

USS IOWA SSN-797

Commissioning Committee, 226 5th Ave SW, Cedar Rapids, Iowa 52404



Commissioning Committee
Newsletter
31

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www.SSN797.com

Officers

- Sponsor: Ms. Christie Vilsack
- Chairman: Doug MacCrea, CAPT USN (Ret)
- Exec. Director: Tom Hudson
- Directors: Michelle Bell
Mat Tanner

“As you all know, much remains to be done. The tremendous amount of work thus far accomplished augurs well for the future ...”

***CAPT John McCrea, Commissioning CO,
USS IOWA (BB-61)***

Friends and Supporters of the USS IOWA Commissioning Committee –

Hello and our apologies. Our last Newsletter was in mid-November and a lot has changed in these past few months. Among them changes in the leadership of both the Commissioning Committee and the Pre-Commissioning Unit of IOWA.

First, my name is Doug MacCrea and I was asked to become Chairman of the Commissioning Committee in mid-February. I am a retired U.S. Navy Captain, a Surface Warfare Officer (we can argue forever about who is a target, the surface ship or the submarines I was routinely tasked to hunt), who had the privilege of having three commands during my thirty-year career. My son-in-law is a career Submarine Officer currently stationed in Kings Bay, Georgia.

Having commissioned a ship myself, I fully recognize that the task of the Commissioning Committee is to provide the best possible support to the crew and the boat as it proceeds through the many milestones of construction into commissioned status.

I would like to take a moment to thank Peter Welch for his unbounded, enthusiastic efforts to get the Commissioning Committee established and moving forward to its ultimate goal – the successful commissioning of the IOWA. Unfortunately, Pete found it necessary, for both personal and professional reasons, to step down from the chairmanship of the Committee early this year.

There have also been significant changes in the leadership of the crew of IOWA since our last Newsletter. The Commanding Officer, CAPT Quinton James, transferred in February to

a new assignment in the Wargaming Department at the Naval War College in Newport, Rhode Island; the Executive Officer, CDR Randy Riewerts, transferred in November to the Naval War College staff as well, and; the Chief of the Boat (COB), Master Chief Larry Alger, also transferred in November to another command in the Groton area. While we are saddened to see them go, they have made a lasting impact on the IOWA and we wish them the absolute best in their new assignments.

We are happy to welcome Commander Matt Powell as the new Commanding Officer. Commander Powell comes to the IOWA following a staff tour in Washington, DC. LCDR Kevin O'Malley assumed duties as Executive Officer following a tour on the staff of SUBRON ONE in Hawaii. The new Chief of the Boat (COB) is Master Chief Darryl Hartley who comes to the IOWA following a tour as COB on the USS ANNAPOLIS (SSN-760), also out of Hawaii. Their full biographies are included at the end of this Newsletter so you can get a better feel for the truly capable individuals who have been charged with getting the crew ready and helping to bring the IOWA into the fleet next summer.

STATUS OF THE BOAT

As the November Newsletter was being completed and distributed the final welds joining the three sections of the boat were being completed. The boat is now one complete hull with most systems fully completed and system testing in progress. Most notably, systems testing of the reactor is well underway and by all accounts is progressing smoothly.

General Dynamics Electric Boat has revised the production schedule and plans to transition the boat into the graving dock and float it in late August and to christen the IOWA on September 3rd. This will be the first waterborne christening of a VIRGINIA Class submarine that we are aware of.

We hope to be able to provide more detailed updates over the next couple of months as production on the boat continues and culminates in sea trials and delivery early next year.

FOURTH DUTY SECTION NAMED

In late January the crew decided to name their fourth duty section "THE SULLIVANS" after the five Sullivan Brothers of Waterloo who perished together in action during World War II.

The Sullivans duty section joins the Cyclones, Hawkeye and Panther duty sections named in 2021.

CHRISTENING OF THE IOWA

We now have a planned date for Christening – September 3rd, and I'm sure that some of you are very interested in attending this event.

The Christening of the IOWA is a major milestone event for the building yard- in this case Electric Boat, and the Commissioning Committee has very little, if any input, in the ceremony and the who can attend. I'm sorry to say that as I know that there are many of you who would like to attend.

While the Commissioning Committee may be given the opportunity to invite a very limited number of friends and supporters to the event, we have been politely informed that, at this point, it is highly unlikely due to the current physical constraints at the shipyard.

COMMISSIONING COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Commissioning Committee has been forced to do some restructuring in recent weeks.

We have established several committees to help us achieve our goal of helping commission the IOWA and deliver her to the Fleet. Those committees are:

Engagement Committee - identifying events to participate in for crew interaction/fund raising; coordinate logistics for these events (i.e. RAGBRAI, State Fair, etc.)

Fundraising Committee - identify/approach prospective corporate/influential donors and develop other fundraising strategies

Emblematics/Memorabilia Committee - identify, design and source different types/items of emblematics/memorabilia for christening/commissioning and fundraising acknowledgement.

External Communications/Media Relations Committee - coordinate/manage Facebook & website updates; draft Newsletters & gather Newsletter inputs; identify/coordinate opportunities to promote Commissioning Committee efforts and the boat/crew; draft press releases as appropriate.

Christening/Commissioning Events Committee - help plan/execute christening/commissioning events sponsored/supported by Commissioning Committee.

We are seeking additional volunteers to help staff those committees, so if you are interested in joining one of these committees, please give me a call at 515-450-0773 or send an e-mail to dmaccrea@gmail.com.

We have also found it necessary to develop and implement a new website: www.ssn797.com. The old website was quite effective in the early efforts of the Commissioning Committee, however it was becoming increasingly difficult to update in a

timely manner and the costs associated with operating it were also increasing. We have been fortunate enough to engage the services of a Des Moines based company who have agreed to help develop, host, and implement timely updates to the website pro bono.

UPCOMING ENGAGEMENT SCHEDULE

There are several events that we are currently planning on bringing members of the crew back to Iowa to attend. Those events right now are:

Memorial Day Weekend (most events in the Des Moines area)

RAGBRAI

Irish Fest

State Fair (focused on Veterans Day at the State Fair)

Iowa/Iowa State Football Game

Thanksgiving (looking for Host families across the state)

WHAT IS AHEAD

It is our goal to issue future editions of the Newsletter every month until early 2023 and then try and issue Newsletters bi-weekly as we get closer to commissioning. Why? Because we want to keep you informed and up-to-date on the status of this great crew and submarine named IOWA.

Should you have any questions or input regarding this or future editions of the USS IOWA (SSN-797) Commissioning Committee Newsletter, please feel free to contact me at dmaccrea@gmail.com.

Regards,

Doug MacCrea

Doug MacCrea

CDR Matt Powell

Commanding Officer – PCU IOWA



CDR Powell is from Conyers, GA. He received a Bachelor of Science degree in Chemical Engineering from Georgia Tech in 2003 and was commissioned on October 10, 2003 from Naval Officer Candidate School in Pensacola, FL.

CDR Powell's first sea tour was on the USS RHODE ISLAND (BLUE) (SSBN 740B) in Kings Bay, GA. During this junior officer tour, he qualified in submarines and completed five Strategic Deterrent patrols.

For his second sea tour, CDR Powell served as the Weapons Officer on USS NORFOLK (SSN 714) where he completed two deployments to the U.S. Central Command area of responsibility.

CDR Powell reported to USS VIRGINIA (SSN 774) as the Executive Officer in December 2016. VIRGINIA completed one deployment to the U.S. European Command area of responsibility and conducted a change of homeport to Kittery, ME.

Shore tours for CDR Powell included serving as a planner at Joint Functional Component Command Global Strike at United States Strategic Command (STRATCOM), a Tactical Readiness Evaluation Team Department Head for Commander Submarine Forces Atlantic, and Speech Writer for the Director of Undersea Warfare in Washington D.C.

CDR Powell received a master's degree in Engineering Management from Old Dominion University and is a distinguished graduate of the U.S. Army War College.

In February 2022, CDR Powell took command of PCU IOWA (SSN 797) in Groton, CT.

CDR Powell is a proud father to three wonderful children: Caleb, Mason, and Grace.

The crews CDR Powell has served with collectively earned two unit awards, three Battle "E's" and the Atlantic Fleet's Arleigh Burke Trophy. His personal awards and decorations include the Meritorious Service Medal, Joint Commendation Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal with three stars, Joint Service Achievement Medal with one OLC, and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with one star.

LCDR Kevin P. R. O'MALLEY

Executive Officer - PCU IOWA



Lieutenant Commander Kevin O'Malley is a native of Elmhurst, Illinois and graduated from the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign in 2009 with a Bachelor of Arts in English Literature and Creative Writing. After commissioning from the Naval Reserve Officer Training Corps and completion of nuclear training, he reported aboard the USS LOUISIANA (SSBN 743). While aboard LOUISIANA, he served as Reactor Control Assistant and Assistant Engineer for five strategic deterrent patrols and the ship earned the Meritorious Unit Commendation.

After completion of a Master of Science in Applied Physics from the Naval Postgraduate School and Submarine Officer's Advanced Course, LCDR O'Malley reported aboard USS MISSOURI (SSN 780) as Engineer Officer. During his tour, MISSOURI completed a European Command deployment and a homeport shift from

Groton, CT to Pearl Harbor, HI. During his time, the ship was awarded a Navy Unit Citation for deployment operations and awarded the first shipyard Battle 'E' Efficiency Award.

LCDR O'Malley then reported to Commander, Submarine Squadron ONE where is served as Squadron Engineer. The tour included service as the Engineer Officer on the USS NORTH CAROLINA (SSN 777).

LCDR O'Malley is married to the former Stephanie Fleshman of Ottawa, Illinois. They live in Groton, CT and are the proud parents of Grace and Clare.

LCDR O'Malley's personal awards include the Navy Commendation Medal with two Gold Stars and the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal with two Gold Stars.

MMACM(SS) Darryl G. Hartley

Chief of the Boat – PCU IOWA



MMACM (SS) Darryl Hartley was born in Oswego, NY and raised in Joliet, Illinois. He graduated from Lincoln-Way High School in 2000 and joined the Navy in February 2002.

MMACM Hartley attended basic training in Great Lakes from February to April of 2002, before reporting to Basic Enlisted Sub School in Groton, CT and then on to Machinist Mate "A" school. He then reported onboard his first fast attack submarine, USS PHILADELPHIA (SSN 690) from February 2003 to March of 2008. There he completed three Mediterranean/ CENTCOM deployments and was advanced to the rating of First Class Petty Officer.

MMACM Hartley then reported to his first shore duty at Naval Submarine Support Facility New London where he was the LPO of the Hydraulic and Pneumatic repair shop 31F.

Upon completion of shore duty, he then reported onboard USS VIRGINIA (SSN 774) from April 2011 to April 2014. He completed a first of class EDSRA in Portsmouth, New Hampshire and EUCOM deployment in 2013. While deployed was advanced to Chief Petty Officer.

MMACM then reported onboard USS HOUSTON (SSN 713) as the Auxiliary Division Leading Chief Petty Officer. There he completed a WESTPAC deployment and was advanced to Senior Chief Petty Officer in 2016. He then shifted homeports to Bremerton, WA where the ship was decommissioned.

His next shore duty was as the Special Operation Forces LCPO at COMSUBRON 1 in Pearl Harbor, HI. There he was an instrumental part of DDS integration of Virginia Class Submarines to the Pacific Theater.

In January 2020, he reported onboard USS ANNAPOLIS (SSN 760) as the Chief of the Boat. He completed a WESTPAC deployment and was advanced to Master Chief in September 2020.

MMACM Hartley's personal awards include the Meritorious Service Medal, Navy and Marine Corps Commendation Medal (three awards), Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (eight awards), and various unit citations.

He is married (Lacy) with two children (Cassidy 13, Brody 12) and lives in Jewett City, CT.