

Supplement A
Historical Preservation

Supplement B
The NOL Naval Reserve
Officers Unit (NORC-511)

Submitted by
Frank Koubek and Bob Barnet

A short while back, I received a photo and a brief note from Bob Barnet regarding the

NOL Naval Reserve Officers Unit (NORC-511) of long ago. Later, we talked by phone to fill in more details so that I was able to write this true Oral History of NORC-511.

Bob told me that in the early years of its existence, NOL formed an in-house Naval reserve unit made up of NOL personnel who were commissioned officers in the naval reserve. In the event of a major national emergency, such as an all out war, the Unit's officers, in all probability, would remain at NOL in their civilian positions but would be in uniform in officers billets. Bob Barnet was a charter member, having been a Navy lieutenant at the Navy Plastics Laboratory in Silver Spring during WW II. (Bob and I are now collaborating on a LEAF Oral History article on the Silver Spring Plastics Lab for a future issue.) Another early member of the Unit was Dr. Ralph Bennett, NOL's first Technical Director.

Bob went on to tell me that the Unit meetings were held in the NOL auditorium after working hours. The meetings featured films, guest speakers and other pertinent military related training activities. The chain of command (commanding officer, executive officer, etc.) shifted every year without regard to rank. Promotions in rank occurred over the years of the Unit's existence. Bob added that both he and Al Lightbody eventually were promoted to Captain. Jim Martin was also a Captain.

Accompanying the phot submitted by Bob Barnet and included in this history was a diagram (prepared by Bob) identifying some of the officers. The photo was taken at the US Naval Medical Center during a special briefing visit of the Unit. In the back row, on the far left, is John Fedenia. Next to John is Al Lightbody. Fifth from the left in the back row is Bob Barnet, wearing the "over-seas cap." In the middle row, far right is Nick Sarellas—Nick ran the NOL shops. Then in the front row, far left, is Jim Martin and next to Jim is Don Webber. How many other people can you I.D. in the photo? Incidentally, the photo only includes those officers who attended the Medical Center visit. Thus, absent members are not pictured.

Other recollections of the unit are that it was sort of a semi-active reserve unit in that unlike a fully active reserve unit, the members were not paid for sessions in the NOL auditorium. However, they did get credit points for retirement and promotion purposes. Also, they could serve TDY (Temporary Active Duty) assignments—usually two weeks on a navy ship at sea or at some other naval installation, such as the Main Navy Department downtown on Constitution Avenue (later moved to Crystal City). TDY was usually, but not always, a pay status situation. It did include retirement and promotion points for each day of TDY.

What can you recall about the NOL Reserve Officers Unit? Perhaps you can ID more people on the photo and shed more light on the Unit's activities. Send your input to the Editor of the LEAF.

Editor Note: I told Bob that I knew about Unit because a large bronze plaque about the Unit's charter hung next to elevator on first floor in Lobby area. I also believe the officer who is in the middle row, third from right is Robert J. Miller. He worked at NOL, BuOrd, ASWSPO, and OP-95. He was my boss in the 60's in Bldg 90 when I worked for the Systems Analysis Office.