

TOPIC 1 HISTORY AND TRADITIONS OF THE CHIEF PETTY OFFICER
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ENABLING OBJECTIVES:

- 1.1 **DESCRIBE** the history of the Chief Petty Officer uniform and rate.
- 1.2 **DESCRIBE** the traditions of the Chief Petty Officer.

ALLOTTED TEACHING TIME:

1.0 hours

STUDENT PREPARATION:

A. Student Support Materials:

- 1. Student Guide, NAVEDTRA 38202A,
(1 per student)

B. Reference Publications: None

INSTRUCTOR PREPARATION:

A. Review related student material.

B. Reference Publications: None

C. Supplemental References:

These readings are suggested as additional sources of information. Although not required, you are encouraged to review these readings to broaden your perspective of the lesson.

- 1. Bearden, Bill. The Blue Jackets Manual, Twenty-first Edition. Naval Institute Press. Annapolis, Maryland. 1990.
- 2. Hagan, John. *Core Values and Naval Heritage, Intertwined and Inseparable*. Direct Line (Special Edition), Vol 16, No.3. May-June 1996.

TOPIC 1
HISTORY AND TRADITIONS OF THE CHIEF PETTY OFFICER

D. Training Materials Required:

1. From Student Guide:

- a. TS 1 History and Traditions of the Chief Petty Officer
- b. OS 1-1 History and Traditions of the Chief Petty Officer
- c. IS 1-2 History of the Chief Petty Officer Grade
- d. IS 1-3 The Fouled Anchor
- e. IS 1-4 History of the CPO Charge Book
- f. IS 1-5 History of the Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy

2. Transparencies:

- a. TP 1-1 History And Traditions of the Chief Petty Officer
- b. TP 1-2 Enabling Objectives

- c. TP 1-3 CPO History and Traditions
- d. TP 1-4 Why Study History?
- e. TP 1-5 Pre-Revolutionary War to End of Civil War
- f. TP 1-6 Civil War – World War I
- g. TP 1-7 End of World War I – World War II
- h. TP 1-8 After World War II – Present Day

3. Video Tapes: None

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

1. Introduction

In this lesson, we will discuss the history of the Chief Petty Officer and the traditions that over the years have set the rank of Chief Petty Officer in the United States Navy apart from the pay grade of E-7 in other branches of military service.

2. Why study history

This topic is important to you as a new Chief, because you now have the distinct responsibility of knowing and passing along this significant information.

History and traditions exert a profound influence upon human behavior. The effect is particularly marked in professional organizations such as the military which - because of imposed discipline - lends itself to passing on and perpetuating venerated customs, heroic traditions, and dignified ceremonies.

U.S. Naval history is a continuum of success, and its customs, traditions, and memory of past heroes help today's Sailor identify with the Navy's Core Values. Traditions bind us to the past and, at the same time, lend an air of dignity and respect to the modern Navy.

1. **Display** TP-1, History and Traditions of the Chief Petty Officer.

Display TP-2, Enabling Objectives.

Refer to OS 1-1, History and Traditions of the Chief Petty Officer.

Display TP 1-3, CPO History and Traditions.

2. **Display** TP 1-4, Why Study History?

Question: Why are we discussing CPO history?

CPOs are responsible for knowing and passing along this information

History and traditions influence behavior

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

3. Pre-revolutionary War to end of Civil War

a. First use of the term “Chief”

The earliest example of the use of “Chief” was on the Continental Navy warship “Alfred” when Jacob Wasbie, a Cook’s Mate, was promoted to “Chief Cook” on June 1, 1776.

b. “Chief Petty Officer” means “Primary Petty Officer”

Before 1865, there were two classes of Petty Officers: Petty Officers of the Line, and Petty Officers of the Staff. The Master at Arms title of Chief Petty Officer was one of function not rank with emphasis of the word “Chief” or primary. This is stated in the Navy Regulations from that time frame.

3. **Display** TP 1-5, Pre-Revolutionary War to End of Civil War.

Refer to IS 1-2, History of Chief Petty Officer Grade

Direct the students to IS 1-2 and tell them to read as homework.

a. **Question:** When was the term “Chief” first used?

In 1776, Jacob Wasbie, a Cook’s Mate, was promoted to “Chief Cook.”

b. **Question:** Prior to 1865, was the title of Chief Petty Officer one of function or of rank? Why?

Function, because the Master at Arms was considered the primary Petty Officer by virtue of job description

The Master-at-Arms will be the Chief Petty Officer of the ship in which he shall serve. All orders from him in regard to the police of the vessel, the preservation of order, and obedience to regulations must be obeyed by all Petty Officers and others of the crew. But he shall have no right to succession in command, and shall exercise no authority in matters not specified above.

c. Special set of values

It is evident that even in the earliest reference of the use of the term “Chief Petty Officer” that a heightened sense of responsibility and trust was expected of the individuals who held the title. So it is easy to see that they had earned this trust by their sense of good values and demonstration of sound leadership.

c. **Question:** What distinction is made between the early use of the term “Chief Petty Officer” and leadership ability?

Evidence of sound leadership and a sense of good values based on the trust and responsibility of the position.

4. Civil War through World War I

a. Division into rates

In 1885 the dividing of enlisted men into rates from Seaman to First Class Petty Officer occurred. When looking at Navy Regulations Circular No. 41 (Table 1-1), you will see that the Petty Officer First Class category carried Chief Boatswains Mates, Chief Gunners Mates, and Chief Quartermasters. However, these were titles associated with assignment of duties not separate pay grades.

4. **Display** TP 1-6, Civil War – World War I.

Question: When did the Navy divide job descriptions into rates?

1885

a. **Question:** Were the rates mentioned in the Navy Regulations of 1885 as “Chiefs” actually Chief Petty Officers?

No, they were first Class Petty Officers. Their titles were associated with assignment of duties, not a separate pay grade.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

b. Establishment of Chief Petty Officer grade

It wasn't until 1893 that the Navy established the pay grade of Chief Petty Officer. Refer to U.S. Navy Circular No. 1 (Table 1-2) and General Order No. 409 (Table 1-3).

c. Development of rating badges and the Fouled Anchor

Originally the Master-at-Arms rating badge had three chevrons, an eagle and three arcs (rockers). It was the basis for today's CPO chevron which has a single rocker and became official in 1894.

The Fouled Anchor was first used as a cap device with the Chief Petty Officer uniform in 1905.

b. **Question:** When was the CPO grade established?

1893

Question: Who was the first Chief Petty Officer?

There was no one person who is known as the first Chief Petty Officer.

Nearly all Sailors carrying the rating of Petty Officer First Class in 1893 were automatically shifted to the CPO level.

c. **Refer** to IS 1-3, The Fouled Anchor

Direct the students to read IS 1-3 (approximately 5 minutes).

Question: How was the Fouled Anchor first used with the Chief Petty Officer's uniform?

In 1905 the Fouled Anchor was used as a CPO cap device.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

d. The first women Chief Petty Officers

Later during World War I the Secretary of the Navy authorized the enlistment of women in the Navy. They were given the designation, “Yeoman (F)” and came to be called, Yeomanettes.

Loretta Perfectus Walsh may be the first Yeoman (F). She was sworn in on 21 March 1917 as a Chief Yeoman.

e. First woman’s uniform

The first enlisted woman’s uniform was comprised of a single breasted coat, blue in winter and white in summer, long gull bottomed skirts and a straight-brimmed Sailor hat, blue felt in winter and white straw.

f. The first CPOs awarded the Medal of Honor

The Navy and Marine Corps’ Medal of Honor is our country’s oldest and continuously awarded decoration. From the beginning, CPOs exemplified the values and true dedication to duty that characterizes the Chief Petty Officer today.

d. **Question:** Who may be considered the first female Chief?

Chief Yeoman Loretta P. Walsh

f. **Discussion:** Although the Navy’s Core Values will be discussed in depth in a later topic of this course, **discuss** how reflecting on the Medal of Honor awards of past CPOs can help us understand the Navy’s Core Values.

(answers will vary)

A few of our past heroes are:

- 1) Chief Boatswain’s Mate John McCloy was awarded the Medal of Honor (2nd award) on 4 December 1915 for heroism in leading three picket launches along the Vera Cruz sea front to draw away enemy fire allowing the rescue of men on the shore.
- 2) Chief McCloy’s first Medal of Honor award was earned when he was a Coxswain during the relief expedition of the Allied forces in China in June 1900.
- 3) Chief Watertender Eugene P. Smith was awarded the Medal of Honor on 8 February 1916 while onboard the USS Decatur for repeatedly entering damaged compartments after an explosion onboard, locating and rescuing injured shipmates.

5. The end of World War I through World War II

a. Division into pay grades

Formal structuring of the pay grades occurred in 1920. Instead of being paid by job description the grades were established by rank from Seaman Apprentice to Chief Petty Officer.

5. **Display** TP 1-7, End of World War I – World War II.

a. **Question:** What was the impact of restructuring paygrades in 1920?

Instead of being paid by job description the grades were established by rank from Seaman Apprentice to Chief Petty Officer.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

b. CPO berthing and messes

It is due to the unique position CPOs fill that it became a necessity for them to have separate berthing and messing. Not only is it a new privilege that goes with seniority and advancement but it also allows the crew to see us in our new role in the leadership and structure of the command.

c. The reason for Charge Books

During WW II, COs were authorized to advance and promote deserving and qualified Sailors to CPO. Chiefs began to direct First Class Petty Officers to prepare themselves by recording information passed down by the Chiefs to PO1s about additional responsibilities, technical aspects of various ratings, leadership, accountability, and support of the chain of command. This form of professional development was the original "Charge Book."

b. **Question:** Why do you think the Navy felt it was necessary for CPOs to have separate messing and berthing?

Due to their unique leadership position

Allows the crew to see them in their new role in the leadership and structure of the command

c. **Refer** to IS 1-4, History of the CPO Charge Book

Direct students to read IS 1-4 (approximately 5 minutes)

Question: Where did the use of the Charge Book originate?

WWII, used to help determine deserving and qualified first class Petty Officers for promotion to Chief

d. CPOs carrying on a strong sense of values

Again during the WWII era, we see our fellow Chiefs carrying on their extreme sense of responsibility and demonstrating courage in the face of danger by laying down their lives for their shipmates.

- 1) Chief Watertender Oscar Verner Peterson was awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary courage and conspicuous heroism above and beyond the call of duty while in charge of a repair party during an attack on the USS Neosho by enemy Japanese aerial forces on 7 May 1942. Lacking assistance because of injuries to the other members of his repair party and severely wounded himself, Peterson, with no concern for his own life, closed the bulkhead stop valves and in doing so received additional burns which resulted in his death.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

2) Chief Watertender Peter Tomich was awarded the Medal of Honor for extraordinary courage and disregard of his own safety, during the attack on the Fleet in Pearl Harbor by the Japanese forces on 7 December 1941. Although realizing that the ship was capsizing, as a result of enemy bombing and torpedoing, Tomich remained at his post in the engineering plant of the USS Utah, until he saw that all boilers were secured and all fire room personnel had left their stations, and by so doing lost his own life.

6. After World War II to Present Day

a. Senior Chief and Master Chief Petty Officers

The pay grades of E-8 and E-9, Senior Chief and Master Chief Petty Officer, were created in 1958. Selected Chief Petty Officers were promoted to Senior Chief and Master Chief.

b. Fouled Anchor as a Collar Device

In 1959 the Fouled Anchor as a collar device become an official part of the CPO uniform.

6. **Display** TP 1-7, After of World War II – Present Day

a. **Question:** How were the first of Senior Chief and Master Chiefs selected?

Service wide examinations in August of 1958.

b. **Question:** In 1959, what uniform items was added to the CPO uniform?

The Fouled Anchor was added as a collar device.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

- c. The First Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

The position of Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy was created in 1967 and Master Chief Gunners Mate Delbert D. Black was selected as the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy.

- d. Caretakers

Chief Petty Officers are the caretakers of our history and traditions. History and traditions play a major role in how we operate as Chiefs today. You should have an understanding of their origin and strive to live up to the proud traditions of service in the U.S. Navy.

- e. How History and Traditions formed today's Core Values

It is easy to see through the time honored history and traditions of the Chief Petty Officer how Chief Petty Officers have shaped today's Navy. They have done this through their Honor, Courage, and Commitment.

- c. **Question:** Who was the first MCPON and when was he selected?

GMCM Delbert D. Black was selected in 1967.

DISCUSSION POINT

RELATED INSTRUCTOR ACTIVITY

Through the demonstration of Honor, Courage, and Commitment of past CPOs, the Navy's Core Values have influenced the behavior of Sailors today.

7. Summary

Question: What impact has Naval history and traditions had on today's Navy Core Values?

Through the demonstration of Honor, Courage, and Commitment of past CPOs, the Navy's Core Values have influenced the behavior of Sailors today.

Question: What is our responsibility as CPOs in regards to history and traditions?

To have a good understanding of them, pass them on untarnished from generation to generation and use them as a basis to help instill a true sense of the Navy's Core Values in each other, our subordinates, and seniors

7. Summary

Importance of studying CPO history

Major milestones in the history of the CPO

CPOs as caretakers