

TOLLING FOR THE BOATS CEREMONY

For those of you here today who are not familiar with submarines and submariners, I would like to offer an explanation of the ceremony you are about to witness.

Since the birth of our underwater Navy in 1900, many sacrifices, loss of life, and a universal dedication to duty, have made our volunteer service what it is today. These accomplishments did not come easy or without the “can do” spirit possessed by those who wear the coveted Dolphin Insignia with pride and dignity.

The U.S. Submarine Veterans of World War Two originally established the "Tolling for the Boats" ceremony. It is a unique and time-honored memorial service and is in keeping with the finest traditions of the Navy. Custom has established that this ceremony is formal, and it honors the memory of those submariners who lost their lives in the line of duty, especially the majority who perished during World War Two. In the ceremony, the names of each of the U.S. submarines lost, along with the fate of its crew, are read aloud as a ship's bell is tolled for each in turn.

The tolling of the bell reminds us of the debt of gratitude we owe to both our departed shipmates and to those in active service, who guard our country, while serving silently under the sea. In many ways the "Tolling for the Boats" ceremony formally reaffirms to serving Navy submarine personnel that their current "deeds and sacrifices" follow in the footsteps of those submariners who preceded them.

It is true that the sea has always taken its toll of seamen. This is especially true for the submariner. Over the years, almost four thousand young men have lost their lives serving our country in the U.S. Submarine Force. In all, a total of

sixty-six U.S. submarines have been lost during war and peace.

The vast majority went down with all hands. Some crews died with a *BANG!* as depth charges imploded the hull or a mine detonated their own torpedoes. Still others were crushed when a damaged hull sank below its maximum limit. Still others died with a "whimper" as oxygen in their boat slowly ran out.

It is also true that no maritime power has ever survived unless its men have been willing to fight back with successively better ships manned by professional seamen who have profited by the lessons learned from the past. Those who have gone to sea in submarines and those who will do so in the future are forever indebted to those submarine sailors who gave their lives testing different innovations in submarine warfare during times of peace.

The significance of our ceremony of "Tolling for the Boats", which honors our fallen submarine heroes, is fundamental to our creed as members of U.S. Submarine Veterans, "To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in pursuit of their duties while serving their country."

We shall never forget the ultimate sacrifice they made so we all, and especially our families and loved ones, enjoy the fruits of freedom.

There is a poem,

Lost Harbor

by Leslie Nelson Jennings

There is a port of no return, where ships
May ride at anchor for a little space
And then, some starless night, the cable slips,
Leaving an eddy at the mooring place . . .
Gulls, veer no longer. Sailor, rest your oar.
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.

We shall now proceed with the tolling ceremony.

66 Lost Boats of the Silent Service

Mar. 21, 1915	USS F-4 (Skate) (SS-23)	19 men lost
Dec. 17, 1917	USS F-1 (SS-20)	19 men lost
July 30, 1919	USS G-2 (SS-27)	3 men lost
Mar. 12, 1920	USS H-1 (SS-28)	4 men lost
Sep. 1, 1920	USS S-5 (SS-110)	no loss of life
Oct. 10, 1923	USS O-5 (SS-66)	5 men lost
Dec. 17, 1927	USS S-4 (SS-109)	34 men lost
May 23, 1939	USS Squalus (SS-162)	26 men lost
June 20, 1941	USS O-9 (SS-70)	34 men lost
Dec. 10, 1941	USS Sealion (SS 195)	5 men lost
Jan. 20, 1942	USS S-36 (SS-141)	no loss of life

Jan. 24, 1942	USS S-26 (SS-131)	46 men lost
Feb. 11, 1942	(first) USS Shark (SS-174)	59 men lost
Mar. 3, 1942	USS Perch (SS-176)	8 men lost
June 19, 1942	USS S-27 (SS-132)	no loss of life
July 30, 1942	USS Grunion (SS-216)	70 men lost
Aug. 17, 1942	USS S-39 (SS-144)	no loss of life
Sept. 25, 1942	USS S-51 (SS-31)	46 men lost
Jan. 10, 1943	USS Argonaut (SS-166)	84 men lost
Feb. 14, 1943	USS Amberjack (SS-219)	71 men lost
Mar. 5, 1943	USS Grampus (SS-207)	71 men lost
Mar. 15, 1943	USS Triton (SS-201)	74 men lost
Mar. 20, 1943	USS Kete (SS-369)	87 men lost
April 3, 1943	USS Pickerel (SS-177)	74 men lost
April 22, 1943	USS Grenadier (SS-210)	4 lost as POW
May 28, 1943	USS Runner (SS-275)	78 men lost
June 12, 1943	USS R-12 (SS-89)	42 men lost
Aug. 29, 1943	USS Pompano (SS-181)	76 men lost
Sept. 9, 1943	USS Grayling (SS-209)	76 men lost
Sept. 28, 1943	USS Cisco (SS-290)	76 men lost
Oct. 7, 1943	USS S-44 (SS-149)	56 men lost
Oct. 11, 1943	USS Wahoo (SS-238)	70 men lost
Oct. 12, 1943	USS Dorado (SS-248)	78 men lost
Nov. 16, 1943	USS Corvina (SS-226)	82 men lost
Nov. 19, 1943	USS Sculpin (SS-191)	40 men lost
Nov. 23, 1943	USS Capelin (SS-289)	76 men lost
Jan. 5, 1944	USS Scorpion (SS-278)	77 men lost
Feb. 26, 1944	USS Grayback (SS-208)	80 men lost
Feb. 29, 1944	USS Trout (SS-202)	81 men lost

Mar. 26, 1944	USS Tullibee (SS-284)	79 men lost
June 1, 1944	USS Herring (SS-233)	80 men lost
June 7, 1944	USS Gudgeon (SS-211)	80 men lost
June 14, 1944	USS Golet (SS-361)	82 men lost
July 4, 1944	USS S-28 (SS-133)	50 men lost
July 26, 1944	USS Robalo (SS-273)	84 men lost
Aug. 13, 1944	USS Flier (SS-250)	80 men lost
Aug, 24, 1944	USS Harder (SS-257)	80 men lost
Oct. 3, 1944	USS Seawolf (SS-197)	102 men lost
Oct. 17, 1944	USS Escolar (SS-294)	82 men lost
Oct. 24, 1944	USS Tang (SS-306)	83 men lost
Oct. 24, 1944	(second) USS Shark (SS-314)	90 men lost
Oct. 24, 1944	USS Darter (SS-227)	no loss of life
Nov. 7, 1944	USS Albacore (SS-218)	86 men lost
Nov. 8, 1944	USS Growler (SS-215)	84 men lost
Nov. 9, 1944	USS Scamp (SS-277)	83 men lost
Jan. 12, 1945	USS Swordfish (SS-193)	90 men lost
Feb. 4, 1945	USS Barbel (SS-316)	81 men lost
Mar. 26, 1945	USS Trigger (SS-237)	89 men lost
April 8, 1945	USS Snook (SS-279)	84 men lost
May 3, 1945	USS Lagarto (SS-371)	88 men lost
June 18, 1945	USS Bonefish (SS-223)	86 men lost
Aug. 6, 1945	USS Bullhead (SS-332)	84 men lost
Sept. 26, 1949	USS Cochino (SS 345)	1 lost from Cochino, 6 from USS Tusk during rescue
May 30, 1958	USS Stickleback (SS-415)	no loss of life
April 10, 1963	USS Thresher (SSN-593)	129 men lost
June 2, 1968	USS Scorpion (SSN-589)	99 men lost

(Two blasts on the klaxon)

“Sailors, rest your oars.”