



**the NEW**  
**STIMSON**  
**DRAFT!**



VOL. 2026 #7

JULY 2026

**USS HENRY L. STIMSON ASSOCIATION SSBN655 NEWSLETTER**

Association Officers & Board of Directors 2025 - 2027

<b>PRESIDENT</b> Jerry [CJ] Blevins	<b>VICE PRESIDENT</b> Paul [Margaret] Clark	<b>SECRETARY</b> Nick [Linda] Nichols	<b>TREASURER</b> Ken [Diane] Meigs	<b>PAST PRESIDENT</b> Tom [Marie] Krauser
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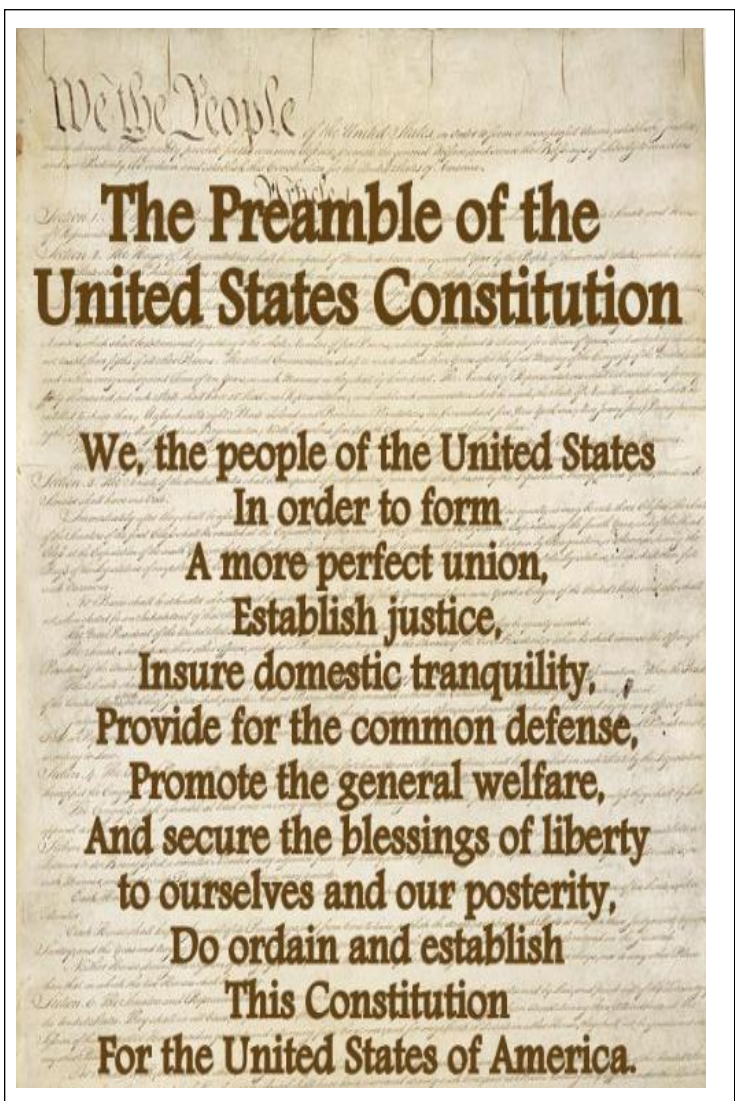
Other Positions 2023 - 2025

<b>HISTORIAN / CUSTODIAN</b> Larry [Linda] Knutson	<b>WEBMASTER / NEWSLETTER</b> Nick [Linda] Nichols	<b>CHAPLAIN</b> Bruce [Vicki] Stefanik
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**HAPPY INDEPENDENCE DAY  
STIMSON SHIPMATES & FAMILIES.  
HAVE A VERY BLESSED, HAPPY AND  
SAFE TIME AS WE CELEBRATE 250  
YEARS OF FREEDOM AND DEMOCRACY  
IN THIS GREAT COUNTRY WE LOVE.  
WHETHER YOU SERVED A SINGLE DAY  
OR MANY YEARS UNDER WATER, OR YOU  
WERE THE ONE WHO STAYED HOME AND  
KEPT EVERYTHING OPERATING, YOU  
EACH WERE A SIGNIFICANT PARTNER IN  
KEEPING OUR COUNTRY FREE. YOU CAN  
TRULY BE PROUD OF THE PART YOU  
PLAYED. BRAVO ZULU  
(that's WELL DONE in Navy lingo)**

*Submitted by Dave Violett [MM1(SS) B 73-76;  
USSVI/HC Carolina Piedmont Base;  
Association Life Member]*

On this great day it is right for us to celebrate the founding of our country. Here is a link of the reading of the Declaration of Independence. It is appropriate on this day that we take a moment to listen to and think about these great words that forever changed not only our history but the world also. Enjoy. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4uE-tqe0xsQ>



## REUNION CONTROL CENTER

**2027 Stimson Reunion #14**

**HOTEL: TBD**

**DATE: TBD**

**LOCATION: Indianapolis IN**

**Reunion Committee:**

**Gary & Mary Owen and Doug Cooper**

**Watch this space for more info to come.**



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

CJ and I just wish everyone a wonderful 4<sup>th</sup> of July,

The recent celebration of D-Day observances prompted me to research submarine activity for that operation.

The HMS X-20 (known as the EXEMPLAR) was a British Royal Navy X-craft midget submarine. It is most famous for its heroic, classified reconnaissance and beach-marking operations leading up to the D-Day invasion.

EXEMPLAR was launched on 01Nov43, commanded by Lt. Ken Hudspeth, and XIPHIAS on 13Dec 43, commanded by Lt. George Honour.

The subs had a surface displacement of 27-tons and submerged displacement of 30-tons, with a maximum depth of 300-feet (ft), surface speed of 6 -knots and submerged speed of 5-knots. They were 51-ft long with a 5.7-ft beam and had a crew of four (CO, XO, diver, and engineman/helmsman). For D-day operations a second COPP (Combined Operations Pilotage Parties) diver was included.

In January, 1944, the EXEMPLAR spent four days surveying the French coast along Omaha Beach. At night divers swam ashore from the submarine to collect soil samples for determining

whether the beach could support heavy armor.

The submarines having arrived on station on 04 Jun 44, spent 64-hours submerged, using bottled oxygen, due to the weather delay.

On June 6, 1944, the EXEMPLAR and the XIPHIAS surfaced before the landings and mounted an 18-ft mast, with a light and radio beacon, to guide British and Canadian landing craft to Sword and Juno Beaches.



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

Happy 250th Birthday America!

May we always remember that the USA is the land of the free and the home of the brave.

Shout for joy to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come before him with joyful songs. Psalm 100:1-2

So let us praise God for the land that we live in. Let us show Great love for each other, as we enjoy the land that we love.

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



**Ship's Historian - Larry Knutson [MMCS(SS) B 79-81 USSVI/ Holland Club Charleston Base]:**

Some of you may remember many irreplaceable items were stolen from our storage locker back in Nov 2020. Pictures may be of items we no longer have.

Many of you still haven't asked for a copy of your check-in card. If you were on the Gold Crew during the time when Bob Weeks was the CO you had to complete a check-in card for him. If you're interested in



### Submarines Lost During the Month of July

<b>USS S-28 (SS 133)</b>	<b>July 4, 1944 – Training Exercise</b>	<b>LOST WITH ALL HANDS 49 SOULS</b>
<b>USS ROBALO (SS 273)</b>	<b>July 26, 1944 – 3<sup>rd</sup> War patrol</b>	<b>LOST WITH 77 MEN; 4 DIED AS POW'S; 81 SOULS</b>
<b>USS GRUNION (SS 216)</b>	<b>July 30, 1942 – 1<sup>ST</sup> War patrol</b>	<b>LOST WITH ALL HANDS 70 SOULS</b>

**THREE Boats and 202 Men Lost**





**Stimson Shipmates on Eternal Patrol.**

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**ET1(SS) Daniel F. Jasman G 70-75**

Eternal Patrol 9 March 2026

**CDR(SS) Sameul D. Johnson B 91-93**

**Decom CO / Association Life Member**

Eternal Patrol 22 June 2026

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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**

(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 on our Sailing List but without an email.

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**None**

**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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**Margaret Clark** [wife of **Paul Clark**, Association Vice President]

Cards to: 6 Birkdale Ct., E. Aiken, SC 29803

**6.22.26: Email from Paul Clark:** Margaret was released from the hospital on May 30 with better, but not great, pain management. She completed 5 high dose radiation treatments over 10 days that wrapped up on June 17. Had a PET scan on June 19 that identified additional areas where the cancer has spread including her lymphatic system, adrenal glands, and additional areas of her bones. The bones are still causing extreme pain even after the radiation treatment. Waiting for tissue biomarker identification from her earlier spinal biopsy to finalize a treatment plan. Should have the answer by the week of June 22 so she can get started. The waiting is hard. Thanks for the prayers and please keep them coming.

**5.30.26: Email from David Huckeba:** Got a call from Paul Clark this morning. Margaret has been in hospital since Memorial Day in Augusta. A routine chest CT found a tumor in left lung and water in the lung. She has been having pain in back and further tests show a lesion on her L5 that's metastasized from the lung cancer. She is in a lot of pain. Dr attempting to reduce pain so she can be released to start radiation treatments 4 times per week. It's not operable but treatable. He wanted to get the info out to our shipmates.

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**Timothy Breit [ETN3(SS) G 75-77]**

Cards to: 500 NW Island Lake Rd Poulsbo WA 98370

**5.25.26: Email from Tim:** I have been diagnosed with non alcohol related cirrhosis of the liver. also suffered a dislocated shoulder. This required reverse joint replacement.

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**Bruce Stefanik [MS1(SS) B 73-77, 655 Assoc Life Member, USSVI/Holland Club USS Asheville Base]:**

Cards to: 50 Fairway View Dr., Etowah NC 28729

**6.18.26: Email from Vicki:** I received a call yesterday from the surgeon in Greenville that the surgeon here referred me to. What he sent must have stressed how much I need what they can't do locally. They rearranged a few other patients to get me in for the appointment next Wednesday. They found when doing my knee pre-op that my large hiatal hernia had allowed my stomach to move up into my lungs. A follow up barium

swallow test by my gastroenterologist confirmed that this was impeding my ability to eat so they sent me to the surgeon here. I will definitely be having surgery, just have to find out when.

*4.14.26: Email from Vicki: I had an excellent 6 week post-op with my surgeon yesterday. He is very happy with my progress. Thanks for all the prayers. Bruce is doing great. He was a wonderful nurse even setting his alarm for 3 am to make sure I took my pain meds. He doesn't see his neurologist until going to ALS clinic in October. We will know more then.*

*2.26.26: Email from Vicki: Surgery went well. Doctor said the knee was really bad. Lots of pain right now but they did have me stand and move a little sideways. Will have me walk tomorrow. Thank all of you for your prayers.*

*1.13.26: Email from Vicki: I [Vicki] am scheduled for left knee replacement surgery on February 26 with an overnight stay in the hospital.*

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**Diane Meigs [wife of Ken Meigs ETR2(SS) G Comm 65-70 Plank, SV MAL Base HC, Assoc. Treasurer & Life Member]**

Cards to: 1537 Pebble Beach Ct Medford OR 97504

**6.25.26: Email from Ken:** Diane's cancer has grown a little bit from the beginning of the year to the end of May and was now found in her liver and in 1 kidney but a separate MRI brain scan did not show it being there. That it is in her kidneys and liver is the first time that it has gone beyond her lung. Her oncologist is on vacation but on July 1st, we will be meeting to determine what her treatment plan will be.

*2.7.26: Email from Ken: Diane has had some post chemo (treatment #1) complications that we're working through with the help of friends from church who have gone through similar treatments.*

*1.30.26: Text from Ken: They found more cancer in Diane. She started her 1st of 4 chemo treatments on 30 Jan hopefully will remove the cancer that was uncovered in a PET scan a couple of weeks ago. There will be a 3-week interval between each of the treatments.*

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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

**5.7.26: Email from John:** I am now home again

after multiple hospital in (109) and out (21) of the last 130 days. A December 2, 2025 stroke (my second) started it off. Only the left side was affected as I received the clot busting shot right away so only minor residual affects.

Next.... I damaged my left Achilles tendon so was non-weight bearing for most of January through the middle of April. During this time, on February 23, 2026 I had a third stroke which was centered in the portion of the brain that controls my vision leaving me totally blind.

Thank The LORD!!! It has improved to the point that I have a limited kind of short-ranger tunnel vision on most days while other days I am left with shapes and shadows. Doctors say the eyes are fine, it is the Parkinson's and Stroke affecting the brain. However, it now seems that the biggest concern is the COPD and heart failure that is leaving me short of breath.

'If It's Not One Thing Its Another', Getting Older Is Not for the Faint at Heart That's for Sure!  
We pray that all are doing much better and can get off the Binnacle List soon. V/R, John & Susan Cole

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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**Bob 'Doc' Dougherty [MM1(SS) G/SY1/G 70-74]**

Cards to: 2600 Eberly Street, Hatboro, PA 19040

**4.17.26: Email from Elaine:** Doc was admitted for the 3rd time this year on March 25 and discharged on April 7. He is on 24/7 oxygen. He continues to struggle with breathing whenever exerting any type of energy. Just going 2 or 3 feet is a struggle even with having oxygen. He is scheduled for an Ablation on May 21. This is usually an outpatient and also considered a low-risk operation.

However, with Doc's weakened condition this will be high risk and also involve at least an overnight stay in the hospital with the chance he might be in for 3-5 days. Hopefully this will help with his breathing problem although the doctor only gives it a 60% chance of helping. All prayers are greatly appreciated.

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**Hal Smith [MM2(SS) G 68-69]**

Cards to: 12050 Grand Lakes Dr., Jacksonville FL 32258

**No Recent Updates**

*1.19.26: Email from Hal: Feb 15 2024 was told to see a cancer surgeon by Dr. after colonoscopy. Went to Baptist MD Anderson Cancer Center in Jacksonville, Fl. Oncologist said that biopsy indicated I have colon cancer of the type Goblet Cell carcinoma. A very aggressive type at stage 4. I had surgery and the tumor and 2.5 ft of my colon was removed including the appendix and 19 lymph nodes. I healed in 5 weeks and I began 2 different types of chemotherapy consisting of infusion and home chemo over a period of a year or so. CT scan indicated chemo was not working and we began Immunotherapy consisting of 2 nasty home meds and infusion. During all of this I had various side effects from it all such shortness of breath, tiredness, water retention which caused my legs and feet to swell. the swelling caused the water circulation to stop and collected in my legs, with water blisters which broke draining liquid down my legs constantly. I am going to wound care. I was having trouble breathing and was in the hospital for that and various other things for two days. I had a ct scan while in the hospital. I was released after 2 days. I was taken off the home immunotherapy meds because my kidney functions were not good. I continued with infusion therapy 2 more times. On my last Oncologist visit about 1.5 weeks ago, The Oncologist said that the Immunotherapy was no longer working and the last CT scan was showing that the cancer was spreading and at this time no other type of treatment would be effective and they would like to switch treatment to quality of life. I was told that I have about 6 months to live. I would like you all to keep me in your prayers.*

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**Sandy Hastie [CAPT B 80 (Oct-Dec) CO-1 patrol]**

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

**NO RECENT UPDATES**

*12.29.25: Email from Sandy & Donna:*

*Dear Family and Friends,*

*We thank everyone who has faithfully prayed for both of us. 2025 has been a year of challenges; however, we also continue to find joy and gratitude each day and thank God for the many blessings He has bestowed on us. Here are our current statuses.*

*Donna continues to have severe chronic back and leg nerve pain. No doctors we have seen are able to offer a reliable solution, which is depressing but, as we understand it, is not an unusual occurrence. She saw the doctor that did her EMG and he thought a spinal epidural in the “hot spot” that showed on her EMG could provide some relief. He believes this spot is causing some, if not the majority of her pain. The injection is scheduled for early February, first available appointment. She is on the wait list in case an earlier appointment comes available. As often is the case, doctors are often booked up four to eight weeks ahead and that is the case here. The other option is a spinal stimulator, which has limited effectiveness and is not strongly recommended because of the metal rods in her back. However, that remains a possibility down the road.*

*Sandy has had some positive news. Specifically, for his heart, he was approved for a procedure to replace his aortic heart valve. This was done a month ago and has helped with his fatigue, dizziness, and lymphedema swelling in his legs. On Wednesday this week, we saw the doctor who did the procedure and he said Sandy’s heart was working well – a very positive outcome! His fractured right collar bone from a fall a month and a half ago is healing well and he has almost 100% use of his right shoulder and arm – another positive outcome as this is the arm he uses his cane to help him walk. He had a PET/CT scan on 30 November and, although he will never be cancer free, the scan showed the Keytruda was controlling the cancer well except for two spots in his right hip that were growing slowly. He may have to go back on chemo at some time; however, for now, that is not necessary – another positive outcome.*

*So, for now, Sandy will try to exercise more to maintain good health and we will continue to look for a solution or solutions to help Donna’s challenges.*

*With love and thanks, Donna and Sandy*

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**George Stevens [MT2(SS) G 68-71]**

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

**No Recent Updates**

1.23.26: Email from George: Ann is doing better but still in pain - so no real change there. Me, I tried boron and it didn't help my arthritis but then I realized I was already taking it with my multivitamin. I did find that turmeric seems to help. My heart has been up and down. Was doing better after giving up chocolate but then started back with aFib again. Realized that I ran out of cayenne about the same time. Have started taking it again and my heart is doing better again.

11.11.25: Email from George: My heart is doing better since I gave up chocolate but having a lot of pain from arthritis/muscle/joints - everything hurts. Ann is going for a consult for her back - pinched sciatic nerve.

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.

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

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

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### DID YOU KNOW??

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**PC running low on storage?** If you need a few extra gigabytes fast, clear out temporary files. Go to **Settings > System > Storage > Temporary files**, select what you don't need, and click **Remove files**. Just look at your **Recycle Bin** and **Downloads** folders first, so you don't accidentally delete anything important.

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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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**Add emergency contacts:** Make them visible on your phone's lock screen, so first responders know who to call. On **iPhone**, open **Health > Medical ID**, add your contacts, and enable **Show When Locked**. On **Android**, go to **Settings > Safety and emergency > Emergency contacts** and toggle **Show on Lock Screen**.

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### SEA STORIES, COMMENTS and JUST GOOD THINGS From Our Shipmates

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Submitted by George Stevens [MT2(SS) G 68-71]

#### WARNING

**Real life example of attempted fraud ...** A woman got a call from her credit card company (Chase) telling her about a fraud charge. She'd gotten them before so nothing seemed out of place there. BUT, then she was transferred to the fraud department which had ties to the FBI and FDIC - so they said. They didn't want her to make any changes - like a new credit card as it might tip off the fraudster who they thought was a bank manager. They didn't want her to call the bank as that might tip off the fraudster too (red flag). They gave her a case number lending further credibility. They then had her download an app on her phone (another red flag) and scan in her drivers license. Her husband was suspicious of the whole story and at that point called Chase directly. Yep, it was a scam call but it sounded so credible it fooled the woman. The husband was the suspicious one and he stopped it before they got any important data or money. Just be aware they can sound very real and credible.

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Submitted by George Stevens [MT2(SS) G 68-71]

On June 15<sup>th</sup>, George pulled this from usOldSubmariner on X wrote about the USS Thomas A. Edison elevator and piano.

"65 years ago today, USS Thomas A. Edison (SSBN-610) was launched at EB in Groton. She had a Steinway piano installed aboard before hull completion & in 1962 had an elevator installed for

JFK because of his back problems.”

*Further looking into this post, I found the following in the Naval Submarine League archive of 2009. What a story and worth the read.*

The EDISON was an Ethan Allen (SSBN-608) class fleet ballistic missile submarine built at Electric Boat in Groton, Connecticut. She was commissioned on March 10, 1962 with Captain Charles M. Young commanding the Blue crew and Commander Walter Dedrick commanding the Gold crew. Cracking the bottle at the launching on June 15, 1961 was Mrs. John Eyre Sloane, daughter of the famous inventor after whom the boat was named.

All of this sounds like that of any other nuclear-powered boat launching and commissioning, but EDISON carried in her crew's mess an upright Steinway piano. While other boats, such as the NATHANIEL GREEN carried more portable, electronic organs, EDISON is the only American submarine to have ever housed a real piano over the life of the submarine. Its story is singular and interesting.

**[The full story can be read here.](#)**

**And to add to that of course is the elevator story.**

**[Watch the YouTube video of JFK going into the Edison in the elevator.](#)**

**[The elevator is permanently located at the Submarine Force Museum in Groton, Connecticut](#)**

In April 1962, President John F. Kennedy visited the newly commissioned ballistic missile submarine USS Thomas A. Edison (SSBN-610) at the Naval Base in Norfolk, Virginia. The visit came at a tense point in the Cold War, just months before the world would face the Cuban Missile Crisis. Every move by the United States and the Soviet Union was measured, and nuclear weapons were a terrifying reality. Submarines are not built for easy access. Crew move between decks via steep vertical ladders and narrow hatches. Kennedy, however, had a chronic back injury that made using the ladders impossible. To accommodate the President, the Navy installed a special, one-of-a-kind elevator aboard Thomas A.

Edison, the only submarine ever fitted with such a lift. This “JFK Submarine Access Elevator” allowed the President to enter the submarine standing upright and descend safely down to the missile compartment. For the first time, the Commander-in-Chief could see, up close, the platform that would guarantee a U.S. second-strike capability in the event of a nuclear attack. The visit was more than ceremonial.

The Polaris submarines represented a massive strategic advantage. They were virtually invisible and could survive a first strike, meaning the Soviets could not risk escalation: a U.S. counterstrike was now assured. The Cold War was a game of hidden strength, and Kennedy's presence aboard Thomas A. Edison made the stakes tangible, the President was literally inside the core of the nation's nuclear power. Above the submarine, the U.S. Second Fleet was underway, demonstrating the Navy's operational readiness. Aircraft carriers like USS Enterprise (CVAN-65) and USS Forrestal (CVA-59) led formations of cruisers, destroyers, and amphibious ships, while anti-submarine helicopters hovered overhead, dipping sonar balls into the water. The coordination, precision, and sheer scale of the fleet underscored America's military capability at sea. Thomas A. Edison's elevator was temporary but historically significant.

After the visit, it was removed, and the submarine returned to normal operations. The elevator itself now resides at the Submarine Force Museum in Groton, Connecticut, alongside the historic USS Nautilus (SSN-571), serving as a tangible reminder of the day the President entered the heart of America's nuclear deterrent. Kennedy's visit was a rare intersection of human necessity, Cold War strategy, and cutting-edge technology. He was not merely inspecting ships, he was physically inside the system that safeguarded the United States, experiencing firsthand the very engines of nuclear deterrence. In April 1962, with the world watching and tensions simmering, President Kennedy's descent into Thomas A. Edison marked a moment where leadership, innovation, and the shadow of nuclear war converged in one extraordinary act.

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***The Lean Submariner***

Here's the latest posts on the blog. Still going

strong. The link to his blog is

<https://theleansubmariner.com/>

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### **The Old Submariner**

By **Mister Mac** on June 27, 2026

I sometimes don't know where I'm going, but Oh, all the places I've been.

[Read Blog here](#)



#### **The Computer Corner**

**By: George Birmingham [ET1(SS)  
G/SY1/G 69-74, Assoc. Life  
Member, USSVI/Holland Club  
Carolina Piedmont Base]**

### **Windows 11 Notifications – You are the Master**

Windows 11 has a feature, called Notifications, that keeps you updated with notifications from apps, services and features. For example, when you plug in a USB drive to your system, a notification pops up to ask what you want to do with that drive. Some notifications are very helpful, while others may be viewed as an annoyance. The good news is that you have control of which notifications you want to see, and can also define a “Do not Disturb” period to suppress all messages.

If you press the WIN+A key sequence, you will get a pop-up window on the lower right side of your primary display. On that page, if you click on the Gear icon, it will take you to the System > Notifications setting page where you can turn off all Notifications or customize the Notifications settings for various apps. You can even enable an automatic activation of “Do not Disturb” action to suppress messages during time periods you define for your specific needs.

If you press WIN+N key sequence, you will get a pop-up page that allows you to also activate Do not Disturb manually and also clear all messages. At the very bottom of that page there is the current date displayed with an up-arrow “^” icon to the right side. Click on that icon and you get a calendar displayed. That can be handy from time to time.

And, of course, if you click the WIN Key, the select Settings > System, the Notification settings are in the 3<sup>rd</sup> selection bar down from the top.

So now you are in command of those notification

pop-ups, which can be useful or annoying. I hope you find this helpful in managing Notifications on your computer.

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at [subvet\\_ssbm@bellsouth.net](mailto:subvet_ssbm@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, USSVI/Holland Club  
Carolina Piedmont Base]**

### **Using a VPN – You may get more than you ask for...**

Greeting Shipmates! This month we will take a look into an interesting turn of events regarding VPN use.

In January, 2020, I wrote an article on VPN use and the pros and cons of their use. Generally speaking, a Virtual Private Network (VPN) protects your digital privacy by creating an encrypted “tunnel” for your internet traffic, hiding your IP address, and preventing ISPs or hackers on public Wi-Fi from monitoring your activities. It secures sensitive data, masks your physical location, and provides enhanced, though not absolute, anonymity.

Ahh, masking your physical location. That has to be a good thing, right? Well, not so fast! The article link below takes you to an article from March 26<sup>th</sup> of 2026 that discusses how your constitutional rights against government spying on you may be at risk, depending on congressional action:

#### **Using a VPN May Subject You to NSA Spying**

So, this is something we may we may well want to keep up with as Congress makes their decision about this law. The provision was set to expire on April 20<sup>th</sup>, 2026. At the time I write this, the outcome of congressional actions on this matter is unknown. Regardless, I would recommend that you remain aware of this issue to see if it was modified to protect American citizens. Also, if you are a VPN subscriber, be sure you know where the VPN exit servers are located, just in case they are in a foreign country. There have been VPN providers who do exit in a foreign country. I happen to use Norton 360's VPN and I can see


what location I am observed to be at that moment.

If in doubt, you can use one of the following tools to see what your location appears to be when you are on a VPN:

- **IPLocation.net**: Uses multiple databases for a comprehensive search.
- **NordVPN IP Lookup** : Offers a straightforward tool for identifying IP locations.

And remember this, you are not paranoid if they really are out to get you!

As always, shipmates, comments and suggestions for future topics are welcomed. Contact me at [subvet\\_ssbm@bellsouth.net](mailto:subvet_ssbm@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**  
<https://www.va.gov/>  
**And FLEET RESERVE**

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 you 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.

### **In VA Study, CO<sup>2</sup> Therapy Shows Promise for Vets with Parkinson's Disease**

As reported May 27 by Brendan Wile, when Vietnam veterans develop Parkinson's disease, the VA attributes it to Agent Orange exposure. Now, thanks to new VA-funded research, they and other veterans who face elevated risks of neurodegenerative diseases could have a clue to a future treatment — one that doesn't involve drugs. Your brain has a waste disposal system. It works best when you're in deep sleep, pumping cerebrospinal fluid through brain tissue to carry away toxic proteins that build up during the day. When that system breaks down, those proteins accumulate. In Parkinson's disease, clumps of a misfolded protein called alpha-synuclein build up in brain cells and destroy them. In Alzheimer's, it is amyloid-beta and tau. The waste clearance

system, called the glymphatic pathway, is supposed to prevent that. In people with Parkinson's, it often does not work well enough, in part because the disease disrupts the deep sleep the system depends on. Now, a team of researchers has found a way to turn that system on while patients are wide awake, using nothing more than carefully timed pulses of carbon dioxide.

**Read More...**

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### **Ask for Your PSA Test**

PSA screening is not routine past 70. Several groups of vets are at risk due to toxic exposure. Prostate health is a concern for most men. Current medical policy is to skip the PSA blood test after age 70 years. You have the right to request a PSA from the VA. Ask for your test today.

**Read More...**

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### **VA Aims to Cut Prosthetic Wait Times by 40 percent**

As reported June 11 by Derricke Dennis for *Military Times*, every year, thousands of military veterans receive prosthetic limbs through the VA. It's a process that can take weeks, sometimes months, for approval, purchasing, fittings, and therapy before an eligible veteran receives one. But as of April 2026, the federal government has streamlined the process with an eye toward efficiency, cost, and convenience. Among the changes: case reviews by a contracting officer would be waived except for the most expensive prosthetic limbs; and local purchasing agents would be able to source prosthetics from area suppliers, eventually cutting wait times by as much as 40 percent.

**Read More..**

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### **Fraud Alert: Beware the "Veterans Savings Program" Postcard Scam**

On June 10 the VA released an alert regarding a new scam targeting veterans. The latest tactic involves sending fraudulent postcards claiming you (or your spouse) are entitled to "extra VA benefits" or additional payments, including CHAMPVA, TRICARE, and dental coverage, regardless of a VA disability rating. Don't fall for it. These scammers claim to be affiliated with VA.

They might instill a sense of urgency, pressuring you to contact them as soon as possible, or within five days. Their goal is to get you to call the number provided. Once you do, they will often use flattery and praise regarding your military service to gain trust. The scammer will attempt to obtain personal identifying information like your Social Security Number, bank account details, or other sensitive information. Never give this information over the phone or on the internet. VA is monitoring the situation and urges you to remain vigilant against these fraudulent attempts to steal personal identifying information. Refuse to engage; do not call unverified numbers; and hang up. Refuse to engage; do not call unverified numbers; and hang up immediately if you are contacted by unsolicited numbers.

[Learn More...](#)

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### **Small Daily Rituals, Big Results for Your Mind and Body**

For veterans and their caregivers, some of the most effective habits are also the simplest. Small, daily acts of self-care can add up to real results. Whether you're managing a health condition, supporting a loved one, or just looking to feel more like yourself, these five habits are a great place to start: Make sleep a priority; give yourself time for a healthy breakfast; get outside in the fresh air; stretch, do yoga, or practice breathing exercises each evening; and treat yourself to a long, hot bath.

[Read More...](#)

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### **A Coordinated Response to Support Aging Homeless Vets**

In fiscal year 2024, almost half of all veterans enrolled in VA healthcare were 65 or older. By fiscal year 2035, the number of veterans aged 85 and older is expected to increase by 66 percent. Within this broader population, a growing subset of aging veterans is experiencing or facing homelessness for the first time in their lives—due to factors like rising housing costs, complex medical needs, income loss, or lack of family support. With the number of aging and disabled homeless veterans expected to increase, VA launched the Homeless Aging and Disabled Veterans Initiative to bring together housing assistance, healthcare, and supportive services

through the Housing and Urban Development-VA Supportive Housing (HUD-VASH) and Geriatrics and Extended Care (GEC) programs. The initiative helps connect older homeless and disabled veterans with complex health needs to stable housing, case management, community-based care, and services that support long-term health, independence, and quality of life.

[Learn More...](#)

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### **VA Launches Partial Claim Program to Help Vets Avoid Home Foreclosure**

On June 15 the VA launched the VA Partial Claim Program, a new effort to help veterans facing financial struggles avoid foreclosure and stay in their homes. Here's how it works: Mortgage servicers identify veterans who are in default and might be able to qualify for the Partial Claim Program; servicers place qualified veterans on a three-month trial payment plan to assess their ability to stay current on their loan. When a veteran successfully completes this trial period, the mortgage servicer will pay the overdue amount on the mortgage to make the veteran current again. VA will then pay that same amount to the mortgage servicer. Servicers must repay VA when the loan is paid in full, refinanced, or the property is sold. Veterans having difficulty reaching a resolution with their mortgage servicer can contact VA at 877-827-3702, option 6.

[Read More...](#)

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### **When you send a message on My HealtheVet Important dos and don'ts**

Sending a message on My HealtheVet is a secure and convenient way to communicate with your VA health care team. But unclear messages can result in confusion and frustration. Try these tips for effective messages.

[Learn more](#)

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### **Know your vision benefits**

Are you unsure about what vision benefits are covered? Find out about your vision care and how to schedule an exam.

[Learn about VA vision benefits](#)

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### **Exercise for upper back pain**

Movement is one of the best ways to treat back pain. If you suffer from upper back pain, the

Veterans Health Library has a program to help you manage your pain, speed healing, and prevent future flare-ups.

**Try this exercise program**

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**Veteran shares how VA Health Chat saves time**

A Veteran shares how this mobile app allows him to manage his health care and gives him back hours of his time—time that’s even more valuable now that he’s a new father.

**Learn more about VA Health Chat**

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**The Submarine Service now has a home in Australia for the first time since WWII. The last significant U.S. submarine facility in Australia was the one at New Farm, Brisbane, which operated until March 1945. After World War II, there have been no permanent U.S. submarine bases in Australia.**

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**U.S. Navy Stands Up 2 Australian Commands In Support Of American, U.K. Subs**

*(USNI NEWS 11 JUN 26)* ... Dzirhan Mahadzir

The U.S. Navy recently stood up two new commands to operate at the Royal Australian Navy’s HMAS Stirling naval base in Western Australia in support of Submarine Rotational Force-West.

Submarine Squadron 3 (CSS-3), which previously operated out of Hawaii, was re-established Wednesday at HMAS Stirling to lay the groundwork for maintenance, logistics and operational support rotational U.S. and U.K. submarines as part of SRF-West, a trilateral military initiative between Australia, the United States, and the United Kingdom to have nuclear submarines operate out of Perth. Naval Support Activity (NSA) Stirling is a new command established on May 30 to provide support services and programs for U.S. service members, civilian personnel, contractors and their families assigned to SRF-West, which will begin operation in 2027.

“Establishing NSA Stirling and reestablishing CSS-3 lays the foundation for SRF-West and, ultimately, Australia’s sovereign conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarine fleet,” Director of Submarine Programs Vice Adm. Rob Gaucher said in a Wednesday news release. “With SRF-West, we have submarines rotating

through a critical region with an organic, predominately Australian, maintenance workforce keeping those boats fit to fight. That not only supports readiness, but it also reduces the burden on the U.S. shipyards and increases our fast-attack submarine force’s readiness while preparing Australia to maintain their own SSNs.”

SRF-West will be made up of nuclear-powered submarines – one from the U.K. and up to four from the U.S. – operating out of Perth on rotational deployments. SRF-West is part of AUKUS Pillar 1 in which Australia will acquire its own nuclear attack submarine capability. Australia will buy three in-service block IV Virginia-class attack submarines from the U.S. along with also procuring five SSN-AUKUS-class attack submarines under its plan for a nuclear-powered attack submarine capability.

“SRF-West will directly support submarine deployments by expanding maintenance options and sustainment infrastructure in the region and will accelerate Australia’s readiness to own, operate, maintain, and regulate a sovereign conventionally-armed, nuclear-powered submarine capability,” reads a trilateral joint statement released May 30 by the three countries.

Navy Region Japan was tasked in October 2024 to stand up NSA Stirling, according to a Navy news release also published May 30.

“Establishment of NSA Stirling with our AUKUS partners demonstrates our command mission to support the Fleet, warfighter, and family,” Vice Adm. Scott Gray, Commander, Navy Installations Command, said in the release. “By providing essential services to U.S. personnel and their families, NSA Stirling will enhance rotational submarine force readiness.”

CSS-3 was re-established by Rear Adm. Chris Cavanaugh, Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet. CSS-3 previously operated out of Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, and was decommissioned in February 2012. The new CSS-3 will operate from HMAS Stirling in Western Australia and its personnel will integrate with their Royal Australian Navy counterparts to support all rotational U.S. and U.K. submarines at HMAS Stirling, reads the Wednesday Navy news release.

According to Cavanaugh, the reactivated squadron enhances operations in the theater.

<https://news.usni.org/2026/06/11/u-s-navy-stands-up-2-australian-commands-in-support-of-american-u-k-subs>

## **U.S. Navy Establishes Naval Support Activity Stirling In Western Australia To Support AUKUS Submarine Rotations**

*(DEFENCE INDUSTRY EUROPE 08 JUNE 26) ...*  
Martin Chomsky

The U.S. Navy has established Naval Support Activity Stirling in Perth, Western Australia, as part of AUKUS. The enhanced trilateral security partnership brings together Australia, the United Kingdom and the United States.

The move follows a trilateral Joint Statement issued on May 30 confirming that key milestones continue to be met for Submarine Rotational Force-West. SRF-West will support the rotational presence of U.S. and U.K. nuclear-powered fast attack submarines at Australia's HMAS Stirling base in Western Australia.

Naval Support Activity Stirling will provide support services and programs for U.S. service members, civilian personnel, contractors and their families assigned to SRF-West. The U.S. Navy said the activity will help support the readiness of rotational submarine forces.

"Establishment of NSA Stirling with our AUKUS partners demonstrates our command mission to support the Fleet, warfighter, and family," said Vice Adm. Scott Gray, Commander, Navy Installations Command. "By providing essential services to U.S. personnel and their families, NSA Stirling will enhance rotational submarine force readiness."

Navy Region Japan was tasked in October 2024 to establish NSA Stirling. The Navy said SRF-West is being established with the approval of and at the invitation of the Australian Government.

"We are currently in the early stages of establishing NSA Stirling," said Rear Adm. Ian Johnson, commander of Navy Region Japan. "While there is still much work ahead, we are confident in our ability to accomplish this task through strong collaboration with our AUKUS partners."

NSA Stirling will connect U.S. personnel to housing, healthcare, childcare and recreation services. The Navy said those services are intended to support the well-being of U.S. service

members, civilians and their families during their assignment.

The new support activity expands the infrastructure needed for AUKUS submarine cooperation in Western Australia. It is intended to provide the services required for U.S. personnel supporting SRF-West at HMAS Stirling.

<https://defence-industry.eu/u-s-navy-establishes-naval-support-activity-stirling-in-western-australia-to-support-aukus-submarine-rotations/>

## **AUKUS Partners Announce First US Navy Submarine Support Presence In Australia**

*(STARS AND STRIPES 01 JUNE 26) ...* Seth Robson

U.S. military personnel will begin rotating to Western Australia later this year ahead of the planned deployment of American and British nuclear-powered submarines under the AUKUS security partnership, defense leaders announced over the weekend.

The move marks a key milestone in preparation for Submarine Rotational Force-West, or SRF-West, which will station up to four U.S. Navy submarines and one British submarine at HMAS Stirling, an Australian naval base near Perth, beginning next year.

Defense Secretary Pete Hegseth, Australian Deputy Prime Minister and Defense Minister Richard Marles, and U.K. Defense Minister John Healey announced the plan Saturday following a meeting at the U.S. Embassy in Singapore.

"This month, the United States authorized establishment of the U.S. Navy support elements for SRF-West and will begin rotating the first U.S. Navy personnel to HMAS Stirling later this year," the three leaders said in a joint statement.

U.S. Pacific Fleet Submarine Force, headquartered at Pearl Harbor, Hawaii, did not immediately respond to a request for additional details on Sunday.

The defense leaders also announced changes to Australia's planned acquisition of Virginia-class submarines from the United States.

Under the revised plan, Australia will acquire three used vessels rather than the previously announced combination of two used and one newly built boat.

Marles told reporters Saturday that the new plan

is simpler and cheaper since all of Australia's nuclear-powered submarines will be the same, according to a Sunday report in the Sydney Morning Herald.

"We don't get the additional cost and complexity of operating a one-off submarine which is different to all the rest," he said.

The submarine rotational force is intended to help Australia develop the expertise and infrastructure necessary to operate its own conventionally armed, nuclear-powered submarines.

The program has already seen activity at HMAS Stirling. The United Kingdom's HMS Anson, an Astute-class nuclear-powered submarine, underwent maintenance there earlier this year.

The USS Vermont, a Virginia-class fast-attack submarine, also completed maintenance at the base late last year. Australia has committed billions of dollars to support the effort, including more than \$5.7 billion for infrastructure and logistics improvements at HMAS Stirling — \$2.8 billion toward construction of a submarine shipyard in South Australia and \$8.6 billion for the Henderson Defense Precinct, a shipbuilding and sustainment hub south of Perth.

<https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2026-06-01/navy-submarine-rotational-force-australia-21839427.html>

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## **USS Connecticut, After Crashes, Bedbugs And Polar Bear Encounters, Nears Return To Service**

*(STARS AND STRIPES 01 JUNE 26) ...*

Alexander Soule

More than four years after the USS Connecticut slammed into an underwater mountain to force an emergency ascent off China's southeast coast, the Seawolf-class submarine is nearing a return to service.

But not long after, retirement is now looming for a sub that became a lifeboat for the southeastern Connecticut economy as the Cold War drew to a close.

Designated SSN 22 in Navy shorthand, USS Connecticut was the second of three Seawolf-class attack submarines launched in Groton by General Dynamics Electric Boat in the 1990s, between USS Seawolf and USS Jimmy Carter.

A technological marvel then and now, the U.S.

Navy originally envisioned a fleet of 29 Seawolf-class subs to counter the newest sub designs by the Soviet Union. But with the country disintegrating in 1991 during Mikhail Gorbachev's final year as president, the Navy canceled the contract with plans to swap in what it intended to be a cheaper option in the Virginia-class subs that Electric Boat assembles today in Groton.

Facing a seven-year gap before Virginia-class sub construction would begin, Congress authorized a limited run of Seawolf subs to keep two active submarine construction shipyards viable during those years. As worded by Les Aspin, secretary of defense at the time, USS Jimmy Carter represented the final "bridge" sub in his words to keep dollars flowing to Groton and Quonset Point, Rhode Island, Electric Boat's auxiliary shipyard that builds major components.

"When the Berlin Wall fell and Gorbachev really scaled back the size of the Soviet navy and military force, the cuts to the submarine program happened instantaneously," said U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd. "You look at the size of the shipyard workforce, it went from about 30,000 to less than 10,000 in a really short period of time. ... It was awful."

USS Connecticut took five years to build, launching on Sept. 1, 1997, and commissioned for service in December 1998. This month, the Navy set a 2031 retirement date for USS Connecticut, even as planning proceeds for a new attack sub it currently calls SSN(X) — which given China's current push for naval superiority, might end up a lot more like USS Connecticut than the Virginia-class subs that Electric Boat is building today.

"The Seawolf class is extremely capable — when you're going against other submarines, you have this feeling that this just isn't fair," Michael Connor, former commander of USS Seawolf and Submarine Force Atlantic based at the Naval Submarine Base New London, told CT Insider. "It's probably the best submarine class ever built."

### **'Sick to my stomach'**

In the "silent service" where stealth is prized above all else, USS Connecticut has stood out from the pack for landing in headlines repeatedly in recent years.

By far the most serious incident occurred in October 2021, when the sub struck an underwater mountain in the South China Sea while on a

classified “humanitarian evacuation” mission in the words of a Navy report after the accident. Hainan Island, China’s base for its most advanced nuclear submarines, is located off the country’s southern coast in the South China Sea.

USS Connecticut was forced to surface with injuries to 11 sailors, one of whom had a fractured scapula, but no damage to the sub’s nuclear propulsion system. Still, the force of the impact was sufficient to risk fatalities or even “loss of ship” in the words of a Navy report led by C.J. Cavanaugh, today a rear admiral and commander of the U.S. sub fleet in the Pacific Ocean. The Cavanaugh report was declassified in 2022 with many elements redacted for national security purposes.

As detailed in the report, USS Connecticut struggled initially to make the surface amid issues with its system that generates high-pressurized air to expel seawater from tanks, giving subs the buoyancy to ascend. The crew quickly found a workaround using a trim pump, only for that device to overload to the point it “glowed red” and then ignited, but with the fire extinguished quickly.

At some point in the subsequent transit to Guam, USS Connecticut’s bow dome detached, making for a rough ride home, with YouTube video showing the sub in its stricken state after arriving in San Diego. A post-cruise examination also found rocks in the main ballast tanks.

Fifty crew members were recommended for mental-health counseling once back in port, according to the Cavanaugh report, another testament to the ordeal sailors suffered in the incident and aftermath.

Despite the Navy stating the underwater seamount did not appear at the time on its charts of the South China Sea, the Cavanaugh report termed the incident preventable and was the result of “an accumulation of errors and omissions in navigation planning, watchteam execution, and risk management that fell far below U.S. Navy standards.” The sub’s commander was relieved of duty.

Since arriving at Puget Sound Naval Shipyard in December 2021, USS Connecticut has been laid up in Dry Dock Five, one of six at the Navy yard used to lift vessels free of the water for repairs and maintenance. The extended layoff was driven by the need to custom-build a new bow dome,

which required more than three years of work.

“When that crash took place in 2021, when I heard about it — I was sick to my stomach,” said U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney, D-2nd, in an interview with CT Insider. “You just knew what a loss it was to the Navy.”

The USS Connecticut is not alone on the list of Navy submarines to suffer severe incidents in peacetime, with several other examples this century alone including the USS Hartford. The sub went aground in 2003 in a Sardinia harbor, and six years later collided in the Strait of Hormuz with the USS New Orleans, a large ship designed to launch shore assaults with amphibious landing craft and other equipment.

In 2001, USS Greenville collided with a ship off Oahu carrying high school students from Japan on an educational research voyage, with nine people dying. The USS San Francisco struck an underground seamount while traveling at 25 knots, with a crewmember dying of injuries. Other submarines to collide with ships include the USS Jacksonville, USS Montpelier, USS Newport News, USS Oklahoma and USS Philadelphia. But USS Connecticut had a few other incidents as well. In 2020 in what the Navy would term a “class A mishap”, the USS Connecticut smacked into a pier while attempting to moor at Naval Base Point Loma in San Diego. Class A accidents are the biggest red flags raised by Navy investigators, involving at least \$2.5 million in damage, serious injury, or fatalities.

The previous year, a bedbug infestation broke out that, according to the independent publication Navy Times, resulted in some sailors sleeping on the floor or in chairs to avoid getting bitten. Navy Times reported one unidentified petty officer floating a scenario in which someone groggy at the helm after a night of little sleep could run the sub into an underwater mountain.

USS Connecticut has also made plenty of benign headlines — both those churned out by the U.S. Navy to promote its vessels and crews, as well as a break-the-Internet moment in April 2003 north of the Arctic circle.

After the sub punched through ice near a climate research station operated by the University of Washington, a polar bear ambled up to sniff the sub’s rudder as a meal candidate, with some trial bites before going on its way after

about a half-hour. USS Connecticut crew members captured the moment in photos through the periscope,

“When you surface through the ice, polar bears are one of those things you need to always be ready for,” Connor told CT Insider. “People go out onto the ice and there’s a person assigned with a weapon to protect the humans. No one’s ever had to do that — but they’re always ready.”

### **The next SSN(X)**

Puget Sound Naval Shipyard is now readying USS Connecticut’s return to the deep, with the sub at last report expected to resume service this September. In an updated shipbuilding plan published in May, the Navy set a 2031 retirement date for USS Connecticut, sticking with 33-year service life for attack submarines despite USS Connecticut losing more than four years while laid up in dry dock for repairs.

It is one of two Navy vessels today with names derived from Connecticut, along with the USS Hartford which is currently undergoing maintenance and upgrades at Electric Boat. A third will follow in the future USS Groton, a Columbia-class ballistic missile sub that will become the fourth Navy vessel named for the municipality home to Electric Boat and the Naval Submarine Base New London.

Notable among the ships next year slated to sail into the sunset: the USS Ohio, whose namesake class of ballistic missile subs will be replaced by the Columbia-class, starting with the USS District of Columbia now being assembled in Groton.

From where he sits as ranking member of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee of the House Armed Services Committee, Courtney thinks USS Connecticut might win a temporary reprieve from that 1931 retirement date, given its extended layoff for repairs.

“A lot of Los Angeles-class subs have definitely exceeded those initial retirement dates that have been in shipbuilding plans in the past,” Courtney said. “But they are obviously keeping an eye on hull safety and the reactor reserve — its basically running your gas tank down.

“It’s so valuable,” Courtney continued. “I think they are going to try to squeeze every deployment they possibly can for that sub.”

The same Navy shipbuilding plan devotes ample attention to the Columbia-class of ballistic

missile submarines, and farther out, the SSN(X) class of attack subs.

“This submarine will be the first of its kind, engineered from the outset to accommodate and utilize unmanned systems and payloads,” the newest U.S. Navy Shipbuilding Plan states. “SSN (X) will benefit from a revitalized industrial base’s full capability and capacity. We cannot repeat the mistakes of the 1990s, when a false sense of security caused leaders to allow the [submarine industrial base] to atrophy.”

The document does not delve into whether SSN (X) would share Seawolf-class characteristics of being stealthier, faster and diving deeper than today’s Virginia-class subs — not to mention bigger, allowing it to carry more missiles, drones and torpedoes, and with improved sonar and other technologies.

“A lot of subs can be quiet if they’re not doing anything. Seawolf, you can be quiet and fast,” Connor said. “My first couple of weeks on [USS Seawolf], it was a little confusing because in the same place you’d see five sonar contacts on a Los Angeles-class, you might see 15 or 20.”

That all likely means a heftier price tag, even as Washington gauges how to pay for any number of new military platforms. Those range from hypersonic missiles to President Trump’s sought-after investments like a “golden dome” missile defense shield for the United States, and a proposed nuclear-powered battleship.

In a May hearing on Capitol Hill, Courtney voiced skepticism at being able to deliver on Trump’s timeline for a new battleship, in part on grounds just two U.S. shipbuilders today are certified to build nuclear-powered vessels: Electric Boat and Hill’s Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia that also builds submarines and aircraft carriers.

Courtney is not alone in wanting the U.S. to build on its sub capabilities, given the exposure of surface ships to hypersonic missile attacks and the threat subs represent to opposing navies.

“We have an overwhelming advantage against the Chinese in the undersea world,” said U.S. Rep. Mark Wittman, R- Virginia, speaking during a mid-May hearing of the Seapower and Projection Forces Subcommittee. “If you look at the pace that [Los Angeles-class subs] are coming out of the inventory and the pace at which Ohio-class

are coming out of the inventory, that should be where the gas pedal is pressed.”

Iran and before that Ukraine have proven the capabilities of aerial or seagoing drones to pose threats to surface naval and commercial ships. After Connor retired as rear admiral, he started ThayerMahan in Groton which runs a maritime reconnaissance network using ocean buoys and autonomous surface drones to keep tabs on vessel traffic above and below the waves. In March, the company revealed it has developed a system to counter the threat of underwater autonomous drones to threaten ports, without disclosing the technology except to say it was a “non-kinetic” approach.

“It’s highly unlikely-to-impossible that we can produce submarines at the rate that China is currently producing them any time in the next 20 years,” Connor said. “That’s why we and other companies are focusing on large numbers of less expensive systems that have detection capabilities that are almost as good as a submarine — it’s not quite as good. We are looking to supplement the number of submarines we have with the ability to access a number of our remote systems, and make the submarine the linchpin in a network. That is the only way we outperform China.”

<https://www.stripes.com/branches/navy/2026-06-01/uss-connecticut-submarine-nears-return-21843208.html>

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### **Lost World War II Submarine, USS Herring, Identified Off Japanese Coast**

*(STARS AND STRIPES 01 JUNE 26) ...* Corey Dickstein

The U.S. Naval History and Heritage Command on Monday confirmed the wreck site of USS Herring, an American submarine lost in the Pacific Ocean during World War II.

Herring’s final resting place off the coast of Matsuwa Island, Japan, was confirmed exactly 82 years after the boat went missing at sea on June 1, 1944, following an engagement with Japanese forces, according to a Navy news release.

The boat’s wreckage was first discovered in 2017 during a joint expedition of the Russian Geographic Society and the Russian military, which suspected it was the Herring because of its location and appearance, according to the Navy.

In 2022, another expedition returned to the wreck site to document its status. Members of the expedition placed a commemorative plaque and honored the lost crew, the Navy said.

Two U.S. volunteer researchers and a Japanese researcher have spent recent years analyzing data collected by the Russian Geographic Society and have determined the crash site was indeed Herring.

The crash location is about 300 feet deep off the coast of Matsuwa Island, a small uninhabited island in the central Kurile Islands between Japan’s mainland and Russia’s Kamchatka Peninsula. The Japanese fortified the island during the war, using it as an air base with a large underground bunker.

In May 1944, USS Herring embarked on her eighth combat patrol of the war after fueling at Midway, according to Navy records. Herring sank two Japanese cargo ships on May 30, 1944, before linking up with another U.S. submarine, USS Barb, the next day to map out their patrol areas in the region.

It was the last contact Herring would have with the American military.

USS Herring is credited with sinking two additional Japanese ships early on June 1, 1944. The ships were anchored just off Matsuwa Island. Japanese historical records indicated Herring was then struck in a counterattack by a shore battery. The battery twice hit Herring’s conning tower, sinking it, according to Japanese information.

Herring now sits upright on its keel maintains a high degree of integrity and has “battle damage around the conning tower and evidence of grounding at her bow, correlating with the historical record,” according to the Navy.

The boat sank with 83 sailors aboard, Navy records show.

According to U.S. law, the Herring’s wreck site is now a protected sunken military craft and a war grave to those who perished aboard.

“While non-intrusive activities, such as remote sensing documentation, conducted on U.S. Navy sunken military craft are allowed, any activity that may disturb a sunken military craft must be coordinated with NHHHC and, if appropriate, authorized through the relevant permitting program,” Navy officials said.

Herring went down after conducting eight

combat patrols in the Atlantic and Pacific theaters during about 2½ years of service. She was credited with sinking seven enemy ships.

Herring was awarded the European-African-Middle Eastern Campaign Medal with two battle stars, the Asiatic-Pacific Campaign Medal with three battle stars, and the World War II Victory Medal, according to Navy records.

<https://www.stripes.com/history/2026-06-01/wreckage-found-wwii-sub-uss-herring-21843479.html>

## USS BONEFISH found

After 80 years beneath the waters off Japan, the wreck of USS Bonefish (SS-223) has finally been found.

USS Bonefish was a Gato-class submarine of the United States Navy that served in the Pacific during World War II.



Commissioned in 1943, the submarine completed several successful war patrols and earned multiple battle honors for its actions against Japanese shipping.

During its eighth and final patrol in June 1945, Bonefish entered the Sea of Japan and attacked enemy vessels.

Japanese escort ships detected the submarine and launched a fierce counterattack. Bonefish was sunk on June 18, 1945, just weeks before the end of the war, and all 85 crew members aboard were lost.

For decades, the submarine's exact resting place remained a mystery. In 2025, the Lost 52 Project, led by explorer Tim Taylor, located the wreck using advanced sonar mapping and

underwater survey technology.

The discovery was publicly announced in 2026. USS Bonefish was one of 52 U.S. submarines lost during World War II.

Its discovery not only solves an 80-year-old wartime mystery but also provides a final resting place for the crew who never returned home.

The wreck is considered a war grave and will remain undisturbed as a tribute to the sailors who made the ultimate sacrifice.

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## A Nuclear Submarine Vanished During A Secret Mission. 99 Men Never Came Home— And The Navy Can't Explain Why.

***Three theories persist about what led to the Scorpion's sinking. None have been proven.*** (POPULAR MECHANICS 25 JUN 26) ... Kyle Mizokami

Since the end of World War II, the United States has lost only two submarines: USS Thresher and USS Scorpion. Scorpion was the last American submarine to leave on patrol and never come back.

Scorpion, her nuclear power plant, and two onboard nuclear weapons were never recovered. They remain on the bottom of the Atlantic Ocean, roughly 400 miles southwest of the Azores. The Navy has never fully explained the loss of the submarine and its 99 crew members.

That has left Scorpion in a strange place in American naval history: officially unresolved, heavily studied, and still argued over by people who know the submarine world well.

## A Nuclear Sub Built for Speed

USS Scorpion was a Skipjack-class nuclear-powered attack submarine. Scorpion and those of her class were part of a new generation of submarines designed for greater speed underwater than on the surface. The use of nuclear power over traditional diesel engines allowed the submarine to spend almost all of its time fully submerged instead of cruising on the surface and submerging near enemy waters. This, in turn, meant that the teardrop-shaped hull was streamlined for underwater travel rather than for surface travel.

As a result of this streamlining, Skipjack subs could hit speeds of 33 knots underwater. This made Scorpion one-third faster than the Skate-class subs, an earlier class of nuclear-powered

submarines that used a more conventional hull layout. Scorpion was powered by a single Westinghouse S5W nuclear reactor generating 11,000 kilowatts. It displaced 3,000 tons underwater, and was 251 feet long. The sub was fitted with six 533-millimeter torpedo tubes and carried a mix of both anti-surface and anti-submarine weapons.

### **An Espionage Mission Gone Wrong**

On May 20, 1968, the U.S. Navy ordered one of her fastest submarines, the USS Scorpion, to conduct a high-tech espionage mission. The submarine, fresh off maneuvers with the Sixth Fleet in the Mediterranean Sea, was diverted to intercept a Soviet naval task force located southwest of the Canary Islands. Consisting of an Echo-II-class diesel-electric submarine, a destroyer, a submarine rescue vessel, two hydrographic survey ships, and an oiler, the task force was thought to be conducting an intelligence operation of its own, measuring the acoustic signatures of NATO warships in the region.

Scorpion was ideally suited for the task. What better to stalk the Soviet spy task force than a submarine designed to avoid detection? On May 21, the submarine checked in via radio, reporting its position as 250 miles southwest of the Azores, estimating it would return from the mission on May 27.

But Scorpion would never be heard from again.

### **Three Theories, Zero Conclusions**

By May 24, Vice Admiral Arnold Schade, Commander of the Atlantic Submarine Fleet, knew the submarine had failed to respond to classified communications messages, but the Navy waited until May 27 to officially declare her missing. Within hours, the service discovered the Sound Surveillance System (SOSUS)—an underwater network designed to detect the acoustic signatures of Soviet submarines—had detected the breakup of the Scorpion's hull as she descended, mortally stricken, beyond her hull's crush depth.

The standard public account says Scorpion was found on October 28, 1968, in roughly 11,000 feet of water, approximately 400 miles southwest of the Azores. None of the 99 crew members survived.

A Navy inquiry did not produce a definitive public answer. Still, the torpedo theory has more

weight in the current public record than the original story made clear. A Navy Memorial summary says the court of inquiry could not reach a definitive conclusion, but that "a torpedo accident was considered to be the most likely scenario." Under that theory, Scorpion may have suffered a "hot run" torpedo—a weapon that became active while still in its tube. The submarine's reported turn away from its expected course has often been cited as a clue, because one response to a running torpedo was to turn away and try to trigger its anti-friendly-fire mechanism.

Other explanations have centered on a mechanical casualty or an internal explosion. One version starts with Scorpion's Trash Disposal Unit, or TDU, which allowed the crew to dispose of waste at sea. Scorpion had a reputation for mechanical trouble—some sailors privately called it "Scrapiron"—and the TDU had been associated with flooding issues before. In this theory, a failed TDU could have let seawater into the submarine, with the water eventually reaching the 69-ton lead-acid battery and causing a short or explosion.

A related battery-well theory points to hydrogen gas. Submarine batteries can generate hydrogen while charging, and hydrogen is a nasty problem inside a sealed steel pressure hull: colorless, odorless, and dangerous if it accumulates. A spark in the wrong place could have ignited the gas and produced a violent internal explosion.

Another argument has grown louder in recent years. In a 2025 Naval History article, author Ed Offley argued that the familiar Scorpion narrative leaves out too much of the internal Navy record. His reading of declassified Court of Inquiry material points to a possible "large charge weight external to the pressure hull," and he argues that logs, witness accounts, and search-ship capabilities suggest the wreck may have been effectively located in early June 1968 rather than first found in late October.

That's not the Navy's adopted public conclusion, but a contested theory, and it has been pushed back on by other submarine and naval-history specialists.

### **The Nuclear Wreck on the Seafloor**

Scorpion also took its nuclear reactor and two nuclear-tipped MK-45 ASTOR anti-submarine torpedoes to the bottom. The reactor and the

torpedoes were never recovered.

That sounds like the beginning of a different disaster, but the official environmental record is calmer than the image suggests. The latest publicly available Naval Nuclear Propulsion Program environmental reporting says follow-up sampling near the Scorpion site in 1979, 1986, and 1998 found no evidence of radioactivity released from the reactor fuel elements. The report also says the 1986 and 1998 sampling campaigns specifically assessed the nuclear torpedoes for plutonium leakage, and that the measured plutonium levels were consistent with background fallout from weapons testing, not leakage from Scorpion's weapons. The report's bottom line: the wreck has had "no discernible effect on the radioactivity in the environment."

The U.S. Navy made sweeping changes to its submarine fleet after the prior loss of USS Thresher in 1963. A new program, SUBSAFE, ensured that submarines were built with safety-first principles, including the ability for a stricken sub to surface under any conditions. While Scorpion had not been built under the SUBSAFE program, successive generations of submarines have been built to exacting program standards. Two such submarines, San Francisco and Connecticut, have survived major collisions with underwater mountains, allowing them to surface and even return to port under their own power. <https://www.popularmechanics.com/military/weapons/a71731939/lost-submarine-uss-scorpion/>

 <p><b>ROTARY PHONE</b> 2 points</p>	 <p><b>CONSOLE TV</b> 5 points</p>	 <p><b>STEREO SYSTEM</b> 4 points</p>	 <p><b>MIXER</b> 3 points</p>	 <p><b>THERMOS</b> 2 points</p>
 <p><b>LAWN CHAIR</b> 3 points</p>	 <p><b>WAGON</b> 2 points</p>	 <p><b>CRACKER JACK</b> 2 points</p>	 <p><b>45 RPM RECORD</b> 2 points</p>	 <p><b>LUNCH BOX</b> 3 points</p>
 <p><b>DRIVE-IN SPEAKER</b> 3 points</p>	 <p><b>FLOWER GLASSES</b> 2 points</p>	 <p><b>SHAG CARPET</b> 3 points</p>	 <p><b>EASY-BAKE OVEN</b> 3 points</p>	 <p><b>FUNYUNS</b> 2 points</p>
 <p><b>DOOR-TO-DOOR SALESMAN</b> 5 points</p>	 <p><b>8mm MOVIE CAMERA</b> 4 points</p>			

**HOW MANY DO YOU REMEMBER?**

These are the pictures I received from Chuck Linhart [QM1(SS) G 68-74]. He received them from Nora Bolstad who has passed away. Her husband, Dennis Bolstad [MM3(SS) G 69-71] [Eternal Patrol March 30, 2010] took the pictures during his time onboard.

Each picture is numbered. If you know the name or names of those in the picture or the location taken please send me an email stating the picture # and the names. If there is more than one person an explanation of where they are in the picture would be great. As I begin getting the

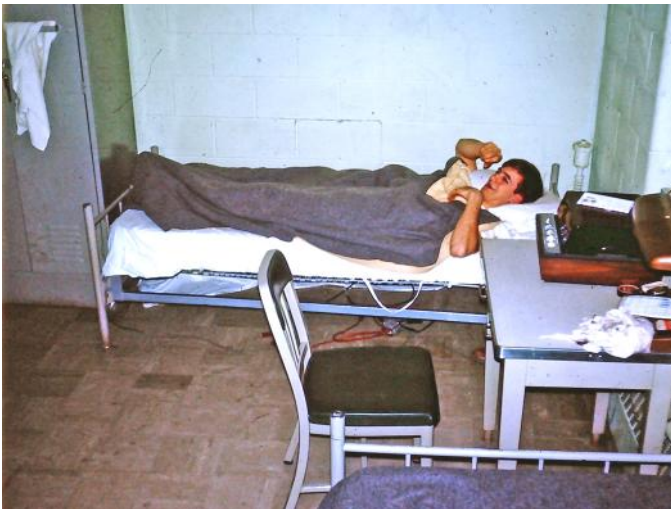
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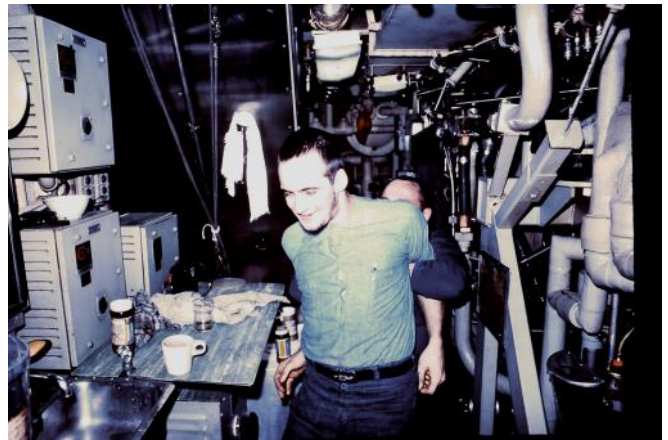
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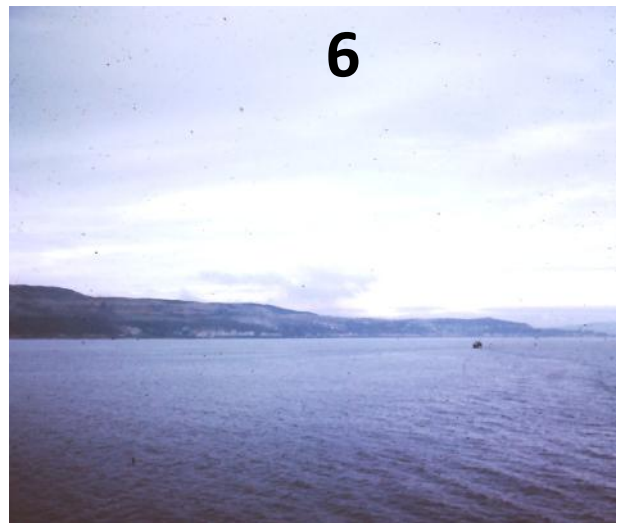
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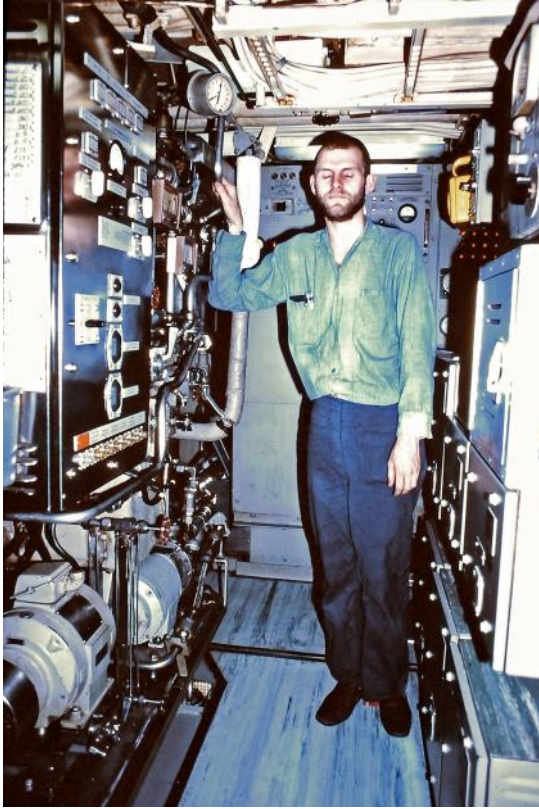
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