to find new waterfront mechanics. They are needed to replace retiring managers who are being promoted into leadership positions. This challenge was especially enlightening.

Afterward, the panelists took questions from the attendees and Mr. Shoemaker stayed to autograph his recently published history of Norfolk Naval Shipyard. It was a fun and engaging evening for all who participated.



RADM Hugel Introduces speakers to audience.



Jim Shoemaker, RADM Hugel, CAPT Wolfson take the stage.

Photos by Renée M Russell



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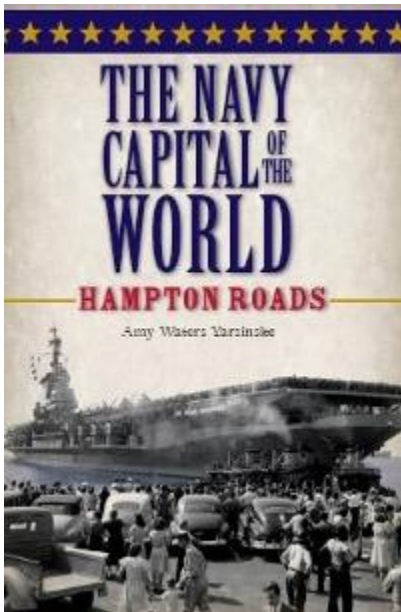
THE FRIENDS OF THE PORTSMOUTH NAVAL SHIPYARD MUSEUM

Upcoming Speaker Events:

Wednesday, March 22, 6-7 PM,
Churchland Branch Library

Come hear Friends member, and noted local author, **Amy Waters Yarsinske**, speak about The Navy Capital of The World.

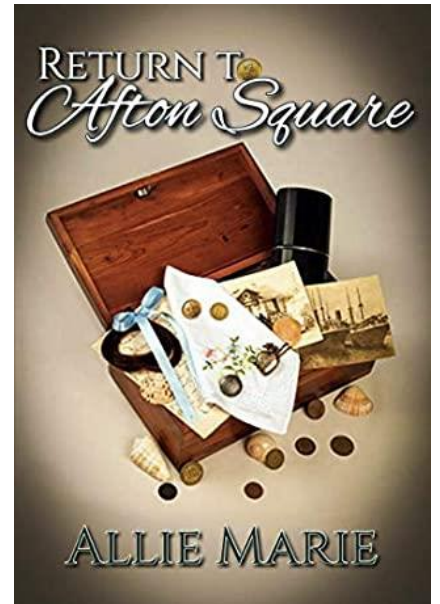
From the nascent U.S. Navy's first wooden-hulled warships, to the famous Civil War ironclads that clashed in its waters to the great battleships that gathered off Norfolk's Sewell's Point as part of President Theodore Roosevelt's Great White Fleet, the Hampton Roads region of Virginia has maintained a proud naval tradition - and the beating heart of this rich historical narrative is the **Norfolk Naval Shipyard**. Into the twenty-first century, this is arguably still true. Come early and meet with Amy ahead of the talk.



Wednesday, June 14, 6-7 PM,
Churchland Branch Library

Come hear noted local author **Allie Marie** speak about her research on the German Village at the NNSY. As many of you are aware, during World War I, two German ships became stuck at NNSY. While there, their crews built a real-life German village at NNSY.

Allie did an extensive profile of the village in her wonderful book Return to Afton Square. Allie will be available starting at 5:30 to meet and speak with you and will have some of her books available for purchase. Allie's fiction books focus on Portsmouth.



For additional information, see this article from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Museum:
<https://portsmouthnavalshipyardmuseum.com/portsmouths-german-village/>