

October 13, 2020 - 245 Years



VOL. 2020 #10

OCTOBER 2020

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

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REUNION CONTROL CENTER

2021 Stimson Reunion

October 13-17, 2021

Hotel: Holiday Inn

1717 Airport Exchange Blvd.

Erlanger, KY 41018

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From the Reunion Chairman - Dick Young, SN (SS) G 70-71, USSVI Cincinnati Base, Assoc. Life Member:



Shipmates,

Not much is happening in the world of Reunion 2021. As you know the new dates will be October 13-17, 2021. ALL hotel reservations have been moved to that week, your credit cards

will not be charged until you actually stay at the hotel. The room rates of \$129.00 per night before taxes remains the same also.

The outside events will be going forward, Wright-Patterson AFB Museum tours will be on Thursday October 14, Ohio River Riverboat Cruise is Friday October 15th and the Banquet on Saturday October 16th. If this new schedule is a conflict with other plans you have made we

understand and a rebate will be issued. I am sorry for any inconvenience this may cause.

Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions using the Reunion email address. // Regards, Dick

stimson655reunion2020@aol.com

From the Association President - Tom Krauser, MM1(SS) B 72-74:



In most states things are slowly getting better but worse in many states. Almost every one of us knows someone who has been sick or died from the virus. Please be safe and follow the guidelines.

Many colleges had a large spike in cases when students came back.

My daughter's boss and his wife were very sick the end of September with Covid so it is still out there. She is still mostly working from home but has to go in a couple of times per week to do things that cannot be done from home.

Amy lives in Baton Rouge, LA and has had four near misses with storms recently. I hope anyone living in the states that did get hit came

Chris Crawford, FTB2(SS) B/G 71-78

I remember him and I am sorry to see his passing. Our thoughts and prayers go out to his family.

Ken Delano LT(SS) B/G 70-73 / SY1, LCDR(SS) Retired, USSVI MAL

Read this with sorrow. I made my first patrol with CDR WD Smith. I think Denny Jones was Engineer. Sandy Beal was Weps and I was one AWEPS along with Ron Townsend. We would overhaul the 655. We pulled into Norfolk and for reasons I don't remember we went to the AFB O Club to celebrate. We had a few when Capt Smith got up on the pool table to say a few words. I guess we were loud. Anyway a well-dressed woman stormed into the room and interrupted the Capt. She said to WD, my husband is celebrating in the dining room and you people are making too much noise. He is a Col and is going to SAC, Strategic Air Command she said proudly! I think the Capt said OH. She then asked, who are you? Capt Smith looked down on her and said I am Capt Smith, with my crew from SUC. What is that she asked? Strategic Underwater Command he said proudly. We all roared as she stormed out of the room. I think I have told this story a million times. He was a good skipper that I would have gone to war with.

Gus Gustavson, LCDR(SS) B NAV 71-75, RADM Retired

ADM Bill Smith was the consummate leader and gentleman, as well as a tremendous submariner. Those of us who served with him on Stimson were truly blessed.

Larry G. Long, FTG2(SS) G 71-74

I served under (CAPT.) Smith on Stimson Gold. He was a great leader and Captain..

TR Bietsch, EM1(SS) B 72-74

I knew Cmdr Smith during those 655 years. He was a great guy, and handled a sensitive issue for me during that time, which I was extremely grateful for. Rest in Peace Captain, Pax et Bonum

Chuck Linhart, QM1(SS) G 68-74

I served under Captain Smith and remember him well. Always kind and easy to like. RIP Captain.

Steven Hinkle, MS2(SS) B 84-87

What an amazing life of dedicated service. RIP.

Sam Johnson, CDR G Decom CO 91-93

Amazing guy. That section about being CO of a Boomer is totally true.

Nick Nichols, TM1 G/B 70-75; FTCS B COB 85-89, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Charleston Base, Holland Club

I have to agree with all of these statements about CDR/ADM Smith. There were a couple of incidents during the yards when I was Deck LPO that would have kept me from ever completing my career. He saw what happened as things I had no control over. I do still remember my couple of private talks with him that helped me get my head screwed tight to my body. He sure made a young immature TM2 think about his future.

George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Carolina Piedmont Base, Holland Club

Sad to hear of our former skipper's passing. A great Captain that I was proud to have served under and with.

John Scaplen, SN(SS) G 69-70

I had no idea he served on the USS Hardhead as a supply officer. That's where I was assigned when I wouldn't ship over. I wonder if he had anything to do with that...24 hours after being assigned we head out in a Med tour...great duty...horrible crossing. 2 Hurricanes and a major gale going across...all on the surface. I do remember that my supply room and office on the Hardhead was in a converted bilge tank in the aft torpedo room. Touring ports throughout the med was incredible, we stopped in ports that hadn't seen an American vessel since WW II and the

people would line up on the piers and welcome us with open arms. Great duty! Rest your oars CDR (SS) ADM(retired) Smith, we've got the watch!

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The direct link to the Association Eternal Patrol page is: <http://ssbn655.org/eternal-patrol/eternal-patrol.html>



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated Shipmates

(Shipmate has contacted us to be added or have info updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List to for shipmates contact info.)

MM2(SS) Stephen R. Bollman G/SY2 80-84
(info updated by shipmate)

MM1(SS) Joseph J. Civiletti Sr. G/SY2 79-82
(info updated by shipmate)

MM1(SS) Walter 'Walt' Upchurch SY1/B 72-75
(info updated by shipmate)

Many of our shipmates are on FaceBook but are not listed on our Sailing List. Please check the new 'Looking For' Sailing List on the website to help locate these shipmates. When you see shipmates on Facebook ask them if they are on the Sailing List and please send them a personal invite to contact 655webmaster@ssbn655.org to be listed and become a member of the Stimson Association.

George Stevens, MT2(SS) G 68-71

Cards to: 3025 Winterhaven Dr Lake Havasu City, AZ 86404

8.6.2020: Had a heart operation. Made it through OK. Feel like I've been run over by a semi but I survived. No more operations available for this problem. Don't know yet how effective it was. I'm in recovery ... I will be for a bit. A lot of bruising

and swelling that needs to get back to normal. Thanks again for all prayers.

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Elam Mauk, EMCM(SS) B 65-69 Plank / COB 66 -68, USSVI USS Sailfish Base, Holland Club, Association Life Member

Cards to: 509 Clubside Cir., Venice Fl 34293

4.12.2020: From Elam & Angie: I am preparing for a Heart Valve replacement in the near future. Hope to make the next reunion. Sincerely, Elam

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William 'Sandy' Hastie, CAPT B CO 80 (Oct-Dec)

Cards to: 75 Lambeth Drive, Asheville, NC 28803

07.04.2020: Friends, We are celebrating Sandy's good report this week. He had his 3-month PET/CT scan on Sunday, June 28. The report was good and sufficient to continue his 3-week Keytruda immunotherapy infusions. We are so blessed that both his oncologists (Pardee and Duke) agreed to continue the Keytruda when the mesothelioma returned last summer. The Keytruda manages and controls this very aggressive cancer and allows a good quality of life. The cancer is still there, but in the new area that we have been so concerned about has decreased from 11.5 SUV in March 2020 to 8.1 SUV currently. No new areas of cancer uptake were noted. We are so grateful for this immunotherapy treatment, for the doctors who manage it, and for our God that holds Sandy firmly in his grip. It is a "glory hallelujah" time at the Hastie home. We only wish we could be together to celebrate; but until then, we will be "together apart" and hold you close in our thoughts and heart. Though it is a challenging time, we think one of the things the pandemic has invited us to, is to allow God to come to us, to allow Him to visit us. We are so blessed!

Until we are next together, keep safe, keep hopeful, keep in touch, and enjoy the concert.

God Bless America - Donna and Sandy

5.17.2020: Concerning Sandy Hastie's battle with cancer, there is good news. We got the results back from the March 29, 2020 PET/CT scan.

Some cancerous activity is still present; however, the activity is slight and is being controlled by the

names of Officers who had made the list. Your name would appear, and you would try to figure out what did I do to make the list? and then one day, your name was no longer on the list. It kept you on your toes. Later in years, I liked the idea so much I used it with my sons. They never quite knew what they had done to make the list, but it kept them from getting on my bad side.

There was the patrol on the North Atlantic with really rough seas. We would roll 15 degrees at 200 feet until we got to a better course. Bob Weeks had chosen that patrol to construct his Heath kit television, and he brought all the component parts and spread them across his stateroom. You would be OOD and the phone would ring from the CO. "Get off this course! All my television parts are rolling across the deck!"

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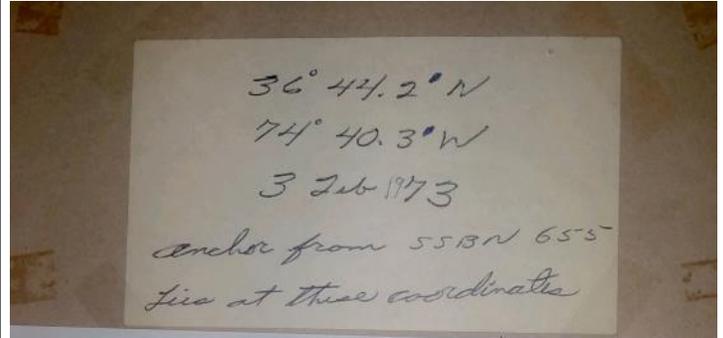
*Submitted by Ken Delano, LT(SS) B/G 70-73 / SY1.
USSVI MAL, LCDR Retired*

It was a great crew and I have a soft spot in my heart for the 655. My daughter remained in Port Orchard when I retired. She was able to get me a 2' x 2' piece of the pressure hull from Frame 71 cut 12/23/1993!



You may remember I came aboard as a fairly fresh caught Ensign. I was commissioned from MTC with 10 years' service by then, and I tell the following: When someone called out "Hey Chief"

they wanted and respected your opinion. When someone called out "Hey Ensign:, you were usually in trouble! I also have the chromed anchor chain link that became the chain end when we lost the anchor on sea trials. The shipyard shop gave me the souvenir as I was the First LT the entire time I was on Stimson.



Many great memories. Treat men like men and you get the best men! We dazzled them at the Cape even though we didn't get the Missile Launch. I remember the inspection team said we were the best they had seen. We should have been awarded the NUC. I ran into Capt Catola in Holylock. He was the Commodore and I was Weps on the Tecumseh.

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*Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74,
Assoc. LM, USSVI Holland Club / Carolina Piedmont
Base*

GOOD STUFF

I'm on two diets. I wasn't getting enough food on one.

A cold seat in a public restroom is unpleasant. A warm seat in a public restroom is worse.

Apparently RSVP'ing to a wedding invitation "Maybe next time," isn't the correct response.

Don't irritate old people. The older we get, the less "Life in prison" is a deterrent.

Have you ever listened to someone for a minute and thought, "Their cornbread isn't done in the middle."

Aliens probably fly by earth and lock their doors.

"You will hit every cone on the highway before I let you merge in front of me because you saw that sign 2 miles ago like I did."

I asked my wife if I was the only one she had ever been with. She said yes, all the others were nines and tens. Give it a minute...

I really don't mind getting older, but my body is taking it badly.

It turns out that being an adult now is mostly just googling how to do stuff.

I miss the 90's when bread was still good for you and no one knew what kale was.

Do you ever get up in the morning, look in the mirror and think "That can't be accurate."

I want to be 14 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas.

As I watch this new generation try to rewrite our history, one thing I'm sure of.... it will be misspelled and have no punctuation.

some hardware technical concepts that will be new to many of you. Unfortunately in our digital world it is a reality we must embrace to be certain our information remains secure and in our possession. Sadly, it cannot be avoided.

However, the links I have provided should help to make it a bit more understandable for you, and help you decide what actions you may need to take when upgrading systems or replacing hard drives in your current computer system. If understanding the issues interests you, then please read on.

This article will not cover disk hardware selection, as that is driven by your particular PC/Laptop brand and drive connection technology. What this article will discuss is some steps you need to take anytime you replace a disk drive, due to a hard drive failure, an upgrade, or a complete system replacement. And that relates to the removal of your personal data from ALL hard drives. And I will cover what to do if the hard drive has failed completely and can no longer be accessed by the computer. It does happen.

So first, let's look at the case where your disk drive has failed, either electrically or mechanically. You have replaced it with a new drive and restored from your backups. I strongly discourage sending the drive to an electronics recycling service, because there is a good chance they may attempt to revive the drive so they can sell it for something other than just scrap metal. The best solution here is to take the bad drive and physically destroy it. It's simple to do. Here are the instructions on how to do it:

<https://snapguide.com/guides/destroy-a-hard-drive/>

Also, you can also find drive shredding services that will do the job for you, but at some cost. The point is to make sure the disk drive platter inside is destroyed before discarding. If you just throw out the drive without full destruction, the really serious bad guys can get their hands on the drive and perhaps repair it and get to your data. Dumpster diving and landfill surfing are still used to get at carelessly discarded disks and data.

Now for systems where you are upgrading your disk drive, or perhaps just replacing the



The Computer Corner
By: George Birmingham, ET1 (SS), Gold 69-74, USSVI Carolina Piedmont Base, Holland Club, Association Life Member

Hard Drive upgrades – be sure to wipe or destroy before discarding

Let's face it, if we have used computers for very long there comes a time when we have to upgrade either the entire system or maybe just the hard drive to a bigger capacity drive, to improve system performance and storage capacity. In the October 2019 article we looked at defragmentation and disk optimization to save space, but sometimes that doesn't get the job done.

This month's article will, by necessity, cover

entire system. If you go to yard sales in your area, you can often find disk drives and even complete systems for sale. Did the prior owner eradicate all of their data? Perhaps not as well as they should have and the following article describes some astonishing facts:

<https://netcentrics.com/ghosts-users-past-recovering-data-discarded-resold-salvaged-stolen-hard-drives/>

If you are discarding an old system, or just upgrading to a new hard drive, here is some information on how to sanitize that old system hard drive (or the drive you have upgraded from) before re-installing the operating system and making the system ready for sale. Again, it's a bit technical in nature, but it has some good information to look over (get coffee first!) if you go the do-it-yourself route.

<https://www.blancco.com/blog-dod-5220-22-m-wiping-standard-method/>

<https://www.blancco.com/blog-what-do-you-really-know-about-ssd-erasure/>

As for tools to do the job, I have personally used Darik's Boot and Nuke (DBAN) for several PCs I have discarded over the years:

<https://sourceforge.net/projects/dban/>

<https://www.lifewire.com/how-to-erase-a-hard-drive-using-dban-2619148>

And here is a reasonably good video on how to use it:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LJ0dfR56edE>

And another product I have used is Eraser:

<https://eraser.heidi.ie/>

Regardless of which approach you use, the important thing to remember is this: Be certain your data has been erased completely and securely before discarding any old PCs or working disk drives to anyone. If you take your computer to a place like Best Buy, or a local computer repair service to do the upgrade/replacement for you, I recommend that you make sure they hand you the old drive for you to destroy. You can't be sure they will sanitize or destroy it properly. And if that old hard drive has died and you can't erase it using any of the normal methods I have described – then destroy it - physically!

We cannot avoid drive failures, and systems that are too old to serve our needs any longer. But we can make sure anything that leaves our control does not take our personal data with it. It's just the way the digital lifestyle works these days. Remember - It's your personal data, so protect it well.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. I am in need of topics for future articles, so please send your ideas along to me. Contact me at subvet_ssbns@bellsouth.net.

And if you have a difficult computer or network problem you need help with, contact me. I'm always glad to help out if I can.

//George

Navy Releases Hundreds Of Documents From Investigation Into Sinking Of Thresher

(NEW LONDON DAY 24 SEP 20) ... Julia Bergman

The Navy this week released hundreds of pages of previously undisclosed documents of testimony from the classified investigation into the sinking of the USS Thresher, which nearly 60 years later remains the worst submarine disaster in U.S. history.

The documents — the first 300 pages of the more than 1,700 pages of testimony from the Court of Inquiry — include witnesses and exhibits, findings of fact, opinions, recommendations and initial testimony, and provide insight into what Navy officials knew and their decision-making at the time. Up until this point, only 19 pages of testimony had been made public.

The Navy alerted the families of the Thresher crew members last month that it would be releasing the records. Some of the families have said they've been waiting decades to find out more about what happened.

All 129 men aboard — 112 sailors and 17 shipyard personnel — died when the submarine sank during a deep dive test on April 10, 1963, about 220 miles east of Cape Cod. The Navy has said the most likely explanation is that a ruptured seawater pipe in the submarine's engine room caused catastrophic flooding and ultimately

caused the submarine's nuclear reactor to shut down.

"The Navy is committed to transparency with the families of those lost and the public regarding the loss of Thresher," Rear Adm. Bill Houston, director of the Navy's undersea warfare division, told reporters this week in advance of the records being released. "While the Navy stands by the initial determinations of the Court of Inquiry, and does not believe that records related to Thresher will shed additional light on her loss, the Navy is actively processing records to be publicly released."

The Navy's release was prompted by a lawsuit by a retired submarine commander, Capt. Jim Bryant, who has questioned the service's official account of what happened. Earlier this year, a federal judge sided with Bryant and ruled that the Navy had to begin releasing the records, which are now available for viewing in an electronic reading room set up by the Navy.

Bryant, in a phone interview Thursday, commended the Navy for the release and said the records give "a lot of the flavor of what they were thinking back then."

"A lot of that needs to be studied. The decision-making at the time needs to be studied. That's very valuable," he said. "Naval historians are going to love it."

Bryant said he and his research team still are combing through the documents, but his initial reaction is that the records will shed light on some of the questions he's sought to answer, such as whether inadequate training was a factor in the Thresher's loss.

The Navy, around 2012, planned to release more documents on the Thresher's sinking but ultimately decided against it, saying the information was mostly technical in nature, didn't contribute to any better understanding of the loss and would cause unnecessary trauma to the remaining descendants. Houston said he would not comment on previous decisions by Navy leaders with regards to the documents or Bryant's lawsuit.

Following the loss of the Thresher, the Navy created a program that developed new submarine

safety standards, known as SUBSAFE, that still exists today. No submarine certified under the program has been lost.

In addition to SUBSAFE, the Navy significantly enhanced its Undersea Rescue program, providing the capability for worldwide deployment of deep-sea submarine rescue platforms.

"The loss of Thresher was a defining event for the submarine service," Houston said. "From day one, every new submariner checking onboard discusses the impact of Thresher to the submarine force, and the significant improvements that transpired as a result of her loss."

Last year, a memorial to honor those lost aboard the Thresher and the safety changes that followed was erected at Arlington National Cemetery.

<https://www.theday.com/military-news/20200924/navy-releases-hundreds-of-documents-from-investigation-into-sinking-of-thresher>

Navy Documents Reveal Officer Flagged "Dangerous Condition" Before Deadliest Submarine Disaster In U.S. History

(CBS NEWS & ASSOCIATED PRESS 26 SEP 20)

The Navy began releasing documents from the investigation into the deadliest submarine disaster in U.S. history this week, revealing that the ship's commanding officer noted a "dangerous condition" on the vessel before it was lost. The first of the documents released were 300 pages from the official inquiry into the sinking of the USS Thresher in 1963.

The loss of the nuclear-powered submarine and all 129 men aboard during a test dive in the Atlantic Ocean delivered a blow to national pride during the Cold War and became the impetus for safety improvements.

"The loss of Thresher was a defining event for the submarine service," said Rear Adm. William Houston, director of the undersea warfare division in the office of the chief of naval operations at the Pentagon.

The documents noted that the commanding officer's evaluation of the first year of operations – before additional work was conducted -- included praise for the submarine. But he also said the submarine was overly complex in many areas and he noted a vulnerability of the auxiliary salt water system.

"He stated, 'In my opinion, the most dangerous condition that exists in Thresher is the danger of salt water flooding while at or near test depth,'" the report said.

On April 10, 1963, the Thresher had undergone sea trials and was back in the ocean for deep-dive testing about 220 miles off Massachusetts' Cape Cod. The first sign of trouble was a garbled message about a "minor difficulty" after the 279-foot submarine descended to more than 800 feet.

The crew indicated it was attempting to empty ballast tanks in an effort to surface. The crew of an accompanying rescue ship heard something about the "test depth." Then the sailors listened as the sub disintegrated under the crushing pressure of the sea.

The Navy inquiry found weaknesses in the design and construction of the first-in-class nuclear-powered submarine, which had been built at Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine, and based in Groton, Connecticut.

On March 4, 1964, nearly a year after the disaster, CBS aired a segment on the Thresher, which was reported by Dan Rather. "All the events of that morning may never be known," Rather said. "Complete answers as to why they happened may never come."

The documents released Wednesday included the timeline of the sinking, evidence lists, reports, testimony and correspondence. But there were some redactions. Even more than 50 years later, technical details including the test depth were redacted.

In the documents, the Navy said it believes an interior pipe burst and caused electrical problems that caused an emergency shutdown of the nuclear reactor.

The brazed joints in pipes were a special concern, and many electrical panels were not

adequately protected from sea water in the event of a leak, the report said.

Resting on the ocean floor at a depth of 8,500 feet, the Thresher looks as though it went through a "shredding machine" and is spread out over a mile, University of Rhode Island oceanographer Robert Ballard told The Associated Press in 2013. Ballard used his 1985 discovery of the RMS Titanic as a Cold War cover for surveying the Thresher.

Not everyone was satisfied with the Navy's conclusions.

Retired Capt. James Bryant, commander of a Thresher-class submarine, requested the documents under the federal Freedom of Information Act and ultimately went to court to demand the documents' release. He thinks there's more to be learned from the documents, most of them classified.

Michael Shafer, whose father and uncle both died on the Thresher, said some of the families need to review the documents to see for themselves and fully understand what happened. His suspicion is that the Navy was pushing the limits and placing personnel at risk during the Cold War.

"I want to know the truth, the whole truth. Not some smoke screen from the Navy," he said Wednesday from St. Petersburg, Florida.

A judge in February ordered the Navy to release the documents. The coronavirus pandemic delayed the review of the documents. Eventually, more than 1,000 pages of documents will be released.

If there was a silver lining, it was that the tragedy so shook the Navy that it accelerated safety improvements and created a program called SUBSAFE, an extensive series of design modifications, training and other improvements.

One submarine has sunk since then, the USS Scorpion in 1968, and it was not SUBSAFE-certified, the Navy said.

Some of the improvements included better welding techniques, and the main ballast tank blow system that helps a submarine reach the surface was made more effective.

Joy MacMillan, one of four siblings who lost their father, the submarine's chief radioman, said it's helpful to know the tragedy spurred safety improvements. But it's still important for the families to have the documents, and some closure.

"After being 57 years in the dark, it's time for the families to know any and all information so that we can put it away," MacMillan said.

<https://www.cbsnews.com/news/uss-thresher-submarine-disaster-navy-documents-released/>

Meet The Last Survivor Of A Legendary World War II Sub

(SAN DIEGO UNION-TRIBUNE 31 AUG 20) ...

Diane Bell

Sept. 2 marks the 75th anniversary of the formal Japanese surrender ceremony that officially brought World War II to an end.

Navy veteran William "Bill" Leibold remembers that time well. He had just been released from a secret Japanese military compound, known as the "torture farm," after 10 months in captivity. His weight, he recalls, had dropped from 172 to less than 60 pounds.

"I try not to think of those days," says the Escondido resident, 97. "We weren't fed regularly."

Leibold was one of nine survivors of a crew of 87 on the Navy submarine, USS Tang. The sailors were plucked out of frigid ocean water by a Japanese patrol boat after the sub had aggressively attacked its convoy in the Formosa Strait en route to the Philippines.

After sinking to its watery grave on Oct. 25, 1944, the Tang was later credited with taking out 33 enemy ships, carrying out daring attacks and rescuing numerous downed airmen. It earned the WW II reputation as the most lethal Allied sub in the Pacific.

In a tragic quirk of fate, as the Tang fired its 24th and final torpedo before heading home that October night, the torpedo malfunctioned. Leibold was stationed on the bridge.

"When we fired, the torpedo surfaced instead of running as it should have. It flew out of the water and then went back down," he recalls. The

erratic torpedo continued to splash up and down like a porpoise in a semi-circle on the port side, as the sub built up speed to move out of harm's way.

"All of us on the bridge were concerned, but I don't think any of us fully realized it was heading back to hit us in the stern," says Leibold, who served as chief boatswain's mate. "No one to this day knows what caused it to run erratic. Something just went wrong with the torpedo itself. Possibly it was damaged during loading into the tube. Any number of things could have happened. No one will ever know."

The rest is naval history. And the details are clearly imbedded in Leibold's memory:

"When it hit our stern, we went down fast. The aft torpedo room flooded. Half the compartments flooded rapidly.... I went down with the ship. I don't know how far. I was able to swim back to the surface. I could see the bow of the Tang still out of the water, but I couldn't swim against the current to get to it. None of the men on the bridge were able to swim back to the bow."

The disaster unfolded in the 2:30 a.m. darkness. Leibold guesses that maybe he was submerged about 50 feet before he felt a thud and started swimming upward.

Trying to stay afloat, Leibold kicked off his shoes and took off his trousers. He tied the pant legs together, tried to inflate them and slip them over his head to use as a lifesaver-like flotation device as the crew had been instructed, but they didn't hold air.

Eventually he heard a nearby voice call out. It was Floyd Caverly, a radio technician who, by luck, had been dispatched to the bridge to resolve a communication problem moments before the sinking.

"He told me he couldn't swim," says Leibold. "I told him he could float." Leibold continued to coax him on when to inhale and exhale in the choppy water to keep from drowning. Leibold later received the Navy and Marine Corps Medal for heroic conduct for supporting a shipmate in the water for eight hours.

It was discovered later that half of the 87 members were killed upon impact. Others were trapped in what had become a metal tomb on the

ocean floor 180 feet deep. The incident made naval history because this was the only sub to have survivors ascend during an emergency without surface assistance by using the Momsen lung, a crude breathing device stored on the sub for use in such emergencies.

Some who reached the surface could not swim and drowned, Liebold says. In the end, only nine of the original 87 crew, including Liebold and three others from the bridge, survived the night and were picked up by the Japanese.

They were placed in solitary confinement in a navy compound in Ofuna, Japan but not classified as prisoners of war, Liebold says. "They referred to us as captured enemy."

Nearly every day they were taken out to "swab the halls," he recalls, explaining it was really a ruse to give the guards "an opportunity to exercise what we called their baseball bats. We were beaten almost every time we were taken out of the cells."

When asked what kept him going, Liebold said: "I don't know. It was just the determination to survive. Staying alive was the one thing we had to do."

Just before their liberation on Aug. 22, 1945, they were moved to a separate section of a POW camp run by the Japanese army.

Liebold has recorded an oral history of his ordeal and was extensively interviewed by Alex Kershaw, an author who specializes in military history. Kershaw wrote the dramatic story of the Tang legend and tragedy in his 2008 book, "Escape from the Deep: The Epic Story of a Legendary Submarine and Her Courageous Crew."

"Bill is (the) last survivor of (the) greatest U.S. submarine in history," Kershaw tells me. "He helped found Navy Seals. He's a living legend in U.S. Navy. Brave, honorable, selfless, the best example of the greatest generation."

Kershaw credits Liebold with helping win the war through his role in the "silent service" — the submarine force that strangled the Japanese Empire through its sinkings and blockade. "He's also a star of my book," Kershaw notes.

After being liberated, Liebold returned to the United States to find that his wife, his high school sweetheart, Grace, was still waiting for him. A less lucky fate greeted four of the seven married ex-prisoners. Having received a telegram notifying them of the ship's loss, their brides, understandably, had moved on with their lives and remarried.

Despite his ordeal, Liebold completed a 40-year career in the Navy, returning several times to Japanese waters as commander of a submarine service/rescue ship.

Having previously been homeported in San Diego, he and Grace stayed and raised their three children in Chula Vista. The couple later built a home on Palomar Mountain, aptly nicknamed the "Ship House" for its shape and windows.

Several years later, they bought a house in Escondido. After Grace passed away, he moved into an independent living facility.

Liebold stayed in touch with his former Tang crewmates and even held a reunion in the Ship House. Floyd Caverly died in 2011, just shy of his 94th birthday and is buried here at Fort Rosecrans National Cemetery.

Liebold is the last survivor.

<https://www.sandiegouniontribune.com/columnists/story/2020-08-31/meet-the-last-survivor-of-the-world-war-ii-submarine-tang>

Divers May Have Found U.S. Navy Submarine Grenadier Lost In WWII

(ASSOCIATED PRESS 20 SEP 20) ... Grant Peck BANGKOK — Divers have found what they believe is the wreck of a U.S. Navy submarine lost 77 years ago in Southeast Asia, providing a coda to a stirring but little-known tale from World War II.

The divers have sent photos and other evidence from six dives they made from October 2019 to March this year to the United States Naval History and Heritage Command for verification that they have found the USS Grenadier, one of 52 American submarines lost during the conflict.

The 1,475-ton, 307-foot long Grenadier was scuttled by its crew after bombs from a Japanese plane almost sent them to a watery grave. All 76

of its personnel survived the bombing and sinking, but their agony to follow would be prolonged. After being taken prisoner, they were tortured, beaten and nearly starved by their Japanese captors for more than two years, and four did not survive that ordeal.

The wreck lies 82 meters (270 feet) underwater somewhere in the Strait of Malacca, about 150 kilometers (92 miles) south of Phuket, Thailand. It was discovered by Singapore-based Jean Luc Rivoire and Benoit Laborie of France, and Australian Lance Horowitz and Belgian Ben Reymenants, who live in Phuket, Thailand.

Reymenants was one of the divers who took part in the dramatic rescue of a dozen boys and their soccer coach who got trapped in a cave in northern Thailand two years ago.

The Belgian has been researching possible locations for shipwrecks for many years, Horowitz said in an interview with The Associated Press, and Rivoire had a suitable boat to explore the leads he found. Reymenants would ask fishermen if there were any odd spots where they'd lost nets, and then the team would use side-looking sonar to scan the sea floor for distinct shapes.

When they dived to look at one promising object, it was a lot bigger than expected, so they dug back into the archives to try to figure out which lost vessel it could be, and then dived again.

"And so we went back looking for clues, nameplate, but we couldn't find any of those," recalled Horowitz. "And in the end, we took very precise measurements of the submarine and compared those with the naval records. And they're exactly, as per the drawings, the exact same size. So we're pretty confident that it is the USS Grenadier."

The Navy command's Underwater Archaeology Branch on average receives two to three such requests a year from searchers like the Grenadier divers, said its head, Dr. Robert Neyland, in an email to The Associated Press.

"A complete review, analysis, and documentation may take two months to a year to complete," he said, adding that it will likely take a few months in the case of this potential discovery.

The Grenadier left Pearl Harbor on Feb. 4, 1942, on its initial war patrol. Its first five missions took it to Japanese home waters, the Formosa shipping lanes, the southwest Pacific, the South China Sea and the Japanese-occupied Dutch East Indies (now Indonesia). It sank six ships and damaged two.

It sailed on March 20, 1943, from Fremantle, Australia, on its sixth patrol, to the Malacca Strait and north into the Andaman Sea.

The commanding officer, Lt. Cdr. John A. Fitzgerald, recorded what happened there in a report written after being freed from a Japanese prisoner-of-war camp in 1945.

On the night of April 20, the submarine glimpsed two small freighters and set course to intercept them the next morning, sailing on the surface for speed.

In the morning, a plane was sighted; an immediate crash dive was ordered, but the ship did not descend far enough, fast enough. Blasts from two bombs battered the sub; key parts of the vessel were mangled; power and lights were lost and a fire broke out. All hands desperately worked to fix what they could as Fitzgerald ordered the ship to stay on the sea floor.

When it surfaced after 13 hours it was clear the Grenadier was too crippled to flee or fight. An effort was made to rig makeshift sails on a periscope to reach shore before blowing up the vessel, but there was dead calm.

As dawn broke, two ships on the horizon were closing in. Codebooks and sensitive equipment were destroyed as preparations were made to scuttle the submarine. A Japanese plane made a run at the ship, but was fought off with small arms, dropping a bomb harmlessly about 200 meters (yards) away. The crew abandoned ship at 0830 and an hour later were hauled aboard an armed merchant ship, which took them to Penang, a major port town on the Malayan Peninsula.

At a Catholic school requisitioned by the Japanese for use as a prison, events took an even darker turn.

"The rough treatment started the first afternoon, particularly with the (enlisted) men. They were forced to sit or stand in silence in an

attention attitude," wrote Fitzgerald. "Any divergence resulted in a gun butt, kick, slug in the face or a bayonet prick. In the questioning room, persuasive measures, such as clubs, about the size of indoor ball bats, pencils between the fingers and pushing of the blade of a pen knife under the finger nails, trying to get us to talk about our submarine and the location of other submarines."

After a few months, all the crew were transferred to camps in Japan, where the abuse continued. Four died from a lack of medical attention.

"This was an important ship during the war and it was very important to all the crew that served on her," diver Horowitz said last week. "When you read the book of the survivors, that was, you know, quite an ordeal they went through and to know where she finally lies and rests, I'm sure it's very satisfying for them and their families to be able to have some closure."

<https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2020/09/20/divers-may-have-found-us-navy-submarine-grenadier-lost-in-wwii/>

'We're Still A Small Percentage': Submarine Officer Reflects On Expanded Opportunities For Female Sailors

(THE DAY 26 SEP 20) ... Julia Bergman

NEW LONDON, Conn. — When, during one of her first days of classes at the University of Michigan's Naval Reserve Officers Training Corps program, Jeanne Van Gilder was asked what career path she wanted to follow in the Navy, she was clear: if the opportunity opened up, she'd like to serve in the submarine force.

"By the time I got into college it was almost a matter of time. They'd been talking about it for a few years at that point so I kind of kept my fingers crossed," the 29-year-old Van Gilder said in an interview this week.

In the spring of 2010, toward the end of her freshman year of college, the U.S. Navy announced it was lifting its ban on women serving on submarines, first allowing female officers to begin their training. At that point Van Gilder knew

"it came down to making sure I had the qualifications."

Van Gilder is from Webberville, a one-stoplight town in Michigan, and grew up the youngest of four children. Her dad served in the Navy, working as a design engineer for Naval Reactors, which oversees the Navy's nuclear propulsion program.

"Even though he didn't serve on submarines, he had some good submarine stories," she said. "I always thought they were the coolest pieces of equipment, technological marvels, and I knew the (submarine) community was very small, which I was interested in being a part of, given I'm from a small town."

Female officers like Van Gilder, a lieutenant commander assigned to the fast attack submarine USS Minnesota based in Groton, have served aboard submarines since 2011. Enlisted women began their training in 2015 and started reporting to submarines a year later.

Previously, the Navy had dedicated windows for female sailors to apply to convert their careers into submarine ratings. Now, new volunteers are able to apply on a continuous basis, just like men. Starting in 2021, Virginia-class attack submarines will have "gender neutral accommodations," separate chiefs' quarters and berthing for men and women.

Currently, 335 women — 97 officers and 238 enlisted sailors — are serving on submarines, making up about 5% of the silent service.

"We're still a small percentage. There's not that many of us, so we're kind of our own little club," Van Gilder said, adding that the integration of women aboard submarines has gone "extremely well."

When she reported to the guided missile submarine USS Florida based in Kings Bay, Ga., "I was old news," Van Gilder said. Women already had been serving on the boat for a few years. "It was the norm," she said.

She was among the first group of female officers who helped serve as mentors to the enlisted women as they reported to submarines already integrated, helping them to adjust to life in a steel tube under the water, and providing advice

to senior male officers who may not have served with females before.

"I definitely feel a responsibility to prove all the naysayers wrong," Van Gilder said. "That doesn't necessarily change the way I act. I'm going to act in a professional manner and I want to do my job well for me, but I'm certainly aware of the specific spotlight on myself and other women in the Navy to prove the naysayers are wrong."

By all accounts, the transition has gone smoothly with a few exceptions. A dozen male sailors were prosecuted in 2015 for secretly videotaping female officers and trainees as they undressed on board the ballistic missile submarine USS Wyoming. And in May of last year, Navy leaders fired Capt. Gregory R. Kercher, commanding officer of Florida's "Gold Crew," for failing to fully investigate a sexually explicit list targeting female crewmembers.

Those incidents appear not to have impacted retention. An analysis by the Associated Press in 2018 found that the retention rate for female submariners was on par with that of their male counterparts — about 26% and 27%, respectively. And numbers provided by the Navy for this article show that trend has continued.

In June 2020, Van Gilder reported to the Minnesota as the boat's engineering officer, a job that involves overseeing the maintenance and operation of the nuclear reactor on board, and leading the 50 to 60 sailors — a little more than one-third of the crew — who are assigned to the engineering department.

Looking ahead, she said, "I'm excited to see the day when women being on submarines is not a surprise to people."

<https://www.stripes.com/news/us/we-re-still-a-small-percentage-submarine-officer-reflects-on-expanded-opportunities-for-female-sailors-1.646494>

Navy's Newest Destroyer Is Named For A Former Top Enlisted Man And Pearl Harbor Survivor (STARS AND STRIPES 28 SEP 20) ... Christian Lopez \The USS Delbert D. Black, the Navy's newest destroyer, entered service Saturday, more than a year after being damaged

in a shipyard collision.

The Black, the 68th Arleigh-Burke class destroyer, is the first destroyer commissioned by the Navy this year. The ceremony at Port Canaveral, Fla., was kept small and private, like many other Navy ceremonies this year, due to coronavirus restrictions.

The destroyer is named for former Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Delbert D. Black, the first to hold that rank, and is equipped with the Aegis air-and-missile defense system. It's the 32nd vessel of its class built by Ingalls Shipbuilding, according to a company press release.

Next stop for the Black is its new homeport, just up the coast at Mayport Naval Station, Jacksonville, Fla.

Ima Black, Master Chief Black's widow and a Navy veteran, gave the first order to "man our ship and bring her to life," as sponsor.

The principal speaker for the ceremony was Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy Russell Smith. Secretary of the Navy Kenneth J. Braithwaite also spoke.

"Commissioning a ship after the first Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy is an honor without equal," Braithwaite said during the ceremony, according to the Navy. "The Navy has always been and will always be indelibly influenced by the leadership of our senior enlisted sailors epitomized by Delbert Black."

In March 2019, the Delbert D. Black had completed its acceptance trials from Ingalls' shipyard in Pascagoula, Miss., when a heavy-lift vessel, the M/V Hawk, delivering a floating dry dock, struck a testing barge alongside it, according to USNI News.

The barge in turn collided with and damaged the destroyer, which took on water, according to a statement from Huntington Ingalls Industries, the shipbuilders' parent company.

The collision delayed the destroyer's entry into service by nearly a year. The warship had been launched in 2017.

The 510-foot-long Black will be homeported alongside the destroyers USS Farragut, USS

Lassen, USS The Sullivans, USS Thomas Hudner and USS Paul Ignatius.

Prior to the Black, the Paul Ignatius, commissioned in July 2019, most recently entered the Navy inventory. Ingalls has four more destroyers under construction and in June won a \$936 million contract for a fifth, according to an Ingalls news release.

Black was a World War II veteran who managed to survive the attack on Pearl Harbor and eventually reached the highest possible enlisted rank.

Black defined the senior enlisted adviser position, established in the Navy in 1967, during the Vietnam War. He retired in 1971 after 30 years of naval service and died March 5, 2000. He is buried at Arlington National Cemetery, Va., according to Naval History and Heritage Command.

“Master Chief Black fought for increased sea-pay, family support programs, expanded uniform guidance and a host of other issues that improved the quality of life of not only junior enlisted, but all sailors and officers,” Braithwaite said, according to the Navy. “By making life better for sailors, he made our Navy stronger for us all.”

<https://www.stripes.com/news/navy/navy-s-newest-destroyer-is-named-for-a-former-top-enlisted-man-and-pearl-harbor-survivor-1.646648>

Marine Corps Considers Closing South Carolina, San Diego Recruit Training Depots To Open New Location

(MARINE CORPS TIMES 25 SEP 20) ... Philip Athey

The Marine Corps might close the doors on its iconic Marine Corps Recruit Depot Parris Island, South Carolina, and hilly Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego.

One plan under consideration would shift Marine Corps boot camp to a third location specifically built for modern day training with gender-integrated platoons, according to reporting from Military.com.

The 2020 National Defense Authorization Act required the Marine Corps to gender-integrate

recruit training at the platoon level at both boot camps — a task the Marine Corps simply does not have the infrastructure for, Marine Corps Commandant Gen. David Berger said Thursday.

“Nothing the way we’re organized right now lends itself to integrated recruit training,” Berger said at Defense One’s state of the Marine Corps event.

“We have to get to a place where on both coasts or at a third location, or whatever we end up with that every recruit male, female, there’s all there’s male and female around,” he added.

The Corps is still too early in the planning process to give details on what exactly is being considered, a Marine Corps spokesperson told Marine Corps Times.

“We are exploring all options to accomplish this integration, while also realizing the vision of the 38th Commandant’s Planning Guidance related to modernization of our training facilities to ensure our Marines remain capable, relevant and lethal in the future,” Capt. Joseph Butterfield, a spokesman for Headquarters Marine Corps, said in a Friday email. “At this time, any remarks on courses of action are premature as we are simply exploring all options.”

The Marines have been on Parris Island, South Carolina, since 1891 and have been training new recruits on the island since 1915, while Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego starting “making Marines” in 1923.

In the past century, hundreds of thousands of Marines have received their initial introduction to the Corps on Parris Island, South Carolina, but age, technological advancement and the threats of climate change may lead the Corps to choose a third location for initial training.

“Due to a variety of limitations, neither Marine Corps Recruit Depots Parris Island nor San Diego are currently able to optimally train recruits in an integrated environment,” Butterfield said.

Parris Island — a small island off the southern coast of South Carolina — faces an increased risk of flooding and may soon see six times more “black flag” days that reduce the training recruits can perform, according to a study by the Union of Concerned Scientists.

In a 2018 Senate Armed Services hearing Gen. Glenn Walters, then the assistant commandant of the Marine Corps, testified that Parris Island, South Carolina, was the Marine Corps' "most critical vulnerability," concluding that the Marine Corps will eventually have to build a seawall on the base to fight against flooding.

"We are a waterfront organization, also we have come to the conclusion that we're not going to turn the tide," Walters said.

While boot camp on the West Coast faces fewer issues from flooding, the base must take into consideration its vulnerability to California wildfires, which may cause power outages or even threaten the recruits as they complete the portion of their training conducted on Camp Pendleton, California, John Conger, director of the Center for Climate and Security told Marine Corps Times.

"The electric lines that transverse California are significantly impacted by wildfires, they're significantly impacted when they have to shut the power down because it's too hot," Conger said.

"Those power fluctuations affect the base, so you have to have energy resilience plans ... that's going to cost its own money," he added.

Once the Marine Corps starts doing the math on how much it will cost to upgrade for integrated training, climate change protections and just general modernization, it could start make sense to just build a third more efficient location to train all Marines.

"If you have to update a lot anyway, do you save manpower, resources and personnel by just combining the two into one?" Maj. Eric Flanagan, Berger's spokesman, told Military.com.

Conger, who served as assistant secretary of defense for energy, installations and environment during President Barack Obama's time in office, said the Marine Corps is unlikely to acquire new land to build a base on, but may add on to an existing Marine Corps or even Army installation.

"They can build a bunch of infrastructure, they can leverage infrastructure at other bases," Conger said.

"Marines do training right now at Fort Leonard Wood (Missouri)... they could leverage the Marine foot print there," Conger added.

The Marine Corps currently holds several military occupational specialty schools on Fort Leonard Wood, including its motor vehicle operator course and its military police school.

"It is almost like a Marine base within an Army base," Conger added.

<https://www.marinecorpstimes.com/news/your-marine-corps/2020/09/25/no-more-yellow-footprints-on-parris-island-corps-considers-closing-south-carolina-and-san-diego-recruit-training-depots-to-open-third-training-base/>

What It Means To Become A Gold Star Family (*MILITARY TIMES 25 SEP 20*) ... Sarah Sicard

In the military, a blue star comes from the symbol on the service flag used to denote a family member who is serving. As such, those with active duty relatives are called "blue star families." But in the event of a death, that blue star is replaced with a gold variant — the highest honor.

Those who have lost loved ones to service never forget where they were when they received the news. It's something they will carry with them forever: the day blue turned gold.

How The Day Began

Craig Gross was at a picnic after church with his wife on July 16, 2011. The husbands were in one room, wives in the other. As the men chatted, one asked if he was concerned about his son, Army Cpl. Frank Gross, 25, who was in Afghanistan.

"I'm not worried about him at all," he said. "I spoke with him on a regular basis and he's in a part of Afghanistan where I think he's pretty safe. Right now there's 150,000 troops over there. What are the odds of that?"

Not long after, Gross received a call from a neighbor saying he should come home right now — a water main had burst in his house.

When he pulled up to the driveway, Gross saw a car with government plates and asked the vehicle's occupants to hold off on telling him anything until his wife arrived.

"Craig, is Frankie dead?" she asked immediately after pulling up to the house.

“I just hugged her, and held her for a minute,” Gross told Military Times.

For Kelly Kowall, the day began a little differently. It was Sept. 20, 2009. She was decompressing following her stepdaughter’s wedding the night before when her phone rang. It was her ex-husband and she nearly didn’t answer.

“When I picked up the phone, he asked me if the military service members have arrived,” she said, to which she responded, “What are you talking about?”

“Corey’s gone,” he said about their son, Army Spc. Corey Kowall, 20, who was deployed to Afghanistan.

Kelly couldn’t wrap her head around it. “Gone where?” she asked.

“He’s gone,” he said, with an intonation of finality.

It wasn’t until the government car pulled up and Kowall saw the headlights that everything began to sink in.

“You wish the world would just stop so you can catch your breath,” Kowall said.

‘Nothing To Fight For’

Krista Simpson Anderson received a call on April 27, 2013, after her husband, Green Beret Staff Sgt. Michael Simpson, 30, was involved in an IED attack in Afghanistan. He was alive but critical.

Clinging to hope, Anderson spent days communicating with doctors in Bagram. But hope faded when doctors declared her husband clinically brain dead.

Her first thought was, “What am I going to do without my person?”

The Army kept Simpson on life support and transferred him to Landstuhl, Germany, where Anderson would arrive with his family to say goodbye.

“I just remember thinking it was the first time in my life that I couldn’t fix something, or change the outcome, or just make it OK,” she said. “There was nothing that I could fight for.”

After calling everyone to share the news, she crawled into bed with him and listened to his heart

— still beating. There Anderson remained until she fell asleep, praying.

“In the middle of the night, the nurse came in and wanted to wash him up and change his dressings. I asked her if I could help,” Anderson said. “She let me, and it was such a special moment.”

Simpson died on May 1, five days after the IED blast.

A Bad Feeling

On Aug. 2, 2017, Britt Harris was at work. She was newly and unexpectedly pregnant and had just given the news to her recently deployed husband, Spc. Chris Harris, 25, the week before.

The couple was looking for houses for their growing family while Harris was deployed. In the middle of a messaging thread centered around housing possibilities, Harris suddenly stopped replying.

“I have pretty bad anxiety, but I hadn’t heard from him,” she said.

She and a friend went to lunch, Harris hoping the distraction would ease her nerves. But while waiting for food, she saw a notification on her phone from American Military News that two soldiers had been killed in Kandahar.

“It’s Chris,” she thought immediately, doing her best to remove the notion from her mind.

Harris went back to work and called her family readiness group, which told her they were unable to say anything until next of kin could be notified in-person. Unable to shake her fears, Harris decided to go home. A short while later, a car with government tags arrived.

“I wanted to be crazy. I wanted Chris to call me and be like ‘God, you overreacted like a crazy person,’ she said. “Instead, they notified me he had been killed.”

Ashley Bugge, whose husband, Ensign Brian Bugge, 35, served in the Navy, received a different kind of phone call that would change her life forever.

While a pregnant Bugge and the couple’s two other children were out shopping, her husband went to a personal diving course he had enrolled in using his GI Bill.

“I’ve been a military spouse long enough to know that if an unknown number calls you, you answer it,” Bugge said. “I’m a scuba diver myself, and so, I know that accidents happen, but typically accidents that happen in the water are fatal.”

It was the dive shop, and they were sending someone to pick her and the children up to take them to the hospital. They were unable to tell her what had happened.

When they arrived, she said, “I left my 1- and 3-year-old kids in the car with a complete stranger. I ran inside the hospital with my six-month pregnant belly to find out that he had died.”

Going To Dover

In the event of a service member’s death overseas, the body is returned by way of Dover Air Force Base in what is called a dignified transfer. Families are allowed to attend and witness the moment the coffin is moved to a transport vehicle in advance of a memorial service.

“It was the most heart-wrenching three days of my life,” Gross said. “I think it was like two o’clock in the morning when the jet landed — my son and five other soldiers’ caskets were lowered off of the plane and onto the tarmac.”

That was the last time he saw his son’s casket until it arrived at Arlington National Cemetery.

Gross, who said he delivered his son on the day he was born, was now delivering his son’s casket to the cemetery on almost the exact anniversary of his birth — Aug. 19 at approximately 11 a.m.

“I don’t think anybody could even write a movie script for something like that,” Gross added.

For some, like Kowall, that day wasn’t just about the loss of a loved one — lives had been cut short by a finite tragedy. Though she was at Dover for her son’s transfer, Kowall was taken aback when she spotted a tragedy-stricken young woman, carrying a newborn, who had just lost her husband.

“There was a young mother with an infant in her arms, and she was there with her mother,” she recounted. “Her husband was coming back with the flag draped over his coffin, and I

remember them letting her know, ‘This one is your husband that’s coming down.’”

The young woman collapsed to her knees, her mother grabbing the baby.

“I just remember thinking of this poor child who never got to know her father except in pictures or from stories people tell her,” Kowall said.

For Harris, that pain is all too familiar. Before traveling from Fort Bragg to Dover, she had to tell her mother-in-law that she was pregnant.

“Not only did Chris pass, but he’s going to have this baby he’ll never meet,” she said. “I was worried maybe it’ll make her more upset, but maybe it’ll be like a little bit of comfort that there’s a piece of Chris still here.”

The Grieving Process

The death of a family member can challenge even the most stalwart.

“My faith was really tested at that point in my life,” Gross said. “I kind of came unglued. I hate to admit that. I didn’t handle it well and I started drinking pretty heavily.”

Though he’s since turned away from the bottle and towards the Bible, he says some days are still hard.

“I still miss Frankie every day,” Gross said. “I think about him every day.”

What one experiences when losing a child is unfathomable. Telling young children about the loss of a parent, Anderson says, may be one of the hardest aspects of becoming a Gold Star family.

“I said, ‘Well, you know that daddy is a soldier, and so daddy is going to be God’s soldier now,’” she said. “And he immediately knew what that meant, because he said, ‘But I will miss him.’”

The couple’s other son Gabriel was just 1 at the time.

“Gabriel has gone through phases where he’s angry that Mic had more time with his dad because he’s older, and he has more pictures with him,” Anderson noted. “He gets sad and feels guilty that he doesn’t remember anything but the stories that we tell him.”

Bugge struggled with explaining the idea of forever to her two young children. She and Harris,

both pregnant when their husbands died, have only memories to share with their daughters who were born after.

When Harris' daughter Christian, who is now 2, was born, she felt a mixture of grief and happiness.

"She was this last little connection to Chris," Harris said. "If something ever happened to her — this is all I have left of him. I'm getting a little less crazy, but she's pretty attached to me because it's just me and her."

Honoring The Fallen

"I think the biggest fear that any Gold Star parent has is that our son's name will be forgotten," Gross said.

Harris echoed that sentiment.

"When it first happened, news outlets were asking me a lot about Chris's story," she said. "Now those opportunities don't happen as often. But it's so important to be able to talk about him."

One way to keep an eye on the future while remembering the past, Kowall said, is to find a passion that can be dedicated to the memory of a lost loved one.

"Find a purpose," she said. "Do something that helps to honor your son, daughter, spouse or sibling. If you do that, you are keeping them and their spirit alive through acts of service."

Anderson, Bugge, Gross, Harris, and Kowall all agreed that sharing the stories of their loved ones is not only therapeutic for them, it also honors those who are lost.

Speaking about them preserves their legacy, Gross noted.

"It's been said that the only soldier who ever really dies is the soldier whose name is never mentioned again."

<https://www.militarytimes.com/off-duty/military-culture/2020/09/25/what-it-means-to-become-a-gold-star-family/>

Submitted by George Birmingham, ET1(SS) G 69-74, Assoc. LM, USSVI Holland Club / Carolina Piedmont Base

Seven retired Italian guys were playing poker in their Florida condo clubhouse when Guido



loses \$500 on a single hand, clutches his chest, and drops dead at the table.

Showing respect for their fallen comrade, the other five continue playing, but standing up.

At the end of the game, Giovanni looks around and asks, "So, who's gonna' tell his wife?"

They cut the cards. Pasquale picks the low card and has to carry the news.

They tell him to be discreet, be gentle, don't make a bad situation any worse.

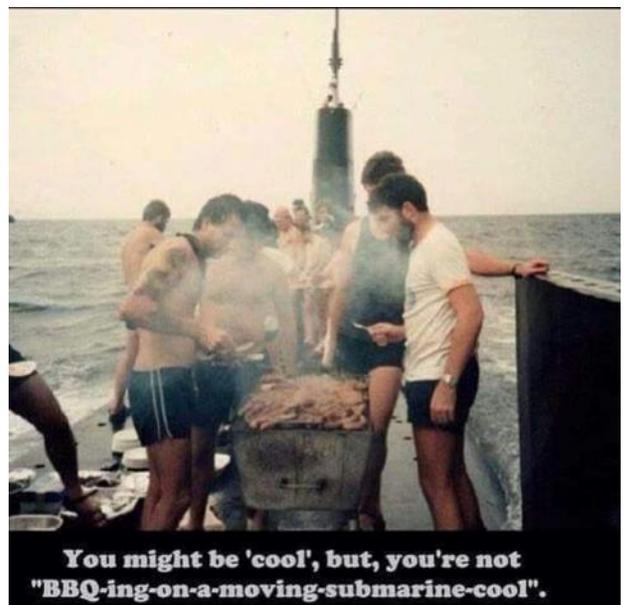
"Discreet? I'm the most discreet person you'll ever meet. Discretion is my middle name. Leave it to me!"

So, Pasquale goes over to the Guido's condo and knocks on the door. The wife answers through the door and asks what he wants?

Pasquale declares: "Your husband just lost \$500 in a poker game and is afraid to come home."

"Tell him to drop dead!" yells the wife.

"I'll go tell him." says Pasquale.



You might be 'cool', but, you're not "BBQ-ing-on-a-moving-submarine-cool".

Submitted by Skip Shepherd, TM2(SS) B 73-75

Garage sale find!

You just never know what you will find. Wind up rubber band propulsion system (Rickover) design. Lead ballast weight, diving planes, snorkel mast and periscope and a deck gun. What do you think, ever seen one of these?





**ADM WILLIAM DEE 'BILL' SMITH,
US NAVY RETIRED
COMMANDING OFFICER
USS HENRY L. STIMSON SSBN 655
GOLD CREW / SHIPYARD #1 / BLUE CREW
1971-1974
ETERNAL PATROL 9 SEPTEMBER 2020**

SMITH WILLIAM DEE SMITH Admiral, USN (Ret.) Admiral William Dee Smith, USN, Ret. passed away on September 9, 2020. He is survived by his soul mate of 63 years, Sabra Harriman Smith, his daughter, Evangeline Quinn and son-in-law, Kevin Quinn. He is predeceased by his son Frederick W. Smith who also graduated from the US Naval Academy and served in submarines. His early assignments were on the USS BACHE and 6 submarines before taking command of the USS Henry L. Stimson in October 1971. He then served on the staff of Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet as the Deputy and then Senior Member of the Nuclear Propulsion Examining Board. After a tour as Director of Nuclear Power Personnel he was ordered as Squadron Commander to Submarine Squadron Fourteen in Holy Loch, Scotland. Then he was assigned to the Office of the Chief of Naval Operations (CNO) as Director, Naval Communications Division. Then he became Commander, Submarine Group EIGHT before being reassigned to the office of the CNO where he served in various administrative capacities. His final assignment was the U.S. Representative

to the Military Committee of NATO. He retired in December 1993, the last active duty member of the Naval Academy class of 1955. Some of Admiral Smith's many decorations and awards include the Defense Distinguished Service Medal, Distinguished Service Medal w/ Gold Star, The Legion of Merit w/3 Gold Stars, The Meritorious Service Medal w/ gold Star and the Navy Commendation Medal He formed a consulting firm, Heisler Corporation, became a full time Senior Fellow at both the Center for Naval Analyses and National Defense University. He served as Chairman of the Board of Directors of the Naval Submarine League, the Naval Mutual Aid and the Board of Advisors to APL at Penn State University. He was a member of the Naval Studies Board of the National Academy of Sciences and served as a Capstone Fellow at the National Defense University. Admiral Smith was the soul of kindness and a blessing to all who knew him. A memorial and celebration of life will be held at a date to be determined; burial will be in Arlington National Cemetery. Admiral Smith was the soul of kindness and a blessing to all who knew him. A memorial and celebration of life will be held at a date to be determined; burial will be in Arlington National Cemetery.

https://www.legacy.com/obituaries/washingtonpost/obituary.aspx?n=william-smith&pid=196824173&utm_source=MarketingCloud&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=ObitMessenger_Results_PowerInbox_Neustar_081320&utm_content=ObituaryURL&sfmc_id=10038128

To Plant Memorial Trees in memory, please visit our [Sympathy Store](#).
Published in The Washington Post on Sep. 20, 2020.



"I RELIEVE YOU, SIR"



Larry Phillips Dolphins 1973



John Glaub receiving dolphins and letter Nov13,1973





 DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
 USS HENRY L. STIMSON (SSBN655)
 FPO, NEW YORK 09501

SSBN655/LPH:pn
 1650
 Ser: 5058/73
 28 November 1973

Mrs. Thomas E. Krauser
 106 Yale Drive
 Ladson, S. C. 29456

Dear Mrs. Krauser,

It was recently my pleasure to award your husband the "dolphins" which signify that he is Qualified in Submarines. As you probably know, this designation is respected and coveted both in the Submarine Service and in the Navy at large, coming, as it does, only after the successful completion of a long program of study, training, learning, and experience. Your husband's thorough, diligent efforts in completing Submarine Qualifications during this patrol are something of which he can well be proud. This detailed knowledge of the ship and her systems has impressed his seniors as well as his peers and those junior to him, and has set a fine example for others to follow. The very backbone of any spirited and effective submarine crew is that group of trained and knowledgeable men who are designated "Qualified in Submarines".

I trust that you share the pleasure and pride that the crew and I feel in your husband's having earned his "dolphins".

Sincerely,

 W. D. SMITH
 Commander, U.S. Navy
 Commanding Officer



Tom Krauser receiving dolphins

655B E Div 1973 by Larry Phililps



655G-MT Div Jun 1977 by Rick Baker



655G-MT Div-Aug79 by Rick Baker



655G-MT Div-Jun78 by Rick Baker



Print a copy, complete and mail with your check to the address below:

Event Registration 655 Reunion #11

13-17 October 2021

Holiday Inn Cincinnati Airport

1717 Airport Exchange Blvd.

Erlanger, KY 41018

888.294.5067

www.holidayinn.com/cvg-airport

Call the hotel number above or reserve on their website.

Reserve Group Rates using either:

Henry L. Stimson 655 Reunion OR Block Code R65

Hotel Reservation Deadline SEPT 8, 2021

Hotel Reservation is the responsibility of the individual.

Reunion Registration Deadline SEPT 8, 2021

http://ssbn655.org/reunions/2020_Reunion11



Please complete (print legibly), print the form and return along with a check payable to: **Henry L. Stimson Reunion**
Mail to: Dick Young, 7209 Austin Woods Ln., Cincinnati OH 45247 **Email:** stimson655reunion2020@aol.com

Shipmate Name: _____ Guest Name: _____

Relationship: ___ Spouse ___ Significant Other ___ Family ___ Friend

Street Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: Home: _____ Cell: _____ Work: _____

E-mail: Home: _____ Work: _____

Number who will be attending this event in your group: _____

Patrols on STIMSON: _____ Total # Patrols on all boats: _____

Dates Onboard	Rate	Crew	Dates Onboard	Rate	Crew
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

Special Needs: _____

(Event attendance will be through advance payment only.)

I am registering for the following per person (Association Member and all guests):

Registration Fee: (required for all) \$45.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

Saturday Banquet: (if attending) \$35.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

Wright Patterson AFB Tour (if attending) \$30.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

Ohio River Cruise/M meal (if attending) \$75.00 ea Number: _____ = _____

Total Enclosed _____

REUNION USE ONLY
Check # _____
Date Rcvd _____
Registration # _____
Hotel Resv: _____

Two are two scheduled events. Please indicate your interest. **Include fees with your check for the reunion.**

- Thursday:** Wright Patterson AFB Museum Tour in Dayton OH. This is a 70 mile trip (just over an hour) and we will go by coach bus/s. Cost for the tour/transportation is \$30.00 per person.
(Include the fee in your check for registration.)
- Friday:** Ohio River Cruise and Meal. The cruise departure is less than a 30 minutes from the hotel and we will go by coach bus/s. Cost for the Cruise/M meal and transportation is \$75.00 per person.
(Include the fee in your check for registration.)

The Association has established a refund policy for reunion registrations and it is located within our Bylaws in Article V.g. You can view this policy at:

<http://ssbn655.org/association/bylaws/1610%20655BylawRev.pdf> or on the back of this form.

g. Cancellation of reunion registration and the refund of monies paid will be based on the timing of the cancellation. Registration cancelled prior to the reunion registration cutoff date will result in refund of monies paid minus the registration/office fee. For cancellation after the registration cutoff date, there will be no refund of monies paid.

Cincinnati is located in Southwest Ohio and just across the Ohio River is Northern Kentucky where the reunion will be held. It's only 10 miles from Indiana. There are 3 Interstates that lead to Cincinnati: I-74, I-75 and I-71. We are located a day's drive (8-10 hours) from most of the East Coast. There will be plenty of **free parking at the hotel for cars and RV's**.

If you are flying there are 7 major airlines that service Cincinnati (CVG) and several are discount airlines. They include Air Canada, Allegiant, American, Delta, Frontier, Southwest and United. A free shuttle service from the airport (1.5 miles) is provided by the hotel.

Along with the planned activities here are a few activities that you can do on your own if you arrive early or stay late or don't plan on going to the Wright Patterson AFB Museum on Thursday.

The baseball season will be over but the Reds have one of the best Museums in the Professional Baseball and it's located next to the Great American Ball Park. The Museum is free to veterans.

<https://www.mlb.com/reds/hall-of-fame>

Our Zoo and Botanical Gardens are second to none with a White Tiger display and Baby Fiona, a hippo raised from birth at the zoo.

<http://cincinnati-zoo.org/>

The Creation Museum is about 7 miles from the hotel. It's a state of the art Adventure through biblical history with stunning exhibits, botanical gardens, planetarium, zoo, zip lining ...and dinosaurs. In the Bible??? For real??? You gotta see it to believe it.

<https://creationmuseum.org/>

The Ark Encounter is 20 miles south and has a real wooden Ark based on the size described in the bible; it is huge.

<https://arkencounter.com/>

Kentucky Horse Park is about 45 miles away near Lexington Kentucky.

<https://kyhorsepark.com/>

The Cincinnati Museum Center is near the downtown area and housed in the old Art-Deco Union Terminal Train Station. It has a natural history museum and the Cincinnati History Museum. You can also tour the old railroad control station housed on the top floor. It also features an IMAX theater.

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

The Hofbrauhaus in Newport, KY features the best German food outside of Munich.

<https://www.hofbrauhausnewport.com/>

You may want to check out the restaurant on the top of the Radisson Hotel located in Covington, Ky (5 miles from the hotel) on the Ohio River. It sits on the 18th floor of the hotel and revolves once every 45 minutes, giving a great view of the downtown area, and the food is delicious.

<https://www.restaurantcovingtonky.com/>