

Moonshine Mountain

Each month in May submariners from all over travel to Moonshine Mountain to participate in the annual visit to the World War II submarine memorial built by Chief Flowers.

Upon his retirement Chief Flowers purchased a mountain top where he built his retirement home. Then he decided to build a Memorial to World War II submarines. The submarines that were lost at sea and the men who served on board them. He built the Memorial on a portion of his property. Actually he built the Memorial, then dissatisfied he tore it down and rebuilt it three times.

Chief Flowers is on permanent sailing orders now, but his Memorial lives on.

First you have to find lodging and we stayed at the Big Lynn Lodge in Little Switzerland, NC. This Lodge is overlooking the Blue Ridge Parkway and is operated by Hoyt and Vickie Johnson. The view from the Lodge assures you that there is a God as only he could create such a view. These two innkeepers go out of their way to make you welcome. The price of the inn also includes breakfast and the evening meal. Innkeeper Hoyt does the cooking and it's really delicious.

The actual Memorial is still about twenty miles from Big Lynn Lodge so we stopped off at a Western Sizzling to eat lunch on the way to the Memorial. Lois and I had a very nice lunch and then it's off to the Memorial.

Once at the Memorial you are amazed at its size and the workmanship. Chief Flower's devotion to the submarines lost during WWII. There are 52 of them and their names are listed on a large brass plaque located on the center of the Memorial.



This year's event was visited by submariners from Florida, South Carolina, North Carolina, Georgia and even had a British Submariner in the group. I'm sure I have missed a few and am sorry.

I was the only WWII submariner present. I was hoping they had a bottle of rare wine that the last one standing would get to drink. I know I am not the last WWII submarine sailor but I was hoping I could pull it off. Alas, no one fell for this but in a drawing I did win a basket that came complete with two bottles of wine, cheese, crackers and many other things to eat.

Naturally I got nowhere but I did participate in many of the events. I also got to help place the large wreath in front of the plaque containing all the names of boats lost during WWII. I am deeply indebted to all those who helped me function. People went out of their way to make sure Lois and I were comfortable, helped me up and guided me to where I was to be.

Lois and I always enjoy going to the Moonshine Memorial Event. However, I took off from home without my medication. The two and a half days was not all that enjoyable to me as I could hardly walk or stand without my medication. Most of the time I was in real pain but I think I concealed it pretty good.

I did enjoy the Navy cadets, the bag piper, and the bugler who blew taps, the reading of each boat lost and the ringing of the bell. I am also indebted to Hop and Carol who provided the ride to and back from the event.

I would say to you that visiting the Moonshine Submarine Memorial must be placed on anyone's bucket list. The event takes place every year in the month of May. It's on a weekend and you can contact the Asheville Sub Vets to get all the information for the event. Contact Hoyt Johnson at 828 765 4257 as the Big Lynn Lodge fills up rapidly.

Or just give me a phone call and I will make sure you get all the information.

I hope to see you there next year and I have already reserved my room at the Big Lynn Lodge.

George Bass