

June Meeting
Still Zoom Conference
(Please See Page 5)

THE PERISCOPE

A monthly publication of the Los Angeles/Pasadena Base • United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Volume 17, Number 6 • June 2021



PRIDE RUNS DEEP



"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution."

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Editor's Corner

Found two really good articles for you guys this month: our cover story about the Cold War *Grayback*, and yet another telling of the oft'-recounted tale of *Barb's* remarkable railroad sabotage mission on Japanese Home Island soil. I never tire of that one, do you? There's also a tease on page 4 about a forthcoming article dear to my heart, plus all our usual features and stuff. Dive in and enjoy! As usual, I'll be in the Yeoman's Shack if anyone needs me.—Jeff

The Oddly Shaped USS *Grayback* Was a Cold War Submarine Like No Other

This Remarkable Sub's Story Includes Launching Fighter-Sized Cruise Missiles, Attempting to Rescue Vietnam War POWs, and Getting Painted Bright Orange.

(Reproduced from The War Zone website - published February 10, 2021)

by Thomas Newdick



USS *Grayback*. (U.S. Navy photo from the National Archives.)

Few of the U.S. Navy's post-World War II submarines had such an unusual career as the USS *Grayback*. She went from carrying some of the United States' first strategic missiles to stealthily delivering naval special forces to the coast of North Vietnam during the war in Southeast Asia. She was truly a fascinating and bizarrely shaped boat whose multiple lives underscored how she was able to change along with a morphing Cold War.

Laid down on July 1, 1954, at Mare Island Naval Shipyard in San Francisco Bay, California, the first of the *Grayback*-class missile submarines was, like her sister, the USS *Growler*, built as a conventionally powered submarine that would have a primary armament of cruise missiles. The pair were the first submarines to be designed around an armament of subsonic Vought SSM-N-8 Regulus I strategic missiles. Four of these nuclear-armed, turbojet-powered weapons were carried in a pair of huge cylindrical hangars located above the bow.

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From the Wardroom...



Dave Vanderveen,
Base Commander

Shipmates and Ladies,

As I write this, we are nearing Memorial Day and we have an abbreviated plan for our recognition this year of shipmates lost in combat and in operational accidents in peacetime. COVID constraints remain in place in California and on military reservations, so we will have limited attendance by veterans and no public presence. On Monday, May 31st, a small group of us will meet at the World War II Submarine Memorial – West at ten a.m. to honor our shipmates and to “Toll” their boats. Paul Riggs, Director of the Memorial is managing attendance, and is cataloging those who have expressed intentions to be there. Please contact Paul if you have not done so yet, to see if he has reached the attendance limit rather than just show up at the Memorial. Weapons Station command is adamant that our group must be small to comply with COVID constraints. Even if you are unable to attend our Memorial Day Ceremony in person, please continue to give thought to the 3,516 American submariners lost in World War II and to the 228 lost on USS *Thresher* and USS *Scorpion*.

Ironically, we have a glimmer of hope that constraints will be lifted soon, perhaps early in June. That does not impact our Memorial Day observance, but MAY allow us to access Building 6 for our regularly scheduled meeting, so we will run parallel plans. Our usual ZOOM gathering will be set up for the 19th, and we will also be ready for our Steak Fry in Building 6 if Weapons Station command is able to allow access. Of course, separate communication will go to each member as we learn what develops. This issue of *The Periscope* is being published before we know what to expect, though, so I apologize that we cannot give you more certain information in these pages.

One of the Nav ET's, a history buff, on USS *Stonewall Jackson* occasionally mentioned that our course was near the location of a boat lost in WWII as we cruised between Guam and points north in 1969. I doubt that I am unique among my shipmates, but I thought quietly about those crews and wondered about the events that lead to their loss. There was no outward drama in his mention of the wrecks or in the crew's discussion about them, but it affected me and I still feel the wonder as I read submarine history and when I hear the Tolling of the Boats. That is part of the reason I feel so gratified when my grandkids tell me they want to work on the Memorial with me. When we spiff up the torpedo or rake leaves, they always take time to look at the monuments and often ask questions about the men named there and their submarines. I appreciate their work and that they care about our history, too.

Memorial Day is a solemn occasion and many decades ago it became a National Holiday. I regret that some among the U.S. population do not know the meaning of the holiday, but I do not begrudge them for their enjoyment of time away from work, or for the parties they may attend. I also enjoy a backyard barbecue late in the day, and an adult beverage while I savor having honored men whose young lives ended as they did submariners' jobs. Memorial Day is important to us.

Dave Vanderveen

Commander

Los Angeles-Pasadena Base



May Zoom Gen'l. Meeting Sailing List

Ramon Aguilar
Armen Bagdasarian
Ed Barwick
Herb "Bo" Bolton
Darin Detwiler
Robert Frazier
Sam Higa
Phil Jaskoviak
Joe Koch
Jack Mahan
Bill Moak
Bruce Neighbors
Jeff Porteous
Paul Riggs
Mike Swanson
Dave Vanderveen
Ron Wagner
Dennis Walsh & dog Flynn
Gary Wheaton
Gary Wing



Minutes of May 15, 2021 General Meeting on Zoom

Taking over for Base Commander Dave Vanderveen, who was experiencing intermittent computer connection difficulties, Base Secretary Bill Moak called the Zoom General Meeting to order at 1105 hours. In attendance were those shown in the Sailing List at the left, including Robert Frazier and Darin Detwiler, our two newest members. Our old friend and former base member Phil Jaskoviak also joined us near the end of the meeting.

Ed Barwick, filling in for absent COB Ray Teare, then led us in prayer with an invocation, followed by a request for a moment of silence for our departed shipmates. Ron Wagner asked that we also recognize the loss of the Indonesian submariners who'd recently perished.

Membership Update:

Bill introduced our two newest members, Robert Frazier and Darin Detwiler. Both were welcomed aboard by the members attending. A question arose as to when we might be meeting face-to-face, and Joe Koch mentioned that the Navy Submarine League is again meeting in person on the subbase in San Diego. This is a good omen for our possible gathering in Building 6 for our next meeting. Stay alert for late-breaking details.

Treasurer's Report:

Mike Swanson provided monetary details for the account as of May 14, 2021. The specific numbers have been approved by the E-Board, and appear in their meeting minutes.

Memorial Day Plan:

Paul Riggs reported details concerning a "members only" observation and ceremony at the Memorial site. The program will begin at 1000 hrs., and he asks that attendees arrive by 0930. There will be a flag raising and lowering, and a Tolling of the Boats Ceremony. Paul indicates attendees should bring a chair, and he will provide the coffee.

Eagle Scout Program:

Ed Barwick has taken the reins concerning the Eagle Scouts, and in fact is attending an Honors Ceremony this Monday the 17th at 1900 in South Pasadena. He advised any members here today to contact him at edsubvet@gmail.com for the address and details, should they wish to attend. Joe Koch mentioned his attendance at a similar ceremony in June.

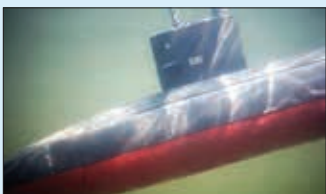
Award Nominations:

Low numbers have been submitted due to COVID-19, and many bases are not conducting meetings. Bill will work with Dave on a suggestion he has made in the past, in hopes of submitting in time for the deadline.

(concluded on next page)

Coming Soon in *The American Submariner...*

Ever wondered about radio-controlled scale model submarines? Yes, they exist, and they're a lot of fun! Read all about them—what they are, how they work, what they do—in your next issue of *The American Submariner*. Don't miss it!



Minutes of May 15, 2021 General Meeting on Zoom

(concluded from previous page)

For the Good of the Order:

Jeff asked to coordinate with Bill regarding today's attendees for the *Periscope's* coverage, and confirmed Bruce Neighbors as present.

Ron inquired of Joe as to information concerning the *Rickover* commissioning, and a discussion followed. It appears both Joe and Ron are dealing with the same individual regarding this matter.

Phil Jaskoviak joined the meeting just as we were about to adjourn. Bill inquired as to how the Dallas Base has dealt with COVID and the restrictions. Phil reported they have met sporadically over the past two months.

Ron Wagner also mentioned how members can view a video of the "firing up" of *Razorback's* diesel engines on her website, and also the *Silversides'* diesels in Muskegon, MI.

With no further comments, Joe made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Jack, and approved by voice vote. Adjournment occurred at 1141 hrs.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Moak

Secretary, L.A.-Pasadena Base, USSVI



June Meeting to be Zoom Video Conference
 (More details on Chapter News page.)

June Meeting

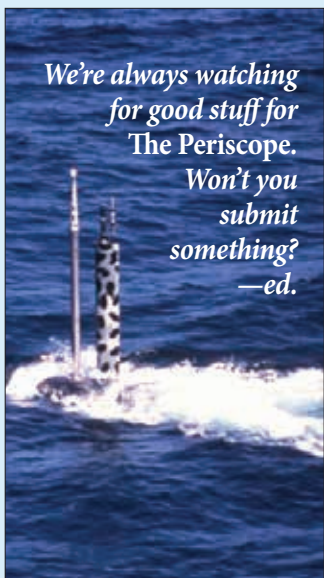
Date: June 19, 2021

Again this month, our usual base meeting will be conducted as a Zoom video conference. This software for internet-based meetings has been working well for many groups wanting or needing to remain "face-to-face" during the global pandemic. See the Chapter News page for details. Hope to see your smiling face among the crowd!

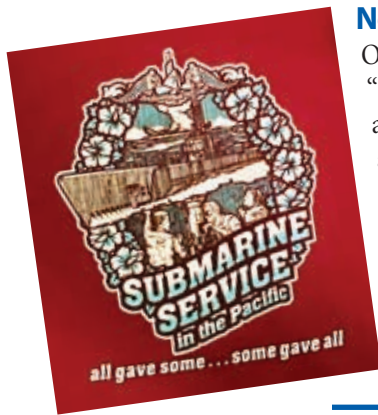
June Birthdays

We hereby extend the happiest of wishes to all our L.A.-Pasadena Base birthday celebrants.

- Milt Boudov 6/3
- Blacky Blackwell..... 6/18
- Bob Frazier 6/23
- Ken Dorn..... 6/26
- Angus McColl..... 6/29



Ship's Store



New Reduced Price on T-Shirts!

Our ever-popular L.A.-Pasadena Base "Submarine Service" tees are once again selling like fresh whites after a fall down the pump room hatch! Now a mere **ten bucks** apiece, there's no reason not to have a closetful. Contact Jack Mahan for yours, or just bring a few extra bucks to the next meeting, you skinflint!

2021 Calendars Now Available!

Get yours through the USSVI website or see details elsewhere in this issue. Don't miss it—they're selling fast!



Get in touch with our Storekeeper, Jack Mahan, at 714-349-5878 for more purchasing information.



USSVI Logo Patch
 (9¾ x 6¾)
\$11.00 ea.



L.A.-Pasadena Base Patch
 (3¾ x 5)
\$5.00 ea.



Holland Club Member Patch (3x3)
\$6.00 ea.

LOS ANGELES - PASADENA BASE

2021 FLOWER FUND and BOOSTER CLUB

A special thank you to the following folks whose generous contributions this year have helped make our Base activities and charitable functions possible:

Ken Dorn (x6!) • Jack & Marlene Mahan • Sally Moran
 Ed Kushins • Skip Loveless • Mike Varalyia • Harold Staggs



Booster Club and Flower Fund donations are welcome in any amount and are often also popular with 50/50 Drawing winners at our Base meetings. Contributions can be made in cash or by check payable to L.A.-Pasadena Base of USSVI. Checks may also be sent to Mike Swanson at 1149 W. Santa Cruz Street, San Pedro, CA 90731. To ensure proper credit, be sure to indicate Booster Club or Flower Fund on your check.

UNITED STATES SUBMARINE FORCE LOSSES ON ETERNAL PATROL

"I can assure you that they went down fighting and that their brothers who survived them took a grim toll of our savage enemy to avenge their deaths."

— Vice Admiral Charles A. Lockwood, USN

JUNE TOLLING OF THE BOATS



USS HERRING (SS 233)



USS R-12 (SS 89)



USS GOLET (SS 361)

USS HERRING (SS-233)

Lost on 1 June 1944 with the loss of 80 men near Matsuwa Island. *Herring* was on her eighth war patrol and was conducting a surface attack when a shore battery spotted her and made two direct hits on her conning tower, causing her loss. *Herring* was the only U.S. submarine sunk by a land battery.

USS R-12 (SS-89)

Lost on 12 June 1943 with the loss of 42 men near Key West, Florida during a practice torpedo approach. The cause was probably due to flooding through a torpedo tube. The CO and two other men on the bridge survived, as did 18 crew members on liberty at the time of the accident.

USS GOLET (SS-361)

Lost on 14 June 1944 with the loss of 82 men. On her second war patrol, *Golet* was apparently lost in battle with antisubmarine forces north of Honshu.

USS BONEFISH (SS-223)

Lost on 18 June 1945 with the loss of 85 men when sunk near Suzu Misaki. A recipient of three Navy Unit Citations, *Bonefish* was on her eighth war patrol. After sinking a passenger-cargoman, *Bonefish* was subjected to a savage depth charge attack. She was the last SubPac submarine lost in World War II.

USS S-27 (SS-132)

Lost on 19 June 1942 when it grounded off Amchitka Island. *S-27* was on the surface in poor visibility, charging batteries and drifted into the shoals. When she could not be freed and started listing, the captain got the entire crew to shore (400 yards away) in relays using a three-man rubber raft. The entire crew was subsequently rescued.

USS O-9 (SS-70)

Lost on 20 June 1941 with the loss of 34 men when it foundered off Isle of Shoals, 15 miles from Portsmouth, NH.



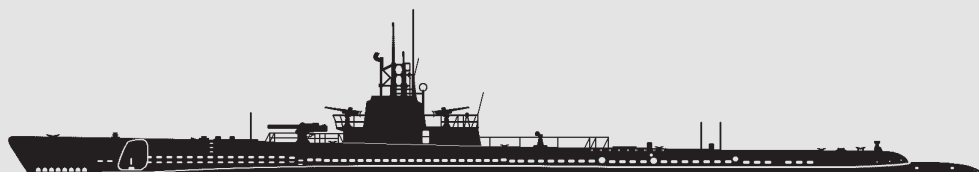
USS BONEFISH (SS 223)



USS S-27 (SS 132)



USS O-9 (SS 70)



WE REMEMBER For those who gave their lives in defense of our country WE REMEMBER

How an Unusual World War II Submarine Raid May Have Influenced the Navy SEALs

(Reproduced from the Insider website—published March 15, 2021; originally published November 9, 2020)

By Sean Spoons, SOFREP



The U.S. Navy submarine USS Barb (SS-220) in San Francisco Bay, near the Mare Island Navy Yard, May 3, 1945. (U.S. Navy photo.)

Five sailors with black shoe polish on their faces peer over the shoulder of Engineman 3rd Class Hatfield as he connects the wires to the simple pressure-switch detonator wedged between the two wooden beams.

There was no chance to test the crude device before using it. It was a jury-rigged affair and it would either work or blow them all to hell as soon as the wires picked up the current from the three dry-cell batteries they were attached to. Hatfield's hands worked under the dim red glow of a red lensed flashlight.

It was shortly after 0100 hrs on July 23, 1945. These sailors from the USS *Barb* submarine had landed on Japan in the first commando raid of WWII on the Japanese Home Islands. Their mission was to torpedo a train.

The USS *Barb* was laid down in June, 1941, and launched in April of 1942. She was assigned to SUBRON50 and sent to the Atlantic Ocean to support allied landings in North Africa. She then made five war patrols without sinking a single target. This could not be blamed on the *Barb's* crew as much as on the absence of German and Italian shipping in *Barb's* Mediterranean patrol areas.

The chief of naval operations, Adm. Ernest J. King, decided that SUBRON50 was serving no useful purpose in the target-

sparse Atlantic theater and deployed the submarine squadron to the Pacific where the war was heating up.

In September, 1943, departing from Pearl Harbor on her sixth patrol, the *Barb* scored hits on two ships without sinking them. Her seventh patrol did nothing to improve that record. Then in May, 1944, *Barb* received a new skipper, Eugene B. Fluckey, and embarked on her eighth war patrol...and a whole new career.

Under the style of Cmdr. Fluckey, the aggressive new USS *Barb* torpedoed and sank numerous ships, sampans, patrol craft, and trawlers. On that single first patrol under her new skipper, she was credited with sinking 15,472 tons of enemy shipping. Fluckey then went on to his 9th, 10th, and 11th patrols, continuing to sink ships—including the 20,000-ton escort carrier *Unyo*.

This new commander had made all the difference. When the ships of the Japanese navy would not present themselves to fight, Fluckey would take the fight to them. On the night of January 23, 1944, Fluckey boldly sailed the *Barb* right into Namkwan Harbor, surfaced, and engaged some 30 ships lying at anchor there.

The *Barb* loosed eight torpedoes from her bow and stern tubes. Eight giant explosions lit up the night sky. Three Japanese ships were sunk and three burned furiously. Fluckey then brought the sub about and steamed at 21 knots on the surface for an hour,

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How *Barb* May Have Influenced the Navy SEALs

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hightailing it out of a shallow, mined harbor for which the U.S. did not have nautical charts.

Fluckey was awarded the Medal of Honor for this feat, and *Barb* received the Presidential Unit Citation.

“Now there is a target I’d like to blow up.”

Fluckey embarked on his 12th war patrol aboard the *Barb* in December of 1944. By now the fortunes of war had turned against Japan. Most of her fleet had been sunk by the planes, ships, and subs of the U.S. Navy; most of the Japanese merchant fleet had also been sunk.

This forced submarine commanders to sail perilously closer to the Japanese Home Islands to find targets closely hugging the coast and sailing only at night. This, in turn, brought them within range of shore batteries, aircraft, and fast sub-hunting corvettes. Most of the U.S. submarines and crews lost in WWII were near the Japanese Home Islands.

On July 19, 1945, due to the lack of targets, the *Barb* was slowly patrolling in Patience Bay near Otasamu on the east coast of Karafuto (now Sakhalin Island). Fluckey was able to see a rail line, which ran along the coast, and trains moving on it frequently. The Allied invasion of Japan was in the works, and Fluckey knew these trains were running war materials and supplies to the southern part of the island to be shipped to the main Japanese Home Islands.

Fluckey watched the trains run for three days through his periscope, carefully noting their schedules and their number of cars. Fluckey was rankled that they could not do anything about the trains or tracks. The targets were not appearing as smoke plumes on the horizon for him to track and sink, but they represented thousands of tons of shipping moving by rail that he longed to intercept and destroy.

“Now there is a target I’d like to blow up,” Fluckey muttered as he watched yet another train run down the tracks trailing black coal smoke. It was his Chief of the Boat, Paul “Swish” Sanders, who said that maybe there’s a way the *Barb* could “sink” a train.

COB Sanders was a Gunner’s Mate and a plankholder. He had been with the *Barb* since her commissioning; every man who had sailed on her since 1942 had sailed with Sanders. He had never transferred to another boat; the *Barb* was his home.

Soon charts were spread on a plot table and plans began to form. And they sounded crazy. What if they unbolted one of the 55-pound scuttling charges from the submarine’s hull and connected it to a detonator and three dry-cell batteries fitted inside an empty pickle can? How would they set it off? Obviously it

couldn’t be done manually, as the explosion and train wreck would wake up the entire prefecture, and the landing party would still need to paddle out to the *Barb* to make their escape.

It was then that a young Electrician’s Mate named Hatfield offered a solution. He had worked on railroads back in the States, and he could improvise a pressure switch attached to a wedge-shaped piece of wood to be slipped between the rail and the wooden tie. When a train would pass over it, the locomotive’s weight would compress the rail against the tie, thus setting off the pressure-switch detonator. For the mission, they would use two rubber boats each containing four men.

Cmdr. Fluckey approved the idea and they set about selecting men for the assignment. They would all have to be single (except Hatfield). And they needed to be in good shape to row the two rubber boats over 1,000 yards there and back again.

It was decided that Engineering Officer Lt. Walker and COB Sanders would be in charge of the boats. The remaining men were selected for their Boy Scout skills, including first-aid, foraging, and navigation. The men practiced bird calls as a form of communication in the dark. Everything was ready, or as ready as could be made.

The night of July 23 would be moonless; the perfect cover for a stealthy mission. Fluckey slipped the *Barb* within 1,000 yards of the beach and the eight men, their faces darkened with boot polish, slipped into the rubber boats. They were armed with Thompson submachine guns, carbines, knives, and grenades.

They carried personal flotation devices, red lens flashlights, D-rations, cigarette lighters, binoculars, wire, cutters, and a flare gun. Their watches were carefully synchronized. Fluckey informed them that the *Barb* could not await them for more than three hours. The men had to be back at least 15 minutes before dawn broke or the sub would be visible from the beach.

Fluckey looked at each of the men in turn. “Boys,” he said, “if you get stuck, head for Siberia 130 miles north. Follow the mountain ranges. Good luck.”

The eight men began to paddle through the surf towards the beach.

“Paddle like the Devil! ... We’re leaving!”

Sharp attention to their compass bearings got the raiding party to the beach. Two men were left to guard the boats. Three more were detached and posted as lookouts. Lt. Walker quietly climbed a water tower to get a better view of the area—only to find it was being used as a guard tower by the Japanese!

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How *Barb* May Have Influenced the Navy SEALs

(continued from page 8)



Members of the USS Barb's demolition squad pose with the sub's battle flag at the end of her 12th war patrol, taken at Pearl Harbor, August, 1945. (U.S. Navy photo.)

He was able to silently slip back down the water tower ladder without waking the sleeping Japanese sentry. As he moved to rejoin the men, Sanders with his "Land Torpedo" and Hatfield with his pressure switch were carefully excavating out gravel under the track to place the 55-pound charge and situate the detonator.

Suddenly, an approaching train caused them all to flatten against the ground. The train roared past them, and *Barb's* men were able to plainly see the engineer's face as the express locomotive blew by. Hatfield and Sanders worked quietly but very quickly to set the charge, and Lt. Walker recalled his three lookouts. Though they had all been ordered to stay well clear of Hatfield while he armed the crude device (in case it should go off prematurely), all five peered over his shoulder as he set the pressure switch between the track and rail and armed it.

The men then retreated to the waiting rafts and found them still inflated and guarded by the team's other two men. Manning the boats, they began to paddle back out to *Barb*, which Fluckey had moved even closer to shore. When they reached about the midway point back to the sub, a distant railroad whistle was heard. The train was ahead of schedule: it would trip the bomb, and the resulting explosion and fire would illuminate *Barb* and the rubber boats to anyone and everyone located along the beach.

They would all be sitting ducks! Fluckey didn't dare come any closer to the beach to try to meet them. And he couldn't allow himself to wait for them should the train blow up while the men were still ten minutes of hard paddling away. It was simply too risky; he would have to submerge and abandon them...

Grabbing a voice-powered megaphone Fluckey yelled with all

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How *Barb* May Have Influenced the Navy SEALs

(concluded from page 9)

his heart, “PADDLE LIKE THE DEVIL! WE’RE LEAVING!”

The eight men rowed furiously, hearing the train whistle moving swiftly closer. Then came a sudden ear-shattering explosion—its flash of light illuminating locomotive parts and an exploding steam boiler flying some 200 feet in the air! The train’s fifteen cars now piled up upon each other, the night shattered by the sound of crashing, twisted metal and splintering wood.

The eight men barely reached the sub in time, and *Barb* retired at high speed to submerge in sufficiently deep waters. As the raiding party rushed below, each was able to catch a quick glimpse of the spectacular carnage they had left behind ashore.

The USS *Barb* and her crew went on to conduct an astonishing twelve total war patrols. This was an impressive feat, since there were few if any more dangerous jobs in WWII than being a submariner. Fully 25% of submarine sailors were lost in action, the reason it remains an all-volunteer force. Fluckey’s record in *Barb* put him among the very best skippers in the service. His boat is credited with nearly 100,000 tons of enemy shipping.

In a career of just three-and-a-half years of service, the *Barb* was awarded four Presidential Unit Citations, a Navy Unit Commendation, and eight Battle Stars.

The crew of the USS *Barb* was highly decorated as well. Looking at her Battle Flag in the photo on the previous page, you

can see the medals awarded to the crew: six Navy Crosses, 23 Silver Stars, 23 Bronze Stars, and a Medal of Honor. Look a little closer, notice anything missing? No sailor aboard the *Barb* earned a Purple Heart while assigned to her. She never suffered a single casualty in all her twelve patrols.

They say the Navy has Traditions, the Army has Customs, and the Air Force has Habits. This old joke reflects the relative ages of the service branches. Navy Traditions tend to carry on for hundreds of years. Last October, then-Navy Secretary Kenneth Braithwaite announced that the next *Virginia*-class attack submarine, hull SSN-804, would be christened USS *Barb* in honor of Fluckey’s command. The original USS *Barb* was hull SS-220. That’s over eighty years and 584 submarine hulls later.

There is also a legend—perhaps fact and fiction mixed together—wherein the admiral in charge of the Navy SEALs was once questioned why the basic SEAL squad is comprised of eight men. Why not ten, twelve, or fourteen?

Why *eight* men?

It’s said that this admiral had no hesitation in his response: “Because of that raid on Japan by the USS *Barb*. Eight men just works.”

SOFREP is a non-political news site run by former military special operations and intelligence professionals.



Navy SEAL surf passage training. (U.S. Navy photo.)

There Was a Time, Long Ago...

by Bob "Dex" Armstrong

In our day, going to sea was an adventure. People would never understand how cramped our world was. In movies, it always looked neat, clean and roomy.

When we loaded stores for several weeks, we had to store it everywhere. A few examples:

We had two enlisted showers. We had to keep one clear so corpsman, cooks and messcooks could stay clean. The other got three croaker bags of spuds.

Big cans of sugar, flour and coffee were stored two high, outboard the engines. It was hell to crawl back there when the damn things were hammering out turns.

We laid down a cardboard carpet of can cases on the after battery walking deck. Two deep. Made you feel two feet taller when you made your way forward and also made the poor bastards in the lower bunks have to damn near Crisco their butts to get into their racks. Once in, you had some idea how claustrophobic a coffin must be.

When the messcooks bricked in the passageway with the cases, they used a marking pen and a code known only to themselves and possibly the Jolly Green Giant. This was supposed to allow them to enter the compartment when the animals were sleeping and locate stuff the cook needed. At times, this became damn near impossible. Those times the cook would turn on the white lights, bang on the bottom of an aluminum pot and yell, "Okay ladies, rise and shine! Need six cans of beets! Six cans of beets! Up and at it!"

"Screw you and the horse you rode in on. Turn off the gahdam lights and get your ugly butt outta here."

"Beets, sleeping beauties... Six cans."

"You gahdam gut bandit! Everything you cook tastes like sh*t anyway... Go get something you can find and turn off the f*cking lights!"

"You're so sweet, my little garbage mouth darlings, and I slave over a hot stove just to generate this outpouring of love and affection... Beets, sweethearts... Beets... The sooner you find 'em, the sooner you little ungrateful, worthless sonuvabitches can go beddie-bye again."

It was either find what he needed or shoot him, so we usually located the stuff.

There was one obvious benefit to living in the after battery. You were literally surrounded by stuff to eat. This allowed you to enjoy the diesel boat sailors equivalent of breakfast in bed. You could knock a hole in a case, grab a can, zip the lid out, and chow down. Granted the contents of the can had to lend itself to be eaten without preparation like heating, cooking or mixing, which limited the menu, somewhat.

The all-time crew favorite was "pigmy peters," known in the surface world as Vienna sausage. You could knock the lid out of a can of peters and pass it around, fish the little rascals out and enjoy a little nocturnal snack with the last man tossing the juice filled can into the head waste bucket.

Another crowd pleaser was crackers and peanut butter. We were a Peter Pan boat. Others were Skippy boats. We killed Skippy eaters and shot their remains out the GDU. We stored peanut butter in the portside waterway and always had five or six boxes of saltines stored above the vent lines in the alley.

We had an unwritten code that governed life in the alley. One of the cardinal no-no's was using anything other than a designated eating utensil to dig peanut butter out of the communal jar. This rule became necessary when an engineman striker was found using his comb to spread peanut butter.

It was simple: You got a spoon, drilled a hole in the handle and hung it on your bunk chain with twenty-one thread shot line or a piece of dog tag chain.

All it took to launch a food fiesta, a little sub-surface luau, was to yell, "Let's feed the roaches!"

We shared space with little brown multi-legged creatures that thrived on cracker crumbs and God knows what else. They never looked like they were missing meals. Periodically, the Navy would fumigate the boat and we would return to find our little pals lying around like empty peanut hulls. We missed their little gentle footsteps across our faces at night as they searched for an ear or vacant nostril to homestead and bear their young.

Cockroaches multiply at a rate that would eclipse the Chinese. A National Basketball League player would have envied the sex life of the average SUBRON SIX seagoing roach. We did.

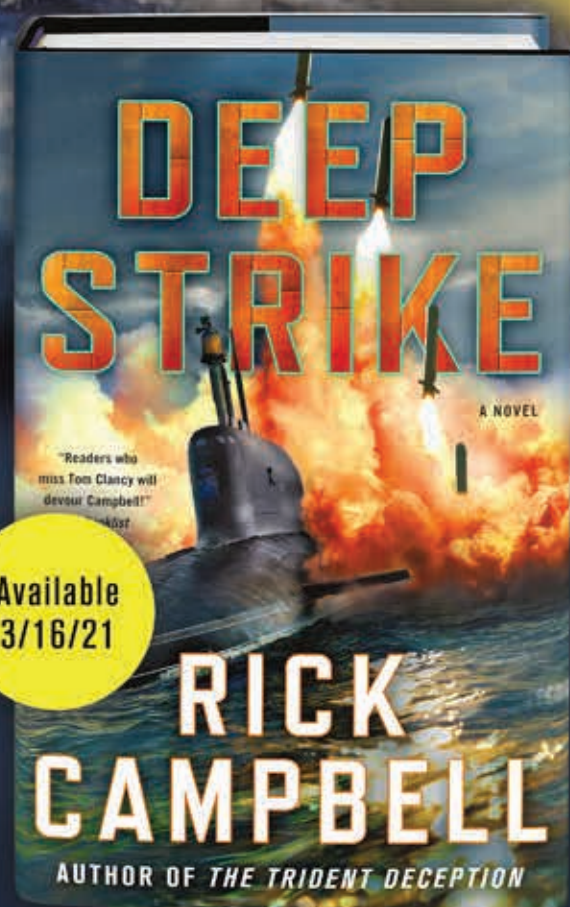
Their favorite hangout was the bread locker. We used to say, "If you don't like raisin bread, shake your slice and all

(concluded on page 25)

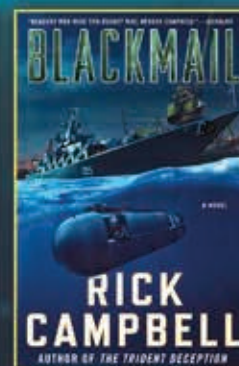
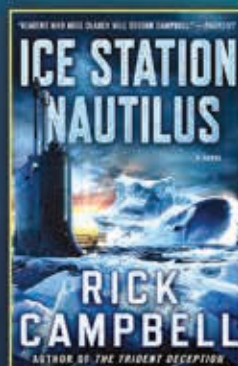
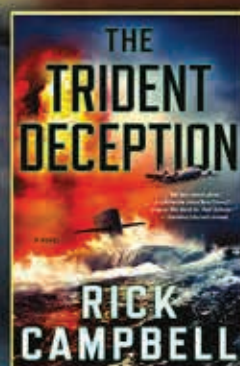
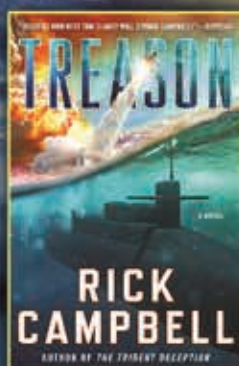
"Readers who miss Tom Clancy will devour Campbell." —*Booklist*
WHO WILL STRIKE FIRST IN A RACE TO STOP A ROGUE RUSSIAN
SUBMARINE FUNDED BY ISIS FROM HITTING AMERICAN SOIL?

DEEP STRIKE

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"Fans of submarine thrillers will welcome Campbell." —*Publishers Weekly*

DEEP STRIKE — RELEASES MARCH 16, 2021 TO BOOKSTORES EVERYWHERE
(PRE-ORDER OR PURCHASE WHERE YOU BUY YOUR BOOKS — HARDCOVER, EBOOK, OR AUDIOBOOK)

New Members

We proudly welcome aboard our newest base shipmates:

Dr. Darin Steven Detwiler
(E5-MM2SS; served 1986-1994)
Wife: Gennette Zimmer
40 Cedar Walk, Unit 2414
Long Beach, CA 90802-7927
cell: 425-232-5743
ddetwiler680@gmail.com
Qualified in 1989 on the
USS *William H. Bates* (SSN-680)

Robert "Bob" John Frazier
EMC-SS E-7 CPO; served '78-'94)
4278 Hill Avenue
Fullerton, CA 92833-3430
cell: 714-931-8654
Uboatman@gmail.com
Qualified in 1981 on the
USS *Tautog* (SSN-639)—'80-'85
USS *Rich. B. Russell* (SSN-687) '89-'92

Robert "Mike" Cailor (returning)
(EM1-SS E6; served '64-'71)
Wife: Rebecca
2514 Elm St., Seffner, FL 33584-5812
cell: 813-585-7615
rmcgfish@gmail.com
Qualified in 1968 on the
USS *Guardfish* (SSN-612)

Edward "Ed" Elliot Kushins
(LT-03SS; served '68-'79)
Wife: Mary Hamilton
45 16th Street
Hermosa Beach, CA 90254-3402
phone: 310-345-3562
edkushins@gmail.com
Qualified on the USS *Flasher*
(SSN-613)—'69-'71, LTJG.

Ramon O. Aguilar (returning)
(E5-ET Radio Div.; 1996-2001)
22736 Jody Lane
Carson, CA 90745-3603
cell: 562-303-0866
octiviano89@gmail.com
Qualified in 1998 on the USS
City of Corpus Christi (SSN-705)

Gary Lee Wing
(E6-STSS1SS Sonar; 1985-1994;
Air Force Reserve thru 2012)
Fiancé: Megan
612 Cooper Drive
Placentia, CA 92870-2001
cell: 707-373-8277
beniciahawk@gmail.com
Qualified in 1988 on the USS
Richard B. Russell (SSN-687)



"Get'cher Chapter News Here —Read All About It!" —

When News Breaks, We Pick Up the Pieces...

Now Hear This:

- **L.A.-Pasadena June meeting to be held as a Zoom conference. (Dave Vanderveen can also provide phone participation info. via e-mail for those wishing to again participate by teleconference call only.)**
- **To access Zoom, type "Zoom.US" (without the quotation marks) into your internet browser, then select "signup for free." Set up your user I.D. and passcode, then on meeting day prior to 11:00 a.m., just follow the steps to sign in. Or: *just click on Dave's e-mailed link to the meeting.***

Custom-Made Deluxe Rare Wood Ballpoint Pens from Dennis Bott

Everyone's favorite craftsman—our woodwork-
ing shipmate, Dennis Bott—hereby announces his
latest project: a selection of custom-made deluxe
submarine-themed twist-type ballpoint pens, now
for sale as a base fundraiser. They are made of
exotic hardwoods and feature Dolphin pocket clips
in silver or gold. Cost is \$35 each (half goes to the
base, the other half covers Dennis for his materi-
als). They are available to order now. Please contact
Dennis directly at 562-355-0230 with your interest
and to arrange payment and shipping or pickup.

- 6) Bahia Rosewood (Patagonia)
- 5) Olivewood (Jerusalem)
- 4) Lacewood/Leopardwood (Aust.)
- 3) Brazilian Rosewood
- 2) Rosewood (Indonesia) 1) Ebony (Gabon)



Fundraiser for the Base



John P. Holland

L.A.-Pasadena Base 50-Year Holland Club

(75-year members noted with *)

Larry D. Long	2021
G. Judson "Jud" Scott, Jr....	2021
Edward E. Kushins	2020
Bruce Evan Neighbors	2020
David H. Vanderveen	2019
Philip J. Jaskoviak.....	2019
Dennis Bott	2018
James A. Burnett.....	2018
Robert "Mike" Cailor	2018
Robert Miller	2018
John A. Anderson.....	2017
Roger C. Dunham, MD....	2017
Richard McPherson	2017
Harry "Bill" Moak	2017
Louis A. Myerson	2017
Elliot Rada	2017
Ronald G. Wagner	2017
Dennis J. Walsh.....	2017
Michael Kish.....	2016
Gary Wheaton	2016
Lawrence R. Butler	2015
Samuel T. Higa	2015
Harry P. Ross	2015
Stephen C. Rowe	2015
Charles H. Senior	2015
Larry E. Smith	2015
Sam Aboulafia	2014
David Palagyi.....	2014
Dennis Neal Parr	2014
Earl Thomas Peratt, Jr.....	2014
David D. Semrau, DDS	2014
Ray Tracy Teare.....	2014

(continued next page)



Los Angeles-Pasadena Base

2021 Calendar of Upcoming Events

January 16:	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference
February 20:	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference
March 20	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference
April 17	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference
May 15	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference Nominating Committee Appointed Call for participants in the Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade (?) TBD
May 31	Private Memorial Day Service - 0930 (L.A.-Pasadena Base Subvets Only - Public Service Disallowed by Weapons Station) Submarine Memorial, West
June 19	Monthly Meeting as Zoom Conference Call for nominations for 2020 Base Officers
July 4	113th Annual... Huntington Beach 4th of July Parade
July 17	LeRoy Stone Memorial Picnic Bunker 33, Seal Beach Weapons Station (??)
August 21	Monthly Meeting - "Hawaii" Theme 2020 Base Officer Candidates Announced
September 18	ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING Election of Officers
October 16	Monthly Meeting Annual Officer Installation Luncheon
November 20	Monthly Meeting - Thanksgiving Theme
December 18	Annual Christmas Luncheon at the Los Alamitos Golf Course



Milton Harry Boudov	2013
Kenneth Jon Dorn.....	2013
M. Mark Hoffer	2013
Michael P. Klein.....	2013
Ronald L. Levenson.....	2013
Edward L. Arnold	2012
T. Michael Bircumshaw....	2012
Raymond Cheesebrough .	2012
Bobby O. Mahaffey.....	2012
John V. Mahan.....	2012
Lee Melody	2012
Clyde Matthew Turner.....	2012
George R. Walrath.....	2012
John L. Weisenberger	2012
Edward A. Barwick.....	2011
Joseph W. Koch, Jr.	2011
Stephen D. Diumentti	2009
David Whittlesey.....	2009
Dennis A. Yure.....	2009
Armen Bagdasarian.....	2008
Bernard M. Kauderer	2008
Paul A. Riggs.....	2008
Rex L. Shields.....	2008
John L. Von Ulmen	2008
Francis R. Traser.....	2006
Melquiades Mares, Jr.....	2005
Ronald K. Thompson.....	2004
Michael Varalyai.....	2004
Hughie T. Blackwell.....	2003
Robert L. Conboy.....	2003
James Rogers	2003
John E. Savela, Jr.....	2003
Ben Van Devender.....	2002
Berry S. Yolken	2002
James E. Carter	1999
William F. Long	1999
Herbert J. "Bo" Bolton	1998
Kenneth E. Chunn.....	1998
*Clifford Bernard Murr ...	1996
*Royal Harrison, Jr.....	1995
*Sterling F. Higgins	1995
*Robert Clair Koplin.....	1995
*Mark Maynard.....	1994
*William J. Dillon.....	1993
*Harold Staggs.....	1992

E-Board Zoom Conference Minutes of May 15, 2021

The Los Angeles-Pasadena Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc., E-Board Zoom Conference was conducted on the morning of Saturday, May 15, 2021.

In attendance:

- Dave Vanderveen, Base Commander (In and Out)
- Ed Barwick, Vice Commander (Belated Arrival)
- Bill Moak, Secretary
- Mike Swanson, Treasurer
- Herb "Bo" Bolton, Committee Chair
- Sam Higa, Committee Chair
- Chuck Senior, Committee Chair
- Paul Riggs, Memorial Director (Belated Arrival)
- Jeff Porteous, *Periscope* Editor
- Gary Wing

Taking over for Base Commander Dave Vanderveen, who was experiencing intermittent computer connection difficulties, Base Secretary Bill Moak called the Zoom Conference to order at 1007 hours, and the April meeting Minutes were approved via motion from Mike, seconded by Sam, and approved by voice vote.

Treasurer's Financial Report: Mike Swanson

The Treasurer's Report as of May 14, 2021 was read into the Minutes by Base Treasurer Mike Swanson:

Checking	\$8,116.37
Savings	\$14,884.79
Cash On Hand	\$50.00
Uncleared Checks:	\$00.00
Total	\$23,051.16

All vendors have been paid up-to-date.

Income:	\$640.00
Expenses:	\$300.00

Flower/Booster Club Additions:

Ken Dorn	\$100.00
----------	----------

Inkind Donations:

\$00.00

Bill made a motion to accept the Treasurer's Report, seconded by by Dave, and it was accepted as reported.

Memorial Day Plan:

Paul Riggs provided information on our "members only" Memorial Day ceremony to be held at the Memorial site at 10:00. Paul advised everyone to bring their own chairs, since no chairs or other items normally provided by the Weapons Station would be present. There will be a Tolling of the Boats ceremony—to be read by Joe Koch, or by Dave as a backup. Bo will bring the WWII bell for the tolling.

(concluded next page)

UK's Dreadnought-Class Submarine Will Use Flight Control Technology

(Reproduced from Inceptive Mind website, published April 3, 2021.)



Flight control technology set to dive underwater for marine mobility. (Illus: BAE Systems.)

by Amit Malewar

BAE Systems revealed that the first of the Royal Navy's *Dreadnought*-class nuclear missile submarines would be steered by the new control technology used in aircraft. The new approach involves adapting controls that are usually used in fly-by-wire aircraft and applying them in a marine environment.

The complete Active Vehicle Control Management (AVCM) system will monitor all important aspects of the submarines' manoeuvring capability to the highest levels of safety and reliability, similar to existing systems on modern air transport platforms.

At first glance, the Typhoon fighter jet doesn't have much in common with a 17,200-ton nuclear submarine armed with Trident missiles. Obviously, they are designed for different purposes and operate in vastly different

(continued on next page)

E-Board Meeting Minutes...

(concluded from previous page)

Membership Update:

Bill apologized for not having information concerning membership, other than announcing two new members, Robert Frazier and Darin Detwiler.

Independence Day Parade Plan:

While Bo was in attendance, his audio did not work. The most recent related info. was that Bo was awaiting receipt of the application for the parade. It is hoped that our base, and those from *Bonefish* Base, will be able to participate in the parade.

Eagle Scouts Program:

Ed Barwick has volunteered to perform as Eagle Scout Director. He is in touch with a counterpart in the Scouts, and will be attending an Honors Ceremony on Monday, 5/17, at 1900 hrs. in South Pasadena.

Last Opportunity to Nominate for USSVI Awards:

Bill indicated he had previously made a suggestion to recognize a member, and will coordinate with Dave whatever action is necessary to make a nomination before the deadline.

For the Good of the Order:

Mike wished to report to Dave that the caterer at the Navy golf course informed him that they will be able to accept a contract for our Christmas Luncheon this year.

The question again arose as to a possible date to begin face-to-face meetings again. Suggestions to consider an alternate site, such as restaurants or churches, were explored. Paul indicated he felt that Greg Smith, PAO for the Weapons Station, could possibly lift Navy restrictions by or on May 31—meaning our June meeting *might* be in person on the base. Stay tuned.

With no further items, Ed made a motion to adjourn, seconded by Mike, and approved by all. Adjournment took place at 1038 hours.

Respectfully submitted,

Bill Moak

Secretary, L.A.-Pasadena Base, USSVI

UK Boat “Takes Flight”

(continued from previous page)

environments. However, aircraft and submarines are very similar in one important aspect. Both, in a sense, fly—one operates in the air and the other underwater, but the way air and water flow over a vehicle are very similar in a surprising number of ways. In fact, many submarine hull designs are based on the aerodynamic principle of the airship, and the way the submarine control system works is quite similar to that of an aircraft.

Therefore, similar to how fly-by-wire works for aircraft, the company’s engineers are developing electronics that control the heading, pitch, depth, and buoyancy of the *Dreadnought* class, among other critical elements with added safety benefits.

“With over fifty years of avionics experience, we already have a great understanding of how to develop complex control systems for hi-tech platforms. However, taking our technology underwater brings exciting new challenges, and we are proud to support the *Dreadnought* program and play an important part in our national security effort,” said Jon Tucker, Director for Maritime Controls at BAE Systems Controls and Avionics.

Based on the *Astute* submarine, four *Dreadnought*-class

(continued on next page)



Note that the following e-bulletins from Regional and National appear in these pages in the order received. The most recent information therefore appears toward the back.—ed.

FOX Traffic:

Bulletins from USSVI—Regional and National

Shipmates and Ladies,

Forwarding USSVI correspondence to L.A.-Pasadena Base members.

Dave

From: “USSVI POC: William C. Andrea” <NJVC@ussvi.org>

Date: May 6, 2021

Subject: USSVCF Scholarship information

Submitted by: Robert E. Frick, Nat. Scholarship Committee Chairman

Shipmates, Scholarship Applicants:

A message from Robert Frick, our Scholarship Fund Manager:

The Scholarship application window closes on May 19th.

As of today, we have only 25 applicants who have completed their applications. Normally we would see about 75 applicants at this point. We normally award about 50 scholarships. It would be sad if we cannot even get that many applicants.

Many students have started but have not completed their applications. I have reached out to nearly every applicant reminding them to finish their application.

This link is important: <https://bit.ly/3vQw7W8>

Time is running out and we are encouraging everyone to complete their applications. Go to the link shown above to complete or begin your application process.

Do not delay. Any questions or concerns, please contact me ASAP. Time is rapidly running out.

Thank you.

Robert Frick

National Scholarship Committee Chairman

refrick1@gmail.com

703-754-4959

Oops. Guess this came in a little late to be helpful. Since we publish monthly, only notices coming in mentioning deadlines at least a month in advance are useful. Hope everyone is already receiving stuff like this from Regional and National through their regular email.—ed.

Shipmates and Ladies,

Forwarding USSVI correspondence to L.A.-Pasadena Base members.

Dave

(continued on next page)

UK Boat “Takes Flight”

(continued from previous page)

submarines will replace the aging British *Vanguard*-class Trident submarines after 2030. Each of them will be powered by the Rolls-Royce PWR3 nuclear reactor and armed with a set of 12 U.S.-built Trident D5 missiles.



PRIDE RUNS DEEP

**Ad Still Here by
Popular Demand!**



Just the Place for Killer MidRats!

Hey, know anyone on boats out of New London? Or, planning a visit to Groton yourself? Drop anchor at this local dive: **Wings'n'Pies** at 924 Route 12, just down the road from the Base's Main Gate. Your editor enjoys firsthand knowledge that the pizzas here are some of the tastiest and sloppiest around. Forget those extra napkins—just wipe your greasy fingers on your shirt and they'll think you've been hanging out with the A-Gang!

USSVI Regional and National News Bulletins...

(continued from previous page)

From: "USSVI POC: William C. Andrea" <NJVC@ussvi.org>
Date: May 10, 2021
Subject: Convention Reminder / Information
Submitted by: David Self, Editor, 2021 USSVI Convention Magazine

This is a reminder that the 2021 USSVI National Convention is again being held at the Rosen Shingle Creek in Orlando, FL from August 30, 2021 to September 4, 2021.

We sincerely hope you will plan to attend. Rosen Shingle Creek is a beautiful four-star hotel with every imaginary amenity.

To ensure the best possible experience for our subvet members and their families, we are soliciting sponsor donations from a variety of local and national businesses, organizations and individuals.

The purpose of this letter is to give all USSVI bases, shipmates and businesses the opportunity to conveniently contribute to the convention and to give all USSVI bases the opportunity to advertise in the 2021 Convention Magazine.

The deadline for placing your ad or sending a sponsorship has been extended to July 15, 2021. Please consider placing an ad for your business or organization.

If you have already submitted an ad or sponsorship, thank you for your support of US veterans and especially the Submarine Force.

Ad and sponsorship forms may be accessed by clicking on this link—ussvi.org/2021—or by going to the USSVI website and clicking on the green “Conventions” button. Then click on the “Visit website” link. The forms are located under the “Vendor Information” tab.

Thank you in advance for supporting your 2021 National Convention!

Fraternally,
David Self
Editor - 2021 USSVI Convention Magazine
david@ssn688.com
(513) 519-3314

*Shipmates and Ladies,
Forwarding USSVI correspondence to L.A.-Pasadena Base members.
Dave*

From: "USSVI POC: William C. Andrea" <NJVC@ussvi.org>
Date: May 17, 2021
Subject: Welcome “Heart of Texas” Base
Submitted by: Harold W (Bill) Scott, National Awards Chair

Shipmates,

During the Central Texas Base-hosted “Lonestar SubVet Round Up” held the weekend of May 14-16, 2021, at Navarro Lake near Corsicana, TX, the Central District Four Commander, Harold W (Bill) Scott II presented the USSVI Charter dated 6 May 2021 for the

(continued on next page)

USSVI Regional and National News Bulletins...

(continued from previous page)

new Base formed in the District, the Heart of Texas Base, located in Waco, Texas. The National Commander, Wayne Standerfer, Central Region Director, Tom Williams and the Central Texas Base Commander, Rick Mitchell were in attendance. Please welcome Ken S Walker, TM3(SS), Base Commander, and his thirteen shipmates to the fold.

Honored to Serve,
Harold W (Bill) Scott II, STSCS(SS) USN RET.
USSVI National Awards Chair
Central District 4 Commander
Chief of the Boat, USSVI Central Texas Base
CTB Newsletter Editor, 512-826-8876

Shipmates,

Ron Wagner sent this pair of links along. It's good to give a look and listen—even for those of us who basked in nuclear luxury!

Dave

From: Ron Wagner <res0gd4t@verizon.net>
Date: Sat., May 15, 2021
Subject: *Razorback* Engine Start
To: lapasadenabase@gmail.com <lapasadenabase@gmail.com>

Hi, Dave,

These are the two video links of the *Razorback* #1 firing up. There may be some of the crew who would like to see that again.

<https://www.facebook.com/AIMMuseum/videos/10151542815824626/>

<https://www.facebook.com/ussrazorbacksubmarine/videos/1344788578942636/>

Ron

A little something Dave forwarded for me to include here.—ed.

From: Ed Barwick <edsubvet@gmail.com>
Date: Tuesday, May 18, 2021
Subject: Eagle Scout Court of Honor
To: Michael Williamson <williess582@gmail.com>

Hi Willie,

Last night I attended the “Eagle Scout Court of Honor” for Michael Johnston. The event was held at the Holy Family Church in So. Pasadena. I have attended these events before and it is always rewarding to see how excellent these young men are. When we have the honor of meeting these young men, you realize there is hope for the future of our country.

My wife and I left talking about how outstanding this entire event was and how excellent Michael is. I know that Dave, having made Eagle many years ago, knows that it requires a minimum of 21 merit badges for Eagle; this young man has 51 merit badges plus two Bronze Palms, two Silver Palms and two Gold Palms. According to the Scoutmaster, Michael is the most awarded scout of all his 46 Eagle Scouts during the past eighteen years as Scoutmaster.



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USSVI Regional and National News Bulletins...

(concluded from previous page)

I did present him with the USSVI Award Certificate, along with a copy of Rear Admiral Eugene B. Fluckey's Bio and a WWII National Submarine Memorial – West patch.

After the ceremony he did find me and thanked me again for coming.

*Shipmates and Ladies,
Forwarding USSVI correspondence to L.A.-Pasadena Base members.
Dave*

From: "USSVI POC: William C. Andrea" <NJVC@ussvi.org>
Date: May 19, 2021
Subject: 2021 USSVI Convention
Submitted by: Jay Mack, 2021 Convention Chair

IMPORTANT!

Shipmates:

On Wednesday, May 19, at 1200 hours, the USSVI National Board of Director's held an Emergency Board Meeting to discuss the status of the 2021 USSVI National Convention. Following a presentation by Convention Chairman Jay Mack, and a discussion, a vote was taken by the Board. The decision of the board was to hold the convention as planned. The 2021 USSVI National Convention is a GO! If you are planning to attend, and have not sent your registration form, please do so now. All Regional Directors and District Commanders are encouraged to promote the convention to their constituents.

Jay Mack
2021 USSVI Convention Chairman
Jay Mack
jmack349@gmail.com



Yes, just needed to fill some space here, so you guys get a shot of your editor enjoying a peek through the 'scope of the USS Batfish (SS-310) way back in 2008. (Um, yeah, I think I've used this for filler before—sorry! —ed.)

Grayback Was a Cold War Sub Like No Other

(continued from page 1)



An SSM-N-9 Regulus II missile is maneuvered aboard the Grayback. (U.S. Navy photo.)

The second submarine to carry the name, the USS *Grayback* was launched on July 2, 1957, and commissioned on March 7, 1958, as SSG-574. Ultimately, the submarine was one of five equipped to launch the Regulus I that were in service by 1960. To launch the airplane-sized missile, the submarine first had to surface, before the rear of the hangar was opened, and the Regulus I disgorged onto a trainable ramp that was recessed into the top of the hull, forward of the sail. The ramp was then turned sideways, and the missile blasted off under the power of a pair of solid-fuel rockets before the Allison J33 turbojet kicked in. The missile had a range of around 575 miles.



The USS *Grayback* is waterborne after being launched at Mare Island Naval Shipyard on July 2, 1957. (U.S. Navy photo.)

The USS *Grayback* made history as the first submarine to carry Vought's next-generation SSM-N-9 Regulus II and undertook trials with this Mach-2-capable weapon off the U.S. West Coast.

Two of these weapons could be carried, compared to four of the previous Regulus Is and the first successful launch of the missile took place on September 16, 1958, while the *Grayback* was operating out of Naval Base Ventura County, California. However, the Regulus II was canceled later the same year, by which point the concept of the submarine-launched cruise missile had been overtaken by the development of the Polaris submarine-launched ballistic missile, which promised much greater range, speed, and reliability.

On February 9, 1959, the USS *Grayback* departed Mare Island for Pearl Harbor in Hawaii, arriving at what would become its permanent home base on March 7.

Between September and November of 1959, the submarine completed the first of nine deterrent missions, patrolling the Pacific with an armament of Regulus I missiles. In the course of these patrols, the *Grayback* spent more than 20 months at sea and logged well over 130,000 miles.



Another view of a Regulus II on USS *Grayback* emphasizes the scale of these early strategic missiles. (U.S. Navy photo.)

The USS *Grayback* served in its strategic missile role until it was decommissioned on May 25, 1964, as the cruise-missile submarines divested their deterrence duties to the new Polaris boats.

A new lease of life then began when the USS *Grayback* was converted as a submarine transport, initially under the pennant number APSS-574. The ability of submarines to transport personnel and materiel, as well as launch raiding parties ashore, while using its inherent capabilities to help avoid detection, was

(continued on page 22)

Grayback Was a Cold War Sub Like No Other

(continued from page 21)



A poor-quality but rare image of a swimmer delivery vehicle engaged in daytime launch and recovery operations by the USS Grayback. (National Archives photo.)

well established by the end of World War II, and would continue into the Cold War and beyond.

The conversion work for the new role was authorized in 1967 and was undertaken at the Mare Island Naval Shipyard between November, 1967 and May, 1969. This included removing the Regulus equipment and lengthening the hull from 322 feet 4 inches to 334 feet. Mess and sleeping quarters now provided accommodation for up to 67 troops. The missile hangars were converted to carry six swimmer delivery vehicles (SDVs) and a diver's decompression chamber. The SDVs and scuba-equipped divers could be launched and recovered while the submarine was submerged. The height of the sail was increased by around 10 feet and a Sperry BQG-4 Passive Underwater Fire Control Feasibility System (PUFFS) was fitted.

The role of the “new” USS *Grayback* was to carry commando and other covert forces on special missions against targets which required a stealthy approach from the sea. Members of the U.S. Navy's SEAL teams and Naval Underwater Demolition Teams (UDT) were certainly carried onboard the submarine, as were, in all likelihood, U.S. Army Green Berets. UDTs would be used, for example, to undertake reconnaissance of possible landing zones ahead of an amphibious assault, or to clear the approaches to a beach.

As well as its amphibious role, the USS *Grayback* could also perform similar duties
(continued on page 23)

as an attack submarine, for which it was armed with the thermal-powered Mk 14 anti-ship torpedo of World War II vintage and the electric-powered Mk 37 anti-submarine torpedo. These were operated using the Mk 106 Model 12 torpedo fire-control system.

As of August, 1968, the submarine's designation was changed again, to LPSS, indicating an amphibious transport submarine, and the new-look USS *Grayback* was commissioned for a second time on May 9, 1969. Thereafter, she was operated by the Pacific Fleet and based at Subic Bay in the Philippines.

By the time of the Vietnam War, the Navy was using specially configured submarines to support special operations—the USS *Grayback* and the *Gato*-class USS *Tunny* working along the coast of North Vietnam. They also helped gather intelligence.

The submarine's most dramatic—and secretive—mission took place in June, 1972, during the conflict in Southeast Asia. This was Operation Thunderhead, an attempt to rescue U.S. prisoners of war who were planning to escape from North Vietnam's notorious “Hanoi Hilton” prison. The two POWs, both aviators, planned to steal a boat and make their escape by river to the Gulf of Tonkin, where they would be picked up by elite troops from the U.S. Navy's SEAL Team One, Platoon A, and Underwater Demolition Team 11 (UDT-11). Exactly how communi-



SEALs onboard Grayback ahead of Operation Thunderhead. Lieutenant Melvin Spence Dry is seated at center with papers in his hands. (U.S. Navy photo.)

Grayback Was a Cold War Sub Like No Other

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cations were run between POWs and rescuers while planning this daring mission has not been explained.

The USS *Grayback* departed Subic Bay to transport these special forces into the coastal waters off North Vietnam, where plans called for one or more Mk 7 SDVs to be launched under cover of darkness. Piloted by two operators from UDT-11, each SDV would deliver four SEALs from Platoon A to an island at the mouth of the Red River, which flowed into the Gulf of Tonkin. The *Grayback* was on station around 4,000 yards from the mouth of the river and at a depth of around 65 feet.

A first attempt to launch a reconnaissance mission on June 3, 1972, ended in failure after the four-man team became lost, struggling with navigation errors and tidal currents which were much stronger than expected. Unable to relocate the USS *Grayback*, the team had to abandon their SDV after the vehicles' batteries ran out. After eight hours they were rescued by a helicopter around 10 miles south of the submarine's position and were then flown to the nuclear-powered guided-missile cruiser USS *Long Beach*, which was stationed approximately 15 miles offshore, serving as the command ship for the mission.

Two days later, the team was to be returned to the submarine by helicopter, with the aim of dropping them into the water along-



Divers from *Grayback* ready an SDV for launch operations at a depth of 35 feet. The vehicle was manned by personnel from Underwater Demolition Team 12. (National Archives photo.)

side the USS *Grayback* at night. Again, however, the submarine proved hard to find. Once it seemed the infrared locator beacon had been found, the operators jumped from the helicopter, but the chopper was flying too high and too fast for a safe jump and was downwind, meaning the jumpers hit the water with even much greater velocity. Lieutenant Melvin "Spence" Dry was killed immediately, and one other member of the team was seriously injured.

Meanwhile, the USS *Grayback* had launched another SDV, but this mission was abandoned too after its crew ran out of air.

The second team came to the surface and it was their locator beacon that the first team had inadvertently found. The two teams rendezvoused before both were picked up by helicopter and returned to the USS *Long Beach*. After the United States began sowing mines in North Vietnamese ports and rivers, the chances of mission success were further reduced, and it was decided to abandon the POW escape effort altogether.

Operation Thunderhead remained classified for many years and it was not until 2008 that Lieutenant Dry's death was finally acknowledged as a combat loss, and he was posthumously awarded the Bronze Star for Valor.



USS *Grayback* underway in the South China Sea in 1982. (National Archives photo.)

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Grayback Was a Cold War Sub Like No Other

(concluded from page 23)

In 1975 the USS *Grayback* was reclassified yet again, this time as an attack submarine, or SS, for administrative reasons, to ensure continued funding from the U.S. Congress for what was now a true niche capability.

Exactly what, if any, covert missions the USS *Grayback* was involved in during the years that followed is not known, but the Navy undoubtedly appreciated the submarine's utility and it remained in service until decommissioned for a second and final time at Subic Bay on June 16, 1984.

Befitting a boat with a less-than-conventional history, the USS *Grayback* received a bright orange paint scheme to increase its conspicuity before it was sunk as a target near Subic Bay on April 13, 1986. It brought to an end the story of a unique submarine—a guided-missile pioneer and a covert amphibious transport with a harrowing Vietnam combat record.

Today, the legacy of the little-known amphibious transport submarines is kept alive by the Navy's four *Ohio*-class nuclear-powered guided-missile submarines. They traded-in their strategic nuclear missile armament and now carry diverse cargoes ranging from Tomahawk cruise missiles to Navy SEALs. In this way, they continue the tradition of the USS *Grayback*, with capabilities befitting the demands of 21st-century warfare.

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High-angle stern view of the USS Grayback underway. You can see two of the “sharkfin” sonar domes associated with the PUFFS system on the hull. (National Archives photo.)



Powhatan class fleet ocean tug USNS Catawba (ATF-168) towing the former Grayback out of Subic Bay in August, 1986. (U.S. Navy photo.)

Armstrong - There Was a Time, Long Ago...

(concluded from page 11)

the raisins will get up and run away.”

As a courtesy, we would knock on the bread locker before we opened it so they could hide. Rumor had it that sudden bright light hurt their little eyes.

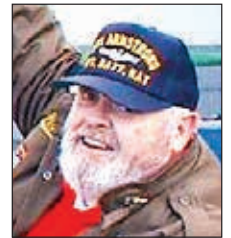
The Navy gave us spray cans of stuff that was supposed to send them to cockroach heaven in large numbers. We read the contents and decided the last thing a diesel boat needed was to add all that weird crap to air that already had enough strange sh*t running around in it. We had no desire to father three-headed kids or watch our toes turn green and fall off. We deep-sixed the stuff and continued to feed the roaches. Besides, we had gotten used to roach exploration expeditions, discovering new worlds in our ears.

There was another delicacy known to all boat sailors that went by the most indelicate names... “Horsecock”... “Donkey Dick”...or Italian hard salami. It had a butcher twine loop at one end that allowed you to thread the loop over an operating vent handle. They would swing back and forth in a rolling sea.

Horsecock and mayonnaise sandwiches was a mid-rat staple ...and a fond memory. Wish I had a nickel for every night I stood there dripping wet, sharing a cup of hot coffee, wrapping myself around a two-layer donkey dick sandwich and enjoying life with some of the finest people I’ve ever known.

At battle stations when they set Condition Baker, they would call you on the XJA and tell you to open the access plates behind the bulkhead flappers so the cooks could pass donkey dick sandwiches and coffee thermoses in to the hungry apes in the forward room.

You had to be one of us to understand. Life on those boats did something to you. It made you appreciate the little things in life. Stuff most people took for granted. It established the common denominator which allows me to know that in writing about our life, there are men out there who will understand, appreciate and remember. I have carried these wonderful memories for years with no one to share them with. I hope I’m not boring anyone’s socks off.



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USS <i>Hyman G. Rickover</i> (SSN-795)	

Questions?

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USS Connecticut (SSN-22)

The Seawolf-class attack submarine returns to port at Naval Base Kitsap-Bremerton after participating in Ice Exercise (ICEX) in the Arctic Circle on April 27, 2011. (U.S. Navy photo.)



*In memory
of the
fifty-two
submarines
lost in
World War II*



SEALION

S-36

S-26

SHARK I

PERCH

S-27

GRUNION

S-39

ARGONAUT

AMBERJACK

GRAMPUS

TRITON

PICKEREL

GRENADIER

RUNNER

R-12

GRAYLING

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S-44

DORADO

WAHOO

CORVINA

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HERRING

GOLET

S-28

ROBALO

FLIER

HARDER

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