

Click Box to hear Tommy Cox sing
"SCORPION"



the NEW
Stimson
Draft



Remember Those Who Served



All Gave Some, Some Gave All



VOL. 2023 #5

MAY 2023

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2021 - 2023

PRESIDENT Tom [Marie] Krauser	VICE PRESIDENT Jerry [CJ] Blevins	SECRETARY Nick [Linda] Nichols	TREASURER Ken [Diane] Meigs
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Other Positions 2021 - 2023

HISTORIAN / CUSTODIAN Larry [Linda] Knutson	WEBMASTER / NEWSLETTER Nick [Linda] Nichols	CHAPLAIN Bruce [Vicki] Stefanik
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REUNION CONTROL CENTER

2023 Stimson Reunion

October 11-15, 2023

Charleston SC

Hilton Garden Inn (Summerville SC)

[information and directions to the hotel venue
are on the [Reunion #12 Webpage](#)]

56 registrations have been received as of 15
April 2023. There are another 8 that have
reserved hotel rooms but not registered yet.
Check here to see who has signed up to attend:

[Registered Attendees Sailing List](#)

STATES W/REGISTERED ATTENDEES & # ATTENDING				
SC - 8	NY - 2	FL - 6	KY - 4	NC - 8
CT - 2	OK - 2	GA - 2	TN - 1	CA - 1
VA - 2	OH - 4	AL - 2	AZ - 2	CO - 2
MA - 1	PA - 3			

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From the Association Reunion
2023 Reunion Chairman, [Harry
Nettles](#), QMCS(SS) G COB 91-92,
[QMCM Ret.], USSVI Charleston
Base, Holland Club:

Good day Shipmates. The
countdown is well underway and I am becoming
more and more excited every month. We still have
a few loose ends to finalize.

Make sure you get your registration in soon. It
is very important we have a good head count to
assist in planning.



From the Association President -
[Tom Krauser](#), MM1(SS) B 72-74,
655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI
Albany-Saratoga Base, Holland
Club

Went to Virginia Beach at end of
March to visit our granddaughter,
Caitlin. I was surprised how many of my ancestors
were in that area of Virginia in the 1600's and

1700's.

On April 15th we had a birthday party for Marie's mother, Viola, who was 99 and now on her way to 100. We had all the family here. Amy flew from Baton Rouge and Caitlin came up from Virginia. It was a very nice time.

Marie and I are going on a cruise with our daughter Amy on Memorial Day Weekend out of New Orleans from the 25th to the 29th. Then we plan to go visit my family in Texas for a few days before flying back to NY.

Marie and I are looking forward to the next reunion in Charleston THIS October. Look for details about the reunion progress in the newsletter.

If you have any questions or concerns for the board, please feel free to contact us so we can address them.



From the Association Vice President - Jerry Blevins, LT(SS) B 76-79, USSVI USS Groton Base, 655 Assoc Life Member:

April was the 60th Anniversary of the loss of the USS Thresher

SSN-593. Toward the end of the newsletter you will find the story - A Modern Submarine on Eternal Patrol – A Tribute to the USS Thresher (SSN 593). The men who died on the Thresher made our lives safer when we went to sea.

We'll see you in October!



Ship's Historian - Larry Knutson, MMCS(SS) B 79-81 USSVI Charleston Base, Holland Club:

As most of you are well aware of, back in November 2020

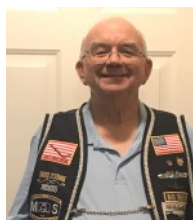
someone broke into the storage unit housing our Stimson Association Ship's History Archives. If you would like to be reminded exactly what happened please read the January 2021 newsletter to be brought up to date. We still have not recovered any of the items that were taken.

At each reunion the Association attempts to put out all of the items in our Archives for you to look at. If you are attending the reunion and have something of interest from the boat please bring it with you to display with what we have left. You can then take it home with you when the reunion is over.

We still have the box of Gold Crew check-in cards that were from the time of Bob Weeks CO tour. This last couple of months has seen an increase in the number of our shipmates asking for a copy of the check-in card. If you were on the Gold Crew during any time when Bob Weeks was the CO you completed a check-in card for him.

The box of cards is now held by our base secretary. If you would like a copy of your card sent to you please contact our Secretary at

655webmaster@ssbn655.org.



Chaplain's Corner - Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS Asheville Base, Holland Club:

The heavens declare the glory of God; the skies proclaim the work of His hands. Psalm 19:1

It has been a rough time for some with the Spring storms. We need to keep all those affected in our prayers. Just remember that God is a great God even when it seems that the world is falling

Submarines Lost During the Month of May

USS LAGARTO (SS-371)	May 3, 1945 – 2 nd War patrol	Lost with All Hands – 86 Souls
USS SCORPION (SSN-589)	May 22, 1968 – returning from deployment	Lost with All Hands – 99 Souls
USS SQUALUS (SS-192)	May 23, 1939 – during test dive	33 survivors – 26 Souls Lost
USS STICKLEBACK (SS-415)	May 30, 1958 – under tow	NO LOSS OF LIFE

FOUR Boats and 211 Men Lost

May you and your families be blessed as we think of each other this month.



From The Editor & Secretary -
Nick Nichols, TM1 G/SY1/B 70-
75; FTCS B COB 85-89, 655
Assoc Life Member, USSVI
Charleston Base, Holland Club

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The 123rd Submarine Birthday Ball was held in Charleston on April 8th. Linda and I attended and had a great time. I hope if there was a Birthday Ball in your area you were able to attend and wish our Submarine Force a very Happy Birthday.



One of our senior Charleston Base SUBVETS was selected to cut the cake along with the most recent qualified Sailor. SD1(SS) James Higgins who qualified in 1954 on USS SEA ROBIN (SS-407). Jim has been qualified in Submarines for 69 years.



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At the 2005 Reunion, the Henry L Stimson Association SSBN 655, was formerly established with Bylaws. This came after very successful Stimson Reunions in 1991, 2001, and 2003.

At the bottom of this page I have shared a chart I put together using our past business meeting minutes. I'm sure this may need to be adjusted some because I don't have all of the info needed. Don't hesitate to let me know if there are changes. I will try to verify them using the minutes and when/if I do, then the chart will change. The chart will also be going on the website in the next week or so.

I'm asking all shipmates to look at this chart and thank those early Stimson brothers who had the forethought to put together this great group.

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REUNION 2023: We now have 56 registrations for the reunion, only a little over halfway to our projected 100 shipmates and guests that we hope will be attending.

The Reunion Committee is at the point where some hard decisions are needing to be made on what to do, how many hotel rooms do we really need, etc. Without having a firm grasp on the number attending these decisions are impossible to make.

You can check to see who is registered by going **HERE**.

If you register now and for some reason need to cancel before the reunion, our cancellation policy IAW with our Bylaws: **Cancellation of reunion registration and the refund of monies paid will be based on the timing of the cancellation. Registration cancelled prior to the reunion registration cutoff date will result in refund of**

The Stimson Association was officially established with bylaws in 2005							
YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	TREASURER	SECRETARY	WEBMASTER	CHAPLAIN	HISTORIAN
2005	Phil Johnston	na	Phil Johnston	Loree Riggs	Jeff Bricmont	JB Helms	na
2005-07	Phil Johnston	Robert Callahan	Phil Johnston	Loree Riggs	Randy Allen	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2007-09	Chuck Hladik	Robert Callahan	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2009-11	Chuck Hladik	Neal Anderson	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2011-13	Chuck Hladik	Neal Anderson	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2013-16	Ray Kreul	Tom Krauser	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Nick Nichols	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2016-18	Ray Kreul	Tom Krauser	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Nick Nichols	Ken Meigs Acting	Larry Knutson
2018-21	Tom Krauser	Steve Novic	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Nick Nichols	Jake Morris	Larry Knutson
2021-23	Tom Krauser	Jerry Blevins	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Nick Nichols	Bruce Stefanik	Larry Knutson

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For all Retirees and Annuitants,

Navy Shift Colors is the Navy's official newsletter for Retired Sailors and surviving spouses. It updates the retired Navy community about changes to laws, policies, programs, and benefits that affect them.

The newest edition of Navy Shift Colors is now available. Visit https://www.mynavyhr.navy.mil/Media-Center/Publications/Shift-Colors/?utm_medium=email&utm_source=dfas&utm_campaign=Shift+Colors+Spring+2023 to get your copy today!

Retired Pay DFAS Cleveland

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SHARING PICTURES WITH SHIPMATES:

If anyone has pictures you would like to share with your shipmates please either email them to me or contact me and I will send you directions to upload to our Stimson Dropbox file.

655webmaster@ssbn655.org

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SUBMARINE QUALIFICATION CARD & CERTIFICATE

We seem to have had a stall in shipmates sending in their qualification information. Check out the **SS Qual Card & Certificate** webpage. I'm sure there are many of you who still have your qual cards, although some of you may have to go digging. When you find it either scan it or take a good picture and send it to me at **655webmaster@ssbn655.org**. Your name will be added to the new page with a link to your certificate. This is for all Stimson shipmates, not just the ones who qualified on the 655. No matter what boat you qualified on if you were on the Stimson send me a scan or picture and it will be added to the website.

This can be any item related to your SS qualification: Qual Certificate; Qual card, picture receiving your dolphins; etc.

Qualification Cards of Stimson Sailors

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The following Stimson Shipmates have departed on Eternal Patrol.

1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10

None reported this month

1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8

The direct link to the Association Eternal Patrol page is: <http://ssbn655.org/eternal-patrol/eternal-patrol.html>



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated Shipmates

(Shipmate has contacted us to be added or have info updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List for shipmates contact info.)

**NOTE: DON ORT, MM1(SS) G/OVHL1/G 69-74,
CONTINUES TO LOCATE OUR STIMSON
SHIPMATES WHO ARE ON OUR SAILING LIST
BUT WITH NO EMAIL ADDRESS.**

MM3(SS) Dennis Navarrete B 86-90

[updated by member]

EMCM(SS) David Couser B 88-91

[found by Don Ort and updated by member]

BINNACLE LIST UPDATES: If you know of a shipmate who should be on the binnacle list please let me know. I will contact the shipmate for permission to add them to this list. I only add those who have given permission.

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Sandy Hastie, CAPT B 80 (Oct-Dec) CO-1 patrol

Cards to: 75 Lambeth Dr., Asheville NC 28803-3425

NO NEW UPDATE

3.28.23: Email from Sandy & Donna:

Dear Friends,

Donna saw her spine surgeon's PA on Friday, March 24. She still has severe pain in her right leg and back, despite pain medications. The PA said we needed to wait the full four months after surgery to assess the pain and what further action is needed. In the meanwhile, he recommended we obtain a local pain specialist to help resolve the current pain issues. Hopefully, the pain specialist will be able to provide both short and long-term pain relief methods.

I had a PET/CT scan on March 12. I then saw my local oncologist and had my Keytruda infusion on March 15. In conjunction with my local oncologist, we decided to follow up with my Duke oncologist for his recommendations as the PET/CT scan showed increased cancer activity. This may be due to the Keytruda reaching the end of its effectiveness. The plan is to continue Keytruda for a series of four infusions as usual, then repeat the PET/CT scan. At that time, it will be determined if a different treatment is needed. Keytruda has been my friend for five years and has set records on how long Keytruda has worked to control this type of cancer. I would hate to lose this friend because the next option, chemotherapy, has an average record of controlling this cancer for 6 to 12 months only.

Donna and I will continue to fight on both fronts and keep you informed.

God can continue to do wonderful things. Please pray Keytruda will get back on track and hold the cancer at bay. Your prayers would be greatly appreciated!

We are grateful we have a God who listens to and acts on prayers!

Blessings and Love, Donna and Sandy

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Lloyd Hyatt, MT2(SS) B 73-76

Cards to: 134 Coral Way, Jacksonville Beach FL 32250

NO NEW UPDATE

1.26.23: Email from Lloyd: A quick update on my AML cancer. I was going to Moffitt Cancer Center in Tampa on 1/24 to start the process for my bone

marrow transplant on 1/31. However, the transplant has been postponed. The Doctor said that the donor cells had deteriorated to the point that they can't be used. They are finding a new donor, new timeline for transplant 4-6 weeks. Thank you for the support and prayers. Lloyd

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John Cole, LT [CDR Ret] B AWEPS 78-80 [E1-E9 & O1E-CDR Ret.]

Cards to: 5914 Ruby Dr., Pearland TX 77581-8926

NO NEW UPDATE

1.26.23: Email from John: Sadly... The family's Princess Southeast Caribbean Cruise over Christmas did not turn out to be all that we planned it to be. All started well with 13 of us sailing on Saturday December 17, 2022.

All went well to start but each stop I going ashore less and having more breathing problems.

Our last planned stop was to be Curacao. Susan went on a bus tour while I stayed in our room knocked out until she returned about 1:00pm. The ship was scheduled to depart about 4:30pm for the final two days at sea.

About 4:15pm I started having crushing pain in my left chest area that was going down my left arm. A crew member who saw what was happening called the ship's doctor. After some tests and him telling Susan and Brian that "If I did not get off the ship and into the hospital I would die!", I was taken off the ship. Susan was left to get our stuff off the ship and somehow to get to the hospital as best as she could. The ship departed leaving Susan and I behind on Curacao.

At the hospital they very quickly determined it was not a heart problem but a breathing problem associated with the Parkinson's as well as COPD. It was now Christmas Eve and a two-day holiday so I would not get to see a doctor until Tuesday morning, Dec. 27, 2022.

I was released from the hospital on Wednesday afternoon but only to go to the hotel with Susan promising to return on Friday, Dec. 30 at 1:00pm for a doctor appointment that resulted in me be released to fly on Sunday Jan. 1st, 2023.

Once released the real problem raised its head

in how might find seats on one of the two flights off the island with only two flights on Jan. 1st. Also was getting home to Pearland. We ended up taking the long way home via Miami FL, then Charlotte NC and final to Houston TX on Tuesday Jan. 2nd.

Bye For Now, Very Respectfully, John F. Cole,
CDR U. S. Navy Retired 100% Disabled

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**Ron 'RG' Hyson, STS1(SS) B 70-75, Assoc.
Life Member, USSVI Hampton Roads Base,
Holland Club, STSCM(SS) Retired**

Cards to: 3425 MacDonald Rd., Virginia Beach
VA 23464

NO NEW UPDATE

1.29.23: Email from Ron 'RG': After my diagnoses of Alzheimer's, February 2022, I had to have my Aortic Heart Valve replaced in April followed by Cardio Rehab from June to August of 2022. I entered a CBD Oil Study from July to October through EVMS, Eastern Virginia Medical School, to help with my anxiety and agitation. It seemed to help a lot. January 2023, I was reevaluated for my Alzheimer's and I am now in the moderate stage. I was prescribed new medication to help with my memory and anxiety. It seems to be working very well. Thank you for all your prayers, RG and Jean

GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

655 Association Website
www.ssbn655.org

SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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*Submitted by Jim Kinney, LT G WEPS 67-69, CAPT Ret.,
Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Tarheel Base, Holland Club*

Two Bob Week's stories.

Everybody knew that there was a list posted on the CO's stateroom door "COSL" (Commanding Officer's S--t List) One day your name would appear, sometimes you would know why and other times you weren't sure. And then one day your name would disappear. There were usually 3

or 4 names on the list. After I had left the active Navy on the completion of my STIMSON tour, I got an envelope in the mail with a copy of the COSL with my name on it, and a message "Gone but not forgotten"

On a North Atlantic patrol in winter, the seas were rough. Bob had brought his Heath kit on board to assemble the interior components. One night we were submerged 200 feet and still feeling pitch and roll. The Control Room Sound powered phone rang. It was the CO. "Get the hell off this course, all my TV parts are rolling to the side of my stateroom!"



The Computer Corner

**By: Tom Krauser, MM1(SS) B 72-74, 655 Assoc Life Member,
USSVI Albany-Saratoga Base,
Holland Club**

Can You Still Upgrade Windows 7/8 to Windows 10 for Free

There is a lot of discussion on whether you can still upgrade a Windows 7/8 operating system to Windows 10 for FREE. When Windows 10 first came out, there was a time period where Microsoft allowed you to upgrade Windows 7/8 operating systems to Windows 10 at no charge. There was a stated time period where you were allowed to do this. After that time period, it was supposed to require you to buy a new Product Key to perform the upgrade.

Since Windows 7/8 are no longer supported by Microsoft, you will want to upgrade to Windows 10 (or 11 which you would have to purchase a Product Key for),

There have been several articles saying that it was still possible to install Windows 10 on a computer using Windows 7/8 and it would automatically "activate" with a digital license number and be legally activated.

Recently, I have recently installed Windows 10 on 2 Windows 8 computers, and when the installation was completed, the Windows 10 software was shown to be "activated" with a digital

license. The worst that could happen is that it does not automatically activate with a digital license and you might have to purchase a Windows 10 Product Key to activate it.

I used a specific process to accomplish the installation of Windows 10.

First back up all your important files to a backup device such as an external hard drive or USB flash drive. You may even want to make a "clone" of your hard drive before trying to upgrade to Windows 10. You could always go back to the cloned hard drive if necessary.

Download the Microsoft Media Creation Tool for Windows 10 from the link below:

<https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/software-download/windows10>

Click on "Download Now". After it downloads click on the software to install it. Accept the license agreement.

When it asks you what you want to do, select the option "**Upgrade this PC now**". The other option creates an ISO file to install Windows 10 from a DVD or USB. I have had mixed results with that option activating.

The installation program will start and setup Windows 10. I would let this process complete without trying to do anything else while the process takes place. After the installation is completed and the computer restarts, you should be on the Windows 10 operating system.

To see if Windows 10 activated, type "activation settings" in the Search window next to the Windows Start button. Select "Activation Settings" from the list that comes up. The result should show the Windows version installed and "Windows is activated with a digital license".

Hopefully, you are now on a legally activated copy of Windows 10.

Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Carolina Piedmont Base , Holland Club

FBI warns against using public USB charging ports

LUKE BARR April 11, 2023

The FBI is warning the public against using

charging stations in malls and at airports, according to a tweet from the bureau's Denver office.

The public charging stations could be a conduit for bad actors to introduce malware onto personal devices, officials warn.

"Avoid using free charging stations in airports, hotels or shopping centers," the FBI Denver said. "Bad actors have figured out ways to use public USB ports to introduce malware and monitoring software onto devices. Carry your own charger and USB cord and use an electrical outlet instead."

The FBI didn't respond to ABC News' request for comment on whether there has been a rise in malicious activity related to the cyber-theft tactic known as "juice jacking."

Javed Ali, the former senior director for counterterrorism at the National Security Council, told ABC News that the information tweet was likely "informed by an FBI-driven investigation or other intelligence that has now been approved for public release."

"The tweet's message that public USB ports have been used by "bad actors" as points of origin to load malware or spyware on electronic devices connected to those public charging stations suggests a fairly high level of technical capability in order to carry out these operations," Ali, now an Associate Professor of Practice at the University of Michigan's Ford School of Public Policy said.

A 2021 alert posted by the Federal Communications Commission warned that using a public charger could lead to malicious software on a device without the user's knowledge.

"Cybersecurity experts have warned that criminals can load malware onto public USB charging stations to maliciously access electronic devices while they are being charged," the alert, initially posted around the holiday season warned. "Malware installed through a dirty USB port can lock a device or export personal data and passwords directly to the perpetrator. Criminals can use that information to access online accounts or sell it to other bad actors."

While officials did not offer statistics about the

FBI warns against using public USB charging ports originally appeared on abcnews.go.com



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https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/02/28/all-combat-injured-vets-would-keep-their-full-retirement-disability-pay-under-proposal.html?ESRC=navy-a_230301.nl

Military Retirement and State Income Tax
https://www.military.com/benefits/military-pay/state-retirement-income-tax.html?ESRC=navy-a_230301.nl

DoD Still Hasn't Released a Form Needed for Retirees' One-Time Chance to Change SBP
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/02/dod-still-hasnt-released-form-needed-retirees-one-time-chance-change-sbp.html?ESRC=eb_230303.nl

Veterans' Emergency Room Bills Could Get Repaid by VA Thanks to Change
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/01/veterans-emergency-room-bills-could-get-repaid-va-thanks-change.html?ESRC=eb_230302.nl

VA Drops Mask Requirements for Staff, Patients at Most Medical Facilities
<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/06/va-drops-mask-requirements->

<https://app.box.com/s/5vpitm4kzf07vl8u0jb8q960nhk0exs2>

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**The New Tricare Pharmacy Contract:
Delivering Value for Military Families and
Taxpayers**
[https://www.military.com/daily-news/
opinions/2023/03/09/new-tricare-pharmacy-
contract-delivering-value-military-families-and-
taxpayers.html?ESRC=eb_230310.nl](https://www.military.com/daily-news/opinions/2023/03/09/new-tricare-pharmacy-contract-delivering-value-military-families-and-taxpayers.html?ESRC=eb_230310.nl)

Biggest Military Pay Raise in Decades Proposed by White House

<https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/09/biggest-military-pay-raise-decades-proposed-white-house.html>

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House GOP Entertains Scuttling VA's \$16B Electronic Health Records Program
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/08/house-gop-entertains-scuttling-vas-16b-electronic-health-records-program.html?ESRC=eb_230309.nl

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Who Is Eligible for Space-A Flights?
[https://www.military.com/travel/space-available-flight-eligibility.html?](https://www.military.com/travel/space-available-flight-eligibility.html?ESRC=navy_230314.nl)
[ESRC=navy_230314.nl](https://www.military.com/travel/space-available-flight-eligibility.html?ESRC=navy_230314.nl)

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How to Use the Survivor Benefit Plan's One-Time Open Enrollment
https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/10/how-use-survivor-benefit-plans-one-time-open-enrollment.html?ESRC=navy_230314.nl

VA Secretary Swats Down Idea to Cut VA Disability Pay for Wealthier Vets

[https://www.military.com/daily-](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/23/va-secretary-swats-down-)
[news/2023/03/23/va-secretary-swats-down-](https://www.military.com/daily-news/2023/03/23/va-secretary-swats-down-)

[idea-cut-va-disability-pay-wealthier-vets.html?ESRC=eb_230324.nl](https://www.va.gov/idea-cut-va-disability-pay-wealthier-vets.html?ESRC=eb_230324.nl)

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Get Prescription Refills Quick and Easy with the VA Health and Benefits App

Veterans can now refill their prescriptions using the VA Health and Benefits mobile app. [Download](#) the latest version of the app to gain access to the new features.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Expanded Disability Benefits for Vietnam Veterans

Vietnam Veterans may be eligible for expanded VA disability compensation under the [PACT Act](#), a law passed in 2022 which increases access to VA benefits and health care for Veterans exposed to toxic substances during their military service.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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If You See a Fabric Loop on Your Seatbelt, This Is What It Means

Have you ever noticed this seatbelt secret?

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Aging and Muscle Loss

Keep your strength and independence. As you age, your body can change in surprising ways. Keeping your muscles strong will help you continue doing the things you love.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Eating for Kidney Health

If you live with kidney disease, you know getting the right nutrition can be a challenge. VA dietitians have tips and recipes to help you care for your kidneys.

[WATCH NOW](#)

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How to Keep Your Heart Strong

Heart disease is the leading cause of death in the United States. Take these steps to improve your cardiovascular health.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Preventing Cancer

Some types of cancer are linked to lifestyle choices. Other types can be prevented or caught early with regular screenings. We have 6 ways to protect yourself from cancer.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Get Your Medical Records Online

My HealtheVet has tools to help you access and share your medical records. With VA Blue Button, it's easy to create custom reports to print or download.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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My HealtheVet on VA.gov

We're building a new home for VA health tools on VA.gov

My HealtheVet isn't going away—but it is moving to VA.gov. You'll be able to manage your health care needs in the same location where you manage your other VA benefits and services.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Five Movements for Pain Relief

Chronic pain is hard to ignore. These five exercises may help strengthen your back and relieve pain.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Diabetes: Keeping Feet Healthy

Diabetes puts your feet at risk for health issues like neuropathy and infection. Daily foot care is the best prevention. VA can help with nail trims and tips for healthy feet.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Need Internet or a Tablet for Appointments?

Telehealth brings you care from the comfort of home. If you don't have regular access to the internet or a video-capable device, VA has options for you.

[LEARN MORE](#)

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Surgery? How to Prepare

It's normal to feel worried before surgery. Knowing how to prepare for your surgery and

recovery can help give you peace of mind.

LEARN MORE

The Lean Submariner

Here's the latest posts on the blog. Still going strong. The link to his blog is

<https://theleansubmariner.com/>

Submarine Month 2023

Mister Mac Apr 1

I have been involved with the Pittsburgh Council of the US Navy League for about ten years. It's a great organization that reflects the connection between Pittsburgh and the Navy and in particular, the submarine service. Most people who are not fully aware of Pittsburgh and Western Pennsylvania probably would not know how much the [...]

Read more of this post

She built it well

Mister Mac Apr 5

I got a "proud Aunt" note from one of my favorite cousins last year about her niece. "Hi Bob! Hope all is well. Just wanted to share. My niece, Isabella just became a certified welder and had her second interview over at Electric Boat in New London. If she gets hired, she might get to [...]"

Read more of this post

Rule number one at sea: keep the sea outside of the boat

Mister Mac Apr 6

What is bravery? Through the years, I have often been told by people that they could never ride a submarine. Claustrophobia is probably a big thing, but the fear of being cooped up in a small metal cylinder operating in a vast ocean is also a factor. I saw a lot of brave actions in [...]

Read more of this post

How MAD were we?

Mister Mac Apr 7

In January 1963, the world was on edge. The recent Cuban Missile Crisis had shown how close

we were to Mutual Assured Destruction on a scale never before seen. The arms race of the late 1950's and early 1960's had pushed the east and west closer to global confrontation since the end of the Second [...]

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No One is Laughing Now Mr. Holland

Mister Mac Apr 8

Originally posted on [theleansubmariner](https://theleansubmariner.com/):

April is submarine month in the United States and April 11, 1900 is traditionally celebrated as the day the submarine force was started with the purchase of the Holland Submarine. This year, I have spent a lot of time researching through the national archives for stories from 1900 or at least...

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Navy Will Have 'Challenges' Meeting

Submarine Delivery Schedules, Admiral Tells

Senate (USNI NEWS 20 APR 23) ... John Grady

In February, nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS Louisiana (SSBN-743) completed a mid-life refueling overhaul – the last for the Ohio-class submarines.

"Louisiana will be the last. The long availabilities are complete," Vice Adm. Johnny Wolfe told the Senate Armed Services strategic forces subcommittee on Tuesday.

Now, as the Ohios are set to depart the service, "Columbia-class is the priority," Wolfe said.

"We're going to have challenges" in meeting submarine production demands and keeping weapons systems modernization and delivery in synch with ship construction, Wolfe said.

"Most U.S. nuclear deterrent systems – including the SSBN fleet – are operating beyond their original design life. Replacement programs are ongoing, but there is little or no margin between the end of useful life of existing programs and the fielding of their replacements. As noted by the 2022 NPR [Nuclear Posture Review], we need to fully fund the Columbia class SSBN program to deliver a minimum of 12 boats

on time, as the Ohio Class SSBNs begin to retire. We also need to continue to prioritize near-term investments in the submarine industrial base, Ohio-class sustainment and the second life extension of the TRIDENT II D5” missile, Wolfe wrote in his prepared testimony.

“On-time delivery” has become increasingly challenging.

USNI News reported last month that Navy Secretary Carlos Del Toro told House appropriators that the Virginia-class attack boats program is “significantly behind” schedule.

The Navy’s plan was to build one Columbia-class sub and two Virginia-class per year, but the plan did not take into account deliveries to Australia.

General Dynamics Electric Boat and Huntington Ingalls Industries Newport News shipyards are the only yards capable of building nuclear-powered submarines. Instead of two Virginia-class per year, the Navy reported they are delivering 1.2 boats.

Testifying on an earlier panel at the same hearing as Wolfe, Vice Adm. James Caldwell, deputy administrator for naval reactors at the National Nuclear Security Administration, said his program “is delivering the life-of-the-ship reactor core and the electric drive propulsion system for Columbia.”

Panel Chairman Sen. Angus King, (D-Maine) noted that importance in the hearing. That reactor eliminates the need for a refueling overhaul over its 40-year life cycle. It also allows the Navy to field 12 ballistic missile submarines rather than 14 since extended yard periods won’t be needed, he said.

At the beginning of the year, the chairman and then-ranking member of the Senate Armed Services Committee expressed their concerns over shipyard space and workforce availability with the pending delivery of submarines to Canberra under the Australia-United Kingdom-United States [AUKUS] agreement.

Wolfe said the Navy is investing more than \$2.4 billion over the next five years in modernizing and expanding yards. Rep. Joe Courtney, (D-R.I.),

ranking member of the House Armed Services Seapower and Projection Forces panel, often said capacity “is the biggest constraint” in growing the fleet.

Adding to construction challenges is a diminished and aging workforce in the nation’s shipyards. “We face the same challenges” in recruiting and retaining new workers in strategic systems, as does Caldwell with nuclear reactors, Wolfe said.

The strategic systems program “does not have the benefit of a healthy industrial base that comes from maintaining production and continuous development,” he said in written testimony. He noted the Navy has not called for a key component – integrated aeroshell – since the 1980s. The Navy needs to “re-invigorate a production capability that only reside in a small cadre of highly skilled experts in an exceptionally niche industry.” The aeroshell, also used by the Air Force and the United Kingdom, is the outer protective covering for warheads as they move through the atmosphere.

Members noted this was the 60th anniversary of the Polaris Sales Agreement that allowed sharing of nuclear propulsion and weapons technology with the United Kingdom and compared it to AUKUS. “Let there be no doubt – AUKUS is a tremendous addition to my existing mission. ...My program will be a key element of [its] success,” Caldwell said in written testimony. He added in oral testimony that “it will require a generational investment in people, nuclear technologies and facilities.”

Caldwell said there have been “incredible interactions” with the Australians during the 18-month consultation period from the date AUKUS was announced. “Stewardship” has been emphasized in handling nuclear technology safely and the need for governance and regulatory guidance. He added that has been “inherent in every part of the process.”

Six junior Australian naval officers are completing nuclear reactor school in Charleston, S.C., and will be assigned to American submarines. Caldwell said they will be given

opportunities to learn on nuclear submarine operations with the United as they advance in rank.

He added the same holds true with Australians now assigned to the Royal Navy. <https://news.usni.org/2023/04/20/navy-will-have-challenges-meeting-submarine-delivery-schedules>

U.S. Denies Iran Forced Submarine to Surface in Persian Gulf

(BLOOMBERG NEWS 20 APR 23) ... Patrick Sykes and Omar Tamo

The US denied a claim by Iran's navy that it was forced to surface a nuclear-powered submarine in the Strait of Hormuz oil choke point.

In a statement published on Twitter on Thursday, US Naval Forces Central Command said an earlier claim by the Islamic Republic was "absolutely false," adding that no US submarines have recently transited the Strait of Hormuz, a key conduit for energy exports.

Admiral Shahram Irani, commander of the Iranian Army's Naval Forces, told state TV earlier on Thursday that an Iranian Fateh-class submarine detected the USS Florida with sonar after it partially entered Iranian waters in the Persian Gulf, forcing it to transit the strait at surface level.

Iran's claim is absolutely false. A U.S. submarine has NOT transited the Strait of Hormuz recently. The claim represents more Iranian disinformation that destabilizes the region. U.S. 5th Fleet continues to operate wherever international law allows. <https://t.co/BDLHNIGASB> — U.S. Naval Forces Central Command/U.S. 5th Fleet (@US5thFleet) April 20, 2023

He said Iran expects an explanation from US officials for the "dangerous and unprofessional" action.

The US said on April 8 that it deployed the submarine — capable of carrying as many as 154 Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles — to the region to "ensure regional maritime security and stability."

US Deploys Nuclear Submarine in Mideast Amid Iran Tension (1)

Last month the US conducted air strikes on Iran-linked forces in Syria, after a drone allegedly made by Iran crashed into a coalition base.

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/articles/2023-04-20/iran-says-it-forced-us-submarine-to-surface-in-strait-of-hormuz>

U.S. Navy To Get New Unique Submarine: Virginia SSW

The USS Jimmy Carter is widely regarded as the most secretive submarine in the U.S. Navy. It is especially equipped for Seabed Warfare, unreported missions deep below the waves. Now a new seabed warfare submarine, using a Virginia Class hull, is planned.

(NAVAL NEWS 20 APR 23) ... H I Sutton

The USS Jimmy Carter is currently the U.S. Navy's principal seabed warfare submarine, specially fitted for covert spy missions deep beneath the waves. Now plans are underway to build a follow-on special spy submarine using the newer Virginia Class hull.

A single Mod VA SSW (Modified Virginia, Subsea and Seabed Warfare) version of the Virginia Class is expected to be built.

Work is already underway at the famous Electric Boat shipyard in Groton, Connecticut. A basic outline of the design was shared by General Dynamics Electric Boat's President, Kevin Graney, in a January 2022 at a Connecticut Economic Summit in 2022. Since then, some information about the SSW design has slowly emerged in open sources, but naturally the details remain cloaked. According to the Congressional Research Service, a single boat will be procured in the U.S. Navy's 2024 budget. The calculated cost is \$5.1 billion, almost a billion more than the baseline Virginia Class.

Seabed Warfare

Seabed warfare has been brought into sharp focus by Russia's ongoing efforts to map undersea infrastructure. And by the September 2022 with the attack on the Nord Stream gas pipelines in the Baltic. There is no suggestion that

the USS Jimmy Carter was involved in the Nord Stream incident (it wasn't!). But the attack shows the relevance of these capabilities. Most seabed warfare however is closer to espionage than sabotage. And the American submarines excel.

The history of operations against undersea infrastructure, such as sensor networks, communications and energy infrastructure goes back a long way. And both the U.S. Navy and Russian Navy have strong traditions.

In the 1970s Operation Ivy Bells saw the U.S. Navy tapping Soviet communications networks deep undersea. Tapping the cables which the Soviets thought were safe gave the U.S. valuable insight and intelligence. The first tap, in the Sea of Okhotsk was followed by several others of similar significance but less fame. The USSR only found out about them when a Soviet spy deep in the American intelligence apparatus, Ronald Pelton, betrayed them.

At first the U.S. Navy used a converted cruise missile submarine, USS Halibut. This was followed by USS Seawolf and then USS Parche, both of which were upgraded with extended hulls to carry the specialist equipment. Then in the 2000s one of the new Seawolf class submarines, USS Jimmy Carter, was built with the hull extension already fitted. This submarine becoming the premiere seabed warfare boat of the U.S. Navy. The new specialized Virginia class submarine will augment or succeed USS Jimmy Carter.

The Virginia SSW Submarine Design

Extract details of the new Virginia SSW submarine are, as we should expect, unclear. Even the USS Jimmy Carter which has been in service almost 20 years remains something of a mystery. However, we can expect the new submarine to carry specialist uncrewed underwater vehicles (UUVs), remote operated vehicles (ROVs) and special operations submersibles.

Some of the vertical launch systems for missiles, known as VPMs (Virginia Payload Modules) will be repurposed for new systems. Additionally, the keel beneath them will be

extended. Exactly how this will interface with specialist submersibles can only be speculated at.

Russia too has a long tradition of seabed warfare. And relative to even the U.S. Navy, is heavily invested in this area. The largest submarines in service anywhere in the world are Russia's fleet of specialist submarines. The U.S. Navy's seabed warfare capability is likely more sophisticated, but Russia's is broader and more plentiful.

So, if the U.S. Navy wishes to retain any advantage it has, it is natural that it would look to have a successor to the USS Jimmy Carter.

<https://www.navalnews.com/naval-news/2023/04/u-s-navy-to-get-new-unique-submarine-virginia-ssw>

A Navy ship named for a Confederate victory now honors a Black Union hero

Quil Lawrence, NPR April 12, 2023



The USS Chancellorsville has been renamed the USS Robert Smalls, to honor the enslaved man who stole a Confederate battleship in the Civil War and delivered to the Union forces, loaded with weapons. The USS Robert Smalls is shown here off the Japanese island of Iwo To, on its way to honor the fallen service members of the World War II battle of Iwo Jima. *Navy Media Content Services*

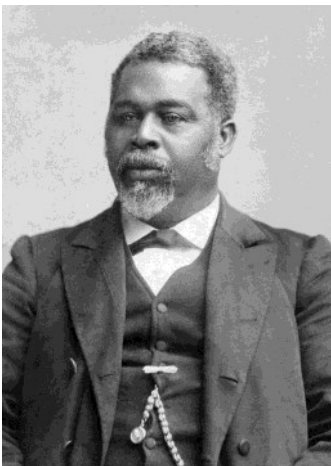
The U.S. Navy has finally shed the last two ship names that honored the Confederacy — and renamed one of them in honor of a man whose life story reads like an action movie hero.

The USS Chancellorsville is now called the **USS Robert Smalls**, the man who stole a Confederate steamer loaded with guns and delivered it to the Union Navy, delivering himself and 16 other crew and their families from slavery.

"It is a move much more consistent with the Navy's values," said Capt. Edward Angelinas, who commands the ship. "Going from a Confederate victory to this incredible story of a former slave, who commandeered a Confederate ship and turned it over to the Union Navy."

Rebel generals Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson won a decisive victory over the U.S. military at Chancellorsville, Va., in 1863. As recently as 1989 the U.S. Navy saw fit to name a warship for that battle. Just seven years ago there was still a portrait of Lee and Jackson displayed in the ship's wardroom.

The U.S. military is in the process of renaming all the bases and warships that honor the Confederacy, including civil war generals who enslaved people and fought against the U.S. military. The newly christened USS Robert Smalls may be the most direct repudiation of that legacy.



Robert Smalls, a Civil War hero who escaped from slavery in 1862. Smalls was the first Black man to command a U.S. Naval vessel, and later served in the U.S. House of Representatives. *Ullstein bild via Getty Images*

Born into slavery in Beaufort, S.C., Robert Smalls was already such a skilled mariner by his 20s that his enslaver rented him out as a pilot in Charleston harbor.

In May 1862, that meant ferrying munitions on a 150-foot side-wheel steamer called the Planter. The white officers on board trusted Smalls so much, or were so blinded to his capabilities, that they often left the ship to go home to their families at night. But Smalls was thinking about his own family.

"He was married, he had two children, among

them my great-grandmother Elizabeth," said Michael Moore, and South Carolina businessman.

"He knew in slavery that his family could be separated from him in an instant. To make a long story short, he knew that there was a (Union Navy) blockade just outside the mouth of Charleston River," said Moore.

On May 12, Smalls enlisted the rest of the enslaved crew and sailed away. They made an audacious stop to collect their families, and then one more ruse de guerre — he disguised himself as the captain.

"He donned a straw hat and long sort of top coat that the Confederate captain wore, and in the middle of night and at distance, he rang the various pass-codes to be allowed to pass by about five forts in Charleston Harbor and sailed passed them all into freedom," said Moore.

The risk was absolute. Smalls and probably the entire crew would have been made gory examples if they'd been caught.

"They would've been killed in a very public way to deter other enslaved African Americans from trying such a heist," said Robin Moore, also a great-great grandchild.

Smalls and his shipmates knew it was freedom or death. Some accounts say they rigged the boat with explosives in case they were caught.

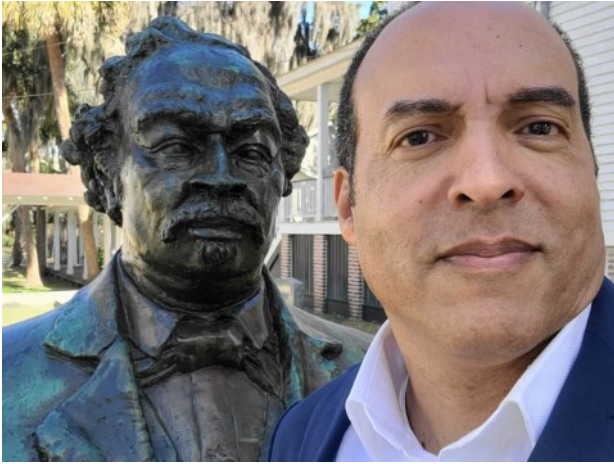
Once they slipped past Confederate lines, the danger wasn't over. Seeing a Southern ship heading directly at them, the Union sailors prepared their cannons. The dawn's early light revealed a white flag just in time, sewn by Smalls' wife from bedsheets.

Smalls handed over an entire steamship loaded with Confederate guns.

"Robert got a reward for delivering the boat to the United States. And he actually could have lived a very comfortable, happy life, perhaps up in the north where he was received as a real hero," said Michael Moore.

Instead, Smalls returned to war. He first piloted the same ship he'd taken from the Confederates, and later took command of a Union ship under fire in an attack on Charleston, becoming the first African American to command a U.S. Navy

vessel.



Michael Moore takes a selfie with a statue of his great-great-grandfather, the Union Navy hero Robert Smalls. *Michael Moore*

After the war he kept serving — in the South Carolina legislature and then the U.S. House of Representatives. He promoted equality and public education, and made sure his own children were educated, said Robin Moore.

"His commitment to education was passed along to his daughter Elizabeth, who was that four-year old on that ship. All of Elizabeth's children went to college," she said.

His list of accomplishments is almost unbelievable. On a Philadelphia streetcar he was asked to give up his seat to a white man. He started a boycott that led to integration. He served as brigadier general in the South Carolina militia. He bought his former enslaver's house. And he started a school, published a newspaper and founded a railroad.

Suffice to say, there's plenty for the sailors aboard the USS Robert Smalls to take pride in today, said Capt. Angelinas. He spoke with NPR while sailing off the coast of Japan. The first time he walked aboard and was announced as the captain of the USS Robert Smalls, the crew started cheering.

"They certainly weren't cheering for me or my arrival. They were cheering for the namesake. And that's the first time I've seen that in three command tours and 27 years in the Navy," he said.

What are some hacks that everyone should know?

When you sign up for anything online, put the website's name as your middle name. That way when you receive spam/advert email, you will know who sold your information.

When you first meet a person and don't feel like you are connecting, ask them what job they'd choose if money wasn't an issue. It initiates a talk about their passions, which are rarely dull and make it simple to connect.

If you want to be an effective communicator, let others talking about themselves and their interests.

Do not try to be the man your father would want you to be. Be the man you would like your son to be. It more clearly defines your own convictions, desires, goals, and motivates you to be your best.

Pay Attention to the smell of your home when you come back from a trip - that's what it smells like to guests all the time, you just get used to it.

When a friend is upset, ask them one simple question before saying anything else: 'Do you want to talk about it or do you want to be distracted from it?'

No matter how much your workplace pushes "team building" and "family culture" - remember, they're not your friends and it's still a workplace.

If you're stuck on an annoying call, put your phone on airplane mode instead of just hanging up. The other person will see "call failed" instead of "call ended".

If you want to learn a new language, figure out the 100 most frequently used words and start with them. Those words make up about 50% of everyday speech, and should be a very solid basis.

Nukes, Nubs And Coners: The Unique Social Hierarchy Aboard A Nuclear Submarine

Getting assigned to your first sub doesn't make you a submariner and once you become one, you'll find yourself in a social structure unlike any other.



Photo by Commander, Submarine Force Atlan—
Public Domain

Living in a machine with over 100 sailors requires a person to be flexible socially and sometimes physically. I spent two decades on United States Navy submarines performing sonar duties among eccentric personalities in incredibly stressful situations. When sailors report to their first submarine, they are joining a work culture unlike any other. Surrounded by crew members busily moving about tight spaces and narrow walkways, announcements over the circuit boxes, roving watchstanders, equipment humming to 400hz fans, it can be anxiety-inducing to any sailor.

That is why every new crewmember starts as a NUB. But, if they work hard and learn the systems, they will earn their dolphins and become a member of another entirely unique subculture within the grander social hierarchy that exists within the confines of the submerged tube they call home for months on end.

Here's is what is expected of a new crew member and a bit about the various 'unique' groups of people aboard the submarine, one of which the NUB will find themselves an integral part of once they get minted a submariner.

The NUB

A new crewmember is a Non-Useful Body, or NUB. He or she uses our limited supply of space, water, food, and oxygen. They are not welcome, but BUPERS (Bureau of Personnel) keeps sending them. The NUB is easily identifiable as he will be the only crewman wearing a command ball cap with the ship's name and no Dolphins symbol on the front. They have their qualification card in their rear pocket at all times and had better have a

small notebook in their hand for studying. They do not have movie privileges unless they are a "Hot Runner." Hot Runner refers to a torpedo self-starting despite the fact it hasn't been launched yet. Very dangerous, but Submariners like that kind of initiative in the NUB.



A sailor washes down the USS Washington. Photo by USN

Everyone, officer or enlisted, is a NUB when they report to their first submarine. They are treated with contempt. In the case of the officer, its respectful contempt, sir. The NUB is expected to qualify in submarines within 12 months. This can be extended a few months if there are outside circumstances that delay qualification opportunities.

Qualification on a U.S. submarine is a formal process completed in phases. The first phase introduces all the major systems around the boat. This orientation phase is purposefully designed to ease the NUB through the culture shock of living inside a machine the Navy sends to submerge in the ocean for weeks on end. This introduces the NUB to their fellow crewman, one watch station at a time. This first impression will affect how difficult their qualification path is because the crew decides if you are to become a submariner or not. They must earn their confidence. They must prove that they can perform emergency actions without direction and with confidence during a 'casualty,' when something goes wrong.



A sailor mans the main console of the ship's Ballast Control Panel on board the nuclear-powered ballistic missile submarine USS Pennsylvania. Photo by USN

Phase two of submarine qualification is the most difficult. It requires detailed knowledge of every system on the boat, from the nuclear powerplant, to ventilation, to electrical and hydraulic systems, to simple atmosphere scrubbing and gravity drains. The Non-Useful Body must memorize every system, be able to draw it from memory on command, and know the initial actions they must perform if a causality occurs to that system. Even if it's not their assigned equipment, they must know how to prevent a failure from cascading into a major casualty that could be catastrophic for the boat.

Phase three of submarine qualification is the most physically demanding. This is the walkthrough phase. The NUB will walk through every level of every compartment one at a time with a qualified crewman. During this tour, they may be dressed in full protective gear like a Fire Fighting Equipment (FFE) asbestos bodysuit and wearing breathing protection. This physical discomfort compounded with an oral interview answering detailed system-specific operational questions simulates a small, but important amount of stress compared to what they would endure during a real casualty situation.



Sailors assigned to USS Indiana. Photo by USN
Phase four is 'The Board.' This is the end phase of the submarine qualification and is more difficult to schedule than it is to pass. The NUB must find at least three submarine qualified crewmen who have three to five hours of off-watch time at the same time to be part of an oral interview board. There must be at least one submarine qualified officer, one senior enlisted man, and one system expert on the Board.

It is customary for the qualifying crewman to bring a small snack to the Board. Usually, there is a bowl of Jolly Rancher hard candies, but I have seen a cook make a full dessert platter with pastries and a cake. The Board members can't ask hard questions when they are enjoying some sugary treats!



A sailor checks a radar display while another studies a chart inside the control room of the USS Florida. Photo by USN

If a Board interview is failed, a crew member can reschedule a second board when they are ready. He or she is only restricted by the time

constraints of the qualification schedule. If they fail a second board, they may be removed from submarine service, but this is very rare. Good submariners can be built if given enough time by the crew to help them. I have seen both enlisted and officers wash out of the submarine qualification program and in each of those cases it was for the better. It very possibly saved their lives and ensured the safety of our ship.



U.S. Navy Master Chief Jeffrey Bottoms, chief of the boat for the USS Rhode Island, far left; Navy Cmdr. Robert J. Clark, commanding officer for the Rhode Island, and Navy Lt. Cmdr. Paul Pampuro, far right, watch as Navy Petty Officer 3rd Class William Corring speaks at a ceremony in the Rhode Island crew's mess as the submarine patrols in the Atlantic Ocean, Aug. 16, 2010. Corring received his Dolphin pin during the ceremony.

The final phase is a one-on-one interview with the Executive Officer and the Commanding Officer. Every submarine qualified sailor is awarded their dolphins with the full confidence and trust of the submarine Captain. By this time, the crewman has earned the respect of their shipmates and demonstrated that they know the basics to keep the submarine in fighting shape, no matter the circumstances.

After achieving the approval of the crew and getting one's dolphins, they get categorized into one of two groups—Nukes and Coners.

The Nuke

Crewmen who work in the engine room are called Nukes. They are made up of high school graduates who loved Star Trek so much they decided to role-play their science fiction fantasy in real life. Incredibly smart and able to digest volumes of information in a short time, these mystical figures often whisper of powerband

constraints and millirems amongst themselves. They use math so much in their daily routine they ran out of numbers and added some Latin letters to their measurement logs. They are best avoided at mealtime and are given their own table in the crew's mess next to the Chief Petty Officers.

Nukes come in three varieties:

The **Reactor Operator** is likely the stereotypical 90-pound geek who maintains a World of Warcraft account despite being underway for 10 months of the year. He's wiry, lanky, and a little jittery from energy drinks. Despite his excitement, he is the smoothest Reactor Operator in the nuclear program and can catch a power spike like he's dimming the bedroom lights next to his waifu body pillow.



Nukes studying one of the boat's systems. Photo by USN

The **Nuclear Electrician** is the most chameleon-like and may be difficult to spot in a crew photo. He often has average height and build allowing him to blend in with the 'Coners' if left unchallenged. He gives himself away by always having a Sudoku puzzle book tucked inside his pooppy suit and a faint odor of ozone follows him around.

The **Nuclear Mechanic** is the protector and enforcer of the engine room. These sailors are often very large compared to their fellow Nukes. They have oil-stained fingers and faded blue pooppy suits that have seen more underway time than was intended. They eat at the Nuke table in the crew's mess with gusto, filling their frames with enough carbs to make it through the next six hours in the hot engine room.

Life in the engine room is routine at sea. No matter what the mission or our deployment location they serve one purpose: Push the Cone.

The Coner

Coners live in the Cone. That's any space forward of the engine room. They make up the rest of the crew. A grab bag of cultures and backgrounds, from small-town USA to big city living, the Cone represents a microcosm of the United States' young men and women. This mix of people come together at the needs of the Navy and perform well despite their differences.



Submariners scan the horizon through periscopes aboard the fast attack submarine USS Santa Fe. Photo by USN

The Radioman is the most elusive of the Coners. He spends his time locked in his 'Radio Shack' both off watch and on. This limited access space offers a small amount of privacy not seen anywhere else outside the Captain's stateroom. From this room, messages are dispatched around the boat. Radiomen are the gatekeepers of all message traffic from the most sensitive top-secret orders to routine personal messages. No matter what is happening or planned, the Radiomen know about it first.

The Quartermaster, or "QM," could be mistaken for a militant artist with his bandolier of colored pencils and erasers. He is the 'Keeper of the Chart.' Hunched over a plotting table for six hours at a time, he is constantly calculating and verifying the ship's position.

Off watch, they are preparing charts for the next day or next mission. A modern, Neo-QM has turned in his colored pencils for a tablet pc and

paper charts for their digital replacement, but their fixation for geolocating and browsing rules of the aquatic road remains a constant.

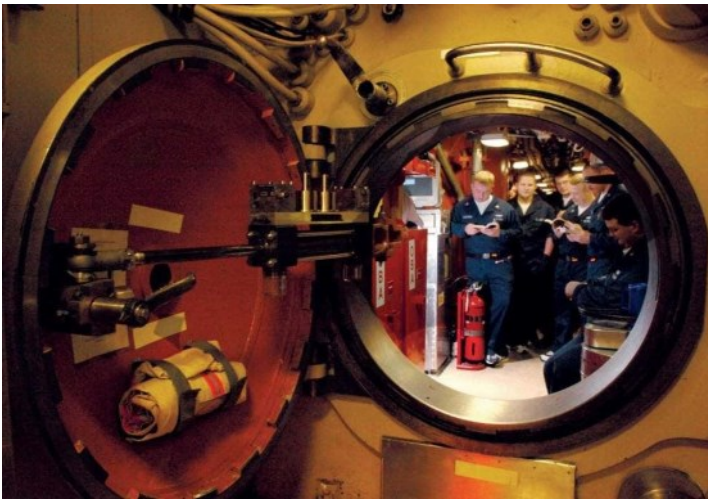


Plotting a course aboard Virginia class nuclear fast attack submarine USS Texas. Photo by USN

Sonarmen, sometimes referred to as "shower techs" or "sonar girls," are the most eccentric of the crew zoo. In a world where every evolution from flushing the toilet to firing up the kettle has a written procedure, the sonarman works in the most liberal and creative of environments.

Sonar is a talent-based skill that varies from sailor to sailor and some of the best are also some of the most unstable personalities to be awarded a secret clearance. They are most likely encountered in or near the shower as they have an affinity for bathing underway.

Missile Technicians, "MTs," are the stewards of 'Sherwood Forest.' Rising between levels in the missile compartment, 24 large orange trunks fill the nuclear ballistic submarine like an apocalyptic orchard. MTs rove around the ballistic missile tubes checking temperatures and pressures, ensuring their precious reentry vehicles and the nuclear warheads nested inside them are very comfortable.



The watertight hatch that separates the rest of the boat from 'Sherwood Forest.' Photo by USN

Auxillarymen, or an "A-Ganger," is a hostile creature and the natural predator of the sonarman. A combination of 'Nuke Waste,' a sailor who failed nuclear power school, and a backyard diesel mechanic, the A-Ganger is the gruffest, foul-mouthed sailor onboard any United States Navy vessel. They are responsible for scrubbing the atmosphere clean, managing the waste tanks, and keeping the sweet Fairbanks Morse diesel engine running smoothly. They appear to be a less evolved Nuclear Mechanic whose smell is as rank as their language.

The **Torpedoman** can always be found in the torpedo room. Both on watch and off watch, the torpedo room is the crew's social center on an attack submarine. A master of small arms and heavy explosives, the Torpedoman is the weapons master of the crew. They are always cleaning rifles and polishing the torpedo tubes to a new level of brass brightness. They are often found in pairs due to their reader-worker routines, checklist and grease pencil in hand. If you find yourself in the torpedo room, look for the most heavily armed person there and that is your Torpedoman.



Torpedomen conduct maintenance on small arms in the torpedo room aboard the Los Angeles class attack submarine USS Helena. Photo by USN

The **Cooks**, or Mess Specialists, are the most liked persons of the submarine crew. They dish out 1,000 calories of happiness every six hours, every day and keep the crew fueled.

While every crewman has their watch team and circle of friends, everyone knows the cooks. Clad in very distinctive white chefs' outfits and paper hats, they manage to serve up chow with a smile and light banter to keep morale up.

Anyone who has spent time at sea respects the cook.



Cooking up some pancakes on a Los Angeles class fast attack submarine. Photo by UNS

Yeomen are crewmen with a very specific skill. They can type. Commonly found in the 'Yeomen Shack' hunched over a keyboard like Schroeder on the piano or in the torpedo room yammering about how they don't have to stand watch because they work so much. The Yeoman is the Executive Officer's right hand and has a chest full

of Navy Achievement Medals to prove it. He or she processes the paperwork bureaucracy that keeps the Navy afloat and flowing in the right direction.

Doc, the submarine's Corpsman, also known as the "Pecker Checker," keeps everyone healthy or at least can identify when someone is not. From dispensing the Navy's universal cure, Motrin, to the 'morale check' (a slap on the crotch), the Doc makes sure everyone has absorbed enough radiation for evolutionary mutation and is ready to stand watch.



Master Chief Hospital Corpsman David Peterson administers a flu vaccine to Machinist's Mate 1st Class Kyle Leoard aboard the Los Angeles-class fast attack submarine USS Cheyenne. Photo by USN

This is the American Submarine crew. On their own, they may be goofy and socially awkward, but as a crew, this band of misfits becomes the best warfighters I have ever had the honor of serving with.

Life on board a submarine is rewarding because it is a demonstration of what a diverse group of people can achieve under incredibly difficult conditions.



The crew of the Los Angeles fast class attack submarine USS Louisville. Photo by USN

*Aaron Amick is a retired U.S. Navy submarine sonarman. He served in both Atlantic and Pacific Oceans on 688 Los Angeles class fast attack and Ohio class ballistic missile submarines. He has published two audiobooks on Cold War-era submarines, *Akula SSN Project 971 Sub Brief* and *USS Nautilus SSN-571 Sub Brief*. Now, Aaron manages a small [Patreon page](#) and contributes to *The War Zone*.*

Contact the editor: Tyler@thedrive.com

This is a rather long narrative about a US Navy PD4Y-2 that was shot down during the Cold War. As those of us who were on the boats during that time frame we knew there was nothing 'cold' about that war. Please read if you have time. A story I never knew. Editor

The Cold War Mystery The U.S. Military Can't Afford to Forget

Russia downing a U.S. drone last month wasn't the first-time tensions between the two countries boiled over mid-air.

(POLITICO 09 APR 23) ... Gordon F. Sander

Seventy-three years ago this week, the first lethal clash of the Cold War lit up the skies over the Baltic Sea. Ten American airmen on a secret — and well-disguised — mission disappeared, never to be heard from again. Most likely you have never heard about them. But at a time when Russia and the U.S. once again have daggers drawn, their story is one we cannot afford to forget.

Latvia certainly hasn't forgotten. Every April the U.S. ambassador to Riga, along with representatives of the Latvian government and military, presides over a solemn ceremony on the beach promenade of Liepāja, a coastal city overlooking the Baltic Sea, to honor the 10-man crew of the U.S. Navy Privateer reconnaissance aircraft PB4Y-2, flight 59645, which was shot down by four Soviet jets on April 8, 1950. This year's commemoration took place on Thursday, featuring a speech by Christopher Robinson, the new American ambassador. "This commemoration is particularly relevant in light of our renewed confrontation with authoritarianism," he told me.

Indeed, a new Cold War between the U.S. and Russia is heating up in the skies overlooking the same foam-specked waves in which the U.S. Navy PB4Y-2 went down. Two weeks before the ceremony, a Russian jet intercepted two U.S. B-52 bombers flying nearby. Just a week before that aerial tangle, in the first known military encounter between Russia and the U.S. since the invasion of Ukraine began, Russian jets playing chicken with an unmanned American surveillance drone over the Black Sea caused it to crash. Fortunately, there were no casualties in either incident. The Russian SU-45 tailing the two venerable U.S. bombers over the Baltic, which the Kremlin claimed were flying toward Russia, disengaged. The U.S. drone that Vladimir Putin's eager eagles — as his predecessor, Joseph Stalin, used to call his pilots — caused to crash was remotely piloted.

Nevertheless, Liepāja mayor Gunars Ansins noted the troubling parallels between past and present: "In light of today's events in Ukraine, we see that [the] values [fallen soldiers] fought for — freedom, security, democracy — are more relevant than ever."

What led those brave men to their deaths off the coast of Latvia that day, bringing the U.S. to the precipice of a hot war 32 all those decades ago? What exactly was the real purpose of flight 59645, and what happened to men on board?

Three quarters of a century later, none of these

things are truly clear.

One of our aircraft is missing. That was the essence of the alarmed, all-points message that went out from the NATO air force base at Copenhagen, Denmark, on the afternoon of April 8, 1950, after the converted Navy PB4Y-2 Privateer reconnaissance aircraft, also known as "Turbulent Turtle," went missing.



Turbulent Turtle on routine flight

The U.S. plane was on a "routine" "navigational flight" from Wiesbaden, Germany, to the NATO air force base at Copenhagen, according to the opaque statement issued by the Pentagon the following day, buried in a short article on page 12 of the New York Times.

The mystery behind the missing plane was cleared up — or, more accurately, partly cleared up — on April 11, when the Kremlin announced that a B-29 Superfortress had disappeared over the Baltic Sea near Liepāja in occupied Latvia after it had putatively intruded on Soviet air space. According to Moscow, the offending plane had been intercepted by Soviet fighters after it had refused their orders to land. Instead of obeying, the bomber had opened fire, according to the Soviets, forcing them to return fire.

The State Department and Department of Defense continued to claim that the plane was on a routine navigational flight, castigating the Kremlin for its apparent refusal to assist its former World War II ally in the search for the missing Privateer crew. "The attitude of the Soviet government shows clearly the insincerity of its oft-

proclaimed desire for peaceful relations with the United States and the non-Soviet world,” protested Michael McDermott, chief spokesperson for the State Department.

The USSR’s failure to take part in the search, the livid American continued, “or to exhibit the slightest evidence of concern [for them] showed an astonishing lack of common international courtesy and an unusual disregard of the loss of human life.”

But the New York Times was skeptical of the original American position regarding flight 59645. “The specific role of the plane remain[s] something of a riddle,” the paper reported on April 11. “In spite of a statement that the mission was routine,” it continued dubiously, “observers noted that the crew was composed predominantly of special technicians, including electronic specialists.”

In fact, both Moscow and Washington were lying. The Turbulent Turtle was indeed on an electronic reconnaissance mission.

It would take a quarter of a century for the U.S. government to admit it, however as the Naval Investigative Board, which looked into the episode, noted in a report declassified in 1975, the Privateer was engaged in a “special electronic search project mission.”

“Ferret flights,” these spy missions used to be called — reconnaissance missions designed to locate Soviet radar stations. In case war broke out with the USSR, which appeared increasingly possible at that feral juncture of history, the data gathered on such flights would be critical. These difficult, hair-raising flights, manned entirely by volunteers, were not for the faint-hearted. “Crews were jammed into cramped compartments where they huddled over radar screens and electronic monitoring devices,” wrote air force historian Paul Glenshaw in a 2017 Air & Space Magazine article. The purpose of these dangerous missions was to trigger enemy radar installations so as to confirm their location.

Moscow was also lying. The Kremlin knew — or had to know — that the plane its pilots shot down was not a B-29 as it claimed, but had been

converted from the much smaller B24. The massive silhouette of the B-29 Superfortress, the same heavy bomber that had dropped the first atomic bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki, was completely different from the medium-sized B-24 Liberator upon which the Privateer was based. Moreover, the Soviets themselves actually possessed a number of B-29s that had been forced to land on their territory.

Even more ridiculous was the charge that the “Turtle” had fired at the Soviets: Like all spy planes, the Privateer had deliberately been stripped of ordnance. The only weapon on board, according to Glenshaw, was the .38 caliber belonging to the pilot, Lieutenant Commander John Fette.

Another point of disagreement was the exact location of the aerial confrontation, which Washington insisted took place in international waters. Back and forth went the dueling statements, much like the ones that the two sides recently exchanged after the crash of the U.S. drone over the Black Sea, with Washington declaring that the downed drone was in international air space, which Moscow denied.

The only thing that was and is still clear, is that something went badly wrong — at least from the U.S. Air Force’s point of view. For his part, Stalin was so pleased by the performance of both the radar men who detected the U.S. spy plane and the pilots who blew it out of the skies that he awarded them medals — just as their successors who crashed the U.S. drone last month were.

And so the increasingly frustrating search for the U.S. craft continued. On April 15, a week after the incident, searchers spotted a lifeboat from the Privateer, pointing to the probability that the aircraft had not broken up, but had made a soft landing. Ten days later, on April 25, the captain of a Swedish fishing vessel found an airplane wheel in its net. The wheel, identified as the nose wheel of a Privateer, had been pierced by a machine gun bullet.

Still no sign of the captain, John Fette, and his crew.

By then Fette and his nine men had been

declared missing in action, and their shocked and puzzled families, who had been in the dark about the missing flight, had been notified.

That same day, Navy Secretary Francis Matthews, at the joint behest of President Harry Truman and Congress, awarded the Distinguished Flying Cross to Fette and his men “for performing assigned tasks with courage and skills on a peacetime mission,” while maintaining discreet silence about the actual nature of that mission.

The Kremlin, anxious to make maximum propaganda use of the episode, certainly wasn’t discreet — possibly on the basis of new evidence it had uncovered during its parallel search — asserting that the Privateer’s objective had been “photographing [Soviet] defense installations.” Which could be true.

Which might not have been far off the mark. Had the Soviets recovered some incriminating flotsam from the fallen plane?

And, incidentally, what happened to the men themselves? Had the Russians captured some of the crew, as rumors and reports by persons formerly detained in the Soviet gulags suggested? The State Department reportedly sent a pointed demarche to Moscow about the matter in 1956, as a 1992 report by the Department of Defense POW/MIA department notes. There is no reliable evidence that any of the men survived the crash or were taken prisoner. Nevertheless, the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency has not closed its books on the incident.

Whatever happened out there in the skies over the Baltic near Liepāja, a dangerous line had been crossed. A new war — a “cold war,” including a low-key but very real shooting war, was on, as Navy Secretary Matthews told a meeting of the Manhattan chapter of the Reserve Officers Association on April 24, the night before the men of the Turbulent Turtle were posthumously decorated, according to the New York Times. Soon the press would stop using the quotes around “cold war” and begin capitalizing it.

The Cold War would continue for 50 years. And there would be more casualties. U.S. spy planes would continue to be shot down. The most

famous incident, of course, was the May 1960 shootdown by Soviet anti-aircraft missiles of the high altitude U2 spy plane piloted by Gary Powers.

Powers was fortunate. He survived his shootdown and was eventually repatriated. But most of the American airmen who were shot down by increasingly effective Soviet air defenses were not so fortunate — nor were their families. All in all, an estimated 200 men, including the men of the Turbulent Turtle, went down with their spy craft in this all but forgotten theater of the Cold War, which ended with the break-up of the USSR in 1991, when the former so-called Latvian Socialist Social Republic regained its independence.

No less than 126 airmen lost during the Cold War are still unaccounted for and officially listed as MIA, according to the Pentagon.

Most Americans may have forgotten these long -ago incidents, but the crew’s families remember. In 2015, Kathy Fiffick, who is the niece of pilot John Fette, and Paul, her husband, attended the annual commemoration in Liepāja.

The government and people of Latvia remember, too. “Today marks 73 years since a U.S. aircraft was shot down by Soviet military forces near Liepāja,” said Natalja Vecvagare, international policy adviser for Liepāja, at the ceremony on Thursday, “marking the first Cold War casualty in the reconnaissance war against the Soviets.”

“Eternal vigilance is the price of freedom,” she continued, quoting Thomas Jefferson. “And today, when the world ‘war’ has so many faces — conventional, informational, cyber, electronic — we all need to stay extremely vigilant to protect our freedom.”

Ambassador Robinson seconded those sentiments in his own closing remarks. “We have not forgotten the sacrifices of those who came before us,” he declared. “We honor their memory with our pledge to defend NATO’s territory with the full force of U.S. and Allied power, and in supporting the people of Ukraine in their fight against Russian tyranny.”

"We stand for the same values as the Latvians," the visibly moved ambassador told me afterward. As he spoke, two shadows appeared overhead. For a moment, I could have sworn that they were Russian jets.

But no, they were only two patrolling sea gulls.

Meanwhile, the Pentagon's official position on the status of the Turbulent Turtle remains the same: One of our aircraft is missing.

<https://www.politico.com/news/magazine/2023/04/09/russia-u-s-air-cold-war-00090967>

Submitted by George Birmingham via Chaplain Ray Fritz, Carolina Piedmont Base.

These are from a book called "**Disorder in the Court**" and are things people actually said in court, word for word, taken down and published by court reporters who had the torment of staying straight-faced while the exchanges were taking place.

ATTORNEY: What gear were you in at the moment of the impact?

WITNESS: Gucci sweats and Reeboks.

ATTORNEY: What is your birthday?

WITNESS: July 18th

ATTORNEY: What year?

WITNESS: Every year.

ATTORNEY: Now doctor, isn't it true that when a person dies in his sleep, he doesn't know about it until the next morning?

WITNESS: Did you actually pass the bar exam?

ATTORNEY: The youngest son, the 20-year-old, how old is he?

WITNESS: He's 20. Very close to your IQ.

ATTORNEY: Were you present when your picture was taken?

WITNESS: Are you kidding me?

ATTORNEY: She had three children, right?

WITNESS: Yes.

ATTORNEY: How many were boys?

WITNESS: None.

ATTORNEY: Were there any girls?

WITNESS: Your Honor, I need a different attorney. Can I get a new attorney?

ATTORNEY: How was your first marriage terminated?

WITNESS: By death.

ATTORNEY: And by whose death was it terminated?

WITNESS: Take a guess.

ATTORNEY: Can you describe the individual?

WITNESS: He was about medium height and had a beard.

ATTORNEY: Was this a male or a female?

WITNESS: Unless the Circus was in town I'm going with male.

ATTORNEY: Is your appearance here this morning pursuant to a deposition notice which I sent to your attorney?

WITNESS: No, this is how I dress when I go to work.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, how many of your autopsies have you performed on dead people?

WITNESS: All of them. The live ones put up too much of a fight.

ATTORNEY: Do you recall the time that you examined the body?

WITNESS: The autopsy started around 8:30 PM.

ATTORNEY: And Mr. Denton was dead at the time?

WITNESS: If not, he was by the time I finished.

ATTORNEY: Doctor, before you performed the autopsy, did you check for a pulse?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for blood pressure?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: Did you check for breathing?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: So, then it is possible that the patient was alive when you began the autopsy?

WITNESS: No.

ATTORNEY: How can you be so sure, Doctor?

WITNESS: Because his brain was sitting on my desk in a jar.

ATTORNEY: I see, but could the patient have still been alive, nevertheless?

WITNESS: Yes, it is possible that he could have been alive and practicing law.



A Modern Submarine on Eternal Patrol – A Tribute to the USS Thresher (SSN 593)

April 10, 2023 By Ncurrie, Posted In Cold War, Navy, Marines, & Coast Guard

The story of the *Thresher* begins at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, ME when her keel was laid down in 1958. She was completed and launched in 1960. After being outfitted, the *Thresher* made a preliminary dive to a safe 600 feet in July 1961, and then was commissioned in August 1961 and placed in command under Commander Dean L. Axene, a World War II submarine officer. After commissioning, she was thoroughly tested for close to a whole year, exceeding the expectations of her designers and engineers.

During *Thresher's* short career, she was put through a battery of tests, including sound tests in the Bahamas to see how effective the silencing measures worked to suppress radiant sound vibrations from her machinery and reactor. She passed with flying colors. After that test, she returned to New London, and prepared to go on another shakedown cruise to Puerto Rico with the USS *Cavalla* (SS 244) to conduct anti-submarine exercises. It is here where there was a bit of foreshadowing of things to come. During the

exercise, the *Thresher* put into San Juan, which did not have the port facilities to provide external power to the submarine. Per procedure, the reactor was shut down, and the auxiliary diesel engine aboard the submarine provided everyday power until it broke down. The loss of the diesel engine would make it difficult to restart the reactor, but all was not lost at that point.

The *Thresher* was equipped with a large storage battery, which would not power the submarine for long. Restarting a nuclear reactor requires a great deal of time and electricity and without the diesel engine, they would need all the electricity in the battery. This meant they had to turn off ventilation and internal lighting to conserve as much electricity to restart the reactor. In the process of getting the reactor started the temperature in the reactor room climbed to an unbearable 140 degrees Fahrenheit. As the battery was dying, the mechanics were still working on the diesel engine, and the reactor still had not come on line, the *Cavalla* came along the *Thresher* and connected her diesel engines to electrical cables to provide power to *Thresher*. The help from *Cavalla* allowed the *Thresher* to get her reactor and life support systems back on.

For the rest of 1961 and into 1962, *Thresher* conducted additional tests, including test firing of dummy SUBROCs, testing her new SONAR system, and shock testing by dropping depth charges in and around the submarine. Though she took only minor damage overall, it was enough to shake some of the silencing measures to come loose. Returning to the Bahamas, additional stealth tests found that *Thresher* was making a lot more noise than typical groans of metal under pressure.

In July 1962, *Thresher* returned to Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for an extensive overhaul. Initially, the work was estimated to finish by January 1963, but completion was delayed until April 1963 due to prioritization of the construction of nuclear ballistic submarines that were on the slipways.

It was during this prolonged overhaul that most of the crew, officers and enlisted, were reassigned. The *Thresher* was placed in the command of Lieutenant Commander John Harvey. Harvey was a young officer who had graduated from the Naval Academy in 1950 and

had been part of the Nuclear Submarine program since its inception. He was a highly qualified officer who had received training and qualification aboard three different nuclear submarines. He had been the nuclear reactor officer aboard the USS *Nautilus* (SSN 571), engineering officer aboard USS *Tullibee* (SSN 597) and later the executive officer (XO) aboard the USS *Seadragon* (SSN 584).

Of the eleven officers assigned in March 1963, five were qualified in submarines and three were qualified in nuclear power plants. To qualify in submarines, an officer or an enlisted sailor is tested in each of the sections and jobs of a submarine to a degree in which they can fill in in case of an emergency. Passing all these tests earns a sailor their “dolphins,” a device that is worn by a qualified submariner. Of the eleven officers, only three of them had spent any significant time on the *Thresher*. This unfamiliarity with submarines, in general and the *Thresher*, specifically was also reflected in the enlisted crew. This green crew was one of the contributing factors in the tragedy that was to come.^[8]

In a reversal of priorities, the deputy commander, Submarine Force, Atlantic Fleet ordered that more fast-attack submarines be ready. Portsmouth prioritized the overhaul of the *Thresher*. The initial work was completed in March, and Harvey planned a “fast-cruise” where they would simulate being underway. He found about five hundred deficiencies, but a minimum of only about 200 of them were required to make the vessel ready for sea. The shipyard quickly made the repairs, and the “fast-cruise” resumed on March 31.

The simulation showed how unprepared the crew was for sailing. Among the problems that the simulation revealed, a flooding drill took the sailors over 20 minutes to isolate the problem.

The submarine eventually returned to sea on April 9 leaving Portsmouth Naval Shipyard for a two-day cruise to perform a number of dives, including a dive to her test depth of 1,300 feet. The *Thresher* would be again in the company of the USS *Skylark* (ASR 20). She set sail from Portsmouth with a crew of 129. Aboard the submarine were her twelve officers, ninety-six enlisted crew, four naval observers, and seventeen civilian observers. Most of the

observers were from Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, though two engineers were from Sperry Gyroscope Company, one engineer was from Raytheon Company and one engineer was from the Naval Ordnance Laboratory. The observers were there to inspect the repairs made to the submarine and to help improve her performance. Normally, a *Thresher/Permit*-class submarine has a crew of about 104 to 112 personnel, so to accommodate the additional personnel makeshift beds (made from plywood and air mattresses) were constructed in the torpedo room.

The visiting officers and engineers packed a suitcase to cover their needs for the cruise. Only four of the assigned crew of the *Thresher* were ashore when she set sail. One officer had a family emergency and three enlisted sailors were away from the ship for various reasons.

The first round of tests were several shallow dives to check the hull’s integrity. They only dove down to about 600 feet to test for leaks. Finding no problems, the skipper communicated to *Skylark* via the UQC (underwater telephone) that things were fine. Harvey released the rescue ship and arranged to meet *Skylark* to rendezvous around 200 miles east of Cape Cod past the edge of the continental shelf the next morning. The depth beyond that point reached down beyond 8,000 feet.

The morning of April 10, the two vessels met up at the designated position and began the next round of tests. At around 0730, Harvey communicated to *Skylark*, which was ten miles off of the *Thresher*’s position, that they would begin their dive. Harvey communicated to *Skylark* via the UQC when the *Thresher* hit depth markers in 15 minute intervals counting down towards her test depth of 1,300 feet. At just after 0800, the *Thresher* had reached the half-way point to her test depth – 650 feet. It was just after 0900 after making a routine check-in stating they had reached the depth of 1,300 feet, that *Skylark* received a message from *Thresher* that they were, “Experiencing minor difficulty...have a positive angle...attempting to blow...Will keep you informed.” After that message, there was one last attempted communication, but it was unintelligible.

TO READ MORE ON THIS POST GO TO
The Text Message - USS Thresher
on Eternal Patrol



Event Registration 655 Reunion #12

11-15 October 2023

Hilton Garden Inn Summerville
406 Sigma Drive, Summerville SC 29486
843.832.1304



To Reserve Rooms: call the number above or link to

<https://group.hiltongardeninn.com/y4h1lh>

Reserve Group Rates by referencing either: USS Henry Stimson Reunion OR code UHS

Hotel Reservation Deadline Monday SEPT 11, 2023

Hotel Reservation is the responsibility of the individual.

Reunion Registration Deadline Monday SEPT 11, 2023

[Reunion Web Page](#)

The hotel does not provide a shuttle from the airport. Rental cars, LYFT or Uber are available for you.

Please complete (print legibly), print the form and return along with a check payable to: **Henry L. Stimson Reunion**

Mail to: 655 Reunion Secretary, 102 Greenhurst Ave., Summerville SC 29485 **Email:** 655webmaster@ssbn655.org

Shipmate Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

Relationship (place X beside correct one): Spouse Significant Other Family Friend

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

E-mail: Home: _____ Work: _____

Number who will be attending this event in your group: _____

Patrols on STIMSON: _____ Total # Patrols on all boats: _____

Dates Onboard	Rate	Crew	Dates Onboard	Rate	Crew
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Special Needs: _____

Reunions Attended:	1999 ND	2001 CT	2003 WA	2005 MO	2007 CT	2009 GA
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X beside each one	2011 SC	2013 AL	2016 SC	2018 OK	2021 KY
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Event attendance will be through advance payment only.)

I am registering for the following per person (Association Member and all guests):

Registration Fee: (required for all) \$150.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

(This fee includes registration, Saturday banquet, Thursday Welcome Aboard gathering, all hospitality room food & beverages, etc.)

Friday – HL Hunley Tour \$30.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

The Hunley has changed significantly since the 2016 Reunion. Check their website

[THE FRIENDS OF THE HUNLEY](#). Bus transport may be provided for an extra fee.

Please indicate (circle) if you will take the bus if provided: YES NO

Please indicate (circle) if you will provide your own transportation: YES NO

The 2023 Reunion will be a different format. We are allowing those who attend plenty of unscheduled time. Charleston and the Tri-County area offers a host of places to see and things to do so we are going to give you time to enjoy and have fun either as individuals, couples or small groups. On the next page I have listed several places and things to do to make your time here enjoyable. The Eternal Patrol service will be Saturday morning and the Business Meeting will be Saturday afternoon followed by our Banquet. All will be conducted at the hotel.

The Association has established a refund policy for reunion registrations and it is located within our Bylaws in Article V.g. You can view this policy at: <http://ssbn655.org/association/bylaws/1610%20655BylawRev.pdf>

g. Cancellation of reunion registration and the refund of monies paid will be based on the timing of the cancellation. Registration cancelled prior to the reunion registration cutoff date will result in refund of monies paid minus the registration/office fee. For cancellation after the registration cutoff date, there will be no refund of monies paid.

REUNION USE ONLY

Check # _____

Date Rcvd _____

Registration # _____

Hotel Resv: _____

Our 2023 Reunion Venue is located in Summerville SC in a newly built area named Nexton. It is a mixed-use community which includes a combination of dining and shopping, single family homes and apartments/condos. You can check this area out [HERE](#). From fast-food to fine dining, you will be able to find many places to eat...and you can get to them all with either a quick drive or a nice leisurely walk to build up the appetite. Check them out [HERE](#).

Many of you lived in the Summerville area while stationed in Charleston. If you haven't been back in a while, you will have a hard time believing all of the changes to this quaint little town. But the one thing that hasn't changed here is that it still has a quaint feel to it when you are in the downtown area. The website www.visitsummerville.com is loaded with a wealth of information on our little (???) town and what's available. Even being here for a few years (49 to be exact) there are things listed on the site that we haven't taken advantage of yet. Brochures about Summerville are also available at the hotel.

Of course, the Charleston area in general has a plethora (like that word?) of things you can do. Here is a small list with links:

Plantations & Gardens:

- [Magnolia Plantation and Gardens](#)
- [Boone Hall Plantation](#)
- [Middleton Place](#)
- [Drayton Hall](#)
- [Charleston Tea Plantation](#)
- [McLeod Plantation](#)
- [Hampton Plantation](#)
- [Charles Pinckney National Historic Site](#)

[North Charleston Fire Museum](#) & [Tangier Outlet](#):

[Beidler Forest](#)

[Bee City](#)

[Old Navy Base Memorial](#) & [Old Navy Base Riverfront Park](#)

[Cold War Memorial](#) / Stimson Bench

[Patriot's Point/Yorktown](#)

[Fort Sumter & Fort Moultrie](#)

[The Battery & White Point Gardens](#)

[The Charleston Market](#)

Carriage Rides

- [Old South](#)
- [Palmetto](#)