

USNS Lucy Stone Christened as MSC's Newest Fleet Replenishment Oiler



Story by [Sarah Cannon](#), [Military Sealift Command Pacific](#), Sept. 21, 2024

SAN DIEGO-Fleet replenishment oiler USNS Lucy Stone (T-AO 209), the Military Sealift Command's newest ship, was christened during a ceremony at the General Dynamics NASSCO shipyard in San Diego, Calif., today.

The event was attended by Secretary of the Navy, Carlos Del Toro; Meredith Berger, Assistant Secretary of the Navy for Energy, Installations and Environment; Vice Adm. John F. G. Wade, commander, U.S. THIRD Fleet; Vice Adm. Jeffrey Jablon, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Installations and Logistics; Rear Adm. Thomas J. Anderson, Program Executive Officer, Ships; Capt. Micah Murphy, commander, Military Sealift Command Pacific; U.S. Merchant Marine Capt. Lee Apsley, Stone's civil service master; as well as executives and employees of NASSCO San Diego.

The ship honors American suffragist Lucy Stone, who joined other notable advocates such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, Ernestine Rose, and Antoinette Brown Blackwell to petition for suffrage and abolition in the 19th century. Her efforts as a founder of the Women's National Loyal League were essential to the passage of the Thirteenth Amendment abolishing slavery.

"In choosing to name this ship after Lucy Stone, Secretary Mabus and Secretary Berger knew the legacy of this remarkable woman, who dedicated her life to freedom and to equality for

all, "said Deborah Donnley Simmons, Stone co-sponsor. "Her legacy will continue to be told, as this ship sails throughout the world."

The official christening moment happened when the ship's co-sponsors, Alicia Aadnesen Deborah Donley Simmons broke a bottle of champagne over the ship's bow with the words, "For the United States of America, I christen you the USNS Lucy Stone. May God bless this ship and all who sail on her." Following the christening moment, the ship blew her horns and slid down the rails, amid a fanfare of music from the Navy Band Southwest and red, white and blue streamers.

"The enduring legacy of Lucy Stone as a trailblazer in the women's rights movement remains an indelible source of inspiration today," said Del Torro. "How extraordinary that all of these years later, today, our United States Navy is headed-up by the Chief of Naval Operations, a female by the name of Adm. Lisa Franchetti. It would not have been possible if it had not been for the efforts of Lucy Stone."

The 746-foot Stone is the fifth ship in the new John Lewis-class previously known as the TAO(X). This class of oilers has the ability to carry 162,000 barrels of diesel ship fuel, aviation fuel and dry stores cargo. The upgraded oiler is built with double hulls to protect against oil spills and strengthened cargo and ballast tanks and will be equipped with a basic self-defense capability. The Lewis-class of oilers will replace the current Kaiser Class fleet replenishment oilers as they age out of the MSC fleet. The ship will be manned by a crew of about 100 civilian Merchant Mariners, sailing under the operational control of MSC.

"In order to maintain sustained operations at sea, our Navy warships rely on Military Sealift Command's Combat Logistics Fleet," said Del Toro. "Despite the challenges posed by shortfalls in numbers, MSC continues to play a vital roll in

supporting our nation's logistics readiness. I thank all of our Merchant Mariners for answering our national call to maritime service, and for their ongoing efforts to recruit and maintain our critical capabilities!"