



# National Museum of the American Sailor

**March 2023  
Newsletter**

Every March, the museum honors two important groups of people - female veterans for Women's History Month and Vietnam veterans for Vietnam Veteran's Day on March 29. In the twenty years of the Vietnam era, the Navy changed significantly for both male and female sailors. Women pushed for greater equality, while men served in new capacities necessitated by the unique warfare of Vietnam. Dive into these topics with this month's newsletter. From a Sailor Spotlight of the first enlisted woman aboard a ship to a blog post on blue jeans, this newsletter is full of Vietnam era tales.

Moral Courage - doing what has to be done, because it is the right thing to do - is the mark of a true hero.

- CAPTAIN THOMAS G. KELLEY, VIETNAM WAR MEDAL OF HONOR RECIPIENT

## Sailor Spotlight: Personnelman Third Class Peggy Sue Griffith



Although the U.S. Navy had formally integrated women into the service in 1948, they were still barred from serving aboard ships until 1972. When war broke out in Vietnam, the Officer Personnel Newsletter specifically stated, "Numerous inquiries have been received regarding the assignment of women officers to Vietnam. There are no current plans to send women officers with 1100/1105 designators to this area. If at a future date the Navy deems it necessary to make such assignments, voluntary requests will be solicited." Although a handful of female officers served in Vietnam, it was the goodwill voyage of hospital ship USS *Sanctuary* in 1972 that finally opened ship duty to enlisted women. The first enlisted woman to step aboard *Sanctuary* was PN3 Peggy Sue Griffith. PN3 Griffith was among over 50 women aboard USS *Sanctuary*.

## Volunteers Wanted for Sea Stories

Are you a Navy veteran or active duty sailor who loves regaling your friends with sea stories? We've got the job for you! Beginning this spring, Sea Stories volunteers will be sharing their experiences with recruit graduation families on Fridays.

To join this group, please contact [NHHC\\_NMAS@us.navy.mil](mailto:NHHC_NMAS@us.navy.mil).



**SEA STORIES**  
WITH A NAVY VETERAN

**EDUCATION  
AND EVENTS**

## Upcoming Events



### Vietnam Veteran's Day

**Wednesday, March 29 at 11:00 PM**

Honor the nation's Vietnam veterans with a special ceremony. Veteran-era veterans receive commemorative pins for their service.

Are you a Vietnam-era veteran? Contact us at [NHHC\\_NMAS@us.navy.mil](mailto:NHHC_NMAS@us.navy.mil) to reserve your pin.

### Doing Both: Pageant Queen and Navy LT Friday, April 14 at 6:30 PM

What does a former pageant queen and current social media influencer have in common with a Navy officer? Turns out, everything!

LT Kellie Sbrocchi gives an inspirational talk about how she does it all, serving as a mentor and leader for a 21st century Navy.



**New  
Date!**

## Blog Post: Green Faces, Blue Jeans

The first Navy SEALs are well known for their green painted faces in the jungles of Vietnam, but did you know they also often sported blue jeans? The non-regulation pants were a favorite among SEALs due to their durability in the harsh Vietnamese climate.



Discover how the all-American denim became a staple for SEALs in Vietnam in this month's blog post. "Green Faces, Blue Jeans" will post in mid-March.

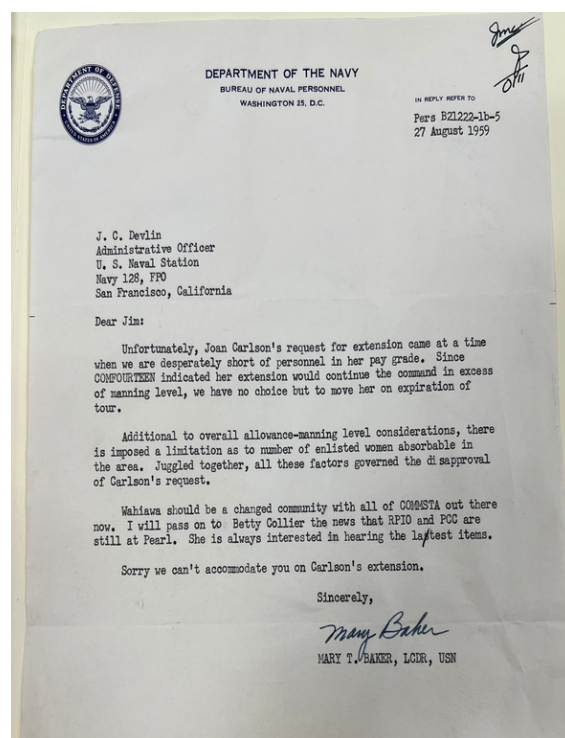
[Read the blog on Sailor's Attic](#)

COLLECTIONS  
AND  
RESEARCH

## Artifact Spotlight: Letter, 1959

Although the Vietnam War era was a time of great change in the Navy, and in the United States more generally, opportunities for women in the Navy were still limited. The museum's archival collection holds several items from the service of Yeoman First Class Joan Marie Carlson. YN1 Carlson served with distinction for twenty years, from Great Lakes to Pearl Harbor.

However, in 1959, when YN1 Carlson was up for promotion, she was explicitly rejected based on gender. The letter from Carlson's commander stated, "There is imposed a limitation as to number of enlisted women absorbable in the area." In other words, although there were positions available for chiefs, there was no need for a *female* chief at that time. Despite Carlson's many commendations, she never made chief.



## First Impressions are Everything

With the completion of the museum's new enlarged lobby, the Exhibit Specialist is turning his attention to updating the vestibule. This small space used to be where our volunteers welcomed visitors but now it will be an esthetically pleasing waiting area.



The National Museum of the American Sailor will be closed on Monday, March 6 through Wednesday, March 8 for the installation of a new closet system and artwork.

EXHIBITS

## Thank You to our Vietnam Era Veterans!

Each year National Vietnam Veterans Day is observed on March 29th as a way to thank and honor our nation's Vietnam veterans and their families for their service and sacrifice. The National Museum of the American Sailor would like to extend our sincerest gratitude to our Vietnam War and Era Veteran volunteers!

VOLUNTEERS  
AND  
OUTREACH



**THE NATIONAL MUSEUM OF  
THE AMERICAN SAILOR**

# **WE ARE RECRUITING NEW VOLUNTEERS!**

**SATURDAY  
OPPORTUNITIES  
AVAILABLE!**

Help us tell the story of the United States Navy's enlisted sailor! The National Museum of the American Sailor has a wide variety of positions available to volunteers. There are several new and exciting volunteer opportunities. We're currently in need of volunteers to help as:

- Exhibits and Facilities Assistant
- Front Desk Greeter(s)

**INTERESTED IN COMING ABOARD?**

**REACH OUT TO US AT:  
(847) 688-3154 X215 OR  
NHHC\_NMAS@US.NAVY.MIL**

