

National Capital Commandery

McMullen Biannual Naval History Symposium and Commodore Dudley W. Knox Lifetime Achievement Awards

Several companions of the National Capital Commandery attended the biannual McMullen Naval History Symposium, 18 and 19 September 2025, at the US Naval Academy in Annapolis, Maryland. The USNA History Department manages the symposium, the largest of its kind, drawing an international attendance of historians, scholars, and authors.

The National Capital Commandery had a display table in the exhibition hall along with other maritime history organizations such as the National Maritime Historical Society (NMHS), The 1805 Club, North American Society of Oceanic History, and the Naval Institute.

The opening plenary session featured a panel of speakers from the USNA Class of '57 concerning the topic: Landing a Career in Naval and Marine Corps History. The speakers were Craig Symonds, Professor Emeritus, USNA; Roger Bailey of the Citadel; Mark Folse, USNA; and Tyler Pitrof of the Naval History and Heritage Command.

The symposium consisted mainly of three-person panel discussions with moderators. The Naval Order sponsored a panel selected by the Naval Order Historian General, Captain Stan Carpenter of the Naval War College. Focusing on the topic, Navies in World War One, the panelists were: Emily Abdow of the Naval History and Heritage Command, Salvatore Mercogliano of Campbell University, and Haley Smith of King's College, London. The panel chair was Kater Yip Ka-Ming, Ph.D.

One highlight of the symposium was the McMullen Seapower Address, by author/historian Nathaniel Philbrick. The title of his talk was *The Sea, George Washington, and the Naval Victory that Won the American Revolution*. Mr. Philbrick has written sixteen books on American history. In 2000 he received the National Book Award for his book, *In the Heart of the Sea: The Tragedy of the Whaleship Essex*.

A second highlight was the Chief of Naval Operations Naval History Essay Contest, hosted by the Naval History and Heritage Command under the leadership of Admiral Sam Cox, who gave the awards. This event was held in conjunction with a luncheon on the USNA campus at Alumni Hall.

On Friday evening, 19 September, right after the close of the McMullen Symposium, the US Naval Institute held its annual Commodore Dudley W. Knox Lifetime Achievement Awards presentation at the Jack C. Taylor Conference Center located on the USNA campus. Those of us in the Naval Order attended with great excitement because our companion, Dr. David

Rosenberg, of the National Capital Commandery, was one of the three recipients. Dr. Rosenberg's achievements include:

- Served as captain in the Navy Reserve, commanding two units at the Office of Naval Intelligence.
- Directed two "lessons learned" projects for the Director of Naval Intelligence.
- Received the Navy Superior Civilian Service Medal for this work in long-range planning with the office of the Vice Chief of Naval Operations.
- Directed Task Force History for Operation Iraqi Freedom.
- Co-founded the Center for the Study of Force and Diplomacy at Temple University.
- Served as Maritime Strategy Chair at the National War College.
- The only military historian to receive a MacArthur Fellowship.
- Authored dozens of monographs, book chapters, and articles. Co-authored *The Admiral's Advantage: USN Operational Intelligence in WWII and the Cold War*.

The two other Knox award recipients were US Navy veteran, prolific author, and professor at the National War College, Bernard "Bud" Cole, and Virginia Steele Wood who served for 32 years as Reference Librarian and Reference Specialist for Naval and Military History at the Library of Congress, as well as working in an advisory capacity to naval history projects and organizations. Several Naval Order companions are members of the Naval Institute and past award recipients, some of whom attended.

The McMullen symposium is named for Dr. John J. McMullen, a 1940 USNA graduate who, after serving fifteen years in the Navy, found success in the business world and eventually owned the Houston Astros and New Jersey Devils. Upon his passing he left a generous bequest to the US Naval Academy.

Judy Pearson, Ph.D.

Photos and Captions:

Photo 1: The Naval Order display table. L – R: LCDR Phil Puckett, Captain William F. Steagall, and Mr. John Shanahan

Photo 2: The panel sponsored by the Naval Order on the topic: Navies in World War I. L – R: Emily Abdow, Haley Smith, Salvatore Mercogliano and Kater Yip Ka-Ming, Ph.D.

Photo 3: National Capital Commandery companions gathered to congratulate Dr. David Rosenberg on winning the Knox award. L – R: Dr. David Winkler, Captain John Rodgaard, Dr. Judy Pearson, LCDR Nathan Bien, Dr. David Rosenberg, Dr. Charles Chadbourne, and Mr. John Shanahan

