

Construction Begins on Bath Iron Works' First Flight III Arleigh Burke Destroyer

BATH, Maine – Construction of the future USS Louis H. Wilson Jr. (DDG 126) officially began at General Dynamics Bath Iron Works (BIW) shipyard on March 3. The milestone was marked by a ceremony at BIW's structural fabrication facility in Brunswick, Maine, the Program Executive Office (PEO)-Ships said in a release.

DDG 126 will be the first Arleigh Burke-class destroyer built in the Flight III configuration at BIW. Flight III destroyers will have improved capability and capacity to perform anti-air warfare and ballistic missile defense in support of the integrated air and missile defense mission.

This system delivers quick reaction time, high firepower, and increased electronic countermeasures capability for anti-air warfare.

The ship will honor Marine Corps Gen. Louis Hugh Wilson Jr., who was awarded the Medal of Honor for his leadership and daring combat tactics in the Battle of Guam in 1944. During a prolonged firefight with Japanese forces, Wilson led Marines under his command across rugged terrain to secure a strategic objective. Despite being wounded three times, Wilson and his men defended their position for more than 10 hours of combat. The following day, Wilson led a 17-man patrol to capture, secure, and hold a second position.

"This is a tremendous occasion as we mark the start of construction on BIW's first Flight III Arleigh Burke-class destroyer." said Capt. Seth Miller, DDG 51 class program manager, PEO-Ships.

“General Wilson embodied the spirit of our nation in his will to protect his fellow Marines and countrymen. What better way to honor him than to build a highly capable warship that advances our Navy’s ability to protect and defend our nation.”

BIW also is in production on the future Arleigh Burke-class destroyers Daniel Inouye (DDG 118), Carl M. Levin (DDG 120), John Basilone (DDG 122), Harvey C. Barnum Jr. (DDG 124) and Patrick Gallagher (DDG 127) as well as the Zumwalt-class destroyer Lyndon B. Johnson (DDG 1002).