



The Dolphin Brotherhood

The WWII Diesel Boat Era

By Michael Skurat

There have been many major changes in the U.S. Navy Submarine Service since the WWII Diesel Boat Era. It might be interesting historically to note some of them. Initially there were only seven pay grades (actually eight). They ran from one to seven with Apprentice Seaman (AS) as one, Seaman Second Class (S2/c) as two, Seaman First Class (S1/c) as three, Petty Officer Third Class (e.g. MM3c) as four, Petty Officers Second and First Class as five and six. Chief Petty Officers were initially promoted to "seven A" for one year (Acting Appointment) and then to Chief Petty Officer as pay grade seven. There were no Master or Command Chief, etc. The

"C" for Chief Petty Officers preceded the rate designation, for example CMM not MMC as today. For all of the seaman ratings there was a comparable Fireman (F)

The Officer's rank structure has remained consistent with minor exceptions. During WWII a five star Fleet Admiral rank was added and bestowed on Nimitz and King. No one promoted to that rank since WWII. Another thing there was no Commodore rank utilized. Officers were promoted from Captain to Rear Admiral (lower half) and hence to Rear Admiral (upper half). The Rear Admiral (Lower Half) replaced the Commodore rank. As it is custom to call any Com-

manding Officer Captain it also was custom to call a Submarine Squadron Commander Commodore.

Before WWII an Apprentice Seaman's pay was \$21.00 per month. Pays increased in WWII with Apprentice Seaman to \$50.00 per month and to around \$120.00 per month for a Chief. All personnel on Submarines got 50% submarine money and 20% sea duty pay. When added together added up to about 80% extra pay. If you were married and/or had dependents your pay was reduced by \$28.00 per month the U.S. Navy supplemented another \$22.00 and your dependent was sent a monthly check for

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Commander's Corner

by Robert Oppe, Base Commander



We blink an eye and the year is more than half over. Its been a busy year for the base.

We have had a couple very good speakers. One who took us on a B47 bomber over the Himalayas during WW2, a summary of the adventures of the Tusk and one man's dream of rescuing this diesel submarine and a recap on the successful return of the USS Razorback.

On behalf of all the base members I want to thank Don Masoero, Charlie Ryan and all the crew who worked

on the Tolling of the Boats ceremony next to the Foxtrot submarine. For the second year in a row, this was an outstanding event and one that all who were present will long remember. Thank you shipmates for making all of us proud of this Seattle Base event.

Mike Hein has agreed to help on the special events coming up for the

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Ike Peterson on the History Channel

Hi Phins & "target ship" Navy Cobblers (Aussie for friend). I'm impatiently waiting for **Deepsea Detectives** on the History Channel (Ike's segment aired on Tuesday, 4-May-04 @ 8:00pm. They are going to have a segment on Guam, Apra (Agana) Harbour. & the ships that were sunk there.

Anyway about (60) years ago when I was twenty, I was on a submarine in the Pacific. I was very dry behind the ears, on my first patrol (1 of 5), & had never been to sub school.

Bribed (\$5.00) my way into the Submarine Service after Boot Camp, QM School, (San Diego) & Shore Patrol Duty in San Fran. Was waiting to go to Noumeia, New Caledonia for Landing Craft Duty. Duh!! A month later I saw my first Submarine off a troop ship coming in to Pearl Harbour [PHTH].

Was assigned to a Relieve Crew (RC) on the old USS Holland. Later, I was transferred to another RC on the Submarine Base at PHTH (that was an "Upgrade!"). Still later, I tried out and got assigned to the 'old' USS Snapper (SS-185), a pre-war boat and my home for almost the next (2) years.

My first day at sea - a trial run on the Snapper - is another story. **My Story:** I'm going to publish it some day. It is the most vivid / memorable day in my (81) years on this earth.

We first went to Truk where we sank a target and got depth charged. Scared? We got 76 of them dropped on us, I know because I kept the log. Scared? I wet the bottom of my pants and that's the polite way of saying it! Leaving Truk, we went north towards the Mariana Islands where we encountered a convoy heavily escorted by tin-cans (destroyers), a Submariners most feared foe.

We couldn't get into position to fire on the convoy. The Old Man then had us come up a little until we had about (10) feet of the periscope out of the water. A tin-can saw it, turned & came hell-bent towards us.

When he was 1,000 yards away - with the range closing fast - the Skipper fired three torpedoes at the can. "Down



The Throat!" The Destroyer blew-up. His friends came and gave us another afternoon of Hell below the seas.

Later we arrived @ Guam & laid off of Apra Harbour. This harbour is protected by a reef [like an atoll] with one small channel in and out that is well protected and pa-

trolled. We found a suppression in the reef where we could see a target freighter docked or anchored inside. The Old Man decided to take a shot at it.

After a lot of planning, the right bearing, the highest tide and the change of tide (less current thru the suppression), we fired three torpedoes and sank the target. I got a quick peek thru the scope. Saw a ship burning, and some fires on land - it looked like an industrial area.

They proceeded to lay depth charges inside the harbour (we were outside) - best depth charge attack I ever went thru. When we saw some ASW (Anti Submarine Warfare) boats coming out of the channel, we got the hell out of there.

We found out later that the USS Flying Fish had tried this earlier. Their torpedoes hit the reef, blew up and made the suppression that we used.

I was in the Snapper's conning tower when we fired the torpedoes. Why me on the History Channel? I think I'm the only one left that was in the Snapper's conning tower at that time.

They [The History Channel] taped me for two hours and said the average is one minute on the air for each hour of taping so I might have two minutes of fame. I'm afraid they might take things out of context - who knows?

So please watch next time and see if you see me.

Thanks, Ike QM2c/SS.

Tolling of the Boats—2004

by Pat Householder

On Saturday, July 31st, on a hot and sunny afternoon with approx 160 persons in attendance, Seattle Base held it's annual Tolling the Boats ceremony alongside the Russian Submarine.



Honoring our fallen submarine heroes is both a honor and a solemn duty of all members of U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc. In our participation we honor those gallant submariners who made the supreme sacrifice while performing their duties with valor, integrity and courage.



Jen Jameson and her staff of the Russian Submarine, including our own Ric Hedman, deserve our thanks for the extra time and effort they put into preparing the site and allowing us a venue for this important ceremony. These thanks also apply to the VFW 2995 Honor Guard (led by Jim Weaver) the US Navy side-boys from Bangor, the Seafair Pirates, who read out a letter of appreciation

on behalf of the City of Seattle, and the City of Seattle Marine Fire Dept for their spectacular water canon salute and for committing the memorial wreath to the deep.

The entire event was professionally executed, with much pomp and ceremony. One SVWWII participant remarked that

he "felt like he was in a movie!" Base member Michael Hein, one of the original members of USSVI back in 1964 was surprised with his 40 year membership pin and certificate, presented in ceremony by Base Commander Bob Opplé. Don Masoero was resplendent in his whites as MC, as were the other members of our group still fit enough to squeeze into their military uniforms. This select group included RADM Horton Smith, MM1(SS) Peter Berkebile and RMCS (SS) Mike Hein.



John Baker and 'Terry' Terrass were inducted into the Holland Club and Fred Ennsli's bio was read out (Fred was inducted last year but was unable to attend at that time, and Terry was in Europe and unable to attend.)



Accompanied by our earliest qualified member, Tom Rice, Admiral Smith recognized and promoted Sea Scout & Sea Cadet Travis Berman and reminded us all how important it is to bridge the gap between ourselves and the youngsters
(*Tolling - Continued on page 5*)

USSVI Dues Increase Coming in 2005

by Patrick Householder, USSVI National Secretary

The first dues increase in USSVI in many years, this will be effective for the 2005 dues year and thereafter.

Following the Reno Convention NC Peters established a committee headed by NSVC Tom Conlon to review and evaluate our financial health, and to project costs into the future. Part of the mandate was to look for ways to generate alternative revenue and reduce current/future costs as well. The Dues Committee report was completed and delivered to the Board of Directors at the Kansas City Mid Term meeting.

REALITY CHECK: It currently costs about \$ 18.00 per member per year to cover all national USSVI costs, which makes the need for the increase is fairly obvious. Cost of living has greatly increased since the last dues change and many structural changes in USSVI have occurred to improve the organization, which have also added to the cost of doing business. A couple of examples that come to mind include the establishment of a national office in 2000 with a paid national office manager, and the Region and District Commanders have become more active in growing our organization, which has involved travel expenses in their areas of responsibility. AMERICAN SUBMARINER, our signature publication and the single highest cost item to our organization, has grown in cost for the same inevitable 'cost of living' reasons.

Adding to the budgetary problem was a unrealistically low Life Membership dues structure. As more and more members have recognized what a bargain the National Life dues are, the ranks of Life members has swelled to the point that over half of our members are either Life or HC (non life dues paying) members now. Simply put, the large number of Life members threatens our financial viability without this dues increase.

COST CUTTING AND INCOME GENERATING FACTORS: A major cost of USSVI operations is the annual national elections, mandated in the National Constitution. A Proposed Constitutional Change will be on the 2004 Ballot to change the terms of National Officers from one to two years. If bi-annual elections are approved, this will save us approximately \$20,000 over the next 10 years. We're also offering on-line voting to members with internet access. By identifying those who prefer to vote on-line, we can save the cost of mailing and costs of production. The savings here are hard to specifically identify, but it will range in the 50 to 75 cent area per member voting online. Previously the A/S went from bi-monthly to quarterly production, which saved us 33% of total A/S production and mailing expenses. The board also established an investment policy committee at the end of 2003 which has invested \$200,000 in conservative bond and equity holdings. Since it's establishment, approximately \$5,000.00 has been generated in value and the portfolio is on track to grow at approx 6% per annum. Certain National Projects will and are contributing to the financial health of our organization, such as annual Calendar sales and the USSVI Longevity pins, through the National Storekeeper program

The Non-Life Dues (effective with 2005 dues year) are as follows:

One Year	\$ 20.00/yr
Three Year	\$ 55.00
Five Year	\$ 90.00

New Life Dues:	
45 and younger	\$500.00
46-55 years	\$400.00
56-65 years	\$300.00
66-75 years	\$200.00
76 and older	\$100.00

Old Life Dues:

45 and younger	\$250.00
46-55 years	\$150.00
56-65 years	\$100.00
65 and older	\$ 50.00

This means all current 'annual' dues members have an opportunity through the end of the year to renew at the 'old' Life rates.

Just for comparative purposes, here are the Naval Submarine League (NSL) membership rates:

NSL Non Life:

One Year	\$ 35.00/yr
Three Year	\$ 90.00

NWL Life Dues:

34 and younger	\$ 750.00
35-50	\$ 640.00
51-65	\$ 400.00
66 and older	\$ 230.00

John Baker, qualified USS Atule, 1944

John Baker grew up in Seattle and Bremerton, where he often admired the sleek Navy vessels being overhauled at the Bremerton shipyard. He entered the Navy in June 1943, shortly before his 19th birthday and after training and submarine school became a



plankowner on the then-state-of-the-art USS Atule, SS-403. After commissioning the new Balao-class submarine in June 1944, John and Atule crossed the Caribbean Sea and transited the Panama Cannel to Pearl Harbor.

On 9 October 1944 *ATULE* departed Pearl Harbor on her first war patrol and on this patrol John Baker earned

(See "HC" - continued on page 6)

("Tolling" - Continued from page 3)
coming up in the world.

Charlie "Spook of the Boat" Ryan did his usual professional job and was busy everywhere at once, it seemed, keeping the event coordinated and on track. Phil Ward, in addition to his work as chief usher, read the sad list of lost submarines and crews, while one of the USN sideboys attended the bell. Doug



and Connie Abramson provided the beautiful memorial wreath with 65 carnations representing the lost boats, plus the hot-dog and hamburger buns. Holland Club member & SVWWII Erv Schmidt led us in the Invocation and Benediction. Bill Giese ran the electronics and Diane Giese manned the store-keeper sales booth. Kirstin and Kelly, Bob Opple's daughters, did a lovely job singing patriotic songs for us all. Steve Shelton was the duty photographer. Pat Householder brought the food and drink.

There were many others lending a hand or participating in the ceremonies. Cliff Nutter, John Bush, Bob Morris, George & Nikki Debo, Karl Krompholz Dave Schueler and Kay Ward come to mind. Apologies to any and all I've missed mentioning.

In addition to the memorial ceremony, new Holland Club members were inducted and a group hot dog and hamburger soupdown, with Floyd & Dorothy Davis as the duty cooks, was held following the event.

Second Annual Submarine Veterans of World War II and United States Submarine Veterans Inc. Joint Holiday Lunch at the Seattle Yacht Club

Reserve Saturday, December 18, 2004 from 11:00-3:00 on your social calendars!

That's when Lockwood Chapter of Subvets of WWII and USSVI Seattle Base will hold their second annual gala Christmas social and luncheon at the Seattle Yacht Club. This year we will have the same private reception and dining rooms overlooking the Yacht Club moorage and Portage Bay houseboats with our own full size Christmas Tree and blazing fire. It's the perfect ambiance for shipmates and spouses to catch up on the past year's events and plan new adventures for 2005.

Following a cocktail hour and three-course luncheon, WWII vets, post-war submarine veterans and guests will reminisce about past Christmas deployments and hear how WWII vets spent the Christmas of '44.

The cost of lunch, other details and reservation forms will be provided at the October Subvets of WWII and USSVI meetings as well as by mail in October to members. Seating is limited and reservations will be honored in the order payment is received. Last December's event was a sell out with 105 attendees and a memorable event in all regards.

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his submarine dolphins in November 1944. Shortly after midnight on 1 November while patrolling the South China Sea, *ATULE* established contact on a fast-moving escorted transport and moved in for the kill. Despite rain squalls and heavy seas, *ATULE* closed the transport and fired six torpedoes. The first hit caused a terrific explosion which threw flaming material high in the air. When one of the transport's escorts began to close the submarine, *ATULE* began a crash dive just as her second torpedo exploded. Japanese destroyers dropped

2004 Seattle Base Officers and Chairs

Commander:	Bob Opple	425-747-1247
Sr. Vice Commander:	Karl "Dutch" Krompholz	253-631-5736
Jr. Vice Commander:	Ric Hedman	206-335-7424
Secretary:	Charlie Ryan	206-525-0935
Treasurer:	Jim Harper	425-357-6485
Membership Chair:	Peter McCafferty	206 784-8920
Ceremonies Chair:	Don Masoero	253 941-4133
Base Chaplain:	Don Smith/Mike Bennett	
Chief of the Boat:	Ted Taylor	425-228-3764
Newsletter Editor:	Don Gentry	425-227-5410
Base Storekeeper	Bill Giese	425-355-5590
Webmaster	Ric Hedman	206-335-7424
Foxtrot COB	Dave Goodson	425-823-3507

2005 Subvet Calendars

The theme here is pre-WWII boats and the quality is excellent. This is a fine, must-have calendar and can be ordered by mail for \$10 (from SK Bill Geise, 911 93rd St SW, Everett WA 98209) or pick one up at a base meeting for \$8.

Email: Bill.Giese@verizon.net or Call (425) 355-5990



nine depth charges in the vicinity as John and his shipmates heard loud breaking up noises from the freighter. *ATULE* first kill was a 16,975-ton Japanese transport. *Atule* sank additional Japanese ships and ended a highly productive first patrol in which she accounted for almost 27,000 tons of enemy shipping destroyed. *Atule* and her crew received the Navy Unit Commendation for this patrol. *Atule* and John went on to complete another three successful war patrols in the Yellow Sea and Japanese home waters.

John tells a story about *Atule*'s third war patrol when she was assigned to aircrew lifeguard duty in the dangerous waters off Bungo Suido in the Japanese home islands. On 5 May 1945 *Atule* was running on her surface patrol station while an Army Air Force B-29 circled high above to communicate with and locate any American aircrewmembers who might need to bail out or ditch

(See "HC" - continued on page 12)

Lost Submarine Classification: A Discussion

(public domain)

Lost Submarines Listings

Counting the losses incurred by the US Naval Submarine Force in World War II and arriving at a firm number for use in memorial ceremonies, speeches, presentations and writing should not be difficult and the number should be easily agreed on. Such is not the case. The number normally used is 52. This has been the traditional number used since the end of World War II. It is useful to the discussion to understand where that number came from.

In 1949, the Preliminary Design Branch of the Bureau of Ships issued a multi-volume work which formalized the "lessons learned" in ship design in World War II. This work detailed damage to selected submarines and listed "Depth Charge, Bomb, Mine, Torpedo and Gunfire Damage including Losses in Action". The 52 submarines listed in the "Losses in Action" became the core listing for US submarine losses.

The criteria for what constituted a loss is generally straight forward. It included:

1. Submarines lost at sea by enemy action with or without personnel loss.
2. Submarines lost by stranding & foundering regardless of personnel loss.
3. Submarines lost at sea by collision with personnel loss.
4. Submarines lost for unknown reasons.
5. Submarines lost due to material or operational causes with or without personnel loss.
6. Submarines lost due to scuttling.

The period for actions for which a lost submarine could be listed in this report was that of the U.S. declared involvement in WW II, 7 December 1941 to 15 August 1945. The portion of WW II from September 1939 to December 1941 was not included even though we lost several ships including one submarine during this period. The list only accounts submarines that were lost while under US flag during the stated period.

Using the criteria above and expanding the time to cover the entire history of our submarine force, a corrected total for our submarine losses may be obtained.

Sixty Five Submarine Losses since establishment of the U.S. Submarine Force. (53 in Wartime, 12 in Peacetime.)

Total Losses in Wartime : 53 Submarines:

The two declared wars in the 20th century were World Wars I and II. World War I period of US involvement was from August 1917 to November 1918. The USS F-1 (SS-20) was lost on 17 December 1917, during World War I, by collision at sea (Criteria 3). This boat's loss plus those lost during WW II bring the total of submarines lost by our submarine force in wartime to 53.

These are:

USS F-1 (SS-20), USS S-26 (SS-131), USS Shark (SS-174), USS Grunion (SS-216), USS Argonaut (SS-166), USS Amberjack (SS-219), USS Grampus (SS-207), USS Triton (SS-201), USS Pickerel (SS-177), USS R-12 (SS-89), USS Runner (SS-275), USS Pompano (SS-181), USS Grayling (SS-209), USS Cisco (SS-290), USS Wahoo (SS-238), USS Dorado (SS-248), USS Corvina (SS-226), USS Capelin (SS-289), USS Scorpion (SS-278), USS Grayback (SS-208), USS Trout (SS-202), USS Gudgeon (SS-211), USS Herring (SS-233), USS S-28 (SS-133), USS Golet (SS-361), USS Growler (SS-215), USS Robalo (SS-273), USS Harder (SS-257), USS Escolar (SS-294), USS Shark (SS-314), USS Seawolf (SS-197), USS Albacore (SS-218), USS Scamp (SS-277), USS Barbel (SS-316), USS Swordfish (SS-193), USS Kete (SS-369), USS Trigger (SS-237), USS Snook (SS-279), USS Lagarto (SS-371), USS Bonefish (SS-223), USS Bullhead (SS-332), USS Sealion (SS-195), USS Perch (SS-176), USS Grenadier (SS-210), USS S-44 (SS-155), USS Sculpin (SS-191), USS Tullibee (SS-284), USS Flier (SS-250), USS Tang (SS-306), USS S-36 (SS-141), USS S-27 (SS-132), USS S-39 (SS-144), and USS Darter (SS-227).

Total Losses in Peacetime : 12 Submarines

The portions of the 20th century not included in WWI and WWII are considered, for the purposes of this discussion, peacetime. This is a point of semantics and it will be argued by participants and historians for many decades to come.

• Criteria 1: 0 Lost

During these peacetime periods we lost no more due to enemy action.

(See "Lost Boats" - Continued on page 11)

\$50.00. Consequently, an Apprentice Seaman would get \$22.00 per month.

Enlisted personnel below pay grade four could not marry without the permission of their Commanding Officer. This rule was breached more often than observed and obviously many entered the service married. At one time the Navy Paymasters would pay personnel with \$2.00 bills so that when spent it would indicate to the local economy the impact of the service. Also when being paid by the Paymaster on board a tender you would line up with your "pay chit" to draw your pay. When you reached the pay desk you would salute the Paymaster, put your fingerprint on the "pay chit" and draw your money. There was a posted pay list indicating what you had on the "books" and you could draw all or whatever amount you desired. Submarine and sea pay were a real boon especially when sea store cigarettes at six cents a pack and a bottle of beer on Bank St. was twenty-five cents. Later when you came in off patrol you would have that back pay and be really flush.

Due to rapid expansion of every aspect of the U.S. Navy, if you could cut the mustard, promotions were forthcoming. Many a serving enlisted person commissioned (called mustangs) or advanced in rating because of the enormous need to fill billets in new construction and replace casualties. Classes at the U.S. Naval Academy graduated early. Personnel with special qualifications were coming into the service rated and/or commissioned. You could see a Chief Petty Officer with no hash marks. These ratings were derided and called "slick arms" (no hash marks) and/or "Tojo" ratings by the old-timers. Some enlisted personnel commissioned as regular line officers, Warrant Officers and Limited Duty Officers (LDOs) in specific areas. Such commissions initially were considered temporary with reversion back to their permanent grades at the conclusion of hostilities. They created many specialty ratings. In their "Crow" specialty designator was a diamond with a letter inside, e.g., the letter "A" would be for a coach or professional athlete who would conduct physical conditioning, etc. Most, if not all, of these ratings ceased to exist with the end of the war. Some referred to these as "square knot" rates. There were right and left arm rates. Right arm rates were considered "Sea Going Rates" (BM, QM, GM, SM, FC, TM, etc) and the "Crow" was worn on the right arm. Left arm rates were ancillary and were MM, Y, EM, RM, MoMM, ET, etc. Right arm rates were senior to left arm ratings. There was no Boatswain Mate Third Class they were called Coxswains. Seamen and Firemen wore a "watch stripe" round the right shoulder - white for seamen red for firemen. There was other colors of "Watch Stripes" for

aviation, CBs, etc. Indication of rate was on uniform cuffs. One white/red stripe for AS/FA, two for S2c/F2/c and three for S1/c and F1/c.

The present diagonal 1, 2, or 3 stripe(s), in color was originally for WAVE uniforms and after WWII were adopted for the present enlisted uniform and the watch stripe was eliminated. The "T-Shirt" a part of the enlisted uniform initially served two purposes. (1) It was to be worn without the Jumper on work details, especially in tropical locations. (2) It was meant to have the high white neckline to show in the "V" of the Jumper. Some personnel, to enhance the appearance would cut the tab off and wore the "T-shirt" backward for a better appearance especially if with age and washings it seemed to sag. The popularity of the T-Shirt expanded into wide public acceptance after WWII and is now utilized, not only as an undergarment but as outerwear with various designs, logos, etc.

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. These worn on the right upper sleeve and there were many of them. One "perk" that has persisted is the wearing of gold rating insignia and hash marks for those with 12 years of good conduct. Chief Petty Officers merely pinned their fouled anchor hat insignia to the front top of their hat covers. The black band and background for the insignia was initiated after WWII. Officers did wear Gold Metal Dolphins as they do today.

Unknown today was also the fact that there was a dress white uniform for enlisted personnel. The collar and cuffs were blue and were adorned with piping. What is worn today are "undress whites". Pictures of them are in old "Bluejacket Manuals". Officers wore swords for ceremonial occasions as they do today but back before WWII Chief Petty Officers had a cutlass for ceremonial dress occasions. Another uniform item that is now passé is the flat hat. Once the ribbon had the name of your ship but this discontinued for security reasons and all flat hats merely had U.S. Navy in gold on

the ribbon. In boot camp all of your uniform items were stenciled with your name and service number. There were no doors on lockers and each item had a prescribed method of folding and stowing. It was even prescribed as to how you would pack your sea bag.

Originally, the entire Groton, CT submarine base was literally below the railroad tracks. Later as the base expanded it was called "lower base". Most of the upper base buildings, i.e., Morton Hall, Dealey Center, etc., were constructed for WWII. The road from the present main gate past the golf course was the Groton-Norwich road. About half way up the road was an overhead railroad bridge. The entrance to the base was under the bridge and the Marine guard stationed there in a guard shack. The base commander's office was housed in a small brick building about half way between the training tower and the Torpedo Shop.

Submarine School - six weeks enlisted and three months for officers. Of some 250,000 men who applied for submarine duty less than 10% made it to Sub School and many of those washed out. Submarine School was the sole tyrannical domain of one Chief Torpedoman Charles Spritz. Submarine School was called "Spritz's Navy". He ruled with an iron hand and was feared by instructors and students alike. He had little regard for rate whether you were a Seaman First Class or a Petty Officer First Class. To call him eccentric was a gross understatement. He did not smoke, did not drink and was single. It is open to debate as to if he ever even pulled a liberty. His total devotion was to the Submarine School. It was universally conceded that he had gone "Asiatic", not 100% stable and perhaps as a youngster he might have been dropped on his head. He insisted that personnel, at all times, be properly and neatly attired in the regulation "Uniform of the Day" without exception. No tailor-mades, proper rolled neckerchief down to the "V" in the Jumper with immaculate white T-Shirt showing, shoes well shined, etc. He did not permit smoking nor any type of horseplay. He demanded that all personnel move at a fast pace. Chief Spritz had the uncanny ability to be everywhere at all times and pity the poor individual who crossed his path. His discipline was swift and sure. He felt it was his personal mission to ascertain that anyone leaving sub school for submarine duty was in every respect ready. He had many axioms but his favorite was "There is room for anything on a submarine except a mistake". Sub school

students were not "boots", many, if not most, had time in the U. S. Navy and were rated. There is an article in POLARIS issue of August, 2000 (Submarine Saga segment) which delves into more detail relative to Chief Spritz and is briefly incorporated here as it is a definite part of the Diesel Boat Era. Sub Vets of WWII in recognition of respect, and a fealty obligation to this once feudal lord and master, wear a "Spritz's Navy" patch on their vests. It would seem that the screening at Sub School served us well.

Friction between members of the crew was unbefitting and unacceptable. If an individual demonstrated an inability to "get along" he could be transferred to another boat. If the same conduct prevailed there he would be transferred out of submarines. The training tower caused many a wash out for both physical and mental reasons. If a person could not "pop" his ears it could cause pain and even bleeding from the ears. Your voice changed dramatically to a high pitch under pressure. All personnel had to qualify from the 100' lock with the Momsen Lung. Right after the war it was noted that some German submariners had made emergency escapes using free ascents. A number of crews from boats went to the tower and made free ascents. We had less pomp insofar as the ceremony observed when a member of the crew qualified than is apparent today. The individual, thrown over the side then sewed dolphins on his uniforms and wore them with pride. They have always been, and always will be, a badge of honor regardless of manner in which bestowed. There was less reverence on some other occasions also, e.g., when a "Good Conduct Medal" was awarded to a member of the crew it would be given by the Captain (or perhaps the Exec) at quarters amid "hoots and hollers" with cries of "Undiscovered Crime". There was also a bonus system for awards ranging from \$1.00 per month for the Good Conduct Medal to \$5.00 per month for the Congressional Medal of Honor.

"Tailor Made" dress blues were the uniform of the day for liberty. The jumper was skin tight with a zipper in the side so that it could be taken off. Accentuated bell bottoms were mandated. The inside of the cuffs were decorated with embroidered color decorations, usually dragons, etc., and were only visible when the cuffs were turned up. When you made Chief you initially bought the cheapest hat you could find since it was also considered appropriate and properly respectful to have all of the crew urinate in your first hat.

Sad to note in this day and enlightened age all of the military services of the United States were segre-

gated during our era. The practice abolished by President Truman over 50 years ago. Stewards, at that time, recruited from America territories and from American minorities. Even in such a tight knit group as American Submarines two racks in the Forward Torpedo Room hung off the overhead beneath The Torpedo Loading Hatch were reserved for the Stewards. Rated Stewards wore uniforms similar to Chiefs.

The submarine sailor was a very irreverent individual with an avid distaste for regulations, etc. The average life span of a submarine sailor was four patrols (about a year). Despite bravado, that thought prevailed to varying degrees depending upon the individual. That premise however, was unsaid but used as an excuse for hell-raising. Rarely mentioned in tales of WWII submarine lore was the fact that going through minefields was as apprehensive as being depth charged. Submarine Officers and crews were very young - anyone past thirty was a very old man. Admiral Charles Lockwood (Uncle Charley) ComSubPac was most forgiving, as were Skippers and Execs, of transgressions of both Officers and men. Returning from patrol crews were treated extremely well. Another "perk" of the submarine force was that any record of "minor" disciplinary action that a member of the crew suffered would be entered into the "page 9" of his service record. Virtually all disciplinary action was handled internally on the boat. However, both the original and carbon copy (BuPers Copy) retained in his jacket. When transferred, the original and copy, removed by the Yeoman to be deep-sixed. Unless there was a serious offence personnel transferred with a clean record.

Many friendships were formed in sub school, plus other training and schools and transfers were not uncommon due to the needs of new construction, promotions, etc. Consequently, the force became even more closely knit. It was the rare boat that did not have personnel whom you knew. Submariners were very independent and resourceful, both individually and as a group. Needs (and desires) of the boat as prescribed by the U.S. Navy, did not always coincide with what was considered proper and adequate. Therefore, a system of "midnight requisitioning" and "midnight small stores" developed to enhance efficiency. This avenue of acquisition considered a solemn duty in promoting the war effort. Those proficient and innovative in this endeavor were greatly admired. It was an art as well as a science executed individually or as a group cooperative effort. Some of these escapades took great ingenuity as well as "brass balls". As a term of affection they were called "scroungers" and/or "dog robbers". If a Skipper or Exec made an "innocent" passing remark that some particular

thing might be "nice" it would appear mysteriously in due time.

On board an informal, but professional, attitude prevailed. Although we had an evaporator to make fresh water, battery watering was primary. In the design and scheme of things, personal hygiene or washing of clothes did not seem to be considered. One Engineering Petty Officer, called the "Water King" ran the evaporators. Personal hygiene or washing of clothing was an afterthought. The use of after-shave lotions, deodorants and especially talcum powders prevailed. Large cans of "Lilac" were the norm, purchased inexpensively and sprinkled liberally. To the unacquainted it could appear that the rapport between Officers and men was quite informal and to a degree it was but it in no way detracted from efficiency, military courtesy, tradition or discipline. There was a strong mutual respect. Aye-Aye Sir, Very Well and Well Done were accorded as appropriate. The vast majority of the crew was rated and competent in their skills. Obviously so were our officers.

There was no such thing as stenciled ratings on dungaree shirts so a person coming aboard a submarine at sea would have a difficult time determining any individuals rate. Also there was an axiom that in submarines "you left your rate on the pier". Ability was the hallmark. When conditions approached that of a Chinese garbage scow junk with an over flowing head and the crew in dire need of fumigation the Skipper might decide to allow showers piecemeal by sections. You lined up to enter the shower, the Chief of the Boat turned on the water for 2 seconds and shut it down while you soaped down. You were then allowed a correspondingly brief rinse. Each member of the crew was allotted one locker which measured about 12" high, 18" wide and about 18" deep. You kept your uniforms under your mattress. Your rack had a plastic zip around cover. Your mattress was encased in a "mattress cover" which was akin to a oversized pillow case able to be turned over once and some even turned them inside out and got two more uses.

Internal communications on board were conducted by the 1MC and 7MC phone and speaker systems. To reenter a submarine after handling lines etc. when returning to port was a shocking revelation. It was impossible to believe that you had survived that malodorous environment. Politely put the atmosphere was conducive to a shanty town house of ill repute that also was inundated by a back up of its sewer system. Pity the poor relief crew that had to come on board and make the boat shipshape again. You could immediately identify an Electrician on a submarine. He was the individ-

ual with the most shredded moth eaten dungarees. Ribald humor was the tenor of the day. No topic or human frailty was off limits. Nothing was sacred. Horseplay and trickery were the order of the day. The antics and demeanor of the crew, both at sea and ashore, would not be socially acceptable nor politically correct nowadays. I fear that the late Admiral Rickover would have been aghast.

One real advantage was food, especially when you first went out. Although they were ridden without mercy the cooks did an excellent job of feeding the crew. We ate family style off china plates. Our officers ate exactly what the enlisted personnel did. The stewards would come back to the After Battery Galley and fill their serving plates and bring it to the Forward Battery for the Wardroom. When leaving port rations were stored in every conceivable space (including the shower since it wouldn't be needed). However, as supplies diminished the cooks were hard pressed to come up with varied favorable menus. All boats had "open icebox" so you could prepare and cook anything you wanted at any time as long as you cleaned up after yourself. The After Battery "Mess" was for chow, off duty recreation, meeting space and a hang-out.

This is a collective attempt at recollection after the passing of a half-century so any errors or omissions hopefully forgiven as "senior frailties". Much of this is collective memory and is a compilation of boats in general. There is no pride of authorship so any comments, additions, corrections and/or deletions are welcome and appreciated. This is merely a historical comparison as best one can do and is in no way a negative reflection between "then and now". GOD BLESS ALL SUBMARINERS - Past, Present and Future

*Michael Skurat
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("Lost Boats" - Continued from page 7)

• **Criteria 2: 1 Lost**

By stranding and foundering, we lost USS H-1 (SS-28).

• **Criteria 3: 4 Lost**

By collision we lost USS O-5 (SS-66), USS S-51 (SS-162), USS S-4 (SS-109) and USS Stickleback (SS-415).

• **Criteria 4: 2 Lost**

Losses for unknown reasons we lost USS O-9 (SS-70), and USS Scorpion (SS-589).

• **Criteria 5: 5 Lost**

Due to material or operational causes we lost USS F-4 (SS-21), USS S-5 (SS-110), USS Squalus (SS192), USS Cochino (SS-345) and USS Thresher (SS-593)

• **Criteria 6: 0 Lost**

We lost no more boats under Criteria 6.

There are indeed other criteria that could be used to count a loss. One could count those submarines which, by action of the enemy or by accident, became "constructive total losses" and add Salmon, Nathaniel Greene, Bonefish and others. However, those boats and others like them were brought home by their crews and the decommissioned alongside with appropriate ceremony.

The decision whether the boat's structure would be repaired or discarded was made not by the sea, enemy or others of those things beyond our control, but by a considered process with the boat in port and the remainder of the crew safely ashore, which is why they are not reflected in the totals above.



USSVI Seattle Base
c/o Robert Opple
4607 142nd PI SE
Bellevue, WA 98006

To:

*"No matter where you travel, when you meet a guy who's been...
There's an instant kind of friendship 'cause we're brothers of the 'phin."*

— Robert Reed, G.W. Carver (SSBN-656)

(Continued from page 1)

remainder of the year and through 2005. We are looking into visiting several display submarines, military museums and a target tour on the new guided missile Destroyer DDG92 USS Momsen.

In the very near future you will be receiving your 2005 annual subscription notices. I would like to request that you mail these in as soon as received. You will notice that we will be following the new National dues structure of offering one, three or five year annual dues.

Thanks to all of you who sent in the 2004 National Ballot. Although I received many paper ballots, I can report that a very high percentage of the members voted electronically this year.

Respectfully,
Robert W. Opple
Base Commander

(HC—Continued from page 6)

their aircraft after combat missions over Japan. Suddenly Atule spotted two Japanese patrol aircraft closing in. The submarine radioed an alert to the B-29 as she crash dived. One Japanese aircraft turned away but the other made a bombing run on John's barely-submerged submarine. The lurking B-29 then swooped in to machinegun the Japanese plane out of the sky. Atule surfaced and located the downed plane. Two of its crew had been killed, but a third aviator, badly burned, was rescued and taken on board as a POW. The prisoner, refusing to answer any questions, remained on Atule 20 days until she dropped him off at Midway. Atule's CO, Jayson Maurer, went on to become a Rear Admiral. And the Japanese aviator? After the war he joined the

Japanese Maritime Self Defense Force, Japan's post-WWII navy, and also rose to the rank of Rear Admiral. John says that a few years ago that former-Imperial Japanese Navy aviator that he and his shipmates rescued in 1945 attended an Atule veterans' reunion and told them: "Thanks for saving my life. Once we were enemies but now we are friends."

John left the Navy as a Second Class Radioman. He graduated from the University of Washington Pharmacy School and rowed on the varsity Husky crew. After a career in pharmacy and trucking, John and his wife Barbara retired to Port Angeles where a visitor recently noted that the former Husky athlete still goes to the gym to work out at 5:30 each morning.