

USS Washington (SSN 787) Commissioning Information



The USS Washington (SSN 787) is the first ship since World War II and the only submarine to be named after the State of Washington.

Although it is expected the USS Washington will be commissioned in Virginia and homeported in Hawaii, the ship represents the State of Washington. As Secretary of the Navy, the Honorable Ray Mabus, said during the USS Washington Naming Ceremony on 7 February 2013: “The men and women who serve on board this submarine represent your state and will be in parts of the world where they will be the only Americans many people will ever see. Your namesake will ply the waters of the globe, giving others the chance to see what the Navy can do and what Washington means to the Navy and the country.”

The commissioning ceremony is one of the most important traditional ceremonial milestones in the life of the ship, for it represents the acceptance of the ship by the United States Navy and her entry into the active fleet. Citizens of the State of Washington and other Americans will have the opportunity to join in the celebration of the WASHINGTON, a national security investment and to support and gain understanding of the United States Navy by attending events and the ceremony itself.

Other milestone ceremonies are the Naming, Keel Laying, Christening and Decommissioning. USS Washington was named in the Naming Ceremony on 7 February 2013 where the Governor of Washington proclaimed: “This is a Navy state, a Navy state by tradition. I want to thank the U.S. Navy and its leadership for being great partners with Washington State.” The Keel Laying occurred 22 November 2014. Her Christening is anticipated in January 2016 and the commissioning will take place sometime in the fall of 2016.

Washington is one of fourteen next-generation attack submarine, the Virginia Class Submarine (<https://quiet-warriors.files.wordpress.com/2014/02/the-virginia-class1.pdf>). It will provide the Navy with the capabilities required to maintain the nation's undersea supremacy well into the 21st century. Their inherent stealth, endurance, firepower, and sensor suite directly enable them to support five of the six maritime strategy core capabilities - sea control, power projection, forward presence, maritime security, and deterrence. SSN 787 will be 7,800-tons and 377 feet in length with a beam of 34 feet. It can operate at more than 25 knots submerged. Her 134-member crew can launch up to 12 Tomahawk land-attack missiles and Mark 48 advanced capability torpedoes.

The United States Navy League is the foremost citizens' organization to serve, support, and stand with all the sea services. It is the perfect organization to the "commissioning community" and organize and provide commissioning events to the residents of the State of Washington, other American citizens and the officers and crew of the USS Washington.

The Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League, a nonprofit 501c(3) organization based in Kitsap County Washington, was founded in 1948. It is one of 9 councils within Washington and over 245 councils nationally within the Navy League of the United States. Two goals of the Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Council of the Navy League are to "educate national leaders and the nation; and support the men and women of the sea services." Its major programs include: Support for one Naval Sea Cadets Corps Unit, and 3 NJROTC High Schools Units. The Bremerton-Olympic Peninsula Navy League has close to 500 members. The Council formed the USS Washington Commissioning Committee shortly after the announcement that SSN 787 would be named the USS Washington.

The USS Washington Commissioning Committee is an all-volunteer committee across the State of Washington and led by the Navy League of the United States, Bremerton-Olympic Council. The committee is comprised of former Navy and Coast Guard personnel, civic leaders and civilians who recognize the value and the need of the sea services. It will help honor Washington's newest namesake ship.

A commissioning is a ceremony placing a ship into active service and is celebrated to honor ship, and the men and women onboard as it begins its history. The ceremony and events that surround it are rooted in centuries old naval tradition.

Needs Statement

History is made when SSN 787 is "brought alive" and placed into the United States Navy's fleet as the USS Washington. Steeped in Naval custom and tradition, numerous events surround the official Commissioning Ceremony. However, the Navy's budget doesn't allow for the fanfare and celebration the ship and her crew should have as it sets out a course for our national security over the next thirty plus years.

Goals and Objectives

The USS Washington Commissioning Committee Objectives:

- Provide a memorable Commissioning Ceremony for the USS WASHINGTON
- Raise awareness within the State about the construction of SSN 787 and her commissioning.
- Promote lasting relationships between the State of Washington and the crew of USS WASHINGTON.
- Finance appropriate events and activities associated with these objectives by supplementing the limited funds provided by the Navy for customary and expected social activities.



USS Washington (SSN 787) Crest



Navy tradition requires that each ship of the United States Navy have its own distinct coat of arms, which reflects both the heritage embodied in the ship's namesake and its future mission objectives. Unique in design for each ship, the crest will represent the ship's identity throughout its service life, and help foster unity and esprit de corps for the crew.

USS Washington's crest blend Washington State icons Mount Rainier, the Seattle skyline, evergreen trees; and silhouettes of the previous two WASHINGTONs. The central image is the submarine, surging forth from the waters of the Puget Sound, emblazoned with a paint scheme reminiscent of Native American art depictions of an orca whale, the state's official marine mammal.

Along the top of the state border, 6 hollow stars represent previous naval vessels named for George Washington and 2 solid gold stars representing the ships named for the state. At the bottom, submarine dolphins, one silver and one gold to represent the enlisted and officer warfare insignia. They sit atop a block of battleship armor plating on which is printed the ship's name and motto, "Preserving Peace, Prepared for War." The motto is derived from a quote from the state's namesake, George Washington, "To be prepared for war is one of the most effective means of preserving peace."

Set behind the state is a ring adorned with the official state tartan, as adopted in 1991 for the state's centennial. The color scheme of the tartan is a green background for the rich forests of "The Evergreen State," with perpendicular bands of contrasting colors symbolic of the features of the state: blue (for the lakes, rivers and ocean), white (for the snow-capped mountains), red (for the apple and cherry crops), yellow (for the wheat and grain crops), and black (for the eruption of Mount St. Helens). At the top center of the tartan ring is the ship's hull number, "SSN 787," split by the silhouette of George Washington.

USS Washington (SSN 787) History

The first six Washingtons were named for George Washington; the seventh and eighth, for Washington state. This history will concentrate on the ships named for the State of Washington

The first Washington named for the State CA-11 (Armored Cruiser No. 11) was laid down on 23 September 1903 at Camden, N.J., by the New York Shipbuilding Co.; launched on 18 March 1905; sponsored by Miss Helen Stewart Wilson, daughter of United States Senator John L. Wilson of Washington state; and commissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on 7 August 1906, Capt. James D. Adams in command.

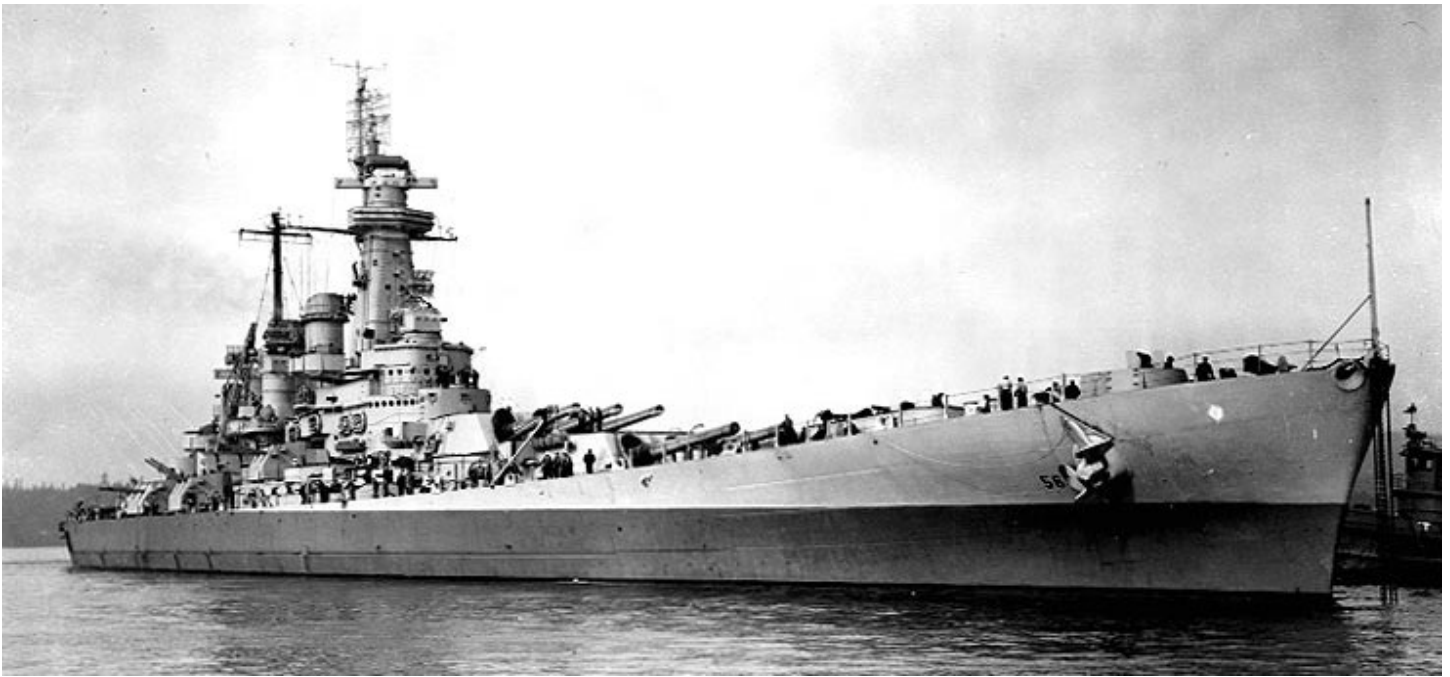
On 9 November 1916, Washington was renamed Seattle (retaining her classification as Armored Cruiser No. 11). She was simultaneously taken out of reserve and recommissioned for duty as flagship of the Destroyer Force. She sailed on 14 June 1917 as an escort for the first American convoy to European waters and as flagship for Rear Admiral Albert Cleaves.



Washington (Armored Cruiser No. 11) at Seattle in 1908, with the Olympic Mountains in the background. Her four tall stacks underscore the emphasis on speed in the design of the armored cruiser, predecessor of the battle cruiser of World War I. (NH 63652)

On 1 July 1931, the ship's designation was changed to "unclassified." As receiving ship, Seattle served as a floating barracks—a "clearance house for personnel"—at New York into the 1940's. She was ultimately placed out of commission and was struck from the Navy list on 19 July of the same year. Sold on 3 December 1946 to Hugo Neu, of New York City, the former flagship of the United States Fleet and receiving ship at New York was subsequently scrapped.

USS Washington (BB-47), a Colorado-class battleship, was the second ship of the United States Navy named in honor of the 42nd state. Her keel was laid down on 30 June 1919 at Camden, New Jersey, by the New York Shipbuilding Corporation. She was launched on 1 September 1921, sponsored by Miss Jean Summers, the daughter of Congressman John W. Summers of Washington State. On 8 February 1922, two days after the signing of the Washington Naval Treaty for the Limitation of Naval Armaments, all construction work ceased on the 75.9% completed super-dreadnought. Ultimately, her incomplete hull was towed out to sea, where she was sunk as a gunnery target on 26 November 1924 by the battleships New York and Texas.



USS Washington (BB-56) was laid down on 14 June 1938 at the Philadelphia Navy Yard; launched on 1 June 1940; sponsored by Miss Virginia Marshall, of Spokane, Wash., a direct descendant of former Chief Justice Marshall; and commissioned at the Philadelphia Navy Yard on 15 May 1941, Capt. Howard H. J. Benson in command.

Washington was assigned operations in the Atlantic fleet with the Home Fleet, patrolling part of the Allied shipping lanes leading to Russian ports. Washington sailed for the Pacific on 23 August 1942, with Rear Admiral Willis A. "Ching" Lee, Jr., embarked as Commander, Battleship Division (BatDiv) 6, and Commander, Task Group 12.2.

On 15 November 1942 Washington engaged the Japanese Battleship Kirishima, in the first head-to-head confrontation of battleships in the Pacific war. USS Washington and USS South Dakota as part of Task Force 64 was defending the invasion of Guadalcanal in what became the Battle of Savo Island. In seven minutes, tracking by radar, Washington sent 75 rounds of 16-inch and 107 rounds of 5-inch at ranges from 8,400 to 12,650 yards, scoring at least nine hits with her main battery and about 40 with her 5-inchers, silencing the enemy battleship in short order. The Japanese had lost the battleship Kirishima. Left burning and exploding, she later had to be abandoned and scuttled.

USS Washington went on to fight in the Battle of the Phillipine Sea, then Washington's heavy guns supported the taking of Peleliu and Angaur in the Palaus. Washington, as a vital unit of the fast carrier striking forces, supported raids on Okinawa, in the Ryukyus; Formosa; Luzon; Camranh Bay, French Indochina; Saigon, French Indochina; Hong Kong; Canton; Hainan Island; Nansei Shoto. Washington's heavy rifles hurled 16-inch shells shoreward in support of the landings on Iwo Jima. Washington lent her support to the shellings of Japanese positions on the island of Okinawa.

Washington (BB-56) earned 13 battle stars during World War II in operations that had carried her from the Arctic to the western Pacific.

After a brief stint as a transport, Washington was placed out of commission, in reserve, on 27 June 1947. Assigned to the New York group of the Atlantic Reserve Fleet, Washington remained inactive through the late 1950's, ultimately being struck from the Navy list on 1 June 1960. The old warrior was sold on 24 May 1961 to the Lipsett Division, Luria Bros., of New York City, and was scrapped soon thereafter.

USS Washington Commissioning Committee

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