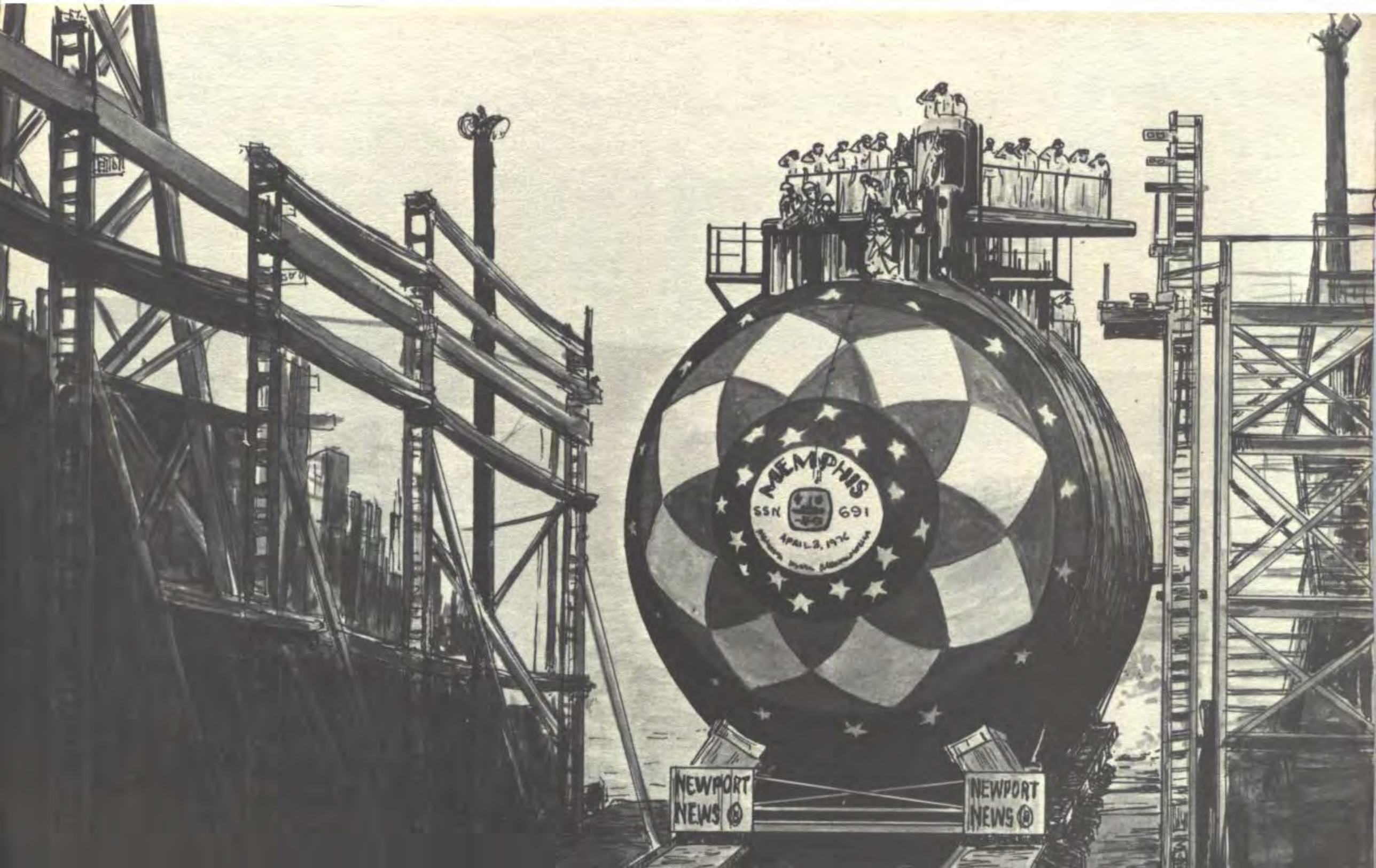
LAUNCHING OF THE NUCLEAR-POWERED ATTACK SUBMARINE (SSN 691)

Memphis

MEMPHIS
SHELBY COUNTY
TENNESSEE

APRIL 3, 1976 · Newport News Shipbuilding

TENNECO


MEMPHIS
SSN 691
APRIL 3, 1976
NEWPORT NEWS
NEWPORT NEWS

PROGRAM

NATIONAL ANTHEM
Commander-in-Chief
United States Atlantic Fleet Band

INVOCATION
The Reverend Cotesworth Pinckney Lewis
Rector, Bruton Parish Church
Williamsburg, Virginia

WELCOMING REMARKS
John P. Diesel
President and Chief Executive Officer
Newport News Shipbuilding

INTRODUCTION OF PRINCIPAL SPEAKER
The Honorable Jack L. Bowers
Assistant Secretary of the Navy
(Installation and Logistics)

ADDRESS
The Honorable Robin L. Beard Jr.
United States House of Representatives
Sixth District, Tennessee

INTRODUCTION OF THE SPONSOR
AND THE MATRON OF HONOR
Admiral H. G. Rickover, USN
Director, Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program

CHRISTENING OF THE U.S.S. MEMPHIS

Mrs. Robin L. Beard Jr.
Sponsor

Mrs. John Rieniets
Matron of Honor

Mrs. Cathy Beard

Sponsor

A native of Cedar Rapids, Iowa, Mrs. Cathy Beard is the daughter of the late Dr. John H. Rieniets and Mrs. Martha Rieniets.

Mrs. Beard is a graduate of Washington High School in Cedar Rapids, and attended Iowa State and Iowa Universities and Peabody College in Nashville. She interrupted her studies in 1963 to marry Robin L. Beard Jr., who then was serving as an officer in the U. S. Marine Corps.

An accomplished student of the ballet, she studied for more than 20 years under various instructors and has danced with a number of professionals including Luis Montero of the Jose Molina Bailes Espanoles. She taught ballet for two years, only recently giving it up to devote more time to her family and community projects.

The Beards have two children—Robby, 10, and Lisa Paige, 5. They maintain homes in Alexandria, Virginia, and on a 13-acre farm in Franklin, Tennessee.

Mrs. Martha Rieniets, serving her daughter today as Matron of Honor, is a graduate of the University of Iowa. After a career as a teacher and as a technician at the Mayo Clinic, she accompanied her late husband on his tours of duty as a Naval doctor from 1942 to 1946. She assisted Dr. Rieniets in his private medical practice in North Liberty, Iowa, until his death in 1971.

The Honorable Robin L. Beard Jr.

Speaker

"The American people, especially the younger generation, look upon national security as an inherent right," says Congressman Robin L. Beard Jr. of Tennessee. "What they fail to realize is that this right must be preserved and protected through a strong national defense system."

Congressman Beard maintains an abiding commitment to America's defense posture—from the floor of the House of Representatives as well as from his seat on the House Armed Services Committee, one of the most powerful committees in Congress.

Born in Knoxville, Tennessee, on August 21, 1939, Congressman Beard is the son of Dorothy Rochelle Damon and Robin Beard, now both of Nashville. He grew up in the Nashville area, attended Montgomery Bell Academy and received a B. A. degree in history with a minor in political science from Vanderbilt University.

After graduation from Vanderbilt in 1962, he joined the Marine Corps serving as officer in charge of the Gemini IV offshore recovery mission. He completed four years of active duty and serves today as a major in the Marine Corps Reserve.

The Congressman's service to the people of Tennessee began in 1970, when he was named State Personnel Commissioner by Governor Winfield Dunn.

He launched his own political career in 1972, campaigning for and winning a seat in the U. S. House of Representatives, representing the people of Tennessee's Sixth Congressional District. The district includes 32 precincts in the City of Memphis.

Despite a Democratic landslide in the 1974 congressional election, Sixth District voters returned Congressman Beard to a second term in the House of Representatives by an 18,000-vote margin.

As a member of the House Armed Services Committee, its Investigations Subcommittee and of the House Post Office and Civil Service Committee, Congressman Beard has been an outspoken proponent of a strong national defense, a defender of a free economy, and a harsh critic of increasing federal interference in private enterprise and local government. He has also distinguished himself through his efforts on behalf of anti-busing legislation, fiscal responsibility in government and Occupational Safety and Health Act reform.

The LOS ANGELES Class

Christening of the *Memphis* by Mrs. Robin L. Beard Jr., wife of the U. S. Representative from Tennessee, is a significant milestone in the construction program for the newest class of nuclear-powered attack submarines.

Memphis is the third ship of the *Los Angeles* Class to be launched by Newport News Shipbuilding, the lead yard in design and construction of the class.

The keel for the *Memphis* was laid on June 23, 1973.

The *Los Angeles* Class will have higher speed capability than its predecessors. It also will have the most advanced anti-submarine warfare capabilities. Underwater stealth, together with powerful weapon systems and sensors, will make ships of this class a deadly force against enemy submarines and surface ships.

Approval to proceed with this important new class of high-speed submarines resulted from investigations of the U. S. Submarine Program conducted eight years ago by the House and Senate Armed Services and Appropriations Committees and the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy. Congress accepted the recommendations of these committees that funds for procurement of long lead items for the SSN 688 be added to the budget for the 1969 shipbuilding program, and also added funds for submarines of this class to the 1970, 1971 and 1972 shipbuilding programs, in addition to the funds proposed by the Department of Defense.

Keels for 11 ships of the class have been laid to date, of a total 28 ships authorized through Fiscal Year 1976.

The Los Angeles, *lead ship of the SSN 688 Class nuclear attack submarine, was launched at Newport News Shipbuilding on April 6, 1974.*

Ships of the Class

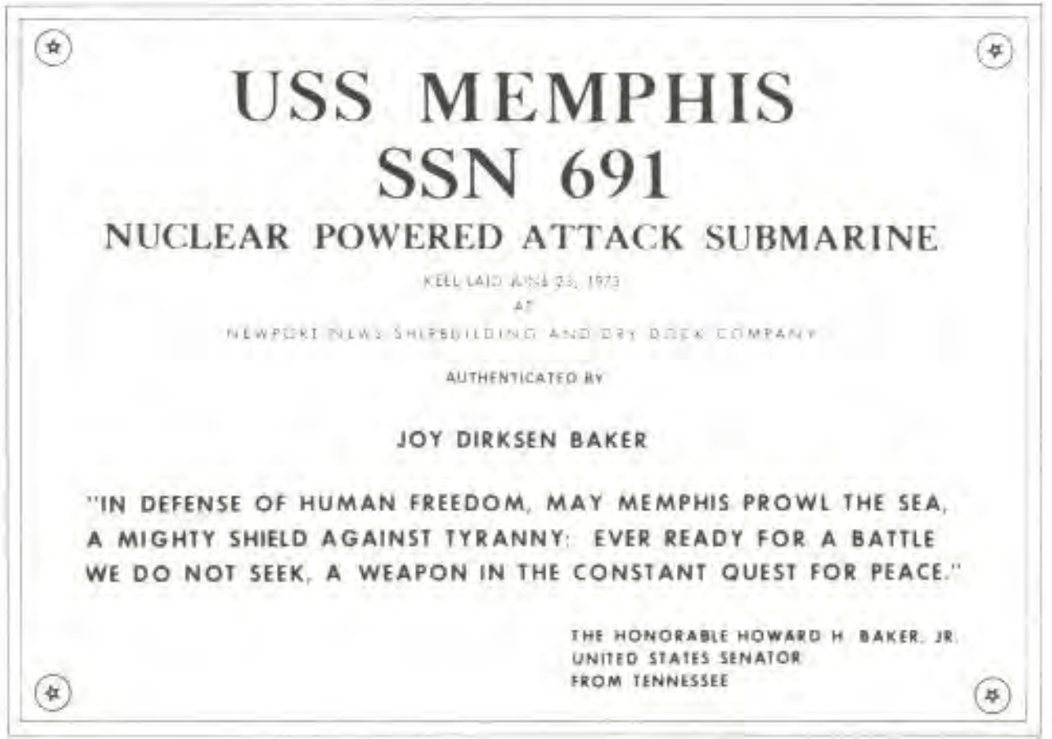
In keeping with the practice of naming ships of the *Los Angeles* class for major American cities, the *Memphis* is named for Tennessee's largest city. The picturesque city of Memphis lies on the Mississippi River in the southwestern corner of the Volunteer State. The city is the center of an important trade area ranging over much of Tennessee, Arkansas, Mississippi, Missouri and Alabama.

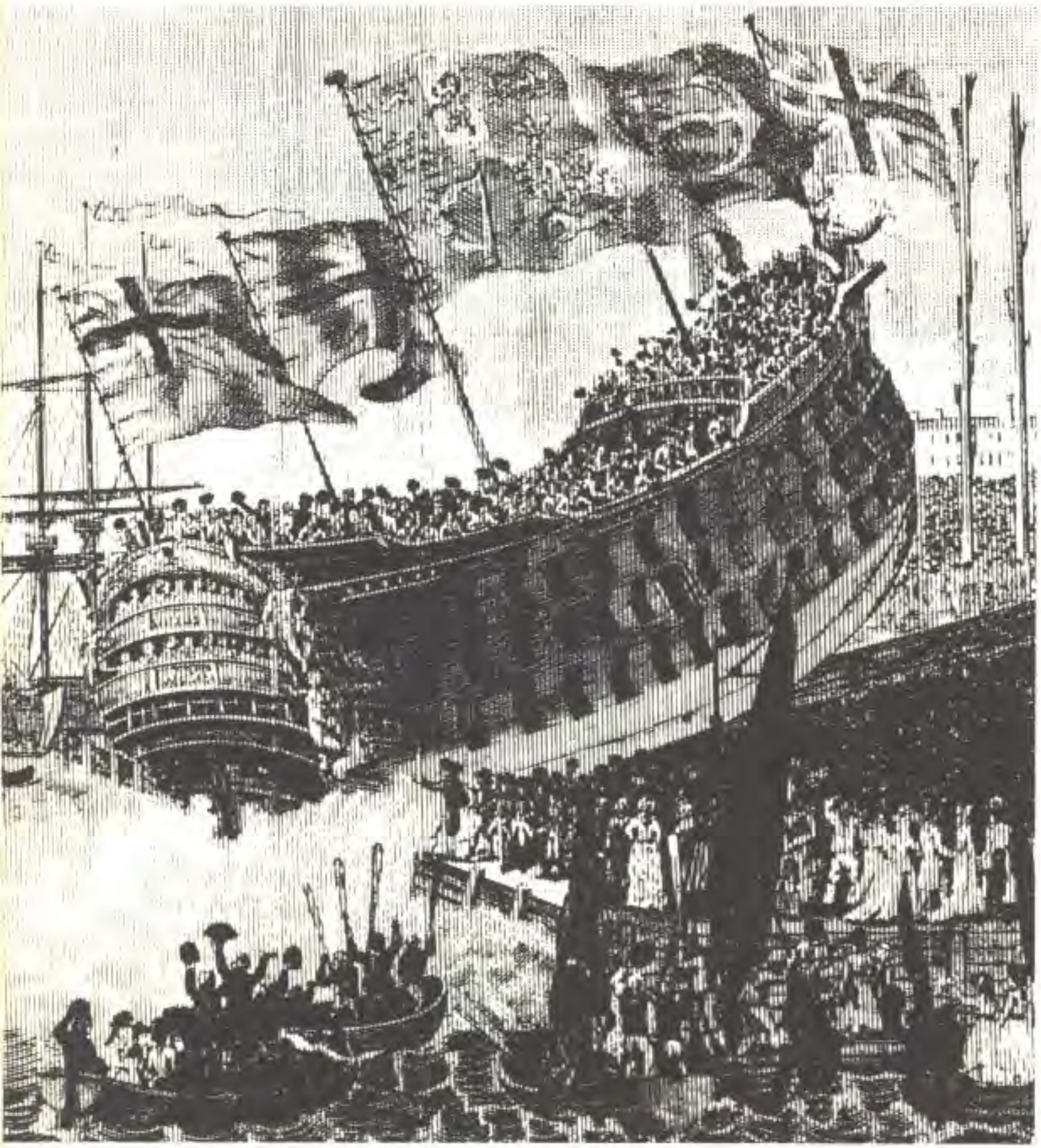
Other ships of the *Los Angeles* Class include:

LOS ANGELES (SSN 688)
BATON ROUGE (SSN 689)
PHILADELPHIA (SSN 690)
MEMPHIS (SSN 691)
OMAHA (SSN 692)
CINCINNATI (SSN 693)
GROTON (SSN 694)
BIRMINGHAM (SSN 695)
NEW YORK CITY (SSN 696)
INDIANAPOLIS (SSN 697)
BREMERTON (SSN 698)
JACKSONVILLE (SSN 699)

(SSNs 700-715—UNNAMED)

Artist's concept of the Memphis *(SSN 691)*





"I Christen Thee..."

Few modern rites have the tradition of ship christenings—a ritual that reaches 4,000 years back into recorded history.

A bottle of champagne will be smashed across the bow of *Memphis,* because this fermentation of the grape of Bacchus has become the time-tested toast to a new ship.

The origins of this tradition date back to the days of the Vikings, and possibly beyond. But the origins are more macabre than glamorous. It's a tradition born in the pagan mind and made legitimate by the early Christian church.

In the days of the Vikings, human sacrifice—the spilling of blood and incantations by high priests—marked the launching ceremony. The gods, it was hoped, would be pleased by the offerings. Later, the Greeks and Romans used water as a token of purificaton in blessing the ship and her crew, officers, passengers and cargo.

The religious fervor of the Middle Ages led to the custom of naming ships after saints, and the rites took on a churchly character. No ship put to sea without its own shrine and

attendant array of images and effigies. Many historians agree that a libation of wine—instead of the earlier blood sacrifice—was lifted as a good-luck toast as the ship hit the water on launching day.

The Tudor era in England witnessed another change, in which the launching ceremony took place after the ship was in the water. Announced by a fanfare of trumpets, a King's lieutenant would appear and be seated in an ornate chair on the ship's poop deck. He was presented with a "standing cup," a golden goblet filled with red wine. After a critical sip of the wine, he would politely whisper the ship's name, wishing her Godspeed.

Spilling a bit of wine on the deck, he then would mark the four points of the compass before drinking to the King's good health. As a finale, the lieutenant would toss the goblet over the side and leave the ship.

Many of the spectators went over the side along with the goblet, hoping to salvage the precious standing cup.

Enterprising shipbuilders, whose responsibility it was to supply the goblet, decided to salvage the cup for themselves. They accomplished this by ringing the ship with a net—to the indignation of the populace. The King expressed great sorrow and anger over the ruse and decreed that the goblet be crown property. The row waxed so hot that launching ceremonies were terminated until the advent of Charles II, who issued a decree that the crown provide the cups, which were then presented to the master of the shipyard.

In the interest of further economy, the use of the cup was discontinued in 1690 and a bottle substituted.

In Britain the ship christening was invariably performed by a male member of the Royal Family—or by a dock yard commissioner—until 1811, when King George IV introduced the first lady sponsor. One sponsor's aim was so bad that she hit a spectator who was injured and sued for damages. The Admiralty then directed that the bottle be secured to the stem of the ship by a lanyard. This practice continues today.

When champagne became widely valued, it was substituted for wine. Champagne was more costly and, therefore, was held in higher esteem.

It's a painstaking job, incidentally, to dress a champagne bottle for use in a modern launching. The bottle is fitted with a "tuxedo"—made in the shipyard—which consists of a slotted aluminum casing to prevent broken glass from endangering the sponsor. A crocheted cotton sleeve covers the metal jacket, and decorative ribbons are embroidered with the name of the ship, the date of christening, and the name of the shipbuilder. The broken bottle and decorative accessories are traditionally presented to the sponsor of each ship.

On the launching stand, the champagne is kept in an insulated bag—at about 60 degrees—to assure a frothy splash. If the weather is cold, an electric heater is provided to warm the champagne. And a spare bottle is within easy reach as a back-up to the original—just in case.

The Shipbuilders of Newport News

Rich as the heritage of the ship christening is, it pales before the tradition of the shipbuilder, who first designs the vessel, then takes a single piece of steel, bends it, shapes it and begins his task by laying the keel.

Piece by piece, section by section, the structure grows into the graceful functional form that is the ship. On launching day, the shipbuilder watches his creation begin her long relationship with the sea. And he feels the special pride that only the shipbuilder can know.

R. A. Ketterman and H. B. Rice Jr. of the pipe department

R. V. Mundie and C. L. Andrews, quality assurance department

C. L. Silver, welders department

I. C. Binder, pipe department

Christine Hall, machinery installation department

T. Latham of the painters department

Keel Laying of the MEMPHIS • June 23, 1973

Senator Howard H. Baker Jr. of Tennessee thanks Newport News Shipbuilding welder J. A. Britt for assisting Mrs. Baker in welding her initials into the *Memphis* keel. Meanwhile, Mrs. Baker cleans her initials with the help of welder supervisor W. T. Stewart.

The *Memphis* keel plaque, which will be displayed in a prominent part of the ship, bears a quote by the Senator, "In defense of human freedom, may *Memphis* prowl the sea, a mighty shield against tyranny: ever ready for a battle we do not seek, a weapon in the constant quest for peace."

After christening the ship will be moved to a shipyard pier for an extensive outfitting period to prepare her for delivery to the U. S. Navy next year.

MEMPHIS—The Legacy of a Name

The fourth Memphis *was commissioned in 1925.*

The new *Memphis*, with its highly sophisticated detection devices, is a far cry from the first *Memphis*, a wooden five-gun screw steamer built in Philadelphia in 1849. She was chartered by the U. S. Navy for an expedition against Paraguay in 1858-59.

The second *Memphis*, a 7-gun screw steamer built in Scotland in 1861, was captured in 1862 during the Civil War by the gunboat *Magnolia* while running the Union blockade from Charleston with a cargo of Confederate cotton. Ironically, the Union Navy placed her in service in the Charleston blockade. She was destroyed by fire in 1883.

Tennessee, an armored cruiser commissioned in 1906, bore that name for most of her service. She was renamed *Memphis* in May 1916. In August of that year, while lying off Santo Domingo in the Dominican Republic, she was driven ashore by a tidal wave and wrecked.

The fourth *Memphis* was commissioned at the Philadelphia Naval Yard in 1925. After cruising both the Atlantic and Pacific, she sailed to France in 1927 to return Capt. Charles A. Lindbergh and his plane to Washington, following his nonstop flight from New York to Paris. *Memphis* continued to cruise both oceans on peacekeeping missions until the United States became involved in World War II. She served President Franklin Roosevelt during the Casablanca Conference in 1942, and was decommissioned in December, 1945.

The fifth *Memphis*, built as the *Esso Memphis* in 1944, was acquired by the Navy in 1956 and placed in service as *Memphis*. In 1957, despite the severest polar ice pack conditions on record, she carried supplies to help establish and maintain American bases along the DEW line. In 1966 she was converted by Newport News Shipbuilding to a floating powerplant and was transferred to the U. S. Army in 1967 for service in the harbors of South Vietnam.

Future Nuclear Powered Submarines

TRIDENT SUBMARINES

In addition to submarines of the *Los Angeles* Class, the *Trident* submarines and missiles are needed to increase the strength of the nation's Naval forces in the 1980s and beyond, and to provide for replacement of the aging *Polaris* submarines.

The United States currently has 41 nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarines. All were built with the technology of the 1950s, and the oldest one will be nearly 20 years old by the time the first *Trident* submarine is scheduled to enter the fleet.

The new *Trident* submarines are being designed with all the latest nuclear propulsion and submarine technology. They will be much more difficult to detect and attack than *Polaris* submarines for two reasons: the new longer-range Trident missiles will give the submarines far more ocean areas to hide in, and the new vessels will be much quieter than the *Polaris* submarines.

Four *Trident* submarines have been authorized, and others are planned.

OTHER NUCLEAR SUBMARINES

Nulear submarines currently in service include 41 *Polaris/Poseidon* missile-firing type, 65 attack type and one deep-submergence research vessel. The last attack submarine of the *Sturgeon Class*—the *Richard B. Russell* (SSN 687)—was delivered by Newport News Shipbuilding on August 12, 1975.

UNITED STATES and SOVIET NAVIES

(Based on unclassified data released by the Department of Defense as of November 1975)

Submarines	*Soviet*	*U.S.*
Ballistic Missile	75*	41
Attack	185	75
Cruise Missile	65	0
Total:		
Nuclear	130	106
Nonnuclear	195	10
Grand Total	about 325	116

*Includes 34 modern YANKEE Class submarines and 11 modern DELTA Class submarines.

U.S.S.R. major surface combatants	
Aircraft Carriers	1
Helicopter Carriers	2
Cruisers	31
Frigates and Destroyers	86
Ocean Escorts	107
Total	227

NOTE: The USSR currently has two aircraft carriers under construction.

U. S. major surface combatants	
Attack carriers	14
Helicopter carriers	0
Cruisers	28
Destroyers	71
Ocean escorts	64
Total	178

U.S.S.R. minor combatants and support ships	
Missile Patrol Craft	135
Other Patrol Craft	540
Amphibious Ships	85
Mine Warfare Ships	255
Auxiliaries	about 1,165
Total	about 2,180

U. S. minor combatants and support ships	
Missile Patrol Craft	0
Other Patrol Craft	8
Amphibious Ships	61
Mine Warfare Ships	3
Auxiliaries	117
Total	189

The shipbuilder is a special breed. Not just a worker—but a craftsman. Pipefitter, designer, welder, accountant, secretary, foundryman . . . They are Newport News Shipbuilding—they are part of the team that can proudly say:
"We built this ship."