

# Morning Quarters

*Quarters is the formation for muster and inspection.”  
The Bluejackets’ Manual, 6<sup>th</sup> Edition  
04/2010*

***A Fleet venue for getting History, Heritage, and Culture  
information to our Sailors on a continual basis.***

To have a thorough understanding of naval customs and traditions; To proactively integrate naval traditions, customs, and practices into decision making processes, training and daily leadership; and to consistently use naval history to demonstrate who we are as a service.



1900 USS San Francisco Commodore Fife tips his cap upon arrival.

## The Hand Salute

The actual origin of the custom of saluting is unknown. The ancient Romans and medieval English knights are often cited as originators of the salute. The Roman custom was to approach each other with raised hands, palms to the front, to show they were not concealing a dagger. English knights, in armor, would use their hand to raise the visor of their helmet when greeting each other. The hand gesture eventually came to signify membership in the same order or group.

The hand salute in the U.S. Navy was adopted from the British Navy. The earliest salutes in the British Navy involved removing headgear. Removing one’s cover eventually evolved to simply touching the cover, which in turn evolved to the hand salute of today. The hand salute is usually rendered with the right hand. However, there are exceptions. Naval custom allows a left-handed salute when it cannot be readily rendered with the right hand. One hundred years ago, our Navy had a custom, on certain occasions, of rendering a salute with the hand farthest away from the officer being saluted. Aboard ship this custom resulted in half of the side boys saluting with the right hand and the other half with the left hand.

Saluting is gesture that affirms a common bond between Sailors. It is not a sign of inferiority in that juniors salute seniors first-- it is a military courtesy towards seniors. The salute of a Seaman Recruit is required to be returned by an Admiral. The salute is recognition of the importance of all Sailors--that is why we *all* salute.



1900 USS Portsmouth side boys salute with the hand farthest away from the officer.



1887 USS Alliance side boys prepare to remove their caps as the Commanding Officer arrives.