Navy to Commission Littoral Combat Ship Indianapolis



The future USS Indianapolis sails Lake Michigan toward Naval Station Great Lakes for a sail-by and salute. The Navy will commission the littoral combat ship on Oct. 26 in Burns Harbor, Indiana. U.S. Navy/Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Camilo Fernan

ARLINGTON, Va. – The U.S. Navy will commission its newest Freedom-variant littoral combat ship, USS Indianapolis, during a 10 a.m. CDT ceremony on Oct. 26 in Burns Harbor, Indiana, the Defense Department said in a release.

The future USS Indianapolis, designated LCS 17, honors Indiana's state capital and largest city. It will be the fourth ship to bear the name.

Lisa W. Hershman will deliver the commissioning ceremony's principal address. Jill Donnelly, wife of former U.S. Sen. Joe Donnelly of Indiana, is the ship's sponsor. She will continue the time-honored Navy tradition of giving the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life!"

"This Freedom-variant littoral combat ship will continue the proud legacy created by ships previously bearing the name Indianapolis," Navy Secretary Richard V. Spencer said. "The crew will carry on the tradition of service to confront the many challenges of today's complex world. To the men and women who will ring in the first watch, you carry with you the fighting spirit of incredible bravery and sense of duty that is inherently recognized with the name Indianapolis."

The most recent Indianapolis was a Los Angeles-class fast-attack submarine, which was commissioned in 1980 and served through the end of the Cold War before being decommissioned in 1998. The first Indianapolis was a steamer built for the U.S.

Shipping Board (USSB) and commissioned directly into the Navy in 1918. After two runs to Europe, the ship was returned to the USSB following World War I.

It is the second Indianapolis, a Portland-class heavy cruiser, that is perhaps the best known of the three. Commissioned in 1931, its service ended when the ship was sunk by a Japanese torpedo minutes after midnight on July 30, 1945. Only 317 of the ship's 1,196 Sailors survived after five days afloat in the Pacific.

But it was the ship's impressive war record that first brought it to the attention of Navy leaders and Americans. The ship saw action in the Aleutians, the Gilbert Islands, Saipan, the Battle of the Philippine Sea, Iwo Jima and Okinawa. In addition to frequently serving as the flagship of the U.S. 5th Fleet, the ship earned 10 battle stars for World War II service. Before it was sunk, Indianapolis successfully completed the top-secret mission to deliver components of the nuclear bomb "Little Boy" to Tinian that ushered in the end of WWII with the use of the bomb at Hiroshima.

The future USS Indianapolis, a Freedom-variant LCS, is a fast, agile, focused-mission platform designed for operation in near-shore environments as well as open-ocean operation. It is designed to defeat asymmetric "anti-access" threats such as mines, quiet diesel submarines and fast surface craft.

LCS is a modular, reconfigurable ship designed to meet validated fleet requirements for surface warfare (SUW), anti-submarine warfare (ASW) and mine countermeasures (MCM) missions in the littoral region.

The LCS class consists of two variants, the Freedom variant and the Independence variant, designed and built by two industry teams. The Freedom variant team is led by Lockheed Martin (for the odd-numbered hulls). The Independence variant team is led by Austal USA (for LCS 6 and the subsequent even-

numbered hulls).