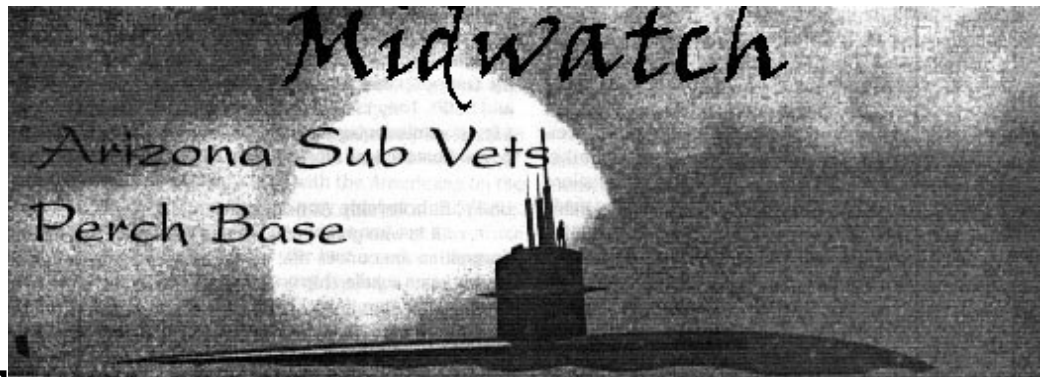




**March, 2003**  
**Volume 9 Issue 3**



<http://perch-base.org>



*Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol*

**MARCH ETERNAL PATROLS**

<b>USS Perch</b>	<b>SS176</b>	<b>Mar. 3, 1942</b>	<b>6 men (as POWs)</b>
<b>USS Grampus</b>	<b>SS207</b>	<b>Mar. 5, 1943</b>	<b>71 men</b>
<b>USS H-1</b>	<b>SS28</b>	<b>Mar. 12, 1920</b>	<b>4 men</b>
<b>USS Triton</b>	<b>SS201</b>	<b>Mar. 15, 1943</b>	<b>74 men</b>
<b>USS Kete</b>	<b>SS369</b>	<b>Mar. 20, 1945</b>	<b>87 men</b>
<b>USS F-4</b>	<b>SS21</b>	<b>Mar. 21, 1915</b>	<b>21 men</b>
<b>USS Tullibee</b>	<b>SS284</b>	<b>Mar. 26, 1944</b>	<b>79 men</b>
<b>USS Trigger</b>	<b>SS237</b>	<b>Mar. 26, 1945</b>	<b>89 men</b>

**Next regular meeting is Mar. 8, 2003**  
**American Legion Post #62**  
**11001 N. 99th Ave. at 1200 hours**  
**Lunch provided at \$3 a head**

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February 6, 2003

Dave Harnish  
Base CDR Perch, USSVI  
6509 West Devonshire Ave.  
Phoenix, AZ 85033-3350  
USA

Please extend my thanks to every member of the Perch Base for your superb support of the 2002 Dinner for Sailors Program. (We renamed this Brotherhood fund the SubVets Caring and Sharing Program for future years.)

Your donation from Perch Base of \$950.00 was both exceptional and sincerely appreciated. The Creed of USSVI really has meaning when we take care of our own. The need for support at Christmas time for our young sailors and their families is real and great. Especially this year when Guam was destroyed by a Category 5 "Super Typhoon" just before Christmas and many young families are deployed to high cost areas. The letters received from VADM John J. Grossenbacher, COMSUBLANT and RADM John B. Padgett, COMSUBPAC, are worth repeating for the Members. "Your generosity is deeply appreciated. Well understood by both of us and the rest of the active duty Submarine Force is the value that our close relationship with all of our veterans brings us. We take comfort in knowing that you and your fellow submariners have always been there for us and will be there in the future. Please extend our appreciation to the entire membership for their selfless support of our men and their families." "We were able to assist submarine families in Bangor, San Diego, Pearl Harbor, Japan, Guam, Groton, Norfolk, Kings Bay, Naples...In particular the monies that were given to Guam could not have come at a better time as they were struggling in the aftermath of Typhoon Pongsona. This is a great example of Submariners taking care of their own which has been fundamental to the success of the Submarine Community for over 100 years." "You put smiles on the faces of lots of young submariners! BZ." These letters from the Admirals are to YOU and your Members.

As National Commander, I extend my Thanks to you. You make me proud. Your support for USSVI and the USSV Charitable Foundation is vital and really appreciated. WELL DONE!

  
John D. Peters

*"To Perpetuate the Memory of Our Shipmates Who Gave Their Lives in Pursuit of Their Duties While Serving Their Country"*

# Sailing Orders



**Next regular meeting is Mar. 8, 2003  
American Legion Post #62  
11001 N. 99th Ave. at 1200 hours  
Lunch provided at \$3 a head**

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**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-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. More details at the next regular meeting.

**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”**

## From the Wardroom

Shipmates,

My term as Base Commander is winding down and I would like to use this column to say THANKS to all the members that have stepped up to make Perch Base the model it is for other bases to follow. Many times there have been compliments directed to me and as I have stated many times in the past, it is the officers and committee chairs that have really done the work and it was my privilege to have had this past two years to work with them. They are the ones that really need your compliments.

At our February meeting a slate of officers were nominated that offer some new blood in the leadership of the base but also many experienced seasoned veterans staying on or moving up to guide the base in the coming year. There will be a call for nominations from the floor at our next meeting and if you would like to share in a leadership role of the base please let this be known to one of your shipmates and ask him to nominate you. The elections and installation of officers will be a part of our March meeting so come out and join us.

We will be hosting our annual Submariners picnic April 12<sup>th</sup> which follows the District 8 meeting in Laughlin. There will be more details available at the March meeting as the COB is working on getting the event catered and should be a great time for the families. The picnic is going to be held in the Margaret T. Hance Park in the same area as we meet for the Veteran's Day parade. Be sure and mark your calendar for this family event and let's enjoy a day of fun in the park.

Fraternally,

Dave Harnish, Commander, Arizona SubVets – Perch Base



## S.S. Lane Victory Cruise Sept. 13, 2003



It's time to start planning your trip aboard the SS Lane Victory. We have agreed to take a cruise aboard the full restored SS Lane Victory on the 13<sup>th</sup> of September and the following will provide some information about the ship and the cruise.

The SS Lane Victory is the last fully operational ship of the 534 Victories built. She was launched in 1945 at Cal Shipyard in Los Angeles Harbor, and was named for Lane College, which was established by Bishop Isaac Lane, a self educated man, born into slavery.

After serving in the final days of WWII, and through the Korean and Vietnam conflicts, it was mothballed in the Ready Reserve Fleet in Suisan Bay, just inland from San Francisco. It languished there along with dozens of other ships from 1071 until 1988, when President Reagan deeded it to the United States Merchant Marine Veterans of World War Two. This act saved her from being sold for scrap, and in 1989 the Lane was towed down to Los Angeles Harbor by Navy tug. Restoration was eagerly begun. Ship's booms, winches, lifeboats and deck gear, stowed in the holds, were brought up and placed. The engine room, galley, and the entire ship was reworked. This mammoth task was preformed entirely by volunteer labor. Later, little by little guns were located, mounted and overhauled. In 1990 the Lane Victory was designated a "National Historic Landmark". The Lane has been officially documented and inspected by the U.S. Coast Guard.

### Statistics:

455 feet long, 62 foot beam, 28 foot draft.

10,750 dead weight tons

Main Propulsion – one cross compound steam turbine with double reduction gears.

Develops 6,000 horsepower at 90 RPM for 15-1/2 knots

Propeller – 19 feet in diameter

Fuel Consumption – 42 gallons per mile

The cost of this one day cruise is one hundred dollars with seventy dollars being a tax deductible donation to the Lane Victory and thirty dollars for the continental breakfast and buffet lunch. If we can get twenty five individuals to take this remarkable cruise we can get a ten percent discount. Children are welcome and encouraged and their fare is sixty dollars for ages fifteen and under.

Start making plan early and we will have more information on the cruise in upcoming news letters. The cut off date for making your reservations will be July 31, 2003 and at that time we will need to have your monies into Dave Harnish so that reservations can be secured. This is an excellent chance to see history in action and a great way to share with your kids and grand kids. Check out their website at: [www.lanevictoryship.com](http://www.lanevictoryship.com).

## February Meeting Minutes

*Minutes of a Meeting  
of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base*

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 February 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 30 members and 3 guests attending the meeting according to the sailing list. .

The members welcomed new members; Walt Blumgren and Bob Hiler, with a round of applause.

The members also welcomed guests: John Woodmanser a member of the Requin Base, Greg Olson and Brandi Hershey.

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 the of the first day of February, 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 a need to clear some of its inventory and was offering shirts and other items at bargain prices.

Chief of the Boat - Doug LaRock announced that the annual Perch Base Picnic will be held at Margaret

Hance Park in Phoenix on April 12<sup>th</sup>.

Base Chaplain - Warner Doyle asked to be notified if any member should become ill or otherwise be in need of a show of support.

Ray Samson - Membership Chairman reported that dues collection for 2003 was going well - 97% or more of the existing members had renewed their membership. As Base Webmaster, Ray also indicated that there were new links and information of the web site and encouraged the members to visit the site. Ray also encouraged the members to check out the list of library books included on the web site and let him know if a member would like to check out one of the books to read. If members contact him, he will bring the books of interest to the monthly meeting.

### OLD BUSINESS

Dave Harnish reminded the members that the cruise on the SS Lane Victory will take place on Saturday, 13 September. Fares are \$100 per adult and \$75 for children. The affair will include a continental breakfast, catered lunch, drink bar on deck and a tour of the Victory Ship Museum. If more than 25 sign up, the Lane Victory will provide a discount to the group. Interested parties should contact Dave Harnish.

Members were reminded of the upcoming USSVI District 8 meeting, to be held in conjunction with the USSV-WWII Southwest Regional Caucus. The meetings will be held at the Ramada Express Hotel and Casino in Laughlin, Nevada; starting April 7th and ending April 10<sup>th</sup>. The business meetings of the District 8 members will take place on April 9<sup>th</sup>. Copies of the registration form were distributed to those interested.

Dave again reminded members of the 2003 USSVI/USSV-WWII (US Submarine Veterans, Inc. and US Submarine Veterans - WWII) combined convention to be held in Reno, Nevada.

### NEW BUSINESS

Dave Harnish announced that the Board of Directors had approved the creation of a new committee to nominate the “Member of the Year” - an award given to the member making the most significant contribution during the past year. The award is usually presented at the Base Christmas Party at the end of the year. The committee will be made up of Past Base Commanders and be chaired by the more senior Past Base Commander. Jim Newman, as the first Perch Base Commander, will chair the committee.

Dave also discussed the efforts to replenish the ship’s store supply of Perch Base western hats and informed the members of the decision to sell the blue western hat with a choice of the Perch Base Patch or the USSVI Patch on the front.

(See “MINUTES,” on Page 7)

## Eternal Patrol February 16, 1943

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. Amberjack (SS-219)



Following her second patrol, AMBERJACK's period of refit, rest and recuperation was cut to twelve days, due to the urgent necessity of submarines in the operating areas. She started out on 24 January, but was forced to return to port for the repair of minor leaks experienced during a deep dive.

Again departing Brisbane on 26 January 1943, AMBERJACK, under Lt. Cmdr. J. A. Bole, Jr., started her third war patrol in the Solomons area. On 29 January she was directed to pass close to Tetipari Island and then proceed to the northwest and patrol the approaches to Shortland Basin. Orders were radioed on 1 February for her to move north and patrol the western approaches to Buka Passage. Having complied with these orders, AMBERJACK made her first miles southeast of Treasury Island on 1 February, and of sinking a two-masted schooner by gunfire twenty miles from Buka the afternoon of 3 February 1943. At this time she was ordered to move south along the Buka-Shortland traffic lane and patrol east of Vella Lavella Island.

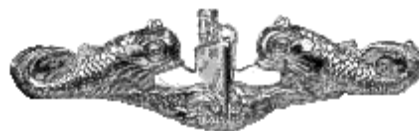
Making a second radio transmission on 4 February, AMBERJACK reported having sunk a 5,000-ton freighter laden with explosives in a two-hour night surface attack that date in which five torpedoes were fired. During this engagement Chief Pharmacist's Mate Arthur C. Beeman was killed by machine gun fire, and an officer was slightly wounded in the hand. On 8 February, AMBERJACK was ordered to move to the West Side of Ganongga Island and on the 10th, she was directed to keep south of Latitude 7-30 'S, and to cover the traffic routes from Rabaul and Buka to Shortland Basin. On 13 February AMBERJACK was assigned the entire Rabaul- Buka-Shortland Sea area, and told to hunt for traffic.

The last radio transmission received from AMBERJACK was made on 14 February 1943. She related having been forced down the night before by two destroyers, and that she had recovered from the water and taken prisoner an enemy aviator on 13 February. She was ordered north of Latitude 6-30 'S, and told to keep hunting for Rabaul traffic.

All further messages to AMBERJACK remained unanswered, and when, by March 10, she had failed to make her routine report estimating the time of her arrival at base, she was ordered to do so. No reply was received, and she was reported as presumed lost on 22 March 1943.

Reports received from the enemy since the end of the war record an attack, which probably sank AMBERJACK. On 16 February 1943, the torpedo boat HIYODORI and sub chaser Number 18 attacked an U.S. submarine with nine depth charges in 5-05 'S, 152-37 'E. An escorting patrol plane had previously attacked the submarine. A large amount of heavy oil and "parts of the hull" came to the surface. This attack is believed to have sunk AMBERJACK. However, no final conclusions can be drawn, since GRAMPUS was lost in the same area at about the same time. From the evidence available, it is considered most likely that the attack of 16 February sank AMBERJACK, but if she did survive this attack, any one of the attacks and sightings thought to have been made on GRAMPUS might have been made on AMBERJACK.

This vessel was credited with sinking three ships, for a total of 28,600 tons, and damaging two more ships for 14,000 tons damaged. AMBERJACK's first patrol was made in the Shortland- Rabaul-Buka area, as her last was. During this first patrol conducted during the last half of September and the first half of October 1942, she sank a freighter, a transport and a large tanker of 19,600 tons. In addition she damaged a freighter and a transport, and made a valuable reconnaissance of several islands in her area. The second patrol of this vessel was in the are west of Bougainville. Although several attacks were made, no damage was done to the enemy. On the basis of her radio report, AMBERJACK was credited with having sunk a 5,000-ton freighter on her final patrol. The enlisted men's recreation center at the Submarine Base, Peal Harbor is named for Chief Pharmacist's Mate Arthur C. Beeman, who was killed in the gun battle of 4 February.



**MINUTES ((from Page 5)**

**GOOD OF THE ORDER**

Guest Greg Olson was called “front and center” where Dave Harnish presented him with a special awards plaque to acknowledge his support in obtaining a storage site for the Base Parade Float. Another plaque is to be presented to Lyle Swenson (who wasn’t at the meeting) for his support in this effort.

The flag raising ceremony at Steele Park on Martin Luther King Day was reported to be a tremendously impressive event. The same flag will be exhibited during the Luke Days at Luke Air Force Base. Anyone in the area at that time, should arrange to view the extra large U.S. Flag.

Dave Harnish acknowledged monetary contributions from Jim Newman, Warner Doyle and Thomas Patterson. All three donated \$150 or more to the US Submarine Veterans Charitable Foundation. To acknowledge their generosity and benevolence, Jim Newman and Thomas Patterson were presented with hand carved mahogany dolphins and Warner Doyle was presented with a carving of the American Bluejacket mounted on a ship’s helm.

Dave Harnish called the Perch Base Holland Club members front and center for the traditional induction ceremony. New Holland Club inductees Roger Cousin, Ted Asbell (not present) and Royce Pettit were then inducted into the Holland Club. These new members will have been qualified in submarines for 50 years during the year 2003. After the ceremony, they received Holland Club pins, membership cards, patches, coffee mugs, certificates and a letter from USSVI Holland Club Commander William Britt. The new members were congratulated by existing Holland Club members and all of the Perch Base members present.

The floor of the meeting was opened to receive nominations for the 2003 election for Base Commander, Base Vice Commander, Treasurer and Secretary. Glenn Herold was nominated for Base Commander, Adrian Stuke was nominated for Vice Commander, Bob May was nominated for Base Treasurer and Ed Brooks was nominated for Secretary. All nominations were accepted and closed. Elections will be held at the March 8 meeting.

**50/50 DRAWING**

The 50/50 raffle was conducted and Lester Hillman was the winner. The winner’s share of the drawing was \$54.

**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 1348 hours.

Edgar T. Brooks – Base Secretary

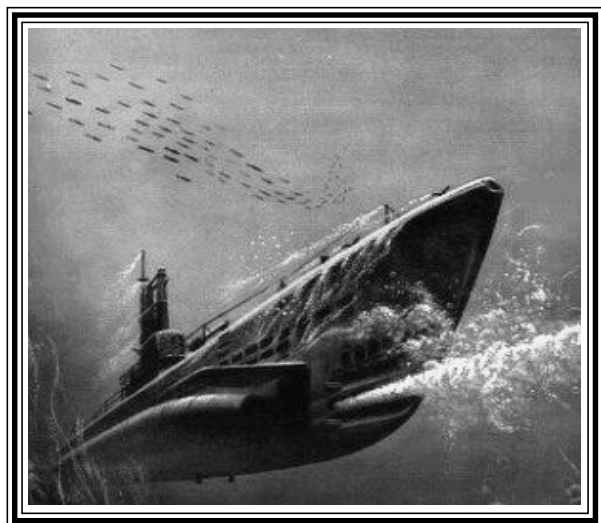
**This Old Boat . . .**

Only one shipmate, Ramon Samson, answered last month’s “This Old Boat . . .” correctly as the U.S.S. L-6. The L-6, also know as the SS-045, was commissioned on Dec. 7, 1917 and decommissioned on Nov. 25, 1922.

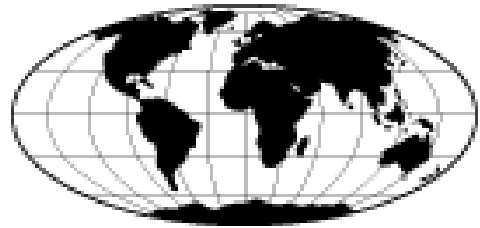
Now try you luck at this month’s really easy one.



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



# Around the World



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## Australian Submarines



CANBERRA, Australia - Australia's multibillion dollar fleet of navy submarines has been recalled to port after a pipe burst and tons of water gushed into one of the subs, forcing it to hastily resurface, the navy said Monday.

The navy said in a statement that one of the Collins Class submarines surfaced immediately after the incident last week and returned to port under its own power. There were no serious injuries among the 42 crew.

During exercises off the western Australia coast last Wednesday, a sea water pipe used for cooling engineering systems burst in a motor room of the HMAS Dechaineux, leaking tons of water into the room.

The statement said emergency procedures were triggered



and the pipe — which is always under surrounding sea water pressure — was quickly shut down.

The navy would not give the submarine's depth when the pipe burst. No other details were released.

All five Collins Class subs have been recalled to port until the results of a technical investigation are known.

The accident joins a long line of teething problems that have plagued the conventionally powered 3,000-ton Collins Class submarines since the first boat, the HMAS Collins, was commissioned in 1996.

Of the five commissioned so far, all have suffered excessive noise from their propellers and difficulties with their combat systems.

Last year, the Australian government announced it would spend 400 million Australian dollars (US\$236 million) to buy a new U.S.-made combat system — a computer set up that links the submarine's sonar with its weapons.



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The Collins Class Type 471 diesel-electric submarines have been designed by Swedish shipbuilders Kockums for the Royal Australian Navy. Construction has been carried out by the Australian Submarine Corporation in Adelaide, South Australia, although the bow and escape tower sections of the first submarines were built in Sweden.

The first-of-class HMAS Collins (73) was commissioned in 1996. HMAS Farncomb (74) was commissioned in January 1998, HMAS Waller (75) in July 1999, HMAS



Dechaineaux (76) and HMAS Sheean (77) in February 2001 and HMAS Rankin (78) in July 2001. The submarines are based at Cockburn Sound in Western Australia.

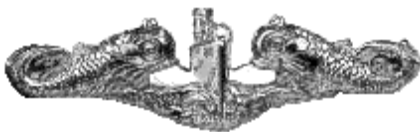
## TORPEDOES

Collins has the capacity for up to 22 missiles and torpedoes, and up to 44 mines in place of torpedoes. There are six 533mm forward torpedo tubes with air turbine pump discharge. Collins carries the Gould Mark 48 Mod 4 torpedo, which is a wire-guided torpedo with active/passive homing and 267kg warhead. Range is 38km at 55 knots or 50km at 40 knots. Collins can also carry BAE Systems Stonefish Mk III mines.



## PROPULSION SYSTEM

The Collins class is equipped with three Hedemora/Garden Island Type V18B/14 four-stroke turbo charged diesel engines, each providing 1,475kW. Jeumont Schneider of France supplies the three 1,400kW 440V DC generators. The main motor is a water cooled DC shunt, double armature motor with rated power of 5,250kW. Emergency propulsion is provided by a MacTaggart Scott DM 43006 retractable hydraulic motor. There is one shaft and a skew back propeller.



## After Battery Rats

### Once We Rode Smokeboats

by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

One of the most gratifying things about writing these goofball recollections has been the e-mail I have received from numerous old 'out to pasture' bastards who have taken the time to say they approve and remember. That's a gift and deeply appreciated.

I hope I have never characterized myself as anything other than a full-of-oats jerk. Because that was all I ever was. An idiot who was damned proud to be accepted by my wonderful shipmates and who was the silly sidekick of the most loyal shipmate a bluejacket ever had. . . Adrian Stuke. Adrian Stuke would have freely given me anything he had and he knew he could count on the same from me. Unfortunately, as boatsailors at our level on the social scale, we never had a helluva lot.

We worked hard... No shirker lasted long in small boat service. There was no way to disguise sloth and worthlessness in an 80-man crew. You had to pull your load or you would find yourself in another line of work. I never heard the words 'loafin' bastard' and 'hardcore submariner' used in the same sentence. Stuke and I would have rather had the COB slap us on the shoulder, shake our hands and say... "You worthless sonuvabitches never cease to amaze me... You do good work." than get a medal.

And we did do good work. The only way to earn respect on a diesel boat was to do a good job. Officers used the term... 'Well done.' Damn, those words made a young fellow feel good.

We all took a lot away from our tour in submarine duty than we ever recognized at the time. Honor, respect for damn hard work, patriotism, respect for the deeds of the men who gave us our gallant history... A high standard by which to judge leadership... And a deep appreciation for

*(continued on "RAT," page 11)*

## Cold War Submarine Memorial

Construction of the Cold War Submarine Memorial is currently underway in Charleston, South Carolina, near a former Navy base that at one point serviced 34 ballistic missile and 15 fast attack submarines. Initiated by local community leaders with strong ties to the Cold War submarine effort, the memorial will be located prominently at the entrance to the Patriots Point Naval and Maritime Museum on Charleston Harbor and serve as a tribute to all submariners, their families, and the civilian workers who supported them during that era.



The memorial will feature the actual sail and rudder of USS *Lewis and Clark* (SSBN-644), and the combination of the sail and the surrounding landscaping will resemble a submarine underway, with white pampas grass growing around the bow representing the wake. Set adjacent to the hull will be a flagpole on a raised platform with an inlaid compass rose.

According to the Cold War Submarine Memorial Foundation, the memorial will also feature "seven educational stations that will provide information about the Cold War role played by the greater Charleston military complex, submarine families, attack submarines, strategic submarines, submarine support elements, and our nation's allies. Additionally, one station will be 'In Memoriam' to those submarines lost at sea with all hands and those submariners who died during the Cold War defending our freedom."

In a recent letter to the Charleston Post and Courier, Executive Director Russell A. Pickett wrote, "Our memorial's mission is to motivate and educate our nation's future leaders on the importance of military service, dedication to what is right, and commitment to freedom, focusing on the cost and duties of freedom and instilling in our youth the essence of the American character."

Construction of the memorial, which will cost approximately \$1 million to complete, began in June 2002. The

dedication ceremony is currently set for 15 November. For more information on the memorial or how to contribute to the effort, visit the foundation's web page online at <http://www.cwsmf.org>.

### FOR THE LADIES OF PERCH BASE FROM KAY HARNISH

We want to thank our gracious hostess, Nancy Nelson, who opened her home to all the ladies for the luncheon on February 8<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks also to all the ladies who were able to attend and made the luncheon a success and so enjoyable. The ladies are looking forward to gathering again on May 10<sup>th</sup> as that is the date the men will be meeting.. May seemed appropriate as the picnic is scheduled in April which we hope many will attend.

Nancy Nelson and Judy Wannamaker are working on a site where we can either be served lunch or enjoy a pot luck. Look for details in the April Newsletter. Please put the below information in your phone book or your computer and feel free to contact any of those listed with suggestions, for information or just to say Hi.

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Nancy Nelson 623-972-1044 E-mail:

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## ***RATS (continued from page 9)***

the highly qualified senior petty officers. Chiefs and senior POs made every diesel boat what it was. I was a raghat at test depth level in the stew pot of ships' company. Cussing Chiefs, and what appeared to me as old bastards at the time, was a way to pass time... It was cheap entertainment. But, we knew that these men were the men providing us the professional knowledge we would need to truly become worthy of calling ourselves submariners.

This is an enlisted chronicle. Most stuff written about submarines is written by officers, technical experts or self-appointed 'never been there' authorities. This is about enlisted men simply because I was a bluejacket and it was all I knew.

None of my seagoing expertise was of such value that I was consulted by commissioned personnel forward. Stuke and I were only invited forward to explain aberrant behavior like being overcome by an inebriated, uncontrollable urge to leapfrog parking meters on Granby Street or explain our participation in some dust up in Bells.

"When are you two bastards going to become 4 OH SAILORS?" was a frequently asked question during our behavioral consultations. We never got into hot water of a depth requiring a 'mast' but we did find ourselves treading water in soup we had to explain.

But, you tend to remember the pranks and monkeyshines. They represent the good times. The acceptable idiotic behavior expected from the young.

In recounting shenanigans, you tend to gloss over the truly meaningful. Things like the feeling a good man has when he simply watches the gentle rise and fall of your national colors aft of your conning tower... The feeling of organizational connection with submarine combat veterans. The thrill you felt when you raised a foreign shore or passed a large foreign ship on the open sea... The tug you felt at your heartstrings when you rendered shipboard honors to the Sub Force honored dead. There were many such moments. Every American bluejacket, worth a damn, carries such memories in the lucky bag of his heart. It makes us what we are.

The simple mundane and seemingly endless moments spent at our mess tables at sea bonded us into a crew... It was at chow and play in our messdeck that we forged the deep lifelong friendships we all have... The only people who will ever understand us, truly appreciate the life we lived, will always be the men with which we shared coffee and bullshit conversation inside the pressure hulls of aged smokeboats. The names of the unshaven sweatsoaked goodhearted bastards we shared strong coffee with will be

forever engraved in our hearts. We and we alone, knew the value of the insignia we had earned. We knew that each man we called 'shipmate' had proven himself as worthy of being 'Qualified in Submarines' by completing a difficult and highly demanding course of instruction. They had mastered the intricate details of both location and operation of all shipboard equipment. Every boatsailor knew he could fall asleep secure in the knowledge that the men on watch could properly react to contend with any situation, evolution or emergency that might arise.

At no other time in my life have I been associated with a team as professionally competent as a diesel boat crew. I say diesel boat crew simply because I freely admit that I don't know the first damn thing about any submersible that post-dated petroleum-powered undersea boats. We were a tight mob... A group of men dedicated to a singular purpose. I hope the men of today have similar feelings. We were taught that 'The ship comes first.' Any bluejacket who adopts that as the guiding principle upon which he bases his Naval service can only become a credit to himself, his shipmates and his ship. The reputation of a ship simply reflects the attitude and professionalism of her officers and men.

If you ever find yourself in the presence of a bluejacket or veteran who denigrates the name of his ship... He was most likely a bum. Ships with bad reputations incubate bums.

I am proud of every boat I rode... I was always taken in by the crews and had the privilege of serving with damn fine men... An experience that was not unique to me.

Not that anyone gives a damn, but given my service experience... If given the opportunity to find myself 18 once again in a recruiting office full of slick talking Army, Navy, Air Force and Marine Corps goat ropers, I would say, "Which one of you silver-tongued bastards can get me a rack in whatever you clowns call the after battery, today?... And, oh yes... A clean coffee cup?"

I wouldn't trade any of it. Well, maybe the really cold, I mean nut-frosting hours on lookout watch and the freezing rain topside watch, a little less of that wouldn't be missed.

There is a patriotic selflessness in enlisted service. Officers are always, genteel and reserved. They spend so much time setting a proper example (properly so) that they collect proper memories... The raghats had a great bottom-up view of sea service... We met hookers... We butt-buffed barstools in dives, pubs and gin mills where generations of the world's bluejackets had tossed down suds and fondled women that would have been run out of your hometown on a rail.

I am sure that we tied up in locations that had sites worth

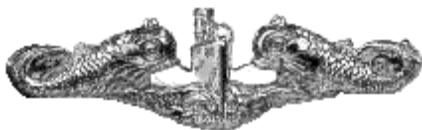
visiting but raghats generally gravitated to places with absolutely no educational value whatsoever, unless you were compiling an international directory of the 'sump pits of the globe.' To us, it was where boatsailors were expected to go... There was always some qualified man who had been there before and knew where to go... So we followed him to some rat hole where beer was cheap and where you met very interesting women... Some of which could actually read and write... And all of which knew the exact amount 'American' it cost to get beyond her skivvies.

Old boatsailors can name fifty or more foreign beers... Make out the exchange rate of weird foreign currency... Remember barbequed monkey strips, strange fruit and drinking stuff an officer wouldn't use to clean a head with. Old boat sailors can remember passing forbidden bottles of assorted firewater around in a returning motor launch until the last man tossed the empty bottle over the side. They remember the return to quarterdecks of some of the finest ships that that ever plowed saltwater.

All we have now are those memories. I have since visited places we went as young men. We all have found that marriage and domestication has tamed us... And with a gentle bride in tow, it is impossible to visit the locations of enlisted good times.

This is rambling discourse originally intended to thank those of you who have followed this thread of bluejacket memories. Frankly, I am amazed that anyone out there gives a damn... But I really appreciate your kind support. I wish some real writer would capture the life we lived, but I doubt there would be a readership base to support such a publication... That's a bloody shame because there are universities that publish entire books on June bug reproduction and the gahdam political trends in places with populations you could fit in a VW bus. Somebody should be able to ferret out something of literary merit in the last years of the Diesel Submarine Navy. Not officers stuff... It's all officer stuff... No, I would like to read a book about simple *Raghat Jack the Last of the Smokeboat Boys*. His life... His contribution to the history of the United States Submarine Service... A book that validates our existence and records our passing. Is that too much to ask?

And, oh yes, never let us forget that we served in a service where returning to your ship after giving your white hat to a wide-eyed five year old was always understood and forgiven with a smile.



## New SSGNs

### Giant Shadow Experiment Tests New SSGN Capabilities

By Chief Journalist David Nagle, Naval Sea Systems Command Public Affairs

ABOARD USS FLORIDA, At Sea (NNS) — The waters off the coast of the Bahamas became a giant laboratory this week, as Naval Sea Systems Command (NAVSEA) tested the capabilities of the Navy's future guided-missile submarines (SSGNs).



NAVSEA and Commander, Naval Submarine Forces (COMNAVSUBFOR) sponsored Giant Shadow, the first limited objective experiment under the "Sea Trial" initiative of the Chief of Naval Operations' Sea Power 21 vision.

Giant Shadow, conducted with USS Florida (SSBN 728), is the first in a series of experiments before overhauling and converting four Ohio-class ballistic missile submarines (SSBNs) to SSGNs.

The SSGN conversion program, spearheaded by NAVSEA, takes four SSBNs (Florida, USS Ohio (SSBN 726), USS Michigan (SSBN 727) and USS Georgia (SSBN 729)) selected for decommissioning and transforms them



into new platforms with capabilities to fight in future conflicts.

"As a result of the Nuclear Posture Review, the President

decided we needed 14, vice 18 Trident submarines,” said Capt. William Toti of Assistant Chief of Staff for Warfare Requirements for COMNAVSUBFOR and the Joint Force Maritime Component Commander for Giant Shadow. “We decided we could take the four SSBNs we were going to decommission and instead use them in this new capacity. It is truly transformational.”

The SSGNs will have the capability to support and launch up to 154 Tomahawk missiles, a significant increase in capacity as compared to other platforms. The 22 missile tubes will also provide the capability to carry other pay-



loads, such as unmanned underwater vehicles (UUVs), unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) and special forces equipment.

This new platform will also have the capability to carry and support more than 66 Navy SEALs (Sea, Air and Land) and insert them clandestinely into potential conflict areas.

Giant Shadow explored how a network of forces, including Florida, special warfare forces, UUVs and UAVs, and various aerial, underwater and ground sensors could be used to provide surveillance, collect real-time intelligence, develop and recommend a course of action for the joint commander and launch a time-critical strike.

Elements of the experiment included an at-sea demonstration and validation launch of two Tomahawk missiles from Florida, the first-ever vertical launch of a UUV and an insertion of SEALs from Florida.

Giant Shadow also provided an opportunity to evaluate various technologies, such as nuclear-biological-chemical sensors, intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance (ISR) and targeting systems.

“One of the goals of Giant Shadow is to identify which technologies provide real operational value to the warfighter, so we can transition them into real acquisition



programs,” said Toti.

Several Navy commands participated in Giant Shadow. USNS Mary Sears (T-AGS-65), Naval Meteorology and Oceanography Command’s oceanographic survey ship, was home for the command and control capabilities that will be put aboard the SSGN as part of the conversion process. Naval Air Systems Command’s “Hairy Buffalo,” a modified P-3C Orion aircraft, provided ISR capability and communication networking that would normally be provided by a high-altitude UAV like Global Hawk. Naval Oceanographic Office provided their UUV, the “Sea Horse,” and elements of Naval Special Warfare Group Four supported the special warfare phases of the experiment.

Results of the experiment are still being evaluated.

“Today’s battlefield is vastly different than it was during the Cold War,” said Toti. “The SSGNs will provide an extremely powerful capability that can operate like a ghost – it’s out there, but you can’t see it – which will complicate the defense of anyone who wants to challenge the United States.”

The SSGN conversions, which will include engineered refueling overhauls (ERO), will take place at Norfolk Naval Shipyard and Puget Sound Naval Shipyard, Bremerton, Wash., which began with Ohio in November 2002. Florida’s ERO and conversion will begin in August.

The first SSGN is scheduled for delivery in 2007.

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**Next regular meeting - March 8, 2003**