Construction Starts on Future USS Nantucket



Sponsor Polly Spencer’s name is engraved in a plaque for the keel laying of the future USS Nantucket on Oct. 9 at Fincantieri Marinette Marine.

MARINETTE, Wis. – Lockheed Martin and Fincantieri Marinette Marine marked the start of construction on littoral combat ship (LCS) 27, the future USS Nantucket, with a ceremony here Oct. 9, according to a Lockheed Martin statement.

As part of a ship-building tradition dating back centuries, a shipyard worker welded the initials of Polly Spencer, USS Nantucket’s ship sponsor and wife of Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer, into the ship’s keel plate. This plate will be affixed to the ship and travel with Nantucket throughout its commissioned life.

“The USS Nantucket will confront many complex challenges,” Spencer said. “It will confront humanitarian relief all the way to ‘great power competition,’ drawing on the strength of every weld, every rivet applied by the great people here.”

The focused-mission LCS is designed to support mine countermeasures, anti-submarine and surface warfare missions today and is easily adapted to serve future and evolving missions tomorrow.

About 40% of the hull of a Freedom variant LCS is reconfigurable, able to integrate Longbow Hellfire Missiles, 30 mm guns and manned and unmanned vehicles. LCS is equipped with Rolling Airframe Missiles (RAM) and a Mark 110 gun, capable of firing 220 rounds per minute. An LCS also is capable of speeds in excess of 40 knots.

“LCS can serve a multitude of missions to include surface, anti-submarine and mine countermeasure missions by quickly integrating mission equipment and deploying manned and unmanned aerial, surface or sub-surface vehicles,” said Joe DePietro, vice president and general manager of small combatants and ship systems for Lockheed Martin.

LCS 27 is the first U.S. Navy ship to be named after Nantucket, Massachusetts, in more than 150 years. Nantucket has a deep connection to sailing and maritime traditions, serving as a whaling hub in the 1800s and as the home of generations of American Sailors since the town’s beginning. The previous USS Nantucket, the first to be named after the island, was commissioned in 1862 to serve during the Civil War.

“I have been given a very special honor in being the sponsor of the future USS Nantucket. I am happy she is being built here in Marinette, Wisconsin, which has an impressive history of shipbuilding,” said Polly Spencer, LCS 27 sponsor. “Thank you to all the talented people who are bringing this ship to life. … It is going to be an amazing journey that I am thrilled to be on.”

LCS 27 will be the 14th Freedom-variant LCS and will join a class of more than 30 ships. It is one of six ships in various stages of construction and test at the Fincantieri Marinette Marine shipyard.

“We are very excited to begin construction of the future USS Nantucket,” said Jan Allman, chief executive officer of Fincantieri Marinette Marine. “Our men and women are proud to put their efforts into giving the Navy versatile ships to keep our country and its interests safe.”