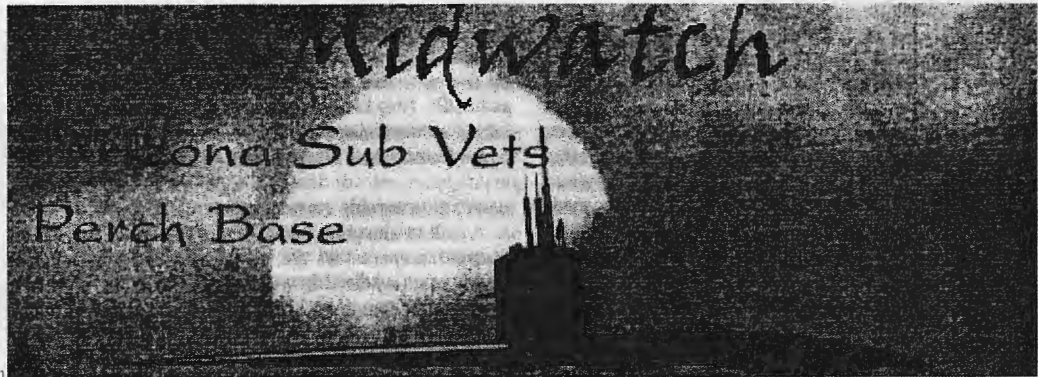




April, 2003
Volume 9 - Issue 4



<http://perch-base.org>

BASE OFFICERS

COMMANDER:

Glenn Herold
839 North Rogers
Mesa, AZ 85201-3849
480-962-6115
duke7@cox.net

VICE COMMANDER:

Adrian Stuke
739 West Kilarea Ave.
Mesa, AZ 85201-6814
480-892-3296
adrianstuk@aol.com

SECRETARY:

Edgar Brooks
517 Eagle Crest Dr.
Prescott, AZ 86301-5424
928-778-4069
etbrooks62@aol.com

TREASURER & MEM. CHAIR:

Bob May
10015 W Royal Oak Rd. #341
Sun City, AZ 85351-6100
623-875-1212

COB:

Douglas LaRock
6400 E Thomas Rd #2001
Scottsdale, AZ 85251-6070
480-659-4134
sewerpipesailor@hotmail.com

STOREKEEPER:

Garry L. Shumann
824 North Rogers St.
Mesa, AZ 85201-3849
480-495-5639
garry1@cox.net

MEMBERSHIP/WEBMASTER:

Ramon Samson
13210 N Lake Forest Dr.
Sun City, AZ 85351-3252
623-815-9247
rsamson@bnswest.net

CHAPLAIN:

Warner H Doyle
13600 W. Roanoke Ave.
Goodyear, AZ 85338-2236
623-935-3830
d-hdoyle@worldnet.att.net

PUBLIC RELATIONS:

Ben Acosta
12914 W. Alvarado Rd.
Avondale, AZ 85323-7142
602-935-7752
Benvirg@juno.com

HISTORIAN:

James W Newman
3422 North 51st Place
Phoenix, AZ 85018-6120
602-840-7788

MIDWATCH EDITOR:

Chuck Emmett
7011 W. Risner Rd.
Glendale, AZ 85308
602-843-9042
chuckster41@earthlink.net



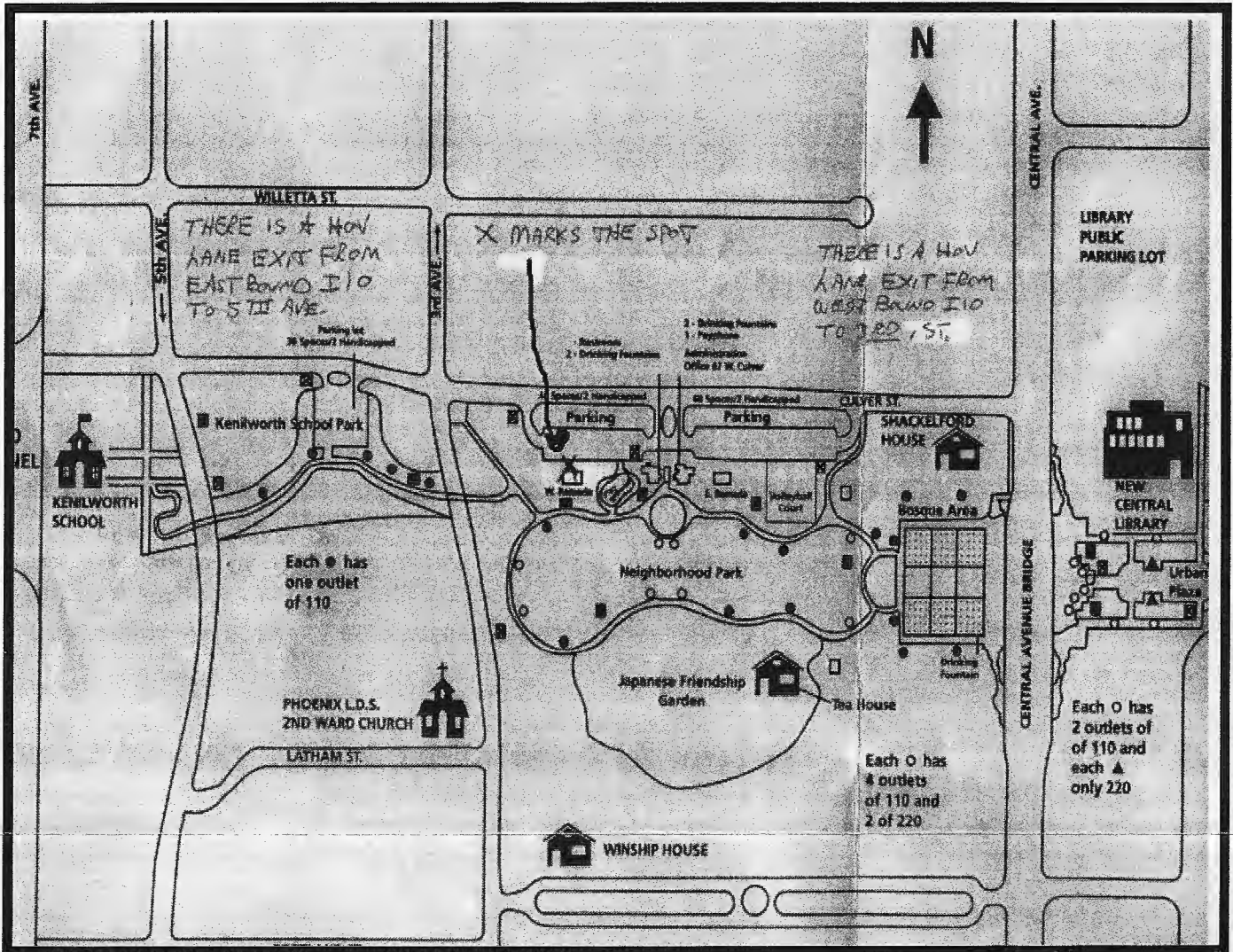
Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol

APRIL ETERNAL PATROLS

USS Pickerel	SS177	April 3, 1943	74 men
USS Snook	SS279	April 8, 1945	84 men
USS Tresher	SSN593	April 10, 1963	129 men
USS Grenadier	SS210	April 22, 1943	4 men (as POWs)

NO APRIL MEETING

See info inside on the Base Picnic,
April 12, Margaret T. Hance Deck Park



Perch Base

\$5

Annual Picnic - Saturday, April 12, 2003

\$5

Lunch served from 1300 to 1500 hours
\$5 per person

MENU

Ribs, Chicken, Spicy Sausage
Bar-B-Q Beans, Potato Salad, Cole Slaw
French Bread, Ice Tea, Lemonade, Sodas
Beer, Brownies, Cookies

Bring your own beer if you prefer but **NO WINE OR HARD LIQUOR**

\$5

\$5

Sailing Orders



**District 8 Meeting
(in conjunction with)
SVWWII Southwest Regional Caucus**

April 7 - 10 2003

Ramada Express Hotel and Casino in Laughlin, Nevada

The District 8 meeting will be held at 1600 hours in the Santa Fe Room on April 9. Room rates are \$18.00 plus tax and reservations must be made before February 15, 2003. Specify No. 7636 when making reservations to get the SubVets Rate. Reservation forms will be at the next meeting or contact Dave Harnish me by email and he will return a form. There is no fees charged to attend the district meeting but you must be registered to participate in any other event.

Annual Submariner Picnic

April 12 2003

Magaret T. Hance Park (Phoenix I-10 Deck Park)

The annual submariner picnic is scheduled for the Saturday after the SVWWII Southwest Regional Caucus. The location is the same as where we meet for the Veterans Day Parade. See map and menu, opposite. There is a playground at the ramada and the Phoenix Trolley Musuem is close by and the Japanese Friendship Garden is a short stroll away.

Next regular meeting is May 10, 2003

American Legion Post #62

11001 N. 99th Ave. at 1200 hours

Lunch provided at \$3 a head

Latest information - Joint National Convention

Reno, NV September 2 - 5, 2003

Host base (USSVI): CORVINA Base, Reno - Don Brown, Co-chairman

Host chapter (USSVWWII): Las Vegas Chapter - Paul Dornberg, Co-chairman

Host hotel: Reno Hilton (1300 rooms blocked off), over two-thirds have been booked, reserve now!

Approximately 45 boat reunions are planned!

All of the convention functions (with the exception of the golf outing) will be held at the host hotel.

"See You In September"

March Meeting Minutes

Minutes of the March Meeting Perch Base – USSVI

The regular monthly meeting of the members of the Arizona Submarine Veterans – Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #62; Peoria, AZ at 1300 hours, 08 March 2003. The meeting was called to order by the Base Commander - Dave Harnish.

The members were led in the "pledge of allegiance"; followed by the dedication, moment of silence for our departed shipmates, "tolling of the boats" and the invocation by Base Chaplain, Howard Doyle.

There were 25 members and 4 guests attending the meeting according to the sailing list.

The members welcomed new member; Greg Olson, with a round of applause.

The members also welcomed guests: Bob Gilmore, Harry McAfee and Jim Foote (USSVI - Western Regional Director).

It was moved and the motion seconded that the minutes from the January meeting be approved as published in the Base Newsletter; "The MidWatch". The motion carried by voice vote of the members present.

Treasurer (Robert May) reported the Base's financial status as of the first day of March, 2003:

A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

REPORTS BY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Vice Commander - Glenn Herold reported for the Ship's Store, indicating that the store had several new items - dolphin pins, Diesel Boats Forever patches, Cold War patches, vehicle decals and more. Glenn also encouraged members to consider purchasing the USSVI Flag. It is a great companion flag to fly with the National Ensign.

Chief of the Boat - Doug LaRock announced that the annual Perch Base Picnic will be held at Margaret Hance Park in Phoenix on Saturday April 12th. Other details will be published in the monthly newsletter and on the Perch Base Web Site.

Howard Doyle - Base Chaplain informed the members of the heart problems Garry Shumann was suffering and asked them to remember Garry in their prayers.

Chuck Emmett asked members to provide him, on a regular basis, any individual or family information worthy of mentioning in the newsletter. The objective is to include more member information in the "Midwatch".

OLD BUSINESS

Dave Harnish announced that the Perch Base Newsletter had been recently entered in competition for the USSVI Newsletter Award. Dave also read a citation the Perch Base sent to the "Joe Negri" awards committee nominating Ed Brooks for that award.

Dave informed the members that the Board of Directors had voted to donate the Base's TV/VCR equipment to the Arizona Veteran's Home.

Dave also reminded the members that those who plan to attend the National Convention in Reno (September 2 through 5, 2003) should make guest arrangements as soon as possible. Hotel rooms in the Convention Hotel are running out and the RV sites at the Convention RV Park are down to only 10 sites. A discussion was held as to ways members could get together at the convention and it was suggested that the Perch Base have a banner or placard to position at one of the tables in the Hospitality Room each day. Members could use that as a gathering point. Ed Brooks agreed to have a large placard made up for the occasion.

Dave Harnish briefed the members on the recent tragedy where a night club in Rhode Island burned and killed a large number of people - two of which were a Submarine Chief Petty Officer and his wife. The death of the Chief left 4 children without a father. A Fund has been set up within the USSVI Charitable Foundation (the Fredrickson Family Fund) to allow members to contribute to a trust fund for the children's future. Dave also informed the members that the Board of Directors had voted to contribute \$200 to this fund.

Mike Keating reminded everyone of the opportunity for members to interact with the Girl Scouts organization at a regional event in Chandler on April 26. Anyone interested should contact Mike.

Roger Cousin was asked to brief the members on the activities of the Phoenix Society (SSN 702). Roger took the floor and provided a detailed update of the progress in creating a memorial using the salvaged sail structure of the USS Phoenix (SSN-702.) The current prospective site for the memorial is to be near the VA Hospital. However, there is also growing support to locate the memorial at Steele Park near the Arizona Veteran's Home. Funds for the

(Continued on "MINUTES," page 12)



The Truth Emerges on Our New Base Vice-Commander

by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

[The following is an endorsement that Dex sent to Glenn Harold, the new USSVI Perch Base Commander, upon hearing about Adrian Stuke's elevation to Vice Commander.]

Glenn,

Adrian Stuke is a power-mad, ambitious, hierarchy climber. A despotic ruler, who crushes the peasant class he rules over. I speak as a former serf in the kingdom over which he ruled.

As a Leading Seaman, he was a fine decent human being... A lighthearted friend of the working man. However, with his elevation to QM3, power instantly corrupted him. He became power-drunk, breathing the elevated air of his lofty position. He beat me like a rented mule.

He repeatedly explained to me that Arliegh Burke personally appointed him to be a 'Petty Officer of the Line' and had grabbed him by the heels and dunked him into the gunk tank of maturity and sophisticated judgment. He repented his sins - which took him damn near two weeks - and ascended to the 'Golden Throne of Naval Leadership'.

From this elevated height, he looked down into the cess pit of the After Battery and instantly recognized the worthlessness of his former friends and low-end professional associates. He explained to those of us still snorkeling in the slime, how difficult it was to walk upright with the additional weight on his left arm represented by that fresh crow. He said that he planned to compensate for his pronounced port list by winning an aircraft carrier anchor pool and buying a ten-pound Rolex watch... And a Dolphin ring with a 25kt diamond as a center setting.

The magic wand that pronounced him to be a 'Petty Officer of the Line' did absolutely nothing to secure his bullshit valve. 'Vice Commander' appears most appropriate, since nobody on the face of the earth knows more about the subject of vice. As a matter of fact, he once authored a book entitled *Vice and Prostitution for Fun and Profit within Five Blocks of DesSub Piers*. Yes, if you were looking for an expert on vice, you got one of the best.

Also, when you selected this 'Paragon of Proper Behavior', you were probably unaware that he has been inducted in the Naval Paint Thieves Hall of Fame and holds a number of records in various categories of 'Willful Destruction of Naval Property', having covered a major portion of the Atlantic Ocean floor with chipping hammers, paint scrapers, Pyrex coffee cups, one pneumatic three-prong knuckle-buster signed for by a lousy COB, Ensign Williams' framed photo of his mother, the COB's referees whistle, and numerous (to remain nameless) empty cans in weighted GDU bags, shortly after the completion of a first night in battery charge.

Far be it from me to be a tattletale, but your new Vice Commander never fessed up as to how a set of woman's step-ins got neatly tucked in behind the bolted flange of the 0-2 level chart table. As the Captains phone talker, a position carried on Requin's Watch, Quarter and Station Bill as the 'Old Man's Cigar Store Indian', I was present when the skipper found these 'gear-adrift' panties that my friend standing in the starboard lookout shears at the time, had removed from a certain barmaid the night before, while doing homework for his correspondence course in door-to-door gynecology.

He made me an accessory after the fact in many of his questionable activities and taught me that submarine tenders and sheep were intended by the Almighty to be regularly fleeced... And nobody, I mean NOBODY, sheared the sonuvabitches like the 'Great Mustaffah'.

Adrian was so good, he could charm that woman up at the Motion Picture Exchange (The one who looked like Mr. Ed the Talking Horse's mother), into a couple of those good sea prints she had stashed behind the counter.

Adrian was every Tender MAA's dream package... He worked them like they were handpuppets. If Rickover had ever turned water into wine, Stuke would've had two jugs of it before the nukes knew it was missing. When the space shuttle came apart, Adrian was devastated... He told me he had already sold twelve seats on the next one to some Aviation Machinist Mate in San Diego.

(See "TRUTH," on Page 7)

Eternal Patrol April 8, 1945

Editors Note: *Less we forget, each month, one boat on eternal patrol will be highlighted in this newsletter. Sailors, rest your oars.*

U.S.S. Snook (SS-279)



SNOOK (Cmdr. J. F. Walling) departed Guam on March 25, 1945 in company with BURRFISH (SS 312) and BANG (SS 385) to carry out a coordinated patrol with Commander Walling commanding the group. They were to patrol Luzon Strait, the south coast of China, and the east coast of Hainan, and to perform lifeguard duties if so directed by dispatch. SNOOK returned to Guam for emergency repairs on March 27th, and departed on March 28th to rejoin her group. The patrol was SNOOK's ninth.

In accordance with her orders, weather reports were received daily from SNOOK as she proceeded westward until April 1st, when she was told to discontinue the reports. On the same date, SNOOK was directed to proceed westward to join a coordinated attack group under Commander Cassidy in TIGRONE. BANG and BURRFISH already had been assigned lifeguard stations, and were not available for the attack group as originally planned.

Although the last message received from SNOOK by shore bases was on April 1st, TIGRONE was in contact with her until April 8th. On April 9th, TIGRONE was not able to raise her by radio, nor was she ever able to afterwards. TIGRONE's inability to contact SNOOK may be explained by the fact that on April 10th SNOOK was directed to move eastward toward Luzon Strait, and on April 12th she was ordered to stand lifeguard duty for British carrier-based air strikes. Her position for this duty was in the vicinity of Sakeshima Gunto, about 200 miles east of northern Formosa. No acknowledgement for these orders was required. On April 20th, the Commander of a British carrier task force reported he had a place down in SNOOK's vicinity, but could not contact her by radio. SNOOK was ordered to search the area and to acknowledge these orders. When she failed to make a transmission, BANG was sent to conduct a search and rendezvous with SNOOK. When SNOOK had not appeared or made

contact by May 16th, she was reported as presumed lost on her ninth patrol.

A number of enemy submarine contacts were reported in the vicinity of SNOOK's lifeguard station during the period in which her loss occurred. During April and May 1945, five Japanese submarines were sunk in the Nansei Shoto chain. The circumstances surrounding SNOOK's loss suggest the possibility that one of these lost submarines may have torpedoed her while she was surfaced during her lifeguard duties and it was not reported. It is known that such tactics were suggested to Japanese submarine commanders by their supporters.

No attacks had been reported by SNOOK prior to her loss on this patrol. She was, however, responsible for sinking 22 enemy ships, totaling 123,600 tons and damaging 10

ships, for 63,200 tons, on her eight patrols prior to her loss. Her first patrol was from mid-April to the latter part of May 1943, along the China Coast from Formosa to the Empire. She sank four freighters, a patrol craft, a sampan and a trawler. In her second patrol, SNOOK covered the East China Sea area. She sank two freighters and damaged two large tankers. During her third patrol, SNOOK covered areas in both the Yellow and East China Seas, and sank a transport and a freighter, and damaged a sub chaser. Her fourth patrol was along the Empire trade routes to the south. Here she sank two freighters and damaged three more.

SNOOK went to the East China Sea again on her fifth patrol, and sank four freighters and a freighter-transport, while she damaged a fifth freighter. In the same area on her sixth patrol, SNOOK damaged one freighter. Her seventh patrol was in the Luzon Strait area and the northern South China Sea. She sank three freighters and damaged a fourth freighter and an unidentified vessel. SNOOK patrolled the Kurile region north of Japan on her eighth patrol, but contacted only three ships. Two were Russian and the other could not be attacked.

The actual whereabouts of SNOOK may have been discovered during a deep sea dive in 1995. The possibility exists that a U.S. submarine lies in about 350 meters of water off the coast of Iriomote Island, the far southwest island in the Okinawa chain. During operations with an Okinawan company using a U.S. made "SCORPIO" ROV in 1995, a group of divers encountered a sonar contact



with what appeared to be a metal structure, about 6 meters in girth and about 35 meters in length (exposed) at roughly an angle of 20-30 degrees. The sonar image of a large unexpected obstruction to the operations prompted the divers to command evasive maneuvers and avoid the area for the safety of the ROV.

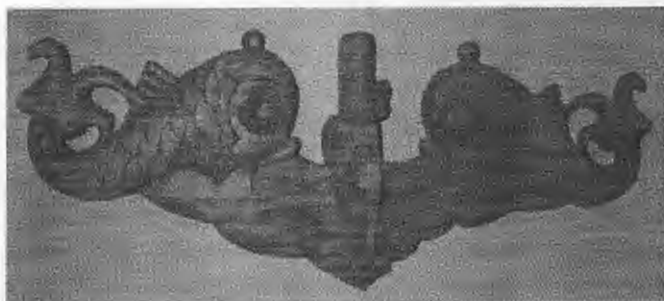
The divers, thinking they would have another opportunity to work in the area at a later date, left the area and never returned to that site. Their ROV was lost in 1997 off Yonaguni island, the last island belonging to Okinawa off the east coast of Taiwan. They were fairly certain that the object was a submarine, and quite possibly the SNOOK (SS-279). No further dives in the area were ever attempted.



(continued from "TRUTH," page 7)

I love the guy. The perverted kind of love, born of riding like hell with the posse hot on our heels. A love shared by two guys at the absolute bottom rung of the ladder, who pooled their resources to navigate the tricky world of the 'Non-Rated Bottom Feeder'... The love of a guy that will use any excuse to oogle Janie... Please congratulate him and tell the devious bastard to save me a place, something like 'High Exalted Senior Assistant to His Highness The PERCH BASE Vice Commander and Official One and Two-way Trashdumper'.

Glenn, have something with advanced gum disease give him a kiss from me



This Old Boat . . .

Mike Keatings was the only shipmate to correctly guess last month's "This Old Boat . . ." as the USS Barracuda, or K-3 (SSK-3.) As Mike said, "This was easy. You can see the K3 on the sail and the large sonar dome."

The Barracuda joined SubRon7 at Pearl Harbor 15 May 1952 and operated on experimental and normal submarine duties, making a cruise to Alaskan waters in August-September 1956. She was decommissioned 7 November 1958. On 15 August 1959, her hull number was changed to SS-552.

Now try your luck at this month's really easy one.



Do you recognize this old boat? Send your answer to the editor
chuckster41@earthlink.net



*Need a book about submarines?
Have you checked out our base library?
It's easy. Find the book online at:
[http://perch-base.org/
perch_base_library.html](http://perch-base.org/perch_base_library.html)*

Around the World



Chinese Submarines

China's Subs Lead the Way

Naval Institute *Proceedings*, March 2003

By Dr. Lyle Goldstein and Lieutenant Commander Bill Murray, U.S. Navy

China's maritime strategy relies heavily on submarines to patrol the littorals, blockade the Taiwan Strait, and stalk aircraft carriers. The U.S. Navy should not underestimate China's ability to build a capable submarine force to challenge a superior maritime foe.

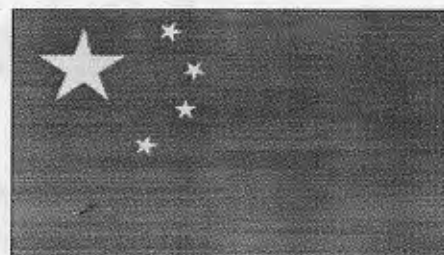
While the U.S. military remains focused on the Middle East and Central Asia, China continues its rapid military modernization. Perhaps the most significant development for the U.S. Navy is China's extensive efforts to upgrade its submarine force. In addition to signing a contract with Russia for eight new Kilo-class diesel submarines last May, China continues to field its new indigenous Song class. The appearance of its new nuclear attack submarine (SSN) is imminent. Finally, Beijing is upgrading the submarine force's weaponry, recruitment, training, and doctrine—all of which suggest that submarines will form the backbone of China's gradual strategic reorientation toward maritime priorities. As one Chinese strategist recently wrote: "Submarines are the maritime weapons posing the greatest threat to an aircraft carrier formation. Submarines are also our Navy's core force." Retired Navy Rear Admiral Michael McDevitt, a close observer of the Chinese Navy, similarly contends that submarines "are an essential ingredient in the maritime strategy of China," and calls for focused research on China's submarine force.

Diesels for the Littoral

The scale of China's \$1.6-billion Kilo purchase suggests that People's Liberation Army-Navy (PLAN) strategists view diesel submarines as a vital asset. The eight new Project 636 Kilos, which are Russia's "best," will augment two older 636s and two somewhat more limited Project 877s that China already owns. Combined, these 12 imported submarines will help make China's 30 aging Romeos and its 20-odd Mings (an indigenously modified Romeo) and newer Song-class submarines a formidable prospective undersea opponent in the East Asian littoral.

Even today, the Kilo probably is the most potent of China's submarines. Quiet and well armed, they deserve a measure of

respect. The new set of Kilos, which China expects to receive within three to five years, will incorporate a number of significant



upgrades, including superior batteries, an enhanced digital sonar system, slower turning screws, and quieter main engines. The weaponry of these new ships also will be more sophisticated. In addition to the heavyweight wire-guided Test-71ME and the 53-65KE wake-homing torpedoes of their predecessors, they will carry the versatile and potent Klub weapon system, giving them the capability to fire land-attack cruise missiles, antiship cruise missiles with supersonic terminal homing, and rocket thrown antisurface and antisubmarine torpedoes. The new Kilos also likely will deploy Russia's supercavitating Skval torpedo, which, according to a Chinese report, travels in excess of 200 knots. Disturbingly, this article hints that the Skval system may already be operational within the PLAN submarine force.

Air independent propulsion (AIP) might enhance the PLAN's next generation of diesel submarines. Although AIP-equipped diesel submarines cannot match the endurance or speed of nuclear submarines, AIP does permit diesel submarines to remain submerged for weeks at a time without snorkeling. European submarine manufacturers offer it as an option on their newest export classes. Pakistan, China's longtime ally, is getting AIP, and there is little reason to believe Beijing will settle for less. In addition, Chinese naval periodicals indicate a significant interest in AIP. The Russian submarine builder Rubin offers a liquid oxygen and hydrogen fuel cell AIP system as an option on the latest Kilo models. Even Chinese-built diesel submarines may soon have AIP.

Analysts noted last year that China's 20th Ming-class submarine was two meters longer than its predecessor, fueling speculation that it might be a test bed for an AIP system.

A recent Pentagon report to Congress on Chinese military modernization concludes, "A new advanced version of the Song-class conventional submarine is expected to incorporate advanced AIP." This report details other Song innovations: a skewed seven-blade propeller, submerged antiship cruise missile launch capability, flank array sonars of French design, and German diesel engines. The PLAN intends the Song to be a modern, capable peer to its imported Kilos. Alternatively, some have interpreted the May 2002 Kilo sale as the death knell of the Song program. Indeed, the half-decade between launches of the first two Songs and the dramatic changes in the second Song's sail suggest possible performance and design troubles. Close analysis, however, of the sail's restructuring suggests that these design flaws were related to acoustic signature rather than underwater stability, as had been speculated in the open press. The recent completion of a third Song, and the apparent continued work on hulls four and five, suggest that the program is going forward. If China does continue to build Songs, the PLAN submarine force is undeniably in the midst of a major near-term buildup.

In 1994 China bought four Russian Kilo-class diesel subs, two of which had been delivered as of 1998. The first vessel delivered to China aboard a Chinese freighter which arrived on 27 February 1995.



The first two are the standard export 877 type, which are deployed to the East Sea Fleet. The other two, of the newer 636 type with

quieter propulsion, remain on order. The Kilo-class submarines are the primary export class of Russian-made submarine, with other units having been sold to Iran and India. Because of its diesel-electric propulsion system it features quiet operations well suited for narrow water lanes and shallow sea areas. The submarine is equipped with radars and sonar to search for targets.

The Kilo-class submarine utilizes the water-drop shape and a T-shaped stern rudder. The 636 type are 72.6 meters long, and 9.9 meters wide, giving a length-breadth ratio of

7.45. They can dive to 300 meters and have a water displacement of 30,760 tons. Underwater, they have a speed of 17 knots. The personnel on board total 52, and the submarine has an endurance at sea of 45 days. It has reserve buoyancy of 32 percent, and a dual-level hull structure. It has six 533 mm torpedo tubes, 18 53-system homing or wire-guided torpedoes, 24 AM-1 underwater mines or eight SA-N-5 "Arrow" standby anti-aircraft missiles. It has passive infra-red guidance and is equipped with boat hull active/passive search sonar and active attack sonar.

China has already taken delivery of two 877EKM-type submarines, which are 73.8 meters long. The main engine is equipped with a shock-absorbing base and drives a large single-shaft, slanted seven-blade propeller (the 877-type has a six-blade propeller). The submarine's hull is covered with sound damping tiles, further reducing noise. It is equipped with six modified SA-N-8 "Needle"-model anti-aircraft missiles, and an MVU-110EM automatic digital command and control system. It can track five targets concurrently, and this class of submarine is generally considered to be extremely quiet.

China has been negotiating with Russia to transfer the technology to permit Chinese construction of submarines of this class. The acquisition of four Kilo attack submarines from Russia reportedly has provided the PLAN with access to technology in quieting and sonar development, as well as weapons systems. China can be expected to try to incorporate some aspects of these technologies into its domestic submarine construction programs, although it will take the navy many years before it can use effectively the advanced technology now available.

The Kilo class submarines are a significant improvement over the Romeo class, of which the PRC has about 30 in service. The Kilo class is well suited for operations in the East Sea and South Sea, and it will remain one of China's main conventional submarines. Reportedly, however, the two Kilo submarines have engaged in only limited sea operations due to engine problems. When their crews are fully trained, these new diesel submarines will provide a substantial improvement in China's attack submarine capability. They will enhance China's capability to interdict commercial or naval shipping, and hence to deny sea control to potentially hostile forces operating in China's coastal seas.

In the beginning of March 1995, the Hong Kong-based South China Morning Post reported that China had agreed to buy six more submarines from Russia, and had held discussions with the Russians to buy another 12 Russian submarines, bringing the total purchase to 22 submarines. But in view of the price of these submarines, it is doubtful if the Chinese Navy can afford to buy that many.

SHIPMATES COLUMN

Now is the time to nominate a fellow Base shipmate to be the "Sailor of the Year." Got a member in mind? Send the name to any Base ex-Commander. Those are Jim Newman, Frank Rumbaugh, Roger Cousin, Dave Harnish or Don Wannamaker.

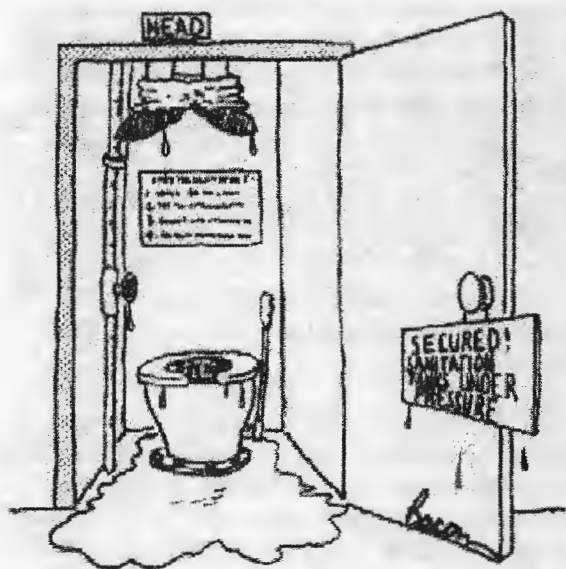
The COB, Doug LaRock, is in new quarters. The LaRock's new home is in the Solera Development of Chandler. His new address is:

3466 E. Waterview Dr.
Chandler, AZ 85249

His e-mail address and phone number remain the same

Do you have any information to share with shipmates? Contact the Midwatch Editor, Chuck Emmett, at:

(602) 843-9042
chuckster41@earthlink.net



Young submariners learn quickly to heed all signs.

Perch Base Inducts New Holland Club Member



"The requirement's for membership in the Holland Club is determined by Section 5 of the USSVI Constitution. Basically a member must be qualified 50 or more years, and is either, a life member and a member in good standing for one year, or an annual member in good standing for 5 consecutive years."



Perch Base Commander Dave Harnish welcomes F.J. "Ted" Ashbell as our latest member of the Holland Club.



Joining Commander Harnish (left) are fellow Base Holland Club members, from left to right, Jerry Becker, Swede Hansen, Harry McAfee, Joe Otreba and Dick Weber.



Along with Harry McAfee, Joe Otreba and Dick Weber, are Holland Club members Bob May, Roger Cousin and Jim Newman, from left to right.

FIRSTMATES COLUMN

Perch Base Wives

Shipmate Ted Asbell's wife Lil had her first book published 6 months ago and entered it in the *Arizona Literary and Book Awards* contest and was shocked when she won first prize for published fiction novels!



The name of the book is "DECEPTIVE IMAGE" by Lil Asbell and published by Iuniverse. It can be ordered at Barnes and Noble or over the internet at www.iuniverse.com.

This month, Lil had her second book published titled "BROKEN PROMISE."

She worked on her first and award winning Deceptive Image for 10 years before finally publishing.

Do you have any information to share with shipmates? Contact the Midwatch Editor, Chuck Emmett at:

(602) 843-9042
chuckster41@earthlink.net

- History -

Los Angeles Times
latimes.com

By Bob Pool
Los Angeles Times Staff Writer

March 27, 2003

Dam the torpedoes, full speed ahead!

That was the cry 60 years ago when Caltech teamed up with the Navy to hurriedly turn a mountain dam into a weapons test site whose remnants remain visible above Azusa — and whose effects are still felt beneath the sea.

Scientists and sailors built a secret torpedo research station at Morris Dam. Work done there helped produce torpedoes that could be launched from fighter planes for the first time.

These days, motorists traveling up San Gabriel Canyon Road toward Angeles National Forest recreation areas are not likely to be aware that work done at the Morris Dam Naval Ordnance Test Station helped the United States win World War II, and that a half-century later it played a role in helping end the Cold War, too.

Still visible clinging to the shoreline behind the dam is an unusual 250-foot concrete ski jump-like ramp that was a launch point for thousands of unarmed torpedoes between 1943 and 1993. One torpedo test resulted in the accidental launch of the world's first underwater rocket — a mishap that eventually led to development of underwater missile systems that are used by today's sophisticated Navy submarines.

The U.S. was looking for a way for fighter planes to drop torpedoes powerful enough to blow a hole in the thick-skinned Nazi and Japanese subs. Conventional torpedoes that naval fliers tried to use were being damaged by the impact of hitting the ocean from hundreds of feet in the air.

"A lieutenant from the Navy Department came out to Caltech and wanted to know if the rockets we were working on would work underwater," remembers Conway Snyder, who then was a Caltech graduate student involved with the rocket project. "We went up to Morris Dam to find out."

Now an 85-year-old retired Jet Propulsion Laboratory scientist who spent 30 years working on lunar and interplanetary exploration projects, Snyder inadvertently

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New Base Officers Sworn In



Jim Foote, Western Regional Director, USSVI, swears in the new officers of Perch Base. From left to right: Adrian Stuke — Vice Commander, Glen Herold — Commander, Ed Brooks — Secretary, and Bob May — Treasurer and Membership Chairman.

Special Award



Outgoing Base Commander Dave Harnish presents a set of "Ed Brooks" dolphins as appreciation for service to Mike Keating and his granddaughter, Brandy Hershey. Brandy is the young "associate shipmate" from whom we buy our 50-50 tickets.

"Bravo Zulu" Mike and Brandy!

MINUTES (continued from page 4)

construction and maintenance of the memorial are being raised through the sale of personalized bricks that will form the deck surrounding the sail.

NEW BUSINESS

Dave Harnish read a recent letter from John Peters - USSVI National Commander. The letter thanked Perch Base for its financial support of the 2002 Diner for Sailors Program (currently named the Brotherhood Fund of the USSVI - Charitable Foundation). The letter also included the text of a letter from Commander Submarine Force who indicated that certain tragedies in the Submarine Force had made the contributions timelier than ever for Submariners and their families. The typhoon that hit the Submarine Base in Guam created unusual need for submarine families.

Dave Harnish also announced that a new USSVI Base has been formed in Yuma. It was named the Yuma Barbel Base. There are currently eleven Perch Base members that reside in and around Tucson, so future plans are to create a new base there as well.

Robert (Swede) Hanson was thanked by the members for his donation of a submarine painting that will be displayed in Perch Base's meeting room at the American Legion facility. The framed painting is a classic view of a fleet submarine underway in choppy seas.

All the Perch Base Holland Club members were called front and center for the initiation ceremony. Eight Holland Club members mustered as Dave Harnish called F. J. (Ted) Asbell to face the group. Ted became the newest member of the Perch Base Holland Club and received a letter from National Holland Club Commander Bill Britt, a Holland Club certificate, membership card, Holland Club and Perch Base patches, a lapel pin and coffee mug. After the induction ceremony, Ted was congratulated by all the Holland Club members as well as the Perch Base members.

Dave Harnish called for the election of Perch Base Officers by reading the names of the candidates for the various Base Officer positions and then asking if there were any nominations from the floor. As there were no new nominations, a motion was made, seconded and approved by voice vote that the candidates be elected by acclamation. Elected to office for the current year were: Base Commander - Glenn Herold; Base Vice-Commander - Adrian Stuke; Base Treasurer - Bob May; Base Secretary - Ed Brooks.

The elected officers were then called front and center for swearing in. The newly elected Base officers were sworn in

by USSVI Western District Commander - Jim Foote.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

Mike Keating and Brandi Hershey were called front and center by Dave Harnish. Mike and Brandi were presented with their set of hand carved mahogany dolphins in appreciation for their generosity and benevolence in contributing \$150 or more to the USSVI- Charitable Foundation's 2002/2003 fund drive.

50/50 DRAWING

The 50/50 raffle was conducted and Davy Jones was the winner. Davy was offered a choice of 50% of the proceeds from the raffle or a set of hand carved dolphins. Davy elected to receive the carving.

ADJOURNMENT

All the outstanding business being concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote.

The meeting was adjourned at 1400 hours.

Edgar T. Brooks – Base Secretary



TORPEDOES, (continued from page 11)

helped invent what is now known as the intercontinental ballistic missile while in a rowboat at Morris Dam.

"If the rocket would fire underwater, the Navy was particularly interested in knowing whether it would produce bubbles that could be tracked from above," Snyder said.

Snyder and his co-workers took a half-dozen 4 1/2-inch-diameter barrage rockets up to Morris Dam to find out. They tied an improvised pipe "firing tube" to two pieces of rope, stuck one of the artillery rockets inside and connected igniter wire to it.

"One emerged from the water about 50 feet from us and shot out of the lake. It landed on the shore, luckily not starting a fire in the dry brush," he said. "We were happy

there was no fire — we left it there and went home."

Snyder's accidental underwater rocket launch eventually helped trigger development of what would become the Navy's submarine-launched Polaris ICBM — a strategic weapon in maintaining the balance of power in the Cold War that came later. Caltech's presence at Morris Dam increased as more sophisticated torpedo test facilities were built there. The goal of each was to determine how various styles of torpedoes reacted when they hit the water at various speeds and angles.

The heart of the test site was the ski jump-like structure about a quarter mile north of the dam, however. The \$3-million "variable angle launcher" boasted a 300-foot-long welded-steel frame that could be moved to change the direction that torpedoes were fired into the water.

The 500-ton framework was equipped with blowgun tubes 22 1/2 and 32 1/2 inches wide that used compressed air to shoot torpedoes into the lake at speeds of up to 680 mph. A counterweight on the opposite side of the spit of land that the launcher was built on could roll the frame up and down the ramp so the torpedo angle could be adjusted from 5 to 38 degrees.

A network of cameras mounted on the shoreline — on cables above the water and in housings beneath the water — recorded the tests on film. An array of underwater hydrophones also plotted the torpedoes' trajectory by sound.

None of the torpedoes carried explosives. But there were mishaps — such as the time a torpedo bounced along the lake surface instead of going underwater. It shot over the top of Morris Dam at about 600 mph and disappeared down the canyon. It was recovered. But dozens of the underwater missiles disappeared after sinking into mud at the bottom of the lake.

"We found a whole bunch of torpedoes when we cleaned out the reservoir in the mid-'90s. We called the Navy to come take it away. We'll probably find more the next time we clean it out," said Leopoldo Herrera, a water resources engineer for the Los Angeles County Department of Public Works. The county took over the dam from the Metropolitan Water District in 1995.

The \$10-million worth of towers, steel framework and other equipment, along with a few barrels of lead-contaminated soil, were removed in the early 1990s after the Navy ended its Morris Dam operations. These days the lake stores water that is carefully released into downstream percolating basins to replenish San Gabriel Valley groundwater supplies.

Return To:

U. S. Submarine Veterans, Perch Base
13210 N. Lake Forest Dr.
Sun City, AZ 85351-3252

<http://perch-base.org>



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PICNIC - SATURDAY, APRIL 12
Next regular meeting - May 10, 2003