



RHUMB LINES

Straight Lines to Navigate By



November 4, 2010

The Centennial of Naval Aviation

"Naval aviation has evolved over the past 100 years to become a centerpiece combat force that is uniquely suited to conduct expeditionary operations and lethal, sea-based power projection. The Centennial allows us to take stock of Naval Aviation's contributions, honor thousands of brave aviators and their supporting aircrews who paved the way, and look ahead to a bright and exciting future."

– **RADM R. J. O'Hanlon, Commander, Naval Air Force Atlantic**

During its first century, naval aviation has grown from a minor tactical capability to a primary instrument of national security. The Centennial commemoration will honor the [proud legacy](#) and recognize the ongoing contributions of naval aviation to America's security and prosperity.

Commemoration

- [The Centennial of Naval Aviation](#) (CoNA) will be commemorated through air shows, flyovers, festivals, open houses and other [events](#) at the national, regional and local level. It will officially kick off at NAS North Island Feb. 9-12, 2011, and conclude at a gala event in Washington, D.C., Dec. 3, 2011.
- Commander, Naval Air Forces is the executive agent for events associated with the 100th anniversary and has established a CoNA Task Force to synchronize activities throughout 2011.

History of Naval Aviation

- The invention of flight revolutionized the way wars were fought and allowed for naval engagement at great distances from surface ships or submarines.
- Capt. Washington Irving Chambers, Officer in Charge of Aviation, requisitioned the Navy's first aircraft on May 8, 1911. This date is marked as the anniversary of naval aviation.
- Naval aviation has been a leader in innovation and heroism for one hundred years and has an impressive list of achievements in peace and war: the first crossing of the Atlantic by air, victory at the [Battle of Midway](#), the first life rescued by helicopter at sea, and the first American in space.

Naval Aviation Today

- Naval aviation – its [carriers](#) and [air wings](#); and [helicopter](#), [maritime patrol](#), and [TACAMO](#) expeditionary squadrons– plays a prominent role in conducting every core capability of the Maritime Strategy.
- The flexibility and forward presence of naval aviation are unique strengths of our Navy and are essential to ensuring the security, prosperity and vital interests of the United States and its allies.

Key Messages

- The 100th Anniversary of Naval Aviation is an extraordinary milestone that gives the sea services opportunity to commemorate the unique contributions naval aviation has made to our national security.
- Naval aviation has been at the cutting edge of aerospace expeditions, from the first successful crossing of the Atlantic by an aircraft, to exploration of the Arctic and Antarctic, to journeys of discovery into space.
- Honoring naval aviation's 100th year of flight underscores our commitment to sustaining a Navy, Marine Corps and Coast Guard responsive to the challenges of the 21st century.
- For more information on CoNA visit www.navy.mil/flynavy.

Facts & Figures

- Nov. 14, 1910: Eugene Ely pilots the first flight to take off from a ship, USS Birmingham (CL 2), and lands safely on Willoughby Spit in Norfolk, Va.
- Jan. 26, 1911: Glenn H. Curtiss makes the first successful hydroaeroplane flight in San Diego, demonstrating the application of the airplane to naval purposes.
- Mar. 20, 1922: U.S. Navy commissions its first aircraft carrier, USS Langley (CV 1). Today, 11 carriers and 10 carrier air wings proudly operate worldwide.
- Every Navy Week in 2011 will have the Centennial of Naval Aviation as its theme. Thirty-two 'Tier-1' events around the nation will celebrate the centennial, along with hundreds of local events.