



May 2004
Volume 10 - Issue 5



<http://perch-base.org>

*What's "Below Decks"
in the Midwatch*

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Lest We Forget Those Still On Patrol

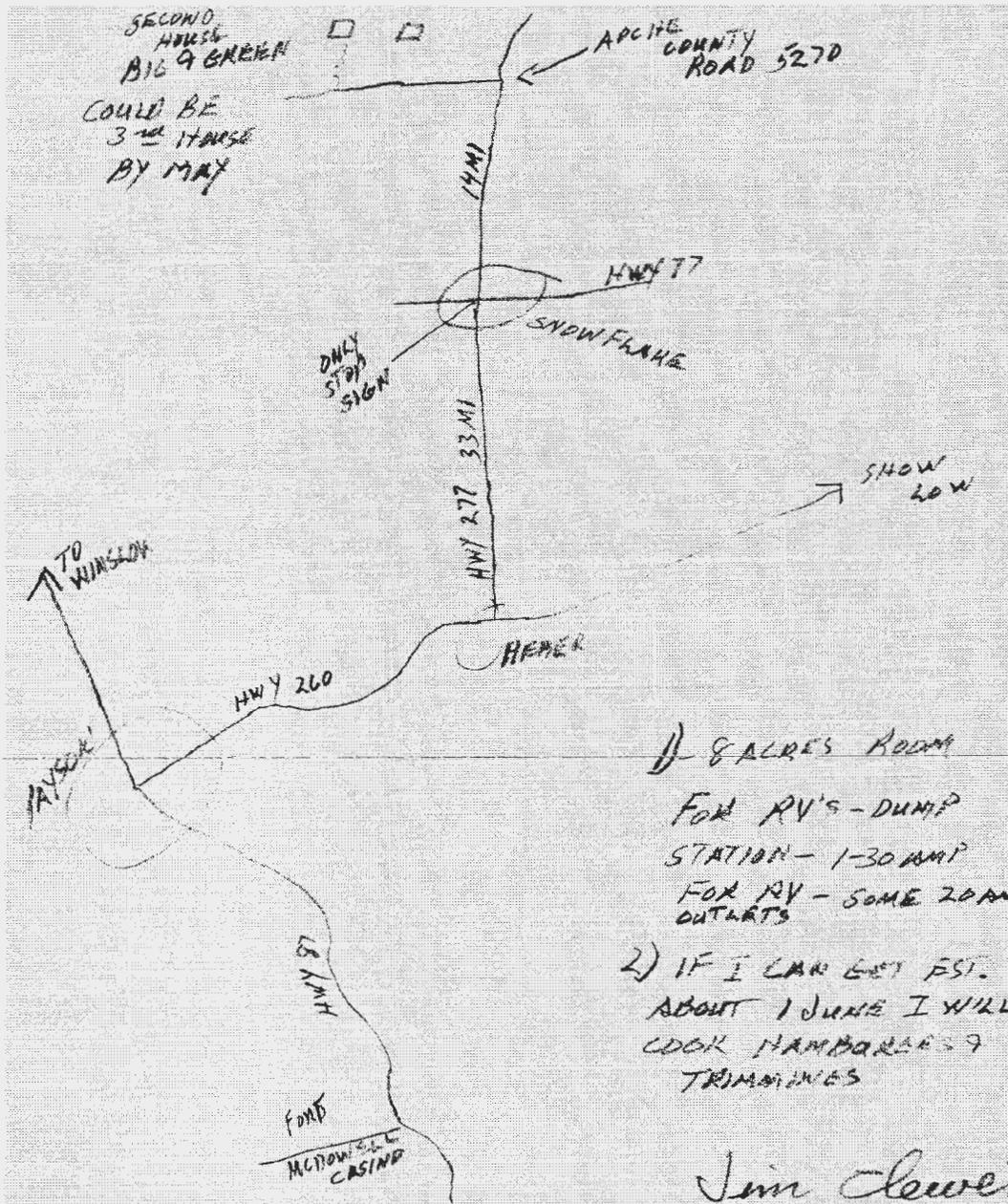
MAY ETERNAL PATROLS

USS Squalus *	SS192	May 23, 1939	26 men
USS Runner	SS275	May 29, 1943	78 men
USS Lagarto	SS371	May 3, 1945	85 men
USS Stickleback	SS415	May 30, 1958	none

* The Squalus was recommissioned as the USS Sailfish in 1940.

NEXT REGULAR MEETING - May 8, 2004
American Legion Post #62
11001 N. 99th Ave.
Starts at 1200 hours
Lunch provided at \$3 a head

Map to Camping Site



The camping is from Friday, June 16 through Sunday, June 18. The Base meeting will be on Saturday, June 17.



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Sailing Orders



**Next Regular Meeting
May 8, 2004**

**DON'T FORGET
Camping and
"Wilderness" Meeting
June 16 - 18
Snow Flake
(See map and note, opposite)**

**District 8 Convention
Denver, CO
May 14 & 15, 2004**

**2004 National Convention
Albany-Saratoga, NY
Sept. 15 - 19, 2004**

From the Wardroom

Shipmates,

It looks like we keep having better meetings each and every time. Thanks again to our lovely ladies in the Subvettes, they arranged not only a Color Guard of Peoria ROTC cadets, led by Air Force Lt. Col. Allan Gaugert, but we were also entertained by the Sun City's "Sweet Adeline's" giving us a rendition of some of the great patriot songs of the past, and present. This was to honor Submarine day April 11, 2004

Bravo Zulu Ladies, you keep doing it again and again.

We also had the youngest guests that we will ever have at a meeting. Miss Serria and Austin Nelson the beautiful twins of proud parents, Brent, and Kim Nelson, along with the proud grandparents, Jim, and Nancy Nelson. For those that don't know, Brent is our only active enlisted Perch Base USSVI member, serving on the fast attack Sub, USS Salt Lake City.

We were able to induct two of our members into the Holland Club. Alexander (Sandy) Martin and Ron Kloch were presented their awards and a letter of congratulations from Holland Club Commander Bill Brett. Dave Harnish, the Western Regional Commander, made the presentation.

Well the picnic was a great success for those that attended. Most everyone enjoyed the train rides, especially since the upgrades to the park seem to have doubled since our last visit. Dave Harnish is also a member of the Maricopa Live Steamers Inc.

I would like to thank him, and the railroaders, for allowing us to use their Park for our picnic. We again had more food than attendees. The COB tried to make certain that we didn't come up short on the grub. But the number that had signed up was greater than the turn out we had. I would hope to prevent this from happening in the future.

I just received word from Lee Cousins, Roger wife, that Rogers operation for a blocked artery in his neck. Surgery to correct the problem was a success, and Roger is home after his operation on Saturday. Our prayers are answered, and are still with you Roger.

This has been a very eventful month for Perch Base. I'm looking forward to seeing everyone at the May Meeting.

Fraternally yours,

Glenn Herold
Base Commander



April Meeting Minutes

The meeting was called to order at 1300 by Base Commander Glenn Herold. The Pledge of Allegiance was led by Dave Harnish and the invocation by Glenn.

Cmdr. Herold stated the purpose of the organization and conducted the tolling of the bell for that month's lost boats.

New members, Bob Nance — a transfer from Florida — and Bill Anderson, were introduced to the Base and warmly welcomed by the group.

The minutes of the last meeting as published in the Midwatch were approved by voice vote. Bob May presented the treasurer's report and it also was approved by unanimous voice vote of the members.

Cmdr. Herold announced that shipmate Adrian Stuke had to resign his post as Base Vice-Commander and that the Executive Board had accepted Tim Moore's offer to fill the vacancy for the remainder of the term.

Officers Reports:

The Chief of the Boat, Bob Gilmore, announced plans for the picnic the following week, including attractions and the menu.

Membership/Wed Master Ramon Samson provided a membership report and told the members that the Base was just short of 100 percent membership renewal with 149 paid members.

Midwatch Editor Chuck Emmett announced that the first business-card sized ads had begun in the newsletter and encouraged all members to be on the lookout for advertisement opportunities. Roger Cousin suggested USSVI insignia might be placed in businesses that contribute.

Old Business:

Dave Harnish read a letter received from Michael Edwards, the British submarine speaker that was a guest of the Base at the March meeting. Mr. Edwards was most thankful for the reception he had received at the Base meeting.

Shipmate Harnish also spoke briefly about the 2004 Convention coming up in Albany and encouraged members to attend.

The topic then turned to the Memorial Park torpedo that the Base was to refinish. Shipmate Harnish discussed the available options to the base with basically two offers realistic.

New Business:

There was no new business.

Good of the Order:

Two members, Alexander Martin and Ronald Kloch, having

See "MINUTES" on page 6

**From Beyond the Wardroom
Perch Base SubVettes**

WOW!!! What a great meeting we had last month. We had the most fun honoring our men for National Submariners Day. We had a Color Guard for our Pledge of Allegiance, and a Drill Team perform too. Both teams, from Peoria High School AFJROTC, did an excellent job. Thank you to Instructor Alan Gaugert, for making them available.

We also had a double quartet from the Sweet Adeline's perform for about 30 minutes. It was such a sight; to see all our men stand up, when they started singing "Anchors Away". It did get a little teary, but it was an awesome tribute from all parties. Thank you to everyone who had a hand in all the arrangements. YOU know who you are.

The annual picnic was a great time. The food was excellent, as usual. We had some special guests attend. Holly Walker, our seamstress, and her family were there to meet and greet. Holly donated six items for us to raffle. They weren't the Vests you are used to seeing, but there were two golf towels, a bath mat and three different types of carryall bags with the USSVI and Subvettes logo. We all really appreciate Holly's efforts and generosity.

This month will be our first joint meeting with the WWII's Pig Boaters. I'm looking forward to it so much, and I know you are too. They all have so much experience and advise to offer. We couldn't find a better asset if we tried. Welcome one and all!!

Our next meeting will be held at the Americana Restaurant at noon on May 8, 2004. Hope you are able to attend.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY

Layne Rumbaugh – 5/19
Lee Ann Brooks – 5/20
Linda Wall – 5/28

Remember to fly your flags at half-staff until noon on Memorial Day, May 31st.

HAPPY MOTHERS DAY!!

With fond regards,

Nancy Nelson, President
SubVettes of Perch Bas



**SUBVETTES MEETING
MINUTES
April Meeting**

The seventh monthly meeting of the SUBVETTES of Perch Base was convened at the Americana Restaurant, Peoria, Arizona at 1200 hours, April 10, 2004. There were 11 members in attendance. In honor of Submariners Day, the Peoria High School AFJ ROTC conducted the Pledge of Allegiance. President Nancy Nelson led members in a prayer of invocation.

A motion was made by Layne Rumbaugh and seconded by Karen Emmett that the minutes from the March meeting be approved as published in the Base Newsletter, "The Midwatch". Motion carried.

Treasurer Karen Emmett reported on the Base's financial status as of March 31, 2004. A motion to accept the report as read was made by Debbie Newell and seconded by Brandi Hershey. Motion carried.

President Nancy Nelson reminded members that raffle tickets were available for an Easter basket donated by Albertson's.

OLD BUSINESS

President Nancy Nelson advised members of the work done by Muriel Grieves and Layne Rumbaugh in booking the Sweet Adeline's to perform during the men's meeting in honor of Submariner's Day. A special thank you to Muriel and Layne for all their efforts. Nancy also thanked Kay Harnish for her efforts in booking the Peoria High School AFJ ROTC Color Guard to open the meeting.

Nancy Nelson reminded members of the USSVI Perch Base picnic to be held April 17, 2004 at 11am, to be catered by Honey Bears BBQ and offered maps to anyone needing one.

Nancy advised members of the passing of Ed Brooks mother and that a request has been made by Dave Harnish, District 8 Commander, that we make a donation to the Scholarship Fund. Members voted unanimously to make a donation of \$50 to the Scholarship Fund in remembrance of his mother.

Nancy then reminded members that the next meeting of the Subvettes will be held at the Americana Restaurant on May 8th at 12 Noon. The June meeting will be in Snowflake on June 12 and that beginning July 17, meetings will be held on the third Saturday of each month to facilitate the joint meetings of the Pig Boaters, WWII, and Perch Base.

NEW BUSINESS

President Nancy Nelson advised members that it would be nice to have good representation from our membership at the Saratoga Springs convention in September and en-

See "SUBVETTES" on page 10

(continued from "MINUTES," page 4)

met the requirements, were inducted into the Holland Club. They were sworn in by Dave Harnish.

Then, the Perch Base Subvettes joined in the meeting and both groups were entertained all members were entertained by nine members of the "Sweet Adelines." The Subvettes had arranged for the group's appearance in honor of National Submarine Day on April 11.

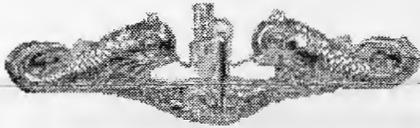
The group sang several songs and was roundly received by the group.

Glen Herold thanked the Subvettes for the singing presentation and for the auxiliary's contribution to the Base.

The 50-50 drawing was held and closing prayer offered by Dave Harnish.

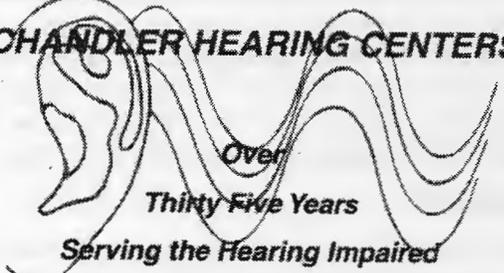
Meeting was adjourned at 1410 hours.

Bill Grieves (for) Ed Brooks, Base Secretary



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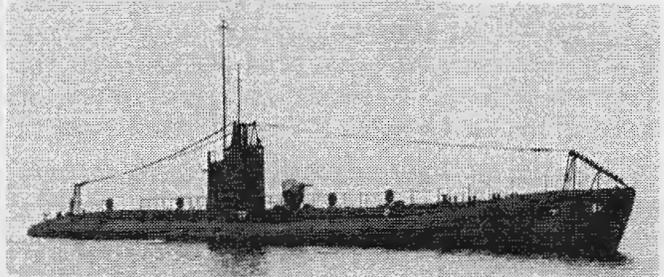
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This Old Boat . . .

Well, I'm now 2 for 2! No one guessed last month's boat either! It was the USS Sea Wolf H-1 (SS28.)

Is this feature getting a little long in the tooth? Shall we discontinue it? If I don't get any positive response, this will be the last time "This Old Boat" will run.

Now, those who dare . . . try your luck on this one. One clue: it ain't one of ours! And you don't need the boat, just the class.



Do you recognize this old boat? Send your answer to the editor
chuckster41@earthlink.net

Pictures of the Picnic



(Continued on next page)



SHIPMATES COLUMN

EDITOR: Lots of happenings this month. Keep 'em coming, shipmates.

Brent Nelson MM2(SS), Perch Base shipmate and a crew member aboard the USS Salt Lake City (SSN-716) and his wife, Kim are the proud parents of a set of twins, a boy and a girl. They were born Monday April 5 in Mesa.

The boy, Austin James, 6 Lbs 9 oz and Seirra Jean, 6 Lbs 3 oz are doing great.

The bad tidings, is Brent leaves for westpac April 23. The kids will be half grown by the time he gets back, if Kim doesn't kill him when he returns.

Shipmate Craig Olson and his wife Christina have a new "point guard" for their team. Greyson Rey Olson was born March 20 at 1:04 a.m. The 7 lb. 6 oz little guy was 19.25 inches long.



Birthdays

- May 7 Stan Reinhold**
 - May 8 Ramon Samson**
 - May 8 John Hellem**
 - May 11 George Woods**
 - May 12 Ron Beyer**
 - May 23 Milan Moncilovich**
 - May 27 Jim Haskell**
 - May 29 Rollo Fischer**
 - May 30 Carl Scott**
-

Does any shipmate know the whereabouts of a "Lowell (Hotch) Day?"

He served on:

Segundo SS-398

Charr SS-328

Spadefish SSN-668

Will Rogers SSBN-659 (gold)

James K. Polk SSBN-645 (gold)

Contact our COB, Bob Gilmore if you can help. There is a member of the Legion Post 62 who would like to get in touch with him. He was a high school buddy of his.

Eternal Patrol April 3, 1943

Editors Note: *Less we forget, each month, one boat on eternal patrol will be highlighted in this newsletter. Although this month's boat had no sailors lost, there could have been. Less we forget, how close we all came.*

U.S.S. Stickleback (SS-415) none lost



- Keel laid by the Mare Island Naval Shipyard, Vallejo, CA, 1MAR44;
- Launched: 1JAN45; Sponsored by Mrs. J.O. Heiley Coll;
- Commissioned: 29MAR45 with Cdr Harley K. Nauman in command;
- Decommissioned: 26JUN46;
- Recommissioned: 6SEP51;
- Decommissioned: 14NOV52;
- Recommissioned: 26JUN53.

USS STICKLEBACK (SS-415) completed outfitting on 26 May and held her shakedown cruise off the California coast. She reported to Commander, Submarines, Pacific Fleet, for duty on 21 June. More modern equipment was installed at Pearl Harbor; and, on 2 August, she arrived at Guam, where she held sea trials for a few more days. She began her first war patrol on 6 August when she departed for the Sea of Japan. She arrived there the following week and began patrolling. However, the atomic bombs had been dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki and it was believed the war would end shortly.

STICKLEBACK had only been in the patrol area for two days when the cease-fire order was passed. She remained in the area and, on 21 August, sighted two bamboo rafts containing 19 survivors of a freighter which had been sunk 10 days before by USS JALLAO (SS-368). They were taken on board for 18 hours, given food, water, medical treatment, and set afloat again a short

See "LOST BOAT" on page 10



Chaplain's Column



Shipmate Roger Cousin has been in the hospital for some maintenance work on his primary coolant system. At press time, it was very good to hear his is doing fine. Last report, Roger was getting fit enough to drive Lee crazy. God speed, Roger and hurry back to base.

*Do you have know of any shipmate who's sick or the wife or family member of a shipmate?
Contact the Base Chaplain, Howard Doyle:*

(623) 935-3830

d-hdoyle@worldnet.att.net

RADM James Butler Osborn, USN (Ret.)

RADM James B. Osborn died of heart failure on Tuesday, March 30, 2004, in Summerville, SC. Admiral Osborn was born May 5, 1918 in Stockton, Missouri and attended the University of Missouri for two years prior to entering the Naval Academy in 1938. After graduation from the Naval Academy in 1941, he served in the battleship USS TENNESSEE in the Pacific during the early part of World War II. In 1944, he was assigned to submarines and made six war patrols in the USS PERCH in the Southwest Pacific.

When World War II ended, Admiral Osborn, then a Lieutenant Commander, entered postgraduate training. In 1948, he received his Masters Degree in Mechanical Engineering from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute where he was awarded full membership in Sigma Xi for scholastic achievement.

He became associated with the Navy's submarine ballistic missile program in the early phase when the Navy was experimenting with launching World War II German V-2 bombs from submarines. He was Commanding Officer of our first guided-missile submarine, the USS TUNNY, which carried the REGULUS missile.

In 1958, Admiral Osborn was selected to command our Navy's first ballistic missile launching submarine, the USS GEORGE WASHINGTON. Two years later, in July 1960, this submarine launched the first POLARIS missile from below the ocean surface off Cape Canaveral. The GEORGE WASHINGTON made the first POLARIS patrol from November 1960 to January 1961.

For outstanding achievements as Commanding Officer of GEORGE WASHINGTON, he was awarded the Legion of Merit and the Navy League Stephen Decatur Award. The ship received the Navy Unit Commendation.

Captain Osborn was assigned as the Representative of the

(continued, next column)

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Commander in Chief, Atlantic, to the Joint Strategic Target Planning Staff at Offutt Air Force Base prior to reporting to Puget Sound Naval Shipyard as Prospective Commanding Officer of the SIMON LAKE.

Selected for Flag rank following his third command, he served as Commanding Officer of the Naval Safety Center, Commander Naval Forces, Danang, Commander Submarine Group SIX and Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Safety and Offensive & Defensive Missiles before retiring in 1973.

He was central to the development of the SSBN concept and throughout his retirement continued to be quite active in the local area with the Naval Submarine League.

Funeral service were held Friday, April 9, 2004 at the Presbyterian Home in Summerville, SC. And buried with full military honors.

From CAPT Charlie MacVean:

"It is with great sadness that I report the death of John Webster. John and I both Commanded USS SEAWOLF, and I relieved John in the Fall of 1975. John had brought SEAWOLF through and an amazing operational period followed by an extensive modification and capability upgrade period in Mare Island.

To this day, I stand in awe of what John did, not only for SEAWOLF and the Submarine Force, but also for me. When John left SEAWOLF, he became the COMSUBPACREP WEST COAST and was my greatest ally, and mentor, in dealing with an "interesting" propulsion plant and equally "interesting" Naval Reactors Representative, Mr. Metzger, in Vallejo.

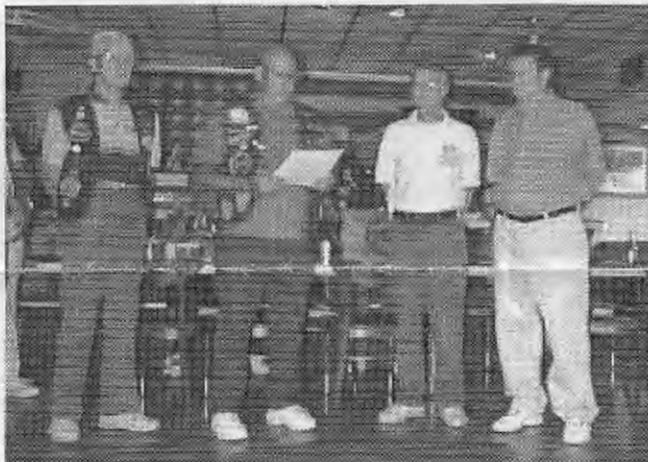
"John was a person of wide and varied interests, and yet he was able to bring focus and perseverance to the problem at hand. In a given lifetime, there are few that we meet who give so much, and expect so little in return. We have lost a great Shipmate."



Perch Base Inducts New Holland Club Member



"The requirement's for membership in the Holland Club is determined by Section 5 of the USSVI Constitution. Basically a member must be qualified 50 or more years, and is either, a life member and a member in good standing for one year, or an annual member in good standing for 5 consecutive years."



Shipmates Alexander Martin and Ronald Kloch are inducted into the Holland Club by Dave Harnish.



Nautical Nuances or, Did You Know?

Duffie

A name given to a Sailor's personal effects. Also spelled duffel, it referred to his principal clothing as well as to the seabag in which he carried and stowed it. The term comes from the Flemish town of Duffel near Antwerp, and denotes a rough woolen cloth made there.

Dungarees

The modern Sailor's work clothes. The term is not modern, however, but dates to the 18th century and comes from the Hindi word dungri, for a type of Indian cotton cloth.

Fathom

Although a fathom is now a nautical unit of length equal to six feet, it was once defined by an act of Parliament as "the length of a man's arms around the object of his affections." The word derives from the Old English Faethm, which means "embracing arms."

(“SUBVETTES” from page 5)

couraged anyone interested to attend and to contact her for any necessary forms.

FOR THE GOOD OF THE ORDER

Happy Birthday wishes went out to the following members:

Lori Bergstedt – April 4

Carolyn Newman – April 12

Muriel Grieves – April 16

Sandi Herrington – April 20

DRAWING

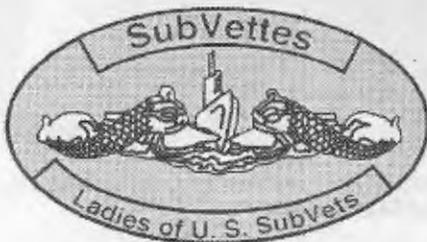
The raffle for the Easter basket donated by Albertson's concluded and Kay Harnish was the winner.

ADJOURNMENT

All the outstanding business being concluded, members were invited to listen to a performance by the Sweet Adeline's immediately following this meeting at the American Legion Hall, and a motion was made and seconded that the meeting of the Subvettes of Perch Base be adjourned. The meeting was adjourned at 1315 hours.

Signed:

Debbie Newell, Secretary



(continued from “LOST BOAT,” page 8)

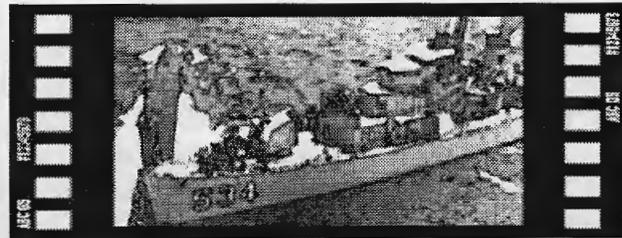
distance from one of the Japanese islands.

STICKLEBACK returned to Guam on 9 September and sailed for the United States the next day. She arrived at San Francisco on 28 September as a unit of Admiral Halsey's 3rd Fleet. She participated in the Navy Day celebration in October and, on 2 January 1946, made a voyage to Pearl Harbor. She was decommissioned, on 26 June 1946, at Mare Island and attached to the Pacific Reserve Fleet.

STICKLEBACK was recommissioned on 6 September 1951 and served at San Diego as a training ship until entering the Mare Island Naval Shipyard on 6 November 1952 for conversion to a snorkel (Guppy IIA) type submarine. The ship was back at sea on 26 June 1953

and joined SubRon7 at Pearl Harbor.

STICKLEBACK supported the United Nations forces in Korea from February to July 1954 when she returned to Pearl Harbor. For the next four years, she participated in training operations and the development of both defensive and offensive submarine tactics. On 28 May 1958, STICKLEBACK was participating in an antisubmarine warfare exercise with USS SILVERSTEIN (DE-534) and a torpedo retriever boat in the Hawaiian area. The exercises continued into the afternoon of the next day when the submarine completed a simulated torpedo run on SILVERSTEIN. As STICKLEBACK was going to a safe depth, she lost power and broached approximately 200 yards ahead of the destroyer escort. SILVERSTEIN backed full and put her rudder hard left in an effort to avoid a collision but holed the submarine on her port side.



STICKLEBACK's crew was removed by the retriever boat and combined efforts were made by SILVERSTEIN, USS SABALO (SS-302), USS STURTEVANT (DE-239), and USS GREENLET (ASR-10), to save the stricken submarine. The rescue ships put lines around her, but compartment after compartment flooded and, at 1857 hours on 29 May 1958, STICKLEBACK sank in 1,800 fathoms of water.



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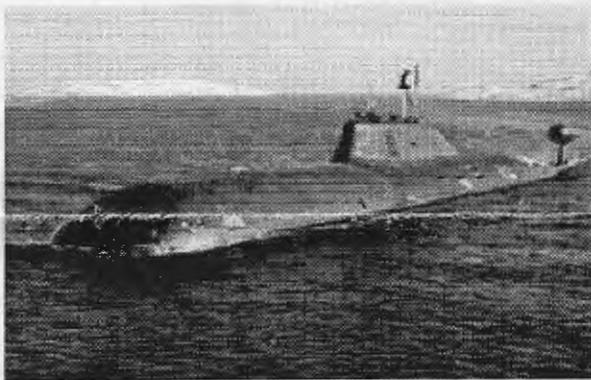
Around the World



New Russian Sub The "Gepard" May Be All New

Russia: Silent Service Hails A New Warrior

Super-silent Gepard, awesome new flagship of Russia's submarine fleet, ceremonially took to northern waters of the White Sea under navy colours today (Tuesday) at a ceremony going some way to easing the wounds of the Kursk disaster and restoring marine service morale. It has been hailed as Russia's first nuclear-powered submarine of the 21st century.



Head-of-state Vladimir Putin met the crew and sent the missile-armed, torpedo-carrying boat - named Cheetah in English - into service after successful sea and weapons trials under the blue and white Russian fleet flag of St. Andrew. The ceremony, at Severodvinsk in the Arkhangelsk region where the vessel was built, was attended by Russian Navy Fleet Admiral Vladimir Kuroyedov and the chief of the Russian General Staff, Anatoly Kvashnin, RIA Novosti news agency said.

Navy officers have already applauded the boost to pride that comes with the new vessel. Commander-in-chief Kuroyedov is on record as calling it symbolic for the lost boat to be replaced by a new submarine, noting that Russia was advancing to building a new fleet which will be a tribute to the sailors who died on Kursk.

The 110-metre-long craft is the last in a fleet of 14 Bars series submarines to be constructed. It displaces up to 12,770 tonnes, dives to a maximum depth of 600 metres and makes a top speed below the waves of 35 knots.

Gepard is served by a 63-strong crew and has an armament potential of 24 nuclear-tipped Granit cruise missiles with a range of up to 3,000 kilometres. It also carries a Strela anti-aircraft weapons system. Though much smaller than the wrecked Kursk, Gepard is viewed as the most formidable ship in the Russian Navy. Construction began in 1991.

Western naval observers say the submarine's arrival is an important step forward. U.S. experts believe Gepard may move as fast and as quietly as America's best fully-operational boats of the Los Angeles class, and have the capacity to dive deeper and harness more firepower, according to a report on the U.S. ABCNews international website.

The new boat is named to honour a World War 1 Russian submarine. As a comparison, its forerunner moved at 8.5 knots and submerged to a maximum depth of 50 metres. Its arsenal was two cannon, a machine-gun and 12 torpedoes.

An official act transferring and commissioning the new boat was signed at the Sevmashpredpriyatiye industrial plant at Severodvinsk yesterday.

Another Perspective

Early this month, the Russian navy began sea trials of a new, third-generation Akula II-class nuclear-powered attack submarine, the Gepard, in the White Sea. The Gepard is to be delivered for service in the Northern Fleet in July. Moscow has also deployed a Delta III nuclear ballistic-missile submarine in the Pacific Ocean from the port of Petropavlovsk on the Kamchatka Peninsula - the first such deployment in months. Both vessels surprised Western intelligence.

In global terms, Russia is signaling renewed will to emerge once again as an important naval power. Much of this stems directly from the decisions of the government of President Vladimir Putin. For years, successive Russian governments have left the navy to rot in port, with new ship construction running years behind schedule. Now, the government is directing scant resources into construction and finds ship-building boosted by orders from abroad.

The attack submarine Gepard represents a fundamental surprise. The vessel was estimated to be five years behind schedule and was believed to be part of a vast body of

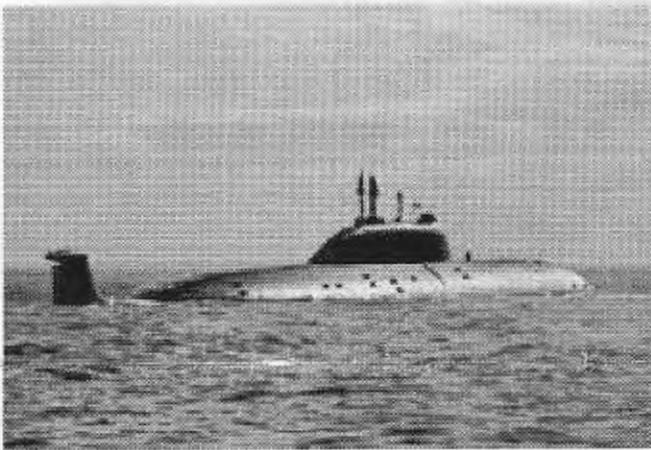
(see "GEPARD" next page)

(“GEPARD” from previous page)

evidence that Russia's fleet is in a poor state. The Gepard, however, represents an important qualitative, as well as quantitative, departure from recent shipbuilding trends.

In some respects, the new attack sub is believed to be superior to the U.S. Navy's Los Angeles-class attack subs. Capable of moving as fast and as quietly, the Gepard can dive deeper than the American vessels and has more firepower than its counterparts, according to Russian media reports and independent naval experts.

Under Putin, Russia's government has moved to boost investments in military projects, with a significant portion going to the navy. Moscow is placing greater emphasis on nuclear ballistic-missile submarines as perhaps its most



important strategic deterrent. Russia bumped up its military budget for 2001 by 50 percent to \$7.9 billion, and the provisional budget for 2002 includes another 20 percent increase to \$9.5 billion. With coasts on both of the world's largest oceans, Russia has an abiding strategic interest in securing the seas and influencing global maritime operations.

These figures still lag considerably behind those of the United States, but espionage may be helping the Russian navy gain advanced capabilities quickly and on the cheap.

In the wake of former FBI agent Robert Hanssen's arrest, the U.S. Navy is investigating whether Russian espionage efforts could have compromised U.S. submarine secrets. The Russian navy apparently has garnered significant technology that will enable it to make future submarines quieter and harder to detect. This technology probably has come from Russian espionage that has penetrated the U.S. submarine program, according to intelligence sources.

Currently, the U.S. Navy is trying to figure out the extent to which its submarine program was penetrated and whether Hanssen was involved, according to those sources. Intelligence sources say the U.S. government is investigating how badly the American program was compromised. It ap-

pears the investigation inside the U.S. Navy is fairly recent, but it may focus on possible pilfering of quieting technologies that make it difficult for adversaries to detect American submarines.

Whether or not Hanssen himself compromised these secrets is unclear. But because he worked in the national security division of the FBI, he would have had access to a wide range of secrets. And his arrest last spring likely triggered new concerns inside the U.S. military.

Ironically, evidence that Russia has penetrated the U.S. submarine program can be found in a small report by a U.S. government agency. Radio Free Europe broadcast a report last week saying Russia was stealing U.S. submarine technology. The report was attributed to anonymous U.S. officials and appears to have been an attempt to downplay Russian technical prowess.

The super-quiet Akula II-class of nuclear-powered attack submarine is believed to have benefited from technologies stolen from the United States and Japan's Toshiba Corp. The Akula II-class has been built at the Northern Engineering Works in Severodvinsk. And the Russian government has maintained that this class of submarines, which first emerged in 1996, is the result of homegrown Russian ingenuity.

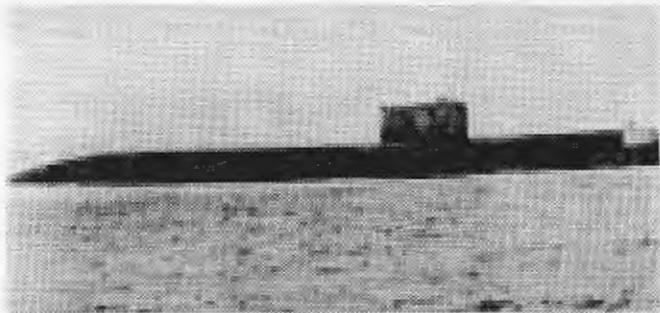
Russia is developing new naval technologies for the first time in many years. In addition to the new attack sub, Russia has developed a new supersonic anti-ship cruise missile, the Yakhont, which can be launched from surface ships, submarines and coastal mobile platforms, according to Rusoboronexport, Russia's arms export agency. The Yakhont has a range of 300 kilometers and can travel twice the speed of sound, surpassing most if not all other types around the world.

Additionally, an infusion of much-needed dollars into Russia's shipbuilding industry is occurring with an increase in foreign orders. For example, on March 5 the Baltic Plant Shipyard in St. Petersburg, one of Russia's largest, laid the keel for the first of three 4,000-ton frigates for the Indian navy, which is also awaiting delivery of an aircraft carrier, according to the Interfax News Agency.

China is becoming another regular customer for submarines and surface ships. Russia's arms export agency also reports it is now offering advanced Amur-class diesel submarines for export. At the same time, some shipbuilding companies are making new investments of their own in research and development, eyeing additional foreign sales from Algeria to Greece to Vietnam, according to Russian media reports.

Meanwhile, Russia is putting the finishing touches on a new naval doctrine. This is aimed at eliminating supply and logistics problems and introducing more regular training, as well as preserving the structures of the Northern, Pacific, Baltic and Black Sea Fleets and the Caspian Sea flotilla.

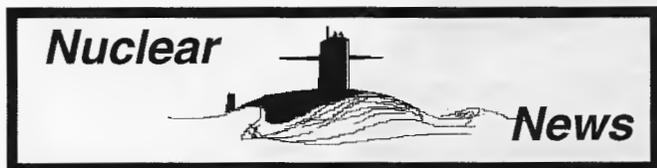
Approved late last year by Putin, the roadmap calls for build-



ing new flagships over the next five years – with serial production to be completed by 2010 – as well as a total rearmament by 2020. Russian navy commander-in-chief Vladimir Kuroyedov recently told reporters in St. Petersburg that “Russia is making a step toward realization that it is a naval power,” according to ITAR-TASS.

A re-emergence of the Russian navy would have widespread implications, fueling the naval arms race already underway in Asia between China, South Korea, Japan and others. This would represent a fundamental upswing in Russian global influence.

For now, the state of the Russian navy remains dismal: Only 40 percent to 60 percent of personnel are able to fulfill their assignments due to aging and to often inoperable ships and equipment. But the Putin government is gambling that with enough money and technology it can rebuild Russian sea power. The cost of failure, however, will be high: If Russia’s navy fails, it will dwindle to fewer than 60 ships in a little more than decade.



PEARL HARBOR, HI — Since its development in the 1930s, submariners have relied on the Oxygen Breathing Apparatus (OBA) to breathe in smoke-filled environments. With the phasing out of OBAs, submariners are breathing a collective sigh of relief with their Self-Contained Breathing Apparatus (SCBA).

USS Cheyenne (SSN 773) is the fourth Pearl Harbor-based submarine to implement to the new breathing apparatus. Members of the crew have expressed relief and approval of the new change.

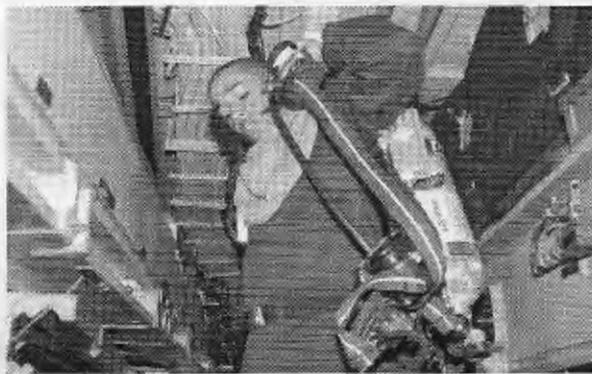
“I think SCBAs are wonderful, compared to the OBAs. They are more convenient and compartment accessible,” said Machinist’s Mate 2nd Class Jay Batista of USS Cheyenne auxiliary division.

OBAs are worn on the chest and that cause problems for

submariners crawling to avoid heat or smoke-filled spaces. They are harder to put on and more prone to snagging on shipboard objects than SCBAs. The SCBAs air cylinders are mounted on a harness and worn on the back, which improves weight distribution and maneuverability. In addition, SCBAs have audible and vibrating low-air alarms.

“That is the unique part of the SCBA. Instead of running to change out your OBA, which takes about 15 minutes, you can change inside a smoke-filled compartment in less than five,” said Machinist’s Mate 1st Class Tim Schreyer, auxiliary division’s leading petty officer.

There are 14 units onboard. There are also 14 extra canisters in case refilling cannot be accomplished during an event.



Batista explains the SCBA also has another plus for use on submarines.

According to Batista, it took 11 days to replace the OBAs because modifications had to be made to the ship to accommodate the new gear.

“It took a while because we had to modify the high pressure air pipes and put in recharging stations. We also had to take down all the old OBA lockers to put in new ones and we did some welding to add brackets for the SCBAs,” Batista said.

Schreyer said halfway through the install, the crew was trained on how to wear and use the fire fighting gear. However, the auxiliary division had a bigger task than basic training.

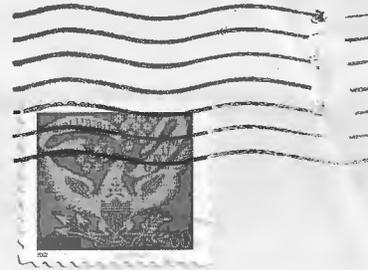
“After the install was complete, auxiliary division got more training because we are the ones who will be responsible for it. We are going to be the ones performing maintenance on the equipment. We have to clean, disassemble, and repair them. It has an eight-year warranty and some of the parts have a 15-year warranty,” said Schreyer. “It is easier to perform maintenance on the SCBA because, unlike the OBA, you do not have any moving parts that can be broken and you do not have to change out any canisters,” he said.

“To sum it up, it’s convenient and state-of-the art. OBAs has been used for a long time. The civilian firefighters use the SCBAs and finally we are too,” Batista concluded.

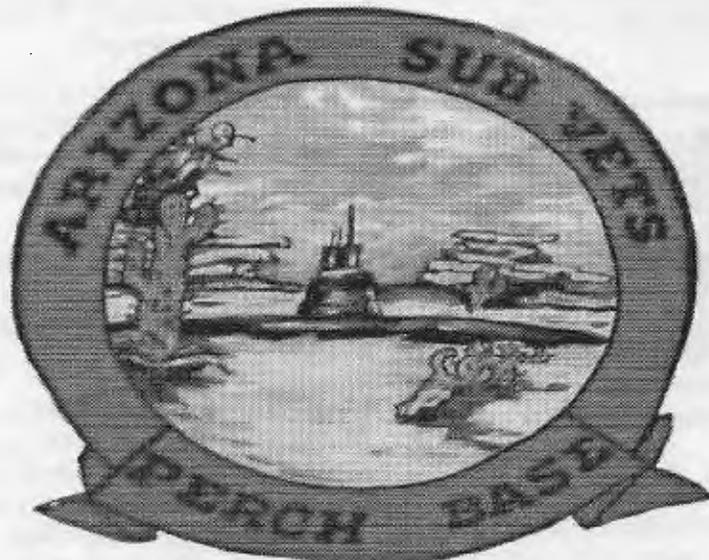
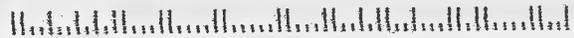
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**Next regular meeting - May 8, 2004
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