



The "MidWatch"



February 2009
Volume 15 - Issue 2

The monthly newsletter of Perch Base - USSVI Phoenix, Arizona

<http://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		

NEXT MEETING

12 noon, Saturday, Feb. 14, 2009
American Legion Post #105
3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, AZ 85053
(see map on page 5)

2009 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. Shipmates, we salute you!



These are the 2009 Contributors. Have you given you support?

Jerry Ailston, David Anderson, Ted Asbell, Reynaldo Altos, Gary Bartlett, Kenneth Becker, Richard Bernier, Ron Beyer, Walt Blomgren, Ed Brooks, David Carpenter, Roger Cousin, George Crider, George Debo, Jim Denzien, Butch Deshong, Jim Edwards, Harry Ellis, Joe Errante, David Fledderjohn, Tom Fooshee, Charles Greene, Billy Grieves, William Grissom, Michael Haler, Robert Hanson, Dave Harnish, Ed Hawkins, Harry Heller, Glenn Herold, Les Hillman, Stephen Hough, Davy Jones, Mike Keating, Denny Kerton, Jack Kimball, Darrell Lambert, Al Landeck, Doug LaRock, Burtis Loftin, George Long, George Marions, Raymond Marshall, Sandy Martin, Terry Martin, Bob May, Alan Miller, Paul Miller, Roger M. Miller, Tim Moore, Bob Nance, Jim Nelson, James



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Sailing Orders



FEBRUARY MEETING

The February Perch Base meeting, and future meetings, will be at 12 noon and on the second Saturday of each month and at the

American Legion Post #105, located at 3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, AZ. This is 1/2 block northwest of the intersection of 35th Ave. and Thunderbird.

(See map on page 6)

Next Meeting - Feb. 14 Special Guest Speaker

Cdr. Darryl Toppin, XO of NRD
(Navy Recruiting District) Phoenix.

Topics:

- U.S. Navy today
- Navy Week, 4-11 March 2009 (Peoria Sports Complex in conjunction with Cactus League spring training)
- RDAC (Recruiting District Advisory Council)

Sailing Orders



(continued)

Perch Base Spring Picnic March 28, 2009

LOCATION: White Tanks Recreation Park. Go west on Olive Ave. as far as you can go and you end up at the park.

PRICE: Picnic meal will be \$7.00 per person. Admission to the White Tanks Recreation Park is \$6.00 per carload.

MENU: Lunch will include chicken, burgers, brats, condiments, soft drinks and water.

Note: It will be BYOB so members will need to supply their own alcoholic beverages if they want them.

September 8 - 12, 2009

Don't wait! The next USSVI convention is right around the corner and this time, it practically next door. San Diego Base is hosting -- an easy few hours drive AND gas prices are low!

But the big news about this convention is that it's a joint venture with the ISA-USA (International) Convention. This is the first time (in recent memory) that the International is meeting in the US and the very first time, a joint convention is held.

Just think! Smooze with not just US boat sailors, but German, French, Russian and English.

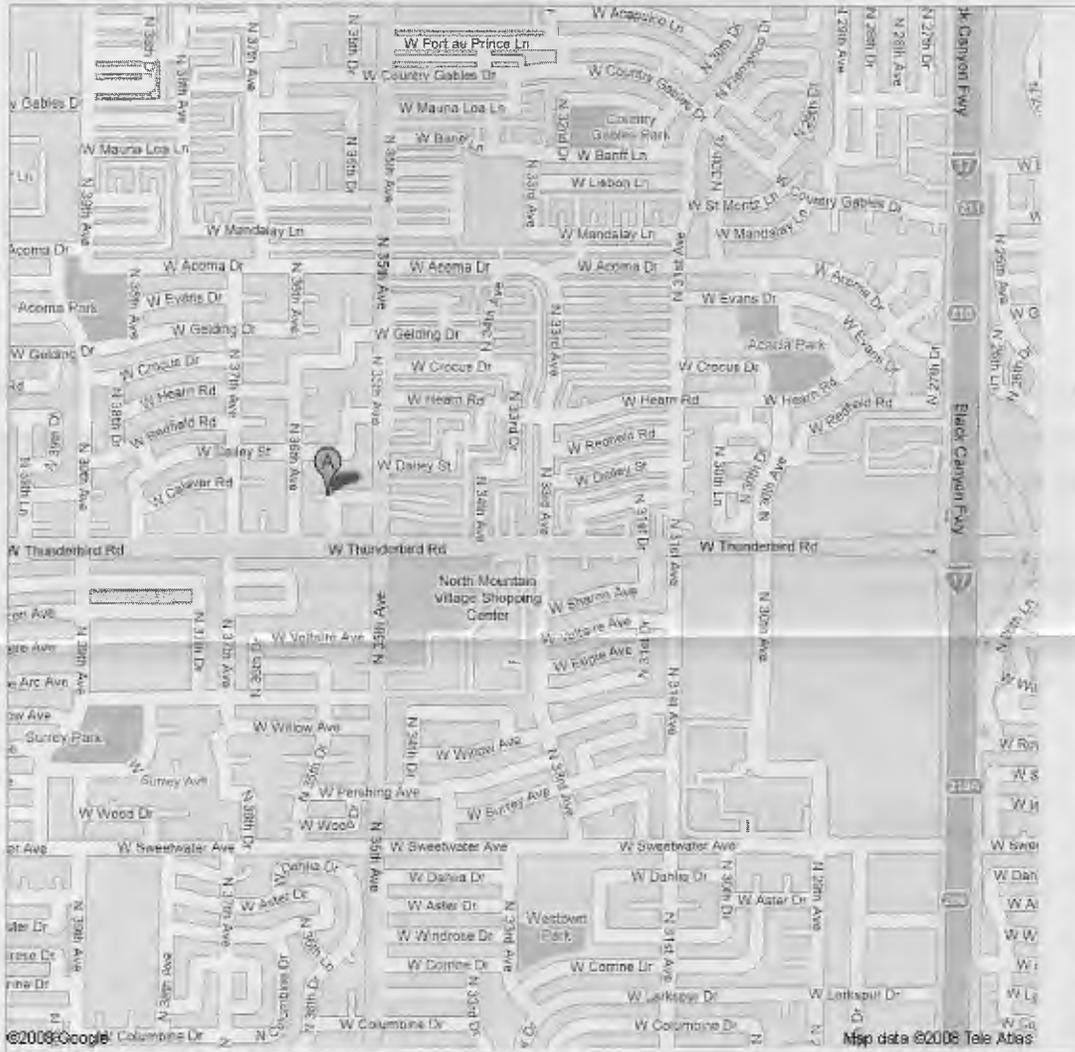
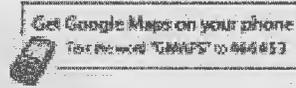
Check the internet link just below to go to the special convention web site.



<http://www.ussvisandiego.org/Convention2009/index.htm>



Address **3534 W Calavar Rd**
Phoenix, AZ 85053



Check out this map to get to the American Legion Post #105

Foundation Shipmates



These organizations and individuals have contributed to the Perch Base Foundation and deserve special recognition as "Foundations Shipmates." Perch Base members are encouraged to use these organizations as a way of saying, "thanks."

Avondale Toyota

Larry Harker Auto Repair Inc.

Fairings - Etc

White Shears Flowers

Frank Bono Metal Design

Southwest Steel Sales LLC

United Parcel Service (UPS)

We Urgently Need Help!!



Shipmates, we need urgent help in cash contributions to the Base. Our magnificent float, a scale model of the USS Phoenix (SSN-702), is ~~exposed to the elements without shelter.~~

After a great deal of research, we have decided on a 40 foot-long sea-van storage module that will be placed, for now, in Shipmate Walt Blomgren's back yard.

There are two main reasons this is the best choice for a shelter. First, it is a total, complete shelter that can easily be relocated if needed. Second, the 40-foot length will allow for our other storage needs that we currently pay about \$40 a month to keep in a rental locker – an instant cost savings.

But an adequate 40 foot sea-van costs about \$3,700 delivered. We just don't have that in the Base treasury now.

Please, even in these hard economic times, dig deep and contribute to buying the sea-van as soon as possible. Remember, if you contribute to the Perch Base Foundation, your donation is 100 percent tax deductible!

From the Base Officers, thank you.





Jim Nelson: he's home . . . at last!

Jim Nelson is home! His three-month tour of west valley hospitals and care units is over! (BIG GRIN) Welcome back Jim and we hope to see you at the February meeting. Jim and Nancy's home address is:

9503 W. Spanish Moss Ln.
Sun City, AZ 85373-1741

Need a Ride to a Meeting?

If you ever need a ride to a meeting, don't kiss off the meeting. Contact the Base's Chaplain, Howard Doyle to arrange a ride. Howard can be reached at:

(623) 935-3830 - home
(602) 228-2445 - mobile
d-hdolye@msn.com

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.



Shipmate



Shipmate

FLASH-01: Annual Member Dues Renewal

Submitted by: Pat Householder on 1/27/2009

As you know, the Feb 1st dues deadline for dropping members is almost upon us.

As Mike Bircumshaw announced, because of some unique circumstances, we are going to extend this deadline by two weeks to Feb 15 for this one year only.

Your national board is in full agreement that this step needs to be taken, but we do so with the greatest of reluctance.

Why?

There are unique circumstances at play this year.

1. The economy is in the tank and there is a lot of uncertainty in the air.
2. The dues renewal grace period deadline shifted this year from April 1st to Feb 1st. In spite of all the publicity given to this change, there are still many members who do not seem to be aware.
3. Dues request letters from the National Office normally go out the first week of January to the remaining 'Dinks' but this year the mail out was delayed, leaving little time for them to reply back.

Particularly troubling to the board and others who care about the integrity of our Constitution and Bylaws, our recent C&B rewrite did not take into account and give us flexibility in responding to special circumstances such as this.

We are left with the unhappy choice of following the letter of the C&B and jettisoning approx 25% of our annual member shipmates, or declaring an emergency and over-riding the constitutional provision to grant a one-time, 15 day extension.

We have chosen the common-sense second alternative, and at the same time I've asked our C&B committee chair to draft a proposed amendment for vote that will provide such a constitutional exception for such circumstances in the future.

This one-time event does not set a precedent and will not be repeated.

It is being done in the spirit of our brotherhood to allow our distracted shipmates a little more time to respond to a dues request letter that should have been sent out a little sooner.

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Graphics Designer
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Fax: 623-886-8727 Web: www.adventsign.com

Snow Bird Info - Members with Dual Addresses

Submitted by: T. Michael Bircumshaw on 12/22/2008

WHAT'S WRONG WITH THIS PICTURE?

According to our National Data Base we have a total of 119 declared SNOW BIRDS within our ranks. However, we have 180 members who are currently on the TEMPORARY AWAY list.

It is only SNOW BIRDS that get themselves on the TEMPORARY AWAY list and it happens like this.

One of our members (YOU) leaves his PRIMARY RESIDENCE for more than 30 days. He has (YOU HAVE) gone somewhere to avoid the weather or escape the kids (whatever).

As soon as the 30-day level is reached the USPS (POST OFFICE) throws away all of his (YOUR) BULK MAIL. Bulk Mail includes your American Submariner Magazine. Then, the USPS sends the American Submariner a bill for fifty cents and tells us that the absent member is (YOU ARE) TEMPORARY AWAY.

We immediately take you off the mail list because we do not know where you are or if you are ever coming back and your magazine delivery comes to a Dead Stop. It does not start up again until we know where you are. You have lost your magazines and we have all lost money and the magazines.

We can improve on this with a little member cooperation.

Make sure that if you are going to be gone from your Primary Address for more than 30 days you use the "SECOND ADDRESS" feature in the USSVI Member Data Base.

To make sure that it gets done right please open the USSVI Web Site at www.USSVI.org and read the instructions. On the Home page, left Hand side, select "DOCUMENTS". On the next opening window select "MANUALS" and find the PDF (Adobe File) marked SNOW BIRD INFO.PDF. Open it, read it, and do it and you should be good to go. Please remember that you must "Swap" your address information each time you move from one address to another.

Base Float Coordinator

Now that Perch Base has a world-class float, the USS Phoenix (SSN-702), the demands for usage have skyrocketed. So the base has a new position, the FLOAT COORDINATOR. If you know of a chance to show off the float, contact:

Barry Bowers
(623) 237-1121
barry85305@gmail.com

Diesel Boat Manuals On-Line

There is a series of Diesel Submarine Training Manuals that was completed just after WW II now available online. (EDITOR: Another reason to get a computer for the techno un-savy!

The series describes the peak of WW II US submarine technology, and includes:

1. The Fleet Type Submarine NavPers 16160
2. Submarine Main Propulsion Diesels NavPers 16161
3. Submarine Electrical Installations NavPers 16162
4. Submarine Refrigerating and Air-Conditioning Systems NavPers 16163
5. Submarine Distilling Systems Navpers 16163A
6. Submarine Air Systems NavPers 16164
7. Submarine Periscope Manual NavPers 16165
8. Submarine Trim and Drain Systems NavPers 16166
9. Submarine Sonar Operator's Manual NavPers 16167
10. Submarine Underwater Log Systems NavPers 16168
11. Submarine Hydraulic Systems NavPers 16169
12. Torpedo Tubes, 21-Inch submerged, Mks 32 to 39 O.P. 1085

A special 'Thank You' is due to Richard Pekelney of the San Francisco Maritime Museum for making these pubs available online and to Robert C. Machen of Montana Base for bringing it to our attention.

Click on the link, below, or paste into your browser

<http://www.maritime.org/fleetsub/elect/index.htm>

Do you Need a Vest?



Need a SubVets vest? Holly, our official base embroiderer, can make one for you. Holly has done all the work on out flags and the spare tire cover for the float. Pretty impressive stuff!

Give Holly a call and support a vendor that has done so much for Perch Base.

~~NEWS-05: KAP(SS)4KID(SS) now an OFFICIAL USSVCF/USSVI Program.~~

Submitted by: Pat Householder on 12/17/2008

The Charitable Foundation Board this day (12/17) has approved a motion that "the Kap(SS) 4 Kid(SS) program is accepted and acknowledged as an official USSVI CF/USSVI program, and that donations to support the K4K program may be made to the Brotherhood Fund of USSVCF."

NJVC T Michael Bircumshaw, the developer of this program is to be congratulated. He started and promoted this program, running it as a temporary unofficial program until its acceptance was well established.

It is well established, with nearly 50 bases participating at this time.

The program does good work for the afflicted children, reflects credit on the local bases for their good works in the communities where they live, and provides a worthwhile feeling of accomplishment for all who participate. It's a win-win situation all around.

Michael will turn over the leadership of this program to Bobby Broderick of Sea Turtle Base as soon as practical. Thanks to Bobby as well for stepping up to manage this very useful program for USSVI and the CF.

And, thank YOU to all those Bases and Shipmates who have stepped up to the plate and adopted this program within their own bases to carry out this good work.



January Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans, Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #105, Phoenix, AZ at 1300 hours, 17 Jan 2009. The meeting was called to order by Stan Reinhold, Base Commander.

The "Call to Order" was led in a prayer of invocation by Dave Harnish followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and 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, twenty-seven (27) members and guests were present. New members and guests included: Dick Miller who qualified on the USS Tecumseh SSBN/SSN-634 in 1965; Cliff Forrester who qualified on the USS Irex SS/AGSS-482 in the early 60's; John Flynn visiting from Bullhead Base; Tom Clonts who was a Phoenix Commission Member and served in the US Army in the Field Artillery and is now an associate member of Perch Base; and Ray Marshall who is visiting from New Jersey and qualified on an "S" Boat in 1940.

A motion was made and seconded that the minutes from the December 2008 regular meeting be approved as published in the MidWatch monthly newsletter. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

Base Treasurer Dave Harnish reported the Base's financial status as of 31 Dec 2008. \$1,200 received in December was

income received as a result of a request to the Phoenix Commission to provide the money needed for the formation of the Save Our Sail Foundation. This was done so there would be no expenses incurred by Perch Base to get the foundation running. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Reports of Officers and Committee Chairmen

Base Vice-Commander – Jim Denzien reported that one of the Phoenix Commission members who is very active in the local Lion's Club in Laveen has requested that we bring the float to participate in the Laveen Community Parade on 31 Jan 2009. We also have a request from Happy Trails in Surprise

for us to participate in a small Veteran's Day Parade on 23 Jan 2009. These showings give us excellent exposure in the community and give people the opportunity to learn about Perch Base and what we are all about.

Base Secretary (Interim) – Tim Moore had nothing to report.

Base Treasurer – Dave Harnish reported that Ray Binns passed away on the 6th of January from pancreatic cancer. Also the former Sr. vice Commander for USSVI Jim Foote, lost his wife on the 6th of January as well. Dave also reported that he has the 2009 Membership Stickers for the annual dues paying members for anyone who might want one.

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

MidWatch Editor – Chuck Emmett had nothing to report.

Base Storekeeper – DeWayne Lober had nothing to report.

Membership Chairman – Dave Fledderjohn was not present. Stan reported that we have had ongoing problems with the Membership Chairman position because of Dave Fledderjohn's absence. Ray Samsom has agreed to take over Membership for the interim.

Webmaster – Ramon Samson had nothing to report.

Base Chaplain – Howard Doyle was not present.

Historian – Jim Newman asked Stan to announce that he brought in some awards that we had won for the float and a photo album and asked Stan to pass them around for everyone to see.

Stan mentioned that once we get the pictures of the chronology of the building of the float catalogued, we will give the information to Jim for the archives. Stan also mentioned that if anyone has any other historical documents or photos about

FAIRINGS - ETC

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our base's operation or of other historical significance, you should give the info to Jim Newman who is our Historian so he can put it in the archives for others to see when we are no longer active or here.

Float Coordinator – Barry Bowers was not present.

Public Relations – Ben Acosta was not present.

Old Business

We will have a guest speaker for our 14 February 2009 meeting. Cdr. Darryl Toppin, XO for NRD (Navy Recruiting District) Phoenix will address our group. He will discuss the Navy today and the upcoming Navy Week events tentatively scheduled for 4-11 March 2009. Other topics of discussion may include having some of our members participate in their Recruiting District Advisory Council (RDAC).

14 March 2009 our guest speaker will be Cdr. C. Les Parsons, USN Retired who was skipper of the Bathyscaphe Trieste. He will give us a discussion about his experiences aboard the Trieste including an extremely interesting slide presentation with some fantastic photographs that were taken at the bottom of the Puerto Rican Trench some 20,000 feet down.

We will be having a board meeting for the Save Our Sail Foundation and we would encourage anyone who is interested in assisting with the fund raising project to attend this meeting. The Save Our Sail project will be a monumental effort and Perch Base will be the administrative arm to handle all the fundraising. The purpose of the meeting is to lay out a business plan for everything that needs to be considered for this project. Major items to be considered would be such things as establishing a means to transport the sail and rudder from Bremerton, WA to Phoenix and formulating plans for the fund raising effort. A site for the memorial to be established at Steele Indian School Park was approved by the city on 23 Oct 2008. A date for the Save Our Sail Foundation meeting has not been established but it is tentatively scheduled to be held towards the end of January or the first part of February.

New Business

There was discussion on what we need to consider for a permanent float storage container/location. Billy Grieves reported that Jack Richardson has said that the WWII SubVets organization would give \$1000.00 towards the purchase of a permanent storage facility for the float.

Under consideration is 40' long x 8' wide x 8' tall Sea Van storage container at a cost of \$3200.00 from Mobile Mini. Walt Blomgren has volunteered his property to store the container. This would provide adequate space to store the float and other equipment and supplies. We are looking at some creative ways to finance this project to minimize any negative impact on our treasury.

The annual awards banquet will be held next Saturday, 24 Jan 2009 at the American Legion Post #105. Surf 'n Turf will be served which includes stuffed shrimp and filet mignon. Included with the awards banquet will be a Holland Club induction ceremony and Jack Richardson, former past president of SubVets WWII will be inducted.

Stan offered a congratulatory note to our SubVettes ladies group who purchased a supply of cookie dough and Stan's crew went to work and baked and wrapped the cookies and got them to Jim to send to our troops in Iraq. A big Bravo Zulu to the ladies for their effort.

The Base will have a spring picnic at the White Tanks Recreation Park on March 28. The picnic lunch will include chicken, burgers, brats, condiments, soft drinks and water. It will be BYOB so members will need to supply their own alcoholic beverages if they want them. The cost of the picnic meal will be \$7.00 per person and admission to the White Tanks Recreation Park is \$6.00 per carload so it is recommended that attendees try carpooling. To get to the White Tanks Recreation Park go west on Olive Ave. as far as you can go and you end up at the park.

Good of the Order

Dave Harnish will be going to Laughlin the week of 19 January where the Western Regional Director will be having a meeting with the District Commanders. One of the topics of discussion will be having each district attempt to get insurance as a district. It would be much less costly on a per base basis, to get insurance as a state or district rather than on an individual base basis.

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Chuck Emmett has contacted the POC's of some of the larger bases across the country to solicit ideas for fund raisers. Perch Base needs a means to raise money for our ongoing normal base expenses. One suggestion was to have a spaghetti dinner for which Stan said he could donate \$200.00 for the food and cook the dinner to feed up to 500 people and the proceeds would go to the base. He also stated that he could probably get the Masonic Hall donated to support this fund raiser.

To help support the float and the Save Our Sail project, we will have a "donation bucket" or "tip jar" for contributions and we will sell USS Phoenix SSN-702 hats to raise money.

50/50 Drawing

The 50/50 drawing was held and the winner was Jim Walls who donated the \$51.00 winning share to the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base Foundation.

Adjournment

All the outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The benediction was offered by Dave Harnish and the meeting was adjourned at 1402 hours.

Tim Moore, Secretary (Interim), Perch Base USSVI



From the Desk Of the Sea Hag

Perch Base SubVettes

The Awards Banquet was very successful. It's a real shame more people couldn't attend. Stan's dinner was excellent, as advertised. I predict there will be photo's in the Midwatch.

Congratulations to Carolyn Newman, our SubVette of the Year! Those of you who attend meetings know that she does a fabulous job as Secretary. She certainly is a welcome asset to the SubVettes.

One more time . . . another plea for you ladies to attend meetings. Please! It's only for a few hours one day a month! We invite you all to join us, give us feedback on what we are doing and what you would like to help us to accomplish in the coming year.

Remember; Base and National dues are due this month. Perch Base Annual dues are \$10.00 and National's Annual dues are \$10.00. Send your checks to Jane Reinhold or me. Better yet – bring them to the February Meeting.

The Annual Picnic is scheduled for March 28 at White Tank Mountain Park. We will be holding a "garage sale" to raise funds for the Ladies group. Bring items for "donation" with prices on them (they should be negotiable) and the monies collected will go to the SubVettes. Items not sold will have to go home with the owner on the day of the picnic.

Re: Cookies for my son: I got the package of cookies you sent today. They are great. Please tell the ladies that put them together thank you very much. All of the folks here have been enjoying them immensely.

Update on Jim Nelson – he's going home! He'll be there by the time you read this! Let's continue to keep Nancy in our thoughts and prayers.

Surprise me! Be at the February 14th meeting! See you there!

"WWII Diesel Boat Trivia"



There were no Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel. Dolphins for enlisted personnel consisted of embroidered "patches" (white for blues and blue for whites) sewn on the right forearm. Silver Metal Dolphins for enlisted personnel was authorized after WWII. All enlisted personnel wore embroidered "patches" as distinguishing marks, e.g., if you were a designated striker you could wear the insignia for that specialty on the left upper sleeve. Other distinguishing

Marks for enlisted personnel were "patches" on uniforms, e.g., an Expert Lookout "patch" binoculars, a diver a divers helmet (M for Master with degree of qualification indicated on the chest section of the helmet.

SUBVETTES MEETING MINUTES

January Meeting

Present: Jacque Hawkins, Sandy Bernard, Muriel Grieves, Linda Wall, Mary Denzien, Carolyn Newman

After attending the Sub Vets meeting through the tolling of the boats, President Mary Denzien called our meeting to order at 12:55PM, followed by the Pledge of Allegiance

Minutes from the December 08 meeting were accepted as written in the Midwatch.

Treasurer's report was read and approved.

OLD BUSINESS

Officer elections will be held in March.

NEW BUSINESS

The membership list was reviewed and corrected to the best of the attendees' knowledge.

Mary advised the group that the men were considering buying a container to store the float and

Recommended we give the men five hundred dollars toward the container. After a lengthy discussion the topic was put on hold until the February meeting. .

Mary asked for ideas to raise funds for the SubVettes. Most of our members are life members; therefore yearly dues do not generate much money. Some ideas were raffles and a yard sale. Mary suggested that we have a yard sale at the Sub Vet picnic being held in March.

Each one should bring items to sale, with the items priced. If the item does not sale, you take it back home with you. Mary will check with the White Tanks Park to see if we can have the sale.

Carolyn Newman had nothing to report about the other bases. A letter will be written to the National asking for their help in getting check cashed and membership cards mailed.

While Jane Reinhold is recovering from surgery, Mary will gather the financial records from her to provide Carolyn with the information she needs prior to her writing the letter.

Lack of attendance to our meeting was discussed. Carolyn will write a letter and or E-mail each member to 1) ask for current information and 2) ideas as to how attendance can be improved.

The 50/50 was won by Mary. She donated the money back to the SubVettes account.

GOOD OF THE ORDER

January birthday - JoAnne Norwood

ADJOURNMENT

Jacque made the motion to adjourn the meeting at 1:55pm. Muriel seconded. The motioned carried.



White Shears
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623-932-3081

Jerry Balch

203 N. Litchfield Road, Suite A
Goodyear, AZ 85338
www.whiteshearsflowers.com
Mailing address: 245 N. Litchfield Road

Since 1957





Eternal Patrol February 4, 1945

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 Barbel (SS-316)

Feb. 4, 1945

81 men



The Balao Class was an evolutionary improvement over the earlier Gato class, the boats had slight internal differences. The most significant improvement was the use of higher yield steel in the pressure hull, which increased their test depth to 400 feet. There were 132 submarines ordered in this class (10 cancelled toward the end of World War II.)

Displacement: 1,526 tons surf., 2,424 tons sub.

Length: 311ft 9 in, Beam: 27 ft 3in, Draft: 15 ft 3in

Test depth: 400ft., Speed: 20 knots surf., 9 knots sub.

Armament: 10 x 21 in torpedo tubes (6 forward, 4 aft, 24 torpedoes)

1 x 5/25 cal AA gun, 1 x 40mm AA Canon, 1 x 3/50 cal and 2 x .30 cal machineguns

Crew: 80 – 85 officers and men

Powerplant: •4 x 1350 hp 16cyl GM 278A diesels

(except SS228-239 and SS275-284 10cyl Fairbanks-Morse 38D-1/8),

•2 x 1370 hp GE electric motors

(except SS228-235 Elliott Motor or SS257-264 Allis-Chalmers)

(two 126-cell Exide main storage batteries

{except SS.261, 275-278, & 280 Gould})

Range: •11,800 nm at 10 knots surf, 100nm at 3 knots sub.

Submerged Endurance: 48 hours

USS Barbel (SS-316), a Balao-class submarine, was the first ship of the United States Navy to be named for the barbel, a cyprinoid fish, commonly called a minnow or carp. Her keel was laid down by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut. She was launched on 14 November 1943 sponsored by Mrs. Harold A. Allen, and commissioned 3 April 1944 with Commander R. A. Keating in command.

Barbel arrived at Pearl Harbor on 21 June 1944 and commenced preparation for her first war patrol. Between 15 July 1944 and 4 February 1945 she carried out four war patrols and is officially credited with sinking six Japanese ships totaling 15,263 tons.

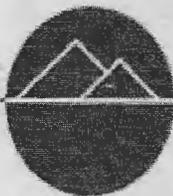
Barbel departed Fremantle, Australia, on 5 January 1945 for the South China Sea on her fourth patrol. Late in January she was ordered to form a wolf pack with Perch (SS-313) and Gabilan (SS-252) and patrol the western approaches to Balabac Strait and the southern entrance to Palawan Passage. On 3 February Barbel sent a message reporting that she had been attacked three times by enemy aircraft dropping depth charges and would transmit further information on the following night.

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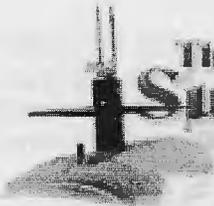


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Barbel was never heard from again. Japanese aviators reported an attack on a submarine off southwest Palawan on 4 February. Two bombs were dropped and one landed on the submarine near the bridge. The sub plunged, under a cloud of fire and spray. This was very likely the last engagement of Barbel. She was officially reported lost 16 February 1945. Barbel received three battle stars for her World War II service.



The Submarine

Submarines in History

Fate of Civil War Sub a Cold Case File

January 05, 2009, Associated Press

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. - It could be one of the nation's oldest cold case files: What happened to eight Confederate sailors aboard the H.L. Hunley after it became the first submarine in history to sink an enemy warship?

Their hand-cranked sub rammed a spar with black powder into the Union blockade ship Housatonic off Charleston on a chilly winter night in 1864 but never returned.

Its fate has been the subject of almost 150 years of conjecture and almost a decade of scientific research since the Hunley was raised back in 2000. But the submarine has been agonizingly slow surrendering her secrets.

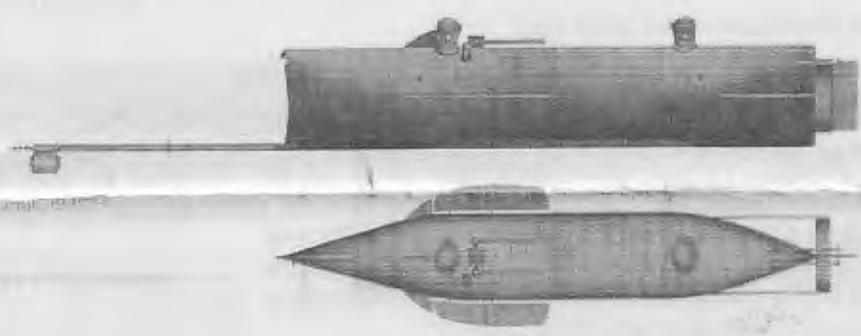
"She was a mystery when she was built. She was a mystery as to how she looked and how she was constructed for many years and she is still a mystery as to why she didn't come home," said state Sen. Glenn McConnell, R-Charleston and chairman of the South Carolina Hunley Commission, which raised the sub and is charged with conserving and displaying it.

Scientists hope the next phase of the conservation, removing the hardened sediment coating the outside of the hull, will provide clues to the mystery.

McConnell, who watched the sub being raised more than eight years ago, thought at the time the mystery would be easily solved.

"We thought it would be very simple ... something must have happened at the time of the attack," he said. "We would just put those pieces together and know everything about it."

But what seemed so clear then seems as murky now as the sandy bottom where the Hunley rested for 136 years.



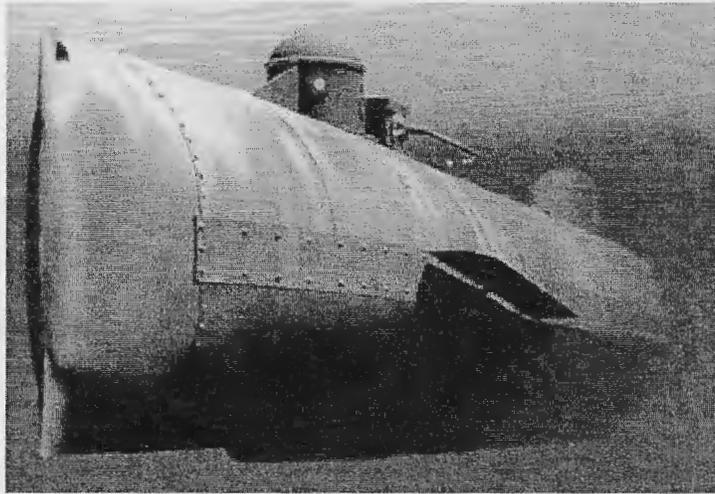


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When the Hunley was raised, the design was different from what scientists expected and there were only eight, not nine, crewmen, as originally thought.

The first phase of work on the Hunley consisted of photographing and studying the outside of the hull. Then several iron hull plates were removed allowing scientists to enter the crew compartment to remove sediment, human remains and a cache of artifacts.



Thousands of people, many re-enactors in period dress, turned out in April 2004 when the crew was buried in what has been called the last Confederate funeral.

With the inside excavated, the outside of the hull will now be cleaned before the sub is put in a chemical bath to remove salts left by years on the ocean floor. The Hunley will eventually be displayed in a new museum in North Charleston.

Archaeologist Maria Jacobsen said the Hunley is like a crime scene except that, unlike on television shows, there is no smoking gun.

"If we compare this crime site investigation with, say, a tragic plane crash in the mountains, that investigation would be a lot easier," she said. "You can go to the crash you can see the metal pieces and they have

the fingerprints of the crash site."

In the case of the Hunley, some of those fingerprints may be covered with the encrusted sediment on the hull that scientists refer to as concretion.

When the sub was found there was no window in the front conning tower, suggesting it had been shot out, perhaps by Union sharpshooters.

But no glass was found inside the sub and the remains of the captain, Lt. George Dixon, showed no injuries to his skull or body consistent with being shot while looking through the window, McConnell said.

The crew's bodies were found at their duty stations, suggesting there was no emergency resulting in a scramble to get out of the sub. And the controls on the bilge pump were not set to pump water from the crew compartment, suggesting there was no water flooding in.

After the attack both Confederates on shore and Union ships reported seeing a blue light, believed to be the Hunley signaling it had completed its mission.

A lantern with a thick lens that would have shifted the light spectrum and appeared blue from a distance was found in the wreck.

But after the attack, the USS Canandaigua rushed to the aide of the Housatonic and there is speculation that the light could have come from that ship instead.

Could the Canandaigua have grazed the Hunley, disabling her so the sub couldn't surface? A good look at the hull in the coming months may provide the answer.

Historians also know the Hunley needed to wait for the incoming tide to return to shore.

"Were they waiting down there and miscalculated their oxygen and blacked out?" said McConnell.

He said a grappling hook, believed to serve as an anchor of the Hunley, was found near the wreck. Cleaning the hull may produce evidence of a rope showing the sub was anchored, perhaps waiting for the tide to change.

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Then there is the mystery of Dixon's watch, which stopped at 8:23 p.m. Although times were far from uniform in the Civil War era, the Housatonic was attacked about 20 minutes later, according to federal time, McConnell said.

One theory is the concussion of the attack stopped the watch and knocked out the sailors on the sub. Or the watch simply might have run down and was not noticed in the excitement of the attack. That could have led to a miscalculation of the time they were under water.

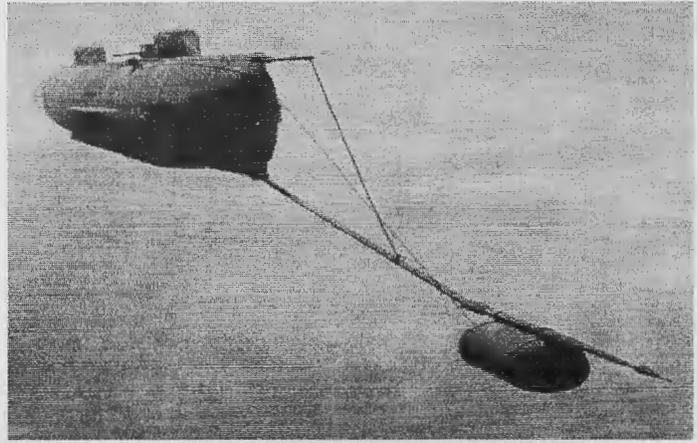
Union troops reported seeing the Hunley approaching and the light through the tower window "like dinosaur eyes or a giant porpoise in the water," McConnell said.

If the Hunley crew miscalculated and surfaced too close to the Housatonic on their final approach they would not have had enough time to replenish their oxygen before the attack, he said.

The clues now seem to indicate the crew died of anoxia, a lack of oxygen, and didn't drown. "Whatever happened, happened unexpectedly, with no warning," McConnell said.

Running out of oxygen can quickly cause unconsciousness.

"One you reach that critical stage, it's like you flick a switch," he said. "It's that fast, like on an airplane."





Nautical Nuances or, Did You Know?

- John Philip Holland built several submarines before the USS Holland, which became the first undersea craft commissioned by the U.S. Navy. The Holland was accepted on April 11, 1900 for a price of \$150,000. Today's nuclear powered submarines cost in excess of \$30,000,000 exclusive of the power plant.
- The first boat known to have been navigated under water was built in 1620 by a Dutchman, Cornelius Van Drebbel. Van Drebbel is said to have developed a chemical which would purify the air and allow the crew to stay submerged for extended periods.
- Alexander the Great (356 to 323 B.C.) ruler of Macedonian and conqueror of the known world in his time, is the first person known to have descended into the sea in a vessel of any kind.
- Over three hundred years ago, Mother Shipton, famous English prophetess, predicted the coming of the submarine when writing, "under water men shall walk, shall ride, shall sleep, shall talk."
- Records of attempts to utilize submarine warfare go back to the earliest writings in history. Herodotus (460 B.C.), Aristotle (332 B.C.) and Pliny, the elder, (77 A.D.) mention determined attempts to build submersibles.
- Interests in submarines extends to royalty and presidents. The King of England and the King and Queen of Spain are among those who have made submerged cruises in submarines. As a result of a trip in an early United States submarine, President "Teddy" Roosevelt ordered extra compensation for personnel serving in the "Silent Service."
- President Harry Truman made a 440 foot dive in a captured German submarine. The first President to cruise aboard a nuclear submarine was President Eisenhower who rode the USS SEAWOLF out of Newport, Rhode Island on September 26, 1957.
- Dollar for dollar and man for man, the submarine is the country's most economical weapon. Comprising only 1.6 percent of the Navy's World War II personnel, the submarine service accounted for 55 percent of all enemy shipping destroyed.
- Leonardo da Vinci, the Florentine Renaissance inventor and artist, developed plans for an underwater warship but kept them secret. He was afraid that it would make war even more frightful than it already was.
- Many instances of submarines being 'caught' by fishing vessels are on record. The NAUTILUS, world's first nuclear powered vessel, was caught in a fish net and towed the fishing vessel several miles before the situation was cleared up. There is one instance of a submarine being captured by an abandoned balloon, and on another occasion a submarine rescued a blimp and towed it to safety.

Return To:

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<http://perch-base.org>



NEXT MEETING
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