



August 2007
Volume 13 - Issue 8

**What's "Below Decks"
in the Midwatch**



<http://perch-base.org>

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Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol

AUGUST ETERNAL PATROLS

USS Bullhead	SS332	Aug. 6, 1945	84 men
USS Flier	SS250	Aug. 13, 1944	78 men
USS Grunion	SS216	Aug. 16, 1942	70 men
USS S-39	SS144	Aug. 16, 1942	none lost
USS Harder	SS257	Aug. 24, 1944	79 men
USS Cochino	SS345	Aug. 26, 1949	(see note)
USS Pompano	SS181	Aug. 29, 1943	76 men

NOTE: Although Cochino lost no men in its sinking, 7 men from the USS Tusk were lost in the rescue of Cochino's crew.

The Perch Base USSVI is not able to totally support itself financially on the dues collected from its members. There has, to date, been no successful and ongoing plan since the base was formed to produce a sufficient source of income to meet all of the Base's needs. Therefore, the Base has relied on additional donations from members. These supplemental donors are called the "Booster Club."



2007 Booster Club

David Anderson, Kenneth Anderson, Ted Asbell, Reynaldo Atos, Gary Bartlett, Kenneth Becker, Ronald Beyer, Bradley Butler, John Cash, Charles Chapman, Roger Cousin, George Crider, Jim Denzien, Harry Ellis, Joe Errante, Ray Lee Graybeal, Charles Greene, Billy Grieves, William Grissom, Robert Hanson, Ed Hawkins, Harry Heller, Glenn Herold, Lester Hillman, Gerald Holloway, Stephen Hough, Davy Jones, Mike Keating, Jack Kimball, Ron Kloch, Darrell Lambert, Robert Lancendorfer, Doug LaRock, Burtis Loftin, George Marions, Terry Martin, Bob May, Jack McCarthy, William McNay, Alan Miller, Paul Miller, Roger M. Miller, Roger R. Miller, Joseph Mullins, Jim Nelson, James F. Newman, Joseph Otreba, Nicholas Pappas, Wayne Pettes, Scott Prothero, Larry Rankin, Robie Robinson, Stanley Rud, Frank Rumbaugh, Mel Rycus, Raymond Schaeffer, Emil Schoonejans, Garry Shumann, Rick Simmons, Wayne Kirk Smith, Adrian Stuke, Jim Thomson, William Tippett, Phillip Wagner, Jim Wall, Forrest Watson, Jerry Yowell, John Zaichkin, Ronald Zomok, Al Landeck, David C. Jones, Walter Blomgren, Royce Pettit, James W. Newman, Ed Wolf, Tim Moore, George Long, Joe Bernard, Ray Samson, Tom Fooshee, Jim Edwards, Bob Nance, Milton Magart, John Welsh, George Woods, Donald Whitehead, Jerry Allston, Jack Messersmith, Dave Harnish, Chuck Emmett, Raymond Marshall, Robert Sungy, Ben Acosta, Ken Schonauer, David Carpenter, Denny Kerton, Thomas Moore, Stan Reinhold, Craig Olson



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Sailing Orders



Next Meeting!!

Aug. 11, 2007,

JOINT MEETING!!

11:00 a.m.

Moose Lodge #319

Prescott Valley, Arizona

6501 East 6th Street,

Prescott Valley, AZ.

(see maps next page)

September Meeting

Sept. 15, 2007

A.T.C.A. (Airline Training Center of Arizona)

LUFTHANSA FLIGHT TRAINING

1658 South Litchfield Road, Building # 104,

Goodyear, AZ 85338-1509

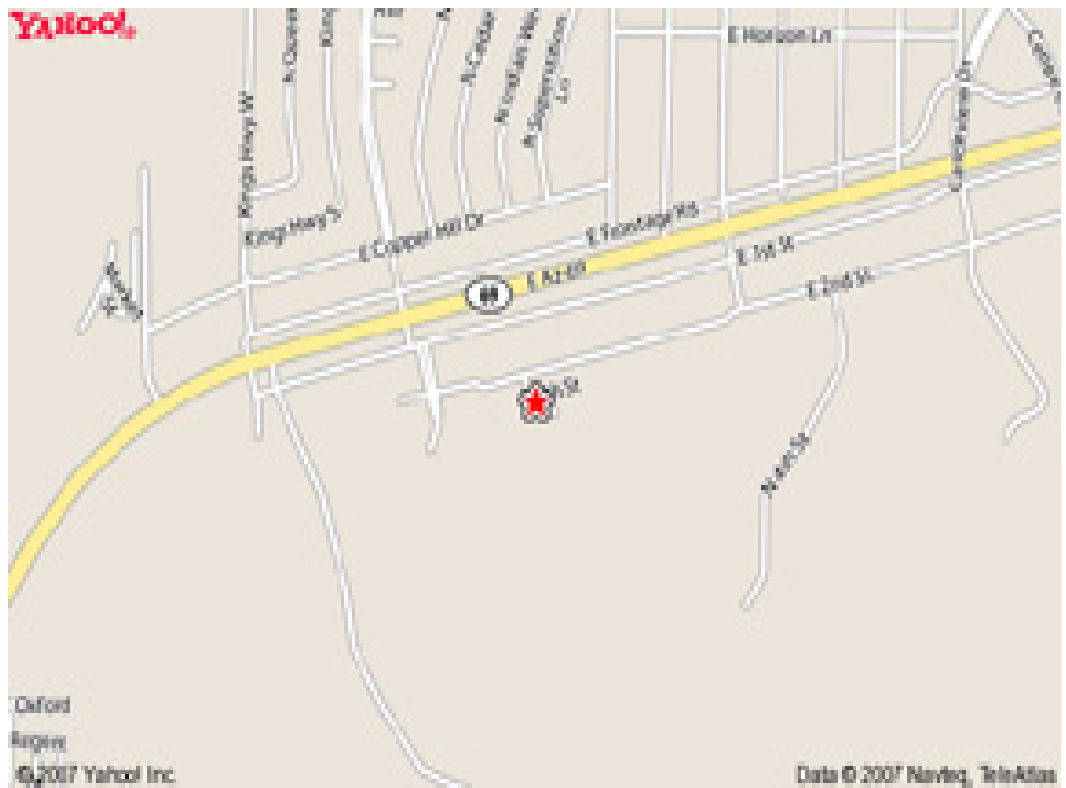
(623) 932-2140 [direct line]

(623) 932-1600 [receptionist]



This map will get you in the ball park.

**Then, use the map below to find the Moose Lodge,
6501 East 6th Street,
Prescott Valley, AZ.**



IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENTS!

*** MIDWATCH NEWSLETTER ***

Article Submission Deadlines

The deadlines for the next three Midwatch newsletters are as follows:

<u>Publication</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
Sept. 2007	Friday, Aug. 30th
Oct. 2007	Friday, Oct. 5th
Nov. 2007	Friday, Nov. 2nd

Please submit your articles by **the evening of the deadline dates** indicated to make sure your articles are included and to assure the timely publication and distribution of the Midwatch. Thank you.

Fraternally,

Chuck Emmett, Editor "MidWatch", Perch Base USSVI

See What You Missed !!



Our Base Commander's superb staff at the Airline Training Center of Arizona baked this cake to cap off the meal at our last meeting and lunch.

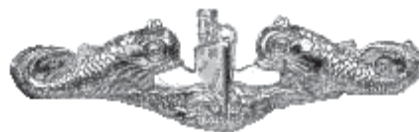
Perch Base has found a good home with the best food you can ask for!

A tremendous lunch for just \$5.

Beer for only \$2.

All of this and good submarine fellowship!

Plan on being in Prescott next month and back at the ATCA for September's meeting.



What Are We Fighting For?™

-by Bob Anderson, CMSgt, USAFR (Ret)

The History of the Challenge Coin

Several years ago I witnessed the resurgence of an old military tradition called challenge coin. I first became familiar with the tradition about 10 years ago while serving in the Air Force reserves. Many units perpetuate this tradition but admittedly I did not see it during my active duty time with the Air Force. I'm not going to say they weren't around, I just didn't experience them.

In the year 2000, I became the Command Chief Master Sergeant for the 147th Fighter Wing, Ellington Field, Texas Air National Guard. I had the opportunity to design my own coin. Coins are usually given out as recognition for service, outstanding contributions to the mission and serve as an immediate reward for service. In my own research I learned the history of the challenge coin and

frankly was surprised when I found out that the tradition started during World War One. I get a lot of questions about the history of the challenge coin, so I thought I would share it with you. This is taken from the Marine Corps News site:



History of the Challenge Coin

During World War I, American volunteers from all parts of the country filled the newly formed flying squadrons in Europe. Some were wealthy scions attending colleges such as Yale and Harvard who quit in mid-term to join the war. In one squadron, a wealthy lieutenant ordered medallions struck in solid bronze and presented them to his unit. One young pilot placed the medallion in a small leather pouch that he wore about his neck.



Shortly after acquiring the medallions, the pilot's aircraft was severely damaged by ground fire. He was forced to land behind enemy lines and was immediately captured by a German patrol. In order to discourage his escape, the Germans took all of his personal identification except for the small leather pouch around his neck. In the meantime, he was taken to a small French town near the front. Taking advantage of a bombardment that night, he escaped. However, he was without personal identification.

He succeeded in avoiding German patrols by donning civilian attire and reached the front lines. With great difficulty, he crossed no-man's land. Eventually, he stumbled onto a French outpost. Unfortunately, saboteurs had plagued the French in the sector. They sometimes masqueraded as civilians and wore civilian clothes. Not recognizing the young pilot's American accent, the French thought him to be a saboteur and made ready to execute him. He had no identification to prove his allegiance, but he did have his leather pouch containing the medallion. He showed the medallion to his would-be executioners and one of his French captors recognized the squadron

insignia on the medallion. They delayed his execution long enough for him to confirm his identity. Instead of shooting him they gave him a bottle of wine.

Back at his squadron, it became tradition to ensure that all members carried their medallion or coin at all times. This was accomplished through challenge in the following manner - a challenger would ask to see the medallion. If the challenged could not produce a medallion, they were required to buy a drink of choice for the member who challenged them. If the challenged member produced a medallion, then the challenging member was required to pay for the drink. This tradition continued on throughout the war and for many years after the war while surviving members of the squadron were still alive.

We proudly continue this tradition today with the challenge coin.

“Coin Check” Rules

1. A “Coin Check” consists of a challenge and response. A challenge is initiated by either holding your coin in the air or slamming it on a table or floor and yelling “Coin Check!”

2. Individual(s) challenged must respond by showing their Coin with their own unit's logo to the challenger within 10 seconds.
3. Anyone challenged who doesn't show their Coin must buy a round of drinks for all challenged, including the challenger.
4. Coin Checks are permitted anywhere and anytime.
5. If everyone being challenged produces their Coin, the challenger must buy a round of drinks for all challenged.
6. If you accidentally drop your Coin and it makes an audible sound on impact, then you "accidentally" initiated a Coin Check.
7. There are no exceptions to the rules. They apply to clothed or un-clothed. One step and an arms reach are allowed.
8. A Coin is a Coin. They are not belt buckles, key chains or necklaces. Coins worn in a holder around the neck are valid.

Always carry your coin as a reminder of your commitment and connection to something bigger in your daily life.

Having my coin has given me the opportunity to acknowledge excellence, acknowledge service of Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, Marines and the Coast Guard. It gives me an opportunity to honor those that fought in the great wars that protected our freedom and citizens; and those folks that exemplify service and sacrifice in their day to day activities. It has allowed me to start conversations that I otherwise never would have had and make connections I would have otherwise missed.

What Are We Fighting For?™ One reason is to honor our traditions - they help us remember where we came from. Traditions should be honored and kept strong, particularly those that are fun.

Bob Anderson, PhD, CMSgt, USAF (Ret) is president and founder of What Are We Fighting For?™ an association focused on re-Americanizing America and supporting the troops. For more information visit his Web site at www.WhatAreWeFightingFor.com

Perch Base Challenge Coins



Buy 'em . . .

Trade 'em . . .

Give 'em to friends!

*** Each member gets one coin at \$15.**

*** The price is \$20 for each additional coin or for any non-Base member.**

Going on the Alaska cruise? Buy enough to swap with fellow boat-sailors.

From the Wardroom Base Commander's Message

Dear Friends and Shipmates,

We had an absolutely great turn out for the July meeting with 26 members present. Good to see Howard Doyle back on the mend after back surgery. It was also great to have Jim Edwards back after he had a knee replace.

Jon Marie Becerra, A.T.C.A.'s baker made a fine Apricot Torte with a representation of the Perch Base coin and Perch Base patch on it. It tasted even better than it looked. If it would help we will publish the menu for the up coming meeting so you can get your taste buds ready!!

Jim Denzien gave us a little talk on his cruise on the USS Helena (SSN-725) in San Diego, California.

We have ordered another 50 Perch Base coin from the Northwest Territorial Mint along with coin cases and stands. The current coins are selling fast contact the Storekeeper, Jim Nelson for one today.

Special thanks to the SubVettes for their donation to buy cookies for our shipmate and Base member, Brent Nelson, MM2 (SS), stationed in Iraq. To date we have sent 92 pounds of cookies to Brent and his fellow sailors and soldiers. Jim and Nancy Nelson have another batch of ten tins to ship this week. It just a little bit of home for our boys that is in harms way! Keep you eye open for any round or square tins that are less than four (4) inches tall. We need more tins for shipments of cookies. Please keep Brent Nelson in your thoughts and prayers until he gets home safely.

Next months meeting will be at Gudgeon Base, Prescott on Saturday August 12, 2007. Hope to see a lot of your in the cooler weather of Prescott.

Fraternally,

Stan Reinhold, Commander – Perch Base USSVI

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As reported to the Chaplin, sick bay is nearly empty. If we are missing shipmates in time of need, please! PLEASE! let us know. For all, our prayers go out for smooth seas and an even bubble.

On the Sick List:

- Chuck Emmett has completed cataract surgery and has lost his last excuse for missing typos in the MidWatch.
- Our Chaplain, Howard Doyle, has had great success in his back surgery. Howard is out and about but he does bring new meaning to the term "shellback." And it doesn't have anything to do with latitude and logitude.

July Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans, Perch Base was convened at the Airline Training Center of Arizona (ATCA), Goodyear, AZ at 1302 hours, 21 July 2007. Stan Reinhold, Base Commander, called the meeting to order.

The membership was led in a prayer of invocation by Chaplain Howard Doyle followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and a standard ceremonial opening. A moment of silence was observed for shipmates on eternal patrol and the tolling ceremony for boats lost in July was conducted.

According to the sailing list, there were twenty-four members and guests present. A prospective new member, Dave Fledderjohn, was introduced and he provided some background on himself.

Minutes from the June 2007 regular meeting as published in the Midwatch were approved.

Treasurer Jim Denzien reported the Base's financial status as of the first day of July 2007. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Reports of Officers and Committee Chairmen

Vice Commander – Bob Gilmore had nothing to report.

Chief of the Boat – Jim Edwards had nothing to report.

Chaplain – Howard Doyle reported that he had back surgery on July 6th and was recuperating satisfactorily.

Membership Chairman/Webmaster – Ramon Samson had nothing to report.

Newsletter Editor – Chuck Emmett had nothing to report.

Ship's Storekeeper – Jim Nelson reported that he now has the challenge coins for sale: \$15 for the first coin (for base members) and \$20 for each subsequent coin.

Past Base Commander - Tim Moore reported on the opportunity raffle that is currently underway. The tickets are \$20 each and half of the proceeds go to the base.

The Subvettes were not represented.

Old Business

Jim Denzien reported on the status of the new float. The fuel tank has been moved to Walt Blomgren's home for security reasons. We are still trying to make a presentation to the 702 Society and the next opportunity will be on August 8th. Jim is preparing a presentation on the construction of the Tucson Base float that will be shown to our membership.

The International Submariners Association will be having a convention in the United States in 2009 in San Diego. Applications to join ISA/USA are in the Midwatch.

New Business

There is an election to be conducted for Western District 1 Commander. Since there is only one candidate, Jim Dunn, the vote was conducted by show of hand rather than by ballot. The results were unanimous for Jim Dunn and Base Commander Stan Reinhold will report the results to the Western Region Director.

The base has decided to order 45 of the 2008 USSVI calendars. The National organization needs our input to insure that a sufficient quantity of calendars is produced.

Next month's meeting will be with Gudgeon Base in Prescott Valley at the Moose Lodge on August 11th at 1200. The social hour will begin at 1100.

Good of the Order

The "Fabulous Phoenix" activities were not supported on the 4th of July as intended. The weather was extreme and there were not enough volunteers to adequately staff the event.



Jim Denzien reported on his recent underway on the USS Helena (SSN 725) in San Diego. He was underway of July 17th and spent the day on the ship with members of the 702 Society, the Phoenix Commission and other guests. One of the guests was Miss USA 2006.

Shipmate Jack Moore reported that he had some printers available. If anyone has a need for one, contact him.

50/50 Drawing and Raffles

The 50/50 drawing was held and the winner was Jim Edwards.

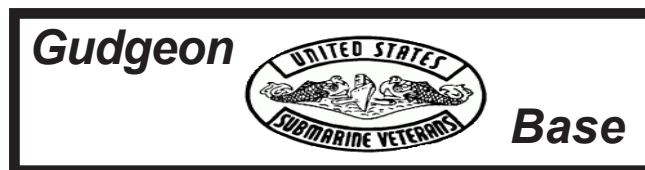
The raffles for the gun club membership and the jewelry boxes were conducted. The winners are: Gun Club Membership: Howard Doyle; Jewelry Boxes: Ed Hawkins and Tim Moore.

Adjournment

All the outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote.

Chaplain Howard Doyle offered the closing prayer and the meeting was adjourned at 1415.

Jim Denzien, Base Secretary/Treasurer



Meeting Minutes as reported by the Gudeon Base:

The Regular Meeting of the Arizona SubVets – Gudgeon Base was held at the Moose Lodge, Prescott Valley, Arizona on Saturday 14 July 2007. The meeting was opened at 1200 hours with a call to order by Base Commander, Jack Messersmith, in standard ceremonial form.

There were sixteen (16) members at the meeting.

The minutes for the June meeting were read and accepted as read. A report of Base financial status, as of July 1, 2007, was read by Base Treasurer – Brad Veek. A motion was made and seconded to accept the financial report as read. The motion carried.

REPORTS BY OFFICERS AND COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Base Vice Commander – Al Landeck was not at the meeting.

Chief of the Boat – Dave Herrington was not at the meeting.

Membership Chairman – Al Weiss had nothing to report.

Base Chaplain – Brad Veek reported that George (Pete) Petrovitz's wife is in hospice care and asked all to remember her in our prayers. It was also reported that Joe O'treba had fallen and broken his arm and produced a hair line in his hip. Joe is in rehab at the Samaritan Village.

Base WebMaster – John Dudas handed out a news letter for veterans.

Base Storekeeper – Warren Riedell had nothing new to report.

Base Librarian - Brad Veek briefed the members on the reading materials in the Base Library.

OLD BUSINESS

Jack Messersmith briefed the members on the Prescott Valley Military Service Monument construction project. Jack also provided forms whereby veterans can purchase an inscribed brick for placing on the walk at the monument. The bricks are purchased for \$50.



Jack also informed the members of a concert titled; "Concert for Heroes" to be held at the Prescott Valley City Hall grounds. The entry fee will go to help fund the memorial.

Jack read a letter from District Commander Jim Dunn encouraging Arizona Bases to contribute to the start up expenses of the newly formed Tautog Base (Casa Grande area). A motion was made and seconded; that the Gudgeon Base contributes \$100 to Tautog Base. The motion carried.

Jack Messersmith announced that the Gudgeon Base Name Badges ordered at previous meetings were complete and ready to be picked up.

It was announced that the Base Christmas Party will be held at the Moose Lodge on Thursday evening, December 19th.

The Arizona Veteran's Service Advisory Committee will meet at the Prescott American Legion Post 6 on August 4th. The meeting is open to those wishing to participate.

Ballots are due for the District Commander election. Those who hadn't voted were poled at the meeting and their vote registered.

NEW BUSINESS

Jack Messersmith announced that the 2009 Western Region Conference will be held in Albuquerque, New Mexico and Gudgeon and Perch Bases will co-host the event.

Ken Earls announced that the 2009 International Submarine Assoc. convention will be a joint convention held in the United States. Ken indicated that the organization is asking USSVI Bases to contribute toward the cost of setting up the convention. A motion was made and seconded that Gudgeon Base contribute \$50 to the convention effort. The motion carried.



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GOOD OF THE ORDER

Al Weiss asked for the floor and related a submarine related experience.

Brad Veek updated the members on his continuing efforts to locate and make contact with the remaining survivors of the SS-211.

Jack Messersmith read the names of members and their spouses who are celebrating birthdays and wedding anniversaries in the month of July.

Jack also informed the members that he and Al Landeck have participated in the Courts of Honor for the induction of two new Eagle Scouts of the Prescott area.

John Dudas proudly announced that his son has returned from Iraq and will be retiring from the U.S. Navy in the near future.

50/50 DRAWING

The 50/50 drawing was won by John Dudas. John donated his share of the winnings to the Base Treasury.

ADJOURMENT

All the business before the group, having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried. After a closing prayer the meeting was adjourned at 1303 hours.

Signed: Ed Brooks, Secretary, Gudgeon Base





From the Desk Of the Sea Hag

Perch Base SubVettes

Thank you, ladies, for attending our meeting July 21. I greatly appreciate each and every one of you for taking the time to join our meeting.

I want to publicly thank Jane for stepping up and taking the Treasurer position. Thank you, thank you, thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Don't forget, we are going to Prescott Valley on August 11 for the annual "Meeting out of the Heat". We'll meet at the Moose Lodge, 6501 E. 6th Street, (corner of 5th and 6th Streets) and decide where to go from there, depending upon how many ladies we have present by 11 a.m. Gudgeon Base does not have a SubVettes group.

If I don't see you in Prescott Valley, I hope to see you on September 15th!

Mary Denzien, President, SubVettes of Perch Base

SUBVETTES MEETING MINUTES

July

The meeting was called to order at 1 p.m. President Mary Denzien led the pledge of Allegiance. Sue Caraker gave the invocation.

President Mary Denzien made the announcement that, Hiromi Povio has resigned as Treasurer and Jane Reinhold has graciously accepted the post until next elections. Thank you and congratulations Jane!!

The Treasurers Report was presented by newly appointed Jane Reinhold.

The minutes were accepted as printed in the June MidWatch.

50/50 raffle was announced and \$22 was raised. Half of it was won by Jacque who donated it back to the Scholarship fund. Thank you for your generosity Jacque!!!

OLD BUSINESS:

The C & B committee made a report to the members that they are working on the changes suggested, and the preliminary results should be ready for the September meeting — or October, depending on the attendance.

We have some awesome ladies and children's shirts for sale. Prices start at \$10 and go up to \$25 for the special ladies v-neck polo with our "DOLPHIN" logo.

The criteria for awarding scholarships were also discussed, and will continue to be discussed until all wrinkles are worked out.

We also drew names for our first Scholarship fund raising event. The poncho was won by JoAnn Norwood and the Afghan was won by Katherine Darnell. Hopefully these ladies will attend our September meeting to collect their winnings.

NEW BUSINESS:

Jacque has donated a beautiful mobile for our base to raffle. We set a minimum of \$120 before we will have the drawing. We also have one of Ed Brooks hand carved dolphins we will raffle to raise additional funds for the Kay Harnish Memorial Scholarship Fund. Additional info on both items up for raffle will be on the Perch Base web site, the MidWatch, and the Ladies of Steel in the near future. Having a spaghetti dinner in October or November was also discussed as an additional fund raising event.

All business concluded, Jane motioned to adjourn, seconded by Jacque. Meeting was adjourned at 2 p.m. Attended by 5 members, which is a good turn out for July.

Nancy Nelson, Vice-President and Acting Secretary, SubVettes of Perch Base



Eternal Patrol August 13, 1944

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

The Final Patrol

Lord, this departed shipmate with dolphins on his chest
Is part of an outfit known as the best.
Make him welcome and take him by the hand.
You'll find without a doubt he was the best in all the land.
So, heavenly Father add his name to the roll
Of our departed shipmates still on patrol
Let them know that we who survive
Will always keep their memories alive.



U.S.S. Flier (SS-250) August 13, 1944 78 men lost



Photo # NH 98325 USS Flier off the Mare Island Navy Yard, California, 20 April 1944

OFFICIAL PHOTOGRAPH

NAVY YARD MARE ISLAND, CALIF

25250-11 (S400) 2
REPRODUCTION ALTERNATION CIRCLE ON M.I. PHOTO
NAVY YARD MARE ISLAND CALIF 20 APRIL 1944

USS *Flier* (SS-250), a *Gato*-class submarine, was the only ship of the United States Navy to be named for the flier, a round sunfish widely known in the United States. Her keel was laid down by Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. She was launched on 11 July 1943 sponsored by Mrs. A.S.

Pierce, and commissioned on 18 October 1943 with Lieutenant Commander John D. Crowley in command.

Flier reached Pearl Harbor from New London, Connecticut, on 20 December 1943, and prepared for her first war patrol, sailing 12 January 1944. Damage suffered in a grounding near Midway Island necessitated her return to the west coast for repairs, and on 21 May she sailed again for action, heading for a patrol area west of Luzon. She made her first contact on 4 June, attacking a well-escorted convoy for five merchantmen. Firing three torpedoes at each of two ships, she sent a large transport to the bottom and scored a hit on another ship, before clearing the area to evade countermeasures.

On 13 June 1944, *Flier* attacked a convoy of 11 ships, cargo carriers and tankers, guarded by at least six escorts. The alert behavior of the escorts resulted in severe attack on *Flier* before she could observe what damage she had done to the convoy. On 22 June, she began a long chase after another large convoy, scoring four hits for six torpedoes fired at two cargo ships that day, and three hits for four torpedoes launched against another cargo ship of the same convoy the next day.

Sunk by a mine

Flier put in to Fremantle, Australia, to refit between 5 July 1944 and 2 August, then sailed on her second war patrol, bound for the coast of Indochina via the Lombok Strait, Macassar Strait and Balabac Strait. At about 2200 on 12 August, as she



The *Gato*-class submarine was the state of the art in American design at the start of World War II. Using the previous *Tambor*-class submarine as a basis, *Gatos* incorporated improvements to increase their overall patrol and combat abilities. Modifications to the diesel engines and batteries increased patrol duration over *Tambors*, and internal alterations provided more amenities for the crew. The class is named after its lead ship, USS *Gato* (SS-212).

Displacement: 1,526 tons surf., 2,424 tons sub.
Length: 311 ft 9 in, Beam: 27 ft 3 in, Draft: 15 ft 3 in
Test depth: 300 ft., Speed: 20 knots surf., 9 knots sub.
Armament: 10 x 21 in torpedo tubes (6 forward, 4 aft, 24 torpedoes)
1 x 3/50 cal AA gun, 2 x .50 cal, and 2 x .30 cal machineguns
Crew: 80–85 officers and men
Powerplant: 4 x 1350 hp 16 cyl GM 278A diesels
(except SS228-239 and SS275-284 10 cyl Fairbanks-Morse 38D-1/8),
2 x 1370 hp GE electric motors
(except SS228-235 Elliott Motor or SS257-264 Allis-Chalmers)
(two 126-cell Exide main storage batteries
{except SS.261, 275-278, & 280 Gould})
Range: 11,800 nm at 10 knots surf, 100nm at 3 knots sub.
Submerged Endurance: 48 hours

transited Balabac Strait on the surface, she struck a naval mine. Traveling at 18 knots, she disintegrated and sank in less than a minute, but several of her crew got out of her.

Treading water in the darkness, the survivors took muster by shouting out their names. Fourteen had survived, meaning that 72 officers and men had gone down with *Flier*.

Although they knew that they were only three miles from land, they could not orient themselves in the overcast night. Commander Crowley directed the survivors to tread water until they could determine direction.

Moonrise was five hours later. By the time it became light enough to see a small island, six more of the crew died and the sea had become choppy. Unable to keep the survivors together, Commander Crowley ordered Lieutenant Liddell, Ensign Jacobson, RTC Howell, FCR2 Tremaine, QM3 Russo, MoMM3 Baumgart, and MoMM3 Miller to each make their own way to the beach. At about 1600 on 13 August, eighteen hours after the explosion, seven survivors met on Mantangula Island; Miller was unaccounted for.

Escaped crew fights for survival on island

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They slept that night burrowed into the sand, then began building shelter the next morning. Their exploration discovered that Mantangula had no fresh water; they must travel to another island or die of thirst. The officers were familiar with their area from studying navigational charts and knew that the two best possibilities were Balabac Island to the west and Bugsuk Island to the east. They decided on Bugsuk, and began constructing a raft. While foraging for materials, they met Miller, who had come ashore on the eastern tip of the island and spent the night alone. Construction of the raft continued through the day as the survivors grew weaker from thirst. They spent a second night on the island.

The next morning, searchers found two coconuts, which were shared by all — and transpired to be the only food or drink they would have for days. They set out on their raft for Byan Island on the way to Bugsuk that afternoon at low tide.

Two men rode the raft and steered with paddles while the others swam pushing it. They reached Byan exhausted, and collapsed on the beach.

The next morning, the party crossed Byan and the channel separating it from Gabung Island, where they passed the next night. The following day was the worst they experienced. They were blistered by sunburn; their feet were lacerated and poisoned by coral; they were plagued by stinging insects; in the four days since their submarine had hit the mine, the only thing they had had to eat and drink had been one-quarter of a coconut each. They made good time on the next crossing because the water was shallow enough to allow wading rather than swimming, though at the price of further injuring their feet on the coral bottom.

Finally reaching Bugsuk, the survivors came ashore into a small coconut grove where they partially relieved their thirst and hunger. Bugsuk had been inhabited in the past; the party explored several empty buildings and discovered a cistern full of fresh water. They slept that night in one of the abandoned buildings.

Meeting up with guerrillas

The next morning, Ensign Jacobson awoke before the others and encountered a young Filipino, a member of the guerrilla "Bugsuk Bolo Battalion." He led the survivors to their headquarters where about 20 more guerrillas were encamped. Here the survivors had their first hot meal in many days, fish and rice, cooked by the guerrillas.

Some of the guerrillas were a party from Palawan Island who had come to Bugsuk to search for possible survivors of a lost submarine. The survivors were disappointed to learn that they were referring not to *Flier* but rather *Robalo* (SS-273), lost three weeks earlier in this same vicinity. The search party transported the survivors to Cape Buliluyan on Palawan, a three-



day boat ride. There they rendezvoused with another party of guerrillas who had been scouting Balabac for *Robalo* survivors. After several more days traveling up the east coast of Palawan, they reached their base at Sir John Brooks Point. Also at the base was a United States Army coastwatcher unit, recently landed by a submarine, which readily agreed to send a message to Commander Seventh Fleet.

While they waited for help to arrive, the survivors were moved some five miles into the mountains, to a trading post owned by an American, Mr. Edwards. In the cooler mountain environment, the survivors began recovering from their ordeal.

The survivors arranged with Commander Seventh Fleet a date for pick-up by submarine and a recognition signal, and arranged with a Moro native to borrow a motor launch.

Rescue rendezvous

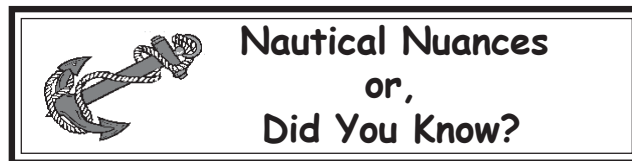
When the rendezvous date arrived, 30 August 1944, eight other refugees joined the party to be rescued. However, the plan was hampered by the presence of a Japanese merchantman anchored near the rendezvous point. Rather than use the agreed-upon signal light, which might be seen by the merchant, they used hand-cranked radio. *Redfin* (SS-272) received the signal and surfaced nearby.

The submarine gave the guerrillas a generous assortment of food, lubricating oil, medical supplies, small arms ammunition, and all the spare shoes and clothing they had aboard as reward for helping the survivors.

After the refugees and survivors were aboard, and the Moro's motor launch was out of danger, *Redfin* attacked the anchored merchantman by gunfire, but was unable to do significant damage before the ship weighed anchor and got underway. *Redfin* gave up the attack and set course for Darwin.

The *Flier* survivors were thence flown to Perth where Crowley made his report and was awarded the Legion of Merit for organizing and leading their escape. Liddell, Howell and Russo also received awards for displaying initiative and resourcefulness in the escape. All eight were awarded the Purple Heart Medal.

Flier received one battle star for World War II service on her single war patrol, designated "successful." She is credited with having sunk 10,380 tons of Japanese shipping. See also List of U.S. Navy losses in World War II.



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**Next Meeting
11:00 a.m.**

**Moose Lodge #319, Prescott Valley
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