



1950 - 1953

VOL. 2024 #7 HAVE A WONDERFUL INDEPENDENCE DAY WEEKEND SHIPMATES!!! JULY 2024

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2023 - 2025

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**REUNION CONTROL CENTER**  
**2025 Stimson Reunion**  
**October 8-12**  
**Holiday Inn Norwich CT**  
**Your Reunion Committee has been hard at work and have set the dates and location for the reunion. More information will be available in July.**



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

CJ and I hope that everyone has a safe and enjoyable month. It is that time of year to review plans, kits, and supplies for weather-related emergencies and evacuations.

On a lighter note, the first Polaris missile was launched by USS George Washington 64-years ago on July 20, 1960.

I have another article at the end of the newsletter on the Lost Boats in July.



**From the Association Vice President - Ray Kreul, TM2(SS) [TMCM Ret] G Comm 65-69 Plank Owner; Assoc. Life Member; USSVI Groton Base/Snug Harbor Base/Rhode Island**

Shipmates, I would like to pass on to you a personal Medical Lessons Learned.

We in the military often herd this phrase Lessons Learned and followed the results. For years I have been going to the Doctor for annual physicals and lab tests. Two years ago, my lab test came up with a slight tic below normal on my Kidney Function test, the Dr. said it's ok we'll "watch it and keep an eye on it". Then last year on my annual physical again my lab test showed the same Kidney Function tic, again " we'll watch it". Just a few weeks ago I went in for my annual physical and lab work and this time the Kidney Function tic is a little lower. The Doc states let's have you go get a Kidney Ultrasound, so off I go. Last week the results came back with the results, Occult Renal Kidney Disease Stage 3A. Not treatable. Here is where I like to make my point. If I had paid attention years ago and not

played the "we'll keep an eye on" game, we could have caught it up front.

Shipmates this is twice in my family where we did the wait and watch game. My daughter had a small knot under her arm pit that they watched for three years, it turned into Breast Cancer. Do not fall for it guys if they or you or your Docs see something **insist** they get it looked at right now. Get that base line look and help prevent paying for it latter. Pass this on to all your family members please.

**DO NOT GO FOR "WE WILL KEEP AN EYE ON IT"**



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

During the upcoming months, we will be showing pictures of our historic items we still have and

some items that were lost.

**Stimson Launching Sign**



If you were on the Gold Crew during any time when Bob Weeks was the CO you completed a check-in card for him. Email the secretary if interested [655webmaster@ssbn655.org](mailto:655webmaster@ssbn655.org).

**Chaplain's Corner - Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B**



**73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS Asheville Base: Happy Birthday America!!**

May we always remember that

the USA is the land of the free and the home of the brave.

I will sing of the Lord's great love forever; with my mouth I will make your faithfulness known through all generations. Psalm 89:1

So let us praise God for the land we live in. Let us show great love for each other, as we enjoy this land that we love.

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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**HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY SHIPMATES**

*Submitted by a fellow shipmate*

**"The 56 Brave"**

Have you ever wondered what happened to the 56 men who signed the Declaration of Independence?

Five signers were captured by the British as traitors, and tortured before they died.

Twelve had their homes ransacked and burned.

Two lost their sons serving in the Revolutionary Army; another had two sons captured.

Nine of the 56 fought and died from wounds or hardships of the Revolutionary War.

They signed and they pledged their lives, their fortunes, and their sacred honor.

What kind of men were they?

Twenty-four were lawyers and jurists. Eleven were merchants, nine were farmers and large plantation owners; men of means, well educated, but they signed the Declaration of Independence

**Submarines Lost During the Month of July**

<b>USS S-28 (SS 133)</b>	<b>July 4, 1944 – Training Exercise</b>	<b>LOST WITH ALL HANDS 49 SOULS</b>
<b>USS ROBALO (SS 273)</b>	<b>July 26, 1944 – 3<sup>rd</sup> War patrol</b>	<b>LOST WITH 77 MEN; 4 DIED AS POW'S; 81 SOULS</b>
<b>USS GRUNION (SS 216)</b>	<b>July 30, 1942 – 1<sup>ST</sup> War patrol</b>	<b>LOST WITH ALL HANDS 70 SOULS</b>

**THREE Boats and 202 Men Lost**

knowing full well that the penalty would be death if they were captured.

Carter Braxton of Virginia, a wealthy planter and trader, saw his ships swept from the seas by the British Navy. He sold his home and properties to pay his debts, and died in rags.

Thomas McKean was so hounded by the British that he was forced to move his family almost constantly. He served in the Congress without pay, and his family was kept in hiding. His possessions were taken from him, and poverty was his reward.

Vandals or soldiers looted the properties of Dillery, Hall, Clymer, Walton, Gwinnett, Heyward, Rutledge, and Middleton.

At the battle of Yorktown, Thomas Nelson, Jr., noted that the British General Cornwallis had taken over the Nelson home for his headquarters. He quietly urged General George Washington to open fire. The home was destroyed, and Nelson died bankrupt.

Francis Lewis had his home and properties destroyed. The enemy jailed his wife, and she died within a few months.

John Hart was driven from his wife's bedside as she was dying. Their 13 children fled for their lives. His fields and his gristmill were laid to waste. For more than a year he lived in forests and caves, returning home to find his wife dead and his children vanished.

So, take a few minutes while enjoying your 4th of July holiday and silently thank these patriots. It's not much to ask for the price they paid. Remember: freedom is never free!

It's time to remember that patriotism is not a sin, and the Fourth of July has more to it than beer, picnics and baseball games.

The 4th of July is fast approaching and a reminder of the sacrifices our Founding Fathers endured is appropriate at this time. We owe a great debt of gratitude to them as we do all our men and women that have served in the military, especially the families that lost loved ones in our wars. We should not vilify them; we should honor them.

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**VA Presumptive Illnesses** – please read this and check the link. It may come in handy for you.

This past month a shipmate contacted me with a question. He was asking for some help on what the VA considered presumptive illnesses, specifically prostate cancer caused from exposure to ionizing radiation. He has been diagnosed with this cancer. This is something all of us who served in submarines should think about. I am constantly hearing of shipmates with prostate cancer.

The short answer is that I didn't have an answer for him. He had been to see the VA and also a DAV Service Officer and in both cases wasn't satisfied with the answer he received. I recommended he should contact others in the VA and DAV...in others words be the squeaky wheel until these groups provided the grease in the way of answers. I am pleased to say he did just that and found a very competent VA counselor. During his one-time visit her, she checked the system and found in the VA files that prostate cancer due to ionizing radiation was on the presumptive list.

Not only did the counselor locate the answer but she also filed the claims necessary before the shipmate left her office. Needless to say he was very happy that he persisted in getting the answers he needed and the help he received from the VA office.

VA presumptive illnesses are conditions for which the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) automatically assumes that military service caused the condition. If a Veteran is diagnosed with a presumed condition, they can be awarded disability compensation. Check this link for more information including the [examples of presumptive conditions](#).

### **VA Adds Three New Cancers to Its PACT Act Presumptive Conditions List**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) added three new cancer types to its list of service-connected disabilities presumed to be caused by military toxic exposure. Presumptive service connection ensures VA automatically assumes a disease is service-connected, making the disability compensation claims process more seamless for veterans. VA's move was done under the FRA-



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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**



**The following Stimson Shipmates have departed on Eternal Patrol.**

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**TM2(SS) Henry Francis Tutt B 65-67 COMM**  
**Plank Owner**

**Eternal Patrol: May 10, 2024**  
[reported by Legacy.com]

**MM2(SS) Dan L. Neal G 69-71**

**Eternal Patrol: June 25, 2024**  
[reported by Funeral Home]

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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 been added or information has been updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List for shipmates contact info.)

**NOTE:** Don Ort, MM1(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, CWO4 Ret, continues to locate our Stimson shipmates who are on our Sailing List be without an email address.

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**FTB3(SS) Robert Arabian III SY2/B 81-84**  
[updated by shipmate]

**ET2(SS) John Ransom B 79-81**  
[updated by shipmate]

**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.

The list is used to update our Stimson shipmates on the condition of any shipmate that has given permission to be added to this list. If you do not remember their health issue please review previous newsletters.

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**Diane Meigs, wife of Ken Meigs, ETR2(SS) G 65-70 Plank Owner, Association Treasurer & Life Member, USSVI Member-at-Large & Holland Club**

Cards to: 1537 Pebble Beach Ct, Medford OR 97504

**NO UPDATES**

*3.25.224: Email from Ken: Almost all of her treatment-related side effects have abated. She can now swallow OK and the radiation-induced skin blisters are gone. She says her physical health is about 90% of normal. She sleeps much less during the daytime. They have not completed recent labs so we're not sure if her white & red blood cell counts are back up to normal. For the next 2 years, she will undergo CT & PET scans but the quarterly infusions of an immunologic agent are still on hold due to concerns about potential negative side effects. I request prayers that we are able to incorporate this therapy because studies have shown improved outcomes when this therapy has been added to a patient's treatment algorithm. Her spirits are back & she's been able to go back to church to fellowship with her friends. God bless always, Ken*

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**Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS Asheville Base:**

Cards to: 50 Fairway View Dr., Etowah NC 28729  
**6.15.24: Email from Vicki:** Bruce is doing great.

His neurologist was a little surprised at his May clinic visit at how Bruce has not progressed but Bruce reminded him that he is on both Rx's to slow the progress. He decided Bruce doesn't have to

go back to clinic for 6 months instead of 3.  
4.17.24: *Email from Vicki: The only thing new is that we now have a Toyota Sienna Hybrid Conversion Van equipped to transport Bruce's 425 pound power chair with a 6-way front passenger seat to make it easy for him to transfer into it. Of course he doesn't need it currently but we are prepared for when the need comes. He did have to go to the VA hospital in Salisbury for a driving evaluation which was like taking the test for a first license which Bruce passed with flying colors. The examiner said Bruce was only the 2nd ALS client she had that has passed.*

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**Elam Lee Mauk, EMCM(SS) B 65-69 COB 66-68 Plank, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI USS Sailfish Base Holland Club**

Card to: 4000 Ibis Way Unit 201 Venice FL 34292

**NO UPDATES**

2.20.24: *Email from Gretchen Glaub: John has joined the USS Sailfish Base and received the following email from the Base Commander. Elam is a member of the USS Sailfish Base:*

- *I called his home and spoke with his wife. He is in the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans Nursing Home in Port Charlotte with dementia. I have added him to our binnacle list. Bill Heck, USS Sailfish Base Commander*

9.17.2023: *Email from Angie Mauk: Elam Lee has been in dementia for the past two years, Of course we cannot travel. Hope your reunion is a great success, We will miss you all*

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

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

**NO UPDATES**

2.18.24: *Email from Sandy: Dear Friends, we met with our local oncologist on Wednesday, February 14 to review Sandy's February 11 PET/CT scans.*

*Although preliminary, the scans showed the three cryoablation operations reduced the size of the cancer nodules that were in my left glute area, right shoulder, and right chest wall. The next scans in May will tell a more complete story. But,*

*our oncologist, our surgeons, and we are cautiously optimistic that the May scans will show the operations significantly reduced or eliminated the nodules. This would help reduce the cancer load on the Keytruda immunotherapy and will hopefully allow Keytruda to more easily control the remaining cancer nodules.*

*Sandy is still recovering from the operations but making good progress.*

*We thank you for your prayers and for God's graciousness in answering them!*

*Warmly, Donna and Sandy*

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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

3.26.24: **Email from Jean:** The results of Ron's evaluation on January 2024, compared to last year, scored significantly lower on a test of global cognition. His doctor reported that Ron has transition to the Moderately Severe Stage of dementia. Also, he was prescribed an additional medication to help with his anxiety and agitation. The medicine is working great!! We now have a happier and calmer household.

Thank you for all the prayers, caring thoughts, cards, letters, pictures, and memories Ron has received. They really brighten his day.

Jean/Ron

5.24.23: *Email from Jean: I really don't have any updates, just taking it one day at a time. We have started attending some social events at our local VFW and Ron enjoys the camaraderie of his VFW buddies, this certainly raises his spirits. Please keep checking in. Your thoughts and prayers are greatly appreciated.*

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

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## GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

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### 655 Association Website

[www.ssb655.org](http://www.ssb655.org)

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Great info for all Navy Retirees.

### DFAS Retiree Newsletter June 2024

<https://www.dfas.mil/retireenews>

The June 2024 issue of the quarterly Retiree Newsletter is now available online.

Exciting News! We just completed a refresh of our askDFAS online tools. The newsletter includes information on all of the tools now available to you online via askDFAS to submit forms, answer questions, and complete self-service requests. We also included a spotlight article for Gray Area Retirees. In addition, there are informative articles on how retirees can generate a verification of pay letter in myPay, the importance of doing a retired pay account checkup, and what to know about school certification season for SBP child annuitants.

In addition, we have news from partners, including information about Navy MWR events, the FEDVIP enrollment period, news from the Air Force Assistance Fund, and the Navy-Marine Corps Relief Society.

To access the newsletter, please copy and paste the link below to your internet browser. You will find a list of topics in the newsletter with a brief description of each article. After copying and pasting the link to your internet browser, click on the link for the article you want to read, and the full text will appear.

We also have a downloadable PDF of the newsletter you can share with others in the military retiree community.

Sincerely, DFAS Retired & Annuitant Pay

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## SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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### Typical Doctor Visit

A man goes to a doctor for his yearly routine physical. The nurse starts with the basic health questions.

"How much do you weigh?" she asks.

"Oh, about 165 pounds," he says.

The nurse puts him on the scale and his actual weight is 187.

The nurse then asks, "And how tall are you?"

"Oh, about six feet tall," he says. The nurse checks and sees that he's only five foot eight. She then takes his blood pressure and tells him it's incredibly high.

"High!" the man exclaims. "Well, what do you expect? When I came in here today, I was tall and lanky. Now I'm short and fat!"

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### **This is too funny not to share with all of you.**

The young woman who submitted the tech support message below (about her relationship to her husband) presumably did it as a joke. Then she got a reply that was way too good to keep to herself. The tech support people's love advice was hilarious and genius!

*The query:*

Dear Tech Support,

Last year I upgraded from Boyfriend 5.0 to Husband 1.0 and noticed a distinct slowdown in overall system performance, particularly in the flower and jewelry applications, which operated flawlessly under Boyfriend 5.0. In addition, Husband 1.0 uninstalled many other valuable programs, such as Romance 9.5 and Personal Attention 6.5, and then installed undesirable programs such as: NBA 5.0, NFL 3.0 and Golf Clubs 4.1.

Conversation 8.0 no longer runs, and House cleaning 2.6 simply crashes the system. Please note that I have tried running Nagging 5.3 to fix these problems, but to no avail.

What can I do?

Signed, Desperate

*The response (that came weeks later out of the blue):*

Dear Desperate,

First keep in mind, Boyfriend 5.0 is an Entertainment Package, while Husband 1.0 is an operating system. Please enter command: I thought you loved me.html and try to download Tears 6.2. Do not forget to install the Guilt 3.0 update. If that application works as designed, Husband 1.0 should then automatically run the applications Jewelry 2.0 and Flowers 3.5.

However, remember, overuse of the above application can cause Husband 1.0 to default to Grumpy Silence 2.5, Happy Hour 7.0, or Beer 6.1. Please note that Beer 6.1 is a very bad program that will download the Farting and Snoring Loudly Beta version. Whatever you do, DO NOT, under any circumstances, install Mother-In-Law 1.0 as it runs a virus in the background that will eventually seize control of all your system resources.

In addition, please do not attempt to re-install the Boyfriend 5.0 program. These are unsupported applications and will crash Husband 1.0. In summary, Husband 1.0 is a great program, but it does have limited memory and cannot learn new applications quickly. You might consider buying additional software to improve memory and performance. We recommend Cooking 3.0.

Good Luck

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*Submitted by a fellow SUBVET*

*Author: ~Mário Raul de Moraes Andrade  
(Oct 9, 1893 – Feb 25, 1945)*

*Brazilian poet, novelist, musicologist, art historian and critic, photographer*

I counted my years and found that I have less time to live from here on than I have lived up to now.

I feel like that child who won a packet of sweets: he ate the first with pleasure, but when he realized that there were few left, he began to enjoy them intensely.

I no longer have time for endless meetings where statutes, rules, procedures and internal regulations are discussed, knowing that nothing will be achieved.

I no longer have time to support the absurd people who, despite their chronological age, haven't grown up.

My time is too short: I want the essence; my soul is in a hurry.

I don't have many sweets in the package anymore.

I want to live next to human people, very human, who know how to laugh at their mistakes, and who are not inflated by their triumphs, and who take on their responsibilities.

Thus, human dignity is defended and we move towards truth and honesty.

It is the essential that makes life worth living.

I want to surround myself with people who know how to touch hearts, people who have been taught by the hard blows of life to grow with gentle touches of the soul.

Yes, I'm in a hurry, I'm in a hurry to live with the intensity that only maturity can give.

I don't intend to waste any of the leftover sweets.

I am sure they will be delicious, much more than what I have eaten so far.

My goal is to reach the end satisfied and at peace with my loved ones and my conscience.

We have two lives.

And the second begins when you realize you only have one.

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### **U.S. Ballistic Missile Submarine, 'Doomsday Plane' Take Part In Rare Show Of Force Off Norway**

USS Tennessee and the E-6B Mercury were joined in the Norwegian Sea by a Ticonderoga class cruiser and P-8 patrol plane (THE WARZONE 25 JUN 24) ... Joseph Trevithick

The U.S. Navy's Ohio class nuclear ballistic missile submarine USS Tennessee recently cruised on the surface in the Norwegian Sea alongside the Ticonderoga class cruiser USS Normandy. The unusual show of force also included an E-6B Mercury and a P-8A Poseidon maritime patrol plane flying overhead.

Any decision to highlight the presence of one



of these submarines, which are key components of America's nuclear deterrent arsenal and typically keep well out of sight while deployed, inherently sends a message to potential adversaries, such as Russia. Tennessee's appearance in the waters to the northwest of Norway notably follows a first-of-its-kind visit by Russia's advanced Yasen-M class nuclear-powered cruise missile submarine Kazan (along with other Russian naval vessels) to Cuba earlier this month, which was also clearly meant to send a signal to the United States.

U.S. Naval Forces Europe-Africa (NAVEUR-NAVAF) and U.S. Sixth Fleet, the Navy's top commands in Europe, released pictures of Tennessee together with the other naval assets, which were taken on June 23, earlier today. This, at least in part, explains the rare deployment of a Mercury jet to the Royal Norwegian Air Force's Rygge Air Station in the southern end of the country last week.

Also known as 'doomsday planes,' the Navy's fleet of 16 Boeing 707-based E-6B jets are critical airborne strategic command posts through which nuclear strike orders would flow, including to Air Force nuclear bomber units in the air and missile silos on the ground, if the need were to ever arise. On the naval side, the Mercury aircraft are equipped with specialized five-mile-long antennas to communicate directly with Ohio class ballistic missile submarines, or SSBNs, allowing the boats to remain submerged where they are less vulnerable to attack. The Navy calls this mission set Take Charge and Move Out (TACAMO), and is looking to supplant the E-6Bs in this role with a variant of the C-130J Hercules turboprop aircraft in the future. The Air Force's airborne nuclear command and control mission set, commonly called Looking Glass, looks set to transition to other platforms, possibly including the service's future Boeing 747-based

**[READ REST OF STORY HERE](#)**

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### **The Security Corner [SOMETHING NEW]**

**By: George Birmingham, ET1  
(SS), Gold '69-'74**

Introducing the Security Corner

The Security Corner is being introduced this month as a way to share information on issues relating to personal security in your digital lifestyle and share information on scams being perpetrated against seniors. With the emergence of AI, scammers are getting even more clever, and the methods we have been trained to use in the past to detect the scams are fading in the face of AI enabled scammers.

As an IT security professional in my last 15 working years, I had the opportunity to see the many ways bad things can happen. I still receive technical newsletters on these issues, and I'd like to share them with you in an understandable way. I hope you find it useful.

For this month, here's an interesting article for your reading:

**[AI is helping scammers outsmart you and your bank](#)**

And this item from our friends at AARP:

**[AI Fuels New, Frighteningly Effective Scams](#)**

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at [subvet\\_ssbm@bellsouth.net](mailto:subvet_ssbm@bellsouth.net) if you have questions about items in the monthly Article.



### **The Computer Corner**

**By: George Birmingham ET1  
(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life  
Member, SV Carolina Piedmont  
Base, Holland Club**

### **Windows 11 and the Migration from Windows 10**

Greetings shipmates! I hope you are having a great summer so far and staying cool. I will be providing the Computer Corner articles for a while, and if like me your old computer needs updating or you need a new one, then Windows 11 will be

something you will have to deal with sooner or later. So this article will open a multi-part journey into the world of Windows 11 (WIN11). I just had to replace my old laptop that would not run WIN11, so I am now in the journey myself. If this is not something you are interested in, then this is your exit point. However, if you have an interest, then let us begin.

Historically WIN11 was released to consumers on October 5, 2021. Wikipedia has an extensive look at the history on WIN11 at:

[https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows\\_11](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Windows_11)

Now for all of you who are fond of Windows 10, here's the bad news: Windows 10 will reach end of support on **October 14, 2025**. The current version, 22H2, will be the final version of Windows 10, and all editions will remain in support with monthly security update releases through that date. This article from Zdnet says all hope is not lost and offers some suggestions:

<https://www.zdnet.com/article/when-windows-10-support-ends-you-have-5-options-but-only-2-are-worth-considering/>

**Option 1: Ignore the end-of-support deadline completely**

**Option 2: Buy a new PC**

**Option 3: Ditch Windows completely**

**Option 4: Pay Microsoft for security updates**

**Option 5: Upgrade your old hardware to Windows 11**

The first step is to see if your current hardware will run Windows 11, so follow these steps:

<https://support.microsoft.com/en-us/windows/how-to-check-if-your-device-meets-windows-11-system-requirements-after-changing-device-hardware-f3bc0aeb-6884-41a1-ab57-88258df6812b>

If that's successful and your hardware is ready, then next month I will share information on things you need to do before moving forward. If however, like my old laptop, it's not up to the task, then a

new computer with WIN11 pre-installed is likely your best option. Next month I will note some things to consider and be aware of when buying new hardware and especially certain WIN11 features.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at [subvet\\_ssb@bellsouth.net](mailto:subvet_ssb@bellsouth.net). And if you have a difficult computer or network problem you need help with, contact me. I'm always glad to help out if I can.

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## **This Is What Happens When You Respond to Spam Emails**

By Emily DiNuzzo

There are a few ways scammers use them to steal your info.

No matter what email service you use, spam emails might still make their way into your inbox. Sometimes these emails set off alarm bells—but other messages from scammers are trickier to spot. If you do respond to, click on, or engage with spam emails, there are a few possible consequences.

What happens when you respond to spam emails depends entirely on the kind of spam email, according to [Jason Hong](#), a professor at Carnegie Mellon University's [CyLab](#) Security and Privacy Institute. Simply replying to spam emails mostly just confirms that your email is active, making you a target for future campaigns or scams, according to Fabian Wosar, CRO at [Emsisoft](#). There usually isn't a direct response from scammers.

In some cases, the spam links to a very convincing-looking copycat website, says Jamie Cambell, a cybersecurity expert and founder of [gobestvpn.com](#). If you follow the link, anything you fill in on that website—usernames and passwords, personal information, credit card details, and transaction numbers—go right back to the scammer, according to Wosar.

Another possibility is that the link or an attachment in a spam email will download a virus or spyware onto your computer, Cambell says. This download can actively record all your typing



**USSVI Veterans Service Officer  
John Dudas**

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**Veterans' Health Information Feared to Be Stolen in Cyberattack that Shut Down Pharmacies**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**Tricare Appointments Will Be Honored Despite Network Turnover for Western US at End of the Year, Military Says**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**More Veterans Can Get Cancer Treatment Closer to Home as VA Expands 'Close to Me' Program**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**Retired Captain of First US Nuclear Submarine Celebrates Turning 100 in Spokane**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**Tricare Lowers Age for Colon Cancer Screenings to 45**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**VA Remains Committed to Controversial Computer System, Says Veterans Affairs Official in Spokane Visit**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**The Final Flight of Lou Conter, Last Survivor of the USS Arizona at Pearl Harbor**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**Reports of Mediocre Disability Exams by VA Contractors Prompts Senator's Demand for Answers**

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**Oracle’s Troubled Effort to Create the Pentagon, VA Electronic Health Record System**

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**VA Benefits Likely Won’t Cover All of a Veteran’s Funeral Costs**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**VA Says It Can’t Change New Urn, Plaque Benefit that Precludes Future Burials in National Veteran Cemeteries**

**[READ HERE](#)**

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**Fisher House Lodging for Military and Veteran Families at VA**

Located at VA hospitals across the country, Fisher House provides eligible military and Veteran families private lodging free of charge while their loved one is in the hospital.

**[LEARN MORE](#)**

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**VA Benefits for Veterans with 70% Disability**

Check out these 11 benefits Veterans qualify for when they receive 70% service-connected disability, including compensation, health care, travel pay and more.

**[WATCH](#)**

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**New Mental Health Copayment Exemptions**

A new law improves access to care and lowers out-of-pocket costs for Veterans' outpatient mental health and substance use disorder care, including exempting the first three VA copays each year.

**[LEARN MORE](#)**

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**VA to Expand Close to Me Cancer Care Program**

The Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) announced that more than 9,000 veterans will have access to advanced oncology treatment and monitoring sites closer to their homes under an expansion of the VA’s Close to Me cancer care program.

Since the start of the Close to Me program in 2021, roughly 500 veterans have been treated for cancer in 20 locations. The expansion will add 30 new locations by October 2025. Currently, the program provides two nurses per site who provide infusion medications and surveillance. The expanded program will add physicians to each site to enable diagnosis and treatment.

The VA claims the Close to Me cancer care program has had zero reported medical emergencies during treatment to date, has high patient satisfaction among veterans, and has a 99% treatment adherence rate. In March, VA announced the expansion of its life-saving cancer screening programs.

Last July, VA expanded cancer risk assessments and mammograms (as clinically appropriate) to veterans under 40, regardless of age, symptoms, family history, or whether they are enrolled in VA health care. VA has also prioritized claims processing for veterans with cancer — delivering nearly \$516 million in PACT Act benefits to veterans with cancer between August 10, 2022, and March 3, 2024. And VA has screened more than 5 million veterans for toxic exposures under the PACT Act — a critical step to detecting, understanding, and treating potentially life-threatening health conditions like cancer.

Learn more about VA cancer care by visiting <https://cancer.va.gov/>

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**VA Benefits Likely Will Not Cover All of a Veteran’s Funeral Costs**

Many military veterans want to be buried in military-related cemeteries. One common misconception when planning the burial of a veteran is that the Department of Veterans Affairs will cover all the costs of the funeral. While burial

in a VA cemetery or state veteran's cemetery may eliminate many of the expenses, quite a few costs are not covered by the VA. A veteran's surviving family members may be caught off guard if they expect these costs to be covered. The VA offers a burial allowance that it pays to the designated survivor. The amount varies depending on the cause of death, date of death, and whether there are expenses for the burial plot. For example, for a non-service-connected death of a veteran who died on or after Oct. 1, 2023, the burial allowance is \$948. An additional allowance of \$948 is available if the veteran is not buried in a national or state veterans cemetery and there are expenses for a burial plot. If applicable, a headstone or marker allowance is \$231 if the veteran died on or after Oct. 1, 2021. For a service-connected death on or after Sept. 11, 2001, the maximum allowance is \$2,000. The VA may pay some or all of the transportation costs if the veteran is buried in a national cemetery.

The VA allowance may help cover burial costs such as a casket, transfer of the remains, embalming, cosmetic services, the cost of the funeral service, use of the funeral home facilities, cremation, urn, use of a hearse and/or limousines, funeral cards and other printed materials, and flowers. If the veteran is not buried in a veteran's cemetery, burial costs include the burial plot, opening and closing the burial plot, and any additional services at the cemetery. If the veteran was married and the spouse was listed in VA records, the VA will typically send the payment automatically after being notified of the veteran's death. In all other situations, a claim is filed with the VA. There is a two-year deadline to file claims for non-service-connected deaths. There is no deadline to file claims for service-connected deaths.

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### **VA Adds Options for Commemorative Plaques and Urns**

Beginning on June 10, families of deceased and cremated veterans can apply to receive commemorative plaques or urns from the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) if they do not

want to inter their loved ones in a VA National Cemetery or receive a government-furnished headstone, marker, or medallion for placement in any cemetery.

Commemorative urns are used to hold the remains of a deceased cremated Veteran, and commemorative plaques are designed to hang on a wall. Both the urns and the plaques honor a veteran's service and serve as a lasting tribute to the individual's status as a veteran.

Eligible family members can request one or the other, but not both. It's important to note that if a family chooses a plaque or urn to commemorate a Veteran, VA is prohibited by law from interring that Veteran's remains in a VA national cemetery or from providing a headstone, marker, or medallion for placement in any cemetery. Families should be certain when choosing to receive a plaque or urn to commemorate their Veteran, because once this decision is made, it cannot be undone. The law does not provide a method to restore these benefits.

This new memorial option is being created as a part of the "Johnny Isakson and David P. Roe, M.D. Veterans Health Care and Benefits Improvement Act of 2020." To be eligible, the veteran must have been discharged under conditions other than dishonorable on or after April 6, 1917, and the veteran's remains must be cremated – with no portion of the remains interred at any location. Eligibility also includes any Servicemember who died on active duty.

More information about the VA's National Cemetery Administration (NCA) memorial options can be found [here](#). More details, including an application for commemorative plaques and urns, will be available on June 10.

Information about VA burial and memorial benefits is available at [VA national cemeteries](#) or by calling toll-free at 1-800-827-1000. To make burial arrangements at any VA national cemetery at the time of need, call the National Cemetery Scheduling Office at 1-800-535-1117.

VA also encourages veterans to apply for **Pre-Need Eligibility** to establish eligibility for VA burial and memorial benefits in advance of need.

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## 4 Warning Signs of Melanoma That Are Easy to Miss

The dangerous skin cancer can take on odd forms and pop up in unexpected places

By Rachel Nania, AARP

Roughly 100,640 Americans will be diagnosed with melanoma this year, according to the American Cancer Society, making it one of the most common types of cancer in the U.S., especially among older adults who have endured decades of sun exposure and whose immune systems aren't as robust as they once were.

The good news: Melanoma is highly curable if it's caught early. Do you know what to look for?

The hallmarks of melanoma are asymmetrical or rough-looking moles without clearly defined borders. A spot on the skin that continues to grow in size or change is another indication, and a once-monthly body scan is an easy way to keep tabs on any of these concerning characteristics.

Here are four warning signs of melanoma you need to know about so that no spot goes unnoticed.

1. The 'ugly duckling'
2. 'Where the sun doesn't shine'
3. Red, white and blue hues
4. Spots on the skin that bleed or itch

### Skin cancer prevention

Wearing sun-protective clothing, sporting UV-blocking sunglasses and lathering on sunscreen are some of the most effective ways to prevent melanoma.

### Risk Factors for Skin Cancer

- A lighter natural skin color
- Skin that burns, freckles, reddens easily or becomes painful in the sun
- Blue or green eyes
- Blond or red hair
- A large number of moles
- A family history of skin cancer
- A personal history of skin cancer
- Older age

The bottom line: "People need to really be aware of their skin.

Read full article [HERE](#)

## The Meaning Behind Coins on Military Graves



Memorial Day is a time to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice for our freedom. During this time, ceremonies honoring those brave men and women who gave their lives for our freedoms are conducted at veterans' cemeteries across the country.

*There are flowers, flags, parades, but have you ever noticed coins on military headstones? If so, do you wonder what they mean?*

What is the meaning of coins on headstones?

Placing a coin on headstones of a service member or veteran is a show of respect and honor, as well as letting the deceased service member's family know someone was there, but the denomination of the coins each has a distinct and significant meaning.

### Here is the breakdown:

Where did this tradition come from?

According to an [article by the Department of Military Affairs](#), the custom of leaving coins with the deceased can be traced back to the Roman Empire. Coins were placed into the mouth of fallen soldiers to pay for passage and protection across the River Styx, which separates the world of the living from the world of the dead. In [Navy mythology](#), coins were placed under the mast of a ship to pay the "ferryman" for safe transport to the afterlife in the event sailors died at sea.

The custom gained popularity in the U.S. during the Vietnam War as a way to honor the fallen during a time of upheaval and political divide over a controversial war. The coins were a

way to quietly honor service members and communicate a message of respect for family members.

### **Honoring our heroes**

Leaving coins on military headstones and veterans' graves is a kind and appreciated gesture, but what generally happens with them after time is also significant and special. The coins are usually collected and used for upkeep of the cemetery or to help pay for burial costs for homeless veterans.

While visiting military graves this Memorial Day (or any other day), why not bring some pocket change as a simple symbol of respect to those who gave so much? It's a small gesture that could mean a lot to the loved ones of these late heroes.

### **5 Other Ways to Honor the Fallen This Memorial Day**

- **Attend an event or parade:** Communities across the nation organize events and parades to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice. Join a local event or attend a parade to show respect and let the families of the fallen know their loved one is not forgotten.
- **Fly the U.S. flag.** If you haven't already, put out the flag as a symbol of patriotism. According to the VA, on Memorial Day, the flag should be flown at half-staff from sunrise until noon, then raised to the top of the staff until sunset.
- **Wear or display a red poppy.** The colorful flower is a symbol of remembrance that dates back to World War I. The tradition got its start thanks to a poem by WWI brigade surgeon John McCrae. Veterans of Foreign Wars conducted its first nationwide poppy distribution ahead of Memorial Day in 1922, a tradition that continues today.
- **Post a Tribute:** Honor a late veteran you know by posting a tribute to the Veterans Legacy Memorial. The VA-connected website is "dedicated to the memory of the nearly 4.5 million veterans interred in VA national cemeteries." The site allows visitors to search for a specific veteran and leave photos, tributes, and memories in their honor.

- **Spend time with family and friends.** What better way to honor those who fought and died for our freedoms than enjoying the moments their sacrifice provided us? Sharing the day with those you love and care about the most is a great way to say "thank you" to these fallen heroes who can't with their families and friends so that we can be with ours.

**Find out how Wounded Warrior Project honors and serves injured veterans.**

**Contact:** — Paris Moulden, Public Relations, pmoulden@woundedwarriorproject.org, 904.570.7910

### **About Wounded Warrior Project**

Since 2003, Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) has been meeting the growing needs of warriors, their families, and caregivers — helping them achieve their highest ambition.

**[READ FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)**



**"These dolphins, once you pin them on your chest, leave deep marks, right over your heart, long after the uniforms have been put away."**

*Submitted by Ron Testa, ETN2 [LCDR ret] B/SY1/G 70-73, Assoc. Life Member*

An oldie but a goodie,

I chanced upon a sailor once with an emblem on his chest. It appeared to be two angry sharks on a trash can for a rest. His white hat was wrinkled and dirty; his neckerchief tied too tight and he had only one eye open as he staggered through the night.

He was young and scrawny and wiry; with



knuckles cracked and oozing. I could tell from the way he looked and smelled he'd spent the night whorin' and boozin'.

But as he pulled abreast, he squared his hat and said "Sir, do you have a light? I'm due back aboard by quarter to four Or the COB will be settin' me right."

As I fumbled around for my lighter, he pulled some smokes from his sock "and I'll be damned lucky to make it," he muttered 'Cause I'm steamin' against the clock."

Through the flame of my well-worn Zippo I could see a smile on his face. "But, you know -- it was damn well worth it. That 'Bell's' is a helluva place."

He sucked the smoke deep down in his lungs and blew smoke rings up towards the moon Then he rolled up his cuffs, pushed his hat to the back and said "Maybe there'll be a cab soon."

In spite of the time, he was losing He was wanting to shoot the breeze. So we sat on the curb, like two birds on a perch as he talked of his life on the seas.

I asked about the thing on his chest and he looked at me with a grin. Then he squared his hat, snubbed out his smoke and said "I'm a Brother of the 'Phin."

"I'm one of the boys who go under the sea where the lights from above don't shine; Where mermaids play and Neptune is king and life and death intertwine."

"Life on a boat goes deep in your blood and nothing on earth can compare to the feeling inside as she commences a dive going deep on a hope and a prayer."

"I've sailed some fearsome waters down below the raging main and I've heard that old boat creak and groan like the wheels of a railroad train."

"It's the one place on earth where there ain't no slack where you don't have more than you need; where each man is prince of his own little space and each lives by the submarine creed."

"There ain't much I've done in this fickle life

that would cause other men to take note, but I've walked in the steps of some mighty fine men who helped keep this country afloat."

"They slipped silently through the layers down below that raging main while up above enemy men-o'-war laid claim to the same domain."

"Brave sailors were they in their sleek boats of steel silently stalking their prey and closing in for the kill."

"They died as they lived unafraid, proud and free putting all on the line to secure liberty."

"Their bones now rest in glory down in Neptune's hallowed ground but their souls stand tall at the right hand of God Awaiting the klaxon's next sound."

"So, it's more than a 'thing' that I wear on my chest It's a badge of the brave, proud and true. It's a tribute to those who have gone here before riding boats that are still overdue"

"It's the "Dolphins" of a submariner worn proudly by the few who've qualified at every watch and touched every bolt and screw."

"They know the boat on which they sail like they know their very soul and through the fires of hell or the pearly gates they're ready for each patrol."

"But when in port they take great sport standing out from all the rest. For deep inside they burn with pride for the dolphins on their chest."

Then he stood erect, squared his hat and pulled his neckerchief down to the 'V' He rolled down his cuffs, put his smokes in his sock and squinted back towards the sea.

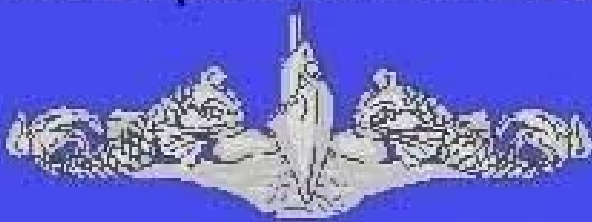
"I can hear them diesels calling So I'd best be on my way. We'll be punchin' holes in the ocean when the sun peeks over the bay."

As I watched him turn and walk away, I felt honored to know such men. For they bring life to Duty, Honor, Country these "Brothers of the 'Phin."



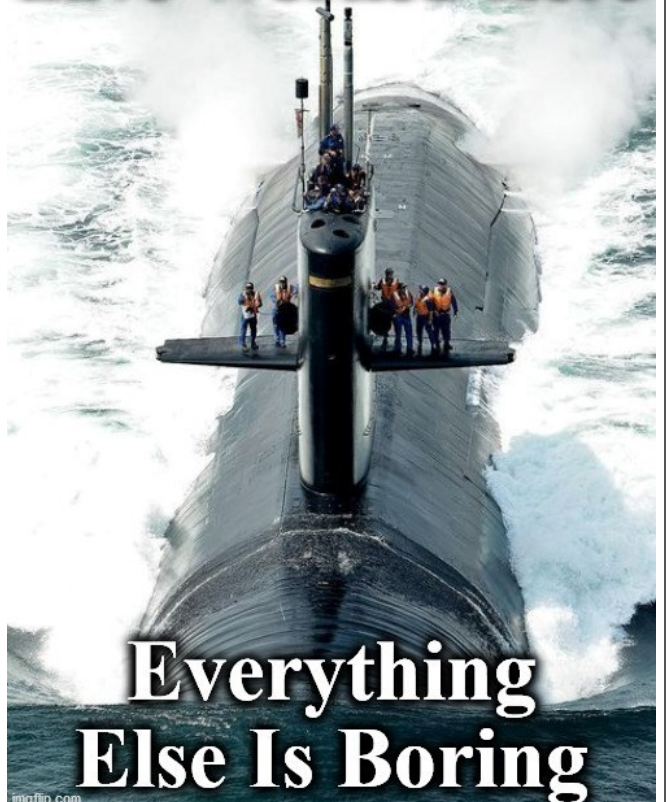
"If You Want To Be Your Best You Must Surround Yourself With The Best."

When I was a young man I was surrounded by the best and they all had Dolphins on their uniforms.



This was more than just pride. It was a brotherhood, comaraderie, and a lifestyle. Most people never have a chance to experience anything like this in their life! Thank you to the men who made this possible.

Once You have Worked Here



The **USS Grunion (SS-216)**, a Gato-Class submarine built by EB Groton, was launched on 22Dec41 and commissioned on 11Apr42.

*GRUNION* departed Groton on 24May42 enroute to the Panama Canal. On 31May42, she sighted and closed on a lifeboat and sixteen survivors from the United States Army Transport (USAT) *Jack* about 150-miles southeast of Jamaica. *GRUNION* proceeded to the last known location of the USAT *Jack* but found no other survivors.

*GRUNION* arrived at the submarine base near Colón, Panama on 03Jun42. She transited the Panama Canal and got underway for Pearl Harbor on 07Jun42 where she arrived on 20Jun. She reached Midway on 04July42, and left the same day for Kiska, AK.

On 10Jul, she began patrolling north of Kiska. Five days later, on 15Jul, she reported firing four torpedoes at an unidentified destroyer, which responded with an unsuccessful counterattack. According to post-war research, *Grunion* engaged an anti-submarine patrol on the afternoon of 15Jul, sinking two Japanese 460-ton submarine chasers Ch 25 and Ch 27.

*GRUNION* continued her patrol and began patrolling the exits of Kiska Harbor on 28Jul42. On the 30<sup>th</sup>, she reported heavy enemy anti-submarine patrols in the area and on that same day she was ordered to return to Dutch Harbor. En route the next morning, she fired multiple torpedoes at the freighter *Kano Maru*. According to Japanese records, when the *GRUNION* surfaced to engage the damaged freighter, an 8-centimeter shell fired by the *Kano Maru* struck *Grunion's* conning tower, sinking her. On 16Aug42, the Navy officially reported *GRUNION* lost.

Brad, Bruce, and John Abele, sons of LCDR Mannert Aberle, her CO, spent several years collecting information on the loss of their father's boat. Using that data, a Project Lost 52 team located the wrecked hull of a submarine in 2007. The wreck was confirmed the *GRUNION*, by ComSubPac, in 2008.



Leo J. I. Bedard, MoMMC Daniel Cullinane, MoMMC Paul E. Banes, MoMMC Albert E. DeStoop, TMC



George E. Caldwell, WO-Electrical Elmer T. Schumann, QMC Carson R. Martin, MoMMC Moore J. Ledford, YC Merritt D. Graham, TMC

The **USS Robalo (SS-273)** was a Gato-Class submarine built by the Manitowoc Shipbuilding Company, WI. She was launched on 09May43, commissioned on 28Sep43, and arrived in Pearl Harbor on 17Dec43. *ROBALO* departed for her first war patrol on 08Jan44 and arrived at her patrol area off the west coast of the Philippine Islands on 27Jan44. She had no success during this 26-day patrol and arrived in Fremantle, Australia on 06Mar44.

*ROBALO* left Fremantle for her second war patrol, on 17Apr44, with a new Commanding Officer. LCDR Manning M. Kimmel, son of ADM Husband E. Kimmel (CINCPAC on 07Dec41). She was attacked on three separate occasions during this South China Sea patrol. A bomb on 24Apr44, rendered her JP radar OOS, severely damaged her hydraulic steering, and caused minor leaks in her conning tower hatch, No. 1 main vent, pit log, and antenna trunk. On subsequent nights she completed onboard repairs and continued her patrol. Depth charging on 03May44 caused a leak in her port side main induction valve. On 16May44, after successfully torpedoing a 7,500-ton tanker, she was depth-charged again, which damaged her starboard main induction valve sufficiently for the CO to terminate the patrol. She arrived back in Fremantle on 30May44.

The *ROBALO* left Fremantle for her third war patrol, on 22Jun44, enroute to the South China Sea. She transmitted a contact report on 02Jul44 and was never heard from again.

In February, 1945, American Forces landed on Palawan Island, Philippines where US Army Counterintelligence Corps (CIC) discovered in interrogation records held by Japanese Military Police that the Japanese had captured four survivors from *ROBALO*. According to these records, an explosion had rocked the *ROBALO*, on 02Jul44, as she was steaming on the surface. The four survivors: ENS Samuel L. Tucker, QM1 Floyd G. Laughlin, SM3 Wallace K. Martin, and EM2 Mason C. Poston, had been on deck when the explosion occurred. They did not survive the war and their fate remains unknown.

As a foot-note, in May, 2019, the *ROBALO* was discovered in the Balabec Strait, Philippines. This discovery was confirmed by the USN in Feb, 2020.



**Darrell E. Dickerson, MoMMC   John W. Lefebvre, EMC   John F. Priddis, EMC   Samuel E. Spencer, TMC**



**Frederick J. Wilson, MoMMC**

The **USS S-28 (SS-133)** was a S-Class submarine built in by Bethlehem Shipbuilding Corporation, Quincy, Ma. The S-28 was launched 20Sep22 and commissioned on 13Dec23.

On 20Jun44, LCDR J.G. Campbell assumed command of S-28. She was assigned the duty of training enlisted personnel and engaging in sonar exercises with ships under control of Commander Destroyers, Pacific. On 03Jul44, she left Pearl Harbor for a schedule week of operations. That day she conducted practice torpedo approaches and acted as a target for antisubmarine warfare vessels. S-28 continued sonar exercises on 04Jul44. At around 1730, she dove about 4-miles from the USCGC Reliance (WSC-150). At around 1805, *RELIANCE* made sound contact with S-28 at a range of 1,700-yards (yds). The range decreased to 1,500-yds and then steadily increased, as the bearing drifted aft. At 1820, with a range of 4,700-yds, *RELIANCE* permanently lost contact of S-28. *RELIANCE* never heard any distress signals from the S-28 nor any unusual noises. **(Interestingly, there were no Chief Petty Officers on board the SS-28 when she sank.)**

The opinion of a Court of Inquiry was that S-28 lost depth control *"from either a material casualty or an operating error of personnel, or both, and that depth control was never regained. The exact cause of the loss of S-28 cannot be determined."* The Court found, further, that, *"the material condition of S-28 was as good or better than that of other ships of her class performing similar duty,"* and that, *"the officers and crew on board S-28 at the time of her loss were competent to operate the ship submerged in the performance of her assigned duties."*

On 20Sep17, the S-28 remains was discovered in over 8,500-feet of water off the cost of Oahu, Hawaii.



**Jack G Campbell, LCDR-CO Claude W. Covington, LTJG Charles E. Nelson, LTJG Harold L. Hester, ENS**



**Robert Madsen, ENS Raymond F. Harsma, ENS**

Submitted by Skip Shepherd, TM2(SS) B 73-75 who now owns the blueprints of the U-505 German Submarine shown below.

Louisiana Spotlight: U-505 and Camp Ruston | The National WWII Museum | New Orleans

<https://www.nationalww2museum.org/war/articles/louisiana-u505-camp-ruston>

**This is the story of the capture of U 505.**

This is a photo of the boarding party from the USS Pillsbury. Zenon Lukosivs and Wayne Pickles both signed the blueprint.

Crew members of USS Pillsbury... - U.S. Naval Undersea Museum

<https://www.facebook.com/navalunderseamuseum/photos/a.261763228693/10158755466088694/?type=3>

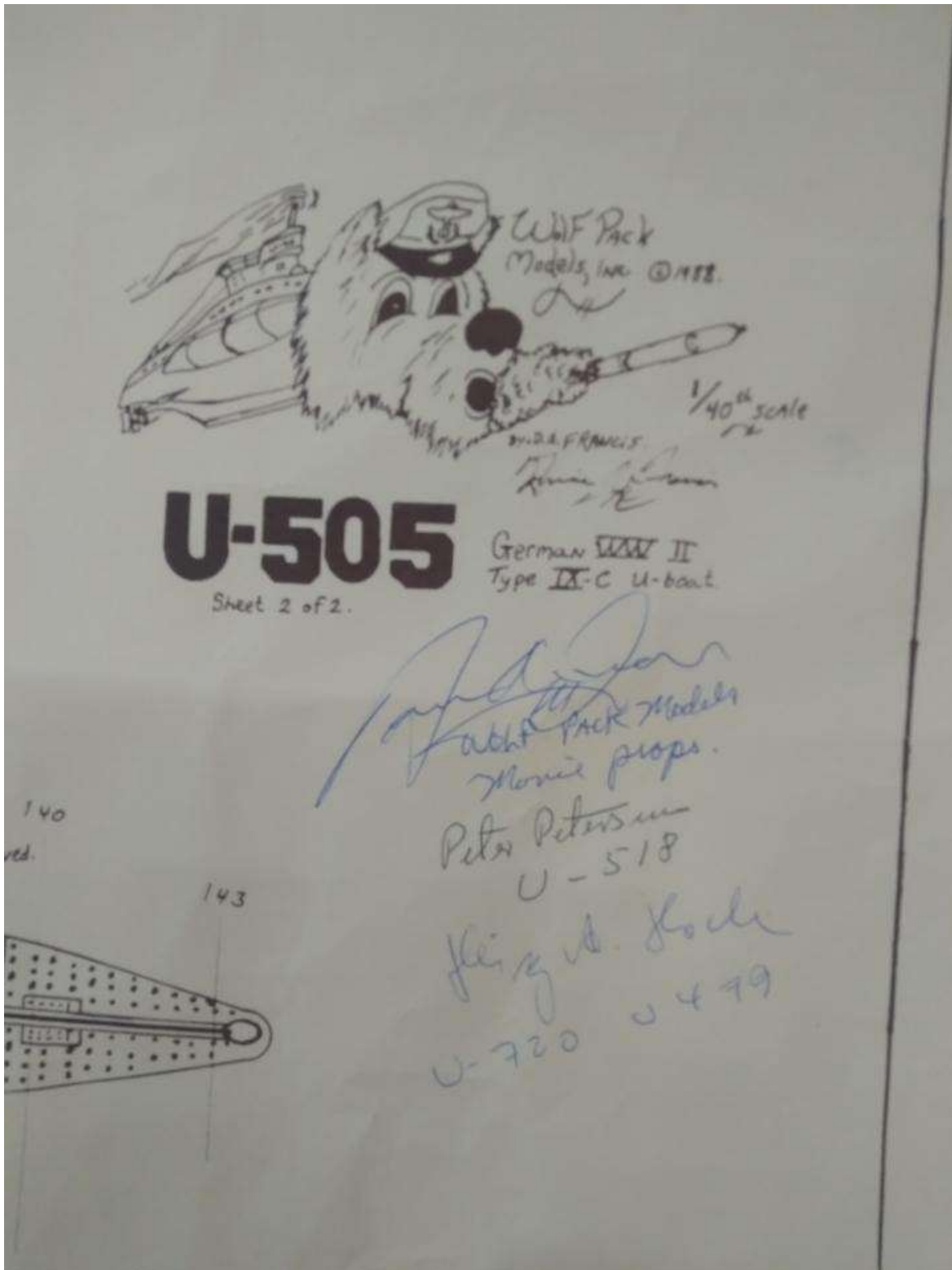


Crew members of USS Pillsbury (DE 133) who made up the the first party to board U-505 after she had been abandoned by her German crew. From left to right, they are: GM1/c Chester Mocariski; EM2/c William Riendeau; CMM George Jacobson; MOMM1/c Zenon Lukosivs; SM2/c Gordon Hohne; BM2/c Wayne Pickles, Jr.; RM2/c Stanley E. Wdowiak; and TM2/c Arthur W. Knispel.

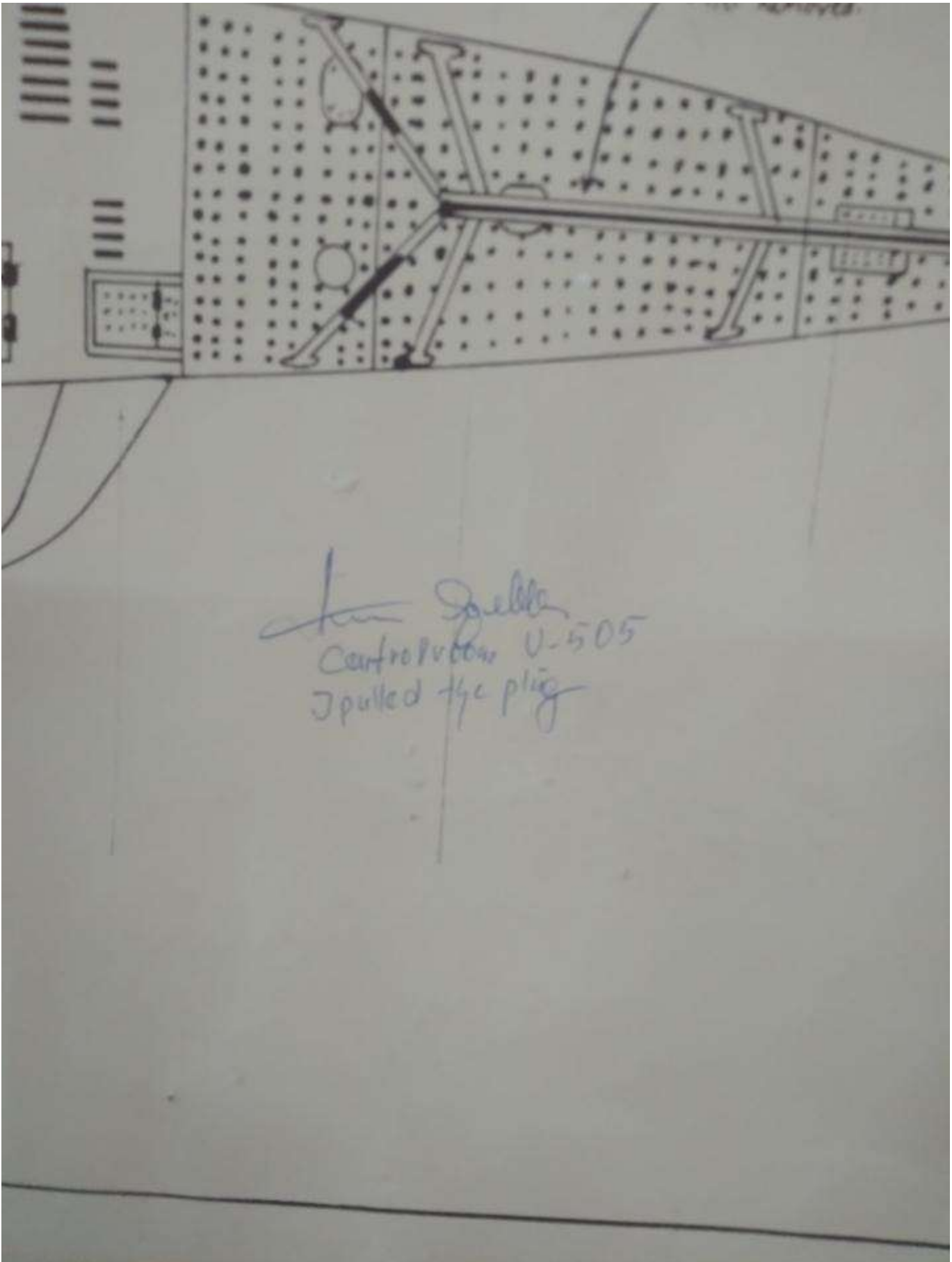
This the story of Hans Goebler. He was the last German to abandon ship. He opened the scuttle valve. His signature is also on the blue print. Under his signature he wrote "I pulled the plug".

German Submarine U-505 Crewmember Hans Goebler Recalls Being Captured During World War II

<https://www.historynet.com/german-submarine-u-505-crewmember-hans-goebler-recalls-being-captured-during-world-war-ii/>



The 2nd photo of the blue print shows Hans Goebler's signature.





The 1st photo has a signature front a sailor on the Quadalcanal. The 2nd photo has Zenon Lukosivs and Wayne Pickles signatures, they were on the boarding party.



A close picture and a far picture of the blue print for size.



**A GREAT SUBMARINE STORY Subject: USS Barb & Commanding Officer Lucky Fluckey**  
**A fascinating WWII story.**

**Lucky Fluckey**

52 years ago this month, an Italian submarine was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1954 was originally the USS Barb... an incredible veteran of World War II service... with a heritage that should not have been melted away without any recognition.



The U.S.S. Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine to launch missiles and it flew a battle flag unlike that of any other ship.



In addition to the Medal of Honor ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its Captain, Commander Eugene 'Lucky' Fluckey. And the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese train locomotive.

The U.S.S. Barb was indeed, the submarine that SANK A TRAIN!  
July 18, 1945 In Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan.

It was after 4 A.M. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned the submarine's command over to another skipper after four patrols, but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make a fifth trip with the men he cared for like a father.

Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and should have been his final war patrol, that Commander Fluckey's success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor. Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. Lucky Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan Harbor he found the mother-lode... more than 30 enemy ships.

In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water his crew had unleashed the sub's forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern. As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships. What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier had been in Washington, DC to receive the Medal of Honor? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline.

Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train!

The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives... one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded; the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men.

Thus the problem... how to detonate the explosives at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party.

## **PROBLEMS?**

If you don't search your brain looking for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony was broken with an exciting new idea: Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up?

Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts," he explained. To complete the circuit [detonating the 55-pound charge] we hook in a micro switch... and mounted it between two ties, directly under the steel rail.

"We don't set it off... the TRAIN will." Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to go along with the volunteer shore party.

After the solution was found, there was no shortage of volunteers; all that was needed was the proper weather... a little cloud cover to darken the moon for the sabotage mission ashore.

Lucky Fluckey established his criteria for the volunteer party:

- [ 1] No married men would be included, except for Hatfield,
- [ 2] The party would include members from each department,
- [ 3] The opportunity would be split evenly between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors,
- [ 4] At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in handling medical emergencies and tuned into woods lore.

FINALLY, Lucky Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself.

When the names of the 8 selected sailors was announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment.

Members of the submarine's demolition squad were:

- Chief Gunners Mate Paul G. Saunders, USN;
- Electricians Mate 3rd Class Billy R. Hatfield, USNR;
- Signalman 2nd Class Francis N. Sevej, USNR;
- Ships Cook 1st Class Lawrence W. Newland, USN;
- Torpedoman Mate 3rd Class Edward W. Klingsmith, USNR;

- Motor Machinists Mate 2nd Class James E. Richard, USN;
- Motor Machinists Mate 1st Class John Markuson, USN; and
- Lieutenant William M. Walker, USNR.

Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that as commander he belonged with the Barb, coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to ComSubPac if the Commander attempted to join the demolition shore party."

In the meantime, there would be no harassing of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would ' lay low ' to prepare their equipment, practice and plan and wait for the weather.

### **July 22, 1945 Patience Bay [ Off the coast of Karafuto, Japan]**

Waiting in 30 feet of water in Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had crafted and tested their micro switch. When the need was proposed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb's engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed digging tools.

The only things beyond their control were the weather.... and the limited time. Only five days remained in the Barb's patrol.

Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. So, this would be the night.

### **MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945**

The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat. No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water. Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the 8 saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach. Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked on the surface of the Japanese homeland.

Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards, Markuson assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb's auxiliary man climbed the tower's ladder, then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy lookout tower . . . an OCCUPIED enemy lookout tower.

Fortunately the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping. And Markuson was able to quietly withdraw to warn his raiding party.

The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more quietly and slower. Twenty minutes later, the demolition holes had been carved by their crude tools and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil.

During planning for the mission, the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. BUT IF the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped or messed up during this final, dangerous procedure . . his would be the only life lost.

On this night it was the only order the sub's saboteurs refused to obey, and all of them peered anxiously over Hatfield's shoulder to be sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a bungled switch installation.

1:32 A.M.

Watching from the deck of the submarine, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flashlight signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. Fluckey had daringly, but skillfully guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach sand. There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub's keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring rescue of his bridge saboteurs became necessary.

1:45 A.M.

The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, ' CAPTAIN!' There's another train coming up the tracks! The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!", knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch.

1:47 A.M.

The darkness was shattered by brilliant light . . . and the roar of the explosion! The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the railroad freight cars accordioned into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb eased away . . . slipping back to the safety of the deep.

Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was into waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savor, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity and daring by the Commander and all his crew. Lucky Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation. Hatches sprang open as the proud sailors of the Barb gathered on her decks to proudly watch the distant fireworks display.

On August 2, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties.

Instead of such a costly armed offensive to end the war, on August 6th the B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. A second such bomb, unleashed 4 days later on Nagasaki, Japan, caused Japan to agree to surrender terms on August 15th.

On September 2, 1945 in Tokyo Harbor the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed. The story of the saboteurs of the U.S.S. Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the [ 8 ] eight sailors who blew up the train near Kashiho, Japan conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese homeland during World War II. Members of the sabotage team pose with the Ships flag (The train mission is noted at the center bottom of the flag)



## Correcting Missing or Invalid Dates

### Don Ort - Gold/SY1/Blue 69-74 and Tom Krauser - Blue 72-74

If your tree has a lot of records, you may find yourself in the situation where you did not add dates, particularly birth dates, when you were adding people to your tree. When records that you did not add birth dates when you created the Profile are part of a Search, you cannot even tell what century these records are from. It makes it extremely difficult to determine if they should be part of your search.

Birth dates are the most critical for your tree to allow you to determine, when searching records, if that person is in the approximate time frame of your search. Other dates such as death dates are not as critical since the death date could be up to 100 years or more from the birth date.

If the birth date is not readily available, it is a good practice to “estimate” the birth dates whenever you add a new record to your tree. You can use information from the parents, children, or other ancestors around that record to “estimate” the approximate birth date to avoid having hundreds or even thousands of records later that are missing birth information.

Estimating birth dates in Ancestry also allows the artificial intelligence (AI) program to better suggest leaf Hints that better match the dates of the Profile you are working on. This date information makes the leaf Hints more appropriate.

### Guidelines for Estimating Birth Dates

It is important if you are going to “estimate dates” for use in Ancestry that you use a method that is “consistent” as much as possible. The following guidelines will suggest a method of estimating dates in Ancestry. You do not have to follow them exactly but whatever method you choose should be applied as consistently as possible. Some estimated dates may have to be adjusted depending on the circumstance of the dates around the estimated date.

Which date should you choose from as the estimated (Abt.) birth date?

- If the person is married and the birth date of the spouse is given, then you can usually estimate the person’s birth date by assuming they are about the same age as the spouse when they got married and put Abt. yyyy (spouse’s birth year) as their birth date. Look at dates for the parents and children to make sure this date makes sense.
- If the parents have a marriage date you can estimate that they started having children about a year after the marriage date. If there are several children for those parents, you can use the same date for “all” the children until you can do some research to determine which order the children were born in. Then you can correct the estimated birth dates.
- If the parent(s) birth date is shown, then you can estimate the birth date assuming that the mother was married and started having children about 20 years old and use that for the estimated birth date. If the father is younger than the mother, then you can assume the father was about 20 when they started having children.
- If there are siblings, and some birth dates are known, you can use those birth dates to estimate the birth date.
- If there are descendants with birth dates, subtract 20 years per generation to get estimated birth date.

## Using Family Tree Maker to Fill in Estimated Birth Dates

The easiest way to fill in estimated birth dates when you have a large number of records with missing birth dates is to use Family Tree Maker to edit the missing birth dates or correct the date formats.

To use Family Tree Maker to correct missing dates or invalid date formats do the following:

- Open the desired tree in Family Tree Maker.
- Select the **Tree** tab if not already selected.
- Under **Sort**: select **Birth Date** to sort records by birth dates.
- Scroll to bottom of list to see records with missing birth dates.
- Click on the record missing a birth date.
- The middle panel shows a Horizontal Tree view and the right panel shows information about the selected person including "Birth:".
- If there is a Spouse listed for the person missing their birth date, click on that person in the middle panel. If the spouse has a birth date listed, assume that they were close in age and that the estimated birth date shown is the same for the person selected. Check the parent's records to verify that their birth dates and marriage dates make sense for this estimated date. In the right panel enter "Abt. yyyy" (yyyy is the birth year of the spouse).
- If no spouse, or spouse is also missing the birth date, then use parent's information to estimate birth date.
- If mother is present, click on mother's record in middle panel.
- If the marriage date is present, add a year to that date, then enter that date for the missing birth date (Abt. yyyy) in the missing birth year.
- If only birth dates are shown, use the parent with the later birth date, then add 20 years to the birth date shown for the child.
- If parent's birth dates are missing, move up tree to grandparents and add 20 years for each generation and fill in missing birth dates.
- If no parents listed, but have descendants, move down tree to find descendant with birth date. Subtract 20 years for each generation as you add birth dates up the tree.
- After you add each birth date with Abt. yyyy, you should click on the **Place** field to force the date to be entered into the record in the correct format.
- After entering the birth date for each person, scroll to the bottom of the list in left panel and click on the last record to start the process over again.
- If the next record is another child for the same parents, use the same birth date for each additional child since you do not know which order the children were born in. Later you may be able to use census data or other documents in Ancestry to determine the correct order.
- After you correct a batch of missing birth dates, you should **Sync** FTM with Ancestry to make both programs the same.
- You may also want to **Compact** FTM to compress the database.
- Continue this process until all missing birth dates are eliminated.

You may find a record that is missing a birth date but has no parents or descendants listed. This record is not connected to any other records in the file. You can choose to either **Delete** the record or flag it with \*\*\* in the first name field. If you flag it with \*\*\*, then later in Ancestry you can search for records with \*\*\* to try to determine who that record should be connected to.

You may also find records where the dates of the ancestors or descendants do not make sense. Maybe there are a couple of hundred years between the ancestors and descendants such that it appears some generations may be missing. You can also flag these people with \*\*\* so you can research the missing generations later in Ancestry.

## Correcting Date Formats

As you see records with date formats that are not your default date format (dd mmm yyyy) you should correct them as you go. FTM and Ancestry may or may not recognize the format or it may be a format that is not your chosen date format.

Some examples are: January 1, 2024; 01 January 2024; abt Jan 2024; Abt Jan 2024; 01/01/2024; 01/01/24; Jan Abt. 2024; or some other variations that were input when obtaining records from other sources.

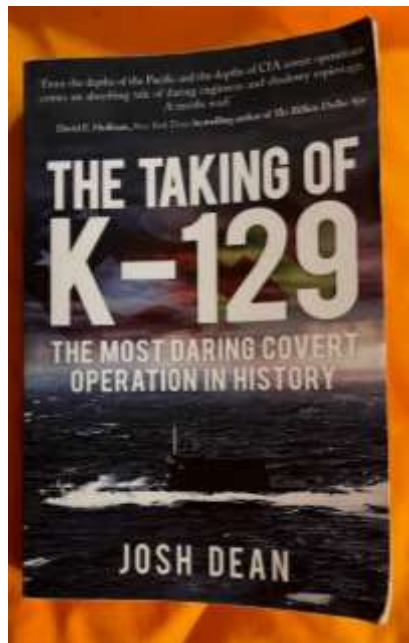
For example, Census data usually comes in as **Abt 2024** instead of **Abt. 2024**. Ancestry “should” (but does not) automatically correct different date formats to the “default” date format. Ancestry does not correct other date formats automatically. Ancestry has ignored all suggestions to fix this.

As you see dates that are not in the correct format, you should click on the date field and see if Ancestry will show a different format for the date. If not, retype the date into the default format to make Ancestry correct the date. It is easier to fix the dates as you enter the records rather than have to go back and fix thousands of records later.

As you scroll through the records in Family Tree Maker sorted by Birth Date you may notice dates (birth or death) that are not in the desired format and should be fixed. You can click on those records to fix the dates in the right panel as you go through the records. When you Sync FTM to Ancestry, these records will be corrected in Ancestry.

You should make a backup copy of the Family Tree Maker files to your external drive when you are done fixing dates.





**Much has been written about the recovery of K-129**

**But we know how she got to the bottom.**

**Written and submitted by Jim Bob Gutierrez,  
LTJG G Comm 66-67 Plank**



K-129 a Russian FBM sub was rammed and sunk by one of our Fast Attacks. The K-129 was a diesel sub cruising beneath the waves in the north pacific in March of 1968. This was her patrol area to launch Missiles towards the USA.

One of our fast attacks, the Swordfish(SSN-579) was sent to intercept her. She had left her patrol area and was heading south towards Hawaii with malicious intent.

The following is the scenario as stated in a published article on the internet. [look up the Swordfish]

On 8 March 1968, K-129, a Soviet Golf II-class submarine, sank northwest of Oahu. On 17 March, Swordfish put into Yokosuka, Japan, *supposedly* for emergency repairs to a bent periscope. It was suggested by the Soviets that K-129 was lost after a collision with Swordfish. The United States Navy states that Swordfish was damaged in an ice pack in the Sea of Japan, and that K-129 was some 2,000 nautical miles (3,700 km; 2,300 mi) distant from Swordfish when she was lost. *We did not do it.*

Below is a copy of the deck log from the Swordfish. Note the reference to **OP order 315-68**. The Navy operates on plans called OP plans covering all possible conditions where action is required. When an OP plan is executed, it becomes an OP order. The **OP plan 315-68** was probably what is to be done if an enemy submarine is about to perform a hostile act. In this case the hostile act was launching missiles towards Hawaii therefore the OP plan became an OP order.

The deck log does not mention the alleged ice pack.

NAVPERS 3100/2 (1-66)  
(Formerly NAVPERS 719)

## DECK LOG—REMARKS SHEET

S/N-0105-404-1560

SWORDFISH (SSN 579)  
 USS \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE DESCRIPTION \_\_\_\_\_ DATE 1-17 MARCH, 1968  
 (Day) (Date) (Month)  
 AT/PASSAGE FROM SPECIAL OPERATIONS TO \_\_\_\_\_

POSITION	ZONE	TIME
0800		
L _____	BY _____	
λ _____	BY _____	

POSITION	ZONE	TIME
1200		
L _____	BY _____	
λ _____	BY _____	

POSITION	ZONE	TIME
2000		
L _____	BY _____	
λ _____	BY _____	

LEGEND: 1. CELESTIAL  
 2. ELECTRONIC  
 3. VISUAL  
 4. D. R.

## REMARKS

1 MAR - 0001 Underway on special operations IAW COMUSOPLOT SEVEN OPORD 315-68 as before.

T.C. Maloney  
 T.C. MALONEY, LCDR, USN

17 MAR - 04-08 Underway as before. 0600 Ceased special operations in accordance with COMUSOPLOT SEVEN OPORD 315-68. Stationed on maneuvering watch. Maneuvering on various courses and speeds to conform to the entrance channel to TOKYO BAY. 0730 COMUSOPLOT SEVEN BROADCAST from his target. Maneuvering on various courses and speeds to enter YOKOSUKA HARBOR. 0758 Moved starboard side to Pier 7 at U.S. Naval Ship Repair Facility, YOKOSUKA, Japan with standard mooring lines doubled. SOPA is COMHIPRON ELEVEN. Ships present include various units of the U.S. Pacific Fleet, yard and district craft.

T.C. Maloney  
 T.C. MALONEY, LCDR, USN

08-24 Moored as before.

J. C. Frothingham  
 J.C. Frothingham, LT, USN

EXAMINED

T.C. Maloney  
 T.C. MALONEY, LCDR

U. S. N. NAVIGATOR

In this particular case the Soviets were correct in their assessment of how their submarine was lost.

The Swordfish was a Skate class submarine. USS Skate (SSN-578) was our first sub to surface at the north pole busting through thick ice. The sail had to be pretty damn tuff to do this. What better sub to ram the K-129, break her in half and send her to the bottom. The deck log was the final piece of the puzzle.

The author, together with his personal knowledge of subs was able put this scenario together exclusively with information on the internet. He only connected the dots.

The Glomar Explorer, built by Howard Hughes for The CIA was able to go down and grab her in 1974. We knew where to look for her because we remembered where we put her on the bottom.



Getting ready to snatch the K-129 off the bottom



They brought her back to the USA. We got their crypto gear

A closer look at what you saw being towed. The Bernie Briere out of Portland, Oregon

