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<http://perch-base.org>

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 Volume 8 – Issue 4

**USSVI CONVENTION SCHEDULE**  
**DULUTH – 2002 Sept. 17 – 22**  
**RENO – 2003 - August 31 - Sept. 7**  
**Two bases bidding for 2004, no decision yet**  
**Kansas City MO – 2005 - Aug 30 - Sept. 4**



*Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol*

**APRIL ETERNAL PATROL DAYS:**

USS PICKEREL	SS177	April 3, 1943	74 men lost
USS SNOOK	SS279	April 8, 1945	84 men lost
USS THRESHER	SSN593	April 10, 1963	129 men lost
USS GRENADIER I	SS210	April 22, 1943	4 died as POW's

**April 20<sup>th</sup> Picnic at Railroaders Park.**  
 Park is located across from Water World on 43<sup>rd</sup> Avenue,  
 Just South of Pinnacle Peak Rd. in North West Valley. Start time 1100 Hours.  
 Bring your own beer – Soft drinks will be served – No charge, donations accepted

### From the Wardroom:

This month of April is going to be a very busy one for us at Perch Base. We are going to see some major changes in our normal schedule due to our hosting of the USSVI District 8 meeting in Laughlin April 8<sup>th</sup> through the 11<sup>th</sup>. Because of this event we have moved our normal meeting date back one week. In addition to moving the meeting to the third weekend we are also making this our annual picnic. Again this year the members of the Maricopa Live Steamers have asked to host our picnic at their club facilities. This was a lot of fun last year and should be even better this year as they have made a number of improvements which will make our visit much more comfortable. Thanks to Shipmates **Roger Cousins**, **Ed Brooks** and **Glen Herold** for stepping up after we encountered a last minute glitch in our meeting time this past month. These three made calls and along with our email list we had a great turnout for the meeting. Also Bravo Zulu's go to **Les Hillman** and his committee for their work and report on the building fact finding committee and the comprehensive report they put together. This energetic group uncovered some interesting solutions. There will be more to follow on this in the coming meetings as items are explored. We would like to encourage all the membership that can to join or transfer their American Legion membership to Post 62 as a show of support for their support of our group. Our Master Wood Carver has been busy doing his magic by turning wood into some of the most beautiful hand carved Dolphins you have ever seen. His work will soon be displayed at the 41 for Freedom at Deterrent Park at the Triton facilities in Bangor Washington. In addition Ed also hand carved a set of dolphins for the Pigboaters Chapter of the SubVets WWII. The Base Commander presented these to the Pigboaters on the 14<sup>th</sup> of March at their regular meeting. For those that are interested the Pigboaters meet the second Thursday of the month at the Scottsdale Elks Lodge at 1100. There is a very active Ladies Auxiliary in this group and a great way to take your wife to lunch and enjoy the company of a great bunch of Submariners. Our membership re-enlistments are not running as high as we would like to see them. At last report we had sixteen shipmates that had not renewed for 2002. We do not want to loose any of these important folks. If you are one of the few that have not gotten your base dues in please take a minute to drop **Ray Samson** a check or take a minute and drop a note letting us know what it is that has caused you decide to drop your membership. Now for the pleading !!!! **WE NEED YOUR HELP !!!!** We need to spread the wealth of the base around in order that the few that are doing the majority of the work do not get burned out. We are in need of a Chief of

the Boat, help with the newsletter, membership and several other areas that can do nothing but improve the base. Look around and see where you can help. If we can get more to step up to the plate the easier it will make it for all and the less time that would be required to get the work done. We have reached the critical stage in our attempt to find a suitable storage for our parade float. In your travels around the valley keep an eye out for a possible site that could be used to store the float yet allow access for maintenance. Looking forward to seeing as many as possible at the District 8 meeting in Laughlin and at our annual picnic. Fraternally, *Dave Harnish*, Commander

### Minutes from March's Meeting:

The regular monthly meeting of the members of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #62; Peoria, AZ at 1527 hours, 9 March 2002. The meeting was called to order by the Base Commander - **Dave Harnish**. The members were led in the "pledge of allegiance"; followed by the dedication, moment of silence for our departed shipmates, "tolling of the boats" and the invocation by **Roger Cousin**. There were 20 members and three guests attending the meeting according to the sailing list. Guests Pete Sattoc, Frank Beyers and Jim Foote were introduced and welcomed by the members. It was moved and the motion seconded that the minutes from the last meeting be approved as published in the Base Newsletter; "The MidWatch". The motion carried by voice vote of the members present. Treasurer (**Robert May**) reported the Base's financial status as the of the first day of March, 2002: A motion was made and seconded, that the Treasurer's Report be approved as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote of the members. **Dave Harnish** read an email sent to Perch Base by the son of one of the Commanding Officers of USS Bang (SS385). The email expressed the joy and appreciation for Perch Base exhibiting the replica of the Bang's superstructure as our parade float.

### REPORTS/OFFICERS & CHAIRMEN

**Dave Harnish** reported that there were still 16 or so members who had not renewed their membership to the Base. Members were asked to contact those they knew and encourage them to reenlist. The floor was turned over to **Lester Hillman**, Chairman of the Base Building Committee to present the committee's report of their research into the feasibility for Perch Base acquiring a meeting facility of its own. Les summarized the findings contained in the report and provided copies to the members at the meeting. The report concluded that a solely owned Perch Base facility would require more than 100 volunteers and thousands of dollars in initial

and sustained income to support such a facility. Ultimately, the Base is too small and has no reliable income stream to pursue our own facility. There is considered, in the report, the possibility for entering into an agreement with other organizations. Such an agreement would allow Perch Base to share a portion of their facility (American Legion Post 62, et al) to hold meetings as well as other accommodations that characterize the area within an area as a Submarine Veterans meeting place. Such things as the displaying of boat plaques, etc. It was agreed that the committee's report would be reviewed at the next meeting of the Perch Base Board of Directors with the thought of pursuing an agreement with American Legion Post 62 in obtaining an area within an area in the new facility they are constructing. Parts of this effort would include determining the associated costs to Perch Base in areas such as taxes, insurance, liabilities commitments to the American Legion Post, et al. **Dave Harnish** asked for a volunteer to serve as Base Chief of the Boat. Anyone interested should contact Dave. Another plea for suggested space to store the float/trailer was made. An indoor storage is desperately needed for the assembly. It was announced that there will be a "Luke Days" at Luke Air Force Base on the 23<sup>rd</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup> of March, 2002. This could be a good opportunity to show off the parade float in an effort to recruit new members. Volunteers were solicited to arrange participation and attend the event. **Dave Harnish** informed the members that **Ed Brooks** had carved two sets of teak Submariner's Dolphins for the Deterent Park - Submarine Memorial in Bangor Washington. The dolphins were designed to be mounted onto the large yoke of the memorial's bell and were presented to Jim Foote from the members of Perch Base. Jim Foote (USSVI Western Regional Director) is associated with the memorial and received the dolphins from Dave. Dave also informed the membership that he would be presenting the SubVets of WWII - Arizona Chapter with a set of mounted dolphins produced by Ed. These are designed to be attached to the podium at the WWII SubVet meetings and are being presented to the organization as a token of appreciation from Perch Base and its members. **Dave Harnish** also reminded members of the availability for membership in the Submarine Veterans RV's. Any SubVets who own RV's are eligible to join. No other reports were offered from the floor.

#### OLD BUSINESS

**Dave Harnish** reminded the membership that the "Spring Festival" parade at Yarnell, Arizona had invited Perch Base to participate again this year. The parade will be held on the 18<sup>th</sup> of May, 2002. The members were asked to make a motion as to whether or not the Base should accept the invitation and participate in the parade. A motion

was made and seconded that the Base accept the invitation and participate in the 2002 Yarnell parade. The motion passed with a voice vote of the members. Dave reminded members of the District 8 meeting in Laughlin, Nevada on the 8<sup>th</sup>, 9<sup>th</sup>, 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of April. All SubVets are invited to attend. You must make your own hotel reservations at the Ramada Express Hotel, and send your meeting registration as soon as possible. The registration form is available from Dave.

#### NEW BUSINESS

Jim Foote (USSVI Western Region Director) announced that nominations are open for all three District Commanders (District 8, 9 and 10). Send any nominations to Jim or **Dave Harnish**. The District Commanders duties include assisting Base Commanders in their district; appointing committee chairmen and members; evaluating the performance of Base Commanders; new base development; and serve in an advisory capacity to the USSVI National Board of Directors. **Dave Harnish** opened up the floor for nomination for the Base offices of Vice Commander, Treasurer and Secretary - noting that the incumbents in those positions had volunteered to run for office for another one year term. There were no additional nominations from the floor. A motion was made and seconded to close nominations. The motion carried by voice vote and the nominations were closed. Another motion was made and seconded that the three incumbent officers be elected for another year by acclamation. The motion carried by voice vote. Jim Foote (USSVI Western Region Director) performed the swearing in ceremony installing the three officers (**Glenn Herold** - Vice Commander; **Bob May** - Treasurer; and **Ed Brooks** - Secretary) for another year in office.

#### GOOD OF THE ORDER

There was no additional items introduced for the good of the order.

#### 50/50 DRAWING

The 50/50 raffle was conducted and **Robie Robinson** was the winner. The winner's share of the raffle was \$50.

#### ADJOURNMENT

All the outstanding business being concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans - Perch Base be adjourned. The motion carried by voice vote. **Roger Cousin** led the membership in the benediction and closing prayer. The meeting was adjourned at 1626 hours.

Secretary *Ed Brooks*, Perch Base

#### Welcome Aboard New Crewmen:

USSVI Arizona Perch Base, welcomes aboard our latest 2 new member's. **Robert L. Bell**. Robert is a friend of shipmate **Wayne "Kirk" Smith**, from Sierra Vista, and joined Kirk at the March meeting,

Although Robert is not qualified in Submarines, I'm sure he could have been, as he spent 32 years, working for Hunters Point and Bremerton Naval Shipyards. Robert with wife Judith, retired some years ago, with a title of General Foreman, down Sierra Vista way. Welcome aboard another new member **Charles Chapman**. Chuck with wife Roberta live in Sun City West. Chuck qualified on **USS Redfish SS395** in 1948, and served on **USS Guitarro SS360** from 52-54, **USS Diodon SS349** from 2/54-6/54, then **USS Raton SSR270** from 11/56-2/60. Retiring after 30 years as a LCDR. Perch Base is looking forward to meeting you at a future get-to-gather.



#### Perch Base Booster Club 2002:

A hardy "BZ's, to the following members for their "Above & Beyond" assistance:

**Jerry N. Allston, Ken Anderson, Bob Bailey, Kenneth E. Becker, Joseph A. Bernard, Richard Bernier, Harold J. Bidigare, Wayne A. Braastad, Michael J. Breitner, Edgar Brooks, James F. Clewett, Roger J. Cousin, Earl Crowley, Stephen F. Day, Warner Doyle Jr., Jeff Duncan, Ronald D. Eddy, Tom Fooshee, Ray Lee Graybeal, Charles Greene, Billy A. Grieves, Warren A. Grossetta, Michael J. Haler, Robert Hanson, John T. Hellem, Glenn Herold, Stephen F. Hough, Mike Keating, Ron Kloch, Larry L. Krieger, Paul Lake, Robert A. Lancendorfer, Doug La Rock, George Marions, Dale Martin, Robert E. May, Bill Mc Nay, Roger M Miller, Roger R Miller, Joseph R. Mullins, Jim A. Nelson, James W. Newman Sr., Joe Otreba, Thomas B. Patterson, Raymond A. Perron, Royce E Pettit, Scott Prothero, Larry M. Rankin, Dan Reel, Frank W. Rumbaugh, Ramon Samson, Dick Schiltneck, Douglas F. Schultz, Tyler Smith, Wayne Smith, Robert G. Sothern, Adrian M. Stuke, James Wall, Kenny Wayne, Richard Weber, Donald Whitehead, Ed Wolf, George Woods, Jerry D. Yowell.**

#### Small Stores:

**NOTE!!! There will be a complete lineup of Ships Stores at the Picnic.** Our Storekeeper, **GARRY L. SHUMANN**, has a comprehensive array of USSVI Small Stores, consisting of hats, shirts, sweat shirts, belt buckles, beer mugs, cocktail glasses, coffee mugs, and a slew of other memorabilia. Give him a call or better yet, come to a meeting and see everything first hand! If you want, you can order from the web site at <http://perch-base.org> Garry's address and phone number on front cover.

#### Next Meeting and Location:

Perch Base Annual Picnic for Aprils meeting, Information to be found on front cover. May 11<sup>th</sup> meeting will be held at American Legion Post 62, located at 11001 North 99th Avenue. Meeting Starts at 1200 Hours. Post 62, is North of West Peoria Avenue, in the city of Peoria, West of Hwy 101. Off HWY 101 take the Peoria exit and proceed West to 99<sup>th</sup> Ave., than right (North) to Post 62, which is on the East side of the street. We would hope to see a good turn-out as the members of this post have welcomed us with open arms. A lunch will be provided at a cost of \$3.00. A heck of a deal, at twice the price.

#### Lost Boats and Crews for April:

**USS PICKEREL SS177 April 3, 1943-74 men lost.**

**PICKEREL** commanded by Lt. Cmdr. A. H. Aleton, Jr., the first submarine to be lost in the Central Pacific area, set out from Pearl Harbor on 18 March 1943. After topping off with fuel at Midway on 22 March, **PICKEREL** began her seventh war patrol off the eastern coast of northern Honshu. She was never heard from after her departure from Midway. She was ordered to remain in her area until sunset 1 May 1943 and then to return to Midway. Standing orders required her to transmit by radio prior to entering a circle of radius 500 miles from Midway, and this report was expected by 6 May. When it was not received, a message ordering an immediate reply was repeatedly sent. No answer was received, and plane search along her expected course, revealed nothing. As a result, she was reported lost on 12 May 1943. Antisubmarine attack data submitted by the Japanese at the end of the war list one attack which could conceivably have been on **PICKEREL**. This attack occurred on 3 April, 1943, off Shiranuka Lighthouse, on the northern tip of Honshu. This position is outside the area assigned to **PICKEREL**, but no other submarine was there. **FLYING FISH** was en route to the area between Honshu and Hokkaido and arrived there on 6 April, but **PICKEREL** might well have moved into the northern area for a few days until **FLYING FISH**'s arrival if she found hunting poor in her own area. Indeed, unless the Japanese attacked a submarine which was the product of their own imaginations, they must certainly have attacked **PICKEREL** on 3 April, since no other boat of ours was near the area of the attack. However, a special notation is made on the Japanese records to the effect that they are inaccurate for the month of April 1943. Thus there is every reason to speculate that, if **PICKEREL** did survive the attack of 3 April, she may have been attacked later in her own area and the attack may not have been reported. We know that there were Japanese mine plants along the coast of Honshu, but a study of the track chart for **PICKEREL**'s sixth war patrol, conducted in the same area, shows that the Commanding officer was

accustomed to stay outside the 60 fathom curve. Mines are normally ineffective in water that deep. The probability as to the cause of **PICKEREL**'s loss is that she was sunk by enemy depth charge attack. Operational casualties for mine explosions represent possibilities, but are not thought to be likely. During the six patrols before her final one, **PICKEREL** sank five ships totaling 16,100 tons, and damaged 10, totaling 9,100 tons. On her first patrol she did no damage to the enemy. Her second, conducted between Manila and Surabaya, resulted in the sinking of two freighters. **PICKEREL**'s third patrol was conducted along the Malay Barrier and again no successful attacks were made. In her fourth patrol, in the Philippines, six attacks were made, but none resulted in damage to the enemy. **PICKEREL**'s fifth patrol was a passage from Australia to Pearl Harbor for refit, with a short patrol in the Marianas en route. She damaged a freighter on this run. On her sixth patrol this ship went to the Kuriles to patrol the Tokyo-Kiska traffic lanes. In sixteen attacks, she sank a freighter and two sampans, and did damage to another freighter and eight sampans.

**USS GRENADIER I SS210** April 22, 1943~4 died as POW's

Patrolling in Lem Voalan Strait in the northeast Indian Ocean, on her sixth war patrol, **GRENADIER** under Lt. Cmdr. J. A. Fitzgerald met her end on 22 April 1943. The following account of her fate is taken from statements made by her Commanding officer and five of her men after they had been recovered from Japanese camps. On the night of 20 April 1943, having had poor hunting for two or three days in Lem Voalan Strait (northwest of Penang on the Malay Peninsula), **GRENADIER** ventured out ten miles west of that place to see what she could find. She found two ships, but before she could attack, they turned away. Figuring that they would come back to their original course in an hour and a half, Fitzgerald planned an attack to meet them on their course at that time. About 15 minutes before time to dive and prepare for the attack, a plane came in on **GRENADIER**, and she dived. As she was passing 120 feet, a violent explosion shook the ship, and all lights and power were lost. She was brought to rest on the bottom at about 270 feet. The hull and hatches were leaking badly aft, and a fire in the control cubicle kept the ship without propulsion. A bucket brigade kept the motors dry, and later a jury rig pump was called into service to perform the task, while the electricians worked all day to restore propulsion. Heat and exertion prostrated several men, but the work went on. At dusk, **GRENADIER** surfaced and continued the work of trying to restore herself. Finally, they were able to turn over one shaft very slowly, but everything possible had been done, and no more speed could be expected. Toward

morning what appeared to be a destroyer, but was actually an 1800-ton merchantman and an escort vessel were seen on the horizon, and a plane was driven away by gunfire. The skipper decided to scuttle the ship then, and it was done, with all hands being taken prisoner by the enemy merchant ship. The statements of the men relate the brutal treatment they received at the hands of the Japanese and how their spirit was kept up by their Commanding officer. The enemy gained no information from this gallant crew, despite the worst they could inflict, and all but four members of the crew were recovered from prison camps at the close of the war. Crewman Thomas R. Courtney described the two-year stay in captivity as a "living hell." The prisoners spent most of their time confined in small classrooms and cells in a convent in Malaysia, facing hunger and extremely harsh treatment. It was during their incarceration that the men scratched their names on two sections of a wall and one of the wooden doors (pictured below). In 1982, surviving crewmembers began sending money to the convent to support its work. Crewmember Robert W. Palmer began writing to the school board chairman, Sister Francis de Sales. Sister Francis replied, "For many years 'the writing on the wall' which we regard with such reverence was, to a certain extent, shrouded in mystery. All we knew was that these brave men were the crew of an American submarine, who suffered cruel torture on our premises at the hands of the Japanese." These initial contacts sparked an exchange of letters between Sister Francis and the crew, in particular Palmer, as well as their family members. With the march of time, many of the players in the **GRENADIER** saga are now gone. Sister Francis passed away on July 24, 1998. Be that as it may, the etchings and other displays in the classroom will remain a poignant reminder of what went on in the convent grounds during the war and the remarkable good that came out of that episode in the years that followed.

**USS SNOOK SS279** April 8, 1945~84~ men lost.

**SNOOK** (Cmdr. J. F. Walling) departed Guam on March 25, 1945 in company with **GRENADIER** (**SS210**) and **BANG** (**SS 385**) to carry out a coordinated patrol with Commander Walling commanding the group. They were to patrol Luzon Strait, the south coast of China, and the east coast of Hainan, and to perform lifeguard duties if so directed by dispatch. **SNOOK** returned to Guam for emergency repairs on March 27th, and departed on March 28th to rejoin her group. The patrol was **SNOOK**'s ninth. In accordance with her orders, weather reports were received daily from **SNOOK** as she proceeded westward until April 1st, when she was told to discontinue the reports. On the same date, **SNOOK** was directed to proceed

westward to join a coordinated attack group under Commander Cassidy in **TIGRONE (SS419)**. **BANG** and **BURRFISH (SS312)** already had been assigned lifeguard stations, and were not available for the attack group as originally planned. Although the last message received from **SNOOK** by shore bases was on April 1st, **TIGRONE** was in contact with her until April 8th. On April 9th, **TIGRONE** was unable to raise her by radio, nor was she ever able to afterwards. **TIGRONE's** inability to contact **SNOOK** may be explained by the fact that on April 10th **SNOOK** was directed to move eastward toward Luzon Strait, and on April 12th she was ordered to stand lifeguard duty for British carrier-based air strikes. Her position for this duty was in the vicinity of Sakeshima Gunto, about 200 miles east of northern Formosa. No acknowledgement for these orders was required. On April 20th, the Commander of a British carrier task force reported he had a place down in **SNOOK's** vicinity, but could not contact her by radio. **SNOOK** was ordered to search the area and to acknowledge these orders. When she failed to make a transmission, **BANG** was sent to conduct a search and rendezvous with **SNOOK**. When **SNOOK** had not appeared or made contact by May 16th, she was reported as presumed lost on her ninth patrol. A number of enemy submarine contacts were reported in the vicinity of **SNOOK's** lifeguard station during the period in which her loss occurred. During April and May 1945, five Japanese submarines were sunk in the Nansei Shoto chain. The circumstances surrounding **SNOOK's** loss suggest the possibility that one of these lost submarines may have torpedoed her while she was surfaced during her lifeguard duties and it was not reported. It is known that such tactics were suggested to Japanese submarine commanders by their supporters. No attacks had been reported by **SNOOK** prior to her loss on this patrol. She was, however, responsible for sinking 22 enemy ships, totaling 123,600 tons and damaging 10 ships, for 63,200 tons, on her eight patrols prior to her loss. During operations with an Okinawan company using a U.S. made "SCORPIO" ROV in 1995, a group of divers encountered a sonar contact with what appeared to be a metal structure, about 6 meters in girth and about 35 meters in length (exposed) at roughly an angle of 20-30 degrees. The sonar image of a large unexpected obstruction to the operations prompted the divers to command evasive maneuvers and avoid the area for the safety of the ROV. The divers, thinking they would have another opportunity to work in the area at a later date, left the area and never returned to that site. Their ROV was lost in 1997 off Yonaguni island, the last island belonging to Okinawa off the east coast of Taiwan. They were fairly certain that the object was a submarine, and quite possibly the **SNOOK (SS-**

279). No further dives in the area were ever attempted.

**USS THRESHER SSN593 April 10, 1963-129 men lost.**

On the morning of April 10, 1963, the ship proceeded to conduct sea trials about 200 miles off the coast of Cape Cod. At 9:13 a.m., the USS Skylark (a surface vessel assigned to assist Thresher) received a signal, via underwater telephone, indicating that the submarine was experiencing "minor difficulties, have positive up-angle, attempting to blow." Shortly afterward, the Skylark received a series of garbled, undecipherable message fragments from the Thresher. At 9:18 a.m., the Skylark's sonar picked up the sounds of the submarine breaking apart. All 129 hands were lost—112 military and 17 civilian technicians. The submarine community, the Navy and the nation were stunned. Thresher was the best of the newest. The ship was built at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine and was the first of a new class of submarine, designed for optimum performance of sonar and weapons systems. Thresher was able to dive deeper and run quieter than other submarine at that time. She was launched on July 9, 1960, and was commissioned by the Navy on August 3, 1961. Two days after the disaster President Kennedy issued Executive Order 11104, ordering U.S. Flags to "be flown at half-staff on all buildings, grounds and naval vessels of the Federal Government in the District of Columbia and throughout the United States and its Territories and possessions," from April 12th to 15th. To the Navy, the disaster meant more than the loss of 129 crewmembers and civilians. Thresher had been the most advanced submarine in the world, capable of reaching depths and speeds unimaginable a decade before. The Navy's investigation concluded that while the **THRESHER** was operating at test depth, a leak had developed at a silver-brazed joint in an engine room seawater system, and water from the leak may have short-circuited electrical equipment, causing cascading casualties. The submarine was unable to surface. Navy officials swore **THRESHER** crewmembers would not die in vain. After the investigation, the Navy embarked on an extensive review of practices and procedures in effect during the **THRESHER's** overhaul. The reviewers determined that existing standards at the time were not followed throughout the re-fit to ensure safe operation of the submarine. Four issues were of particular concern: design, construction, quality assurance and procurement. The lessons learned by the Navy from the **THRESHER** tragedy were to ensure a safer submarine force. Because of improvement in submarine design, construction and repair, further disasters have been avoided. Perhaps the most appropriate legacy for **THRESHER** is the fact that

being a submariner in the U.S. Navy today is a lot safer than it used to be. "Some good came out of the tragedy," said Neal Collier, son of **THRESHER's**, LT Merrill Collier, onboard in preparation of relieving the Engineering Officer. "My father died on **THRESHER**," added Collier, "but the tragedy had a positive effect in the submarine program, nuclear power and national defense." At a memorial ceremony in 1988 in Norfolk, VA., marking the 25th anniversary of the loss of **THRESHER**, Vice Admiral Bruce Demars, the Navy's Chief submarine officer at the time, had this to say. "The loss of **THRESHER** initiated fundamental changes in the way we do business...changes in design, construction, inspections, safety checks, tests, and more," said the Admiral. "We have not forgotten the lessons learned. It's a much safer submarine force today," he added.

#### Getting Underway:

God, I miss the sights, sounds and smells of a submarine. I miss my life aboard a boat. I can still see that misty black silhouette as she slipped the bonds that tied her to the land while the colors were shifted, and

ships horn sounded it's solitary note. We were headed out to sea where a sailor belongs. Out into the channel past the Arizona while rendering honors to our fallen comrades. There was the smell of salt water and the feel of the tropic breeze that touched our face like a hand from heaven as we stood on the bridge, the lush greenery of the island falling astern. The low rumble of our Main engines reverberated through the deck into our very soul and spoke of the power of God himself. The pulses and rhythms of the rhapsody they created were broken only by the muted voices that relayed the ships commands. As we passed the channel buoys at the entrance to Pearl, we began a gentle roll that told us we had left home and loved ones while traveling the same passages others had once traveled to war. Men and ships of whom many never return home. Now it was time to secure the maneuvering watch and set the underway watch. Ships routine was in force. The bow wave formed with a gentle hiss as we knifed through the sea and it wouldn't

be long before playful Dolphins would leap in perfect unison over the crested water play ground we had made. Off in the distance you could see the shafts of rain from a far off storm while close by flying fish skimmed the water and gulls circled effortlessly over head calling to us as if to wish us a safe journey and a speedy return. Our lookouts scanned the leadened skys to the horizon for signs of life, ready at any second to abandon their watch at the command, "DIVE, DIVE" as the raspy voice of the diving alarm echoed in the hull and we slid silently beneath the waves to become as one with the sea. Oh! how I miss it. These will be the

memories that will play in my mind when my spirit passes silently away and I slip into that final harbor. (Author unknown) Submitted by **Robie Robertson**

#### Submarine Maker sold to U.S. Investors:

(EXCERPT) Mon Mar 11, 3:25 PM ET BERLIN - German submarine maker HDW, the country's biggest shipbuilder, was sold Monday to the investment arm of a major U.S. bank for an undisclosed sum, its former German owners Babcock-Borsig and Preussag said. One Equity Partners, an investment firm financed by Chicago-based Bank One Corporation, has bought a 75 percent stake in the HDW yard, engineering firm Babcock-Borsig said in a statement. The sale still requires approval from antitrust authorities. HDW, short for Howaldtswerke Deutsche Werft, is a leading manufacturer of non-nuclear-powered military submarines and has bought rivals in Sweden and Greece in a bid to create a shipbuilding giant able to compete for big orders around the world. But the company has recently chalked up losses from its civilian shipbuilding, complaining that yards in the Far East have forced down prices. Babcock-Borsig said it turned to One Equity after failing in a bid to take control of the yard itself, but was confident the U.S. private equity firm would back HDW's expansion strategy. Babcock-Borsig joined Preussag, a former steel giant that has transformed itself into a tour operator, and a private investor in selling about 25 percent of HDW each to One Equity. Still, Babcock-Borsig said it would retain a 25 percent stake in the company, which employs about 5,000 workers worldwide, many at its main yard in the Baltic Sea port of Kiel, Germany. One Equity has agreed to leave the management of the company in its current hands and to offer minority stakes in HDW to German steel companies ThyssenKrupp and Ferrostaal, which also have shipbuilding interests. Babcock-Borsig said One Equity also has pledged not to sell further shares for at least five years and will give German investors first refusal on any subsequent sales. HDW had revenue of 461 million euros (dls 400 million) in its last fiscal year, which ended in September. Military vessels accounted for just 6 million euros (dls 5.3 million), though submarines accounted for most of its 4.5 billion euro (dls 3.9 billion) order book. Submitted by Dave Hamish

#### LR5 SUBMARINE RESCUE SYSTEM:

The UK's Submarine Rescue Headquarters is based at Renfrew in Glasgow, Scotland. The service is managed by the Royal Navy from the Ministry of Defence Headquarters in Bath. The operating team of pilots, engineers and technicians are employed by Rumic Ltd to maintain and upgrade the rescue systems based at Renfrew. The main assets of the rescue service are a remotely operated vehicle, the Scorpio 45, and the LR5 submersible vehicle to

carry rescue divers down to a distressed submarine, rescue the survivors and bring them back to safety. The rescue service remains on permanent standby and is ready to mobilise to any site world-wide within twelve hours of notification of an emergency.

**UNDERWATER RESCUE OPERATION** Any navy will determine the position of its own distressed submarine, the condition of the survivors and the condition of the submarine. When the UK Submarine Rescue Service receives a callout from any navy, the ships in the area of the distressed submarine which are capable of hosting the rescue submersible are identified. The service maintains a computer register of ships capable of acting as the mother ship to host the submersible rescue system. The register of ships includes large diving ships, cable ships and other ships which have sufficient deck space for the rescue system, capacity to carry the rescue team and survivors and have sufficiently high performance to operate in high sea states and speed to travel quickly to the scene of the emergency. The host mother ship is notified and called to a port to embark the eleven-strong rescue team of specialist divers and technical officers together with the rescue submersible and its associated equipment. The submersible can be air lifted by a military or civil transporter aircraft for example by C-5 Galaxy or Antonov and then transferred to port for speedy installation on the mother ship. For launch from the mother ship the ship's own launch hoists can be used or alternatively an A-frame can be set up on the mother ship in under twelve hours.

**INITIAL CONTACT WITH THE SUBMARINE** Rescue divers approach the distressed submarine and use the submarine's escape hatch to transfer emergency life support stores. The divers prepare the escape hatch on the distressed submarine for the arrival of the rescue submersible. A Scorpio remotely operated vehicle (ROV) can be used to mark the site with navigation beacons. The ROV is equipped with a sonar, a depth measuring system, tracking transponders and four video cameras. A manipulator installed on the front of the ROV can be used to clear debris from the submarine's escape hatch. The ROV can also fit an underwater telephone and a radiation monitor, and be used to deliver life support systems to the submarine.

**DEPLOYMENT OF THE LR5 SUBMERSIBLE** Both the Scorpio remotely operated vehicle and the LR5 submersible are fitted with an Integrated Navigation and Tracking Outfit, developed by Kongsberg Simrad, which integrates the surface and sub-sea navigation data. The Rescue Co-ordinator on the mother ship uses the presentation from the navigation and tracking system and the images from the sonars and cameras to provide real-time detailed pictures of the distressed submarine and the deployed rescue systems. The

rescue submersible makes a watertight seal onto the distressed submarine's escape hatch. The watertight seal allows transfer of personnel without being submitted to the high external sea pressure. Technicians and medical officers can be transferred to the distressed submarine if required and survivors from the submarine are transferred onto the submersible. Up to 15 submarine survivors can be evacuated at a time to the mother ship or to a mother submarine. The LR5 could make up to eight trips to the distressed submarine (rescuing 120 survivors) before needing to recharge the battery power supply. Portable decompression chambers installed on the mother ship are used to treat the survivors in order to

avoid decompression problems. The survivors are returned to normal atmospheric pressure in controlled conditions and at a controlled rate.

**LR5 SUBMERSIBLE VEHICLE** The LR5 vehicle normally carries three submersible crew members, the pilot, a co-pilot and the systems operator. The vehicle is equipped with a suite of tools including a Slings-by manipulator, an ejectable claw, scateur type rope cutters, guillotine action wire rope cutters and a 305mm disc cutter. The communications suite on the vehicle consists of 10kHz and 27kHz underwater telephones, an acoustic pinger operating at 27.5kHz and a Model 2056 voice and pinger set, operating at 10kHz, 27kHz and 45kHz.

**OPERATING CONDITIONS** The LR5 is capable of operating in seastate conditions generating up to 5m wave height and surface visibility of at least one nautical mile. The LR5 two 6kW electric motors give a maximum speed of 2.5 knots, which limits the rescue operations to conditions of a maximum 1.5 knots seabed current and the maximum operating depth is 500m. Mating with the distressed submarine can be achieved in up to 1 knot seabed current conditions. Where the distressed submarine is lying at an angle, a 15° skirt wedge is used to assist mating. The LR5 has a "cram capacity" of 15 at an internal pressure of five bar.

### World War II submariners honored :

Associated Press March 11, 2002 PENSACOLA, Fla. — World War II submariners who rescued more than 500 downed aviators from the Pacific Ocean now have their own monument. Veterans and their families cheered as a two-ton granite monument was unveiled Saturday at Veterans Memorial Park with the names of the 80 ships that served in the "Submarine Lifeguard League" from 1943 to 1945. "This was sort of the forgotten part of submarine work," said Jim McGlamery, 78, who served aboard three submarines during World War II. Among the hundreds of downed pilots saved was then-Navy Lt. George Bush. "You could say that rescue fostered two presidents," said Jim Rolle of Milton, Fla., referring to President George Bush and to his son

now in the White House, President George W. Bush. Rolle is commander of the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc.'s Drum Base, the local submarine veterans group that began raising money for the project in 1995. "And (submariners) suffered horrendous losses — one out of every five boats never returned, and more than 3,600 sailors went down with them," he said. "Their loss was worse than any U.S. force's in World War II for its size." Rolle served aboard submarines in the 1960s and 1970s during the Cold War. "I rode all the boats the older guys rode — except later, when they were falling apart," Rolle said. "We're about to lose what's considered America's greatest generation, so it's important we get this done now."

#### Veterans Battle for Health Care:

By DALE EISMAN, The Virginian-Pilot March 7, 2002  
Washington: They were warriors once, risking their lives in careers of service. Most are gray- or white-haired now; they carry canes rather than rifles and wear hearing aids instead of helmets. They spend too many days at funerals or in hospitals, watching themselves and their friends slip away. But in a federal courthouse Wednesday, a band of long-retired soldiers, sailors, airmen and Marines marched into battle once more. And there was no mistaking their resolve. "In grade school, we were taught that we live in a democracy . . .," said Neil Whitworth of Norfolk, a former Air Force technical sergeant. "Today, I want to see if possibly we're in a totalitarian form of government." Whitworth was among more than 100 military retirees who packed the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit to hear arguments in a lawsuit aimed at punishing the federal government for failing to provide career troops with free health care for life. If they win, up to 1.4 million military retirees and dependents over 65 years old could collect \$10,000 each — a total of \$14 billion. An estimated 40,000 military retirees over 65 live in Virginia. A three-judge panel ruled in the retirees' favor 13 months ago, concluding that they had what amounts to a contract for free care. But the Justice Department secured a rehearing before the full 12-member court. The retirees' fight for a benefit they insist was promised them when they enlisted has spurred congressional action to give them health insurance at a bargain premium, adding \$4 billion per year to the defense budget. "We're not asking for charity. We earned certain benefits. We would like to see those benefits honored," said Wiley Heninger of Norfolk. Whitworth, Heninger and about two dozen other ex-service members from Hampton Roads rode a bus to Wednesday's hearing, then trooped up Capitol Hill to remind U.S. Rep. Ed Schrock, R-2nd District, of their interest in the issue. Heninger, 71, a retired Navy chief petty officer, praised the Tricare for Life insurance coverage that Congress extended to military retirees beginning last October but said the

\$50 monthly premium "is not part of my deal." He was promised free care and won't settle for less, Heninger said. "I don't care about the damages. I care about the benefit." The retirees' lawyer, retired Air Force Col. George "Bud" Day, told the judges that beginning in 1799, the U.S. military entered into what became a contract to care for career service members and their dependents without charge. The commitment never was spelled out by statute, Day acknowledged, but was made and repeated in recruiting brochures and personal appeals by officers soliciting re-enlistments. Congresses and presidents who built and funded the military health system acquiesced in the arrangement, and free care was provided until 1995, Day argued. But with more than 100 military bases shutting down in the wake of the end of the Cold War, Congress that year forced military retirees over 65 into the Medicare program. Many continue to receive free care in military hospitals and clinics when space permits. Justice Department lawyer E. Roy Hawkens said such care on a space-availability basis is all the military could ever promise, absent direct permission from Congress. He said recruiters who made commitments of lifetime care were acting outside their authority. Both Hawkens and Day were questioned aggressively by the judges, who gave no hint of how long they might take deciding the issue. Several pressed Hawkens on his contention that service secretaries could not bind their successors to provide free care, and Judge Timothy B. Dyk noted that the secretaries certainly have power to enter into other binding contracts. Chief Judge H. Robert Mayer, meanwhile, grilled Day on apparent contradictions between military regulations limiting service members' health benefits and the retirees' claims that they were guaranteed free lifetime care. The Supreme Court has ruled that government contracts can't be enforced when they conflict with regulations already in place, Mayer suggested. Though they say recruiters continued to include the promise in literature and personal appeals until at least the early 1990s, the retirees contend it had particular weight for those who enlisted before 1956. That's when Congress first voted to limit free care to that provided in military hospitals. Day came to court Wednesday wearing the Medal of Honor awarded him after a stint as a prisoner of war in the Vietnam era. He and other military retirees living in the Florida panhandle began their fight for free care in 1996, forming the Class Act Group to press their case. Class Act now claims membership of more than 18,000 military retirees nationwide. It is at the center of a network of other retiree organizations that continue to lobby Congress for other changes in military health coverage. Reach Dale Eisman at [icemandc@msn.com](mailto:icemandc@msn.com) or (703) 913-9872.

### Search for Sub I-52:

A salvage diver's search for a treasure of sunken gold was responsible for tuning up a piece of American naval history at the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division, Newport. In June of 1944, a huge Japanese transport submarine, the I-52, was enroute from its home islands to German occupied France with a cargo of 290 metric tons of strategic materials. The Japanese were going to exchange this cargo, which included tin, tungsten, rubber, and two metric tons of gold, for German technology. The Japanese submarine rendezvoused with a German support submarine in the mid-Atlantic to take on fuel and technicians who, ironically, were going to install anti-aircraft radar on the Japanese vessel for the dangerous sail to the Bay of Biscay. Unknown to the Japanese, the allies had broken their code. Each night when the Japanese submarine surfaced to recharge its batteries, its coded messages, which included its location, were being monitored. The escort carrier USS BOGUE, enroute to the U.S. from Europe, was given new orders to find and destroy the Japanese submarine. After arriving in the area of the meeting, flights of Avenger torpedo bombers took off around the clock from the BOGUE, looking and listening. On the night of June 24, 1944, an Avenger got a blip on its radar and dropped flares. The submarine dove, and sonabuys, dropped from antisubmarine warfare squadron's aircraft, picked-up the 357-foot Japanese submarine and commenced an attack. The first aircraft dropped depth charges and then a Mark 24 "mine." The Mark 24 was a code name for the then top secret acoustic torpedo that was being used for the very first time in the war. The torpedo damaged the submarine, and the spot where the submarine was last located was marked with a float light. Another Avenger, piloted by Lt. William Gordon, arrived on the scene, its sonabuys picking up the sounds of the damaged submarine's cavitating propeller noises. Another acoustic homing torpedo was dropped; finding and critically crippling the Japanese submarine as it tried to get away. Fifty years later, a Texas maritime researcher named Paul Tidwell, learned of the I-52 while combing through newly declassified documents, and decided to attempt to salvage the approximately \$25 million in gold. In his research, Tidwell came across references to 78-rpm records that had been made at the former Naval Sound Laboratory in New London, CT. The records, later made into tapes, were compilations of underwater sounds used to train Navy sonar operators. Excerpts of those training tapes are still requested for use by schools for inclusion during marine studies. On one of the recordings, the narrator notes "Here are two more recordings of actual combat at sea, recorded by an airborne magnetic wire recorder connected to a sonabuoy receiver and intercom system." On the

recording Lt. Gordon can be heard talking to his crew, along with the sound of a torpedo exploding and metal twisting. Tidwell contacted the Naval Historical Center in Washington DC, to see if they could help locate any additional information on the original Gordon wire recordings. The Historical Center in turn called the Naval Undersea Warfare Center Division in Newport, the successor to the Sound Laboratory. Coincidentally, that contact was made on June 24, fifty-four years to the day of the I-52's sinking. Like a lot of military facilities, the Division has undergone change in recent years. Some "old stuff" did not survive the closure of the New London Laboratory and the consolidation of its personnel, records, etc. in Newport. Little hope was held for an insignificant 50-year old spool of wire. However, Mary Barravecchia, head of the Division's Technical Library, took the lead to track down the recording. Originally employed in New London, Barravecchia knew who the "keepers" were, and of the nooks and crannies where a small spool of wire might hide. To the amazement of all, two canisters, identified simply as "Gordon wire No. 1" and "Gordon wire No. 2," marked June 24, 1944 were found. Once the wire tapes were found, the search for a functioning recorder began. The only place found to have a wire recorder still capable of playing the recordings was the National Archives in Washington. The original spools of hair-thin wire on which the last moments the Japanese submarine I-52 were recorded have been transferred to the National Archives for permanent

### Laugh for the health of it:

An unemployed man went to apply for a job with Microsoft as a janitor. The manager there arranges for him to take an aptitude test. After the test, the manager says, "You will be employed as a janitor at minimum wage, \$5.15 an hour. Let me have your e-mail address, so that I can send you a form to complete and tell you where to report for work on your first day." Taken aback, the man protests that he has neither a computer nor an e-mail address. To this the MS manager replies, "Well, then, that means that you virtually don't exist and can therefore hardly expect to be employed by Microsoft. Stunned, the man leaves. Not knowing where to turn and having only \$10.00 in his wallet, he buys a 25 LB flat of tomatoes at the supermarket. In less than two hours, he sells all the tomatoes individually at 100% profit. Repeating the process several times more that day, he ends up with almost \$100.00 before going to sleep that night. Thus it dawns on him that he could quite easily make a living selling tomatoes. Getting up early every day and going to bed late, he multiplies his profits quickly. After a short time he acquires a cart to transport several dozen boxes of tomatoes, only to have to trade it in again so that he can buy a pickup truck to support his expanding business.

By the end of the second year, he is the owner of a fleet of pickup trucks and manages a staff of a hundred former unemployed people, all selling tomatoes. Planning for the future of his wife and children, he decides to buy some life insurance. Consulting with an insurance adviser, he picks an insurance plan to fit his new circumstances. At the end of the telephone conversation, the adviser asks him for his e-mail address in order to send the final documents electronically. When the man replies that he has no e-mail, the adviser is stunned. "What, you don't have e-mail? How on earth have you managed to amass such wealth without the Internet, e-mail and e-commerce? Just imagine where you would be now, if you had been connected to the Internet from the very start!" "Well," replied the tomato millionaire, "I would be a janitor at Microsoft!" By definition, a fable must have a moral. This one has four:

1. The Internet, e-mail and e-commerce do not need to rule your life.
2. If you don't have e-mail, but work hard, you can still become a millionaire.
3. Since you got this story via e-mail, you're probably closer to becoming a janitor than you are to becoming a millionaire.
4. If you do have a computer and e-mail, you have already been taken to the cleaners by Microsoft!

Submitted by Shipmate **Adrian Stuke**

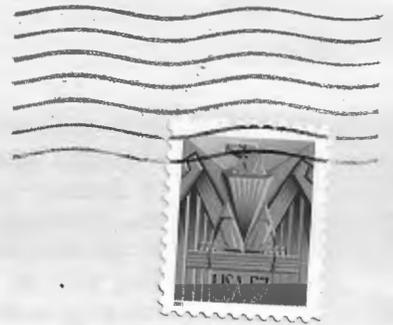
#### Memorials on the Move:

A two-year effort to relocate the ships at the Buffalo and Erie County Naval and Military Park, in Erie Canal Harbor, is showing signs of major progress. Divers have been working underwater to prepare the vessels for the 100-yard journey to their new moorings, and Friday they completed removing propellers from the USS The Sullivans. The destroyer's two 20-ton propellers were hoisted out of the water using cranes. "This is another big step along the way," said Patrick J. Cunningham, executive director of the naval park. "It brings us closer to getting everything relocated." Removal of the propellers reduces the amount of dredging necessary to accommodate the ship at its new location, just west of its current resting place. The current timetable for overhaul of the waterfront attraction calls for the submarine **USS Croaker SSK/SS246**, which was towed off site last year to make way for relocation in the Inner Harbor, to be brought to its new moorings in July. The USS Little Rock is also scheduled to be moved into place sometime this summer. The ambitious and painstaking task of relocating the massive naval vessels began in January 2000, when divers from Buffalo Industrial Diving Co. worked to dig out

about 11,000 cubic yards of sediment that built up beneath the Little Rock during its 20-year stint in the harbor. Over the past few months, the diving crews have been working on underwater alterations on the Little Rock and the USS The Sullivans, including the removal of propellers and sonar domes, and ballasting. The work is part of a \$3.1 million state contract, which also includes subsurface blasting and dredging, plus installation of cradles to hold the vessels at the new site. As the relocation work continues, naval park officials announced the acquisition of significant pieces of the **USS Boston SSN703**, a decommissioned nuclear submarine. The sub's sail and rudder will arrive at the waterfront facility early this summer to become part of the permanent collection. The submarine sail, the part of the submarine that rises above the water while the vessel is surfaced, will be the first sail of a Los Angeles-class attack sub to go on display. The nearly 50-ton sail stands 16 feet tall, 20 feet long and 5 feet wide. In addition to being an attraction for naval history buffs, the USS Boston parts also have a local tie, Cunningham said. "The Boston is identical to the **USS Buffalo SSN715**, which we'd love to get someday but is still in use," he said. "Even though these are parts, not an entire submarine, it's still a unique acquisition for us that will have a lot of appeal." The USS Boston group has also scheduled its 2003 reunion in Buffalo to take advantage of the presence of the sub sections. ~~He~~ estimated that 500 former crew members will come to town for that event. The summer arrival of the Boston parts will have special significance for Bruce McCausland, a Buffalo resident who served on the fast attack sub from its initial manning stage in late 1979 through the end of its first deployment in 1983. "The first time I saw her, she was still under construction in the shipyard in Groton, Conn.," McCausland said. "I was a newly reporting nuclear reactor operator. We were there to learn the system and work with the shipyard on the installation of the components." McCausland, an electronics technician 2nd class, was on board when Adm. Hyman Rickover rode the **USS Boston** during its sea trials, the last that Rickover oversaw. McCausland then spent the next three years on the vessel during its around-the-world first mission. "It offers me a sense of closure," said McCausland, an active member of the USS Boston alumni group. "I've never been able to show my family physical evidence of that experience. When it's on display, I'll be able to take them to the park and explain what it was like." The naval park opens for its 2002 season April 1. It will be open for visitors every day from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

#### **Team Work**

**Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed people can change the world.  
Indeed .... It is the only thing that ever has!**



**Return To:**  
U. S. Submarine Veterans, Perch Base  
6509 W. Devonshire  
Glendale, AZ 85033-3350

<http://perch-base.org>



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