

*In Memoriam*

John Ron "Warshot" Smith







John Ron "Warshot" Smith sailed on Eternal Patrol on Friday September 12, 2008, with his loving wife Georgianna at his side. Ron is survived by his four sons, his daughter, six grandchildren, two great grandchildren, one brother and four sisters. Ron was preceded in death by his son Ronal Lyn and his brother Bob.

Ron was born in Hammond, Indiana in 1925. His mother passed away when he was thirteen years old and he took on the responsibility for his younger brother Rex, as his father struggled to make ends meet working on the railroad.

Ron could recall his early days, cold mornings, showering in the basement with no hot water, fun with friends, causing trouble for his Dad, delivering bread to homes from the local bakery, delivering papers and his excellent education at Thomas Edison school. He always complained about his high school algebra teacher, wondering why he needed to finish his homework or show his work when he always understood the material and could always ace the test. Ron believe strongly in how smart he was.



*John Smith*

Before his 17th birthday, he faked his own ID to enlist early in the US Navy. After boot camp in Illinois, Ron was admitted to the submarine service and transferred to the Mare Island Naval Shipyard. Ron served on the USS Seal in the Pacific and survived an intense depth charge attack by the Japanese. Three Japanese destroyers attacked the Seal, dropping depth charges and Ron in the torpedo compartment, helped identify the distance and direction of the charges. He would often tell the story of hearing the click before the explosion of the depth charges. It was during this attack that Ron received the injuries for which he was awarded the Purple Heart. Ron was a proud sailor and when the Seal returned to



Pearl Harbor after the depth charge attack, Ron served as an instructor in Torpedo school and was proud to be a driver for Commodore Mumsen.

“Ron was a product of America's heart-land, a section of the country known to produce sons who rally to the banner of national defense after war is declared. Ron volunteered for naval service and volunteered a second time to serve in submarines. Ron Smith was not a shy or



timid man. History tells us that the men of the United States Submarine Force sunk the most tonnage by far than any other element of our combined naval force and in so doing, suffered the highest percentage of loss. . . He was called "Warshot," the term used for combat rigged torpedoes. It was an apt nickname for the man, for throughout his life he was an explosive man with deeply held opinions and rock hard convictions. Pound for pound there was more fight in

Warshot than 98% of the remaining planetary occupants. Warshot would have taken on a Bengal tiger with an ostrich feather. .He understood submariner's humor and mastered it. No one could pin the tail on your donkey faster than the little torpedoman of the USS Seal. ."

*Dex Armstrong.*



Ron with Admiral "Fearless" Freddy Warder At the dedication of the Seawolf Memorial at San Jacinto Battleground Park.

Ron was an active member of the Submarine Veterans of World War II and the United States Submarine Veterans, as well as a member of the Naval Order of the United States and the Navy League. Ron was a strong advocate for the Silent Service and made sure everyone he met knew it was the subs that saved us in WWII. He was a driving force in bringing the Cavalla to Galveston and in 1998 when Cavalla's future was in doubt, Ron mobilized volunteers around the country, scheduling a "Save the Cavalla" rally on Veterans Day. With his leadership and the support of submariners around the nation , the Cavalla today stands as a proud monument to our veterans. After the rally, Ron and others banded together to restore the Cavalla. Dave Stoops, one of those who helped restore Cavalla wrote about Ron, "Warshot had many good traits, but I think the one that stood out the most was his fierce loyalty to friends and shipmates. He never held a grudge and was always ready to help anyone in need."







"Over time, Ron became the enlisted boat sailor's face to the American Public. He authored or co-authored two books; "Torpedoman" and "Depths of Courage." He appeared on numerous television historical programs, (including Oliver North's "WarStories") including productions on the History and Discovery Channels. He was the submersible Bluejacket's

ambassador to the population at large. He was the sterling standard representation of old Navy sailing and a hero to those who followed in his wake..."

*Dex Armstrong*



*To our Beloved Ron "Warshot" Smith--May you rest in peace  
Hand Salute my Friend!*

I have one consolation that lives with me today.  
That God is near to them, in his own special way.  
So God in all Your mercy, keep near Thyself the soul,  
Of every Submariner, still on his 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  
Or our departed shipmates still on patrol.  
Let them know that we who survive  
Will always keep their memory alive!

In lieu of flowers, Please remember Ron with donations in his memory to:  
Cavalla Historical Foundation, 12660 Goar Road, Houston, TX 77077