

TORPEDO ALLEY



Vol. 8, No. 5

May 2012

Newsletter of Charleston Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

USSVI Creed

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds, and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution"



Base Meeting:

May 10, 2012 Social hour 1800, General Meeting 1900

Location:

Fleet Reserve Association Branch 269
Low Country Home
99 Wisteria Rd.
Goose Creek, South Carolina. Phone 843-569-2962

| Special Officers | | Phone Number |
|-------------------|-----------------|--------------|
| Chief of the Boat | Rick Sparger | 843-553-5594 |
| Public Affairs | Larry Starland | 843-863-8474 |
| Veterans Affairs | Jim Morrison | 843-832-9716 |
| Chaplain | John Nichols | 843-452-3189 |
| Membership | Carl Chinn | 843-875-3098 |
| Holland Club | John Lookabill | 843-797-2991 |
| Scholarship | Julian Villegas | 843-871-6135 |
| Newsletter | Carl Chinn | 843-875-3098 |
| Storekeeper | Ken Hutchison | 843-553-0935 |
| Webmaster | Nick Nichols | 843-452-3189 |
| Historian | George Scharf | 843 873-3318 |

| Base Officers | | Phone Number |
|----------------|---------------|--------------|
| Commander | Carl Chinn | 843-875-3098 |
| Vice Commander | Marty Sessler | 843-871-1536 |
| Secretary | Theron Irving | 843-572-2731 |
| Treasurer | Terry Trump | 843-873-9563 |

Minutes of the April 2012 meeting

Attendance for the April 12, 2012 meeting was 109

Opening Ceremony: Base Commander called the meeting to order. A Quorum was present and the meeting was commenced at 1900.

Holland Club Induction Ceremony: Base Commander Carl Chin changed the usual order of business to bestow this most prestigious honor to our shipmates that have been qualified in Submarines for more that 50 years. Holland Club chairman John Lookabill was Master of Ceremonies and passed out Certificate of Accomplishment signed by the USSVI National Commander and National Chairman of the Holland

Club. A total of 17 inductee certificates were handed out to these most deserving shipmates.

Introductions: New people introduced. Landing Craft Coxswain Chief Casey, WWII and SK2 (SS) Larry Fox. Welcome aboard!

Secretary: Secretary asked for a motion to approve the meeting minutes from last month. A motion was made and seconded. Minutes approved.

Treasurer: Terry Trump gave a Base Financial report for March 2012.

Vice Commander: Kudos to all who attended the Amberjack Memorial that was held on 11 April 2012. Members are reminded that this is the last service

that the SubVets WW II will officiate as they will be disbanded at this year's convention in September in Norfolk, Va. Bravo Zulu to the shipmates who attended the St. Patty's Day Parade. The float was well received by those in attendance.

Storekeeper: No report

Chaplain: Nick Nichols presented the Chaplain's report.

- **TM2 (SS) Richard 'Fox' Binkley, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP on March 19th in Florence SC. He was a member of Swamp Fox Chapter WWII Submarine Veterans and of the Charleston Base SUBVETS. A private memorial service will be held sometime in May when his ashes will be spread on the Charleston Harbor by the family with a small detachment of the Charleston Base conducting the Bell Tolling. If anyone know of a member with a pontoon boat capable of have 10 or so passengers onboard please see me after the meeting.
- **Colleen Collins, Rick's wife**, had reconstructive surgery on her hand today. This is one year to the day after she had her original carpal tunnel surgery. She is home and doing well.
- **Pauline Stank, Ed's wife**, remains in Duke. She as just completed her 7th week there. According to his email today not much has changed. Doctors are positive and her spirits are good. She and Ed appreciate all of your prayers and thoughts.
- On the same note our shipmates in the Tar Heel Base have been outstanding in their support during the entire time Pauline and Ed have been in Duke. A recent email from their base chaplain read: We enjoyed having Ed Stank with us at breakfast this morning. After breakfast he met with us at our bimonthly Base meeting and seemed to enjoy himself. By the way, his usual run of luck is holding: he won the 50-50 drawing. So, if he owes any of your guys any money, this is a good time to hit him up for it.
- **Steve Everett** had a heart attack on March 18th, a stent put in at the VA on the 19th and was home on the 20th. Saw him at the Amberjack and he was doing well. Steve is here tonight.
- **Sonny & Doris Rash's** granddaughter Ashley, passed away on March 14th leaving two small children, ages 4 & 7.
- **Tom Skorepa** had surgery on March 22nd and is recovering well. Talked to Tom on March 29th and he has found out he has a hernia which will need repaired after he recovers from the previous surgery.
- **Jim Lewis** had knee replacement on March 19th and is home recovering and rehab. Uncle Lou is here tonight.
- **Ev Fuhr, Ken's wife**, continues to have health concerns and they would appreciate everyone's prayers.

- **Nancy Alkire, Rich's wife**, had her left knee replaced and is home recovering.
- **Gary Semler** spent time in Trident hospital and gave us a real scare. He is now home and doing pretty good. Started taking chemo again last week. Gary is here tonight.
- **Barry Wilson** finished the 3rd series of chemo. He had a CT scan today and will probably need to continue chemo. The good news is the colon cancer doesn't show on the scans anymore. His wife, Joy, does not have cancer as previously reported.
- **Anne Przyborowski, Simon's wife**, passed away on March 30th. Simon is one of our WWII veterans.

The following shipmates departed on Eternal Patrol this past month. None of them were members of Charleston Base. Online memorial entries were made and cards sent from the base to the families if the address was known.

- **VADM Shannon D. Cramer, Jr., US Navy, Retired**, departed on EP on February 15th in Washington DC. He was a WWII SUBVET and commanded the SWORDFISH, PATRICK HENRY GOLD, and Squadron 15.
- **MMCS(SS) Virmon W. 'Bill' Arms, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP on February 24th in Moncks Corner. Bill was a Plank Owner on ANDREW JACKSON SSBN.
- **MMCS(SS) Moreno V. George, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP on March 5th in Ladson. I was informed of this at the March base meeting. After checking I found out that there were no services, he was cremated and will be buried at sea.
- **STS2(SS) Marvin 'Red' Chambers, US Navy**, departed on EP on March 22nd in Knoxville TN. He served on the LEWIS & CLARK in the late 60's.
- **ENC(SS) Jimmie S. Beaty, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP on March 23rd in Moncks Corner. He rode diesel boats during his time in the Navy.
- **LCDR(SS) Bruce William Stupfer, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP on March 24th in Goose Creek.
- **CPO(SS) Edward 'Pink' Bluemel, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP April 6th in Johns Island. He served in submarines for 26 years.
- **TMCS(SS) Robert 'Bob' McClean, US Navy Retired**, departed on EP April 12th. A memorial in Orlando is tentatively set for April 28th.

NOTE: Please get your mug shot taken if you have already done so. Also, please complete your Page 2 if you haven't done so. Copies are on the SK's table.

Several follow-ups were made on those who've had surgery or illnesses in the last couple of months along with the base sending additional cards.

If you know of shipmates or spouses from other bases who are having a difficult time, had surgery, etc. and would like for USSVI Charleston Base to send them a card please send their name and address to the Chaplain via email or phone call.

Membership: Charleston Base is now the 2nd largest base in the USA. Bravo Zulu!

Public Affairs: No report

Scholarship: Two applications have been received. Only 3 days until submission deadline.

Veteran's Affairs: No report

Little David: Working party went great last Saturday. Kudos was given by the Museum staff on the excellent appearance of the Little David.

Holland Club: Presentation of Holland Club inductees.

SUBVETS WWII: Meeting will be held Thursday 19 April at Ryan's in Summerville. A Flag Ceremony will be held on 14 April for WWII Vets at Sy Mabie's daughter's home; Suzie Graham in Bowman, SC.

Historian: No report

Newsletter: Our newsletter needs a volunteer to publish the monthly issue. During the interim, the Base Commander will publish it. Please consider taking on this project.

District Commander: Not present

Base Commander: Motion made and seconded to pay for our WW II SubVets to have the Polaris publication for life after their organization is disbanded in September. Motion carried.

Motion made to purchase a full page ad in the South East Regional FRA Convention journal for recruitment purposes. Motion seconded. Motion Carried.

Nuclear Historian: No report

Fleet Reserve: No report

Chief of the Boat: COB needs a volunteer to take charge of the picnic. Please consider this as he has ramrodded all these past events and needs a little rest.

Old Business: Elections to be held next meeting for Vice Commander and Secretary. Current office holders have been nominated. Jerry Stout has been nominated for the post of Vice Commander. Let John know if you have any other inputs.

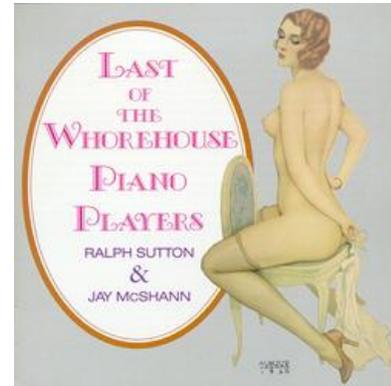
New Business: Submarine Ball will be held on the USS Yorktown at Patriot's Point on the 27th of April. Tickets can be purchased on line CharlestonSubBall.org Tickets

are \$30.00 each. WWII SubVet tickets are complimentary. Open bar will be available.

Good Of The Order: Rodney pointed out that the Cold War Memorial landscaping is in sad shape and is requesting a little financial support for upkeep. Stacy gave kudos to Buddha and Neck for their contribution in the establishment of the base.

Depth Charge: \$340.00 to the winner Ed Simokat.

Meeting Adjourned: The Base Commander adjourned the meeting at 2000.



"Don't tell mom I'm a submariner, she thinks I play piano in a whorehouse."

"It's hard sometimes, but as long as we remember them around the campfire, they will live forever."

May Submarines Lost:

| | | |
|-----------------|--------|--------------|
| USS Runner | SS 275 | May 28, 1943 |
| USS Lagarto | SS 371 | May 3, 1945 |
| USS Squalus | SS 192 | May 23, 1939 |
| USS Stickleback | SS 415 | May 29, 1958 |

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





May Birthdays!

| | | | |
|-----------|--------------|-----------|------------|
| Bailey, M | Birdwhistell | Caroll | Clarkin |
| Conrey | Copeland | Fenton | Fuhr |
| Fuqua | Gallagher, G | Habhegger | Hill |
| Houston | Kozlowski | LeCompte | Lufkin |
| McCollem | Mullins | Nichols | O'Meally |
| Paris | Pickett | Sparks | Strickland |
| Taylor | Weaver | Wieda | |



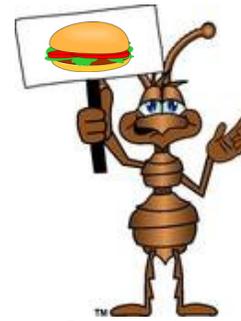
May 5 – Charleston Base picnic at Cooper River Partners Recreation Area; starts at Noon. \$5 each for member and one; all other guests \$10 each. Bring a side dish or dessert

May 10– Monthly meeting

Holland Club Induction

Members were inducted into the Holland Club at our April meeting.

| | | |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| LCDR(SS) | Barnette | George |
| CWO(SS) | Bohling | Charles |
| EMC(SS) | Hix | Carol |
| QMCM(SS) | Hutchison | Kenneth |
| EMCS(SS) | Lindberg | Thomas |
| RMC(SS) | Moore | Robert |
| TMC(SS) | Mueller | David |
| QMC(SS) | Owens | William |
| QM3(SS) | Paris | Larry |
| MSC(SS) | Rackley | Emmett |
| RMC(SS) | Scott | Thomas |
| CM1(SS) | Skorepa | Thomas |
| MMCS(SS) | Sparks | Warren |
| EN2(SS) | Taylor | David |
| TMC(SS) | Wilson | Lloyd |



Charleston Base Annual Picnic

When: 5 May 2012

Where: Cooper River Partners Recreation Area

Time: Starts at 1200

\$5 each for member and one (1)
all other guests \$10 each; pay at the door.

Burgers, Hot Dogs and Drinks provided.
Please bring a side dish or dessert to share

Plenty of picnic tables and covered pavilion

Bring lawn chairs to enjoy the weather!

Available: Volley Ball court, ball field,
swings



Navy's New Plan To Halt Re-Enlistment

PacificFlyer | Apr 08, 2012 By Sanford Hughes

Bad news for squids and jarheads (our beloved sailors and Marines).

The Navy Department has figured a way to cut back on the expense of running a Navy and all those desert wastelands they call Marine bases.

Basically, stop all drinking, smoking and eating rich foods, test everyone all the time and eventually, there won't be anyone left to collect pay and pension benefits. Of course they didn't say that exactly. What they did say is, the Navy will implement fleet-wide breathalyzer tests for sailors and Marines, crack down on smoking and drinking, and phase in many other major personnel policy changes, such as giving females three years off to birth babies instead of standing duty they signed up for. The broad collection of new policies has been dubbed "21st Century Sailor and Marine," and reflected many "longstanding issues or goals" for the department by social engineers now seemingly in charge of the U.S. military.

Navy Secretary Ray Mabus, chief of Naval Operations Adm. Jonathan Greenert and Marine Corps Commandant Gen. Jim Amos unveiled the coming disaster but it isn't clear if the White House forced them into it or they went along willingly.

Juan Garcia (a civilian), assistant secretary of the Navy for manpower and reserve affairs, said that "21st Century" has five "pillars" - readiness, safety, physical fitness, inclusion and "continuum of service."

The Navy Department's basic goal is to get the most possible good out of every service member and keep them in the force for as long as possible before they come to their senses or just head for Canada.

Officials said they hope anti-drinking, anti-smoking and physical fitness campaigns will make troops healthier, reduce accidents such as drunk driving and result in fewer missed work days over a sailor or Marine's career. Contrast this with the British Navy which not only allows smoking but still issues a cupful of grog every day.

EVERYONE GETS SCREENED

The highest profile new policy will be the fleetwide use of breathalyzers, which until now have only been tried sporadically in various parts of the Navy. Within the coming year, Garcia said, virtually all ships and many Marine units will begin fielding breathalyzers and a novel approach for using them.

"What we're stressing is this is not a punitive tool, not a legal tool, but instead it's an inspection and prevention tool," Garcia, who's obviously never been in the Navy, said, "leading chiefs to prevent career-ending or service-ending incidents." Of course, just the opposite will be true.

For example, all sailors coming aboard a ship for a duty shift after liberty will be screened with the breathalyzer,

and the whole crew will be subject to random inspections. In addition to being deeply unpopular with sailors, the Navy's past breathalyzer experiments also have drawn skepticism from its own leaders: former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Joe Campa once observed that a breathalyzer on the brow could cause as many problems as it solved.

A sailor or Marine who shows up for duty with a blood alcohol level above .08 will be sent to medical, his leaders and shipmates will be notified, and his case will rest in the hands of his commanding officer and noted in his record. That should do a lot for reenlistment figures.

NO SMOKING ANYTIME, ANYWHERE

Tobacco and the synthetic marijuana-like drug known as "spice" are also on the hit list. The Navy Department will stop discounting tobacco products at exchanges and begin new rounds of tests to catch spice-smokers.

Recent congressional action also means that, for the first time in decades, Navy warships may not go to sea with tobacco in their ships' stores. Navy officials want to duplicate what they say has been the success of the submarine force, which outlawed smoking at the beginning of 2011.

So much for having an after dinner cigar in the goat locker (chief's quarters).

WOMEN CAN GET THREE YEARS OFF

It also will offer women new options to take time away from service to have children, then return to duty to pick up their careers. Women will be able to move into the inactive ready reserve for as long as three years, receive a stipend for not working, keep commissary and other benefits and use one permanent change of station to relocate.

They'll incur a "two for one" obligation - meaning a woman who took the maximum three years off would owe the Navy or Marine Corps six additional years. Let's see how long that lasts.

BAD NEWS FOR RECRUITING OFFICES

Worse, for Chief Petty Officers and Gunnery Sergeants, the Navy and Marines will also step up a "year-round culture of fitness" to lean on service members to keep fit. With all these sailors and Marines in better shape, drinking less and not smoking, the Navy Department wants to keep them in service for as long as possible, or, at least, until their enlistment is up.

Of course, it may be impossible to get anyone to re-up since the men are unable to smoke or drink. And as all the women will be off having babies, who's going to run the ships, planes and shore bases in about four years? Hopefully, by that time, all the social experimenters in Washington, D.C. and in the Pentagon will have been replaced by realists who understand military enlisted men and what it takes to be a warrior.

But probably not. Please don't let China, North Korea or Iran hear about this.

Nuclear Submarine INS Chakra Inducted Into Indian Navy

By Times of India, Apr. 10, 2012

Tethered to the jetty, the 8,140-tonne steel shark floated menacingly as if waiting to break free. Soon, it will, to prowl silently underwater for extended periods, hunting for enemies to track and kill. The 8,140-tonne nuclear-powered attack submarine INS Chakra, with lethal 'hunter-killer' and intelligence-gathering capabilities, was formally inducted into Indian Navy on a 10-year lease from Russia at a cost of around \$1 billion on Wednesday.

Defence minister A K Antony, Navy chief Admiral Nirmal Verma and Russian ambassador Alexander M Kadakin extolled the submarine as a shining example of the deep and abiding strategic partnership between India and Russia during the welcome ceremony at the highly-guarded Ship-Building Center here.

INS Chakra, with a dived displacement of 12,000 tonnes, will, however, not give India its long-awaited third leg of the nuclear weapons triad since it is not armed with long-range strategic missiles due to international treaties. But it will happen after India's own nuclear submarine INS Arihant, armed with the nuclear-tipped K-15 missiles, is inducted into service sometime next year.

But INS Chakra, propelled by a 190MW nuclear reactor for a maximum speed of around 30 knots, will give India the capability to deploy a potent weapons delivery platform at a place of its choosing at long distances in stealth. It is armed with 300 km Klub-S land-attack cruise missiles and advanced torpedoes.

"We can outrun and overcome any adversary in our neighborhood," said a confident INS Chakra's captain P Ashokan.

Admiral Verma said the 100 metre INS Chakra has made India a part of the select group of countries like the US, Russia, France, UK and China to operate nuclear-powered submarines. "It gives us operational flexibility in our blue-water operations," he said.

China's growing maritime presence in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR), coupled with its increasing assertiveness in the entire Asia-Pacific region, is obviously a big worry for India. Interestingly enough, the Akula-II class 'K-152 Nerpa' submarine silently traversed the South China Sea during its 42-day journey to India after being rechristened INS Chakra in Russia.

Antony downplayed the China angle as is his wont. "Induction of INS Chakra, or other warships, is not aimed at any country. It is meant to more effectively strengthen our national and maritime security. India does not believe in an arms race but we have long land and coastal borders," defence minister A K Antony said. On being asked by TOI, Antony admitted India was in negotiations with Russia for leasing another Akula-II

class submarine from Russia after INS Chakra. "But no final decision has been taken," he said.

Nuclear-powered submarines can operate underwater for long periods, with normal patrols stretching to up to 70 days, unlike the conventional diesel-electric submarines that have to surface every three to four days to get oxygen to recharge their batteries. With just 14 ageing conventional submarines, at a time when both China and Pakistan are boosting their submarines fleets, INS Chakra will add some much-needed muscle to India's depleting underwater combat arm.

ASN Visits Submarine Force to Discuss 21st Century Sailor & Marine

By James Kimber, Submarine Group 10 Public Affairs

KINGS BAY, Ga. (NNS) -- Assistant Secretary (ASN) of the Navy for Manpower and Reserve Affairs (M&RA) visited Naval Submarine Base Kings Bay, Ga., April 10, to host a town hall for service members stationed aboard the base.

Juan M. Garcia III addressed more than 400 Sailors and Marines attending the town hall.

Garcia discussed topics of importance to many Sailors and Marines, including enlisted retention boards, tuition assistance and the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative.

"At a time of enormous change in the Navy and Marine Corps which includes a new budget, a new national defense strategy and significant personnel policy changes, we need to address some possible misperceptions, give you the ground truth as we know it and hopefully alleviate some anxiety," said Garcia.

"Second, we're here to introduce this group of folks to the new 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative," he said. "More than anything, we're here to thank you for the incredible work you're doing."

The 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative has five core areas: safety, physical fitness, inclusion, readiness and continuum of service. Though Garcia addressed each of these topics, he focused on submarine force's readiness and mission capabilities.

From integrating female Sailors into the submarine force to tobacco cessation in all submarines, and the recent successful submerged launch of an unarmed Trident II D5 missile aboard USS Tennessee (SSB 734), Garcia said the submarine force is already leading the way in many of the areas covered by the 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative.

"The Navy is executing an incredibly broad mission set," said Garcia. "In one week, the submarine force helped in Operation Tomodachi to prevent an apocalyptic meltdown of a nuclear reactor in Japan. USS Florida was off the coast of Libya during Operation Odyssey Dawn to stop a ruthless dictator from massacring his own

people. Two submarines were sent to the polar cap to understand the implications of global warming. No other Navy in the world has the skill or ability to do this at one time."

Cpl. Joshua Derrick of Marine Corps Security Force Battalion said the town hall was positive and did rest many of his concerns, primarily about retirement benefits.

"Hearing that current active-duty Marines will receive a grandfather clause to their retirement benefits is a huge relief to me and my family," said Derrick. "If the retirement pay was changed from what I was initially promised, it would make me give some serious thought to leaving the Corps when it's time to reenlist."

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class(SS) Rodney Burnett of USS Maryland (SSBN 738) said he appreciated Garcia taking time to discuss the future goals and plans of the Navy based on the lessons learned from the last decade.

"The initiatives in the 21st century model helped in my decision to reenlist recently," said Burnett, who had read about the initiative before recommitting to the Navy.

"I've been in since 2008, and the Navy is a long-term career option for me, so I'm very interested in the benefits and compensations the Navy can offer me."

The 21st Century Sailor and Marine initiative consolidates a set of objectives and policies, new and existing, to maximize Sailor and Marine personal readiness, build resiliency and hone the most combat-effective force in the history of the Navy and Marine Corps.



Experts out to solve deep-sea mystery of the USS Scorpion

By Dan Vergano, USA TODAY, April 11, 2012

Shipwreck disaster experts are calling for a deep-sea expedition to a lost U.S. nuclear attack sub, the USS Scorpion, in an effort to verify a new theory on what caused the Cold War vessel to sink.

The Scorpion was lost May 22, 1968, killing 99 men, about 400 miles south of the Azores Islands in the middle of the Atlantic Ocean. The sub has been inspected by undersea recovery teams, including a visit in 1985 by oceanographer Robert Ballard before his team's discovery of the Titanic shipwreck. The cause of the sub's loss has remained hotly disputed. A Navy Court of Inquiry found "the cause of the loss cannot be definitively ascertained."

"The families of those 99 men are still out there, and they want to know what happened," says former U.S. naval officer Paul Boyne, who presented a new mechanical explanation for the loss of the sub at a recent marine forensics symposium just outside Washington. Panelists at the event called for a summer expedition to the sub's wreck, led by P.H. Nargeolet, another Titanic explorer, saying it might put to rest a multitude of theories about the Scorpion's demise — ranging from a covert Soviet attack to a torpedo self-firing into the ship to a faulty trash disposal.

Evidence for a more mundane explanation comes from the sub's propeller shaft, Boyne says. Undersea photographs show it rests about 20 yards outside the wreck on the seafloor, about 11,220 feet underwater. Boyne suggests that rubber bearings holding the propeller shaft failed, putting stress on the coupling connecting it to the engine. The coupling's bolts failed catastrophically during a deep test dive, the theory goes, spilling water into the sub too rapidly to allow ballast maneuvers to raise the ship to the surface.

As support, Boyne points to the loss in 1963 of the USS Thresher, the only other nuclear submarine lost by the Navy. The Thresher suffered a similar crushing end but retained its propeller shaft within its hull.

In its planned proposal to the U.S. Navy's Naval History & Heritage Command (NHHC) in Washington, the team would send a robot sub to the wreck to photograph the displaced shaft. The robot would send a small tethered camera into the ship's engine room to examine the damage to the coupling bolts.

Because the sub carried two nuclear-tipped torpedoes and a nuclear reactor, the Navy has periodically tested the water around the submarine for radiological releases, at least as recently as 1998.

"What happened to the Scorpion isn't so much a mystery, as a secret," says Ed Offley, author of *Scorpion Down: Sunk by the Soviets, Buried by the Pentagon*,

which argues for the covert Soviet sub attack explanation.

Investigators who start from technical documents related to the ship's loss, typically differ with his interpretation, he says, which was based on interviews with Navy personnel.

"It couldn't hurt to have a documented expedition to Scorpion," says Offley, who is not a member of the proposed expedition team.

On May 27, 1968, family members of the USS Scorpion's crew waited on a Norfolk dock for the return of the submarine.

At least 11 of them have joined in the call for the expedition.

The Chinese Navy Is Betting Big On Its New Submarine Hunting Drones

By Eloise Lee and Robert Johnson, April 11, 2012

Tackling the long-time nuisance of American submarines off its coastal waters China is deploying drones to its Navy ships.

While not a new development on its own, there are reports of increased drone deployment to the PLA's ships, and a heightened attack against U.S. drone contractors.

UPI reports Chinese hackers have ramped up their barrage of infected emails to glean as much information about the Pentagon's UAV strategy and development as they can.

It's no secret that the Chinese military is in the habit of copying foreign hardware, and while drone technology was previously limited to the U.S. and its allies — that's over.

China began developing UAVs in the 1960s just as several American AQM-34G - R models were lost over the Chinese mainland. Spy Flight says one drone was recovered by the Chinese, who maintain they shot it down.

In 1969 China began reverse engineering the drone at the Beijing Institute of Aeronautics and Astronautics in an eager bid to figure out the American technology and use it for themselves.

By 1972 the U.S. drone was copied into the WuZhen-5. And when China invaded Vietnam during the war of 1979, China's first drone was used to successfully collect visual intelligence — a chilling example of how good China is at counterfeiting military hardware.

But being based on a drone from the 1960s, the Wuzhen-5 is nowhere near as sophisticated as U.S. drones.

And that's why China would be keen to inspect the American RQ-170 Sentinel stealth drone, which Tehran was able to capture last year.

The "Beast of Kandahar" went down to much Iranian fanfare, and after doubts about the drone's capture were

put to rest by its display on PressTV, questions of how great a loss its capture is to U.S. intelligence continue to linger.

There was speculation in February the drone went down with its data still intact and the folks at DARPA told Wired that there is little doubt the Russians and the Chinese were brought in to help with reverse engineering the advanced American aircraft.

When Beijing gets around to using the Sentinel's technology in its own fleet of drones, there is little doubt it will be used to patrol China's vast coastline and maritime territory using the genetic algorithms already employed by its older drones to hunt for submarines.

American subs in Asian waters are a definite burr in Beijing's saddle and are the one true soft spot in the Asian nation's military buildup. The U.S. routinely has 10 forward deployed subs in the world's oceans at any given time and in the event of Chinese hostilities they would slip into the area as quietly as possible.

China's best defense would be its unique algorithms in a fleet of drones, patrolling the coast, using information from sonar buoys to track the American subs. Whether the Sentinel's technology will aid the Chinese in their efforts has yet to be seen.



The Mess Cook Written by ???

Makes one stop and think of what the crews of Thresher, Scorpion were going through. Tomorrow 10 April 1963 49 years ago the USS Thresher SSN-593 went down with all hands. All Submariners take a few minutes to honor their shipmates who paid the "Ultimate Price" in service of our nation..... Sailor, Rest Your Oar!

Some serious reading. Lengthy, but thought provoking. I have often thought of this, although my REAL fear was being trapped in that "no-man's-land" below the depths that we were trained to escape from, but above the crushing depths that bring instant death. I have thought

MANY times of our Russian "Brothers of The Phin" that died together on the bottom aboard Kursk just a few years ago. They could have escaped and made it to the surface if they had been trained in submarine escape techniques. Instead they suffocated on the bottom in an intact, undamaged engine room, while the US Navy's WELL trained rescue personnel had to sit by and wait for Putin to act.

"Permission to come on the bridge!" the mess cook shouted up through the conning tower hatch. The OOD (Officer Of the Deck - the watch conning the submarine) stepped over to look down the hatch and saw the new kid on the boat looking up at him. The OOD had already cleared dumping the garbage over the side with the old man. It was a moonless night, and they were getting ready to change course and head north anyway. Besides, the garbage bags were mesh and weighted, and should leave no trace that they had ever been in this particular acre of the Pacific. All things considered, you never wanted to leave a trace of evidence that you had been there. Even if the Japs found a bag floating about two days from now, they'd have a hard time figuring where you had gone, anyway. It was all extra caution but a good practice beginning at Papa Hotel, the last buoy at Pearl, and not ending until they returned in a month or two, hopefully with a broom lashed to the number one periscope.

"Permission granted," the OOD said as he reached over to help the mess cook struggle with the garbage bags. The kid passed up the two he had and then scampered up to turn around and help his mate with the two he had. When all four bags were on the bridge, the OOD said, "Move them aft to the cigarette deck before you throw them over the side. Hey, and throw them off to port, it's the lee side." The two dragged one bag at a time aft. There wasn't enough room to move more than one at a time in the narrow space between the sail and the rail. "I know you two know this, but be sure you clear that life line on the main deck and the tank tops if you can. We don't want that bag breaking and scattering that shit all over. This stuff has got to sink. Got it?"

"We'll do it right, sir," said Billy the older of the two...he was 19 years old and on his second war patrol. They did it together, one bag at a time. One of those one-two-three- heave things. The OOD had not seen it done quite this way before and was pleased with the results - they cleared the tank tops nicely and at 18 knots, the spots where the bags hit the water disappeared in an instant.

"Can we stay up a bit, Mister Cavanaugh?" It was Billy again. The OOD said, "Sure, but stay alert in case we have to clear the bridge." Cavanaugh liked this young sailor Billy Toomy, and he knew what a lousy job mess cooking must be. But he knew that it was the bottom of the ladder. "They all started there," he thought to

himself. It was a right of passage for youngsters who volunteered for sub duty. He couldn't blame them for wanting to be "up" on a night like this in the South Pacific. The air was balmy, and the phosphorescence in the bow wave was beautiful. The continuous sound of the bow wave added to the whole sense one got on the bridge of a submarine in the tropics at night. Cavanaugh thought, "If you could, somehow, can these elements and sell them to insomniacs, you'd make a killing."

Danny Cavanaugh was a good officer. He knew the job of OOD cold and took pride in doing it well to protect those in his charge, which, on a sub, was the whole package - 88 men 8 officers and the boat Uncle Sam provided. He got a whiff of cigarette smoke and caught himself before he gave them his little lecture about palming the matches and all that stuff. They knew what not to do on a bridge at night in a war. So he let them alone back there. After a few minutes, he turned and asked the port lookout if all was well, and then did the same with the man in the starboard sheers. He was always concerned that a lookout might fall asleep standing there, and said something to them often enough to keep them on their toes. War patrols were, after having seven of them behind him, definitely not a walk in the park. Cavanaugh wanted everyone focused on their jobs, even the mess cooks.

After awhile the two mess cooks walked forward to the conning tower hatch and asked permission to go below. Cavanaugh nodded and said, "Granted." He knew they'd be up at 5AM or so and wanted to get some sleep. He was comfortable with the idea of going to sea on a war patrol where there was considerable risk with seasoned men like chiefs and the petty officers. They had been around, knew what it was all about and were grown up men for the most part. But to see kids like these two leave the safety and comfort of Pearl for a war patrol somehow mystified him. Basically, they peeled potatoes and did the dishes, and looked too damn young and innocent to be out here! He couldn't quite get comfortable with it all.

Cavanaugh was standing the 8-to-12 watch and looked forward to getting a little sleep himself. In 15 minutes his relief would be up to take over at 2345.

The waterproof 1MC speaker on the bridge came to life with, "Bridge, radar, contact bearing 193 degrees - range 14 miles. Its pretty faint, but I'm pretty sure about it."

"Very well radar, notify the captain right away, and keep me informed." He turned to the port lookout and said, "Keep a sharp eye out for a contact off the port bow."

"Permission to come up!" It was his relief, a lieutenant Academy class of '44 named Pete Vaccaris whom he knew from the baseball team. He was a class behind Cavanaugh.

"Granted." Vaccaris came up the ladder and put his cup of coffee on the little chart table they had welded there in the shipyard. On the way up to relieve Cavanaugh he

had stopped in the conning tower to check the charts and the boat's position. The OOD informed his relief of the course, speed and the other conditions of the boat which he should be aware of, like the stage of the battery charge which was going on. When he had completed the change of the watch, Vaccaris said, "I relieve you. Have a good sleep, Danny."

Lt. Daniel Cavanaugh was the gunnery officer which on a fleet boat meant his primary responsibility concerned the torpedoes. He went below and walked forward to wake up the lead torpedoman to inform him of the contact so he would have his ducks in a row in the likely event they made a run at dawn. In forward battery he looked in on the captain who was putting on his shoes. "Let's have some coffee and talk about this contact Danny."

It was first light and they had been on the bridge since 2A.M. The captain, Cavanaugh, the exec and the OOD. The contact was hull-up on the horizon, and it looked like a tanker, certainly Japanese. It was on a course straight for the sub. The captain said to the OOD, "Pete, lets dive the boat, and when you get leveled out at periscope depth, go to battle stations torpedo."

The OOD waited for the other officers to go below before he shouted to the two lookouts, "CLEAR THE BRIDGE, CLEAR THE BRIDGE!" Then he hit the klaxon twice and announced over the 1MC, "DIVE, DIVE!" It occurred to him that it was always exhilarating to hear the loud rush of air as the main ballast tank vents opened just before dropping down the hatch, after his lookouts. He pulled the lanyard behind him while the helmsman climbed the short ladder to dog down the hatch seconds before it was covered by the sea. The OOD, now the diving officer, dropped into the control room to hear the Chief of the Watch shout, "GREEN BOARD - PRESSURE IN THE BOAT, sir." "Very well." The boat was heavier than usual so the dive was quick. The captain's policy on war patrols was to "ride the vents" which meant the ballast tanks were partially flooded. As he went through the whole diving procedure the captain climbed the ladder into the conning tower to make his approach to the target. This was easier than usual since the target was still coming straight for them. While he was on the periscope, the XO (Executive Officer - second in command) took bearings and read out ranges from the back side of the periscope, Lt. Cavanaugh cranked them into the Torpedo Data Computer, (TDC). In 15 minutes they were ready to shoot.

"Torpedo room, Conn, flood tubes No.1, No.2, and No.3." All his orders were repeated. He turned to Cavanaugh and told him there would be a spread of three Mk 14s. "Open outer doors on tubes 1, 2 and 3." Everyone thought they were due for another little Jap flag on the side of the bridge.

The captain raised the periscope once more, nodded at Cavanaugh and said, "Final bearing and shoot". The sailor on the sound powered phones in the cramped conning tower was repeating all the commands to the forward torpedo room. "Bearing - mark." The man on the TDC replied, "Set". The captain said, "SHOOT" and the sailor on the phones pushed the buttons on the panel near him for tubes #1, #2, #3. Cavanaugh hit his stop watch as the captain raised No.2 periscope to watch the strikes. Shortly, he saw the eruption at the bow of the target, but only one. The other two fish appeared to have straddled the tanker, passing to port and starboard. The sound of the blast then hit the boat and everyone cheered except the captain who at that instant saw through the billowing smoke falling away to the tanker's port side, the bow of a Japanese destroyer. From the looks of the smoke the destroyer was making and the bow wave the sub captain estimated it was approaching at flank speed. The captain shouted down the control room hatch, "Take her down to 100 feet! Right 15 degrees rudder, all ahead full and rig for depth charges! We've got a destroyer, gentlemen. It must have been exactly behind the tanker." The destroyer had seen the two wakes pass down its sides and decided to backtrack the torpedo wakes to the sub. The destroyer captain decided that the sub was not likely to just sit there, and set a course to depth charge to the left of the torpedo tracks. He thought of playing goalie on his college's soccer club during a penalty kick. He always had to choose to cover one side of the net or the other - sometimes he got lucky. The sub captain, regrettably decided on heading toward the left side of the track.

The destroyer made a classic depth charge run, mortaring depth charges off both port and starboard and dropping them off the fantail. While the depth charges fired to starboard and those rolled off the fan tail were well behind the sub, those fired to port were on the money. The fourth depth charge appeared to the Japanese destroyer captain to have been a dud, and he pounded the chart table in anger. In fact, the reason it didn't explode was that it had dropped directly onto the sub's cigarette deck and was trapped there by the railings.

Depth charges are exploded by hydrostatic switches. A setting is made aboard ship so that the depth charge goes off at a certain depth. The switch measures water pressure as the charge sinks exploding it at the pre-determined depth. The Japs had set this one for 150 feet and the sub was then only at 100 feet.

With depth charges going off all around, the captain again shouted down the hatch, "Take her to 200 feet!" As they passed 150 feet, the depth charge trapped on the cigarette deck exploded, killing everyone in the conning tower. The captain, the XO, Cavanaugh and the sailor on the phones. The explosion crushed the main induction and flooded the forward engine room whose flapper

valve had been jarred open. Lt. Vaccaris quickly shut the badly damaged hatch to the conning tower but not before several tons of sea water dropped into the control room. He only managed to slow the flooding through the hatch. The control room, beneath the explosion, began to flood quickly. The diving officer, bleeding badly from the head, ordered the safety tank and bow buoyancy blown, not even aware yet that the forward engine room was completely flooded. The bow planesman had an up-angle on his planes. They did everything to reverse the downward motion of the boat.

The Chief of the Boat, holding on to the gyro table, quickly realized it was hopeless with the conning tower and forward engine room flooded and his control room with water up to their waists and rising fast. In spite of his overwhelming fear, he noticed how cold the water was. The diving party, Vaccaris, the chief of the boat, the electrician, manifold operator, helmsman and the two on the planes, just looked at one another. The planesmen seemed to be frozen to their wheels. The sailor on the bow planes began, "Hail Mary, full of grace, the Lord is with Thee. Blessed art thou among women..." The salty old Chief of the Boat said, "Your all good men, and I'm proud to serve with you." They started to tread water as their heads began hitting the overhead. In the few short minutes they had been breathing the remaining air, compressed by the incoming sea water, they had become intoxicated with nitrogen narcosis. It was a godsend. Each took a deep breath, his last. There was no place to go, no salvation. In the dim light of a battle lantern, each finally exhaled and stopped thinking of home. Only the open, terrified eyes of dead men in the control room could have seen the ship's main depth gauge pass 412 feet, its official "test depth."

The young mess cook's battle station was in the forward torpedo room. The boat now had an up angle of 20 degrees due to the flooding aft and he was unspeakably terrified, but said nothing. Those in the room had lost contact with the rest of the boat, the lighting was very dim, supplied only by battle lanterns, one over the tubes and another on the after bulkhead. No one screamed, there was no flooding and they each expected and had faith that the now dead diving party aft in the control room would somehow turn the situation around. They waited in silence holding on to whatever they could to keep from sliding aft. The old first class torpedoman noticed the depth gauge between the tubes pass 600 feet. He knew it was hopeless and chose not to say anything to the others.

The Sonarman was wedged in his little "shack" directly across from the head when it happened. The sea water flushing valve in the head blew across the room with such violence and noise that everyone in the room looked as the two-pound valve went deep into his belly, pinning him against the pressure hull. The other Sonarman leaned over to look at the source of the sound

and was struck full in the face with a stream of sea water with a force no one had ever seen before. Both of his eyeballs were blown out and the extremely high pressure stream broke the bone behind where the right eye had been, and liquefied his brain.

Some still had hope, in spite of the Sonarman, until there was an enormous explosion knocking them all to the deck to slide forward down around the tubes as the boat pitched from 20 degrees up angle to 45 degrees down in a matter of seconds. The bulkhead between the flooded control room and the forward battery had failed profoundly, causing the boat to assume a vertical attitude and speeding up its decent. The mess cook was wedged between the tubes as all the bunks crashed forward, crushing two men. He fought to pull himself up and aft and grabbed on to the starboard mine table for support. The port mine table was the support for the first-class torpedoman - an old salt who had always been nice to the mess cook. As he smiled at the kid, the mess cook heard what sounded like a 20mm firing and saw that the torpedoman had only half a head. The brass sight glass had blown off the No.1 tube door right in front of the torpedoman and struck him on his smiling face. In all the excitement of the torpedo attack, no one had remembered to shut the tube's outer doors. The stream of water from the hole where the sight glass had been hit the Torpedoman's body with such force that it propelled him into the overhead, impaling him onto the valve ends of the pair of oxygen bottles strapped up there. The boat was passing 800 feet.

Numbingly cold 45-degree water was quickly filling the compartment and the mess cook, in the dimness and the horror, realized that he was the only one left in the room. He thought of his mother and how sad she will be not to have a son anymore. He then heard a very loud boom but a little distant. It was the implosion of the after engine room, the maneuvering room and the after torpedo room. The three bulkheads collapsed simultaneously, like dominos, instantly and mercifully crushing everyone and everything in the compartments. The enormous force was enough to detach the three compartments and they now fell separately through the ocean.

The mess cook screamed out, "MOOOOTTHHHERRRR!" and at that instant, passing through 930 feet, the 67 tons of sea water pressure behind the No.2 tube door he was directly in front of caused the tube locking ring to shear off. The door exploded into the room, filling the compartment in less than a second.

Nine thousand miles away, to the east north east, in a little town in Iowa, a pretty 38-year-old woman sat, bolt upright in her bed - she knew not why. Clutching the sheets to her breasts, she cried out, "Holy Mother of God!"

The horror was over for the crew, finally. The two parts of the boat, now completely collapsed like tin cans, still

had over two miles to go before they reached the bottom of this nameless trench in the Pacific. They landed violently, at over 55 knots, 800 yards apart, two tombs of honor on that sunless desert bottom.

AUTHOR'S FOOTNOTE

The names in this story could easily be changed to Hans, Johann or Hartmut. The German subs were essentially the same as those built in America during WWII. The technology was the same. The Japanese were no less eager to sink our boats than we were to sink the German U-boats. It mattered little whether or not one sank in the Mediterranean, the Atlantic or the Western Pacific or whether the boat was full of German or American sailors. The mettle was the same among the crews, along with the horror.

We seem to be comfortable with the notion that submarine crews - German, American, or otherwise, who die at sea, die from drowning and that, since drowning seems to be some dreamy loss of consciousness, the sinking is quick and painless. The fact is, that while there are no eye witnesses and no survivors from all those submarine sinkings, this story is certainly a far more likely set of circumstances. There were no Purple Hearts, as submariners were seldom wounded...you were dead or alive, no in-betweens. The whole crew returned or they all died.

The U.S. Navy's submarine service suffered the highest casualty rate of any branch of all the services during WWII. The German submarine statistics were horrific, far and away worse than any of their own service branches or any other combatant. 28,000 of a total of 39,000 German submarine sailors and officers died! An astounding 781 U-boats never returned to port. 3,500 of the 16,000 U.S. Navy sailors and officers who made war patrols, died. Some of them drowned, no doubt. Most of them, however, died violently by trauma and most knew it was going to happen and had time to think about it!

Admiral Osborne Scholarship Fund

How about helping out the scholarship fund? We are offering a Charleston Base Challenge Coin for sale. ALL proceeds go into the scholarship fund. Coins only cost \$7 each. Available for an additional \$1 is a protective plastic capsule. Buy several for great gifts! To get your coin(s) see Julian Villegas or Carl Chinn. Make sure you have one for "when you get challenged"!



Large Displacement UUV Steaming Ahead

By David Hambling,, April 13, 2012

The U.S. Navy's Office of Naval Research plans to take robot submarines to a new level. Current Navy unmanned underwater systems (UUS) are small vehicles controlled by an operator nearby, for missions lasting a few hours. The Large Displacement Unmanned Underwater Vehicle (LDUUV) will be large and highly autonomous, carrying out missions at long distances for months. It will act as a mothership, deploying and operating static and mobile sensors for persistent surveillance in coastal waters. Ultimately, it is likely to be armed. The program sounds ambitious, but much of the technology has already been proven.

Boeing's Echo Ranger is setting the pace for LDUUV technology. Originally built in 2001, the Echo Ranger is a 5.5-meter (18-ft.), 5-ton craft that can dive to 10,000 ft. "In terms of autonomous operation, we're pretty much there," says Mark Kosko, program manager for Boeing's Unmanned Undersea Systems group.

The Navy's autonomy requirements call for it to operate without human assistance in shallow water littered with obstacles. In the first 18-month phase the craft will work at shallow depths of as little as 100 ft., calling on an operator via satellite link in challenging situations. The second phase, which will take up to three years, will extend operations to open ocean and working without any human intervention.

The LDUUV will have to detect and avoid surface and submerged vessels, and other hazards such as marine mammals and fishing nets. It will sense and maneuver around fixed obstacles, including piers, moorings and underwater terrain, and plot an efficient course to take. Echo Ranger has already worked in this type of environment. Sonar gives it short-range obstacle sensing, and acoustic sensors warn of approaching vessels from several miles away. The vehicle then moves out of the way to avoid collision. Echo Ranger's developers have also learned how to avoid static obstacles, sometimes the hard way—on one occasion it got stuck in a kelp bed. "You only have to learn that lesson once," says Kosko. Another element of the LDUUV program concentrates on endurance, aiming to boost the amount of energy stored per-pound by 10 times. Again, there will be two phases: the first, taking two years, will see the LDUUV operating for up to 30 days at a stretch, increasing to 70 days in the second phase.

Echo Ranger is powered by batteries with an endurance of 28 hr., although Kosko says diesel engines or fuel cells could prolong that time. These technologies might be difficult to apply on small unmanned vessels, but the LDUUV power unit will weigh 3.5 tons, and Kosko says it is largely a matter of packaging existing technology. A third development effort addresses reliability needed for longer missions. Again, Kosko says this has been

explored with Echo Ranger. Drawing on Boeing's expertise with satellites to airliners, developers have looked at redundant systems, improved component reliability and also self-monitoring capability. The craft needs to be able to compensate for the loss of a sensor, and gauge the seriousness of other problems.

"It has to be able to sense a leak and say 'Hey, it's time to go,'" says Kosko.

The LDUUV will have a large payload bay, making it capable of releasing sensors, communication buoys, smaller UUS and weapons. The Navy's current emphasis is on persistent surveillance "over the horizon."

However, its most significant impact could be in mine warfare, both offensive and defensive.

In the counter-mine role, the LDUUV will be able to detect and locate mines, then engage and neutralize them safely. And the LDUUV could make offensive mine laying more controllable and clandestine. In the transformational mine concept, the LDUUV lays networked sensors across a wide area. These track and identify every vessel within range. Depending on the situation, any vessel can be engaged, by either an anchored weapon or a torpedo from the UUV itself. The advantage of using an LDUUV is that the minefield can be switched on or off, or changed in size. It can be emplaced in advance, and never activated. De-mining and clear-up do not pose the major problem that they do with traditional mines.

The Navy plans to release a request for proposals for the LDUUV in 2014. Last October Rear Adm. Barry Bruner, the Navy's undersea warfare director, indicated that up to 10 LDUUVs would be procured. The LDUUV is being pitched as a helper to complement manned submarines. However, if it achieves the technology goals for endurance and autonomy, it will pose serious questions of what exactly large unmanned craft could not ultimately do.

Legacy Of USS Thresher: 'Never Again'

Sub disaster still used in Navy's engineer training
By D. Allan Kerr, Seacoastonline.com, Apr 15, 2012

KITTERY, Maine — Joy MacMillan was 6 years old the night she awoke to loud voices and crying in her house. She recalls getting out of bed to see what the ruckus was and being plied with cereal as a distraction from the commotion around her.

Gradually, the enormity of what had occurred dawned her — her father, Chief Petty Officer Walter J. Noonis, was dead, along with 128 other men lost aboard the nuclear submarine USS Thresher.

During Saturday's memorial service to commemorate the 49th anniversary of the Thresher's loss, MacMillan told a crowd of more than 300 fellow Thresher family members, submarine veterans and active U.S. military

representatives that she used to imagine her beloved "Daddy Jack" was still alive. In her imagination, Noonis had merely been knocked unconscious and lost his memory, but MacMillan was convinced that someday they would be reunited.

"I used to dream that he would come back," she said. The ceremony in R.W. Traip Academy's gymnasium honored the Navy sailors and civilian employees who died when Thresher imploded April 10, 1963. Speakers such as Vice Admiral Kevin M. McCoy, a former Portsmouth Naval Shipyard commander who now leads the Naval Sea Systems Command, and Capt. L. Bryant Fuller III, the shipyard's current commanding officer, assured surviving family members their loved ones did not die in vain.

It is believed the sinking of Thresher stemmed from a piping failure that caused the vessel to lose power and sink toward the ocean floor. It was crushed by enormous water pressure, instantly killing the sailors and civilians on board.

The Navy established the Submarine Safety Program, SUBSAFE, as a result of the Thresher tragedy. That knowledge has helped sustain many family members who spent their lives coping with the loss of their loved ones aboard the sub, which was built at the local Navy yard and home ported there at the time of its loss.

"That has been a thorny path for my family," MacMillan said of the tragedy. "SUBSAFE cut the thorns for future submariners."

McCoy, who was the Navy's chief engineer before his current assignment, told the crowd his familiarity with the Thresher disaster enabled him to make submarine safety a personal issue. To this day, the admiral said, young engineers and designers are required to listen to tapes of transmissions between Thresher and its escort ship, USS Skylark. It's haunting to hear recordings of Skylark trying to establish communication with Thresher, followed by silence and then the sound of the submarine collapsing. It's not unusual to see moist eyes in the room when subsequent generations relive those terrible moments, McCoy said.

Fuller said the submarine's loss still resonates in the "hearts and minds" of the Navy, as a reminder that failure is not acceptable.

"It's a testimony to those who made the ultimate sacrifice, and those who've vowed, never again," Fuller said.

Lori Arsenault and Debra Henderson, daughters of the Thresher's chief engine man, Tilmon Arsenault, led the singing of the national anthem and then performed the Navy Hymn at the service. Arsenault, of Gorham, Maine, said the event reminds her that the families and the military share a common interest in using mistakes from the past to help improve the future.

The name of each individual lost on Thresher was read aloud with the tolling of a ship's bell as a photograph of

the individual appeared on a screen. Fernley Wagner, a retired lieutenant commander who served aboard Thresher until just a few months before the tragedy, shared memories of the sub and its crew. The daughter, sister-in-law and niece of Daniel W. Beal Jr., an electrical engineer from the yard who died aboard Thresher, were led down a boat ramp behind the school to drop wreaths into the Piscataqua River. The shipyard's rifle squad fired a 21-gun salute. Patricia Beal of Eliot, Maine, Beal's sister-in-law, said she went to Prescott Park with Beal's wife to see Thresher heading down the same river 49 years ago. Plans are under way for next year's 50th anniversary ceremony, and McCoy said he intends to invite the U.S. chief of naval operations to the event. Kittery residents and officials are also planning to create a permanent memorial at the Kittery traffic circle to coincide with the anniversary. D. Allan Kerr is a member of the Thresher Memorial Project Group.

Signal Lantern From Confederate Sub Conserved
Associated Press, April 19

NORTH CHARLESTON, S.C. (AP) - A small lantern thought to have been used to signal from the Confederate submarine Hunley has been conserved. But it leaves more questions about what happened that night in 1864 when the Hunley sank the Housatonic off Charleston Harbor, becoming the first sub in history to sink an enemy warship. Both Union and Confederate accounts mention a blue light seen when the Housatonic was attacked. But the lantern lens is clear and scientists say they don't think there ever was any sort of blue coating. The mystery could be in naval terminology. Scientists say it seems at that time the term blue light referred to any sort of emergency light or flare - not simply light blue in color. The Hunley sank before it could return from its mission.



“Honey, I’m home!”

Annapolis Chief Of Boat Relieved Of Duty
Allegations made of alcohol-related misconduct
By Jennifer McDermott, The Day, Apr 20, 2012

The chief of the boat on the USS Annapolis has been relieved of his duties due to allegations of alcohol-related misconduct, according to the Navy. Senior Chief Sonar Technician Gregory Cordray was relieved of his duties Thursday as the most senior enlisted sailor on the Annapolis by the commanding officer of the submarine, according to Submarine Group Two. The alleged misconduct occurred while Cordray was on liberty overseas, or off-duty while in port, Group Two said. The investigation, which is being conducted by Submarine Development Squadron Twelve in Groton, is ongoing. Annapolis (SSN 760) is currently deployed. Cordray has been temporarily assigned to the squadron. Master Chief Electronics Technician Ed Durruea will temporarily assume the duties of the chief of the boat. Cordray has been on the Annapolis since 2011 and has served in the Navy since 1988. Submarine Group Two could not immediately respond to questions.

*“Green sods are all their monuments; and yet it tells
A nobler history than pillared piles,
Or the eternal pyramids.”
~James Gates Percival*

Top Enlisted Aboard Submarine Annapolis Fired

By Sam Fellman, Navy Times, Apr 21, 2012

The top enlisted sailor aboard a Groton, Conn.-based attack submarine has been fired for what the Navy termed "alcohol-related misconduct" during an overseas port call, Submarine Group 2 said Friday.

Senior Chief Sonar Technician Submarines (SS)

Gregory Cordray was relieved Thursday as chief of the boat of the Los Angeles-class attack sub Annapolis by Cmdr. John Gearhart, Annapolis' commanding officer, according to a news release.

Cordray is the eighth senior enlisted leader fired this year and the third from the submarine force.

Cordray has been temporarily assigned to the submarine squadron at Naval Submarine Base New London, according to The Associated Press. Cordray declined to comment Friday when reached by AP.

An investigation by Submarine Development Squadron 12 is underway, SUBGRU 2 said. No details of the incident were made available.

Master Chief Electronics Technician (SS) Ed Durrue has been named chief of boat on a temporary basis. He previously was assigned to the Los Angeles-class sub Miami.

Annapolis is forward-deployed, SUBGRU 2 said.

*"They are dead; but they live in each Patriot's breast,
And their names are engraven on honor's bright
crest."*

~Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Seawolf Gets A Secret Upgrade

The Strategy Page, Apr 21, 2012

The American SSN (nuclear attack sub) USS Seawolf has returned to service after a 31 month, \$280 million refurbishment. The Seawolf entered service in 1997, and SSNs typically undergo a major maintenance and upgrades after about 20 years. The Seawolf went in for this kind of work early, and the refurbishment was more extensive (and expensive) than usual for regular Depot Modernization Period work. This may have to do with the fact that the Seawolf was the first of its class. This might indicate the installation of some special equipment for intelligence missions. A sister ship, the USS Carter, was extensively outfitted as an intelligence and special operations submarine. The navy admitted what the Carter was rebuilt for but for even more sensitive missions you would want to withhold all details.

The twenty-nine 9,000 ton Seawolf-class SSNs were supposed to replace the Cold War era Los Angeles boats but Seawolf proved too expensive. Only three were built. The Seawolf was designed for the Cold War, carrying fifty weapons (torpedoes, cruise missiles, or Harpoon anti-ship missiles) for its eight 26-inch (660-millimeter)

torpedo tubes. Seawolf was fast (top speed of over 60 kilometers an hour) and much quieter than the Los Angeles boats. To replace the un-built Seawolfs the 7,800 ton Virginia-class was designed. Think of it as a Los Angeles size hull with a lot of Seawolf technology installed. The Virginia-class boats ended up costing about half as much as the Seawolfs. But that was largely possible because the Virginias used a lot of the new technology developed for Seawolf.

The U.S. currently has three classes of SSN. Most are the 6,900 ton Los Angeles-class SSNs. Sixty-two of these submarines were built, and 43 are still in service. Armed with four 21-inch (533-millimeter) torpedo tubes, they carry twenty-six weapons for those tubes (either the Mk 48 torpedoes or BGM-109 Tomahawk cruise missiles). The last 31 Los Angeles-class SSNs added the Mk 45 vertical-launch system (VLS), which carries another twelve Tomahawks. If built today these late model Los Angeles class boats would cost about \$1.5 billion each. There are eight Virginias in service and another 24 planned.

Iran Prepares Its Submarine Fleet For Blockade Of The Strait Of Hormuz

Articles.businessinsider.com, April 23

We reported a couple weeks ago that Iran was demanding all U.S. ships entering the Strait of Hormuz stop and check in with the Revolutionary Guard. Now, they're saying that move has blockaded the Strait of Hormuz.

FARS News Agency, Tehran's state run media outlet, announced Tehran is continuing a full blockade on all ships entering the Strait, with each undergoing inspection.

From FARS:

"The alien vessels which enter the Persian Gulf via the Strait of Hormuz always provide the needed answers and information to the Islamic Revolution Guards Corps (IRGC) units," Lieutenant Commander of the IRGC Naval Force Alireza Tangsiri said on Wednesday. He further noted the deployment of a US aircraft carrier in the region, and said, "This vessel, similar to the other warships, answered all the questions asked by the IRGC Navy without any problem or making any particular move and then continued the path to its specified destination."

The UPI reports that Iran's fleet of 20 submarines are much on the mind of U.S. military officials as Tehran increases its bluster and stance in the Strait.

The submarines are seen as a danger to international tanker traffic, which ships one-fifth of the world's oil supplies through the narrow strait every day, and to

Western warships if Iran carries out its threat to close Hormuz if its oil exports are blocked.

U.S. military planners must factor in the Iranian submarine threat as the Americans, spearheaded by the U.S. Navy 5th Fleet based in Bahrain, square off for possible conflict with Iran over its contentious nuclear program. "The Iranians would not have acquired so many submarines if they did not think they would come in handy," U.S. defense analyst Scott Charney observed in an April 9 assessment of Iranian submarine capabilities.

Tehran's submarine fleet is led by three Russian Kilo-class diesel electric boats, deep water subs halfway through their 30-year lifespan, and a large number of "midget" subs that can lurk in the shallow waters of the strait.

One 76-foot Nahang, which means whale in Farsi, is supposed to be completely stealth and able to evade detection.

Finally, Iraq President Nuri al-Maliki is in Iran bolstering ties with its neighbor and ironing out trade agreements. Dina Al-Shibeeb at Al-Aribaya reports Iran's first vice president Mohammed Ridha Rihaimi said the two countries will "form a great international power," if they succeed in forming an alliance. From Al-Aribiya: He pointed out to the two countries' "special relations," and how both were facing "international conspiracies due to their beliefs and goals." He did not elaborate on what these beliefs or goals include. The two countries' trade agreements must be speedily fulfilled, he added. The agreements include railway projects connecting the two neighboring countries and cooperation between their oil and airline industries.

Women Joining Third Bangor-Based Submarine

By Ed Friedrich, Kitsap Sun, Apr 26, 2012

BANGOR — The Navy announced Thursday that USS Louisiana will be the third submarine at Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor to integrate women crew members. Twelve women broke into the sub force here in the USS Ohio and USS Maine. The Navy announced the policy change in spring 2010, the boats were picked out in October and the women arrived late last year after completing college, nuclear power school, prototype training and submarine officer school. They're working on their submarine qualifications and have deployed aboard their boats, said Lt. Ed Early, spokesman for Submarine Group 9.

The Louisiana will have the same female makeup as the other two boats — two ensigns not yet qualified and one lieutenant for each of its two crews, Blue and Gold. The lieutenant will be the boat's supply officer and serve as a mentor for the younger women.

The Maine and Louisiana are ballistic-missile subs; the Ohio was converted to carry conventional missiles. The moves were duplicated at the Navy's East Coast Trident base at Kings Bay, Ga. The difference is this latest sub, the USS Florida, carries conventional missiles instead of nukes.

The Navy is beginning its submarine integration with the 560-foot Tridents because they're larger than fast-attack subs and don't need to be modified. There are five officer staterooms. Women share one. There is one shared head for all the officers. It has a sign on the door saying whether it's in use by a man or woman.

Women had previously been barred from subs on the theory the close quarters and long deployments were unsuitable for a coed crew.

Remember MOM! Mother's Day is 13 May



Boeing Opens New Navigation System Repair Line at Ohio Facility

Company is sole supplier of navigation systems for US Navy ballistic missile submarine fleet 14,000-square-foot facility in Heath incorporates more than \$ 4M in improvements
Military & Aerospace, Apr 26, 2012

HEATH, Ohio, -- Boeing [NYSE: BA] today marked the opening of a new Electrostatically Supported Gyro (ESG) repair line at the company's Heath facility. The new line increases the capability of the skilled workforce and equipment already in place for the repair and maintenance of the U.S. Navy's Electrostatically Supported Gyro Navigator (ESGN, or Trident Navigation System).

"As the sole supplier of navigators for the U.S. Navy's ballistic missile submarine fleet, we believe this new line will allow for a long-range sustainable advantage in product maintenance while we develop the next

generation of ultra-high-precision inertial systems," said Joe Carlin, vice president of Boeing subsidiary Argon ST.

A key component of all Navy Trident submarines, the ESGN, which started production more than three decades ago, is the world's most accurate inertial navigation system. The new facility includes approximately 14,000 square feet of space dedicated to the ESG Stable Platform Housing refurbishment and test program, as well as space for modification, repair, maintenance and storage.

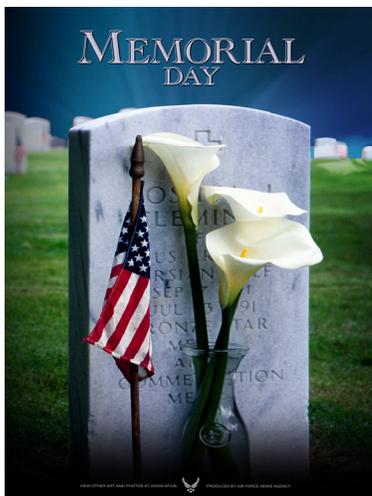
"Ohio class submarines have been patrolling the world's oceans with the Trident II (D5) missile system for 30 years, serving as a credible strategic deterrence against enemies," said Rear Admiral Terry J. Benedict, director of the U.S. Navy's Strategic Systems Programs. "The Electrostatically Supported Gyro Navigator has successfully supported this mission by supplying the Trident Weapon System with critical information." Today's event also celebrated Boeing's commitment to the Heath community. Boeing made \$ 4 million in improvements and upgrades at the facility, which also received investments from the Ohio Department of Development, the Heath-Newark-Licking County Port Authority, and American Electric Power. The Heath facility is Boeing's Center of Excellence for maintenance, repair and overhaul of guidance and navigation systems, inertial instruments and platforms. Under the current contract, Argon ST employees are scheduled to conduct ESG repair and maintenance at the facility until 2025.

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Is this an FTB or FTG operation?

Gives new meaning to Targeting and Firing Solution...



2012 Southeast Regional Conference, Ocala, FL
What the heck went on down there?

