

# North Kingstown, Rhode Island, WWII Heritage City

A series of lessons from the [World War II Heritage Cities Lesson Collection](#)



Figure 1: Naval Air Station Quonset Point, from the *US Naval Aviation News*, May 1947. (Credit: US Navy)

## Introduction

The three lessons, and culminating fourth lesson, support the development of understanding the significance of [North Kingstown, Rhode Island, World War II Heritage City](#). The designation of North Kingstown addresses home front activities within the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island. This includes municipalities and military installations such as Davisville, Camp Endicott, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett.

The first lesson examines the impact and role of local military installations. These installations include Naval Air Station Quonset Point, Camp Endicott, and the Advance Base Depot in Davisville. The second lesson teaches about the contributions of the WAVES in local Naval training and operations. The third lesson describes examples in which civilians contributed to the war effort, through work like parachute packing and material drives. The lesson specifically highlights women in the workforce and students engaged in

wartime activities while at home and at school. All lessons highlight specific contributions but connect to larger themes and understandings of the U.S. home front during wartime. A mix of primary and secondary sources is used, along with photos and media.

## Lessons (with World War II home front topics):

The first three lessons listed can be taught individually or collectively, in any order. The final lesson guides students in summarizing the contributions of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, and leads into a comparison with other World War II home front cities as a culminating activity.

### 1. [Home Front Military Training and Defense in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City \(p. 6\)](#)

- Armed Forces
- Navy, Naval Air Station Quonset Point
- Camp Endicott
- Davisville Advance Base Depot
- Pilot training
- Seabees
- Women service members
- WAVES (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service)
- Quonset hut

### 2. [The WAVES in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City \(p. 20\)](#)

- WAVES
- Military
- Social change
- Women in the workforce

- Camp Endicott
- Naval Air Station Quonset Point

### 3. [Civilian Workforce and Volunteerism in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City \(p. 33\)](#)

- Women in the workforce
- Civilian volunteerism and contributions
- War bonds and war loans
- Material drives
- Student involvement

### 4. [North Kingstown, Rhode Island: Comparing and Connecting WWII Home Front Cities \(p. 44\)](#)

## Positioning these Lessons in the Curriculum:

The standards listed below are a collection of standards covered in the lesson collection. The lessons have been aligned to national standards and topics, as well as to the Rhode Island Social Studies standards (as of 2026). Objectives for each lesson, materials, and resources are listed within the lesson.

**Time period:** World War II

**Topics:** World War II, women's history, workforce migration, science and technology

## United States History Standards for Grades 5-12

*This lesson relates to the following [National Standards for History](#) from the UCLA National Center for History in the Schools:*

### Era 8: The Great Depression and World War II (1929-1945)

Standard 3: The causes and course of World War II, the character of the war at home and abroad, and its reshaping of the U.S. role in world affairs

## Curriculum Standards for Social Studies

This lesson relates to the following [Curriculum Standards themes for Social Studies](#) from the National Council for the Social Studies:

- Theme 2: Time, Continuity, and Change
- Theme 5: Individuals, Groups, and Institutions
- Theme 8: Science, Technology, and Society
- Theme 9: Global Connections

## Relevant Common Core Standards

These lessons relate to the following [Common Core English and Language Arts Standards for History and Social Studies](#) for middle and high school students:

### Key Ideas and Details

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.1
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.2

### Craft and Structure

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.4

### Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.7
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.9

### Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-12.10

## Rhode Island Social Studies Standards

The lessons align with the following grade-level and subject content defined by the Rhode Island Social Studies Standards (as of 2026).

### Grade 7 – Early Modern to Modern World History and Geography

Inquiry Topic 6: Global Wars (1917 - 1989 CE)

SS7.6.2: World War II (1939-1945)

### Grade 7 – Early Modern to Modern World History and Geography

Inquiry Topic 6: Global Wars (1917 - 1989 CE)

SS7.6.2: World War II (1939-1945)

## High School: United States History II: Late 19<sup>th</sup> Century to the Present

### Inquiry Topic 4: World War II

SSHS.USII.4.1: Isolationism and the eventual involvement of the United States in World War II  
SSHS.USII.4.2: The effects of the War on American society

SSHS.USII.4.3: United States military during World War II

## High School: World History II: Early Modern to Modern

### Inquiry Topic 6: Global War and Cold War

SSHS.WHII.6.4: World War II and the Holocaust

*The lesson series was written by Sarah Nestor Lane, an educator and consultant funded by a National Council on Public History's cooperative agreement with the National Park Service.*

# Lesson 1: Home Front Military Training and Defense in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City

## About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [North Kingstown, Rhode Island](#), [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains readings and photos to contribute to learners' understandings about the military presence in the region that included critical Naval training and operations. A background reading, newspaper article, and oral history help provide insight into the impact of the area and its service members on the home front and overseas.

## Objectives:

1. Identify local military installations and describe their contributions to the war.
2. Describe the training, contributions, and challenges faced by local service members.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

## Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 2-9 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3
3. *Recommended:* Map of Rhode Island with North Kingstown, Davisville, Camp Endicott, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett marked



## Getting Started: Essential Question

How did military training and operations in North Kingstown contribute to the success of the United States and its Allies in World War II?

## Photos



Figure 2: "Laying Tile on Southwest corner of Seaplane Hangar No.2, 8-14-40 (Historic American Engineering Record - Library of Congress)



Figure 3: Naval Air Station – Quonset Point, R.I. - First plane to land on newly filled area on the Northwest runway, December 23, 1940. (Historic American Engineering Record - Library of Congress)

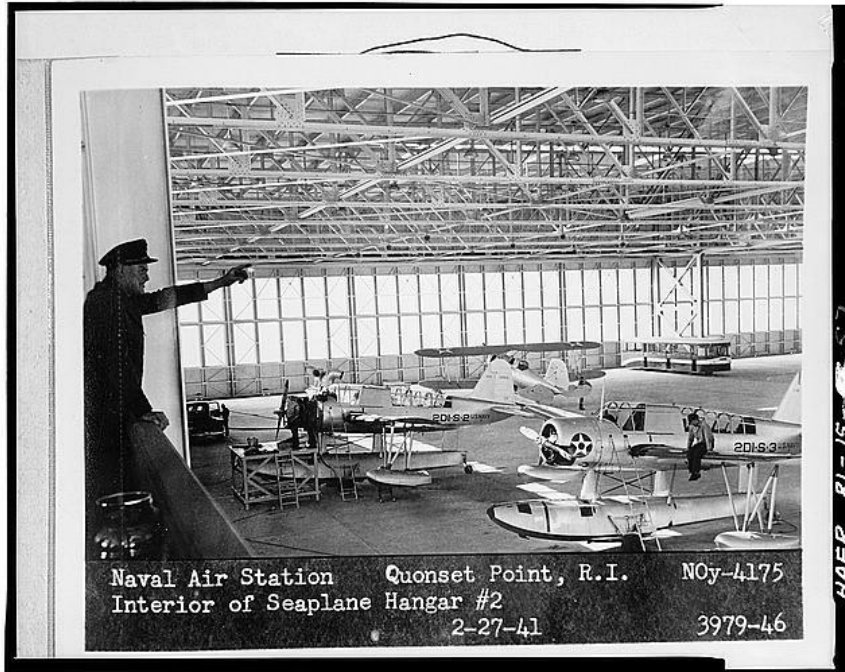


Figure 4: "Naval Air Station – Interior of Seaplane Hangar #2, Quonset Point, R.I." 2-27-41. (Historic American Engineering Record - Library of Congress)



Figure 5: A close up of an exterior wall of enlisted barracks with a triangular wood Quonset Point Insignia. The buildings were designed by Albert Kahn, Inc., architects. (Historic American Engineering Record - Library of Congress)



Figure 6: A Quonset Hut, designed in North Kingstown, Rhode Island, in use with Seabees training at the Seamanship school at Camp Endicott. These huts were built as temporary structures across the world during the war. (Courtesy of the United States Navy Seabee Museum Archive)



Figure 7: Seabees constructing a Quonset Hut as part of their carpentry training at Camp Endicott in Davisville in 1942. (Courtesy of the United States Navy Seabee Museum Archive)



### By the numbers:

- Naval Air Station Quonset Point cost \$35,000,000 to establish in 1940 (worth over \$800 million in today's dollars). It became operational in 1941.
- The federal government expanded Advance Base Depot (ABD) in Davisville from 85 acres to 1,892 acres. It included 20 miles of railroad, 40 miles of roads, and a 1,200-foot pier. The depot was in operation by June 1942 and by the end of that year had shipped 286,000 tons of material for building bases overseas.
- Construction Battalions, or the Seabees, were authorized to be established in January 1942 by the Secretary of the Navy. Camp Endicott, one of the locations where Seabees trained, had 15,000 assigned personnel. By July 1945, there were 247,000 Seabees, and 83% were overseas.
- Around 60 different construction-related trades were recognized as Petty Officer classifications for Seabees. And at Camp Endicott, 27 courses were offered in areas like operating bulldozers, building bridges, welding, and Quonset hut construction.



### Quotations to consider:

“In a sense, Quonset gives the final polish to Navy combat flyers on the Atlantic Coast. . . . Having mastered the type of plane he is to fly in combat, the pilot reports at Quonset for organization into a carrier squadron or group, which may be a large group or a small one. If his carrier has not been commissioned or if it is undergoing extensive repairs, he may remain at Quonset for as long as four months. The time is not lost. He receives constant drill in gunnery and in combat tactics, such as the famous but secret Thach weave, which he will employ against the Japanese when his carrier gets in action.”

- John H. Durston, *The Standard*, September 16, 1943

“They fly together, they eat together, they live together and they even go on leave together. When one is grounded, we ground the other one, too. The idea is to make each of them so familiar with his partner that he can act instinctively in perfect knowledge of what his teammate is likely to do.”

- Lieutenant Commander Paul D. Bule, commander of a fighter squadron at Naval Air Station Quonset Point, quoted in *The Standard*, September 16, 1943



## Read to Connect

*Teacher Note: The Heritage City designation of North Kingstown includes military installations and municipalities located within the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, including Davisville, Camp Endicott, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett. Additionally, see lesson 2 to support students learning more about the women who locally served in the WAVES.*

### Reading 1: Background Text

*Teacher Tip: Use this short background reading to better understand the context of the second and third readings.*

## Military Installations and Service Members in North Kingstown during World War II

By Sarah Nestor Lane

Before 1938, South Quidnessett in North Kingstown was primarily a farming community. The federal government acquired approximately 3,000 acres to construct the Quonset Point and Davisville military complex. The government obtained the land through eminent domain and land purchases, displacing families and requiring the relocation of twenty small family cemeteries. Local farmers and landowners supplied sand and gravel to help fill in 400 acres of marsh land and waterfront for the new air station. The site was developed as a major shipping point and construction provided jobs during the Great Depression. Naval Air Station (NAS) Quonset Point was commissioned in 1940 during the partial mobilization directed by the United States before formally entering the war. It became operational in 1941 and served as an important wartime installation.

NAS Quonset Point played a significant role as a major training and operations center for the Navy's growing air forces. The station trained thousands of naval aviators, flight crews, and support personnel who flew patrol bombers and other aircraft used to protect shipping and hunt enemy submarines. These training programs helped prepare crews for anti-submarine warfare, reconnaissance, and convoy protection missions that were critical to keeping Allied supply lines open.

[Navy WAVES \(Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service\)](#) were stationed at installations in North Kingstown and supported the training at NAS Quonset Point. Originally the Navy had planned to use WAVES for work that was traditionally assigned to women at the time, such as secretarial work and storekeepers. However, as the war progressed and more men were sent overseas, WAVES at Quonset Point took on more

responsibilities, with roles like radio, air traffic controllers, Link Trainer instructors (Link Trainers were simulation trainers for pilots), and gunnery instructors. Some women came to Quonset Point temporarily for celestial navigation training prior to being sent to other installations on the home front.

The government acquired an additional 85 acres to establish the Advance Base Depot (ABD) at Davisville, which later expanded to nearly 1,900 acres with miles of roads, rail lines, and a large pier for loading ships. The ABD assembled and shipped materials for overseas naval bases, and by the end of 1942, hundreds of thousands of tons of supplies had been sent abroad.

Camp Endicott, also located in North Kingstown, served as a primary training center for the Navy's Construction Battalions, or "CBs." They were known as the "Seabees" based on the sound of the acronym, and incorporated a Navy-uniformed bee in their logo. The Seabees were established to perform construction work in combat areas and at ABDs like the one at Davisville. They trained for six weeks at Camp Endicott before being sent to bases across the U.S. and world to support the Allied forces. WAVES were also stationed at Camp Endicott alongside the Seabees, serving in the medical, military training, public works, officer training, supplies, and personnel departments.

The Seabees, like the rest of the armed forces in the U.S. at the time, had racially segregated units. Due to this segregation, [African American Seabee units](#) did not train at Camp Endicott. Most Black Seabees completed basic training at Camp Peary in Virginia, and then went to Gulfport, Mississippi or Port Hueneme, California, or both, before going to do critical construction work overseas. Segregation in the military was not overturned until [Executive Order 9981](#) in 1948.

The [Quonset hut](#) was also first designed at Quonset Point. It was a standardized, low-cost structure that was easy to ship and assemble. More than 160,000 Quonset huts were produced and erected by the U.S. Navy and the Seabees during the war, making it a critical structure that supported home front and overseas military operations.

## Questions for Reading 1, By the Numbers, Quotations to Consider, and Photos

*Use all the sources to answer these questions so far:*

1. What type of land and community was present in South Quidnessett before the military installations were built?
2. What type of training occurred at NAS Quonset Point? At Camp Endicott?
3. How did this training support the Allies on the home front and overseas?
4. How did the WAVES support local military operations?

5. What do the statistics about the Advance Base Depot at Davisville show about its importance?
6. How do these sources and information together show the impact of the military installations in North Kingstown to the war effort?

## Photos



Figure 8: A Seabee using a bulldozer at Camp Endicott in Rhode Island. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



Figure 9: A Seabee using a bulldozer in a South Pacific jungle. Fallen coconuts can be seen. Seabees trained at Camp Endicott to prepare for these conditions and tasks. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.

## Reading 2: Newspaper Article

### Navy's Seabees Justify Slogan 'First to Land, Last to Leave'

*Camp Endicott Gives Final Training to Battalions, Toughened in Commando Tactics Which Build Advanced Bases From Arctic To Solomons.*

*The Standard*, September 23, 1943

By John H. Durston

Davisville-R.I., July 30 – The Navy's doughty Seabees, who combine construction work with commando fighting, receive their final training here at Camp Endicott, which seems to fascinate officers from the nearby Quonset Naval Air Station the way a prizefighter's training camp attracts boxing fans.

Sooner or later the subject of Camp Endicott crops up in conversation with almost any officer a visitor meets at Quonset. After singing the glories of the work his own men are doing at Quonset, the officer says, 'And have you been to Endicott yet? Don't leave until you get a look at the Seabees.'

When duty permits and life drags a bit at Quonset, the aviation men frequently wander up the road to Endicott to watch the Seabees maul each other in judo practice or plug around their mile-long commando obstacle course, which includes all the hazards to life and limb that Endicott's best brains have been able to think up. The Seabees, it is admitted, get the toughest physical training of any outfit in the Navy, and the results are apparent in the muscles that ripple under their sunburned and weather-beaten hides.

#### Many Seabee Veterans

The official name of this hardy organization, whose job it is to build up the Navy's advanced bases from the Arctic to the Solomons, is Naval Construction Battalions, affectionately shortened to Seabees (C.B.'s). Its insignia is an angry little bee wearing a sailor's cap and boring in against the enemy with a submachine gun in its front paws, and hammers, saws and chisels in the rest.

The Seabees differ from ordinary Navy personnel in that experience in construction work is required and the age average is considerably higher than in other Navy organizations. The average age of one battalion at Camp Endicott was thirty-eight. The average of the current ones is about thirty. Many of the Seabees are grizzled veterans of the last war.

The advanced age of the Seabees, relatively speaking, leads the Navy to perpetrate little jokes in its official business. For example, there is an extremely official-looking sign at the

starting line of the commando course which reads: 'Men over 75 are not required to run this course.'

The Seabees, according to Navy officers, exhibited a striking esprit de corps from the inception of the organization, but their morale has received additional spiritual nutriment from the records their comrades already have made in the war. In the Southwest Pacific Seabees went ashore with the marines under the enemy's fire and showed themselves equally at home with guns or bulldozers as tools. When word got back to Endicott that marines at Guadalcanal had said that Seabees would do as fighting partners, the Seabee cup overflowed.

### **Must Be Physically Fit**

Seabees must be physically fit and between the ages of seventeen and fifty. When they enter the Navy, they receive ratings in accord with their construction experience and artisan's ability in private life. They undergo four week's basic training at Camp Peary, Va., and then come to Endicott for eight to ten weeks of advanced training. After a nine-day furlough, they return to Davisville to an advanced base depot adjacent to Endicott to await shipment out. It is never long in coming.

According to Lieutenant Walter R. Bishop, U.S.N.R., public relations officer at Endicott, the prevailing attitude of the Seabees is strictly businesslike.

'Most of these men,' he said, were earning good wages in private life and joined up just to help get this war over.'

Sometimes an elderly Seabee will have to be dropped because he is physically unable to stand the grind. Lieutenant Bishop related a recent instance involving a Seabee who suffered a foot injury at Camp Peary, and, though he doggedly struggled, could not keep up with the others on the commando course or in the various drills and combat practice.

### **Lied About Age to Get In**

When a board of officers investigated, they learned that he was fifty-seven-years old and had lied about his age, saying he was forty-six, to enter the Seabees. His explanation was that he could not fight in the last war because his five children were small and needed him at home. Now, he said, they were grown and he wanted to do his part. When the officers sympathetically denied his appeal and told him to go home, tears ran down his face.

Camp Endicott, like its men, is a bit on the rough side in appearance. Hastily built on a reclaimed swamp which was reputed to have been a gangster's burial ground in prohibition days, it was designed more for utility than for beauty. Metal Quonset huts, which look like igloos and are in the portable houses set up in the field in combat theatres, dot the barrack

areas. Crates of various kinds of machine equipment cover acres. Here and there the towering booms of giant cranes stick out above the trees. About the camp streets more men are to be seen in battle helmets and sweat stained green coveralls than in the usual spotless Navy blues and whites.

There is a lot of ground to cover in the weeks which the Seabees pass at Endicott. In addition to the toughening-up exercises the men are trained to defend themselves in hand-to-hand combat and to knock out bullseyes with Springfield rifles, Thompson sub-machine guns or the new Winchester .30-caliber carbines.

Specially qualified men from each section attend classes for technical instruction in the various trades. They may learn the most advanced practices in maintenance and repair of gasoline engines or specialize in operating portable refrigerators. Practical electricity, blacksmithing, carpentry, concrete work, pipe fitting, welding, surveying are a few of the other occupations in which Seabees must be skilled. On them depends not only the establishment of the bases from which advanced combat units operate but also the maintenance of equipment with which they fight.

On occasion they don their white uniforms and demonstrate that they can drill as well as fight or build docks. When the 96th Battalion received its colors in a formal review the other day, they swung through the maneuvers with snap and precision. Captain Fred F. Rogers, commanding officer of the station, was obviously pleased with their showing.

‘They didn’t look bad, did they?’ he said. ‘And they got here from Camp Peary only five days ago.’

Camp Endicott was named for Rear Admiral Mordecai T. Endicott, who was the first Civil Engineer Corps officer to head the Navy’s Bureau of Yards and Docks. It was authorized on June 9, 1942, and commissioned two months later. Since that time it has been turning out Seabees by the thousands. Their performances in a dozen battle areas have given new meaning to the Seabee slogan, ‘First to land and last to leave.’

## Questions for Reading 2

1. Where did the name “Seabees” come from?
2. How does the author telling the story of the 57-year-old man who lied about his age show wartime attitudes about duty and patriotism?
3. How does the description of Camp Endicott’s landscape connect to training for war?
4. What types of training did Seabees complete at Camp Endicott? How was this connected to their construction backgrounds?

5. The author focuses on the pride and accomplishments of the Seabees. What challenges might be missing from this account (ex. displaced families, environmental impact, strain on local services)? Describe what you think the impact would be of these challenges.

## Reading 3: Oral History

*Teacher Tip: You can use the video titled [“Talking with the Past #2: Oral History”](#) from the National Park Service to support students in analysis of oral histories.*

### Oral History Excerpts: John H. Denike

*Interviewed by Don Moore, July 17, 2019. The full interview can be [accessed here](#) from the Veterans History Project. (Note: John Denike went to a civilian aviation trade school in Elmira, New York prior to joining the Navy.)*

. . . Denike: I wanted to join the Navy and they wouldn't accept me. . . I didn't want to be drafted. I wanted to enlist. So, I enlisted, and was sworn in on Armistice Day 1941, and they sent me to the Quonset Naval Air Station. That was my first station. . . .

It was dedicated the day before by Frank Knox. And this was all under Roosevelt. . . . This was under Roosevelt's National Emergency. And so as I said, I wanted to enlist. It took me from - to have my operation (deviated septum) corrected – it took me from July to November to actually get in . . .

The Navy took me in as a 3<sup>rd</sup> class Petty Officer. No bootcamp. Directly to this new station because I was a qualified aviation metalsmith. . . I was sworn in by a commander on November 11, and they sent me to Quonset Naval Air Station the next day. . .

This was, as I said, under the National Emergency. I reported to the Naval Base in civilian clothes and was already inducted. I was at the Naval Air Station from November 12, 1941 until 1944, at the same station.

Interviewer: What does an aviation metalsmith do? Fix airplanes?

Denike: Repair airplanes.

Interviewer: Alright, what kind of airplanes?

Denike: Any kind of airplanes.

Interviewer: But what would you repair?

Denike: Most of the time when I was at Quonset Point, I was part of the Naval Air Station personnel. Which, any visiting aircraft that came to the base we would take care of. We were part of the crash crew.

The hangar that I was in was developing a lot of modern things at the time. The first Marine night fighter squadron was developed there in that hangar. There was another thing . . .

Interviewer: What were they flying?

Denike: F4Us ... Corsairs...

Interviewer: What other things did you work on? B-17s, B-24s?

Denike: Well no, I never worked on a B-17. It was all Naval Aircraft. . . .

Interviewer: Were you just doing the skin of the plane, or all the insides, the gears...

Denike: It varied as the time went on, because part of the time I was not only repairing the planes, we were taking care of visiting aircraft, making sure they were gassed up, making sure they were safe . . . I had fellows under me, and with inside of two years, I was 2<sup>nd</sup> class Petty officer.

Interviewer: So, you were in charge of making sure the shop ran.

Denike: Yeah, that's right. Because the hangar had a metal shop, an engine shop, a machine shop, a parts shop, a paint shop - all of those.

. . . Actually... For a time, I was called a discrepancy man. When a plane was brought in, most of the time those types of planes we were working on then were planes that missed the hook on a carrier and they went into the barrier on the plane and it would wipe out the landing gear on the front of the plane and they'd bring it in. And my job then was to tell them what to take out of that plane that was damaged. Then when that was done, we'd look into the plane and make sure everything was taken out. And then we'd point them to start putting it back together again. . .

During that same time, I was transferred from the land plane hangar 1 to what they called ABATU which was Advanced Base Training Aviation Unit. From there as I told you, I was part of the operations crew at Quonset Naval Aviation Station, which we did everything. . . I did this for two years and three months at Quonset, then I was transferred to the Pacific fleet.

### Questions for Reading 3

1. Why might the Navy have placed workers like Denike directly into service without requiring boot camp?
2. What job did Denike perform at Naval Air Station Quonset Point?

3. How does Denike's description of his responsibilities show the complexity of operations at Quonset Point?
4. How are oral histories helpful for understanding perspectives from the home front? What are some of their limitations? What other perspectives would you like to hear from?

*Tip: Wanting to hear from others who were stationed at, or trained at, Naval Air Station Quonset Point? You can search the location within the [Veterans History Project from the Library of Congress](#) to locate additional oral history interviews of those who served there.*

## Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did military training and operations in North Kingstown contribute to the success of the United States and its Allies in World War II?

## Additional Resources

[Camp Endicott: Naval Construction Training Center, Davisville, Rhode Island Yearbook](#) from Naval History and Heritage Command

[Naval History and Heritage Command: U.S. Navy Seabee Museum](#)

[Quonset Hut: 1941 – 1960](#) from the Department of Archaeology & Historic Preservation, Washington state

[Quonset Hut Manuals](#) from the U.S. Navy Seabee Museum, Naval History and Heritage Command

[Quonset Point and Its Aircraft Carriers](#) by the Varnum Armory Museum

[Seabee History](#) from the Navy Seabee Foundation

[Seabees Memorial](#) from the National Park Service

[Seabee Museum and Memorial Park Rhode Island](#)

[The SeaBees in World War II](#) by Admiral Ben Moreell (March 1962), U.S. Naval Institute

# Lesson 2: The WAVES in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City

## About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [North Kingstown, Rhode Island](#), [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains readings and photos to contribute to learners' understandings about the role of the WAVES in supporting Naval operations and training at local military installations in North Kingstown. The readings include an on-base newspaper article and two oral histories to learn about some of the women's perspectives, challenges, and accomplishments as WAVES.

## Objectives:

1. Explain some of the roles of the WAVES in supporting Naval operations and training.
2. Describe barriers faced by women in the WAVES and their accomplishments despite these challenges.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

## Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 10-13 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3 (and optional extension)
3. *Recommended:* Map of Rhode Island with North Kingstown, Davisville, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett marked



## Getting Started: Essential Question

How did the WAVES support Naval operations and training in North Kingstown?

## Photos



Figure 10: "Captain Mildred McAfee inspects the Waves." From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



Figure 11: WAVES preparing for inspection. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



Figure 12: WAVES participate in archery as a sport at Camp Endicott. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



Figure 13: Camp Endicott had a newspaper called "The Bulldozer" that reported on news around camp. This photo is of the newspaper staff, showing one WAVE representative. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



## By the numbers: requirements to join the WAVES

- Must be between 20 and 36 years old, and any woman under 21 had to have written consent of her parents or guardian.
- Must have had 2 years of high school or business school.
- Be at least 5 feet tall, weigh at least 95 pounds.
- Must not have any children under the age of 18.
- Vision not less than 6-20 in worst eye, be able to hear whispered words at 15 feet, and sound teeth or satisfactory replacements.



## Read to Connect

*Teacher Note: The Heritage City designation of North Kingstown includes military installations and municipalities located within the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, including Davisville, Camp Endicott, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett. Use lesson 1 to learn more about the general military installation history of the area.*

*Background: The [WAVES](#) (Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service) were created by the United States Navy as a branch of the Naval Reserve. The Navy Women's Reserve Act, which created the WAVES, was signed by President Roosevelt on July 30, 1942. At bases within the United States such as Quonset Point in Rhode Island, the WAVES began doing the work of servicemen who had been sent overseas.*

## Reading 1: Newspaper Article Excerpt

*Teacher Tip: The Quonset Scout was the official newspaper of the Naval Station at Quonset Point, so the audience for this text would have been personnel from the air station. The reading does use outdated language and gender expectations that can be discussed further in the reading's questions. Although there is not an author listed, there is evidence to show the article was written by a WAVE stationed at Quonset Point.*

*The author refers to the "quarterdeck" which is the duty desk of the entrance to the barracks.*

## WAVES: Enlisted Women Reserves Admit They Like Quonset. Settle Down to Enjoy Navy Life.

From the *Quonset Scout*, April 19, 1944 (p.8), [Providence College Archives and Special Collections](#)

Hello mates!

The Waves send their greetings to the officers and enlisted personnel of N.A.S. Quonset Point. We are glad to be here and like it very much.

You'll see us working in the A.&R. [Assembly & Repair], in communications, in the control tower, ship's service, and behind many a pine desk you'll see a trim Wave. AMMs, AMMIs, SKs, Ys, gunnery and link trainer operators, radiomen and lots more are already here and settled and more will soon be with us.

We thank the boys for giving way to us in the chow line. We enjoyed the CASU communications dance at the Park Casino and only regret that more of our shipmates didn't show up.

### Glee Club Formed

A Wave glee club has been formed, with Malcolm Johns, Sp (W)1c, as our director, and Meredith Reynolds as president. Soon you'll hear us harmonizing your favorite Gershwin melodies.

By the way, Waves, rehearsals are held at 1830 to 1930 on Tuesday nights in the Red Cross Work Room building, and it's a lot of fun—join up! Just drop in on Tuesday and draw up a chair. The more there are, the better we'll be.

. . . With Spring comes the sage-wise saying, 'In Spring a young man's fancy lightly turns to thoughts of love!' But – what about the girls! Incidentally, who was the blond gal who walked into her barracks one night and found nobody was on the quarterdeck. Then she went upstairs to her cubicle to retire-- no mattress, no nothing! Maybe she ought to wait until they complete that barracks and go back to 504. She did!

Who said women are the weaker sex – What about one gal. I understand she swings a mean billy-club! . . . Maybe girls are in the dark most of the time, but can't something be done to brighten up the situation, 490 and 503 gals now carry flashlights - 'cuz' some one keeps taking our electric current from us. No, I don't mean bulb-snatchers.

We all give credit to the Link Trainer Operators 2c, who are now studying celestial navigation. It's tough and the best of luck to all.

### Waistline Dangers

Wonder what ever became of the live goose one of the 490 girls won in the raffle? That was mighty good turkey the chefs shoveled out on Easter. I do mean shoveled – we hate to mention this, but what in the world is going to happen to our girlish figures?

Guess we better not mention the lockers! They're so nice and big and roomy!

Something new has been rationed, or so I hear, in Wave barracks 490. Only one person to a chair now, Storekeeper Newman.

My eagle eye has seen some Waves playing tennis. Let's see more of it and maybe we can arrange a tournament.

Hear ye! Hear ye! On Saturday night, the 22<sup>nd</sup> of April, is the gala, stupendous occasion in the Station Auditorium. Come one, come all! Boys—put on your bell-bottom trousers, wash your faces and come ready to waltz or jitterbug with the hostesses. You're all cordially invited.

### Questions for Reading 1, By the Numbers, and Photos

1. What types of jobs are mentioned in the article for WAVES?
2. The author writes about missing furniture and electricity outages. Do you think this was good-natured mischief or an example of unequal treatment of women in the service? Explain.
3. The author mixes descriptions of military work with comments about appearance, like maintaining “girlish figures,” and pushback against the narratives of women being the “weaker sex.” What does this article show about gender expectations at the time? What other details stand out related to gender?
4. *By the numbers*: What surprises you – or not - about the WAVES requirements to join?
5. *Photos and reading*: How do these sources show both the military work and social life of WAVES at Quonset Point?

### Reading 2: Oral History

*Teacher Tip: You can use the video titled “Talking with the Past #2: Oral History” from the National Park Service to support students in analysis of oral histories (both for Reading 2 and Reading 3).*

#### Oral History Excerpts: Virginia M. McCutcheon

*Virginia “Ginny” M. McCutcheon (1921-2007) was interviewed by Tim Peterson and Barry Hill, March 2, 2006. The full interview can be [accessed here](#) from the Veterans History Project. McCutcheon was a founding member of the Boise Chapter of the Idaho Women's Veterans Organization.*

**Virginia “Ginny” M. McCutcheon:** . . . I had learned to fly when I was 19, when I got out of high school. I had saved my money. I had worked in John Wanamaker's, which was a big

department store in Philadelphia, and then I worked at my aunt's bookstore. And I was saving my money to learn to fly.

And so, I finally got enough – \$64 saved for the first eight hours, and I was dating a fellow that would let me have his car, from Tuesday night until Wednesday night. So, when I got off – I had the afternoon off - Wednesday afternoon off from the bookstore, I would drive up to the airport. And I took half an hour of instruction a week that started in June of 1941. I was 19, and so I learned to fly, and so in November of 1941, November 18, I soloed. I had 9 hours and 15 minutes of instruction. And my instructor said, "Well I think you'll find the plane will take off a lot faster without me in it!". . . So, I took off, circled the field and came in and landed, and I was very excited. Well then, the next week, it rained and so we didn't fly, we just sat in the hangar and talked. And then the following week was Pearl Harbor.

And in Philadelphia, everything was grounded 100 miles in from the coast, because we had so many German subs out there, and so then I joined the Civil Air Patrol (in 1942). We all needed a birth certificate, and Harrisburg was pretty busy trying to get birth certificates. It took six months to get a birth certificate. In the meantime, when everything was grounded, I joined the Civil Air Patrol. Pretty soon, everything was grounded 150 miles in and then you couldn't get the gas. It was just one big thing, and so this fellow I was going with wanted to get married. So, I thought, well, I'll get married, till the war is over, or whatever.

So, we got married and then he got drafted in February of 1944, and the day after he got drafted, I went downtown to Philadelphia and joined the WAVES. So, I went to boot camp at Hunter College in the Bronx, New York, and that was a six-week course. And so, then the WAVE officers, we had tests. We studied Naval history. All that kind of thing. They interviewed us about the fifth weekend and said, well, my grades were good enough to go to Storekeepers' school or Yeoman school.

Well, I said, I don't want either one of those things. And the very nerve of talking like that to a WAVE officer was something. But anyhow I did, and so she said, "Well, what do you want?"

And I said something to do with aviation. And then I told her I had learned to fly and I had taken all these correspondence courses on meteorology, and aerodynamics, all kinds of things . . . and so she sent me on a direct assignment to Quonset Point, Rhode Island, which is a big Naval Air Station.

So, I got up there and I had more classes. I had six weeks of classes, and one of the classes was recognition. They would flash the planes on the screen at one fifth of a second. You had to identify them. Well, I got 4.0 in recognition, and so the WAVE officer says, "Well,

we're going to send you right to the tower." So that's how I got to the tower and I was thrilled to death of it. . . .

No two days were alike working in the tower. We only worked four-hour watches at a time, and sometimes it would be from midnight to four o'clock in the morning and if there wasn't any flying, we'd sit on the floor and play bridge or something like that. It was a very, very exciting job. Like I said, no two days were alike, and we had a lot of VIPs coming in. Generals, and the Newport War College was right across the bay. And so, then in December of that year, I got sent to Groton, Connecticut, which was an outlying field.

. . . Well, I realize the WAVES that went in – we were releasing a sailor for active duty for the ocean somewhere on a ship or something. A lot of the men – the sailors resented that because . . . there goes my job, here. A shore duty job. They had to go to sea. . .

The women in the military now can do all types of things. My gosh, they're flying airplanes off carriers . . . doing all types of things that we weren't allowed to even think of.

They gave us tests a lot when I was in, and I remember one time they called me into the Assistant Operations Officer's office and they said, "Well Ginny, your flight results were so good that if you were a male, you could take flight training."

I said, "Well, that's great." (laughs) Well, the Chief in charge of the tower heard that. He was very upset about it. He didn't even want me working there anymore. So, he made out the duty lists and said, "Ok, Webb," he says, "You've got to swab the men's bunkroom."

I said, "Are you kidding?"

So I went down to the operations officer and said I found the duty list, and they've got me down to swab the men's bunkroom. I said, "The men don't swab the women's bunkroom. Why should I? . . . I'm First Class. Why should I be swabbing a men's bunkroom?" . . . That chief was just out to give me a bad time.

So that's when I was in charge of operations dispatch. But you did put up from a lot of guff from the sailors that resented you. We didn't get any type of special privileges. They didn't like us being there because, to them, we were taking a job from them. . . . It was a fight the whole time, really. But anyhow, it all worked out.

To me, I had a great time in the Navy. And everybody I know that was in the service... And everyone of them – the women really relish the time they had served. It's a good feeling you know, you can hold your head up. . . .

## Questions for Reading 2

1. Why did private aviation training and flying become more difficult for Ginny after the attack on Pearl Harbor?
2. What organization did McCutcheon join after aviation activities were restricted?
3. What job did McCutcheon have at Quonset Point, and why would this be important at the time?
4. According to McCutcheon, why did some sailors resent the presence of WAVES on naval bases?
5. How does McCutcheon's story show both opportunities and barriers for women serving in the military during the war? Provide examples from the text.



### Quotations to consider:

"... My brother was in the Army and he was over in Germany, and I thought I can't do this. I was working at Kodak, and I was working on the old-fashioned calculating machines, you know?

And I was doing that in the film planning department, and I thought, I'm not doing anything towards this war effort. If I were making parachutes or doing something like that, I'd feel as though I were doing my part. So I went past my father's store one day and right at the corner on East Avenue was a big poster saying, 'Join the Navy. Be a WAVE.' So that's exactly what I did."

- Mary Elizabeth Dorety, a WAVE who was stationed at Quonset Point, interviewed in 2002 for the [Veterans History Project, Library of Congress](#)

"One evening late in 1943, four of my friends and I went to the movies. The theater showed a short movie about the war and the efforts of women in the service, mainly serving as nurses. None of us felt that we were doing anything very important so we talked it over and decided to enlist. We all went to Norwich, Connecticut, to enlist together. When we got there, the Army Recruiters' Office was closed, but the Navy Recruiters' Office was still open so I enlisted in the U.S. Naval Reserve as a WAVE."

- Marie Virginia Murdock Duggins, in "[A Connecticut WAVE at Quonset Point](#)," from Small State Big History

## Reading 3: Oral History

### Oral History Excerpts: Jane Louise Morris

*Jane Louise Morris (1924 – 2012) was interviewed by Robert Trebus on June 13, 2002. The full interview can be [accessed here](#) from the Veterans History Project.*

Jane Louise Morris (JLM): . . . I wanted to do something when we knew that we were going to go to war. I don't know why I got so interested in helping prepare our country to be trained and have the equipment for war. I can't explain it. All I can say is . . . it was so. And then I said, "Well, what can I do?" You know.

And it finally hit upon me that ever since I was a little girl, I was interested in airplanes. I'll digress for just a second to help things out maybe a little bit, to make it a matter of record that I am to this day a licensed pilot. So that there really was some development out of this whole thing. I stuck to my guns, but anyhow.

Robert Trebus, Interviewer (RT): Were you a pilot before you enlisted, or did you learn to fly in the service?

JLM: Actually, I learned to fly in the service. But it was on my own time, and my own money. Because I used the experience I got in the Link trainer to know how to read the instruments and what the instruments would say if I changed the configuration of the Link to make it be representative of what would happen in the air.

RT: For the record, Jane is a [Link Trainer](#) specialist.

JLM: That's right, yes. Link Trainer instructor, yes. Because we did have people who were highly trained that had to be because of all the mechanics and the electronics that were associated with keeping a Link trainer going correctly.

RT: So, in 1943 you enlisted in the US Navy?

JLM: Yes, I did.

RT: Because of that feeling that you wanted to serve and you felt that that was the best way?

JLM: Yes.

RT: And it also locked in with one of your major interests, which was airplanes.

JLM: You're right. You're right. And that interest maintains until this very second because I'm very pleased to be able to tell you that I am a licensed pilot.

. . . I had to go to Atlanta, Georgia because that's where they were doing the - apparently the largest amount of recruiting in the WAVES. So, for whatever reason, it doesn't really matter, I had to go to Atlanta, Georgia [for training]. And that was a tremendously large operation there. . . .

RT: [After training] Did you have to emphasize – you have to learn to trust the instruments rather than your own senses on flying . . . ?

JLM: . . . You must have confidence that they've been worked over enough that they're accurate. You must rely on them (the instruments) enough or you're never going to make it.

RT: So that was one of the primary things that you convinced the student pilots, that they had to pretty much rely on their instruments rather than . . .

JLM: Yes, and I don't mean to correct you, but not all my students were student pilots. I had some real old graveyards that said that they weren't ever going to get into one of those things! And they were told they were going to get in it, and they got in it, you know. And we just had to work with that, along with the readings on the instruments. (Laughs). . . .

I had gone through the whole program you know, and so forth and so on. I had a little bit more to go on than some of the ladies and the gentlemen, too. . . . That I had some flying experience and that helped tremendously. I wasn't a licensed pilot at that time. But you know, you know how that goes. . . I had flight experience. So, it wasn't a completely unknown quantity to me to get into a cockpit and read the instruments. And my training in Atlanta on the Link trainer was a very pleasant experience.

RT: Great. And when you were actually – where was your trainer located? In Quonset Point?

JLM: . . . That was my destination. They needed people up there in that particular area because the Navy was forming squadrons up that way, and the squadrons would be up there for months because they had to learn how to be a squadron. And in the meantime, they learned how to get in a Link Trainer and work the Link trainer. . . .

RT: How complex was the training in a Link Trainer?

JLM: Very complex. Very complex, because if you really didn't have some previous knowledge of airplanes - some previous knowledge of what instruments indicate to you - it was very difficult and there were people that washed out. Mostly women because it was women who were assigned to be Link Trainer instructors.

. . . We had the patience. We could learn an awful lot. . . using the Link Trainer as a training means, even though some of us were not pilots, and I happened to have been a pilot. And I did help others.

RT: It's interesting. You maybe would have expected that all Link Trainers would be certified pilots, but that was not the case.

JLM: Not the case. Some of the best trainers we had, some of the best instructors... were not pilots.

. . . I was very proud to be in the WAVES, particularly in the section to which I was sent, because not everybody got that. And I was proud of it. I wanted everybody, including my family, to be proud of what I had accomplished – the grades that I had gone up in and how I distinguished myself.

### Questions for Reading 3 and Quotations to Consider

1. What job did Morris have in the WAVES at Quonset Point?
2. Why was Morris's role critical to military training efforts? How was it complex?
3. How did Morris's background and interests prepare her for her role?
4. What barriers and opportunities for women are similar across McCutcheon (Reading 2) and Morris's stories?

### *Readings 2 – 3 and Quotations to Consider*

5. What were some of the motivations of women to join the WAVES? Compare the motivations across the readings and quotations.
6. How are oral histories helpful for understanding perspectives from the home front? What are some of their limitations?

## Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did the WAVES support Naval operations and training in North Kingstown?

## Extension

### Exploring More Oral Histories

Support students in using the [Veterans History Project from the Library of Congress](#) to locate additional oral history interviews with women who served as WAVES at Naval Air Station Quonset Point. Students can search the project's service history records by

location to identify women who were stationed at Quonset Point. After reviewing additional interview(s), students should report new details they learn about military duties and social life and compare these insights with the sources and readings included in this lesson.

## Additional Resources

["A Connecticut WAVE at Quonset Point,"](#) by Marie Virginia Murdock Duggins for Small State, Big History

[Camp Endicott: Naval Construction Training Center, Davisville, Rhode Island Yearbook](#) from Naval History and Heritage Command

["So Proudly They Served: Rhode Island Waves in World War II,"](#) By Evelyn M. Cherpak, Rhode Island History, 61(1), 2003.

# Lesson 3: Civilian Workforce and Volunteerism in North Kingstown, World War II Heritage City

## About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series about the World War II home front in [North Kingstown, Rhode Island](#), [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains readings and photos to contribute to learners' understandings about home front war efforts made by local civilians, including children. The readings connect to an example of defense manufacturing with women in the workforce and share examples of ways students contributed to war financing and activities like material drives.

## Objectives:

1. Explain why women entered the local industry workforce to support the war, and the importance of this to home front efforts.
2. Describe the purpose and examples of home front volunteerism, including youth contributions.
3. Compare local, historical perspectives on service to synthesize and connect to larger wartime perspectives and themes.

## Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 14-18 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2, 3
3. *Recommended: Map of Rhode Island with North Kingstown, Davisville, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett marked*



## Getting Started: Essential Question

How did civilians in North Kingstown contribute to the war effort through their jobs, volunteer work, and other home front activities?

## Photos



Figure 14: "Chute-Packin'" Grandmother, Mrs. Rose Quinlan worked at the parachute shop for the Navy in Quonset. Her husband, a World War I veteran, worked as a steamfitter for the Public Works department. Three of their sons were serving in the armed services during the war. From the Quonset Scout, April 19, 1944.

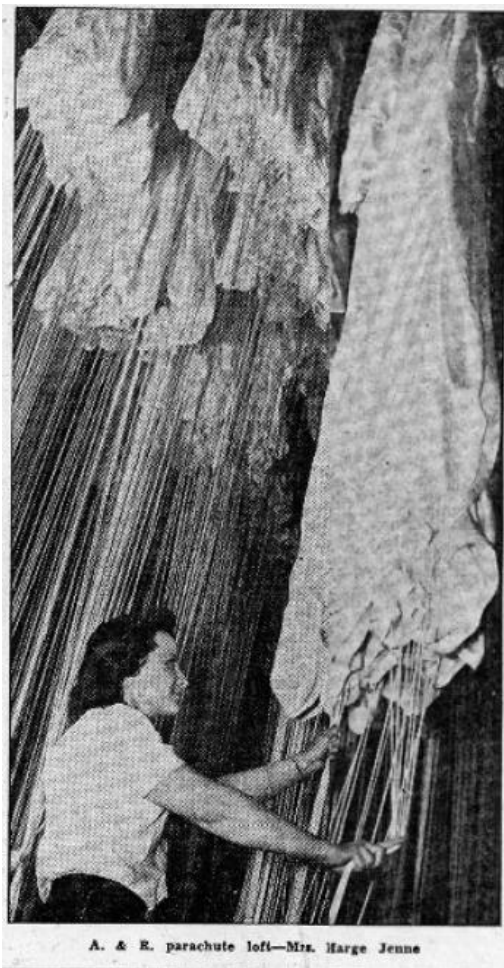


Figure 15: "A. & R. parachute left – Mrs. Marge Jenne." From the Quonset Scout, April 19, 1944. The photo accompanied Reading 1 in this lesson.



Figure 16: A. & R. parachute packing – Mildred Carlum, Marge Jenne, Mary DiBona, Steffie Tessitore. From the Quonset Scout, April 19, 1944. The photo accompanied Reading 1 in this lesson.



### By the numbers:

- Over 70 children in 8<sup>th</sup> grade at the North Kingstown Junior High School collected pennies to buy War Savings Stamps. On February 10, 1943 alone, the students turned in 3000 pennies in exchange for stamps. [*The Standard*, February 11, 1943]

[*Note: The federal government had requested that the copper pennies be kept in circulation for the war effort. This was to prevent coins from being saved when metals were critical to war production, like copper being used to produce artillery. Learn more about pennies nicknamed “Steelies” and currency on the home front in ["Currency on the World War II Home Front"](#) from the National Park Service.*]

- Three highway trucks owned by North Kingstown picked up 4,320 pounds of tin can scrap on Monday, September 27, 1943. [*The Standard*, September 30, 1943]
- The North Kingston-Exeter Motor Corps had seventeen member corps by January 6, 1944, and three officers who drove an average of 400 miles a month. The Motor Corps supported activities like taking people to donate blood plasma, delivering surgical dressings, and collecting Red Cross sewing projects. [*The Standard*, January 6, 1944]



### Quotation to consider:

“Strangely enough, the oldest things in town are those which prove you, Wickford, up to the minute in modernity – in the latest and most acid phases of modernity – the war. Your scrap pile, rusted and corroded with age and weather, is a tribute to your fighting citizens. Your Salvage Flag is flying. You’ve got money in your pockets. I’ve ready you’re going to spend it on local charities. War bonds would have made it a double feature of patriotism, but duty to the community well-being shouldn't be entirely lost in a stampede of war effort. In any event, let’s hope the enemy is trampled underfoot in short order.

- From the “Out-of-Town Crier,” *The Standard*, January 21, 1943 (*Note: Wickford is a small village in North Kingstown.*)



### Read to Connect

*Teacher Tip: This lesson is only one example of civilians in war industries and manufacturing in the area. You may support students in researching other local examples.*

*[Note: The Heritage City designation of North Kingstown includes military installations and municipalities located within the Town of North Kingstown, Rhode Island, including Davisville, Camp Endicott, Quonset Point, and Quidnessett. Use lesson 1 to learn more about the general military installation history of the area.]*

## Reading 1: Newspaper Article

### 'Pay Off' In Chocolates

#### *Women Chute Mech's Work is Appreciated*

From the *Quonset Scout*, April 19, 1944 (p.5), [Providence College Archives and Special Collections](#)

In this war, it's nice to know your work is appreciated.

If you're a busy woman at a war industry lathe, you never know what happens to the thousands of guns and shells your shop turns out. The gals of the A. & R. parachute shop have better luck.

#### Appreciation

Take Mrs. Marge Jenne, senior 'chute packer in the 'chute shop – last week from a grateful Navy pilot came a box of chocolates, in appreciation for her part in saving his skin when he was forced to bail out in a parachute folded and packed on the long tables at the A. & R. shop at Quonset. Occasionally, the gift is more potent – a quart of Scotch is not an unusual gesture from a salvaged flier who found the packer's card in his 'lifesaver.'

Harold R. Brown, leading man in charge of the A. & R. 'chute shop, believes these friendly gestures of appreciation are the parachute packers' due. Women, he believes from long supervision of their work, are just a bit quicker on the draw than males in the delicate art of pleating and packing the huge silk canopies: 'they are more apt to spot something wrong' - and something wrong in the packing is what must not happen.

#### Four 'Chute Mechanics

A. & R. has four parachute mechanics, certified as such by the Civil Aeronautics Authority, government licensing agency for all parachute workers. Mrs. Jenne started in Augusta, Me., working with Mr. Brown when he conducted a parachute service for New England flyers. She was the first woman to make a parachute jump in New England – a 2000 foot drop that ended – but safely – in a tree. Since she has jumped five other times but none from necessity. She is the wife of Chief M. L. Jenne, of A. & R., and lives at Wickford.

With her work Miss Mary DiBona, of Providence, Miss Steffie V. Terristore, and Miss Mildred Carlum, of West Warwick, all of whom began as sewers in the Quonset shop and worked

up to their present ratings. Theirs must be the final touch on repacks – which often reach as many as 1400 a month. Major overhauls reach 600 ‘chutes a month.

### Had 1500 Jumps

The heavy responsibility of A.&R.’s ‘chute shop is Brown’s. Rated as a leading parachute mechanic by CAA, he is a flyer and the veteran of 1500 jumps. He began to fly in 1926 and joined up with a flying circus, conducting air shows all over the country, with difficult and delayed and stunt jumps as part of their repertoire. He never tried anything more sensational than a 14,000 drop and doesn’t care to, thank you. His appreciation of the safety factor is highly personal- and very likely, sharpens the eagle eye he must apply to ‘chute-packing for the Navy’s airmen.

Behind the work of the packers are the sewers, who build ‘chute harnesses, attach the shrouds, sew in the panels – the solid machinery of production that cannot fail at any point. Here again, keen-eyed inspection, infinite care, skilled workmanship are all that counts for the final breath-taking test . . . somewhere, thousands of miles away probably, a split second ahead of death. A box of chocolates indeed!

### Questions for Reading 1 and Photos

1. Why was Marge Jenne gifted a box of chocolates?
2. What was the importance of the A. & R. parachute shop and the women who worked there?
3. How does Harold Brown describe women’s skills in parachute packing? What does his language suggest about gender expectations at the time?
4. How do you think the article served as propaganda or to build wartime morale?  
Support your reasoning with details from the reading.

### Photos

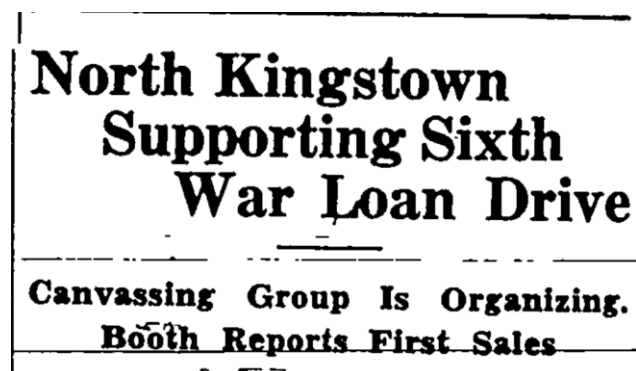


Figure 17: “North Kingstown Supporting Sixth War Loan Drive: Canvassing Group Is Organizing. Booth Reports First Sales.”  
Headline from *The Standard*, December 7, 1944.



Figure 18: A “V for Victory” cartoon in the North Kingstown newspaper featured war savings bonds posters stacked to make a V. *The Standard*, January 16, 1942.

## Reading 2: Newspaper Article

*Background: Allenton and Slocum are villages within North Kingstown. If looking to compare, [Valley City, North Dakota](#) (Lesson 3) is another example of a Heritage City that had students contributing to the purchases of jeeps.*

### "Allenton School Children Saving to Purchase Jeep"

*The Standard*, January 28, 1943

Children in the third and fourth grades of the Allenton Grammar School are all pepped up over the idea of buying enough War Savings Stamps and Bonds to meet the cost of an army Jeep.

The plan was adopted around Christmas time and since then stamps bought by the children have been turned in for five \$25 bonds and that number is expected to be increased to eight by the end of this school week.

Over 40 children are saving to meet the cost of a Jeep which according to the war department is around \$900 each. When the children have purchased 50 bonds, enough cash will have been realized by the War Savings Department to cover the cost of making one Jeep. At the rate the youngsters are going they will reach their goal within a year. Miss Hope Arnold, teacher of the grades is in charge of the project.

Following the purchase of the fiftieth bond the army will arrange to have a Jeep representing the purchase, run around to the school and take the children for short trips. This will be a gala day and the boys and girls are looking forward to it with lively anticipation.

The fifth and sixth grades at the school are also engaged in a wartime project and are making scrap books to show their part in the war effort. Pictures, news clippings, original jingles and poems go into the books as proof of the children's interest in and understanding of the war program. The books will be sent to Washington, D.C., to be judged for comparative merit with those sent in by children from other parts of the nation. Suitable awards will follow for those given a high rating.

Pupils enrolled in the school are from the Allenton and Slocum area.

## Questions for Reading 2

1. What wartime activities were the students involved in?
2. Why might students have been motivated to participate? Would you have been motivated?
3. How did buying War Savings Stamps and Bonds help support the U.S. during the war?
4. Newspaper stories often highlighted positive community efforts during wartime as a form of propaganda and morale-building. What message do you think this article was trying to send to readers? Use details from the reading to support your answer.

## Reading 3: Newspaper Article

*Teacher Tip: The following contains excerpts from the newspaper article. A selection of the children's pieces is included here as a sample.*

*You may use this National Park Service article as a background text for the connections to scrap drives and collection: [Material Drives on the World War II Home Front](#).*

## School Children Denounce Axis Nations in Jingles

*The Standard*, February 4, 1943

Pupils in all four grades of the Allenton Grammar School know just how they feel in the war situation and have no difficulty in expressing themselves with their vocabularies. Not only can they make pointed remarks against the three Axis boys in language of the times but can say it in rhyme as well.

In fact they have said it in jingles so well that these bits of verse will go into scrap books which will be tangible proof of their part and understanding of the country's war effort.

The efforts of grades three, four, five and six along these lines can be appreciated by reading a few passed on by their teachers, Miss Sullivan and Miss Hope Arnold. The jingles follow:

### Help With Tin

I don't gather some tin

And Uncle Sammy will be getting thin

But if I do gather some tin

I hope we get enough to win.

-Charles Northup, Grade 3 . . .

### Help Win the War

I try to buy a stamp a day

To help win throughout the old fashioned way

So try to buy a stamp a day throughout the U.S.A.

-Barabara Brown, 9 years old, Grade 5 . . .

### United We Stand

I'm joining the Junior Red Cross,

I've bought war bonds and stamps, too.

I collect scrap metal and rubber,

For my beloved Red, White and Blue.

I worked in the heat of summer,  
I planted potatoes and corn,  
I weeded my garden carefully,  
Hoping a new America would be born.  
We save iron, tin and rubber,  
All my family buys war bonds and stamps.  
It provides money to lick the Axis,  
As well as those Japanese tramps.  
-Harry Huling [Grade 6]

### What I'm Doing to Help Win the War

My brother and I collect scrap metal and tin cans. We think it's fun to step on them. We each buy five ten cent stamps a week. I already have a bond. We are trying to buy a Jeep at school. We don't go to the movies very often now so we can save gas and tires. We don't use so much sugar now. I am a Girl Scout and brother and I both are in the Junior Red Cross. - Jean Moon (Grade 6)

### Questions for Reading 3

1. What different kinds of wartime contributions are described by the children across their pieces? How were these important to the larger war effort?
2. Harry Huling wrote as part of his poem, "hoping a new America would be born." What do you think he might have meant by that?
3. How did the war shape children's daily lives and responsibilities? Share examples from their writing.
4. Do you consider this article propaganda for the wider newspaper audience? Why or why not?
5. Connect to both Reading 2 and 3: What do the readings suggest about how schools encouraged children to understand and participate in the war on the home front?

## Lesson Closing

Answer the essential question: How did civilians in North Kingstown contribute to the war effort through their jobs, volunteer work, and other home front activities?

*Additional reflection questions:*

Compare the volunteer activities in this lesson to ways you can volunteer in communities today. What similarities and differences do you see?

Which of these home front efforts (employment or volunteering) would you have been interested in participating in if you lived in North Kingstown at the time? How might your personal skills or circumstances influence your decision?

# Lesson 4: North Kingstown, Rhode Island: Comparing and Connecting WWII Home Front Cities

## About this Lesson

This lesson is part of a series teaching about the World War II home front, with [North Kingstown, Rhode Island](#) designated as a [World War II Heritage City](#). The lesson contains photos, readings and a culminating project. The first reading connects to the local military training and operations, and also the impact of the war on the area. The second reading connects the region to the designation of a Heritage City. The culminating project contributes to learners' understandings of North Kingstown, Rhode Island as a WWII Heritage City, with the opportunity to combine lesson themes from the three other lessons in the North Kingstown [lesson collection](#). This is to summarize the city's contributions and encourage connections to the overall home front efforts.

## Objectives:

In a culminating product:

- a. Describe military training and operations in North Kingstown and describe the historical impact to the Allied efforts.
- b. Explain the challenges faced and the accomplishments of women in the WAVES in North Kingstown.
- c. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilian workers and volunteers to home front wartime efforts, including those of youth.
- d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences between North Kingstown and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

## Materials for Students:

1. Photos: Figures 19-22 (*can be displayed digitally*)
2. Readings 1, 2
3. Maps, project materials (as needed)
4. Student graphic organizers (See Figure 23 at end of lesson, for reference)

- Create Comparison Matrices for your students to use. To compare two cities, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows. Label the left column Theme/Topic and the other columns City 1 and City 2. For a Comparison Matrix for three cities simply add an additional column.
- Create two Single-Point Rubrics to assist students' self-assessment. One is for assessing proficiency in meeting teacher-selected standards. One is for assessing proficiency in meeting objectives.
- For the rubric on standards, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows of content. Label the first column "Areas for Improvement," the second column, "Proficient (Meeting Standard)," and the third column, "Areas of Exceeding Standard." Leave the first and third columns blank. In each row of the second column identify a Standard and indicate a space for noting the evidence for meeting the standard. Include a space at the bottom of the page for assigning points for each column.
- For the rubric on objectives, create a one-page sheet with three columns and four rows of content. Label the first column "Areas for Improving toward Objective," the second column, "Proficient (Meeting Objective)," and the third column, "Areas of Exceeding Objective." Leave the first and third columns blank. In the four rows of the second column identify these four objectives:
  - a. Describe military training and operations in North Kingstown and describe the historical impact to the Allied efforts.
  - b. Explain the challenges faced and the accomplishments of women in the WAVES in North Kingstown.
  - c. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilian workers and volunteers to home front wartime efforts, including that of youth.
  - d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences between North Kingstown and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

Include a space at the bottom of the page for assigning points for each column. See the last photo of this lesson for reference.



## Getting Started: Essential Question

Why was North Kingstown chosen as a World War II Heritage City, and what are its similarities and differences to other home front cities?

## Photos



Figure 19: "Line of cars near Main Gate, train from Providence in background – Naval Air Station, Quonset Point, R.I." 7-10-1941. (Historic American Engineering Record - Library of Congress)



Figure 20: Seabees repairing heavy equipment at Camp Endicott. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



Figure 21: Seabees constructing a Quonset Hut. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.

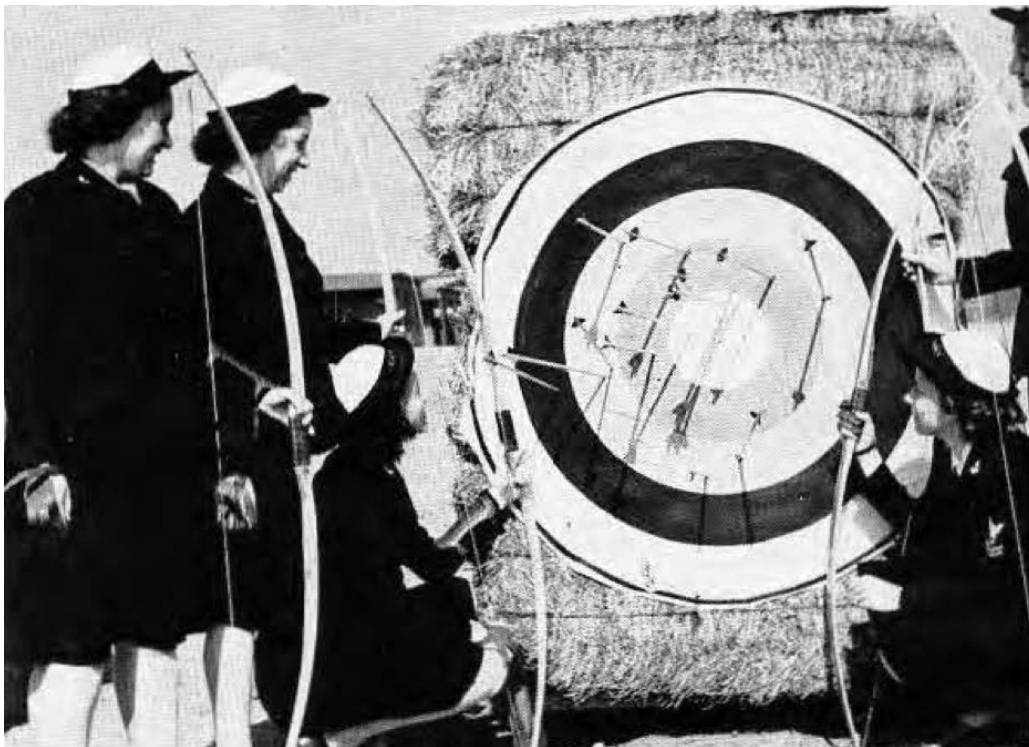


Figure 22: WAVES participating in archery at Camp Endicott. From a Camp Endicott yearbook by the U.S. Navy Department, Office of Public Relations.



## Quotations to consider:

“A group of ten high school youths between the ages of 16 and 17 which will be known as a Maritime Instruction Unit, held its initial meeting at the North Kingstown High School last night. The group, under the instruction of Naval men from the Quonset Naval Air Station, will learn the practical aspects of seamanship in order to give them a good start if and when they join the navy.”

- “High School Boys To Learn Seamanship,” *The Standard*, January 28, 1943

“At last the peoples of the world were free again – free to work, free to pray, and free to live in unity with their fellowmen. The dawn brought plans for a new peace – one that is hoped to last for all time.

Quonset Point – with a new air of freedom filling the air – settled down once more to finish the job it started, knowing that its part was instrumental in helping the Allies to win world peace.”

- From the *Quonset Scout*, August 23, 1945 (p.3), reporting on the local reactions to the surrender of the Japanese (From the [Providence College Archives and Special Collections](#))



## By the numbers: Population

The population of North Kingstown, Rhode Island was 4,604 in 1940. By 1950 it had increased by 208% to 14,180. The population increase can largely be attributed to the military expansion and development in the area. (U.S. Census)

## Reading 1: Newspaper Article

*Teacher Tip: The text discusses civilian defense efforts. These [Pascagoula, Mississippi](#) and [Lewistown, Montana](#) (H)our History lessons from the National Park Service provide additional connection points to civilian defense in designated World War II Heritage cities.*

## North Kingstown Looks Back on the Old Year

*The Standard*, Thursday, December 31, 1942

Like most every other populated spot on the face of the globe, North Kingstown was shaken by the events of the past year to a marked degree. Greatly affected by preparations for a possible war in 1941, the town and other communities of the nation has undergone many more changes since war finally was forced upon the United States.

As a direct result of the war, activities at the Quonset Naval Air Station continued at a feverish pace while the establishment of the Davisville Advance Base became a reality with the government taking hundreds of more acres of land.

The town like others throughout the nation was quick to mobilize groups of citizens into a Civilian Defense organization which has grown to take in several hundreds of persons and which functions in coordinated groups in carrying out a State-directed program.

The first war casualty among men from the town came as Capt. Leroy H. Allen of West Wickford lost his life when the tug which he commanded in salvage operations, was sunk off the Atlantic Coast by an enemy submarine.

The year also brought greatly increased enrollment in the schools of the town and some Federal aid in meeting the increased cost of operation. A temporary elementary school during the later part of the year was also begun near the air station and is now in the process of construction. Several more teachers were also hired. . . .

Along with the increased wartime population came more mail for the several post offices of the town to handle. Wickford was swamped and although more clerks were added the space at the office soon proved inadequate for handling the volume flowing in and out of the office. The Chamber of Commerce and The Main Street Association joined hands in a determined effort to relieve the situation and temporary measures were taken to ease the congestion before more lasting arrangements can be made. The office was changed from third to second class and the office at Allenton was advanced from fourth to third.

Demands upon the time of the Visiting Nurse became so great during the year that a special nurse to take care of the school children was hired. With an office in the high school building the nurse is now working on a part time basis but the new plan has afforded a welcome relief.

In the churches the rationing of gas and tires began to be felt but programs and services were conducted as usual and provided spiritual aid from the distress of war time. . . . This year was a good one for the Girl Scout organization and the troops in the town now number 9, which is an increase of 4 troops in that period. The Boy Scouts, suffering from a lack of leaders taken by enlistments, drafts or war industry, have been hard hit and are just hanging on. . . .

In the military services of the nation, North Kingstown has in the past twelve months sent many more of her youths and now over 200 from this area are in the various branches of the armed forces fighting to preserve freedom and all which that means to America.

The year goes out with more hope than it brought in as we, now geared to wartime living, begin to see the first fruits of initial success against the Axis enemy.

### Questions for Reading 1, Quotations to Consider, and By the Numbers

1. How did the growth of the military presence in North Kingstown affect the population and development of the area?
2. How do school enrollment and nurse shortages show pressure on local systems and infrastructure?
3. The author says they are now “geared to wartime living.” What examples of wartime living are shown in the reading? What might be missing?
4. How might residents have experienced the changes to North Kingstown differently? How might their opinions on the changes differ? (Ex. Displaced families, women, children, new arrivals, service members)
5. How did home front contributions, both paid and volunteer, in North Kingstown support the US and the Allies? Consider both information from this text and from past lessons.

### Reading 2: Heritage City Designation

**Excerpt from:** “[House Report 115-998](#), “*To Direct the Secretary of the Interior to Annually Designate at Least One City in The United States as An ‘American World War II Heritage City,’ and for other purposes*” (October 30, 2018)

“ . . .PURPOSE OF THE BILL

The purpose of H.R. 6118 is to direct the Secretary of the Interior to annually designate at least one city in the United States as an “American World War II Heritage City”.

BACKGROUND AND NEED FOR LEGISLATION

On December 7, 1941, military forces of the Empire of Japan attacked the U.S. Naval Fleet and ground bases at Pearl Harbor in Hawaii. On December 8, 1941, one day after what President Roosevelt referred to as, “a date which will live in infamy,” the United States declared war against the Empire of Japan. Three days later, on December 11, 1941, Japan's ally, Germany, declared war on the United States. Sixteen million Americans, mostly young

working-age men, served in the military during World War II, out of an overall United States population of 113 million.

While an unprecedented number of Americans served in World War II, the country drastically increased its war production on the home front, serving not only the needs of the armed forces of the United States but her allies as well--in what President Franklin Roosevelt called “The Arsenal of Democracy.” The combination of millions serving in the military, during a period of necessary and drastic increases in production, led to significant social changes on the American home front.

The World War II period resulted in the largest number of people migrating within the United States in the history of the country. Individuals and families relocated to industrial centers for good paying jobs out of a sense of patriotic duty. Many industrial centers became “boomtowns,” growing at phenomenal rates. One example, the City of Richmond, California, grew from a population of under 24,000 to over 100,000 during the war. . . .”

### Questions for Reading 2 and Photos

1. What was the purpose of the bill (H.R. 6118)?
2. What contributed to the North Kingstown area’s growth as a “boomtown”?
3. Why do you think North Kingstown was designated as a World War II Heritage City? Connect details from the bill and evidence from the first reading, and/or other readings from the other lessons.
4. Are there other cities you think of when considering home front contributions during wartime? Which, and why?
5. Explain how each photo relates to North Kingstown’s designation as a Heritage City. What local and national themes do the images represent?

## Culminating Activity/Mastery Product

To demonstrate student understanding, support students in creating a final product that meets the following objectives:

- a. Describe military training and operations in North Kingstown and describe the historical impact to the Allied efforts.
- b. Explain the challenges faced and the accomplishments of women in the WAVES in North Kingstown.
- c. Summarize the contributions and volunteerism of civilian workers and volunteers to home front wartime efforts, including that of youth.

- d. *Optional:* Describe similarities and differences between North Kingstown and other Heritage city(s) or World War II home front(s).

### Mastery products should be:

- . . . **student-led;** Students work as individuals or in collaborative groups.
- . . . **student-directed:** Students are offered a variety of choices for product type.
- . . . **student-organized;** Teacher facilitates by providing students with the comparison matrices and/or resource links from throughout the series of lessons.
- . . . **student-assessed;** Teacher supports student self-assessment and reflection by providing students single-point rubrics to assess for meeting standards and/or lesson objectives.

Note: Depending on time and scope, the comparison of North Kingstown, Rhode Island to another WWII Heritage or home front city(s) within the mastery product (objectives) may be omitted. However, comparing cities is recommended, as it connects students to a deeper understanding of the WWII home front.

### Examples of mastery product choices include, but are not limited to:

- **Written:** Letter (opinion or informative), essay, poem, narratives, biography, articles, class book or children's book, speech or debate (then presented orally), blog / website, plaque or historical displays, pamphlets or rack cards
- **Graphic Organizers:** timeline, flowcharts, mind or concept content maps, Venn diagrams, comparison matrices, posters
- **Artistic Expression:** song, dance, theater (ex. skits), 3-D models, dioramas, photo journal, stamp and coin designs, visual art, architecture/building or monument, museum design
- **Media design and creation:** podcast, historical markers, social media content, interactive virtual maps or tours, infographics, video, comic strips or graphics, game design, slideshows, digital scrapbook

Please view the [NPS Heritage cities lesson collection](#) for information and resources on other cities.

## Single-Point Rubric

Areas for Improvement	Proficient (Meeting Standard)	Areas of Exceeding Standard
	<b>Standard:</b> _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	<b>Standard:</b> _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	<b>Standard:</b> _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
	<b>Standard:</b> _____ Evidence of meeting standard: •	
<b>Points</b>		

Figure 23: Single-Point Rubric (Standards; Blank) [Teacher selects priority standards for assessment.] Courtesy of Sarah Nestor Lane

## Acknowledgment

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