



HAPPY BIRTHDAY US NAVY
October 13, 2025 - 250 Years

the NEW



**2025 Stimson
 Association
 Reunion #13
 Oct 1-5**



VOL. 2025 #10

OCTOBER 2025

USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2023 - 2025

PRESIDENT <u>Jerry [CJ] Blevins</u>	VICE PRESIDENT <u>Ray [Rita] Kreul</u>	SECRETARY <u>Nick [Linda] Nichols</u>	TREASURER <u>Ken [Diane] Meigs</u>	PAST PRESIDENT <u>Tom [Marie] Krauser</u>
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Other Positions 2023 - 2025

HISTORIAN / CUSTODIAN <u>Larry [Linda] Knutson</u>	WEBMASTER / NEWSLETTER <u>Nick [Linda] Nichols</u>	CHAPLAIN <u>Bruce [Vicki] Stefanik</u>
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REUNION CONTROL CENTER

2025 Stimson Reunion

October 1 - 5, 2025

Groton CT

From the Reunion Committee -

John & Gretchen Glaub

97 registrations received as of 11 September

Registered Attendees Sailing List

Reunion 13 is here! We are looking forward to welcoming you to Groton/New London this week, and we hope that everyone has a great time. We will have seven plank owners with us. We will also have eleven shipmates, who have never attended a reunion, joining us. We are excited to have retired RADM Michael Holland as our guest speaker for the banquet. Safe travels to those of you attending and we will see you soon!

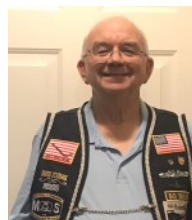
The SUBSCOL Graduating Class graduating on October 3, 2025 will be named Henry L Stimson SSBN 655 Class. Our own Ron Testa, ETN2 [LCDR ret] B/SY1/G 70-73, Association Life Member, will be speaking to the class. John Glaub, MM2(SS) B 71-74, USSVI Groton Base member, will be the SUBVETS representative and read the Sailor's Remembrance, give out the

Heritage Award to the deserving student and shake hands with each graduate.



From the Association President -
Jerry Blevins, LT(SS) B 76-79,
USSVI USS Groton Base, 655
Assoc Life Member:

CJ and I wish everyone a very happy 250th U.S. Navy birthday. As I write this, I also noticed that 21 Sep was Henry L. Stimson's birthday (his 158th).



Chaplain's Corner - Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655
Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS
Asheville Base, Holland Club:

Praise the Lord, O my soul.
 O Lord my God, you are very great;
 you are clothed with splendor and majesty. Psalm 104:1-2

The trees are turning gold and red in the mountains of North Carolina. Nature is being clothed with splendor and majesty.

Great is the Lord and worthy to be praised.

May you and your families be blessed as we think of each other this month. //Bruce

Association Members,

Election of officers occurs during the Reunion business meeting every two years. A slate of candidates will be presented to those in attendance to be voted on. The elected positions are President, Vice President, Treasurer and Secretary. Send any nominations to filling these positions to the Secretary [\[655webmaster@ssbn655.org\]](mailto:655webmaster@ssbn655.org) as soon as possible. You must have the persons agreement to run for the position before submitting the name. Although some currently holding these positions may be willing to continue to serve the Association, all positions are open for our members to nominate others to that job.

The chart below shows past and current officers and their years serving on the BOD. Our bylaws state: "Officers may normally serve no more than two consecutive terms in the same office unless election to subsequent terms is in the best interest of the Association. Officers elected to more than two consecutive terms shall consent to re-election."

YEAR	PRESIDENT	VICE PRESIDENT	TREASURER	SECRETARY	PAST PRES	WEBMASTER	CHAPLAIN	HISTORIAN
2005	Phil Johnston	na	Phil Johnston	Loree Riggs	na	Jeff Bricmont	JB Helms	na
2005-07	Phil Johnston	Robert Callahan	Phil Johnston	Loree Riggs	na	Randy Allen	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2007-09	Chuck Hladik	Robert Callahan	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	Phil Johnston	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2009-11	Chuck Hladik	Neal Anderson	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	Phil Johnston	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2011-13	Chuck Hladik	Neal Anderson	Ken Meigs	Loree Riggs	Phil Johnston	VA Host	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2013-16	Ray Kreul	Tom Krauser	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Chuck Hladik	Nick Nichols	JB Helms	Loree Riggs
2016-18	Ray Kreul	Tom Krauser	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Chuck Hladik	Nick Nichols	Ken Meigs Acting	Larry Knutson
2018-21	Tom Krauser	Steve Novic	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Ray Kreul	Nick Nichols	Jake Morris	Larry Knutson
2021-23	Tom Krauser	Jerry Blevins	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Ray Kreul	Nick Nichols	Bruce Stefanik	Larry Knutson
2023-25	Jerry Blevins	Ray Kreul	Ken Meigs	Nick Nichols	Tom Krauser	Nick Nichols	Bruce Stefanik	Larry Knutson

ITEM 2. Reunion location and chairman for 2027 Reunion #14. It cannot be emphasized enough how important this decision is to continuing our Association and gathering together every two years. This question on location and chairman usually takes the most time in our meeting so come prepared to volunteer.

The BOD is asking for nominations for location and names of a possible chairman for that reunion. Any Association Member whether or not attending the current reunion, can nominate a location & chairman. Send your nominations to both the Association President [\[jl@ssbn655b@gmail.com\]](mailto:jl@ssbn655b@gmail.com) and to the Association Secretary [\[655webmaster@ssbn655.org\]](mailto:655webmaster@ssbn655.org).

Submarines Lost During the Month of October

USS SEAWOLF (SS-197)	October 3, 1944 – 15th War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 100 souls (83 crew and 17 Army)
USS S-44 (SS-155)	October 7, 1944 – 5th War Patrol	Lost with 56 souls – 2 men became POWs and survived the war
USS WAHOO (SS-238)	October 11, 1943 – 7th War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 80 souls
USS DORADO (SS-248)	October 12, 1943 – New - training	Lost with all hands – 77 souls
USS ESCOLAR (SS-294)	October 17, 1944 – 1st War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 82 souls
USS DARTER (SS-227)	October 24, 1944 – 4th War Patrol	No loss of life
USS SHARK II (SS-314)	October 24, 1944 – 3rd War Patrol	Lost with all hands – 87 souls
USSTANG (SS-306)	October 25, 1944 – 5th War Patrol	Lost with 78 souls – 9 men became POWs and survived the war
USS O-5 (SS-66)	October 29, 1923 – near Panama Canal	Lost with 3 souls

Nine Boats and 563 Men Lost



WELCOME ABOARD: Found & Updated

(Shipmate has been added or information has been updated on our Sailing List. Please check the online Sailing List for shipmates contact info.)

NOTE: Don Ort, MM1(SS) G/SY1/G 69-74, CWO4 Ret, continues to locate our Stimson shipmates who are on our Sailing List be without an email address.

FTG2(SS) Bill Kovach B 69-71

[added by shipmate]

BINNACLE LIST UPDATES: If you know of a shipmate who should be on the binnacle list please let me know. I will contact the shipmate for permission to add them to this list. I only add those who have given permission.

I am using the binnacle list as an ongoing story for each person on it. This way you will be able to understand the update better than if you do not remember what their health issues were.

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Sandy Hastie, CAPT B 80 (Oct-Dec) CO-1 patrol

Cards to: 75 Lambeth Dr., Asheville NC 28803-3425

9.26.25: Email from Sandy & Donna:

Dear Family and Friends,

It has been a while since we sent an update on our health. It is not for lack of caring but rather for going through an extended period of waiting for doctor results so we could plan a course of action. The below information provides a status of where we are in a mixture of competing challenges.

Since our July update, the addition of chemo to Sandy's Keytruda immunotherapy was paused to determine whether the chemo or his heart issues were causing his increased dizziness, shortness of breath, fatigue, and retention of fluid in the lymph system (lymphedema). Either the heart or the chemo or both could be causing these symptoms. The lymph system fluid retention causes significant fluid retention in his legs, making walking difficult. After thorough testing, the lymphedema was determined to be mainly caused by severe stenosis in the aortic heart valve.

Combine this with a fall in our home, resulting in a fractured collarbone that eliminates use of his right arm for his walking cane to offset the limp he received after an operation to remove cancer in his left hip. All these challenges caused the cancellation of our attendance at the 65th reunion at the US Naval Academy. This was the last big class reunion for his class, and he planned for so long to attend. We are still waiting for a decision on how to treat the aorta valve stenosis. A long introduction; now we will close with an update.

Donna's back continues to give her a lot of pain. We presently see no options to get rid of the pain; however, we continue to search.

With Sandy, we are balancing his health items. The first big question is his heart. The calcification has worsened recently and is causing the symptoms of dizziness, shortness of breath, fatigue, and fluid retention, especially in the legs.

His cancer is also a worry because the cancer nodules in his hip and shoulder have started to grow again. He has been on a chemo drug in addition to Keytruda. The chemo was also causing dizziness, shortness of breath, fatigue, and fluid retention. For this reason, his oncologist at Duke and his local oncologist recommended stopping the chemo to see how it affected these adverse effects. After stopping the chemo for three infusions (nine weeks), the dizziness, shortness of breath, fatigue, and fluid retention all lessened; however, the drawback is the hip and shoulder cancer continued to slowly grow. His heart specialist, who would install a replacement artificial valve inside the current aorta valve, is concerned about the cancer, which might make Sandy a non-candidate for this procedure. The procedure is a Transcatheter Aortic Valve Replacement (TVAR). We are trying to get him to agree to do the procedure while Sandy is feeling better and before the heart gets any worse. That decision is still up in the air. We will start by having a heart catheterization on October 3, 2025. However, despite the above, we continue the fight for both of us. We will keep you informed if and when we get scheduled for the heart procedure and in three months when we get another PET CT scan.

We appreciate your prayers and support and wish we had better news. We know we have always been in God's hands. We are thankful we have a God that listens to prayers!

Warmly, Donna & Sandy

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Bruce Stefanik, MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI USS Asheville Base:

Cards to: 50 Fairway View Dr., Etowah NC 28729
3.17.25: Email from Bruce: I am doing well. I am holding steady with no progression and do not see my ALS doctor again until October after the Reunion.

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George Stevens, MT2(SS) G 68-71

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

9.22.25: Email from George: Ann's back is worse and there's nothing the doctors can do. Shots don't work and surgery is not an option in her case. Me - not much more the docs can do for me either. I am increasing my cayenne intake and that seems to help.

5.12.25: Email from George: *The ravages of aging are taking their toll. In the past three months, my hands have been increasing in pain so that it is constant, actually, fingers to shoulders. Part of the peripheral neuropathy and arthritis I assume. Sometimes my skin feels like it's on fire. Even my exercise program is in shambles. I will see the VA doc next month. My heart is doing better but I do occasionally have a bad day when my heart is racing - and I'm not LOL*

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John Cole, LT B WEPS 78-80, USSVI Member-at-Large, CDR Ret.

Cards to: 5914 Ruby Dr Pearland TX 77581-8926
NO RECENT UPDATES

7.31.24: Email from John: *We pray that you and your loved ones are healthy and happy. Susan and I are doing well as we fight the continuing battle against Parkinson's, Left Shoulder Surgery and now my C1-C6 surgery as well. It just seems like all of the parts are wearing out as time seems to fly by faster and faster. The things I miss the most are hunting, hiking, gardening and just being in the mountains. I must be content with the flowers and a few pots of garden plants on our patio. Bye for now, Very Respectfully. John F. Cole Cdr., U. S. Navy Retired, 100% Disabled 05/12/1964 To 08/01/1994, E1-E9 & O1E-O5 Vietnam through Desert Storm*

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Elam Lee Mauk, EMCM(SS) B 65-69 COB 66-68 Plank, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI USS

Sailfish Base Holland Club

Card to: 4000 Ibis Way Unit 201 Venice FL 34292
NO RECENT UPDATES

2.20.2024: Email from Gretchen Glaub: *John has joined the USS Sailfish Base and received the following email from the Base Commander. Elam is a member of the USS Sailfish Base:*

- I called his home and spoke with his wife. He is in the Douglas T. Jacobson State Veterans Nursing Home in Port Charlotte with dementia. I have added him to our binnacle list. Bill Heck, USS Sailfish Base Commander*

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Ron 'RG' Hyson, STS1(SS) B 70-75, Assoc. Life Member, USSVI Hampton Roads Base, Holland Club, STSCM(SS) Retired

Cards to: 3425 MacDonald Rd., Virginia Beach VA 23464

No recent updates

3.26.2024: Email from Jean: *The results of Ron's evaluation on January 2024, compared to last year, scored significantly lower on a test of global cognition. His doctor reported that Ron has transition to the Moderately Severe Stage of dementia.*

Thank you for all the prayers, caring thoughts, cards, letters, pictures, and memories Ron has received. They really brighten his day.

Jean/Ron

DID YOU KNOW??

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Follow the 3-2-1 backup rule: Keep three copies of your important files — two in different types of storage and one stored off-site. For example, save the originals on your computer, another copy on an external hard drive or USB stick, and the last one in cloud storage online. Overkill? Maybe. Covered? Always.

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3-second tech genius: Printer acting weird? Unplug it, hold the **power button** for **15 seconds**, then plug it back in. This clears its memory and often fixes common errors. Ink-credible.

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3-second tech genius: In **Gmail**, type "older_than:6m" in the **search bar** to find emails over 6 months old. Want to go deeper? Try "older_than:1y" to get stuff from a year ago.

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3-second gadget genius: Tired of your phone autocorrecting a name? When your spelling pops up above the keyboard, tap it. Your phone learns it and stops "fixing" it.

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Find anything fast in Microsoft Word: Can't remember how to insert a table? Don't waste your time digging through menus and settings. Click the **search bar** at the top, type in "table" (or whatever else you need), and the option will pop right up. FYI: This trick works in **Excel**, too.

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3-second tech genius: Made a whoopsie? Press **Ctrl + Z** on **Windows** or **Cmd + Z** on **Mac** to instantly undo your last action. Works for typing, deleting and formatting.

GREAT LINKS TO SPEND TIME WITH

655 Association Website

www.ssbn655.org

Sean Lomax—Champion Whistler

Check out this guy's uniform! A submarine qualified FTG1 -

<https://youtu.be/-UqchbWfIC0> Go to time 8:09

SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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Submitted by a shipmate who wishes to remain anonymous but has too much time on his hands.

A Little Senior Wisdom

01. If a bottle of poison reaches its expiration date, is it more poisonous or is it no longer poisonous?
02. Which letter is silent in the word "Scent," the S or the C?
03. Do twins ever realize that one of them is unplanned?
04. Every time you clean something you just make something else dirty.
05. The word "swims" upside-down is still "swims"
06. Over 100 years ago, everyone owned a horse and only the rich had cars. Today everyone has cars and only the rich own horses.
07. If people evolved from monkeys, why are monkeys still around?

08. Why is there a 'D' in fridge, but not in refrigerator?

09. As I've grown older, I've learned that pleasing everyone is impossible, but ticking everyone off is a piece of cake!

10. I'm responsible for what I say, not for what you understand.

11. Common sense is like deodorant. The people who need it the most never use it.

12. My tolerance for idiots is extremely low these days. I used to have some immunity built up, but obviously, there's a new strain out there

14. It's not my age that bothers me - it's the side effects.

15. I'm not saying I'm old and worn out, but I make sure I'm nowhere near the curb on trash day.

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

17. As I've gotten older, people think I've become lazy. The truth is I'm just being more energy-efficient.

18. I haven't gotten anything done today. I've been in the Produce Department trying to open this stupid plastic bag

19. If you find yourself feeling useless, remember: it took 20 years, trillions of dollars, thousands of lives and four presidents to replace the Taliban with the Taliban

20. Turns out that being a "senior" is mostly just googling how to do stuff.

21. I want to be 18 again and ruin my life differently. I have new ideas

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

23. I put my scale in the bathroom corner and that's where the little liar will stay until it apologizes.

24. My mind is like an internet browser. At least 18 open tabs, 3 of them are frozen, and I have no clue where the music is coming from.

25. Hard to believe I once had a phone attached to a wall, and when it rang, I picked it up without knowing who was calling.

26. My wife says I keep pushing her buttons. If that were true, I would have found mute by now.

27. There is no such thing as a grouchy old person. The truth is that once you get old, you stop being polite and start being honest.

The Health Corner

By: George Stevens MT2(SS) G 68-71

(this article is written from the author's research and point of view)

This is by no means a comprehensive article. The point is that we need to address the cause of the pain if possible. There are alternatives to NSAIDs like Bromelain and others. These proteolytic enzymes and more are available over the counter and can help with inflammation and pain. A naturopathic doctor can help you with sorting through the maze if you have any questions. Again, do your own research - be informed. This article is for information and education purposes only.

Pain - we all know pain and the battle against it. The causes of pain are often not addressed leaving us with a chronic problem. On we fight and many turn to pain-killers like Tylenol (Acetaminophen) and Ibuprofen but that can lead to problems. Pain can be persistent which causes many to rely on these pain killers on a daily basis but, did you know that Tylenol alone causes over 56,000 ER visits every year.

These generally considered safe medications have side effects. For Tylenol, the effects range from skin problems to digestive tract problems to pain in the back or side. Oh sure, I have back pain I'll take some Tylenol. Oh, that didn't work; I have more pain. Maybe I didn't take enough. All of a sudden, you're in the ER from toxicity - taking too much. Now, a link has been established showing Tylenol contributes to babies being born with autism if the mother takes it during pregnancy.

Ibuprofen - a common NSAID (non-steroid anti-inflammatory drug), can cause an increased risk of heart problems and stroke, can also cause serious gastrointestinal problems including bleeding, ulcers, and perforation on the stomach and intestines. It doesn't stop there. Serious skin reactions like blistering, peeling and loosening of the skin. Include chills, cough, diarrhea, constipation, fever, itching, joint and muscle pain, sore throat and the list goes on. Drugs.com listed 31 common side effects and over 100 less frequent side effects.

NSAIDs can relieve pain and taken infrequently probably may not cause any major problems but you have to use a LOT of caution.

Is there anything we can do aside from these

NSAIDs? Well, yes, there are alternatives

Bromelain is often used to ease pain and swelling, especially in your nose, sinuses, and gums. Some people also use it to treat sore muscles and the pain of osteoarthritis. It comes from pineapples but is found mostly in the skin and stem. Eating pineapple fruit will not help. Quercetin is like Bromelain, it's available as a tablet or capsule. The two are often packaged together as a supplement because both are anti-inflammatories. Bromelain along with two other substances, trypsin and rutin, may be as effective as any over-the-counter anti-inflammatory.

The root cause ... a lot of our pain as we get older is caused by inflammation and a protein called fibrin. Proteolytic enzymes can help with both issues.



The Lean Submariner

Here's the latest posts on the blog. Still going strong. The link to his blog is

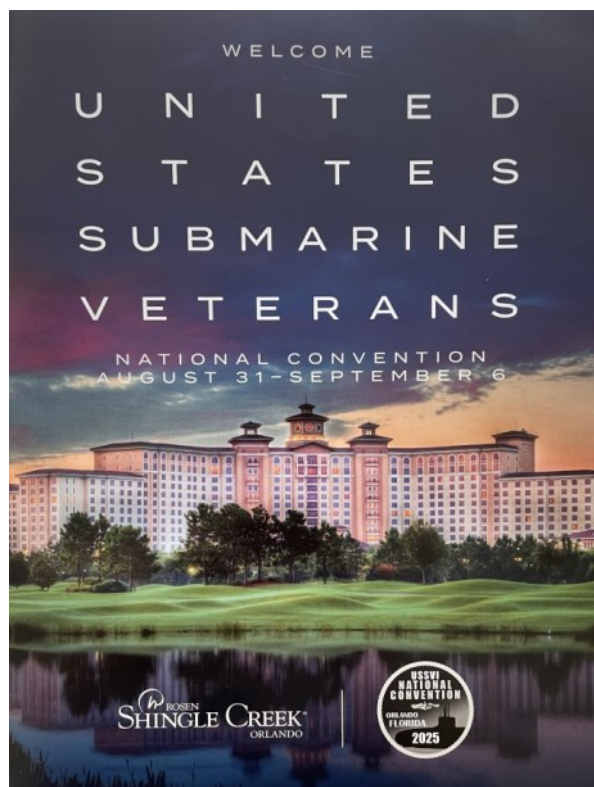
<https://theleansubmariner.com/>

What a Great Week – Orlando 2025 USSVI Convention in the Rear View Mirror
By **Mister Mac** on September 9, 2025

After a few days of winding down, I am ready to give a brief report on the USSVI 2025 Convention in Orlando.

First, I have to give a huge shout out to our

hosts. The Central Florida, South Lake Florida and Snug Harbor Bases were outstanding in their support, and it was awesome to see the “Red Hats” in every corner of the resort. Thanks to Ken Nichols, SE Regional Director also for his warm welcome. We arrived early on Sunday afternoon after a short flight from Charleston SC and the registration desk people were ready for us. Our packages included the exact tours and events that we had pre-registered for and we were ready to begin our week.



The resort that was the host hotel (Rosen Shingle Creek) was nothing less than classic and well appointed. I have been to dozens of conferences over the span of my second career,

and the facility was really among the most luxurious I can remember. From the architecture to the art, you could tell that some thoughtfulness had gone into building the hotel. We had a chance to sample the pools and restaurants, and it was nice to have places to go between work and meetings. The staff was amazing in every detail and made us feel at home.

[READ FULL POST HERE](#)



The Computer Corner
By: George Birmingham ET1(SS)
G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life
Member, SV Carolina Piedmont
Base, Holland Club

Are your computer apps behaving?

Welcome back to the Computer Corner! This month we will look at a way to see what your apps are doing with your network service. As we know, malware has but one purpose, and that is to export data from our computer to its master using your network connection. Be sure to read the Security Corner this month, as they are somewhat related.

We often assume that our computer only uses the network when we are reading e-mail or surfing the Internet and the various websites we visit. That is certainly a reasonable assumption. But do you really know what else on your computer is using your Internet connection? And if you are on a limited use subscription, where you may encounter extra charges for exceeding their monthly data cap on your subscribed connection, then knowing how much you are using and who the culprits are may help you better manage your network connection and avoid extra charges.

In Windows 11, there is a way to keep track of that use and, in fact, have it alert you if you are getting close to the limit.

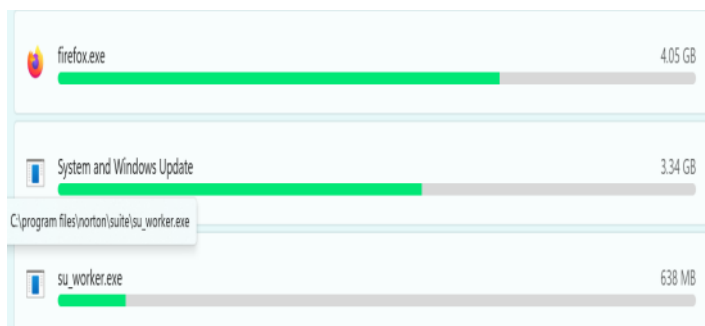
Here is are two useful tutorials on how to do this in Windows 11:

[View Network Data Usage by Apps Stats in Windows 11](#)

[Set, Edit, or Remove Data Limit for Network Connection in Windows 11](#)

As you saw in the first article, we can look at data usage by every application using the internet

from our computer. And if you use your mouse and hover over an app name, you can see where that app lives on your computer:



So here I am suspicious of the app “su_worker.exe” so I hover my cursor over the name and a popup appears that tells me this is part of my Norton AV software. If I find something suspicious, then I note the app location as it appeared and using File Explorer, I then go to that location. When I right-click on the file name, I can select the option to have the file scanned by my AV to see if this item has a problem.

Thus you can, especially after installing and using a new app, see if it is doing anything unusual with the network and track it down using a targeted AV check. In the case of the Chrome Extension I covered in the Security Corner this month, it would likely be possible to detect abnormal network usage and track it back to the extension.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. 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



The Security Corner
By: George Birmingham ET1(SS)
G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life
Member, SV Carolina Piedmont
Base, Holland Club

Things to watch for when installing software

Welcome back to the Security Corner! This month we will talk about safely installing software, even when installing from a certified source. And be sure to read this month's Computer Corner for additional tips on detecting unexpected behavior from apps on your computer.

I recently came across a security article about malware in a Google Chrome extension which is available in the Chrome Store. If you are a Chrome browser user, this may interest you. In the Chrome Store there is an extension called "Color Picker, Eyedropper — Geco colorpick", which has malware installed inside.

The following article describes the issue:

Chrome Store Features Extension Poisoned With Sophisticated Spyware

This brings up a point to consider. We have been constantly told that we should only install apps on our devices from certified sources, like the Microsoft Store, the Apple App Store, or the Google Chrome Store and Google Play Store. Or we can get apps from known reliable verified vendors, like LibreOffice. The above article suggests that we may need to follow some additional steps to make sure our computers don't install infected software.

The problem with some of these “Certified Sources” is, that when you select an app to install, it is done from that site and you don't get to scan it first for issues with your selected Anti-Virus (AV) software. Thus, you are depending on them to make sure it's malware free. From the article above, you can see that sometimes they fall short. So how do we protect ourselves?

1. Anytime you install application software on your computer, the following steps will help you have a safe journey: Create a System Restore point - **Create System Restore Point in Windows 11**. That way, if things don't go well, you can go back to a known good state. Note in the procedure, as of the June 2025 Windows Security update, restore points are only kept for 60 days. So, if you are doing a lot of restore points, a full system backup might be a nice item to get done once in a while, just to be safe. Thank you Microsoft!
2. If you are installing from a non-Store site, download the software package to your Downloads directory, then go to that directory and right-click on the downloaded file to select the option to have your installed AV software check it out for malware. And, of course, I know you always keep your AV updated with the latest malware signatures, right?
3. Once you complete the application software installation, a full system AV scan is always a

good practice to follow. Then you have reasonable confidence that your system remains secure and virus free.

4. As a final comment, we cannot assume that just because a “Certified Store” says they are safe and secure that it is fact. The same is true for non-store software sources. The article I provided makes the case for that, at least for that particular Chrome extension. But are others lurking? If we trust, but verify, we have a reasonable path forward to keeping our systems safe.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at subvet_ssbn@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

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The Security Corner pt 2:

From George: After seeing an article today about the resurgence of Check Washing, I thought perhaps a Security Corner Article on the subject might be handy. I encourage you to watch the videos as I think they are very informative (just skip the ads, which I cannot remove).

Check Washing makes a return from the past

Check washing is a fraud scheme where criminals steal checks from mailboxes, use chemicals or digital tools to erase the original payee and amount, then alter the check to themselves for a larger sum before depositing or cashing it. Victims often don't know until they see a drastically different amount withdrawn from their account or a bounced check.

Well, it seems according to the article link below that it is seeing a resurgence in popularity:

‘Check washing’ costs Americans over \$1 billion each year, says USPIS — how to spot it and protect your money

Many years ago, I had the opportunity to hear Frank Abignale, Jr. speak about check washing while I was an IT Security Specialist at Wachovia Bank (now part of Wells Fargo). You may recall that Frank was the prime character of the movie “Catch Me if You Can”. I found a YouTube video of a talk that Frank did about check washing and how to protect yourself by using a very inexpensive, but very effective Uniball Gel 207 pen. I have used

nothing else since! Here is a link to that video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zhR-koBU4zM>

And this is also a very informative video by Frank as well:

Every scam has one of these red flags:

I hope you find this information useful, and that Uniball Gel 207 he mentioned can be found at Walmart, Target, Staples and other places where pens are sold.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at subvet_ssbn@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

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The Security Corner pt 3:

From George: Based on a news story I saw today about a Chrome Browser VPN Extension being used as spyware, I created an additional article for the Security Corner

Once legitimate Chrome VPN Extension Turns to Browser Spyware

Greetings shipmates! We have discussed several times the use of a VPN, especially on public networks and unsecured networks like hotels and airports to protect and keep our communications private. I still believe this is a prudent approach. And with respect to browsers, while Firefox and Chrome are the leading choices, we haven’t said much about browser plug-ins/ extensions. Many are written by individuals or small software companies. The article links below discusses a turn to a darker side involving the Google Chrome browser and a particular VPN extension called FreeVPN.One. Warning, some of these articles may have a little bit of techie language overkill in them, but I think you will find them helpful.

Legitimate Chrome VPN Extension Turns to Browser Spyware

Google Chrome VPN under fire for secretly screenshotting users’ browsing habits

The AI Summary for exactly who is the developer of this VPN extension returned this very interesting summary:

“The developer of the browser extension FreeVPN.One has remained anonymous and has

been uncooperative with security researchers. The extension, which had over 100,000 installs and was once labeled "Verified" on the Chrome Web Store, was found to be secretly capturing and transmitting screenshots of users' browsing activity. Following these revelations in mid-2025, Google removed the extension from the web store.

- **Vague identity:** Initially, the extension was tied to a company called CMO Ltd. and the developer email was associated with Phoenix Software Solutions. However, the Phoenix Software Solutions link led to a basic and unconvincing Wix website.
- **Refusal to provide proof of legitimacy:** When asked by Koi Security researchers for evidence of legitimacy—such as a company profile, GitHub account, or LinkedIn page—the developer stopped responding.
- **Evasive explanation:** The developer claimed the screenshot feature was part of an "AI Threat Detection" security scan meant only for suspicious domains. However, researchers caught the extension taking screenshots of activity on trusted sites like Google Photos and Google Sheets.
- **Obfuscated activity:** When the developer became aware of the security investigation, they added a new layer of encryption and switched domains to better hide the data being exfiltrated.
- **Malicious update:** Although the extension existed for years as a simple VPN, its malicious behavior began in April and July of 2025 with two specific updates. These updates introduced broader permissions and the silent screen-capture capability.

So, if you are a Chrome Browser user, and by chance have installed this specific VPN extension, and any or all of its subsequent updates as noted, then you may want to think about finding a different VPN solution.

Contact me at subvet_ssb@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

VETERANS AFFAIRS - RETIREE INFO - AARP

And FLEET RESERVE

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THE LINKS BELOW WERE TAKEN FROM THE EMAILS I RECEIVE FROM MANY SOURCES. These are not in any order so take a look at each of them and decide what want to continue reading. You DO NOT have to have special accounts to view this information. There may be some general areas of information in here that will be of help to some of you.

The new My HealtheVet experience allows you to refill and track your VA prescriptions in the same place that you manage your other VA benefits and services. If you have questions about using the new medications tool, we have answers.

Learn more

Login.gov begins accepting passports

Login.gov has begun accepting U.S. passports for identity verification. This is a new option for anyone creating their Login.gov account for the first time.

Learn more about using a passport for identity verification

Get back to sleep with VA's Insomnia Coach

If you struggle with sleep, you're not alone. The Insomnia Coach app can give you the tools to get your sleep back on track.

Learn more about Insomnia Coach

When you need CPAP supplies

If you use a CPAP or BPAP machine, it's important to regularly replace certain parts of the machine to keep it working properly.

VA makes it easy to order supplies online.

Learn when and how to order CPAP supplies

Get the VA: Health and Benefits app

Did you know that there's a mobile app that lets you easily manage your VA health and benefits all in one place? Find out what you can do with the VA: Health and Benefits app.

[Learn more](#)

Make the most of your secure messages

It's easy to stay in touch with your health care team through a secure message. But unclear messages can cause confusion.

[Try these tips to get the most out of your messages](#)

What this attack submarine sidelined for a decade says about the US Navy's maintenance failures

By [Chris Panella](#)

Business Insider

Adm. Caudle told the Senate he'd think hard about the Boise's future.



US Navy photo by Chief Mass Communication Specialist Darryl I. Wood/Released

- The submarine USS Boise has faced maintenance and repair delays since its last patrol ended in early 2015.
- The wait has been caused by — and come to exemplify — the US Navy's maintenance and repair problems.

The new chief of naval operations said in his confirmation hearing that the Boise's time in the yard is "unacceptable."

Sidelined for over ten years now, the attack submarine USS Boise has become one of the clearest and most damning examples of the US Navy's maintenance problems.

The Los Angeles-class sub came up during the

confirmation hearing of Adm. Daryl Caudle, President Donald Trump's pick for top admiral. The Senate recently confirmed him as the new chief of naval operations.

[Read article here](#)

Navy's New Enlisted Leader Puts Sailors, Training At Forefront

(NAVY TIMES 09 SEPT 25) ... Riley Ceder

The 17th master chief petty officer of the Navy released his objectives for the fleet Tuesday, a day after he was sworn in as the Navy's top enlisted sailor.

Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy John Perryman took to social media to share a page outlining his focus on prioritizing sailors and sailors' families, as well as service members' technical knowledge and education as they move forward in their military careers.

"I am committed to removing distractions that don't matter, delivering training that does, and spotlighting excellence wherever it's found," Perryman said in a post's caption on the Navy MCPON Instagram page.

Perryman officially assumed his role as master chief petty officer of the Navy at the Navy Memorial in Washington on Monday during a change of office ceremony.

The new MCPON pledged his commitment to improving barracks, family housing and galleys and promised "timely access" to medical care for sailors and sailors' families, according to the document. Perryman said the Navy would utilize a review process to identify and solve problems as well.

Perryman said he will direct his attention towards continuing education for sailors, specifically targeting technical training and proficiency that is tethered to advancement to the next rank. Service members will hone their skills in "state-of-the-art facilities" and undergo regular training sessions and assessments to accomplish this goal, according to the outline.

Perryman also emphasized the importance of developing talent within the service, ensuring that each sailor is developing expertise that aligns with "career milestones."

"By delivering these improvements, we aim to retain and grow the Navy's most talented warfighters," the outline reads.

Perryman, who previously served as the senior enlisted leader for U.S. Fleet Forces Command, was selected to become the 17th master chief petty officer of the Navy on Aug. 15. He succeeded Master Chief Petty Officer of the Navy James Honea, who served as the Navy's top enlisted sailor beginning on Sept. 8, 2022.

<https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2025/09/09/navys-new-enlisted-leader-puts-sailors-training-at-forefront/>

Navy Policy Update Extends Annual Drug Testing Deadline For Nuclear Sailors

(USNI NEWS 06 AUG 25) ... Heather Mongilio

The Navy is extending the timeframe for drug testing in the Nuclear Weapons community, according to a late July Navy policy change.

Sailors will now have up to 120 days, compared to 30, to get a drug test prior to their initial Nuclear Weapons Personnel Reliability Program, according to ALNAV 60/25.

Drug testing is required for all military, civilian and contractor personnel who are seeking the Personnel Reliability Program (PRP) certification for the first time or returning to a position that requires it.

To maintain the PRP certification, sailors will need to undergo drug testing once a fiscal year, a change from the previous policy, which followed the calendar year.

Those who test positive for an illegal or unallowed substance will be suspended from the PRP while the result is investigated.

The PRP certification is required to perform specific duties with U.S. nuclear weapons and the nuclear command and control systems, as well as the equipment and materials necessary, according to the Department of Defense manual entry on the Nuclear Weapons PRP.

"Nuclear weapons require special consideration because of their policy implications, military importance, destructive power, and the political consequences of an accident or an unauthorized act," reads the entry. "The safety, security, control, and effectiveness of nuclear weapons are of paramount importance to the security of the United States."

<https://news.usni.org/2025/08/06/navy-policy-extends-annual-drug-testing-deadline-for-nuclear-sailors>

Newest Chief Of Naval Operations Assumes Responsibilities

(NAVY TIMES 25 AUG 25) ... Riley Ceder

The U.S. Navy confirmed the 34th chief of naval operations during an assumption of office ceremony Monday, according to a Navy release.

Adm. Daryl Caudle, who previously led U.S. Fleet Forces Command for nearly four years, replaced acting CNO Adm. James Kilby at an event at the Washington Navy Yard in Washington, D.C. Kilby took over for Adm. Lisa Franchetti, whom President Trump dismissed in February without a stated reason.

"The Sailor will be front and center in my vision throughout my tenure as CNO — hands down, no exception," Caudle said during the ceremony, according to the release. "To ensure that they are ready to fight and win decisively—today, tomorrow and well into the future — we will view everything we do we through an operational lens focused on three priorities: the foundry, the fleet and the way we fight."

Navy Secretary John Phelan delivered a keynote address emphasizing the importance of strengthening the service's shipbuilding infrastructure.

Caudle, now a member of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, will serve as an advisor to Trump, the National Security Council, the Homeland Security Council and Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth.

During his confirmation hearing before the Senate Armed Services Committee in July, Caudle said the United States was in the midst of a critical era, "defined by global competition, technological saturation and unpredictable threats."

He vowed to try and reduce bloated budgets for Navy projects and focus on government accountability for defense programs experiencing problems with late deliveries.

Caudle — who was nominated by Trump on June 17 — told lawmakers that success in his role as CNO would mean increasing the Navy ship count, delivering programs and projects on time, reducing gaps at sea, meeting munition floor requirements and improving training for sailors.

Caudle has been a vocal critic of manning shortages and delayed ship availability in the past.

Prior to his appointment to command U.S. Fleet

Forces Command, Caudle held leadership positions with Submarine Forces, Submarine Force Atlantic, Task Force 114, 88 and 46 and Allied Submarine Command.

“As I step into the role as your 34th Chief of Naval Operations,” Caudle said in a video that was posted to X, “I do so with great pride, immense gratitude and an absolute focus on the mission ahead.”

<https://www.navytimes.com/news/your-navy/2025/08/25/newest-chief-of-naval-operations-assumes-responsibilities/>

Russian, Chinese Submarines Sail Together In Sea Of Japan

(USNI NEWS 28 AUG 25) ... Dzirhan Mahadzir

Submarines from the Russian Navy and People’s Liberation Army Navy (PLAN) recently sailed together in the Sea of Japan, marking the two countries’ first joint submarine patrol.

Two Kilo-class submarines, supported by a surface warship and submarine rescue ship each, sailed in the Sea of Japan in early August, the Russian Navy Pacific Fleet announced Wednesday. The submarine patrol indicates an expansion of the bilateral military activities between Russia and China, which already conduct joint naval patrols and joint bomber flights.

Russian submarine RFS Volkhov (B-603) and a PLAN submarine set out on a patrol route in the Sea of Japan, transiting to the East China Sea before the two returned to their respective naval bases.

Volkhov returned to its base in Vladivostok, Russia, on Wednesday, after traveling more than 2,000 nautical miles. Corvette RFS Gromkiy (335) supported the submarine during its patrol. The Japan Maritime Self-Defense Force (JMSDF) spotted the Russian group Aug. 14 and again Aug. 20 while transiting the Tsushima Strait. Volkhov was sailing surfaced at the time of the transit, JMSDF said.

The Japanese force also tracked PLAN destroyer CNS Urumqi (118) and submarine rescue ship Xihu (841) transiting the Tsushima Strait to enter the East China Sea on Aug. 13. Submarine Great Wall 210, which is believed to have been part of the task group, was not sighted, likely because it transited the strait submerged.

The submarine patrol began after an annual Russian-Chinese exercise, dubbed Maritime Interaction 2025 by Russia and Joint Sea 2025 by China. The Russian Navy and PLAN drilled in Vladivostok and the Sea of Japan from Aug. 1-5. Participating warships included the Russian Navy’s destroyer RFS Admiral Tributs (564), corvette Gromkiy, submarine rescue ship Igor Belousov and submarine Volkhov and the PLAN’s destroyers Urumqi and CNS Shaoxing (134), fleet oiler CNS Qiandaohu (886), and submarine rescue ship Xihu, as well as submarine Great Wall 210.

During the exercise, the countries’ submarines and submarine rescue ships rehearsed a crew evacuation in Peter the Great Bay, the main marine entrance to Vladivostok, the Russian Ministry of Defense said. Russian submarine Volkhov descended to the bottom of the bay, simulating an emergency, while Chinese rescue ship Xihu responded to the situation. Igor Belousov carried out a similar exercise with the PLAN submarine.

Russia and China began joint naval patrols in 2021. The first patrol was considered provocative by Japan as the joint flotilla included 10 ships sailing in international waters off the coast of Japan’s main islands of Honshu and Kyushu. Both Russia and China said the patrols were in compliance with international law and not targeted at any country.

“During the cruise, the joint formation strictly abided by the relevant provisions of international law and did not enter the territorial waters of other countries. This joint maritime cruise aims to further develop the China-Russia comprehensive strategic partnership in the new era, enhance the joint action capabilities of both parties, and jointly maintain international and regional strategic stability,” read a China Ministry of National Defense statement at that time.

Since then, the two countries have conducted a joint naval patrol annually, with the exception of last year, which saw two patrols.

The joint patrol in 2023 took place near Alaska and the Aleutian Islands. The July 2024 patrol began south of South Korea’s Jeju Island, with the ships sailing through the Osumi Strait to enter the Western Pacific Ocean. They eventually transited the Philippine Sea before concluding the patrol in

the South China Sea.

The October 2024 patrol saw the ships sail from Russia's Sakhalin Island through the Pacific Ocean and the Philippine Sea before sailing between Okinawa and Miyako Island to enter the East China Sea. That patrol concluded with the ships docking at the port of Qingdao, China

Russia and China also conduct joint bomber flights, mainly in the vicinity of Japan. However, last year, the countries carried out a joint bomber flight in the Alaska Air Defense Identification Zone in July.

Japan considers the Russian and Chinese military activities that take place in its vicinity as a threatening demonstration to Japan.

"These repeated joint activities are clearly intended for demonstration of force against Japan and are a grave concern from the perspective of the national security of Japan," reads the latest iteration of Japan's annual white paper, Defense of Japan 2025.

<https://news.usni.org/2025/08/28/russian-chinese-submarines-sail-together-in-sea-of-japan>

Lack Of TNT Is Squeezing U.S. Military And Industry

Mining materials to make cement, gravel and a host of other common products require an explosive that is becoming more expensive and limited in supply.

(NEW YORK TIMES 01 SEPT 25) ... John Ismay

For more than a century, the United States relied on TNT for military weapons and commercial mining. It was plentiful and cheap, selling for just 50 cents a pound a couple decades ago.

Produced by the millions of tons for both world wars and into the 1980s, TNT filled artillery shells and bombs while making it possible to blast apart rock to build roads and make cement for home foundations and major infrastructure projects.

But making TNT, or trinitrotoluene, creates hazardous waste, and by the mid-1980s the Defense Department had shut down the last facility in the United States that made it. Foreign suppliers — primarily in China, Russia, Poland and Ukraine — stepped in, offering the explosive at low prices while dealing with the hazardous waste themselves.

A second and important source of supply for commercial use had been TNT recovered from munitions like land mines, shells and bombs that the Pentagon regularly decommissions. While the weapons were deemed too old for use by American troops, the explosives inside of them were typically still fully viable and could be recycled.

But according to officials in the civilian blasting industry, those sources have dried up as the U.S. military has elected to keep older weapons in its arsenal since Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022.

Poland had been the Pentagon's sole authorized supplier of TNT. But it has been sending much of what it makes across its border to Ukraine, which is using all that it produces for its own military purposes.

That comes as two of the other main sources of TNT, Russia and China, have stopped exporting to the United States, the officials said.

All of this has put pressure on U.S. weapons production as well as blasting operations at the rock quarries that produce much of the raw material for bridges, roads and buildings in America.

In response, Congress authorized the construction of a new Army-run TNT plant in Kentucky that will cost \$435 million. It is expected to begin operating in late 2028, but it will produce the explosive only for military use, and there are no plans to sell any of it to private industry to help alleviate the domestic shortfall.

The shortage may soon slow the progress of domestic construction projects and make certain raw materials more expensive.

"The world as we know it does not exist without industrial explosives," Clark Mica, the president of an explosives industry trade association, said in an interview. For nearly anything that is mined, he added, "nine times out of ten explosives are involved in some way."

And that process usually starts at a quarry.

At one such site in rural Virginia, Mr. Mica stood at the bottom of a 300-foot deep pit carved into a hillside as workers prepared to blast out more than 100,000 tons of granite in a single shot.

The commercial blasting industry has learned how to make its work less disruptive. Surveys and calculations once done by hand are now produced more quickly and precisely thanks to

drones, 3-D scanners and computers that plot where and when to set off just enough explosives to do the job.

"It starts with drilling a hole and filling it with explosives," he explained.

As Mr. Mica looked on, specialized trucks mixed ammonium nitrate with other chemicals to create a thickened blasting agent that was then pumped into the holes.

Small amounts of TNT are typically used to make that mixture explode.

Tiny electronic detonators that are timed to the millisecond set off soda-can sized booster charges of TNT placed at the top and bottom of each hole, compressing and detonating the blasting agent.

The resulting blast, which had more than twice the power of the largest bomb dropped on Afghanistan, heaved the cliff briefly into the air and dropped more than 110,000 tons of rock into the water-filled bottom of the pit.

But the noise and ground tremor from the massive explosion were negligible 500 yards away.

Soon after the dust settled, gigantic bulldozers, excavators and dump trucks began to move the shattered granite up to crushing machines just above the pit so they can be ground down for use by heavy industry.

To keep blasting operations like this going while the war in Ukraine drags on, companies are looking for alternatives to TNT.

One candidate called pentaerythritol tetranitrate, or PETN, is already made by three factories in the United States, but it is unclear how quickly production can be increased.

In recent years, the Pentagon has relied on a single factory in Poland for TNT it has needed. But it appears that the Defense Department may have secured other sources of TNT as well.

An Army spokeswoman, who spoke on the condition of anonymity because she was not authorized to speak publicly about the service's access to explosives, indicated that the service is no longer solely reliant on the factory in Poland and noted continued efforts to enhance the domestic production of propellants and explosives in the United States.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2025/09/01/us/politics/ukraine-war-tnt-shortage.html>

Official Says Allied Cooperation Improving Navy Sustainment Picture

(DEFENSE DAILY 02 SEPT 25) ... Rich Abott

A Navy official recently highlighted how the U.S. Navy's cooperation with allies is significantly improving its regional sustainment network, especially via limited foreign shipyard maintenance, AUKUS Australian submarine maintenance work, expeditionary missile reloading and international refueling operations.

"One of the great ideas that we've had for the regional sustainment framework is repairing our surface ships in a foreign shipyard. But we were precluded from doing that by law previously. NDAA 25 actually granted us the ability to do that now, where we can do up to 21 day...availability in a foreign shipyard and not have to bring that ship back to the United States or pull into Yokosuka to do that repair. And that's a major, major victory for regional sustainment," Vice Adm. Jeffrey Jablon, Deputy Chief of Naval Operations for Installations and Logistics, OPNAV N4, said Aug. 28 during the NDIA Emerging Technologies for Defense conference and expo in Washington, D.C.

The FY 2025 defense authorization act included a provision from the House Armed Services Committee that for the first time allows the Navy to perform preventative maintenance of a deployed Navy warship outside the U.S. or Guam if it lasts no more than 21 days (Defense Daily, May 24, 2024).

The Navy has been pushing to increase foreign shipyard maintenance of naval vessels overseas for years, particularly those in the Indo-Pacific region at such a distance from U.S. shipyards. During the Biden administration former Secretary of the Navy Carlos Del Toro noted the former administration's FY '25 budget request included plans for up to six continuous maintenance availabilities under 90 days each at foreign shipyards.

In May 2024 he told the committee that the goal was to assess which foreign yards could do the work effectively in peacetime and might be counted on to perform adequate repair during wartime.

At the time, Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.), ranking member of the House Armed Services Seapower subcommittee, noted there has been

pushback from U.S. companies about conducting a wholesale repair availability overseas, but that the 21-day limit was a sensible allowance.

Jablon noted since the authority is relatively new, only one has been completed so far. While a three-week period is short for Navy ship maintenance work, he confirmed it was completed successfully.

"I do know there's been one, I'm for sure, but I don't know the details, so I don't want to say the wrong word where it was done...but I know they've conducted one of these and it was successful."

Naval Sea Systems Command has taken the lead on this work and developed a team to help perform the work on the shortened availabilities," Jablon added.

Separately, he reiterated the progress in having the U.S. Navy and Australia complete the first repair availability of a Virginia-class attack submarine in Australia as part of the ramp up in AUKUS work with the USS Hawaii (SSN-776).

Last year, SSN-776 arrived in HMAS Stirling, Australia following the submarine tender USS Emory S. Land (AS-39) for the first maintenance work on the submarine to occur in Australia with Australian participants via a Submarine Tendered Maintenance Period (STMP). That work included over 30 Australians that were embedded on the tender and had been learning and training for this kind of SSN work (Defense Daily, Aug. 23, 2024).

Jablon said the level of cooperation on the maintenance of the SSN-776 is "really making inroads."

Beyond ship repair and maintenance, he highlighted the Navy has been able to conduct expeditionary reload of Vertical Launching Systems on Arleigh Burke-class destroyers both in Australia and France as well as starting to conduct "a number of console refueling operations" between commercial tankers as well as Japanese and South Korean oilers with U.S. ships, allowing operations to continue more smoothly.

"So that's our focus. I think we're at the foundation. We're moving out on those areas, and that will really benefit both the Joint Force and the Navy."

Jablon said all of these examples come in light of the recent trilateral logistics arrangement

signed by the U.S., Japan and Australia at the start of the Talisman Sabre exercise (Defense Daily, July 11).

He argued this historic arrangement "forms a naval logistics working group between the three countries to develop operations, activities, investments, or sustainment of our forces. And that is a very important step in our sustainment of the fleet, in the Pacific Fleet."

<https://www.defensedaily.com/official-says-allied-cooperation-improving-navy-sustainment-picture/navy-usmc/>

Trump To Rename Pentagon, Restoring Historic 'Department Of War' In Latest Military Move

'Everybody likes that we had an unbelievable history of victory when it was Department of War,' Trump told reporters in August

(FOX NEWS 04 SEPT 25) ... Diana Stancy and Emma Colton

President Donald Trump will sign an executive order Friday to alter the name of the Department of Defense to the Department of War, reverting to the agency's former namesake, Fox News Digital has learned.

Both Trump and Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth have recently indicated they want to change the name of the agency. It is one of several initiatives the Trump administration has spearheaded as part of its "warrior ethos" campaign within the Pentagon.

A White House official confirmed to Fox News Digital Thursday that Trump would roll out the name change Friday. The executive order calls for using the Department of War as a secondary title for the Department of Defense, along with phrases like "secretary of war" for Hegseth, according to a White House fact sheet.

The order also instructs Hegseth to propose both legislative and executive actions to make the name permanently U.S. Department of War.

Likewise, implementing the order will require modifications to public-facing websites and office signage at the Pentagon, including renaming the public affairs briefing room the "Pentagon War Annex," according to a White House official. Other longer-term projects also are in the works, the official said.

Trump signaled in recent days the change was

imminent.

"Everybody likes that we had an unbelievable history of victory when it was Department of War," Trump told reporters Aug. 25. "Then we changed it to Department of Defense."

Hegseth, who Trump already has referred to on occasion as the "secretary of war," also expressed similar sentiments and said the change would reflect a broader, cultural shift within the Pentagon.

"We won WWI, and we won WWII, not with the Department of Defense, but with a War Department, with the Department of War," Hegseth said in an interview Wednesday with "Fox & Friends." "As the president has said, we're not just defense, we're offense."

"We've reestablished at the Department the warrior ethos. We want warriors, folks that understand how to exact lethality on the enemy," he said. "We don't want endless contingencies and just playing defense. We think words and names and titles matter. So, we're working with the White House and the president on it. Stand by."

The U.S. employed the Department of War title for its military agency until 1949, when it was renamed the Department of Defense in accordance with a series of massive reforms included in the National Security Act of 1947.

It's unclear if Congress, which has the authority to establish federal executive departments, will need to step in to issue final approval on the move. However, Trump previously has voiced confidence that he doesn't need approval from lawmakers and that they will get on board if necessary.

"We're just going to do it," Trump told reporters Aug. 25. "I'm sure Congress will go along if we need that. I don't think we even need that."

The executive order changing the name of the Department of Defense will be the 200th order Trump has signed in his second term.

<https://www.foxnews.com/politics/trump-rewrite-pentagon-restoring-historic-department-war-latest-military-move>

[Long Article]

U.S.-China Rivalry Sparks A Submarine Arms Race

(WALL STREET JOURNAL 08 SEPT 25) ... Mike Cheney, Austin Ramzy, and Alistair MacDonald

China is on the verge of becoming a world-class submarine power, with new technology and a bigger, better fleet that is gaining on the U.S. and its allies—spurring a new undersea arms race in the Pacific.

Rapid improvements are making Beijing's underwater navy quieter and faster, capable of carrying more advanced weapons and better sensors and able to remain submerged for longer.

At the same time, Beijing's military has extended its reach deeper into the Pacific, confronting rivals in the South China Sea and performing blockade and invasion drills around Taiwan, where a conflict could demand a greater role for submarines than at any time since World War II.

That is pushing the U.S.—which stations about 60% of its worldwide submarine force in the Indo-Pacific—and its allies to bulk up their own underwater fleets.

China's military has submarine bases from Liaoning in the north to Hainan island in the South China Sea, part of a naval buildup that has enabled Beijing to patrol nearby waters and project power far from its shores.

As the U.S. adapts to meet what it sees as China's growing threat, bases as far west as Guam and regional rotations give America's submarines deeper reach into the Pacific. The Navy has moved several of its most advanced fast-attack submarines—the Virginia class—to the region since April last year.

In a military conflict, Pacific nations would seek to preserve—or obstruct—maritime trade and other shipping traffic through strategic waterways, drawing submarines into the vital role of the stealthy, sustained defense of chokepoints.

"Pretty much every country that aspires to have a half-decent navy in the Indo-Pacific is building submarines, or acquiring submarines," said Peter Jennings, a director at Strategic Analysis Australia and a former deputy secretary in Australia's defense department. "There's no doubt they are very useful."

But the U.S. and its allies are facing stiff challenges in keeping up with China.

The U.S. is struggling to build new submarines. Facing production concerns, the Trump administration is reviewing the 2021 “Aukus” defense pact, an agreement intended to help deter Chinese aggression. Under the pact, Australia is meant to buy nuclear-powered submarines from the U.S. and work with the U.K. to build a new sub incorporating U.S. technology.

China until recently didn’t present such a challenge. For years, Beijing focused on building a fleet of diesel-electric submarines that were sufficient for patrolling its backyard in the Western Pacific. China’s first nuclear-powered submarine, which entered service in 1974, was a loud, slow vessel whose biggest threat was in exposing its crew to radiation.

After a half-century of slow progress, everything has changed.

“They could be on the cusp, for submarine operations, of a technological leap where they are able to quiet the submarines significantly and it becomes very hard to track them,” said Brent Sadler, a Navy veteran and senior research fellow with the Heritage Foundation.

China has made particular strides in the development of nuclear-powered submarines, whose greater speed, range and endurance give Beijing’s navy greater reach.

New models in development include the Type 095, which analysts expect to have vertical launch tubes that can accommodate cruise missiles. “The 095 is going to be a very quiet sub,” said Christopher Carlson, a retired captain in the Navy Reserve and former Defense Department naval systems engineer who researches China’s submarine program. “That’s going to complicate matters greatly.”

China has also improved its newer conventionally powered submarines, the Yuan class, with “air-independent propulsion” technology that makes them quieter and allows them to wait longer to come up for air. And China showed off new underwater drones in a military parade in Beijing on Wednesday, including one that could function as a submarine and another that could be an autonomous torpedo.

[READ FULL ARTICLE HERE](#)

Inside The \$8b Plan To Station American Sailors And Subs Near Perth Through AUKU

(ABC AUSTRALIA 11 SEPT 25) ... Jane Norman

While defence officials sweat on the outcome of the Pentagon's AUKUS review, an unprecedented \$8 billion operation is unfolding south of Perth, where up to five nuclear-powered submarines — and more than 1,000 Americans — will soon be based year-round.

The massive works will deeply embed United States military personnel and hardware into the West Australian community, in a way that will be difficult to unpick if political support for the decades-long submarine agreement collapses.

"I won't say we're getting into the weeds, but we're getting right down into the hairs of the dog," said Australian Submarine Agency chief Jonathan Mead, who added that planning was so far advanced that officials were currently negotiating quarantine arrangements for United States submariners' dogs.

"US service personnel very much like their pets," he told the ABC.

It's called Submarine Rotational Force-West (SRF-West), the first tangible piece in the giant AUKUS puzzle that will involve up to four US Virginia-class and one UK Astute-class submarine rotating through HMAS Stirling for maintenance and repairs from 2027.

This is "the crawl phase" of the decades-long AUKUS agreement, according to former naval officer and ANU Security College expert associate Jen Parker, before Australia buys its own nuclear-powered subs from the US and eventually builds its own.

Vice Admiral Mead said up to 1,200 US and UK personnel and their families would be posted to Perth to support the operation, accommodated on the HMAS Stirling base or in the surrounding suburbs where Defence is building "hundreds of houses" to take some pressure off the local property market.

Negotiations are also underway with Home Affairs to give American spouses work rights during their two-to-three-year postings.

Embedded in the suburbs

Former soldier and Shadow Home Affairs Minister Andrew Hastie — whose Canning electorate neighbours the naval base — said it was not simply a rotation of US sailors, "there'll be a permanent presence at HMAS Stirling, and they'll be integrated into our community".

Unusually for a major piece of military cooperation, this is not taking place in a remote part of Australia, like the joint spy base Pine Gap. It is happening in Perth's fast-growing and highly populated southern suburbs, making it far more visible and potentially creating more sensitivities.

After the annual rotation of US Marines through Darwin, the SRF-West initiative will represent the second-largest American military footprint on Australian soil.

Defence Housing Australia currently manages 640 properties near HMAS Stirling and plans to double the size of its Rockingham property portfolio over the next five years, through "construction, acquisitions and direct leases".

Right now, a steady stream of trucks can be seen driving over the Garden Island Causeway to the naval base where a multi-billion-dollar upgrade is underway. Wharves are being extended, and a small nuclear waste facility is being built, together with an uninterrupted power supply.

"We are on track to receive the first US and UK submarines in 2027," said Vice Admiral Mead, who will next week travel to WA for a town hall-style meeting with locals as part of his agency's broader community engagement strategy.

The 'larger play by the United States'

With less than two years to go, Mr Hastie is warning that the WA and federal governments are failing to explain the AUKUS agreement, right down to what is happening at the community level and how they plan to address the added pressure the US presence will place on schools, hospitals and roads.

"This is a deal that benefits both countries and it's important that we are transparent about what that means," Mr Hastie said.

"I don't think Australians understand the larger play here by the United States."

For Australia, there's a key objective: to learn how to operate and maintain the highly sophisticated nuclear-powered boats, before Australia purchases its own Virginia-class submarines from the Americans in the early 2030s (for which the government has already made a \$US1 billion down-payment).

For the Americans, gaining permanent access to HMAS Stirling has a sharper strategic objective: giving them the ability to respond to crises and conflicts in the highly contested region more

quickly and easily.

ANU Security College expert associate Jen Parker said the US viewed the naval base as an important launch point for operations in the South China Sea and North Asia.

"It's a way to forward base their submarines, to allow them greater access to the region," she said.

HMAS Stirling is much closer to the South China Sea than the American bases in the region, and Ms Parker said it also sits outside China's long-range missile "envelope ... making it harder to target".

It is also a case of history repeating, Ms Parker said. During World War II, the United States operated naval bases off both Fremantle and Albany.

HMAS Stirling, though, will remain an Australian-owned and operated base, according to Vice Admiral Mead, who said: "We've made it very clear that this is an Australian Commonwealth navy base."

"The big picture is, the United States is looking to disperse its presence in the Indo-Pacific; they want more strategic depth," Mr Hastie said.

"It basically cuts their transit time from the west coast of America, but also Hawaii, if a conflict did arise in North Asia.

"The US and Australia are investing in a lot of our defence facilities so that we can be good hosts in the event of some sort of strategic crisis."

But AUKUS is not without its critics including former Labor senator, and left faction stalwart, Doug Cameron who is angry with his caucus colleagues for endorsing an agreement which he said "abandons Australian sovereignty to the United States".

Greens Senator David Shoebridge is also uncomfortable with the deeply intertwined military relationship, and warns the presence of US and UK nuclear-powered submarines at HMAS Stirling will make Perth a target for adversaries, an assertion disputed by defence officials.

After all, as Ms Parker puts it, having more than 1,000 US sailors and their families in and around HMAS Stirling in the coming years will be a very "obvious and visceral demonstration" of the closeness of the two countries' relationship.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/2025-09-12/inside-the-aukus-plan-to-station-american-subs-near-perth/105763818>

Using WikiTree.com to Fill in Ancestors

Don Ort - Gold/SY1/Blue 69-74 and Tom Krauser - Blue 72-74

A program that both Don and Tom have found extremely useful in adding new ancestors to our family trees is WikiTree.com which is a free program on the web.

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

About WikiTree

WikiTree, launched in 2008, is a free, collaborative platform for constructing family trees. Users create and edit profiles to build a unified global family tree, importing GEDCOM files and integrating with services such as FamilySearch. The site, which includes over 36 million profiles and over a million registered members as of 2023, is funded by advertisements shown to non-registered users. While WikiTree emphasizes source accuracy, particularly for pre-1700 profiles, user-generated content may vary in accuracy, with users noting interface and data import limitations.

The key to the statement above is “build a unified global family tree” where there should only be “one profile” for each person on earth. It is true that there can be problems with the data in WikiTree and the user should try and use other sources to verify any information taken from WikiTree.

CAUTION: We have found that “generally” the information from WikiTree is close or similar to what information is in our trees but may not always be accurate. It is up to the user to determine what they want to use or not use from WikiTree.

To use WikiTree it is best to create a free account to gain more access to the available data. It asks for basic information such as name, create a password, email address and to verify you are over age 16. Once you have created and verified your information, you can log into WikiTree to see ancestor data.

Each profile in WikiTree has a Profile Manager or “owner” who is registered with WikiTree. Only the individual who is the “owner” can make changes to the profiles they own. This can be an issue if the “owner” added those profiles but is no longer “active” in maintaining those profiles. We have run into this issue when we email the “owner” in WikiTree to update information but never get a response back from the “owner” because they may no longer be active. We have also found cases where there are more than one Profile for the same person. In these cases we try to get the owners to “merge” them into one profile with one owner.

When you find an issue with WikiTree for a profile, you can send a comment to WikiTree describing the issue. If you click on **Ask A Question** while on a Profile, you can describe the issue and send it to WikiTree. In our experience, someone usually gets back to you fairly quickly with a

response. Sometimes they tell you to send a Private message to the Profile Manager, or they give their opinion on what the issue may be.

You can send a “Private Message” to the owner of the Profile. The email goes through the WikiTree servers so you do not see the email address it was sent to. Hopefully, that person is still active and will respond to your request. Once they respond, you may have information to connect to that person or they may respond back through WikiTree.

Finding Data in WikiTree

It is best to use dual monitors or split screen (This has been discussed many times before) to follow this process. Put WikiTree on the left side and Ancestry on the right side.

The best way to start using WikiTree is to start with someone in your tree such as a grandparent. Open that Profile in your Ancestry so you have the basic information you will need for a search in WikiTree.

For example, John Henry Hawkins Sr. (born: 21 Sep 1643; died: 12 May 1690) is Tom’s 9th great grandfather and Don’s 7th great grandfather. We will use him as an example.

Then open WikiTree (left screen) and log in. Click on the search icon (magnifying glass in upper right). To narrow the search, click on **Advanced Person Search**. Then enter First Name, Last Name, Birth Date, plus more if you want to narrow down the list. There are more options to narrow the list, however, adding more may cause it to return no matches. For “Date range” we usually start with either +/- 12 yrs or +/-30 yrs since birth dates can vary. For much older dates recommend +/-30 yrs. In our example, type John in **First Name**, Hawkins in **Last Name**, 1643 in **Birth Date**, and select +/-30 yrs. Then click **Search**.

You will get a list with the closest matches at the top of the list and then other variations below it. If none of these are correct or you get no matches, then be less specific to try and find a possible match. If you get no matches you may want to just search for the last name in that date range to see if you find someone else that may be in your tree.

In this search we see “John Hawkins Sr” with the correct birth and death information is one of the choices. Note that the middle name is not given.

If we click on John Hawkins Sr it opens up his WikiTree Profile. The Profile has three main Tabs, Family, Ancestors, and Descendants. It also had a Biography and Sources section which provides information about this person including the “owner”. At the bottom of the page is a section where you can post comments or send a Private Message to the Profile Manager. Tom has posted comments and someone from WikiTree usually gets back in a reasonable time, however, they may not be the Profile Manager and may just have you send a Private Message to them.

Selecting **Family** opens up a screen to show Parents, Siblings, Spouses, and Children where you can click on any of them to go to that Profile.

Selecting **Ancestors** opens a screen showing a **horizontal view** showing several generation up the tree for the Father and Mother of Lorenzo.

Selecting **Descendants** shows his children, their spouse and their children in a **vertical format**.

We have found the **Ancestors** tab to be very useful in adding generations up the tree or adding their children down the tree. As we add each generation, we can select that person and keep moving up the tree. For example, we add John Hawkins and Hester Richards (if not already in our tree) and add or compare the information in WikiTree to what we have in our tree.

Since these are grandparents, we may want to add *P* (or *M*) to the Suffix field to show that this is our “paternal” (father’s side) grandparent (*M* for Maternal (mother’s side) grandparent). This makes it easier later to see which people in your tree are your “direct ancestors” and which side (father or mother) they belong to. We can also add a Tree Tag to show they are a “Direct Ancestor” to that Profile. In Tom’s tree he found that his father’s and mothers line connected farther up his tree and he uses *P*M* to show that those grandparents are on both the paternal and maternal sides. Thus, a search for either *P* (1st 3 characters) or *M* (last 3 characters) will find this person.

For each person we use from WikiTree, we add a **Web link** to their Profile and copy the web address for the WikiTree Profile and the name information.

Example: Web address: <https://www.wikitree.com/wiki/Hawkins-493>
 Link name: John Hawkins Sr.

This allows us to easily go back to WikiTree to review the information at any time. We can also go back to move up another branch of the tree as discussed later.

As we move up each generation, the number of grandparents double so it becomes difficult to keep splitting which line we want to continue up. For example, do we keep going up the Hawkins line or start up the Richards line? Eventually we want to go up all the possible branches, but we can quickly lose track of where we are in the tree. If we choose to stay on the Hawkins line, but would like to come back to the Richards line later, we can add *WT* to the Suffix field for Hester Richards so we can search later for Profiles that have *WT* in them to come back later to those Profiles and continue up that branch.

So next we move up to Richard Hawkins and update or add information for these grandparents from WikiTree. Then add a Web link for them, then add *WT* to the Suffix field for Marie Judith Hele since we want to come back later to move up this branch of the tree.

We keep repeating this process until we reach the last person in WikiTree. Then we can go back and start up another branch by searching for Profiles with *WT* in them. For example, we find *WT* in Hester Richards and open her Profile. Then we open the Web Link for WikiTree and copy it to the left side of the screen. Then we start the process up the Richards line as far as we can adding *WT* to the branches we want to come back to. Since we came back to Hester Richards and went up the Richards branch, we want to remove the *WT* from her Suffix field.

NOTE: When you are looking at the family line in WikiTree of each person, you may want to look up the tree several generations. Doing this we have found surnames in WikiTree that are

familiar to surnames in our trees. Looking at these names in our tree we have found connections to existing family lines further up our tree. Since you may not want to wander off the path you are on at this time you may want to put *WT* in the Suffix field so you can come back later to make the connection to that person in your tree. You may also want to make a note about where the connection goes to as a reminder. You could create a Custom Fact using the birth date so the Fact is near the top of the Profile to make a note about who it will connect to. That way when you come back later you know who the connection is going to.

Using this process Tom and Don have been able to add many new generations to their trees.



George Smith Patton Jr.

George Smith Patton Jr. (11 November 1885 – 21 December 1945) was a general in the United States Army who commanded the Seventh Army in the Mediterranean Theater of World War II, then the Third Army in France and Germany after the Allied invasion of Normandy in June 1944.

Born in 1885, Patton attended the Virginia Military Institute and the United States Military Academy at West Point. He studied fencing and designed the M1913 Cavalry Saber, more commonly known as the "Patton Saber." He competed in the modern pentathlon in the 1912 Summer Olympics in Stockholm, Sweden, finishing in fifth place. Patton entered combat during the Pancho Villa Expedition of 1916, the United States' first military action using motor vehicles. He fought in World War I as part of the new United States Tank Corps of the American Expeditionary Forces: he commanded the U.S. tank school in France, then led tanks into combat and was wounded near the end of the war. In the interwar period, Patton became a central figure in the development of the army's armored warfare doctrine, serving in numerous staff positions throughout the country. At the United States' entry into World War II, he commanded the 2nd Armored Division.

Patton led U.S. troops into the Mediterranean theater with an invasion of Casablanca during Operation Torch in 1942, and soon established himself as an effective commander by rapidly rehabilitating the demoralized II Corps. He commanded the U.S. Seventh Army during the Allied invasion of Sicily, where he was the first Allied commander to reach Messina. There he was embroiled in controversy after he slapped two shell-shocked soldiers, and was temporarily removed from battlefield command. He was assigned a key role in Operation Fortitude, the Allies' military deception campaign for Operation Overlord. At the start of the Western Allied invasion of France, Patton was given command of the Third Army, which conducted a highly successful rapid armored drive across France. Under his decisive leadership, the Third Army took the lead in relieving beleaguered American troops at Bastogne during the Battle of the Bulge, after which his forces drove deep into Nazi Germany by the end of the war.

During the Allied occupation of Germany, Patton was named military governor of Bavaria, but was relieved for making aggressive statements towards the Soviet Union and questioning denazification. Patton was also a known antisemite.[1][2][3][4][5][excessive citations] He commanded the United States Fifteenth Army for slightly more than two months. Severely injured in an auto accident, he died in Germany twelve days later, on 21 December 1945.

Patton's colorful image, hard-driving personality, and success as a commander were at times overshadowed by his controversial public statements. His philosophy of leading from the front, and his ability to inspire troops with attention-getting, vulgarity-laden speeches, such as his famous address to the Third Army, were received favorably by his troops, but much less so by a sharply divided Allied high command. His sending the doomed Task Force Baum to liberate his son-in-law, Lieutenant Colonel John K. Waters, from a prisoner-of-war camp further damaged his standing with his superiors. His emphasis on rapid and aggressive offensive action proved effective, and he was regarded highly by his opponents in the German High Command. The 1970 Oscar-winning biographical film Patton helped popularize his image.

Early life

George Smith Patton Jr. was born on 11 November 1885,[6][7] in the Los Angeles suburb of San Gabriel, California, to George S. Patton and his wife, Ruth Wilson, the daughter of Benjamin Davis Wilson, the second mayor of Los Angeles, and Margaret Hereford, a widow from Virginia.[8] The wealthy Patton family resided at Lake Vineyard, built by Benjamin Wilson, on 128 acres (52 ha) in present-day San Marino, California.[9] Patton had a younger sister, Anne, nicknamed "Nita".[10] Nita became engaged to John J. Pershing, Patton's mentor, in 1917, but the engagement ended because of their separation during Pershing's time in France during World War I.

Anne Wilson "Nita" Patton, Patton's sister. She was engaged to John J. Pershing in 1917–1918.

As a child, Patton had difficulty learning to read and write, but eventually overcame this and was known in his adult life to be an avid reader.[a] He was tutored from home until the age of eleven, when he was enrolled in Stephen Cutter Clark's[11] Classical School for Boys, a private school in Pasadena, for six years.[12] Patton was described as an intelligent boy and was widely read in classical military history, particularly the exploits of Hannibal, Scipio Africanus, Julius Caesar, Joan of Arc, and Napoleon Bonaparte, as well as those of family friend John Singleton Mosby, who frequently stopped by the Patton family home when George was a child.[10] He was also a devoted horseback rider.[13]