

## **Brothers Forever!**

When we were young and feeling our oats we joined the Navy  
and went on those boats that sank on purpose sliding into the sea.

Nobody knew where we were going to be except for a few who charted the way  
to a far off coastline or a secret bay.

The rest of us did what we were trained to do  
and trusted each other - but prayed a lot too.

In a sewer pipe coffin we just did our jobs  
pulling sticks, cycling vents or adjusting some knobs.

When all hell broke loose we knew what was best  
because we had dolphins affixed to our chest.

But although we knew every valve on the boat  
that made it submerge or caused it to float

it wasn't dolphins or qual cards or years worth of studies that would save us....  
but rather our crewmates....our buddies.

Many stood by us then, but they stand here no more.  
On Eternal Patrol that have left their last shore.

Husbands and fathers and grandfathers too  
who sailed with us, challenged us under the blue.

Forever a mate, forever our friend  
we're bonded as shipmates beyond our lives end.

We pray for them now as we prayed with them then.  
May you rest in peace always, my brothers - - AMEN

by Mike Bickel