

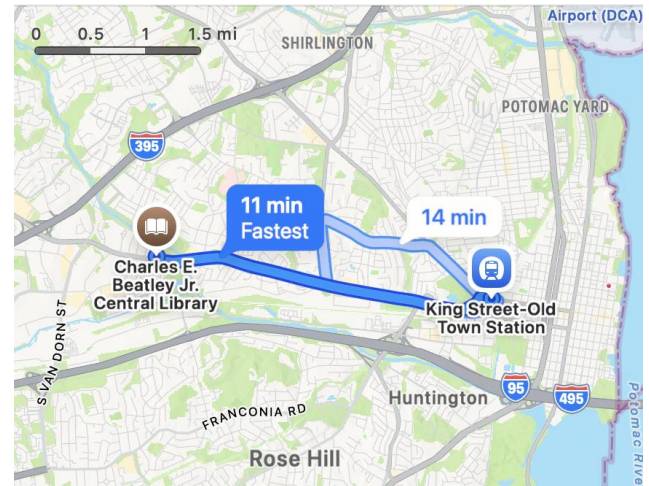


National Commandery OPORDER 2025-04-26
Book and Author Event, Alexandria Public Library, Alexandria, VA

Members of the National Commandery of the National Order of the United States will visit the Charles E. Beatley Central Library (CEBCL) to meet with author **Carol Avriett** to hear about her book **Midnight in Ironbottom Sound** -- an incredible story of the Black Mess Attendant who **saved 15 men** during the Battle of Guadalcanal.

There will be copies of the book for sale, and autograph by the author.

1. Date and time of visit: 1315 – 1430 on 26 April 2025
2. Carpoolers **and individual drivers** arrive at CEBCL at **1300**. GPS Address 5005 Duke St, Alexandria, VA 22304
3. Casual clothes, comfortable shoes.
4. RSVP **as a courtesy** to CDR David Winkler winkler58@msn.com (571) 251-5360 by noon on Friday April 25th, 2025.
5. Details: Cost - No Charge, but books for sale; Photography is allowed and encouraged; Lunch is not planned (no food allowed); The library is handicap accessible; In the event of an emergency at the library notify Library Staff and Event POC. While traveling call 911 and notify Event Captain when practical.
6. After-action: Photos and articles to Newsletter and post on social media.



A captivating World War II narrative of an untold story in the Pacific theater:

In the heart of the Pacific, where the tides of World War II surged, lies a tale of heroism on the high seas—a tale brought to life in book **Midnight in Ironbottom Sound**. This is the untold story of the USS *Gregory* (APD-3), a ship manned by unknown sailors whose bravery echoes through the annals of history.

Upon the decks of this vessel, Lieutenant Commander Harry F. Bauer and Mess Attendant **Charles J. French**, representing the highest and lowest ranks on the USS *Gregory*, become the focal points of this gripping narrative. In the turbulent waters of the Pacific, their stories, interwoven with the ship's saga—whose vital mission was to transport Marine Raiders to bloody beaches—emerge as a testament to the resilience of the human spirit and the unwavering commitment to duty.

Avriett unfolds a brief but catastrophic chapter of naval history that is often overlooked--that of unremitting warfare during the first few weeks following the initial invasion of the Solomon Islands to the demise of the USS *Gregory* four weeks later. Within this crucible, the USS *Gregory*, marked as a "minor" player, takes center stage. The ship's designation as an APD, its brave crew, and the harrowing night of terror they faced, set the stage for an unforgettable story.

Avriett meticulously reveals their heroism and pays homage to the eternal truth that courage has neither color nor prerequisites, and that valor hails from within.

