



The Pound 'n Pint

March 2026

Newsletter of the Colonial Navy of Massachusetts



Commodore's Log

Welcome to a busy and exciting year for historic groups and so many celebrations of the 250th Anniversary of our independence from Great Britain and the tyranny of King George III. There is a lot to unpack there and even more to reflect upon since the end of the Revolutionary War. I remember back to the Bicentennial celebrations of 1976 as a High School student, growing up in Jamestown, Rhode Island. It was such a crazy year! When the Tall Ships came to Newport that year, my parents rented out our bedrooms, and we became a B&B for a few weeks that summer. My two brothers and I slept on cots in our parents' room. We carried bags up the stairs to our second and third-floor rooms, served breakfast, and did all the usual housekeeping chores. Our house was filled with interesting people from far and near. The town of Jamestown created a community chorus that put on quite a show, and I was part of that. I even helped make some of the wardrobe! My shining glory came during the pageant when I became the Statue of Liberty while the chorus sang something very Patriotic (though I don't remember what song... it was 50 years ago!)

I rode my bike out to Fort Wetherill the day the ships came into Narragansett Bay with the view straight across from Fort Adams. I had never seen such a crowd! Over the course of that week, my friends and I were introduced to many of the sailors from Spain, Russia, and Germany as families through my church organized picnics and hosted parties. We had VIP access to some of the ships and special events in Newport. It was an amazing time....



And then in August of 1976 I went to the Philippines for a year as an exchange student with the Rotary Club. Living for a year under martial law was quite a change from the celebrations of freedom and liberty that I had just left behind. Experiencing nationwide enforcement of midnight curfews, constant public presence of the armed Philippine Constabulary military police force, and a shocking level of poverty in direct contrast to the opulent homes of my host families was an education that impacted me deeply. I had friends from all walks of life there, as well as other exchange students, so there were many wonderful experiences and connections that have lasted decades.

When I was a graduate student at URI, getting my MS in Nursing and my post-graduate degree in Family Practice, I spent three weeks in Honduras in a small mountain village, Guinope. Along with my instructor, another NP student, a physical therapy student, and a pharmacy student, we treated patients in the village mission and did house calls. Though we were students, we provided free professional medical care to the villagers using supplies we had mostly brought with us. The people that we cared for were so grateful, and living under conditions that are unimaginable to most Americans.



They had so very little, yet they always offered us something to eat or drink, as that was all they had to give, a level of gratitude that leaves you humbled to your soul.

Many of the members of this group have had extraordinary lives spent in the service of this country. Though I did register for “the draft” when I was 18, a little unusual for women at that time, I never entered the service. Thinking about the sacrifices that have been made, the lives lost through the ages,

and the courage of those who stand and face a threat evokes a profound respect and appreciation for the prosperity and freedom that have been provided by those who have come before us, in both the near and distant past.

I look forward to making some historic memories with all of you this year, making music, sharing good times, and having fun. All Hands on Deck!

Pam Burlingame
Commodore



Cat's Can Relax – Snares Don't Come From Real Cat Gut

The gut strings traditionally used on snare drums are often called "catgut," which may lead some to wonder whether cats are raised specifically for their unique snare sound. The straightforward answer is no; the gut strings used for snare drums do not come from cats. The term "catgut" is thought to originate from a medieval European instrument called a "kit," a small violin or fiddle that used gut strings. This led to the term "kitgut," which eventually morphed into "catgut." Some suggest that "gut" refers to the material derived from an animal's intestines (but not from cats), and that "kitten" or "kitcut" denotes a small animal, such as a sheep. In any case, cats have never had to fear being used to make snare drums.

Historically, gut strings have been made from the intestines of sheep, goats, hogs, horses, and cattle, with sheep being the most common source in many regions. However, in the United States during the late 1950s, the availability of cattle led to their use becoming more prevalent, eventually overtaking sheep as the primary source.

The U.S. gut string industry flourished for over 100 years, manufacturing strings not only for musical instruments and drum snares, but also for applications like belts, lacing, sutures, and racket strings.

The Great Depression forced many gut-string companies to close, while competition from silk strings increased. In 1940, DuPont introduced a monofilament nylon string, but production was curtailed during World War II as all gut makers shifted to surgical gut. After the war, the surviving firms resumed manufacturing musical and racket strings, with synthetic nylon strings gaining ground as technology improved. The Korean War caused a spike in demand for gut sutures, but racket gut was thriving as well.



As tennis gained popularity in the 1970s, the demand for both gut and synthetic strings surged. For the first time, racket gut sales surpassed surgical gut sales, leading to supply shortages and higher prices. However, two significant developments would severely impact the gut string industry: the introduction of oversized rackets in the U.S. and the emergence of affordable synthetic sutures in Europe, both of which gradually reduced the demand for gut products. By 1997, the U.S. gut-string industry had ceased to exist.

Today, snare drum gut snares are predominantly made from synthetic materials, primarily nylon or polyester. These materials offer durability, consistent tension, and resistance to environmental factors, making them ideal for drum snares. These synthetic snares provide reliable performance and longevity, making them a popular choice among modern drummers for both practice and performance.

Are natural gut snares still used today?

Yes, in the style of ancient fife and drum corps, natural gut snares are still commonly used on snare drums. This practice aligns with the historical and traditional music performance styles of the 18th and 19th centuries. Natural gut snares are valued for their authentic sound, which closely resembles the tones produced by historical instruments. This authenticity is especially cherished in reenactments and performances that replicate the music of that era. The unique tonal qualities of gut snares produce a warm, resonant sound that enhances the fife and drum ensemble's overall musicality. Many period-style drums were originally constructed to use gut snares, and modern recreations of these instruments often continue this tradition to maintain historical accuracy.

While synthetic snares may be favored for their convenience and durability, many purists and enthusiasts of ancient fife and drum music still prefer natural gut snares to preserve the traditional sound and playing experience. Although natural gut snares may be difficult to find today, they are still available for snare drums through companies such as Cooperman Drums and Loyal Drums.

Special thanks to Jim Ellis of Cooperman Drums for some of the information in this article.



250 Years of Service? Not so fast.

As you may know, the Colonial Navy of Massachusetts has its roots in the State Navy of Massachusetts during the American Revolutionary War. Founded on December 29, 1775, its primary mission was to protect the state's commerce and coastal communities while launching offensive operations against British forces and merchant ships. During the war, the state navy acquired 25 vessels, used in various roles until it was disbanded on June 4, 1783.

The U.S. Navy claims October 13, 1775, as its official establishment date, when the Second Continental Congress created the Continental Navy. However, this date is not without debate, and there are even more arguments about the Navy's birthplace. Massachusetts asserts its claim based on the Town of Beverly, which boasts that the schooner *Hannah* was launched there in September 1775—the first vessel outfitted by George Washington to harass British supply ships. Meanwhile, Marblehead insists it has the true claim to fame because the *Hannah* was crewed and owned by Marblehead sailors. And then there's Whitehall, New York, which lays claim as the birthplace because several naval vessels under Benedict Arnold's command were built there in the summer of 1776 and later saw action in an important early battle on Lake Champlain.

I believe Massachusetts has a legitimate claim to being the birthplace of the U.S. Navy. But when we celebrate the Navy's 250-year history and acknowledge the connection to Massachusetts's Colonial Navy, two CNM fleet members, in particular, would like to make a point.



USRC Massachusetts

CNM Captain Bob Gregory is a retired Chief Boatswain's Mate (BMC), and I was a Damage Controlman First Class (DC1). As Coast Guard veterans, we learned a little secret in boot camp (way back when): the Coast Guard, not the Navy, is the country's oldest "continuous" seagoing service. You might be wondering how that's possible.

The U.S. Navy was established in 1775 but disbanded in 1785. The Massachusetts State Navy had already been disbanded by that time. The U.S. Navy was not reestablished until 1794, when Congress authorized the construction of six frigates (including the USS Constitution) to fight the Barbary pirates. The Department of the Navy was not established as a separate, permanent Cabinet-level department until April 30, 1798, to handle the naval conflict with France.

So, from 1785 until 1794, there was no U.S. Navy. There was, however, an armed sea-going service. The U.S. Coast Guard traces its lineage to the Revenue Marine, later known as the U.S. Revenue Cutter

Service. The Revenue Marine was founded by an act of Congress on 4 August 1790 as part of the Department of the Treasury. Ten cutters were authorized to enforce tariffs, a major source of revenue for our country. The Act also permitted the recruitment of 40 revenue officers. Each cutter was assigned one master and three mates, all commissioned officers. In addition, each cutter was allowed four mariners.

From 1785 to 1794, when the U.S. Navy was eventually re-established, these "revenue cutters" were the country's only naval force. As such, the cutters and their crews took on a wide variety of duties beyond enforcing tariffs, including combating piracy and rescuing mariners in distress.

In 1794, the Revenue Marine was given the mission of preventing the trading of slaves from Africa to the United States. In 1808, the Revenue Marine was responsible for enforcing President Thomas Jefferson's embargo, closing U.S. ports to European trade. The Revenue Marine was involved in the Quasi-War with France from 1798 to 1799, the War of 1812, the West Indies Anti-Piracy Operation, the Second Seminole War, and the Mexican-American War.



During the American Civil War, USRC Harriet Lane fired the first naval shots of the war, engaging the steamer Nashville during the siege of Fort Sumter.

President Lincoln invoked the "Act of March 2, 1799," which allowed him to order the revenue cutters to combat duty with the Navy. Lincoln directed the Secretary of the Treasury on 14 June 1863 to assign the revenue cutters to the North Atlantic Blockading Squadron.

The Revenue Cutter Service and the U.S. Life-Saving Service were merged to become the Coast Guard on January 28, 1915, in a Congressional Act which said it, "shall be a military service and a branch of the armed forces of the United States at all times." In 1939, the U.S. Lighthouse Service was merged into the Coast Guard. The Coast Guard was moved from the Department of the Treasury to the Department of Transportation in 1967, and then to the Department of Homeland Security in 2003. The Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Act of 2006 states that upon the declaration of war and when Congress so directs in the declaration, or when the president directs, the Coast Guard operates as a service in the Department of the Navy.



While jokes between the Coast Guard and the Navy are a staple of good-natured military humor, Coast Guard veterans like Bob and me can't help but chuckle every time the Navy boasts about its 250-year history. We know that the Coast Guard holds the title of the nation's longest "continuous" seagoing service.

Semper Paratus

Ron Glidden, Editor

Naval Terms and Expressions

The following terms are just a few that will be published in issues of the Pound n' Pint. They come from a variety of sources, including Traditions of the Navy by Cedric Windas (edited by LTCD Arnold Lott in 1978), and from the editor's own experiences.

Dutch Courage: A 17th-century term for false courage inspired by drunkenness. It was coined to describe a custom of the old Dutch Navy, in which it was the practice to serve gin or schnapps to the ship's gun crews before going into battle.



Squared Away means one is in a satisfactory position for whatever has to be done next. This is another phrase borrowed from square-rigger days. When a square-rigged ship braced her yards right across the ship to run before the wind, she was “squared away.”

Jack Tar, as a nickname for sailors, comes from the fact that in sailing ships, the rigging was tarred, and men had the stuff on their hands and clothes. Sailors also wore canvas breeches and coats coated with tar to make them waterproof.

Deck ape is slang for a man working on the topside of a ship. Such a man is also known as a swab jockey or swabby because of the time he spends swabbing the deck. These terms are used even in today's maritime services, often by (below-deck) engineers describing their “topside” or deck force shipmates.



Black Gang refers to engineers who, in coal-burning days, were usually blackened with coal dust. They were also called bilge rats or snipes (and are still called those terms today by their shipmates on the deck force).



St. Patrick's Day Parade - Pawtucket, RI

A brave and hardy crew attended the first CNM event of 2026, marching in the Pawtucket, RI, St. Patrick's Day parade (which really is not on St. Patrick's Day). With chilly temperatures and snowbanks lining the roads, our music and colors put on a great show for the spectators courageous enough to brave the weather.



**There's no better way to prepare for a cold St. Patrick's Day parade than a toast. Sláinte!
Even the Division Parade Organizer (in yellow) joined in our toast – of course, with a cup of “coffee.”**



Those crewmembers who attended this St. Patrick's Day parade would like to offer this heartfelt Irish blessing.
"May the winds of fortune sail you, may you sail a gentle sea, and may it always be the other guy who says,
"this drink's on me."



2026 Schedule

Some of the events listed below are not yet confirmed. Most of those that are unconfirmed are annual events we normally participate in (Gaspee Days, Deep River, Westbrook, Sudbury, etc.), but for which we have not yet received formal invitations. We fully expect to participate in those annual events and recommend that you mark your calendars accordingly.

Date	Event	Location	Time	Confirmed
03/07/26	Pawtucket St. Patrick's Day Parade	Pawtucket, RI	12:00	Confirmed
03/15/26	Short Parade (voluntary)	Adamsville, RI		
03/28/26	Commissioning USS Massachusetts	Boston	8:00	
05/02/26	Lexington Muster	Lexington, MA	10:00	Confirmed
05/09/26	Burning of the Ships	Essex, CT	2:00	Confirmed
05/15/26	Aesthetic Society Corporate event	Boston, MA Conv Ctr	9:30	Confirmed
05/17/26	Wellesley Veterans Parade	Wellesley, MA	1:00	
05/23/26	Bellingham	Bellingham, MA		Confirmed
05/25/26	Memorial Day Parade	Somerset, MA	10:00	Confirmed
06/13/26	Gaspee Days Parade	Warwick, RI	10:00	
06/26/26	Truesdale Health corporate event	Fall River, MA	4:00	
06/27/26	Marlborough 250th	Marlborough, MA		
07/02/26	City of Quincy	Quincy, MA	4-9 pm	
07/04/26	Martha's Vineyard Parade	Edgartown, MA	4:00	Confirmed
07/11/26	Private Event (2484 Pleasant St.)	Dighton, MA	2-4 pm	
07/18/26	National Muster Deep River	Deep River, CT	11:00	
08/01/26	Plymouth 250 Parade and event	Plymouth, MA	10:00	Confirmed
08/02/26	Feast of the Blessed Sacrament	New Bedford, MA	2:00	
08/22/26	Westbrook Muster	Westbrook, CT	11:00	
09/13/26	Eastham Windmill Days Parade	Eastham, MA	10:00	
09/26/26	Sudbury Muster	Sudbury, MA	12:00	
10/11/26	Columbus Day Parade	Providence, RI	11:00	
10/17/26	Sarah Bradlee Fulton Day	Medford, MA	10:30	
11/11/26	Veterans Day Parade	Fall River, MA	1:00	
11/11/26	Bicentennial Park Memorial ceremony	Fall River, MA	2:00	
12/05/26	Holiday Parade	Fall River, MA	1:00	
12/05/26	Fleet Holiday Party (Crossroads Pub)	Warren, RI	6:00	
12/08/26	Fleet Annual Meeting and Election	Fall River, MA	7:00	

Meetings and Rehearsals

Monthly Meetings are usually held on the 2nd Tuesday of the month. (The Narrows 7:00 PM) March-December. Rehearsals, when held, are usually on Tuesday nights at The Narrows 7:00 PM. Reminder notices are always emailed to the Fleet before meetings or rehearsals, but when in doubt, please email the Commodore for confirmation.



The appearance of the Colonial Navy of Massachusetts at the Fall River Veteran's Day Parade, at a ceremony presenting military honors at the Vietnam Memorial and other memorials at Bicentennial Park, and at the Fall River Children's Holiday Parade was funded in part through a generous grant from the Fall River Cultural Council and the Massachusetts Cultural Council.

The Pound 'n Pint Publication Dates and Article Submissions

Editor: Ron Glidden capefifer@gmail.com

The Pound 'n Pint is published quarterly, or more frequently when additional communication to the Fleet is needed or when directed by the Commodore. Anticipated publication months are December, March, June, and September. Any member who would like to submit an article may do so at any time by contacting the Editor at capefifer@gmail.com.

Not the Russian Navy

Captain Dave Kiley provided this historical (Dave called it “old”) picture taken more than a few years ago at Fall River Celebrates America. Dave is pictured second in the front row next to Frank Colaneri. He believes Philip Fata is at the end of the second row. Most notably, Dave points out that the shirts worn by CNM at that time were not the red-striped shirts we now wear, but the blue-striped shirts worn by Russian submariners.



The Colonial Navy of Massachusetts



Not the Colonial Navy of Massachusetts!

Can anyone say,
"Emergency. Emergency. Everybody to get from street."

Certificate of Clearance

Captain Dave Kiley has been working on translating a “State of Massachusetts-Bay” certificate of clearance for the Brig *Dolphin* out of the Port of Boston. The photo of the document (dated 1778) is extremely difficult to read. The following is what has been translated to date.

*These certify all whom it does concern.
That Israel Turner, Master or Commander
of the Brig Dolphin
Burden, one hundred Tons, or thereabouts, navigated with eight Men, mounted with No Guns,
has Permission to depart from this Port with the following articles, viz,
One hundred twenty-five cast Tabacco
One hundred forty lbs. Pitch Pine tar
Filthy bales of flaxseed
Four thousand Staves (barrels)*

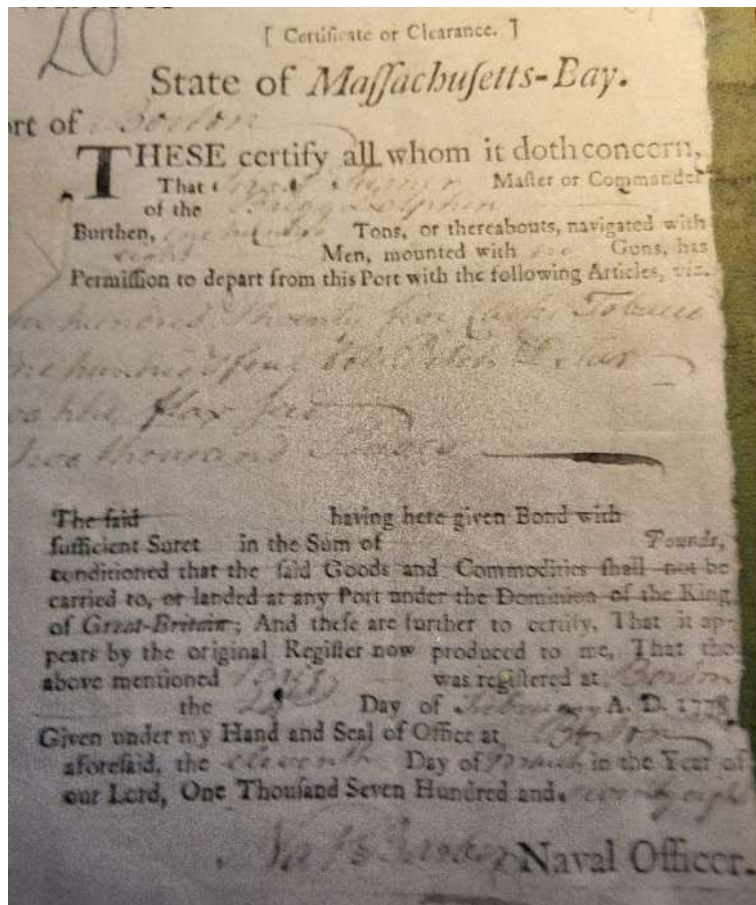
*The said _____ having here given Bond with sufficient Surety the Sum of _____ Pounds,
conditioned that the said Goods and Commodities shall not be carried to, or landed at any Port under
the Dominion of the King of Great-Britain,*

*And they are further to certify, that it appears, by the original Registration (see page two) now produced
to me, That the above mentioned Brig was registered at Boston _____ the 2nd Day of February
A.D. 1778*

*Given under my Hand and Seal of Office at Boston aforesaid,
the Eleventh Day of March in the Year of the Lord, One Thousand Seven Hundred and seventy-eight.*

Nat Bradley, Naval Officer

The above was transcribed into modern English by Capt. David Kiely, CNM, from a copy of the original found in The National Archives, Kew Gardens, London, UK. Their source for reference is TNA, HCA 32/311/2. The *Dolphin* was sold at the port of Belfast, Ireland, after being taken by an Irish Loyalist Privateer in April of 1778. Courtesy of Sean T Rickard, Companion of the Naval Order of the United States.



Photograph of the original Certificate of Clearance from 1778



A modern example of a Brig.
 The U.S. Brig Niagara launched in 1988.



Elected Staff 2026

Commodore: Pamela Burlingame
Vice Commodore: Bob Miorelli
Chief of Staff: Bill Cary
Prizemaster: Tom Murray
Clerk: Ron Glidden

Staff Appointments

Fife Master: Captain Bill Hart
Drum Master: Captain Bob Gregory
Marine Captain: Captain Mike Godek
Color Guard Captain: Captain Bob DelaFuente
Signal: Captain Dave Kiley
Binnacle: Commodore Pamela Burlingame
Stores: Conor Murray
Grog: Laura Hadley
Pound 'n Pint: Ron Glidden

Fleet Contact Information

Email: CNM1775@CNM1775.org
Website: <https://CNM1775.org>
Mailing Address: Colonial Navy of Massachusetts
PO Box 1775
Fall River, MA 02722-1775