



The MidWatch

The Monthly Newsletter of Perch Base - USSVI
Phoenix, Arizona



February 2010
Volume 16 - Issue 2

<http://www.perch-base.org>

What's "Below Decks" in the MidWatch

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Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol

FEBRUARY ETERNAL PATROLS

USS SHARK I (SS-174)	11 Feb 1942	58 Lost
Japanese Surface Attack, Makassar Strait, Celebes Island		
USS AMBERJACK I (SS-219)	16 Feb 1943	74 Lost
Japanese Air/Surface Attack in Solomon Sea		
USS GRAYBACK I (SS-208)	27 Feb 1944	80 Lost
Japanese Air/Surface Attack off Okinawa		
USS TROUT I (SS-202)	29 Feb 1944	81 Lost
Japanese Surface Attack in Philippine Sea		
USS BARBEL I (SS-316)	04 Feb 1945	81 Lost
Japanese Air Attack off entrance to Palawan Passage		



NEW HOLLAND CLUB MEMBERS

SEE PAGE 10

NEXT MEETING

12 noon, Saturday, Feb. 13, 2010
American Legion Post #105
3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85053

2010 Booster and Float Support Members

Perch Base, USSVI, cannot support its on-going operations and provide funds for the Base's float activities on dues alone. While the Base tries to develop activities to raise additional funds, we salute the members, listed below, who have supported the base with additional contributions.

These are the 2010 Contributors.

Allston, Jerry N.
Asbell, F. J. "Ted" (in memory of)
Bartlett, Gary
Bernier, Richard
Beyer, Ronald B.
Braastad, Wayne A.
Brooks, Edgar T.
Butler, Bradley L.
Carpenter, David
Cooper, James J.
Cousin, Roger J.
Denzien, James R.
DeShong, Billy.
Doyle Jr., Warner H.
Edwards, James N.
Ellis, Harry
Enloe, Howard M.
Evans, James
Fooshee, Thomas E.
Graves, John A.
Heller, Harry
Herold, Glenn A.
Hillman, Lester R
Hough, Steve.
Hunt, Theodore
Jones Davy
Keating, L. A. (Mike)
Kimball, Jack S.
La Rock, Douglas M.
Lambert, Darrell
Lancendorfer, Robert A
Lents, Robert W.

Lober, DeWayne
Loftin, Burtis W.
Marions, George
Martin, Terry
Marshall. Raymond
May, Robert E
McComb, Dennis
McPherson, Angus Howard
Miller, Allen H.
Miller, Roger M.
Moore, Tim
Nelson, Jim A
Newman, James F
Pettit, Royce E
Reel, Daniel J
Reinhold, Stanley N.
Robinson, Bruce "Robie"
Rycus, Mel
Sattig, Pete
Schoonejans, Emil
Shumann, Garry L.
Simmons, Rick
Smith, Wayne Kirk
Stuke, Adrian M
Wall, James L
Warner, Robert
Watson, Forrest J.
Whitehead, Donald J
Wolf, Edward J.
Zaichkin, John G.
Zomok, Ronald J.

BASE OFFICERS

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(Vacant)

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Sailing Orders



Feb 6 - Laveen Days Parade, Laveen, AZ, We'll take the float for the second year to this event. Check the web page for more details.

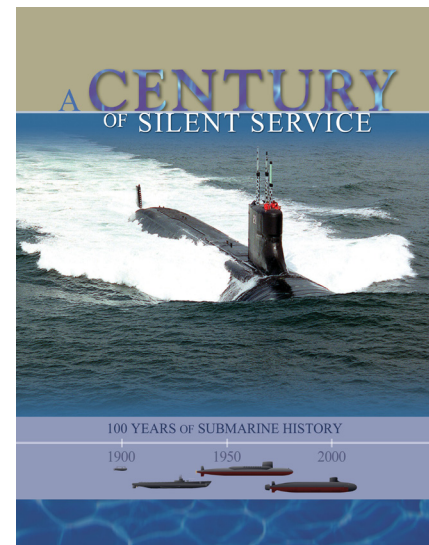
Feb. 13 - Wickenburg "Gold Rush Days." Another float parade. Contact Howard Doyle if you want to help.

Base annual elections are held in March. The four (4) elected Base officers are Commander, vice-Commander, Secretary and Treasurer.

The only announced candidates are Howard Doyle for vice-Commander and Wayne Pettes for

NEXT MONTH'S MIDWATCH

Watch for the final chapter in "Submarines in History" series in the Mid-Watch. Follow the boats from the start of WWII into the nuclear age.



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Bob Snedaker
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623-203-9795 (cell) bob@fairings-etc.com
<http://www.fairings-etc.com>

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Holly Walker
Proprietor

This is a Way for the Base to Make Money!



Through the ingenuity of our Base Secretary -- and a great company that he works for -- the Base could make money every time a homeowner gets needed service done on their heating and air conditioning. The deals also works for estimate service, new equipment, air duct cleaning and other everyday stuff a home owner needs. Contact Tim for more details *.

There is only one catch. You have to use Tim (That's a catch? More like a pleasure!) to arrange the service.

We all have to have that work done a one time or the other, so think what the Base can earn!

Remember! Contact Tim at:

Tim Moore

secretary@perch-base.org

seawolfssn@q.net

(602) 574-3286

EDITOR'S NOTE:

THIS OFFER FROM TIM MOORE IS THE BASE'S ONLY METHOD OF SUPPORTING ITSELF OTHER THAN SHIP'S STORE SALES WHICH ARE RELATIVELY SMALL. WE REMAIN DEPENDENT ON THE BOOSTER CLUB -- OUR SELF-CHARITY -- FOR INCOME. OTHER INCOME SOURCES HAVE BEEN PROPOSED BUT FOR VARIOUS REASONS, NEVER EMBRACED BY THE BASE. PLEASE KEEP THIS IN MIND.

From the Wardroom Base Commander's Message

Shipmates:

Our Awards Banquet was a great success. In addition to an excellent meal provided by our resident chef, Stan Reinhold, we had an outstanding turnout. We awarded Sailor of the Year to both Stan Reinhold and Howard Doyle. Congratulations to both of them! We also welcomed ten new members to the Holland Club, six of which were either present or represented at the ceremony.

Our next meeting is Feb. 13 and we will have Jay Wisener EMCM(SS) as a guest speaker. Jay is an NJROTC instructor at Glendale High School. He will talk about the NJROTC program and what it is designed to accomplish.

We have parades on Feb. 6 (Laveen) and Feb. 13 (Wickenburg) coming up along with a Kap(SS)4Kid(SS) visit to Children's Hospital on Feb. 18.

Plan on attending our meeting and supporting the scheduled base events.

Fraternally,

January Meeting Minutes

January 2010 General Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #105, Phoenix, AZ at 1200 09 January 2010. The meeting was called to order by Jim Denzien, Base Commander.

The "Call to Order" was led in a prayer of invocation by Chaplain Walt Blomgren followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the standard ceremonial opening. The tolling ceremony was conducted for all boats lost in January and a moment of silence was observed for our shipmates on eternal patrol.

According to the sailing list, 30 members and guests were present. One guest was indicated, Roger Smith who is a qualified submariner and he joined the base.

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes from the December 2009 regular meeting be approved as published in the MidWatch monthly newsletter. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

The base's financial status as of 01 January 2010 was reported. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote. The Base Commander indicated that the turnover of the Treasurer position to Wayne Pettes is proceeding as planned.

Base Commander's Board of Directors Meeting Report

Denzien said the Base would have a guest speaker for February. It is Jay Wisener who is a teacher at Glendale Union High School, who is a retired EMCM(SS) and works with the Jr. NROTC program at the school. He is expected to discuss his school program

Denzien reported that the next All Arizona Base Picnic will be sponsored by Perch Base and will take place on 10 April 2010 in lieu of our meeting. It will be held at the White Tanks Regional Park. He stated additional information for that event will be forthcoming closer to the event date.

Denzien further announced that tentatively scheduled for the May meeting is Bob "BJ" Johnson. Johnson was a marine and one of the "Chosin Few" in the Korean War. He is expected to show a historical photo display of that event that his veteran's group uses for presentations.

Denzien reminded members that other upcoming events are posted on the calendar on our website.

The membership was again reminded about our up coming 15th anniversary celebration of the founding of Perch Base. Anyone interested in assisting Jim Denzien and Jim Newman with this event please contact either individual.

Reports of Officers and Committee Chairmen

Vice-Commander – Howard Doyle mentioned that anyone interested in attending the Gold Rush Days event in

Wickenburg, should contact him for details.

Secretary – Tim Moore was not present.

Treasurer – Wayne Pettes had nothing to report.

Chaplain – Walt Blomgren announced that it was good to see Jim Newman back on his feet again having returned from his recent leg injury.

MidWatch Editor/Interim Webmaster – Chuck Emmett reported that the website is complete with the exception of the Ship's Stores on which he will continue to work. Chuck asked members to please let him know of any problems, errors or omissions or any other comments related to the website.

Base Storekeeper – DeWayne Lober reminded the membership to please make sub-related purchases from our Ship's Stores because it helps support our base treasury.

Membership Chairman – Rick Simmons reported that with respect to our reenlistment status we still have eight members owing national dues and 10 owing Perch Base dues. Anyone needing a membership card should contact Rick. He also advised the membership that anyone visiting for the winter that holds a dual membership with another base should advise their primary base of their winter change of address. Perch Base members should let Rick know of any and all changes of address so he can notify National. The Base Commander congratulated Simmons and offered a Bravo Zulu to Rick for the outstanding job he has done since taking over as Membership Chair.

Historian – Jim Newman had nothing to report.

Float Coordinator – Barry Bowers was not present.

Past Commander – Stan Reinhold reported that we received an invitation to the Riverside Veterans Day Parade which takes place on 17 April 2010 in Riverside, CA. He indicated the offer is under consideration for the Base to participate.

Old Business

Denzien reminded the membership that the Awards Banquet will be next Saturday, 16 January at the American Legion Post #105.

He also announced that the Base nominating committee needs candidates to offer their services for both our elected officer and board positions for the March elections. Immediately, the Base needs a COB. Elected positions include Vice-Commander, Secretary and Treasurer. Currently, there is one candidate for Vice-Commander (Howard Doyle) and one for Treasurer (Wayne Pettes.) The Base is still seeking potential nominations for the Secretary.

New Business

The Commander again reminded the membership that Perch Base will sponsor the All Arizona Base Picnic on 10 April 2010. This will be held in conjunction with the 110th birthday of the United States Submarine Service, 11 April.

Stan Reinhold said that as caterer, he will need a firm head count prior to the event for planning purposes. Denzien suggested that those bases, who meet the second Saturday of the month, have their meetings in conjunction with the picnic.

Good of the Order

For information, Denzien reported that Adm. J. Guy Reynolds, who qualified on the Robert E. Lee in the sixties and was CO of the USS Pintado (SSN-672), has been hospitalized in Bethesda with terminal cancer.

Denzien also mentioned that Stan Reinhold is the head of the Trieste Alumni Association and announced that the Jan. 23 marks the 50th anniversary of the Trieste's historic deep dive into the Challenger Deep in Marianas Trench. He said there will be two celebrations commemorating that event. Those interested should contact Reinhold.

50/50 Drawing

The 50/50 drawing was held and the winner was John Zaichkin won \$51.00 and contributed it to the base treasury.

Adjournment

All the outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote and, after a benediction offered by Walt Blomgren, the meeting adjourned at 1300 hours.

Tim Moore, Secretary, Perch Base

USSVI



A Submariner's Prayer

"Eternal Father, strong to save
 Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
 Who biddest the mighty ocean deep
 Its own appointed limits keep.
 O hear us when we cry to Thee
 For those in peril on the sea.

Bless those who serve beneath the deep.
 Through lonely hour their vigil keep.
 May peace their mission ever be,
 Protect each one we ask of Thee.
 Bless those at home who wait and pray,
 For their return by night or day."

Sablefish (SS-303), USS Lizardfish (SS-273), USS Diodon (SS-349), USS Bream (SSK-243), USS Charr (SS-328), USS Besugo (SS-323) and USS Menhaden (SS-377.)

He was a Life Member of USSVI and a member of the Holland Club.

Sailor, Rest Your Oar.

Do you know a shipmate who is on the lee side of a fair wind? Someone who could use the help of a shipmate? Remember, we are the "**Brotherhood** of the Phin."

Contact our Base Chaplain if you know of any way we can help:

Walt Blumgren
 5120 W. Gelding Dr.
 Glendale, AZ 85306
 (602) 309-4407
chaplain@perch-base.org

Shipmate Pete Petrovitz departed on eternal patrol on December 20th, 2009. He is survived by daughters Christine Pearson and Teresa Petrovitz Kane, sons Robert Petrovitz and Richard Petrovitz of Gautier, granddaughter Shelly Petrovitz and sisters Regina Gavlak and Carole Theurich. He is preceded in death by his wife Mariam "Toni" Petrovitz.

Lt. George "Pete" Petrovitz, U.S. Navy, Retired, enlisted in the Navy in 1945 and was serving on his first submarine at the age of 17. He qualified on the USS Redfish (SS-395) in 1946 and also served on USS

ETERNAL PATROL PREPARATIONS

Shipmates, while we hope your day and those of your shipmates is far off in the future, we must nevertheless prepare. Please copy this notice and place it with your will or important papers.

IMPORTANT

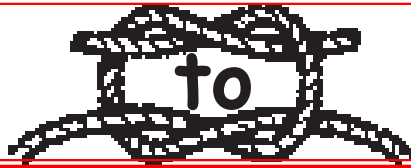
In the case of my death, please immediately notify the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc., (USSVI) at 877-542-3483 or 360-337-2978 and give the person on duty the information regarding my death, funeral, and burial arrangements, plus who they can contact for follow-up and support.

Please ask them to contact my local chapter's Base Commander with this information as well (they can look it up in their membership records).

This information can alternatively be E-Mailed to the National Office at office@ussvi.org.

But remember, your family should always notify the Base Chaplain first. He and your local shipmates can help!!

Shipmate



Shipmate



KAP(SS) 4 KID(SS)

**Thursday, 18 Feb.
(meet between 0945 and 1000)**

Meet at the Phoenix Children's Hospital located just west of the 51 on the south side of Thomas Road. We will muster in the lobby of Building "A". Our escorts will take us up to the playroom and we will have 1 – 2 hours to spend with the kids.



THE FOLLOWING ARTICLE WAS READ AT THE AWARDS BANQUET. IT IS PRINTED HERE BY REQUEST.

The Submariner by Dr. Joyce Brothers

The tragic loss of the submarine Thresher and 129 men had a special kind of impact on the nation — a special kind of sadness, mixed with universal admiration for the men who choose this type of work. One could not mention the Thresher without observing, in the same breath how utterly final and alone the end is when a ship dies at the bottom of the sea. And what a remarkable specimen of man it must be who accepts such a risk.

Most of us might be moved to conclude, too, that a tragedy of this kind would have a damaging effect on the morale of the other men in the submarine service and tend to discourage future enlistment.

Actually, there is no evidence that this is so. What is it then, that lures men to careers in which they spend so much of their time in cramped quarters, under great psychological stress, with danger lurking all about them?

Bond Among Them

Togetherness is an overworked term, but in no other branch of our military service is it given such full meaning as in the so called "silent service." In an undersea craft, each man is totally dependent upon the skill of every other man in the crew, not only for top performance but for actual survival.

Each knows that his life depends on the others and because this is so, there is a bond among them that both challenges and comforts them. All of this gives the submariner a special feeling of pride, because he is indeed a member of an elite corps.

The risks, then, are an inspiration rather than a deterrent. The challenge of masculinity is another factor which attracts men to serve on submarines. It certainly is a test of a man's prowess and power to know he can qualify for this highly selective service. However, it should be emphasized that this desire to prove masculinity is not pathological, as it might be in certain daredevil pursuits, such as driving a motorcycle through a flaming hoop.

(CONTINUED)

Emotionally Healthy

There is nothing daredevil about motivations of the man who decides to dedicate his life to the submarine service. He does, indeed, take pride in demonstrating that he is quite a man, but he does not do so to practice a form of foolhardy brinkmanship, to see how close he can get to failure and still snatch victory from the jaws of defeat.

On the contrary, the aim in the submarine service is to battle danger, to minimize the risk, to take every measure to make certain that safety rather than danger, is maintained at all times. Are the men in the submarine service braver than those in other pursuits where the possibility of sudden tragedy is constant? The glib answer would be to say they are.

It is more accurate, from a psychological point of view, to say they are not necessarily braver, but that they are men who have a little more insight into themselves and their capabilities. They know themselves a little better than the next man. This has to be so with men who have a healthy reason to volunteer for a risk. They are generally a cut healthier emotionally than others of the similar age and background because of their willingness to push themselves a little bit farther and not settle for an easier kind of existence.

We all have tremendous capabilities but are rarely straining at the upper level of what we can do, these men are. The country can be proud and grateful that so many of its sound, young, eager men care enough about their own stature in life and the welfare of their country to pool their skills and match them collectively against the power of the sea.



PERCH BASE HOLLAND CLUB INDUCTION CERMONY

Annual Awards Ceremony

(Current members and Inductees are shown in this photograph)

From absolute left (some hidden): John Zaichkin, Richard Bernier, Walt Blomgren, Gene Crabb, Ed Hawkins, Jim Newman, Wayne Pettes, Charles Farley, Danny Moss, Layne Rumbaugh (for George Marions), George Crider, Davy Jones, Jim Denzien.



BRENT NELSON MM1(SS)

Brent Nelson, believed to be Perch Base's only active duty member, made First Class Machinist Mate on Dec. 18, 2009.

Brent, son of Shipmate Jim Nelson and his wife Nancy, is serving on the USS West Virginia (SSBN-736) Blue Crew out of Kings Bay, Ga.

Bravo Zulu, Shipmate.

From the Membership Chairman

Did you know that you can update your information contained in the USSVI national database? It's fairly easy.

Go to the USSVI website at ussvi.org

Click on "MEMBER LOGIN"

Enter your "LOGIN NAME" and "PASSWORD"

If this is the first time you have done this click on "FIRST VISIT? CLICK HERE TO APPLY FOR YOUR PASSWORD", answer a few questions and USSVI will e-mail you your user name and temporary password.

Click on "UPDATE PROFILE". There are a number of tabs across the top you can select for different areas of your profile.

When you make a change don't forget to click the "SAVE THE CHANGES MADE TO THIS PAGE" at the bottom

WHAT'S NEW ONLINE

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK OUT OUR BASE'S WEB PAGE AT [HTTP://WWW.PERCH-BASE.ORG](http://www.perch-base.org). ITEMS THAT HAVE RECENTLY BEEN ADDED INCLUDE:

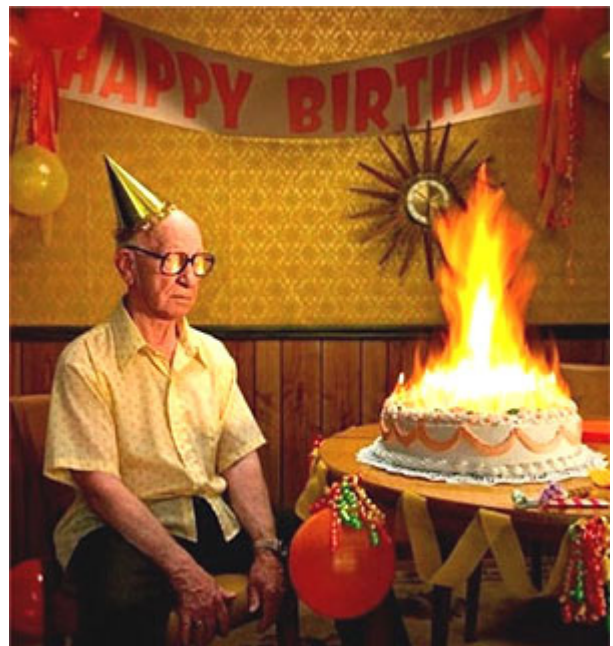
1. A COMPLETE PAGE OF PHOTOS FROM THE AWARDS BANQUET.
2. CALENDAR OF EVENTS HAVE SHIFTED (ROLLING) AND NOW SHOW FEBRUARY, MARCH AND APRIL.
3. A NEW FEATURE AND PAGE: HOW WE BEGAN, THE START OF PERCH BASE. SEE OUR ORIGINAL CHARTER.

Perch Base February Birthdays



ROYCE E. PETTIT	FEB. 1
ROBERT E. MAY	FEB. 2
MEL RYCUS	FEB. 9
DANNY R. MOSS	FEB. 11
EDGAR T. BROOKS	FEB. 13
MICHAEL DAHL	FEB. 16
PHILLIP WAGNER	FEB. 18
EMIL SCHOONEJANS	FEB. 24

*Don't let your
celebrations get
carried away!*





Eternal Patrol February 27, 1944

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

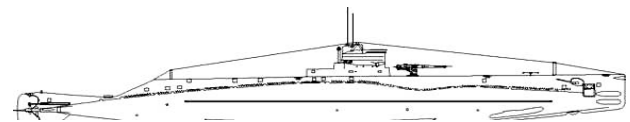
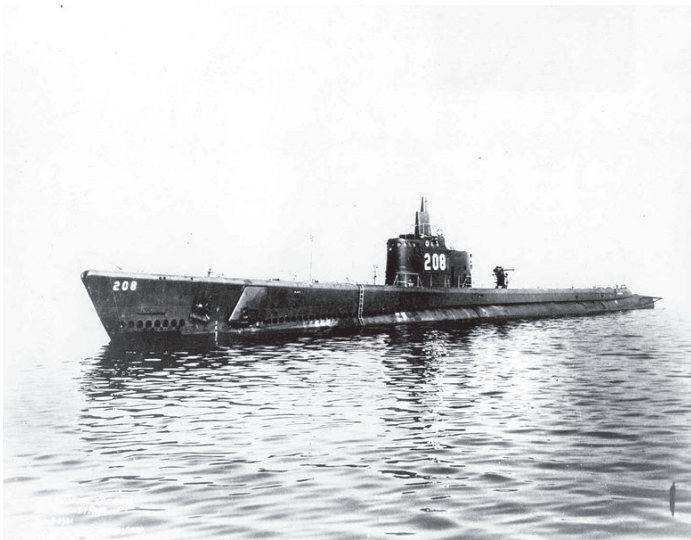
The Final Patrol



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.



USS Grayback (SS-208) February 27, 1944 80 men lost



Tambor Class

Disp: 1,475 tons (surf); 2,370 tons (sub)

Length: 307 ft 2 in, Beam: 27 ft 3 in

Draft: 14 ft 7½ in

Speed: 20.4 knots (surf); 8.75 knots (sub)

Range: 11,000 nautical miles (20,000 km) at 10 knots

Test depth: 250 ft

Propulsion:

4 × FM Model 38D8-1/8 9-cylinder driving electrical generators

2 × 126-cell Sargo batteries

4 × high-speed GE electric motors with reduction gears

5,400 shp (surf), 2,740 shp (sub)

Complement: 6 officers, 54 enlisted

Armament:

10 × 21-inch (533 mm) torpedo tubes

(6 forward, 4 aft), 24 torpedoes

1 × 3-inch (76 mm) / 50 caliber deck gun

4 machine guns

USS Grayback (SS-208), a Tambor-class submarine, was the first ship of the United States Navy to be named for the lake herring.

Her keel was laid down by the Electric Boat Company in Groton, Connecticut. She was launched on 31 January 1941 sponsored by Mrs. Wilson Brown, wife of Rear Admiral Wilson Brown, Superintendent of the United States Naval Academy, and commissioned on 30 June 1941 with Lieutenant Willard A. Saunders in command.

Attached to the Atlantic Fleet, Grayback conducted her shakedown cruise in Long Island Sound out of Newport, New London, and New York City. In company with Grampus (SS-207) she departed New London, Connecticut, on 8 September for patrol duty in the Caribbean Sea and Chesapeake Bay; then arrived Portsmouth, New Hampshire, on 30 November for overhaul. With the United States's entry into the war, Grayback sailed for Pearl Harbor on 8 February.

Grayback's first war patrol from 15 February to 10 April took her along the coast of Saipan and Guam. There she had a four-day encounter with an enemy submarine; the enemy I-boat fired two torpedoes at Grayback on the morning of 22 February, then continued to trail her across the Pacific. Grayback spotted the enemy conning tower a couple of times, and the Japanese ship broached once; but the Grayback could not get into position to attack. After four days, Grayback shook the other sub and continued on patrol. On 17 March she sank her first ship, a 3291-ton cargo ship off Port Lloyd.

Grayback's second war patrol met with a dearth of targets although she even took the unusual and risky measure of patrolling surfaced during the day. On 22 June she arrived at Fremantle, Australia, which was to remain her home base for most of the war. On her third and fourth war patrols, in the South China Sea and St. George's Passage, Grayback was hampered by bright moonlight, shallow and treacherous water, and enemy patrol craft. Despite these hazards, she damaged several freighters and an enemy submarine. However, the very presence of Grayback and her sister ships in these waters—the threat they presented to shipping and the number of enemy escorts they tied

up—was an important factor in the successful conclusion of the Guadalcanal campaign, America's first offensive campaign in the Pacific war.

The fifth war patrol began as Grayback sailed from Australia on 7 December 1942. Only a week out of port, Pharmacist's Mate Harry B. Roby was called upon to perform an emergency appendectomy, the second to be done on a patrolling submarine. With Grayback running a hundred feet beneath the surface, the untutored Roby successfully removed the infected appendix, and his patient was back standing watch by the end of the patrol. Then, on 25 December, Grayback surfaced to sink four landing barges with her deck guns. Four days later she was again fired on by an enemy submarine but maneuvered to avoid the torpedoes. On 3 January 1943 sunk I-18, one of 25 Japanese submarines destroyed by western submarines during the war.

On 5 January Grayback served as beacon ship for the bombardment of Munda Bay and also indulged in rescue work. Lying off Munda early in the morning of 5 January, she received word that six survivors of a crashed B-26 Marauder bomber were holed up on the island. Grayback sent ashore two men, then submerged at dawn to avoid enemy aircraft. The submariners located the downed aviators, three of whom were injured, and hid out with them in the jungle. As night fell, Grayback surfaced offshore and by coded light signals directed the small boat "home safe" with the rescued aviators. For this action skipper Edward C. Stephan received the Navy Cross as well as a Silver Star from the US Army.

Grayback continued on patrol, torpedoing and damaging several Japanese ships. On 17 January she attacked a destroyer escorting a large maru, hoping to disable the escort and then sink the freighter with her deck guns. However, the destroyer evaded the torpedoes and dropped 19 depth charges on Grayback. One blew a gasket on a manhole cover, and the submarine, leaking seriously, was ordered back to Brisbane where she arrived 23 February.

On her sixth war patrol from 16 February to 4 April 1943, Grayback again had a run of bad luck and from the Bismarck Islands-Solomon Islands area without any military success. Her newly installed SJ radar had failed to function; and although she had taken several shots at marus, none were sunk.

The seventh patrol was more successful. Departing Brisbane on 25 April, Grayback intercepted a convoy whose position had been radioed to her by Albacore (SS-218) on 11 May. In a night surface attack Grayback fired a spread of six torpedoes at the seven freighters and their three escorts. The three escorts charged and she had to go deep to elude the attacking enemy. She was credited with the sinking of cargo ship Yodogawa Maru. On 16 May she torpedoed and seriously damaged a destroyer. The following day Grayback intercepted four marus with one escort and sank freighter England Maru and damaged two others before she was forced to dive. She arrived Pearl Harbor on 30 May, then proceeded to San Francisco, California, for a much needed overhaul.



Arriving Pearl Harbor on 12 September 1943, Grayback prepared for her eighth war patrol. Sailing 26 September with Shad (SS-235), she rendezvoused with Cero (SS-225) at Midway Island to form the first of the Submarine Force's highly successful wolf packs. The three submarines under Captain "Swede" Momsen in Cero, cruised the China Sea and returned to base with claims of 38,000 tons sunk and 3300 damaged. Grayback accounted for two ships, a passenger-cargo vessel torpedoed 14 October and a former light cruiser, Awata Maru, torpedoed after an end-around run on a fast convoy 22 October. Wolf pack tactics came into play 2 October as Grayback closed a convoy already attacked by Shad and sunk a 9000-ton transport listing from two of Shad's torpedoes. The submarines had now expended all torpedoes, and on 10 November they returned to Midway.

With almost a quarter of her crew untested in battle Grayback departed Pearl Harbor for the East China Sea on 2 December for her ninth war patrol. Within five days of her first contact with Japanese ships, she had expended all her torpedoes in a series of attacks which netted four ships for a total of over 10,000 tons. On the night of 18 December to 19 December Grayback attacked convoy of four freighters and three escorts. She sent freighter Gyokurei Maru and escort Numakaze to the bottom and damaged several others in surface attack. Two nights later, 20 December to 21 December, she spotted another convoy of six ships; and, after an end-around run she fired a spread of nine torpedoes into the heart of the Japanese formation. This first attack sunk one freighter and damaged another before Grayback dived to elude depth charges. Three hours later she surfaced and sank a second freighter. After an unsuccessful attack the following night had exhausted her torpedo supply, Grayback headed home. The

submarine surfaced 27 December and sank a good-sized fishing boat with deck guns before reaching Pearl Harbor on 4 January 1944.

Grayback's tenth patrol, her most successful in terms of tonnage sunk, was also to be her last. She sailed from Pearl Harbor on 28 January 1944, for the East China Sea. On 24 February Grayback radioed that she had sunk two cargo ships 19 February and had damaged two others [Taikei Maru and Toshin Maru sunk]. On 25 February she transmitted her second and final report. That morning she had sunk tanker Nanho Maru and severely damaged Asama Maru. With only two torpedoes remaining, she was ordered home from patrol. Due to reach Midway on 7 March, Grayback did not arrive. On 30 March ComSubPac listed her as missing and presumed lost with all hands.

From captured Japanese records the submarine's last few days can be pieced together. Heading home through the East China Sea, on 27 February Grayback used her last two torpedoes to sink the freighter Ceylon Maru. That same day, a Japanese carrier-based plane spotted a submarine on the surface in the East China Sea and attacked. According to Japanese reports the submarine "exploded and sank immediately," but antisubmarine craft were called in to depth-charge the area, clearly marked by a trail of air bubbles, until at last a heavy oil slick swelled to the surface. Grayback had ended her last patrol, one which cost the enemy some 21,594 tons of shipping.

Grayback ranked 20th among all submarines in total tonnage sunk with 63,835 tons and 24th in number of ships sunk with 14. The submarine and crew had received two Navy Unit Commendations for their seventh, eighth, ninth, and tenth war patrols.

Grayback received eight battle stars for World War II service.



Fact #1: The REAL Cold War

Most Americans have no idea that the United States and Russia did openly engage each other in war. In 1918, about 11,000 American soldiers and Marines were sent to Russia to support what remained of the Czarist Russian army, where (in future irony) they joined Japanese troops fighting in support of the Czarist forces. In September of 1918, 7000 Marines landed in Vladivostok, and shortly thereafter, 4000 soldiers arrived in the far north of Russia, where British troops were already fighting the Bolshevik army. It was not until 1920 that Woodrow Wilson decided that he could not stop the Bolshevik takeover and quietly withdrew all American forces from Russia. American involvement in the Russian Revolution was well remembered in Russia, especially during the Cold War, even though it has been nearly forgotten in the United States. The number of American dead has still not been officially released to the American public.

Fact #2: The Black and the Baddest

The US Army's 369th Infantry Regiment, a black unit with white officers, served with amazing distinction in the First World War, earning much praise (especially from the French) and setting many records. They served in combat for 191 days in a row, more than any other American ground unit. But they trumped all Allied regiments in that they were the first to reach the Rhine. They were cited eleven times for bravery. They never lost a single foot of ground to the Germans and not one man was captured by the enemy. 171 men and officers were awarded the French Croix de Guerre by war's end.

Fact #3: Southern Gentleman

Long before his stint as Confederate President, a young US Army Lieutenant named Jefferson Davis dealt with insubordination in a rebellious private by beating him senseless with his fists, then refused to put the young man on report, stating that it was a fair fight. No one was insubordinate in Lt. Davis's unit again.

Fact #4: If you want peace...

Woodrow Wilson is remembered as the 'peace president,' because he tried to keep America out of World War I. But during his terms of office, he sent Marines to Haiti in 1915, troops to the Dominican Republic and Mexico in 1916, more troops to invade Cuba in 1917, even more troops to Panama in 1918, and then sent a few more the same year to Nicaragua (to force the country to elect a hand-picked pro-American presidential candidate, who was then forced to sign a commerce treaty with the US on favorable terms to US businessmen), sent most of the military to Europe to fight the Great War, then sent soldiers and Marines to the aforementioned Russian Revolution, and in 1919 sent ships of the US Navy to blockade Russian ports. Peace, huh?

Fact #5: While we're on that subject...

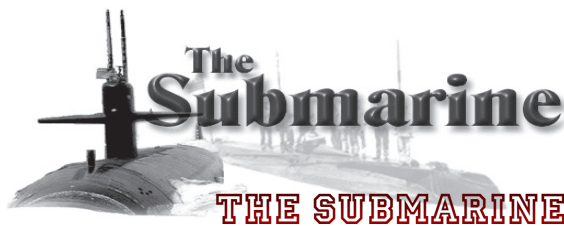
When US Marines took control of Haiti in 1915, they did so in support of a Haitian statesman with pro-American views, but when he toured the bases the Marines established there, he was not allowed to enter the officers' club...because he was black.

Fact #6: Bad Luck of the Irish

It is well known that at the beginning of the Mexican War, John Riley, a career sergeant, deserted with a number of Irish-American soldiers to Mexico and ended up forming an artillery battalion in the Mexican Army known as the San Patricios. He left because of the harsh treatment of Irish soldiers at the hands of their officers, but about half of the regular US Army, and a huge portion of citizen soldiers, were Irish. Irish soldiers despised the San Patricios as traitors and deserters, and fought the San Patricios with a particular ferocity. It was Irish American soldiers who finally captured their erstwhile countrymen, and treated them roughly while they awaited trial, disgusted that fellow Irishmen could so easily cast aside their new homeland and disgrace all Irishmen. The San Patricios were truly elite soldiers in the Mexican Army, fighting with greater vigor than other Mexican units, for the simple fact that Mexican soldiers would be treated as prisoners of war, while the San Patricios would be treated as deserters and traitors and tried accordingly. This, of course, is exactly what happened. Those who defected after war was declared were hanged. Riley and many of his men who defected before the declaration of war were whipped and branded. Riley never returned to the United States. He mustered out of the Mexican Army in 1850. His fate is unknown.

Fact #7: Last of the First

The last veteran of the American Revolution, Daniel Bakeman, died in 1869 at the age of 109.



Submarines Between the Wars

THE SUBMARINE IN HISTORY

1919

Japan, emboldened by their surprise victory over the Russian colossus in 1905 and their successful role in providing escort services in World War I, began planning for an eventual showdown with the nation they viewed as their major and logical adversary: the United States. As one of the World War I allies, Japan received seven of the surrendered U-boats but went a bit beyond mere "examination." Japan imported some 800 German technicians, engineers and naval officers to teach them how to design and build submarines.

Several unfinished K-boats were converted from steam to diesel power. One, designated M.1, was fitted with a 12-inch naval rifle. In theory, the gun could be fired while submerged; in practice, the boat had to surface after each shot to reload the gun. M.1 sank after a collision in 1925.

Another, designated M.2, was turned into a submarine aircraft carrier. M.2 sank when the hangar door was opened by mistake while the boat was still partially submerged.



The big gun gone underwater: the British M.1.

The Treaty of Versailles blocked the German Navy from submarines, and limited the number of officers to 1500. One of those was U-boat-skipper Karl Doenitz. He was assigned as commanding officer of a torpedo boat – a submarine on the surface, if you will. He began developing submarine tactics for the next war.

In secret, Germany acquired a Dutch shipbuilding company which designed submarines ostensibly for sale to international customers but which also were prototypes for the next class of German U-boats. In fact, 1931 sea trials for three boats sold to the Finnish Navy were conducted by German crews.

1923

Most major navies have tried to use submarines as aircraft carriers – never with much success.



Here, S-1 (the 105th U. S. submarine) was equipped with an on-deck hangar and the Martin MS-1 seaplane. Wishful thinking; the MS-1 had to be disassembled to fit in the hangar and put together again before flight, forcing the submarine to remain exposed for too long. In addition, launching and recovery were virtually impossible in the open ocean.

British tested the 3,000 ton X.1. armed with four 5.2 inch guns and six 21-inch torpedo tubes. This was an attempt to build an underwater cruiser. It was not successful, and was scrapped.

U. S. submarine S-51 was rammed by a steamer and sunk in 130 feet of water.

Two years later, S-4 was rammed by a Coast Guard cutter. There was no way that any survivors might have been rescued, and these accidents led to the development of the McCann submarine rescue chamber – and an increase in the submarine hazardous duty pay instituted by T. Roosevelt in 1905.

1927

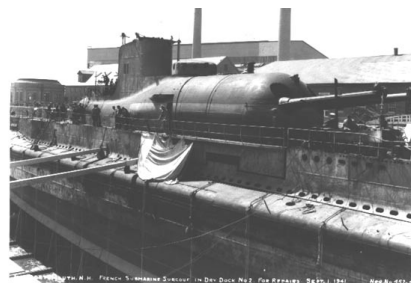
Another “Nautilus” – the 168th American submarine, laid down in 1927 – was another effort at putting big guns on submarines; in this case, twin 6-inch. “Nautilus” offered at least one improvement of the British and French efforts: these guns could independently be trained and aimed.



However, the shells were too heavy for safe handling and the V-class boat was too cumbersome for operations as an attack submarine. “Nautilus” was converted into a seaplane filling station and amphibious support ship for World War II.

1931

Not to be outdone by the British or the Americans, France fielded “Surcouf” – 361 feet, 3,304 tons – the world’s largest submarine until World War II. Armed with twin 8-inch guns and an airplane. “Surcouf” disappeared in 1942, probably after collision with a merchantman.



1932

U. S. Navy opened a competition for the development of a light-weight diesel engine, more suitable to submarines than any currently in production. While the number of engines which might be purchased for submarines was too small to justify the investment, there was a large commercial market waiting in the wings: the railroad.

Japanese submarine designers moved out from under the shadow of the Germans, and, on their own, focused on three basic classes: the I-boats, most of them about the same size as the German U-cruisers; the RO coastal boats, about the same size as the German Type VII (see below) but not as capable; and the HA-series of midget submarines, in many variations.

The Japanese were more serious about submarine aircraft carriers than any other navy: they built their first, the 2,243 ton, 320-foot I-5, in 1932. It was equipped with one float plane. In the next 12 years, they built 28 more, in ever-increasing sizes.

The German government approved the clandestine construction of sixteen new U-boats.

1935

March 16, German Chancellor Adolph Hitler renounced the Treaty of Versailles. A few weeks later, the first of a new series, U-1, entered service.

Captain Doenitz defined his fundamental concepts for the next conflict: “Tonnage War” and “Wolf Pack.” The first replicated World War I experience – sink ships faster than they could be replaced, for a long enough period, and you could strangle an island nation like Britain.

The second – teams of seven or eight boats, attacking on the surface, at night; submerge to escape; re-surface and speed ahead to get in position for the next night’s attack. The 15-knot surface speed of the U-boats was almost twice that of an average convoy, and equal to that of most anti-submarine escorts.

As with World War I, Germany developed several classes of U-boat: typical were the coastal boats (Type II), long range boats (Type IX), and jack-of-all-trades boats (Type VII), which became the mainstay of the fleet: more than 700 completed – in six variations, A through F – by the end of the war. Typical displacement (surface) about 760 tons, length 220 feet, range 8,700 miles with a functional endurance of seven or eight weeks without refueling. Dive time: 20 seconds to a maximum safe depth of 650 feet.



A Type VIIC U-boat – the mainstay of the German World War II submarine fleet – being welcomed on return from war patrol.

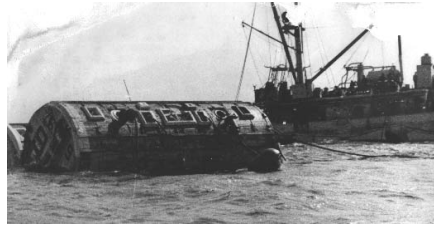
1938

An experimental 140-foot, 213 ton Japanese HA boat topped 21 knots – submerged. The Japanese also developed the world’s most effective torpedo: the “Long Lance. “ The MK95 submarine version had a 900 pound warhead, wake-less oxygen-fueled turbine, range five miles at 49 knots. Contemporary U. S. Navy torpedoes had half the warhead and half the range – when they were working. See below.

1939

While on sea trials, the brand-new U. S. Navy SS-192 “Squalus” sank in 240 feet of water; an incompletely-closed valve caused flooding in the engine room. Twenty-six men were killed in the flooded section; there were thirty-three survivors. All were safely brought to the surface in four round-trips of the McCann submarine rescue chamber.

“Squalus” was salvaged, renamed “Sailfish,” and served to the end of World War II.



Salvage operations above "Squalus," with two heavy-lift pontoons about to be sunk and lashed to the hull.

Ten days after the "Squalus" disaster, a junior officer opened the inner door of a flooded torpedo tube and inadvertently sank the British submarine "Thetis." A few men got out through an escape hatch; ninety-nine were lost.

The British developed an on-board escape system, whereby sailors waiting their turn to go out through a pressure-modulated air lock (and chest-deep in water) would be able to breathe through individual oxygen masks, permanently stored in the fore and aft torpedo rooms.

The British also developed positive interlocks to prevent a recurrence, salvaged the boat and put it back in service, renamed "Thunderbolt." She was lost in combat in 1943.

At the beginning of the year, Hitler told Doenitz that he was planning for a war six years in the future; accordingly, Doenitz developed plans for the construction of a U-boat fleet of 300 Type VII boats. This would allow 100 on station, 100 in transit and 100 in training or under repair. However, Germany moved into Czechoslovakia in March and Poland in September. On the 3rd, the British issued an ultimatum: get out of Poland. You have two hours to make up your mind. The Germans did not respond. World War II began.

Germany then had 57 U-boats in service, only 38 of which could be considered "sea-going." For the time being, it would be enough.

The U-boat war started under "prize rules." But not for long. On the first day, U-30 sank the liner "Athenia" without warning; 122 of 1,100 passengers were killed, including 28 Americans. To their credit, the German High Command was stunned, although they tried to pretend that the sinking was caused by a time bomb planted by the British to inflame public opinion against Germany. As late as January 1940, Minister of Propaganda Joseph Goebbels was ordering his staff "to continue running the "Athenia" propaganda . . . bearing in mind the fundamental principle of all propaganda, i.e. the repetition of effective arguments." The German public did not learn the true story until after the war.

Toward the end of September, the High Command authorized "seizure or sinking without exception" for merchant ships trying to radio for help when ordered to stop. A week later, U-boats were instructed to sink without warning any ship sailing without lights. The commanders were instructed to enter a note in the log that the sinking was "due to possible confusion with a warship or auxiliary cruiser."

By November, all pretense had been withdrawn with Standing Order No. 154: "Rescue no one and take no one aboard . . . Care only for your own boat and strive to achieve the next success as soon as possible! We must be hard in this war."

Dr. Ross Gunn of the U. S. Naval Research Laboratory suggested that "fission chambers" using an isotope of uranium, U-235, could be used to power submarines. In a "Saturday Evening Post" article a year later, a science writer noted that one pound of U-235 has the equivalent energy of 5 million pounds of coal: "A five pound lump of only 10 to 50 percent purity would be sufficient to drive ocean liners and submarines back and forth across the seven seas without refueling for months."

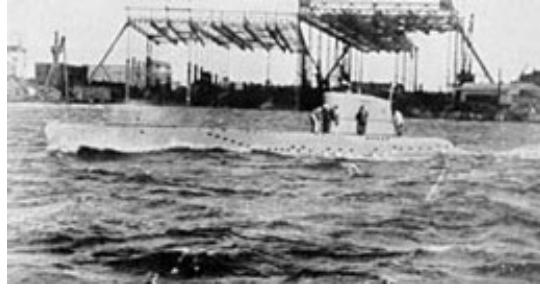
1940

German scientist Helmut Walter demonstrated a prototype for the first true submarine – a boat which in theory could operate submerged for an indefinite period, unlimited by battery capacity or the need for atmospheric oxygen. V.80 was powered by the decomposition of highly-concentrated (95 percent) hydrogen peroxide, H₂O₂, known as Perhydrol. In essence: when the chemical breaks down, it releases superheated steam to drive a turbine, along with oxygen to support conventional combustion or for respiration by the crew.

The hull-shape of V.80 was optimized for submerged operations, and the boat indeed demonstrated exceptional speed – 28 knots submerged. It also demonstrated exceptionally high fuel consumption, 25 times that of a diesel engine, at exceptional cost. According to one source, one 6.5 hour trial run consumed \$200,000 dollars worth of Perhydrol.

The design showed great promise. However, Hitler thought his war was won, and plans for the production of a series

of Walter boats were put in limbo.



The 1943 experimental 250-ton Type Wa-201 Walter boat, U-792, which hit 25 knots, submerged, on sea trials.

Research continued. Perhaps eight, in several variations, 250 and 300 tons, were put into service, 1943-44



The Type Wa-201 Walter boat, U-793, here partially dismantled at the end of the war.



Collapsible hydrogen peroxide storage bags being removed from the 300-ton Type XVIIIB Walter boat U-1407 after the war. With the type of storage outside the pressure hull, fuel could be consumed without appreciable change in trim – seawater simply replaced the depleted volume.

U. S. Navy ran depth-charge tests against an operational submarine (for most of the test, moored underwater without crew). They found that 300 pounds of TNT was not very effective; the explosive charge was doubled to 600 pounds.

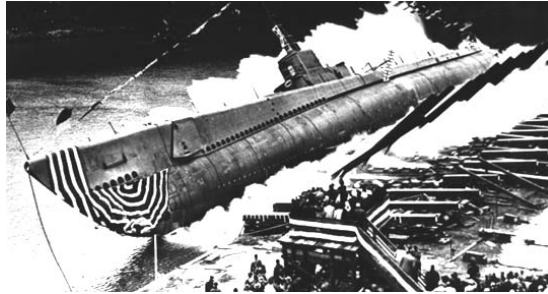
In June, France signed an armistice with Germany, and soon three French bases gave U-boats more convenient access to the open ocean. The eighteen months between July 1940 and December 1941 were known, to the German submarine force, as “the happy time.” The score seemed limited only by endurance and weapons loading.

U-boat operations were directed by long-range radio from fleet headquarters in Germany. The Germans assumed that the traffic would be intercepted, but didn't care, they were encoding all messages. However, even coded intercepts were useful; many individual boats could be identified by their unique radio signature. Even if a firm position could not be established, an analyst could determine when a boat should be headed home along one of several reasonably predictable routes.

Italy joined Germany in June, bringing 105 submarines to the Mediterranean theater. They do not seem to have had much impact.

In ramping up in anticipation of war – or, put more delicately, considering the at-the-time overwhelming public support for continued neutrality, as a “just in case” prudent measure – U. S. submarine production jumped from six or seven a year through the mid-1930s to seventy-one for FY1941.

The Navy settled on SS-212, “Gato,” laid down in October, 1940, as the template: 312 feet, 1,825 tons, range 11,400 miles, 24 torpedoes. Over time, improvements were made including a thicker pressure hull beginning with the otherwise more or less identical SS-285, “Balao.”



A typical World War II U.S. submarine, the “thick skin” SS-364, “Hammerhead.” Wisconsin’s Manitowoc Shipyard developed this sideways technique to accommodate launching a boat into a narrow river.

On August 17th, Hitler formally declared a total blockade of the British Isles. Desperate to acquire more escorts, British Prime Minister Winston Churchill struck a deal with U. S. President Franklin D. Roosevelt: a loan of 50 over-age World War I American destroyers in exchange for long-term leases for base facilities in Newfoundland, Bermuda, British Guiana, and the West Indies.

The first Wolf Pack went into operation in September. Where, in World War I, the simple fact of “convoy” kept the U-boats at bay, the Wolf Pack tactic (attack at night, rush ahead to the next rendezvous) set up a series of long-running battles. Early in the war, escorts were lacking and escort coordination was minimal. Often, they had not even talked with each other – let alone trained together – before meeting up in mid-ocean.

One example: On October 16, one U-boat spotted a convoy of 35 ships and called in the rest of his pack, six more boats. Another joined the next day. After three days, 17 of those ships had been sunk, two other convoys had been intercepted and 21 more ships sunk, without a single U-boat loss. The score would have been higher, but most of the submarines had fired all of their torpedoes and had to go home to re-load.

At the end of the year, a German Naval Staff study noted the “accomplishments” of the U-boats, but called for the building of more battleships, taking shipyard resources away from submarine construction. At the time, a handful of operational U-boats (often, not more than ten at a time) were sinking twice as many ships at the surface fleet

To enhance morale – among civilians and sailors alike – a book of fiction and a feature movie showed Wilhelm Bauer battling bureaucracy and professional intransigence to reach the forefront of heroes: “Corporal Wilhelm Bauer, the first man who dove into the twilight.” See 1850, above.

By December, newly-perfected aircraft-mounted radar could pick up a surface-running U-boat at seven miles. Not a great distance, but farther than the eye could see at night. It was a start.

1941

America’s role as a “neutral” was somewhat fuzzy: there was a steady stream of supplies flowing by convoy across the Atlantic, and for much of the journey, protected by U. S. Navy resources. After several U-boat attacks – sinking an American merchantman in May and a U. S. destroyer on October 30, with the loss of 115 sailors -- public opinion (which had been about 70 percent in favor of continued neutrality) began to shift.

The code-breaking effort dubbed “Ultra” cracked the German Navy code; beginning in June – and, depending on whether new codes had been implemented -- the Allies could read much of the U-boat radio traffic off-and-on throughout the rest of the war.

In August, U-570 became the first – the only – submarine ever captured by an aircraft; under attack, she was forced to the surface and surrendered. An escort ship soon arrived and took over. U-570 was thus transferred to the Royal navy, where, re-designated as “Graph,” she served until being wrecked off the west coast of Scotland in March, 1944.

In August, Adolph Hitler demonstrated a constitutional inability to keep hands off and let his commanders run the war. Against all advice, in a misguided effort to protect his supply lines to North Africa, he ordered a shift of submarines from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. (Misguided? How, indeed, could a submarine protect a surface ship

against the principal threat, which was air attack?) This soon led to an order to a shift of all operational boats from the Atlantic theater – at a time when there were Atlantic targets aplenty, and good weather in which to enjoy them. The “Happy Time” soon came to an end.

Japan attacked the American naval base at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, on December 7. There were 25 I-boats assigned on station around the islands. They did not see any American warships. Five HA-midgets attempted to penetrate the harbor before the air attack began; they achieved nothing but their own destruction. One became the first casualty of the Pacific war, sunk by the destroyer “Ward” as a unauthorized interloper in the offshore defensive sea area – before the air attack had begun. The destroyer sent a flash message to headquarters; headquarters thought it might be a false alarm.

The battle fleet was seriously damaged, but in time all ships were back in service except for two obsolete battleships: “Arizona,” sunk at her moorings, and “Oklahoma,” which sank while under tow back to the west coast for repairs.

The major effects of the attack: to coalesce American public opinion as never before, and to force the U. S. Navy to abandon an ingrained fascination with battleships and shift the burden to the new-generation warships, the aircraft carrier and the submarine.

At that time, the U. S. Navy had 111 submarines in commission – 60 in the Atlantic, 51 in the Pacific. Many were barely capable. “Gato” was commissioned at the end of the month; it would be several years before a fully-capable submarine force was in place.

With the approval of President Franklin D. Roosevelt, the U. S. Navy implemented unrestricted submarine warfare that same day. To salve the conscience of those who had for so long deplored German practice, all Japanese shipping was defined as being in the service of the military, and thus need not be considered as “merchant vessels.”



Submarine pioneer Admiral Chester Nimitz assumed command of the U. S. Pacific Fleet on December 31, 1941 – on board the only available undamaged warship, the submarine “Grayling.” The aircraft carriers were at sea.



Return To:

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7011 West Risner Road
Glendale, AZ 85308
E-Mail: communications@perch-base.org

<http://www.perch-base.org>



NEXT MEETING

12 noon, Saturday, February 13, 2010
American Legion Post #105
3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, 85053
(1/2 block northwest, 35th Ave. & Thunderbird)