



January 2021

STEEL VALLEY DOLPHINS
USSVI REQUIN BASE NEWSLETTER



The USSVI Requin Base supports the National Creed

“To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of 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.”

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Meeting Information

Meetings are held on the second Saturday of the month, normally at the Baden PA American Legion. Quarterly meetings are held around our membership area.

Our next meeting will be

February 13, 2021

At the Baden American Legion

Base Location

American Legion Post 641

271 State St

Baden PA 15005



MAKE A DIFFERENCE, ATTEND A MEETING!

Our Website

For additional information about what is happening at **YOUR** base, go to

<https://www.requinbase.org/>

USSVI National Officers

Office	Officer	Phone	eMail
National Commander	Wayne Standerfer	972-298-8139	lwaynes@charter.net
Senior Vice Commander	Jon Jaques	615-893-7800	jjaques@bellsouth.net
Junior Vice Commander	Steven Bell	704-824-3510	usnret82@carolina.rr.com
Secretary	Raymond Wewers	479-967-5541	raywewers@gmail.com
Treasurer	Paul Hiser	910-691-5650	paulhiser664@gmail.com
Past Commander	John Markiewicz	904-743-2924	markiewiczjohn4@gmail.com
Chaplain	Carl Stigers	412-995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
Region Director Northeast	Leslie Altschuler	917-748-2275	CdrNJNorthBase@hotmail.com
District Commander EN3	Hubert Dietrich	412-486-2635	hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com

USS Requin Base Officers

Office	Officer	Phone	eMail
Base Commander	Hubert C. Dietrich	412-486-2635	hueyfromglenshaw@aol.com
1st Vice Commander	Carl Stigers	412-995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
2nd Vice Commander	Rick Elster	412-751-7967	relster565@comcast.net
Secretary	Jeff Simon	724-502-4505	jeffsimon@zoominternet.net
Treasurer	Lee M. Bookwalter	412-795-8337	booky143@verizon.net
Storekeeper	Frank Nicotra	412-835-6540	nicotrafrank@gmail.com
Chaplain	Carl Stigers	412-995-8028	carstenstigers@verizon.net
Past Base Commander	Joe Campisi	412-322-3201	jcampisi1@comcast.net
Newsletter Editor	Jack Sutherin	330-482-4175	jack.sutherin@comcast.net
Webmaster	Lee M. Bookwalter	412-795-8337	booky143@verizon.net
COB/Historian	Chad Underkoffler	724-809-6830	candj981@verizon.net
Photographer	Rick Flaugh	412-779-0497	flaughre@comcast.net
Holland Club Chairman	Joe Campisi	412-322-3201	jcampisi1@comcast.net
Asst. Holland Club	Dick Geyer	724-637-2995	dgdiving@gmail.com
Technology Chair	Lou Hamill	412-445-3998	itgeek8088@gmail.com
Eagle Scout Chair	Vince Metz	412-613-5554	vincemetz007@hotmail.com
Awards Chair	Dick Geyer	724-637-2995	dgdiving@gmail.com
Master at Arms	Bat Masterson	724-869-1938	mastersoncf@aol.com
Public Affairs Chair	Ed Derr	724-854-0781	rredde@gmail.com

Binnacle List



Jack Sutherin
Ginny Sutherin
Greg Bushko

Eternal Patrol



Dot Paul - first mate of Ed Paul
Chip Porter - COB
Lois Stewart - first mate of John Stewart
Conrad Ostertag - our base accordionist
Mike Naughton - Former N.E. Regional Director

Boats Lost



Tolling of the Boats for January

USS Scorpion (SS-278)

Lost on Jan 5, 1944 with the loss of 77 officers and men in the East China Sea, on her 4th war patrol. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.

USS Argonaut (SS-166)

Lost on Jan 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 officers and men off Rabaul, on her 3rd war patrol. While attacking a convoy, she torpedoed a Jap destroyer who along with 2 other destroyers depth charged her. As she tried to surface, the destroyers sunk her by gun fire.

USS Swordfish (SS-193)

Lost on Jan 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men somewhere near Okinawa, on her 13th war patrol. Probably was lost to a mine.

USS S-36 (SS-141)

Lost on Jan 20, 1942 with no loss of life, on her 2nd war patrol. She ran hard aground on a reef and radioed for help. The entire crew was rescued by a Dutch ship after they scuttled her.

USS S-26 (SS-131)

Lost on Jan 24, 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men in the Gulf of Panama, on her 2nd war patrol. She was rammed by the USS PC-460 and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge, were the only survivors.

Birthdays

Member		Spouse		Anniversaries	
Bagley, Dan	2/11/60	Kim Bittner	2/19	Art & Debra Davis	2/04
Cowher, James	2/18/67	Linda Gaylor	2/09	Mike & Flo Hemming	2/06
Dolgos, George	2/26/39	Lynn Gourley	2/10	Ed & Judy May	2/13
Gains, Lawton	2/19/44	Rosemary McCarthy	2/12	Andy/Barbara Sorbie	2/23
Harris, James	2/26/39	Cassandra Sewell	2/18		
Keys, Richard	2/10/47	Barbara, Sorbie	2/23		
McKinney, Steve	2/15/72	Marylyn Regrets	2/07		
Osborne, Russ	2/05/50	Isabelle Watson	2/22		
Sewell, Joshua	2/14/78	Adele Wise	2/28		
St.Clair, James	2/05/42				
Sutherin, Jack	2/03/42				
Walters, Luke	2/13/61				
Weaver, Ron	2/03/49				

Before I go any further with my column – I want us all to reflect and say a prayer for our shipmates who have COVID. Greg Bushko has a mild case and is coming along just fine. Shipmate and First Mate, Jack and Ginny Sutherin are holding their own. Jack has been admitted to the hospital and having oxygen and Ginny is home with her daughter who flew home from out west to care for her Mom, while good old Jack is in the hospital – Our thoughts and prayers are with them.

At our January base meeting, your officers were sworn in for 2021!

Base Commander – Huey Dietrich	COB/Historian – Chad Underkoffler
First Vice Commander – Carl Stigers	Base Webmaster – Lou Hamill
Second Vice Commander – Rick Elster	SVD Hard Copy – Rick Elster
Secretary – Jeff Simon	Awards Chair – Dick Geyer
Treasurer – Lee Bookwalter	Photographer – Rick Flaugh
Storekeeper – Frank Nicotra	Holland Club Chair – Joe Campisi
Chaplin – Carl Stigers	Master at Arms – Bat Masterson
Newsletter Editor – Jack Sutherin	Eagle Scout Chair – Vince (Jim)
Webmaster – Lee Bookwalter	Public Affairs Chair – Ed Derr

We will continue the practice that there will be no selling of anything at our base meetings without approval of the BOD! We will continue to support anyone or any organization that supports the base.

No distributing political articles or literature about politicians, although they may be invited with approval of the Base Commander for Veterans issues or as a guest speaker. The base will maintain its position that we do not endorse Politicians.

GUEST SPEAKERS

The base is always looking for guest speakers who want to share their information on military happenings, VA issues, Veteran organizations, community and military events and especially navy/submarine “that’s no bull s---”

REQUIN BASE CANDY PROGRAM

Our candy program is up and running all year long. Our Eternal Patrol Shipmate Bernie Sigler started the program and we continue in his honor. The candy comes from Daffin's in boxes of 36 bars and the selling cost is \$1.00 per bar (which is a steal). The candy bars consist of Milk Chocolate, Crunchy, Peanut Butter, Almond, Carmel, Pretzel and Dark Chocolate. We can make up a box of assorted bars.

We made up a special wrapper for the candy. It has our challenge coin and a picture of the Requin Submarine on it. It relates to everyone that this is the only veterans candy bar they will find in the tri-state area.

The program is set up this way – the member who orders the candy, pays \$36.00 up front. Then to recoup his money, he sells the 36 bars. This way it does not cost him a penny. The \$36.00 per box is divided - \$18.00 is given to the candy company and the other goes to the base. The member decides which base activity that he wants the candy profit (\$18.00 to go – Kap(ss)4Kid(ss), Eagle Scouts, Base Memorial Fund, Idaho support Fund, or the General fund. You can order directly from the base commander (Huey) - hueyfromgenshaw@aol.com and pick it up at the next meeting

I just went to get a hair cut a few days ago, and the barber heard that I was selling candy bars at my VFW. He ask me if it was ok for him to sell the candy bars to his customers –

WHAT DO YOU THINK MY ANSWER WAS????? HEE HEE !

Bravo Zulu

A special shout out goes to Al Regits for donating a bunch of USS Requin memorabilia and photos. We will be scanning and adding what we can to the base online Requin library.

<https://requinbase.org/uss-requin-ss-481-library/>

As a thank you to Al we sent him a bottle of the wine. His daughter sent us the following:

Hi,

My Dad (Al Regits) wanted me to forward these pictures to you. He was ecstatic to receive such a beautiful gift. He can't stop talking about how his sub is on the bottle of wine. He will treasure this forever!!

Thanks again,

Rita Greb (Al's daughter)

We shared this with the winery and they also had kind words to share back:

Thank you so much for sharing these with me! I'm so glad everyone loves the labels and the wine. This just warms my heart!

Loretta, Debonne Vineyards



REQUIN BASE BOOSTER DRIVE

We will be kicking off our annual booster drive. This fund raiser has always been successful and it helps us balance our yearly budget without going into our reserves. Each year we solicit individuals, group and veteran organizations to support us by becoming a BOOSTER. The yearly funds that support our programs comes from membership dues and donations, selling of USSVI calendars, candy sales, small stores, our booster drive and Edie's homemade Jams and Salsa.

If you belong to other club organizations, they are excellent partners. And if you are working, you could ask your employer and you will be surprised when he says YES!

Over the course of the last (10) years, we have been fortunate to have had successful booster drives, and we not only reached our goals, but exceeded it. This year with the Covid 19 closing down all the VFW and American Legion canteens, it will be a challenge to accomplish our goals. We also have great support from our members, who not only contribute, but solicit boosters from both their family and friends.

We took on an added activity. We are supporting the USS IDAHO SSN799! The COB reached out to us and ask if we would be interested and we jumped at the chance since the PITTSBURGH was de-commissioned. The COB came over from the Pittsburgh and knows how much we love to be involved with active duty submariners.

We have set a goal of \$10,000.00 for the Idaho support fund. It's coming along really well. We even sent out special wine orders to some of the Requin sailors, who just loved to see their boat on the wine bottle. One was as far as South Dakota and he received it, just in time for the holiday. As soon as this first order wine is sold, we will give you a report on the status of the fund.

Since it was close to the holiday, I came up with the idea of having a fund raiser of great wine with a picture of the Requin and our USSVI/REQUIN shield on the bottle. It has gone over extremely well and we are just about sold out and maybe we will have another go around for Easter. There will be a sample booster letter in the next issue of the SVD and also at the next base meeting.

Anyone who has not sent us their picture, please do.

I think I took up enough of your time and I hope you all enjoy the SVD. We have been planning on a new format for the SVD for close to a year and we believe its time to adopt the format. Let us know what you think of it – pros and cons!

We will cover for Jack, our editor until he's back on his feet! So let's take a moment and say another prayer for him and Ginny and also Greg Bushko.

PRIDE RUNS DEEP

Chaplin's Column

Greetings to all my fellow Requin Base shipmates, spouses, and associate members,

With going into a new format for the newsletter I was reminded that I have not been doing a Chaplains Corner and so have been remiss. As such I got a reminder that I had not submitted and so I am here writing one for inclusion. My apologies to all.

At our last meeting I gave an update on the eternal patrol of Lois Stewart, John Stewarts wife and Clyde "Chip" porter our COB for many years. I sent cards out for the base and due to the restrictions in place by the government we were unable to go pay our respects.

I have been a pastor for 42 year now and the one thing that I have come to realize is that, as far as Believers in God's Word are concerned, death is a finality, an ending, a sudden stop of our lives. But the Word tells us that the exact opposite is true for the Believers of God. The Bible tells us that the last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. That "Costly" is the death of a believer because that believer is no longer here to portray the example of how God loves us. The Bible tells us that God upon our death calls our spirit back to Him and so we immediately are in His presence. Yes, we no longer have the companionship or ability to meet with our shipmates and family members who have passed away, but it is a reality that each of us is going to have to contend with.

Gods Word tells us that we will be with our loved ones for all eternity. And that we are to reassure each other of this Hope laid out before us. There is comfort in knowing the truth of the Word of God. May this find you all in Peace and Blessed.

Please pray for our brothers and sisters deployed in harm's way and for those other service members deployed overseas in combat or support areas. Pray for our Country and leadership. Please know that I lift all of you up in prayer much every day.

If you text or call leave a voicemail as the facility; I work in uses medium voltage up to and including 14KVA and this can interfere with me receiving things at work in a timely manner.

In His Service,
Carl Stigers
National Chaplain/ Requin Chaplain

Store Keepers Report

Please visit our online store at <https://requinbase.org/shop/>.



You can have your items shipped to you at home via USPS [for a small fee], or pick them up at the next USSVI meeting.

Executive Board Meeting Minutes

Requin Base Executive Board Meeting Minutes

January 9, 2021

Voting Members Present: Lee Bookwalter, Huey Dietrich, Jeff Simon, Carl Stigers

Non-Voting Members Present: Joe Campisi, Rick Elster, Dick Geyer, Lou Hamill, Al Lukasik, Vince Metz, Frank Nicotra, Chad Underkoffler

Topics Discussed:

Base Budget: As required in the Requin Base By-Laws, the following budget for 2021 was approved by the Executive Board. All other significant expenditures will be brought to the membership at monthly meetings.

<u>Activity</u>	<u>Expenditure</u>
Website Hosting 3 yr (21)	\$224.00*
Base Website Domain Name	\$16.00*
Boat Sponsorship	\$30.00*
Eagle Scouts (coin/patch/certificate)	\$300.00
USS Requin Memorial Service	\$500.00
Guest Speakers (gifts)	\$100.00
Holland Club hats/pins	\$129.00
Holland Club Donation	\$77.00
Loyalty Pins	\$210.00
Advertising (Veterans Day, etc.)	\$525.00*
SVD & Office Expenses	\$3600.00
Nautilus float expenses	\$150.00
Scholarship (Eternal Patrol)	\$0.00
Insurance (via National paid thru 2021)	\$0.00
American Legion VFW Xmas Gift	\$200.00
Christmas Party	\$1000.00
Total:	\$7061.00

*Fixed amount, all others are estimates

Meeting Locations: The practice of holding one meeting per quarter at a location other than Baden PA will continue this year. March meeting will be at American Legion Post 902 in Houston PA. June meeting will be at American Legion Post 290 in Columbiana OH. August meeting will be in Freeport PA. October meeting will be in New Castle PA.

Additional Activities: February 3 Dorchester Memorial in Baden PA, April 24 American Legion Stand Down, September 1 Requin Base Birthday, September 20 American Legion MIA/POW Service, December 7 Pearl Harbor Day., Possible visit to Cod Base.

Appointed Committees:

Standing Committees:

Storekeeper – Nicotra

Chaplain – Stigers

Newsletter Editor – Sutherin

COB/Historian – Underkoffler

Photographer – Flaugh

SVD – Hard Copy – Elster

Holland Club Chair – Campisi

Asst. Holland Club – Geyer

Eagle Scout Chair – Metz

Technology Chair – Hamill

Webmaster - Bookwalter

Awards Chairman – Dick Geyer

Active Duty Go-Between - Vacant

Requin Sailor Go-Between - Vacant

Projects: Eagle Scout courts of honor, loyalty pin program, Kap(ss)4Kid(ss) program, honor Holland Club inductees, and Memorial Day service onboard Requin, Pearl Harbor day.

Parades: Carnegie on May 30 following memorial service onboard Requin, Sewickley and Coraopolis on May 31. Leetsdale and/or Canonsburg on July 4. Columbus Day in October.

Fund Raisers: Parades, candy sales, 40-40-20 raffle, Booster Club donations, small stores sales, and challenge coin sales

Motion to send bottle of wine to Al Regits for his donation of submarine related materials approved by the members present.

Miscellaneous Topics:

- Members where dues were waved
- Members dropped for base
- Members on Eternal Patrol in 2020
- Holland Cloub inductees
- New members
- Base Life Membership
- USS Idaho fund raising activities

Discussion of Base matters.

- No selling at Base meetings without approval
- Setting up and take down at American Legion meetings
- Traveling meetings must be set up by members in the area
 - Washington/Huston – Bookmiller
 - Columbiana Ohio – ?
 - Leetsburg (River Forest) – Bolcato
 - New Castle – Cochenour

Meeting Minutes

Requin Base Meeting Minutes January 16, 2021 American Legion Baden, PA & Zoom

Base Commander Huey Dietrich called the meeting to order.

Attendees: Eric Bookmiller, Lee Bookwalter, George Brown, Joe Campisi, Tom Clark, Dave Cochenour, Ken Crosby, Ed Derr, Huey Dietrich, Rick Elster, Lawton Gaines, Bob Gourley, Lou Hamill, John Held, Bill Lindsey, Bat Masterson, Vince Metz. Jeff Simon, Carl Stigers, Chad Underkoffler

Base Commander Huey Dietrich: Quote of the day: "The more you sweat in peace the less you bleed in war"

Requin History: Launched January 1, 1945. January 20, 1948 given hull classification OSSR-481 and modified to the Migrain II radar picket configuration. January 15, 1951 entered Mediterranean until May when she returned to normal operations on the US east coast and in the Caribbean. January 1, 1953 maintained her schedule of Second and Sixth Fleet operations but at the end of the year put into Philadelphia PA for extensive modernization overhaul that among other things removed her last remaining anti-aircraft cannon.

Base Commander Huey Dietrich: Let us at this time, with a moment of silent prayer, remember our Shipmates who made the supreme sacrifice that we may gather here in Peace. We dedicate this meeting to our Shipmates on Eternal Patrol, to perpetuate their memories in our lives and to honor our Shipmates on active duty in the service of the first line of defense of our Nation.

Boats Lost:

USS SCORPION (SS 278)	January 05, 1944
USS ARGONAUT (SS 166)	January 10, 1943
USS SWORDFISH (SS 193)	January 12, 1945
USS S 36 (SS 141)	January 20, 1942
USS S 26 (SS 131)	January 24, 1942

We also honor our departed shipmate of the Requin Base, John Good, Robert Goodley, Tom Stewart, Earl Wood, Ed Cramer, Ed Paul and Vince Segeleon. Finally let us remember all the brave submariners who died performing their duties aboard submarines, some individually and some in groups, but where the submarine itself was not lost.

Chaplain Carl Stigers gave the Invocation.

Base officers for 2021 were sworn in.

Members introduced themselves and the boats they qualified on.

Base Secretary Jeff Simon reported that Minutes of the previous base meeting was published in the SVD. Minutes of Executive Board meeting are available upon request. With no objections, the minutes were approved as published.

Treasurer Lee Bookwalter gave an accounting of base assets, expenditures, and deposits are available upon request. With no objections, the report was approved.

Other Reports:

Binnacle List: Gregory Bushko, Jack & Ginny Sutherin

Eternal Patrol: Dot Paul, Chip Porter, Lois Stewart, Conrad Ostertag, Mike Naughton

Membership stands at 194. A summary of changes to membership was given.

Holland Club inductees for 2021 are Bolcato, Bonnett, Elias, Shrump, Small, C. Underkoffler, and Lowry

Shipmate Vince Metz reported on Eagle Scout court of honor presentations.

Memorial And Ceremonies

All parades and ceremonies pending.

Events with Baden American Legion: Dorchester Memorial Feb 3, Stand Down April 24, POW/MIA Service Sept 20

Old Business:

USS Idaho fund raising and support activities were reviewed.

New Business:

Executive Board Meeting Minutes were reviewed.

Covid-19 vaccinations are available from the VA.

For The Good Of The Order:

Booster drive will start shortly.

Letters to the base were read.

Chaplain Carl Stigers gave the Benediction and blessing of today's meal.

Adjournment: The meeting was adjourned.

Next meeting: American Legion Baden PA at 1230 hours on February 13, 2021

Membership

Regular Members	181	Holland Club	89	USSVI Life Members	75
Associate Members	13	WWII	5	Base Life Members	50
Total Members	194				

We recruited 14 new members in 2020

We have one new member coming on board, his application is in the mail.

Eternal Patrol Sigler, Porter, Davenport, Voskuhl, Hilgendorf

Left the base Beachler, Huff, Welts, Swords, Miller, Nichols

Official Dink None

Dues in the mail Lacey, Phelps, Abel, Schwarz & Cuddy

Holland Club (2021) Bolcato, Bonnett, Elias, Shrump, Small, Underkoffler,
Lowrey being honored for **75 years** qualified.

WWII Members Biemer, Hollingsworth, Krautstrunk, Lowry & Watson

USS REQUIN SS/SSR/481 crew members

James Bence	Dennis Cantwell	John Donnelly	Lawton Gains
James Harris	Robert Krautstrunk	Merlin Larson	Robert Moore
Charles Nixon	Alfred Regrits	Earl Riley	Robert Sampson
Richard Simpson	John Stewart	Herb Wise	Paris Von Rabeau

New base members in 2020:

Willard Ashmore	Tom Clark, Jr.	Kevin Corcoran	Ken Crosby
Steve Cuddy	Brad Davis	Art Davis	Ed Derr
John Fordyce	Ron Horton	Evelyn Kudlac	Brian Powers
Richard Seif, Jr.	Keith Small		

Loyalty Pin Program — Requin Base 2021

Five	Ten	Fifteen	Twenty
George Brown	Eric Bookmiller	Robert Gourley	Bill Greenlee
Ron Campbell	Dave Cochenour	Paul MKenzie	
Mike Cherock	Fred Hayes	Jack Sutherin	
Robert Goldman	Frank Nicotra	Mark Winters	
Robert Lindsey		Ed Zdarko	
James List			
Ed May			
Shawn McGinty			
Steve McKinney			
Robert Meyers			

Upcoming Events

REQUIN BASE – MEETING & ACTIVITIES SCHEDULE – 2021

TENATIVELY PLANNED FOR THE YEAR

Base Meetings

Base Activities

Jan 09	Requin Base Board Meeting		
Jan 16	American Legion – Baden		
Feb 13	American Legion – Baden	Feb 03	Dorchester Memorial – Baden
Mar 13	Houston, PA		
Apr 10	American Legion – Baden Holland Club Inductees	Apr 24	American Legion – Stand Down
May 08	American Legion – Baden	May 30	Memorial (Requin)
		May 30	Carnegie Parade
		May 31	Sewickley Parade
		May 31	Coraopolis Parade
Jun 12	American Legion – Columbiana, OH		
Jul 10	American Legion – Baden	Jul 04	Canonsburg Parade
		Jul 04	Leetsdale Parade
Aug 14	River Forest, Freeport, PA		
Sep 11	American Legion – Baden	Sep 01	Requin Base Birthday (1994)
		Sep 20	American Legion POW/MIA service
Oct 09	Hermitage, PA	???	Columbus Day Parade
Nov 13	American Legion – Baden	???	Veterans Day Parade
Dec 11	American Legion – Baden	Dec 07	Pearl Harbor Day

We are also looking into a USS Cod visit

This month in US submarine history

01/01/1943

USS Nautilus (SS 168) evacuated 29 civilians from Teop Island, Solomons. Also on this date, USS Porpoise (SS 172) attacked a Japanese convoy and sank the freighter Renzan Maru off northeastern coast of Honshu, Japan.

01/01/1944

USS Ray (SS 271) sinks a Japanese gunboat at the mouth of Ambon Bay, while USS Puffer (SS 268) attacks a Japanese convoy at the western entrance of the Mindanao Sea, sinking an army cargo ship. On the same day USS Herring (SS 233) attacks a Japanese convoy, sinking an aircraft transport ship 220 miles off Tokyo Bay.

01/02/1943

USS Argonaut (SM1) sinks the Japanese guard boat Ebon Maru in the Bismarck Sea.

01/02/1944

USS Finback (SS 230) sinks a Japanese merchant tanker in the East China Sea.

01/03/1909

USS Scorpion arrives to help the survivors of the Messina, Sicily earthquake. With the Great White Fleet making its way through the Suez Canal, President T. Roosevelt orders the U.S. Navy to assist.

01/03/1945

USS Kingfish (SS 234) attacks a Japanese convoy in the Bonin Islands sinking a Japanese army cargo ship and two freighters 200 miles north of Chichi Jima.

01/04/1943

USS Shad (SS 235) sinks German minesweeper M 4242 (ex-French trawler Odet II) in the Bay of Biscay.

01/04/1944

USS Bluefish (SS 222) and USS Rasher (SS 269) attack a Japanese convoy off French Indochina; Bluefish sinks a merchant tanker while Rasher damages another tanker. Also on this date USS Cabrilla (SS 288) sinks a Japanese freighter off Cape Padran, French Indochina while USS Tautog (SS 109) sinks a Japanese freighter off southern Honshu.

01/07/1945

Submarine Spot (SS 413) sinks the Japanese gunboat No.2 Nichiei Maru in the Inland Sea.

01/08/1983

Fast Attack Submarine USS City of Corpus Christi (SSN 705) is commissioned.

01/08/1994

Fast Attack Submarine USS Santa Fe (SSN 763) is commissioned.

01/09/1942

Submarine USS Pollack (SS 180) sinks the Japanese freighter Teian Maru (ex-Yugoslav Tomislav) 40 miles south-southwest of Inubo Saki, Japan.

01/09/1959

Non-strategic submarine Halibut (SSGN 587), launches. Redesignated an attack submarine in 1965, she serves until decommissioned in 1986.

01/09/1993

Fast Attack Submarine USS Springfield (SSN 761) is commissioned.

01/10/1943

Submarine Trigger (SS 237) sinks the Japanese destroyer Okikaze off Yokosuka, Japan.

01/10/1944

Submarines Seawolf (SS 197) and Steelhead (SS 280) attack a Japanese convoy about 70 miles north of Naha, Okinawa, sinking three ships, including one while in the middle of a typhoon.

01/12/1943

Submarine Guardfish (SS 217) sinks Japanese Patrol Boat No.1 about 10 miles southwest of the Tingwon Islands, located just southwest of the northern tip of New Hanover, Bismarck Archipelago.

01/14/1943

USS Gudgeon (SS 211) lands six men, 2,000 pounds of equipment and supplies on Negros Island for first resupply mission for a submarine.

01/14/1944

Five U.S. Navy submarines sink five different Japanese vessels in and around the Pacific Ocean. USS Albacore (SS 218) sinks Japanese destroyer Sazanami 300 miles off Yap; USS Scamp (SS 277) sinks the tanker Nippon Maru off Sorol Island; USS Guardfish (SS 217) sinks tanker Kenyo Maru southeast of Palau; USS Seawolf (SS 197) sinks tanker Yamazuru Maru off Okinawa, and USS Swordfish (SS 193) sinks transport Yamakuni Maru off Hachijo Jima.

01/14/1945

USS Cobia (SS 245) sinks the Japanese minelayer Yurijima off the east coast of Malaya.

01/15/1916

The submarine E-2 explodes at the New York Navy Yard because of escaping gases during an overhaul. The interior ship is severely damaged and four men are killed.

01/17/1943

Submarine USS Whale (SS 239) sinks the Japanese transport Heiyo Maru.

01/18/1942

Submarine USS Plunger (SS 179) sinks the Japanese freighter Eizan Maru (ex-Panamanian Aurora) off the mouth of Kii Strait, Honshu.

01/19/1943

USS Swordfish (SS 193) sinks army cargo ship Myoho Maru, which was part of the Japanese Solomons reinforcement convoy, while USS Greenling (SS 213) damages Japanese cargo ship north of Rabaul.

01/20/1944

USS Batfish (SS 310) and USS Gar (SS 206) attack Japanese convoys and sink transport Hidaka Maru south of Shiono Misaki and army cargo ship Koyo Maru about 50 miles south-southwest of Palau.

01/21/1943

Submarines USS Pollack (SS 180) and USS Gato (SS 212) attack and cause the sinking of two Japanese ships.

01/21/1954

The world's first nuclear submarine, USS Nautilus (SSN-571), is christened and launched at Groton, Conn.

01/21/1961

USS George Washington (SSBN 598) completes the first operational voyage as a fleet ballistic missile submarine, staying submerged 66 days.

01/23/1943

Submarine USS Guardfish (SS 217) sinks the Japanese destroyer Hakaze off New Ireland.

01/24/1945

Submarine Blackfin (SS 322) sinks the Japanese destroyer Shigure in the Gulf of Siam.

01/24/1956

1956—USS Jallao (SS 368) becomes the first U.S. Navy submarine to transit the Suez Canal traveling from the Mediterranean to Massawa, Eritrea, Ethiopia.

01/25/1943

USS Shad (SS 235) encounters German blockade runners transporting ore in the Bay of Biscay. Shad fires on Nordfels, but the torpedo fails to explode, and Nordfels returns to Bilbao, Spain.

01/25/1945

USS Silversides (SS 236), despite the presence of auxiliary submarine chasers, sinks the Japanese army cargo ship Malay Maru off Kuro Jima.

01/26/1943

USS Wahoo (SS 238) sinks entire convoy of four Japanese supply ships north of New Guinea.

01/26/1944

USS Skipjack (SS 184) sinks the Japanese destroyer Suzukaze and the aircraft ferry Okitsu Maru in the Caroline Islands area. Also on this date, USS Hake (SS 256) sinks the Japanese auxiliary netlayer Shuko Maru off Ambon and USS Crevalle (SS 291) sinks the Japanese gunboat Busho Maru 175 miles southeast of Cape St. Jacques, French Indochina.

01/27/1942

Submarine USS Gudgeon (SS-211) becomes the first US Navy submarine to sink an enemy Japanese submarine in action during World War II.

01/28/1945

Submarine USS Spadefish (SS 411) attacks Japanese convoy west of Chuja Kundo, Korea and sinks escort vessel Kume and transport Sanuki Maru.

01/31/1945

USS Boarfish (SS 327) attacks Japanese HI 88 convoy and sinks freighter Enki Maru 50 miles southeast of Tourance, French Indochina. She also damages a cargo ship that runs aground and 14th Air Force aircraft destroys it the next day.

New documents show doomed USS Thresher submarine lacked training, preparations

Josh Farley
Kitsap Sun



The sinking of the RMS Titanic in 1912. The explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger in 1986. And the implosion of the USS Thresher submarine in 1963.

All were tragedies. But a retired Navy captain believes it's time for further scrutiny of the disaster that's least-known of the three.

"This was a significant historical event," Jim Bryant says of the day Thresher went down. "It needs to be understood."

The deadliest submarine accident ever sent 129 sailors and civilians to their deaths off the coast of Massachusetts. And only now, 57 years later, Bryant has finally received and reviewed a batch of Navy documents never before seen by the public.

Bryant, a 23-year Navy veteran who himself commanded a Thresher-class submarine, the USS Guard-

fish, has been litigating for more records to be released for years. His successful suit against the Navy will ultimately bring to light some 3,600 pages of never-released documents about what happened to the submarine on April 10, 1963, a federal judge in Washington D.C. ruled in February 2020.

The Thresher's fateful plunge came somewhere around 1,300 feet of depth, when its nuclear reactor shut down. The hull imploded despite efforts by the crew to blow its ballast tanks. Its remains weren't found until more than a year later, and the boat is never to be decommissioned, its sailors forever on "eternal patrol."

An official investigation following the sinking found a failed seawater pipe to be the cause. But the new documents cast light on other problems — notably, that the new submarine was rushed and underprepared for the challenges it faced at ever greater depths. Workers from the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard were still aboard working out the kinks as submariners also tried to train, all the while on a new, differently configured and heavier sub loaded with fresh technology.

"They really needed more time," said Bryant, who worked with a team of retired Navy and submarine experts to comb the new documents.

Only 19 pages of a total 1,700 investigative documents had been released publically before Bryant and his team sued to bring more of them to light. In September, in their successful suit, the first 300 pages were released, followed by another 1,200.

'Understanding the mindset'

Bryant, a San Diego resident now in his 70s, said he'd always expected the documents to surface pieces of the puzzle, but he never anticipated any shocking revelation.

"We did not ever expect to find a smoking gun or government coverup," Bryant said. "What we wanted to find out was what the hell these people were thinking."

Bryant has argued throughout the lawsuit that the release of records will help current and future sailors, engineers and others understand "the mindset" of what led to the Thresher disaster. In this case, it appears to have been a lack of preparation for what was the Navy's most advanced sub of its time.

"The dangers of almost doubling the total depth were not appreciated and the fabrication, repair, and quality assurance were not improved fast enough or applied with enough force to prevent this disaster," Bryant wrote in his report on the released documents. "The operating procedures were not in place to recover the submarine at or near total depth after a loss of propulsion and after it became negatively buoyant with minor flooding or excess leakage. Crew training was insufficient."

The testimonies before the Navy Court of Inquiry, which conducted the investigation in the aftermath of the sinking, included that of Cmdr. John Woolston, then project officer that oversaw the Navy's leap from the Skipjack class to the Thresher class of submarines. Thresher was 14% larger, bigger in diameter, and longer. A superior sonar dome at the bow of Thresher, today standard on subs, relocated its torpedo tubs further aft. And while it hasn't been officially released, Bryant said it's widely known Thresher went to nearly double the depths of its predecessors: at least 1,300 feet.

The boat also was not as good at "deballasting" water. In the documents, Rear Adm. Dean Axene — who'd only transferred off Thresher less than three months before the tragedy — testified that the sub's main bal-

last tank's blow system had not enough high-pressure air and could not remove seawater quickly enough from the tank to surface from maximum depth.

"Since Thresher's total dive was much deeper than previous classes of submarines, the (court of inquiry) was surprised to find there was no sufficient effort to retest critical systems to the improved standards, especially silver brazed joints in systems seeing full submergence pressures," Bryant's report says.

And so, while the submarine may have been sunk because of a failed seawater pipe, or, as some have suggested, an electrical failure, Bryant and his team concluded that "time was not made for proper training." That could have also led to a successful recovery strategy, even if the pipe failed.

Bryant uses the example of cost overruns and other problems with the Navy's littoral class ships and the USS Gerald Ford aircraft carrier. While there have been controversies, there were no deaths. And the retired captain is proud of the Navy's response to Thresher in developing the SUBSAFE quality assurance program.

Hyman G. Rickover, the so-called "Father of the Nuclear Navy," also testified in the inquiry, saying the loss of the Thresher was a "consequence of the philosophy on design, construction and inspection." Bryant believes Rickover may have criticized the use of a new steel on the hull, known as HY-80, as a way to steer attention away from the scrutiny of the boat's nuclear power capabilities.

Bryant said this did not come at a cost to the investigation. He points out others testified and defended the new steel. And Bryant says Rickover had good reason for steering clear of nuclear Navy issues. At the time, there were 28 nuclear submarines in the fleet and 36 more on the way, many of them carrying ballistic missiles that gave the United States a strategic advantage in the Cold War with the Soviet Union.

"Rickover did not want to say anything that might make the public and/or politicians lose faith in the safety of the nation's nuclear submarines," Bryant wrote.

Bryant said he's pushed to receive the documents so others can study them, as well as to honor the families of the fallen crew members. There are memorials around the country for Thresher; Thresher Avenue on Naval Base Kitsap-Bangor is named for the submarine.

Bryant is not done yet. The Navy is due to release more documents that will include the testimonies of other high-ranking Navy officials, as well as statements from those on the USS Skylark, a Penguin-class submarine rescue ship that accompanied the Thresher on that fateful day.

"There is more to learn," Bryant wrote in concluding his report.

Those interested in Bryant's work may contact him at jamesb499@cs.com.

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Navy announces latest ship to be christened USS Pittsburgh

MARY ANN THOMAS | Sunday, January 17, 2021 8:31 p.m.



A new warship will be named after Pittsburgh.

The vessel, a San Antonio-class amphibious transport dock warship used to transport landing forces, is one of five the Navy announced it names for on Friday.

“As a resident of the Keystone State, I know that Pittsburgh is a proud city with a strong legacy of service. I am confident that the crew of the future Pittsburgh will demonstrate the same excellence in support of amphibious and littoral operations around the world,” Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite said in a statement.

The latest USS Pittsburgh will be the fifth to be named after the Steel City.

The first vessel named after Pittsburgh was an ironclad gunboat used during the American Civil War. The second USS Pittsburgh, armored cruiser, was used during World War II and another ship, a Baltimore class cruiser, supported the landing at Iwo Jima during World War II.

The fourth USS Pittsburgh was a Los Angeles class submarine used from December 1984 to August 2019.

Another ship, a Navajo class towing, salvage and rescue ship will be named USNS Lenni Lenape to honor the Lenape Nation of Pennsylvania. This will be the first naval vessel to carry the name of the Lenni Lenape tribe who are indigenous people of Pennsylvania’s northeastern woodlands, and the first tribe to sign a treaty with the United States in 1778, according to the Navy.

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