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maintain the Navy's readiness and, through helicopters, supply platforms with which to conduct search and rescue, special operations, anti-submarine warfare (ASW), and anti-air warfare, including the U.S. Navy's premier Maritime Strike and only organic ASW aircraft, the venerable Sikorsky MH-60R operated by Helicopter Maritime Strike Wing.The U.S. Navy began to reex, thn the use of aircraft at sea in the 1910s, with Lieutenant Theodore G. "Spuds" Ellyson becoming the first naval aviator on 28 January 1911, and commissioned its first aircraft carrier, USSLangley(CV-1), in 1922.[102] United States naval aviation fully came of age in World War II, when it became clear following the attack on Pearl Harbor, the Battle of the Coral Sea, and the Battle of Midway that aircraft carriers and the planes that they carried had replaced the battleship as the greatest weapon on the seas. Leading navy aircraft in World War II included the Grumman F4F Wildcat, the Grumman F6F Hellcat, the Chance Vought F4U Corsair, the Douglas SBD Dauntless, and the Grumman TBF Avenger. Navy aircraft also played a significant role in conflicts during the following Cold War years, with the F-4 Phantom II and the F-14 Tomcat becoming military icons of the era. The navy's current primary fighter-attack airplane is the multi-mission F/A-18E/F Super Hornet. The F-35C entered service in 2019. [103] The Navy is also looking to eventually replace its F/A-18E/F Super Hornets with the F/A-XX program.The Aircraft Investment Plan sees naval aviation growing from 30 percent of current aviation forces to half of all procurement funding over the next three decades.[104]Main article: List of United States Navy weaponsAviation Ordnancemen loading GBU-12 bombs in 2005Current U.S. Navy shipboard weapons systems are almost entirely focused on missiles, both as a weapon and as a threat. In an offensive role, missiles are intended to strike targets at long distances with accuracy and precision. Because they are unmanned weapons, missiles allow for attacks on heavily defended targets without risk to human pilots. Land strikes are the domain of the BGM-109 Tomahawk, which was first deployed in the 1980s and is continually being updated to increase its capabilities. For anti-ship strikes, the navy's dedicated missile is the Harpoon Missile. To defend against enemy missile attack, the navy operates a number of systems that are all coordinated by the Aegis combat system. Medium-long range defense is provided by the Standard Missile 2, which has been deployed since the 1980s. The Standard missile doubles as the primary shipboard anti-aircraft weapon and is undergoing development for use in theater ballistic missile defense. Short range defense against missiles is provided by the Phalanx CIWS and the more recently developed AIM-162 Evolved Sea Sparrow Missile. In addition, the navy employs Mark 46, Mark 48, and Mark 50 torpedoes and various types of naval mines.Naval fixed-wing aircraft employ much of the same weapons as the United States Air Force for both air-to-air and air-to-surface combat. Air engagements are handled by the heat-seeking Sidewinder and the radar guided AMRAAM missiles along with the M61 Vulcan cannon for close range dogfighting. For surface strikes, navy aircraft use a combination of missiles, smart bombs, and dumb bombs. On the list of available missiles are the Maverick, SLAM-ER and JSOW. Smart bombs include the GPS-guided JDAM and the laser-guided Paveway series. Unguided munitions such as dumb bombs and cluster bombs make up the rest of the weapons deployed by fixed-wing aircraft.Rotary aircraft weapons are focused on anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and light to medium surface engagements. To combat submarines, helicopters use Mark 46 and Mark 50 torpedoes. Against small watercraft, they use Hellfire and Penguin air to surface missiles. Helicopters also employ various types of mounted anti-personnel machine guns, including the M60, M240, GAU-16/A, and GAU-17/A.Nuclear weapons in the U.S. Navy arsenal are deployed through ballistic missile submarines and aircraft. The Ohio-class submarine carries the latest iteration of the Trident missile, a three-stage, submarine-launched ballistic missile (SLBM) with MIRV capability; the current Trident II (D5) version is expected to be in service past 2020.[105] The navy's other nuclear weapon is the air-deployed B61 nuclear bomb. The B61 is a thermonuclear device that can be dropped by strike aircraft such as the F/A-18 Hornet and Super Hornet at high speed from a large range of altitudes. It can be released through free-fall or parachute and can be set to detonate in the air or on the ground.U.S. naval jackFirst navy jackThe current naval jack of the United States is the Union Jack, a small blue flag emblazoned with the stars of the 50 states. The Union Jack was not flown for the duration of the War on Terror, during which Secretary of the Navy Gordon R. England directed all U.S. naval ships to fly the First Navy Jack. While Secretary England directed the change on 31 May 2002, many ships chose to shift colors later that year in remembrance of the first anniversary of the September 11, 2001 attacks. The Union Jack, however, remained in use with vessels of the U.S. Coast Guard and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. A jack of similar design to the Union Jack was used in 1794, with 13 stars arranged in a 3223 pattern. When a ship is moored or anchored, the jack is flown from the bow of the ship while the ensign is flown from the stern. When underway, the ensign is raised on the mainmast. Before the decision for all ships to fly the First Navy Jack, it was flown only on the oldest ship in the active American fleet, which is currently USSBlue Ridge. U.S. Navy ships and craft returned to flying the Union Jack effective 4 June 2019. The date for reintroduction of the jack commemorates the Battle of Midway, which began on 4 June 1942.[106]For a more comprehensive list, see List of United States Navy people.Many past and present United States historical figures have served in the U.S. Navy.Notable officers include:John P. JonesJohn Barry (Continental Navy officer and first flag officer of the United States Navy).[107]Edward PrebleJames Lawrence (whose last words "don't give up the ship" are memorialized in Bancroft Hall at the United States Naval Academy)[108]Stephen Decatur Jr., David Farragut, David D. Porter, Oliver H. Perry,Commodore Matthew C. Perry (who, under the direction of President Millard Fillmore, forced the opening of Japan)[109]George Dewey (the only person in U.S. history to have attained the rank of Admiral of the Navy)[110]William D. Leahy[111]Ernest J. King[111]Chester W. Nimitz[111]William F. Halsey Jr.[111]The first American President who served in the U.S. Navy was John F. Kennedy (who commanded the famous PT-109 in World War II); he was then followed by Lyndon B. Johnson, Richard Nixon, Gerald Ford, Jimmy Carter, and George H. W. Bush. Some notable former members of the Navy include U.S. Senators, Bob Kerrey, John McCain, and John Kerry, along with Ron DeSantis, Governor of Florida, and Jesse Ventura, Governor of Minnesota.Notable former members of the U.S. Navy include; astronauts (Alan B. Shepard, Walter M. Schirra, Neil Armstrong, John Young, Michael J. Smith, Scott Kelly), entertainers (Johnny Carson, Mike Douglas, Paul Newman, Robert Stack, Humphrey Bogart, Tony Curtis, Jack Lemmon, Jack Benny, Don Rickles, Ernest Borgnine, Harry Belafonte, Henry Fonda, Fred Gwynne), authors (Robert Heinlein, Marcus Luttrell, Thomas Pynchon, Brandon Webb), musicians, (John Philip Sousa, MC Hammer, John Coltrane, Zach Bryan, Fred Durst), professional athletes (David Robinson, Bill Sharman, Roger Staubach, Joe Belloino, Bob Kuberski, Nile Kinnick, Bob Feller, Yogi Berra, Larry Doby, Stan Musial, Pee Wee Reese, Phil Rizzuto, Jack Taylor), business people (John S. Barry, Jack C. Taylor, Paul A. Sperry), and computer scientists (Grace Hopper),During World War I the first U.S. government post offices were established aboard Navy ships, managed by a Navy postal clerk. Prior to this, mail from crew members was collected and at the first opportunity was dropped off at a port of call where it was processed at a US Post Office. Before the arrival of email and the internet, hand stamped mail was the only way Navy crew members at sea could communicate with their family, friends and others. Mail was considered almost as valuable to crew members as food and ammunition.[112] Sometimes mail from various crew members (referred to by historians and collectors as postal history), is directly associated with naval history.[113] Letters and other correspondence sent by commanders, officers and crew members can include names, ranks, signatures, addresses, and ship's postmarks which can often confirm dates and locations of naval ships and crew members during various battles or other naval operations. As such, naval mail can serve as a source of information to naval historians and biographers. Among the more notable examples of Naval postal history include letters sent from the USS Arizona, before and on 7 December 1941.[114][115][116]Cover mailed from USS Arizona, 10 October, 1941, 30 days before the attack on Pearl Harbor Cover mailed from USS Oklahoma, signed by Admiral John Wainwright, US Navy, postmarked 5 March 1932There is a US naval post office aboard nearly every US Navy ship, each with its own postal officer and postmark bearing the ship's name.United States portalBibliography of early United States naval historyList of undesignated military aircraft of the United StatesList of United States aircraft designations (pre-1962)List of United States Navy shipsLists of military aircraft of the United StatesModern United States Navy carrier air operationsNaval militiaSpearhead-class expeditionary fast transportWomen in the United States Navy^ "Establishment of the Navy, 13 October 1775". Naval History and Heritage Command. Archived from the original on 26 April 2017. 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