

The MidWatch



THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER OF PERCH BASE, USSVI PHOENIX, ARIZONA



September - October 2010
Volume 16 - Issue 9/10

What's "Below Decks" in the
MidWatch

**THE USSVI CREED GUIDES OUR EFFORTS AS PERCH BASE.
SEE THE NEXT PAGE FOR THE FULL TEXT OF OUR CREED.**

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LEST WE FORGET THOSE STILL ON PATROL

SEPTEMBER & OCTOBER ETERNAL PATROLS



USS GRAYLING (SS-209)	12 Sep 1943	76 Lost
Unknown causes along approaches to Manila, P.I.		
USS S51 (SS-162)	25 Sept 1925	33 Lost
Rammed off Block Island, Rhode Island		
USS CISCO (SS-290)	28 Sep 1943	76 Lost
Japanese Air/Surface Attack in Sulu Sea		
USS S44 (SS-155)	07 Oct 1943	55 Lost
Japanese Surface Attack in Sea of Okhotsk		
USS WAHOO (SS-238)	11 Oct 1943	80 Lost
Japanese Air/Surface Attack off Japan		
USS DORADO (SS-248)	12 Oct 1943	76 Lost
Air Attack in S.W. Atlantic		
USS ESCOLAR (SS-294)	17 Oct 1944	82 Lost
Possible Japanese Mine in Yellow Sea off China		
USS O5 (SS-66)	20 Oct 1923	3 Lost
Rammed in Limon Bay, Canal Zone		
USS SHARK (SS-314)	24 Oct 1944	87 Lost
Japanese Depth Charge Attack off Formosa		
USS TANG (SS-306)	24 Oct 1944	78 Lost
Circular run of own Torpedo in Formosa Strait		
USS SEAWOLF (SS-197)	30 Oct 1944	99 Lost
Unknown causes off Morotai Island		

NEXT REGULAR MEETING

12 noon, Saturday, October 9, 2010
American Legion Post #105
3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, AZ

USSVI CREED

Our organization's purpose is . . .

“To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today.”



2010 Perch Base Foundation Supporters

The list below contains the names of those Perch Base members who contribute monies to the Perch Base Foundation. The use of these monies for Base operation allows us to keep our dues low and helps us avoid raising money through member labor as most other organizations do.

Remember, if you contribute by check, it must be made out to the "Perch Base Foundation."

These are the 2010 Foundation Supporters



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LOFTIN, BURTIS W.
MARIONS, GEORGE
MARSHALL, RAY
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MAY, ROBERT E
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MILLER, ROGER M.
MOORE, TIM
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REINHOLD, STANLEY N.
ROBINSON, BRUCE "ROBIE"
RYCUS, MEL
SATTIG, PETE
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SIMMONS, RICK
SMITH, WAYNE KIRK
STUKE, ADRIAN M
WALL, JAMES L
WARNER, ROBERT
WATSON, FORREST J.
WHITEHEAD, DONALD J
WOLF, EDWARD J.
ZAICHKIN, JOHN G.
ZOMOK, RONALD J.

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jimnewmanss483@q.com

Sailing Orders



OCTOBER 6

FLOAT STATIC DISPLAY

1600 TO 1900 HOURS

PALM VALLEY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

135TH AVE. BETWEEN THOMAS

AND PALM VALLEY BLVD.

OCTOBER 9

REGULAR BASE MEETING

1200 TO 1400 HOURS

American Legion Post #105

3534 W. Calavar Rd.,

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AH, THE GOOD OLD DAYS!

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<http://www.fairings-etc.com>

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July 2010 Perch Base Meeting Minutes

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base was convened at the American Legion Post #105, Phoenix, AZ at 1230, 14 August 2010. The meeting was called to order by Howard Doyle, Base Vice-Commander.

The "Call to Order" was led in a prayer of invocation by Walt Blomgren followed by the Pledge of Allegiance and the standard ceremonial opening. The tolling ceremony was conducted for all boats lost in the month of August and a moment of silence was observed for our shipmates on eternal patrol.

According to the Sailing List there were 24 members and guests present including one new shipmate who couldn't stay with us today but will be joining. His name is Tom Ede and met Tim at Home Depot who told him about the Perch Base and the USSVI. Bob Gilmore brought a guest by the name of Geri Bennett who is affiliated with Post 61 in Avondale and is with the Arizona Color Guard. This Color Guard is the Arizona State Champ and they are getting ready to go to Milwaukee on the 24th for Color Guard competition. Geri brought a model of a WWII submarine that the Color Guard would like to sell or auction off to help raise funds for their trip to Milwaukee. Members in attendance at this meeting included:

Howard Doyle	Chuck Emmett	Tim Moore	Jack Kimball
Richard Kunze	Stan Reinhold	Walt Blomgren	Royce Pettit
Bob Warner	Bob Gilmore	DeWayne Lober	Dan Moss
Matt Hayball	Jim Edwards	Dewigh Kramer	John Schlag
Richard Bernier	Ron Dutcher	Joe Varese	Peter Tardiff
Jack Moore	Don DeMarte		

As the first item of business, a motion was made and seconded that the minutes from the July 2010 regular meeting be approved as published in the MidWatch monthly newsletter. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

Tim Moore, acting on behalf of Jim Denzien, reported on the base's financial status for the period ending 31 July 2010. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

Base Commander's Board of Directors Meeting Report

Nothing reported.

Reports of Officers and Committee Chairmen

Vice-Commander – Howard Doyle reported on behalf of Jim Denzien. Howard announced that Bob Nance, a WWII veteran passed away on Thursday, August 12 at 1:54 pm. He had recently had hip replacement surgery and seemed to be doing well. He was at home and got up from sitting in a chair and passed out and never regained consciousness. His funeral will be held at 10:00 Monday morning at the Trinity Bible Church in Sun City. Members from Perch Base are encouraged to attend.

Howard pointed out the three new cabinets we acquired and Chuck mentioned that the modifications to the existing display cabinet have been completed. We will make a decision on what to do with the other three matching cabinets once we determine what items we will have available to put on display.

Secretary – Tim Moore had nothing to report.

Treasurer – TBA

Chaplain – Walt Blomgren announced that we still are seeking articles for Chuck to post in the *This Ain't No Sh*t* section of the newsletter. Chuck re-emphasized Walt's plea for more stories.

Chief of the Boat – Jack Moore reported that when Jim Newman returns from his trip, we will take possession of the artifacts he has to be displayed in the recently modified cabinet.

MidWatch Editor/Interim Webmaster – Chuck Emmett brought up that when we do our creed, we only do the first of three paragraphs. Beginning with the next newsletter, Chuck will publish the entire creed. The next newsletter will be published in October. Chuck also announced that we now have the frames completed for the float to display

the posters depicting chronological history of all classes of submarines since the Holland. Those posters have been a popular attraction at static events. Chuck also announced that he has completed the new sound system for the float. The old power supply and amplifier are up for sale and will be posted in the classified section of our newsletter.

Base Storekeeper – DeWayne Lober reported that he has some new coffee mugs for sale. He also has some press-on boomer and SS patches for sale and some good deals on hats.

Membership Chairman – Rick Simmons was not present.

Historian – Jim Newman was not present.

Events Coordinator – Joe announced we have heard nothing from Phoenix yet for the Veteran's Day parade but we do have the date for the Anthem event. We have sent in our application for the Glendale Safety Days event on October 2nd where we will participate in a parade and static display. We will also participate in a two day Veteran's day event in Gilbert on November 9th & 10th. We have been asked to participate in an East Valley Swap Meet event around Pearl Harbor Day and they have suggested that we do it in conjunction with the Pearl Harbor Survivors. This event has not yet been finalized. When these events are finalized, they will be posted on the web page.

Past Commander – Stan Reinhold had nothing to report.

Old Business

Our next Kap(SS)4(Kid(SS) event will be Thursday, 26 August 2010 at the Phoenix Children's Hospital.

If you have not voted in the National USSVI election, please do so as soon as possible. The polls close at the end of the month and there are a number of elected positions and some constitutional issues to be decided.

New Business

Don DeMarte reported that the people in charge of the Anthem Veteran's Day Parade have asked Post #105 to participate and they asked Don to check with us to find out if we would like to participate again this year. This event is on our schedule pending receipt of the parade application information.

Howard stated that he heard one of the bases in Florida works the concession stands during their grapefruit league spring training games and receives a share of the proceeds for fund raising purposes. We would like to explore this potential fund raising opportunity provided that we have enough interest and base membership participation to make it happen. Stan mentioned again that the Phoenix Coyotes have a 50/50 raffle during their games and the only requirement is that the participants be duly authorized 501 (c) (3) entities which we are. Stan will get in touch with their "charitable organization representative" and find out the particulars and get back to us. Don DeMarte mentioned that he could probably get some Post #105 participation to work with us and share the proceeds. Howard said he would contact the Cactus League spring training organizations to find out if any of these opportunities are available to us.

Howard mentioned that in the most current issue of the American Submariner, there was an article stating that the USSVI will be 50 years old in 2014. An idea has been presented that the USSVI would like to have all bases that have floats to consider participating in the 2014 Memorial Day Parade and associated activities in Washington D.C. This would probably end up being a nine or ten day trip. At this point we are just presenting the idea to see what kind of interest there might be on the part of the base membership to participate. Once we have some details about whether or not this event will happen, we will share it with the membership for future planning purposes.

Good of the Order

There were no issues brought up for the Good of the Order.

50/50 Drawing

The 50/50 drawing was held and the winner was Royce Petit who graciously donated his \$25.00 winner's share back to the foundation.

Adjournment

All outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote and the meeting adjourned at 1315 hours.

The benediction was offered by Walt Blomgren.

Tim Moore, Secretary, Perch Base USSVI

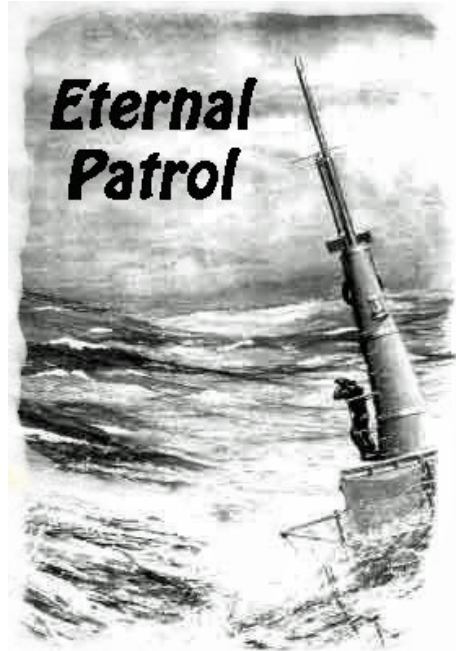


CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN

A Submariner's Prayer

"Eternal Father, strong to save
 Whose arm hath bound the restless wave,
 Who biddest the mighty ocean deep
 Its own appointed limits keep.
 O hear us when we cry to Thee
 For those in peril on the sea.

Bless those who serve beneath the deep.
 Through lonely hour their vigil keep.
 May peace their mission ever be,
 Protect each one we ask of Thee.
 Bless those at home who wait and pray,
 For their return by night or day."



Shipmate Adolph "Bob" Nance, a WWII veteran, departed on Eternal Patrol Thursday, August 12 at 1:54 pm. He had recently had hip replacement

surgery and seemed to be doing well but suffered a setback and never recovered. He was at home. Bob qualified on USS Volador (SS-490) in 1953 and was a RM2(SS) when he left the Navy. He had been a member of Perch Base, and the USSVI, since 1998.

ETERNAL PATROL PREPARATIONS

Shipmates, while we hope your day and those of your shipmates is far off in the future, we must nevertheless prepare. Please copy this notice (in the box immediately below) and place it with your will or important papers.

IMPORTANT

In the case of my death, please immediately notify the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc., (USSVI) at 877-542-3483 or 360-337-2978 and give the person on duty the information regarding my death, funeral, and burial arrangements, plus who they can contact for follow-up and support.

Please ask them to contact my local chapter's Base Commander with this information as well (they can look it up in their membership records).

This information can alternatively be E-Mailed to the National Office at "office@ussvi.org".



SHIPMATES RUNNING ON LESS THAN A FULL BATTERY CHARGE

NO SHIPMATES ARE REPORTED ON THE SICK LIST AT THIS TIME.

Do you know a shipmate who is on the lee side of a fair wind? Someone who could use the help of a shipmate? Remember, we are the "**Brotherhood** of the Pin."

Contact our Base Chaplain if you know of any way we can help:

Walt Blomgren
5120 W. Gelding Dr.
Glendale, AZ 85306
(602) 309-4407
chaplain@perch-base.org

A SHIPMATE IN NEED IS A SHIPMATE INDEED . . . AND TIM MOORE'S FRIEND IS TRULY A SHIPMATE!



Perch Base has a special friend in a Coast Guard shipmate Ande Lange of Avondale, AZ. Because of Ande's many years of practical mechanical experience, our Base Secretary Tim Moore asked him if he knew anyone who might be able to help us with the welding project we needed to have done on the float trailer. Instead, Ande, who has a shop at his home, volunteered to take care of the job himself.

Ande and Tim have been friends since early childhood. After high school Ande joined the U.S. Coast Guard and was trained as an Engineman. He served aboard a weather ship in the Pacific at Ocean Station Victor, halfway between Midway and Japan. The work done by weather ships is now done by weather satellites. Their other primary responsibility was search and rescue. Ande also served aboard a "40 footer" in San Francisco

Bay and was involved in the search in 1962 for the three convicts who were immortalized in the "Escape from Alcatraz".

After the Coast Guard, Ande worked at Sperry Phoenix, the City of Phoenix, SRP and finally the City of Glendale where he retired in 2003. Ande now spends his time restoring vintage cars and working on other vehicle modification projects in his shop at home and helping others with projects like our float trailer.

Bravo Zulu, Ande for a job well done!.

Perch Base September - October Birthdays



SEP

KIRBY ANDERSON	9/18
GARY BARTLETT	9/26
MICHAEL G. BENNETT	9/4
RON A. DUTCHER	9/12
HOWARD M. ENLOE	9/24
JOE ERRANTE	9/4
STEPHEN F. HOUGH	9/29
JACK S. KIMBALL	9/28
DARRELL LAMBERT	9/29
WILLAIM LUND	9/5
ALAN MILLER	9/4
DANIEL J. REEL	9/7
WAYNE KIRK SMITH	9/6
EUGENE B. VEK	9/5
EDWARD J. WOLF	9/1

OCT

KENNETH R. ANDERSON	10/5
JOHN CASH	10/10
BUTCH DESHONG	10/23
MICHAEL J. HALER	10/1
ALBERT LANDECK	10/22
ROBERT W. LENTS	10/10
JIM A. NELSON	10/8
JAMES W. NEWMAN	10/29
CRAIG L. OLSON	10/29
BRUCE "ROBIE" ROBINSON	10/6
STANLEY I. RUD	10/21
KEN SCHONAUER	10/11
ROBERT A. SUNGY	10/14
MARTINE (MARTY) ZIPSER	10/31

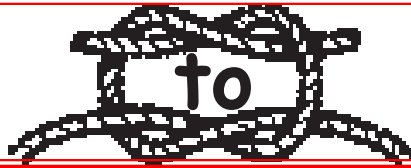
WHAT'S NEW ONLINE

We're not having very good luck with the "Classifieds" section of the web page. Have you Members checked it out? There are some really good deals there. It's easy to get to from the web home page or directly at www.perch-base.org/classifieds.htm address.

So, why no bites on the items listed? Is it the economy? Or maybe we just don't have people look here for any deals. Whatever, it just doesn't make sense to keep running something that no one is using.

The result is that I am going to remove this part of the web page. It will just disappear after the next regular Base meeting unless someone makes a very good argument for keeping it around.

Shipmate



Shipmate

Now, THIS Ain't NO SH*t . . .

We're still looking for stories! All of us have heard the one about the difference between a fairy tale and a sea story. The fairy tale starts, "Once upon a time," and a sea story starts, "Now this ain't no sh*t!"

Well, that's what we are looking for; sea stories. And they only need to be as true as a sea story ALWAYS is! So send something in. Here are the rules (or not, whatever):

1. We can use your name or not: your choice just let me know.
2. Grammar and spelling DO NOT COUNT. I will edit and change just enough to make it somewhat readable!
3. Remember, this is from "boat" sailors to "boat" sailors. BUT, since this publication may fall into skimmer hands (or worse, decent civilians!.) I may have to substitute punctuation marks in place of letters in certain words, as in the title.
4. There is absolutely no limit on how many you can send in. I will publish AT LEAST one each month as we get them.

So send them to:

Chuck Emmett
communications@perch-base.org

or

7011 West Risner Road
Glendale, AZ 85308.



**SHIPMATE TO SHIPMATE
STORIES THAT ARE
"ABSOLUTLY, POSITIVELY, THE TRUTH!"**

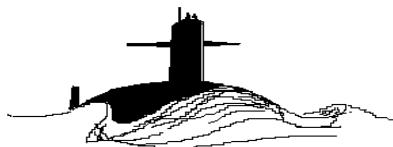
One night I was standing the evening topside watch aboard the Seawolf at the sub base in New London. During my watch, I was joined on deck by a brand spanking new "boot Ensign" who came topside for some cool night air. As we were talking about life aboard submarines, a rather pungent and offensive odor drifted aboard.

In fact it was so bad you could almost see it. The "boot Ensign (and I don't remember his name) turned to me and asked, "What's that horrible smell Moore?" and I replied, "It smells like somebody's blowing sh*t tanks to me sir".

I guess this could be the time in history when *political correctness* may have started because he responded in a very authoritative manner, "Don't you mean defecation tanks Moore?" And I simply replied, "Yes sir, defecation tanks... sure smells like sh*t doesn't it sir?"

With that he went below to the safety and comfort of the wardroom.

SUBMITTED BY SHIPMATE TIM MOORE



Who's This Lady?



Other than being a very attractive lady from that “greatest generation” who served our country during World War II, who is this lady and why is she gracing the pages of the MidWatch?

Meet Nell Turner of Virginia Beach, VA. Mrs. Turner attended the 2010 Convention on behalf of her husband, Marion “Turk” Turner who couldn’t make the trip. “Turk” an EM2(SS), is a WWII Submarine Veteran and among the last who served aboard our base’s namesake submarine, the USS Perch (SS-176.)

While on her second war patrol operating in the Java Sea on 1 March 1942, the Perch was heavily damaged by a depth charge attack from two enemy destroyers and was driven to the bottom at 135 feet. While on the bottom she suffered extensive damage from additional depth charge attacks. She surfaced at 0200 on 2 March 1942 only to be driven back down by enemy destroyers after which the enemy finally abandoned the attack in pursuit of other targets.

During the early morning of 3 March 1942, Perch surfaced and running on one engine with decks awash, the crew valiantly made repairs and attempted to dive with nearly fatal results. She again surfaced in an attempt to make more repairs and came under attack from two Japanese cruisers and three destroyers. Unable to sustain more damage, the Captain ordered “Abandon ship, scuttle the boat”. With all hull openings open, the Perch made her final descent into the Java Sea.

The entire crew of fifty-four men and five officers were captured by a Japanese destroyer and spent the remainder of the war in prisoner-of-war camps.

All, except six, who died of malnutrition, were returned

to the United States after V-J Day. (On Thanksgiving Day, 23 November 2006 the final resting place of the Perch was accidentally discovered by a group of divers off the coast of Java.)

There are now three remaining Perch survivors. In addition to Marion “Turk” Turner, the others are Robert Lents of Mountain Home, AR and Ernie Plantz of Gales Ferry, CT. Brave sailor who endured what most of us never could imagine, we salute you.





Eternal Patrol September 28, 1943

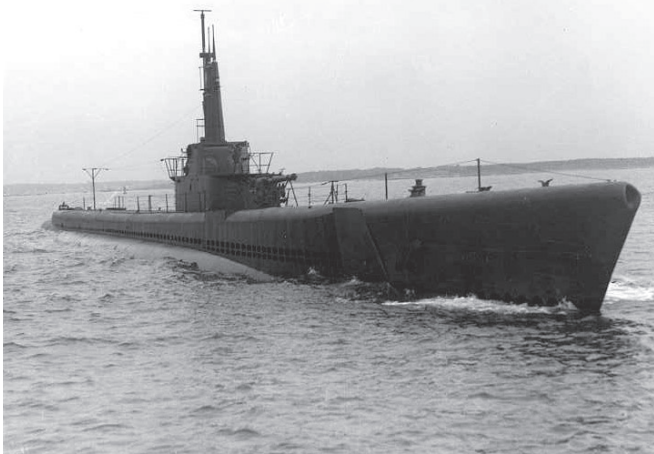

Editors Note: Less we forget, each month, one boat on eternal patrol will be highlighted in this newsletter. Sailors, rest your oars.

The Final Patrol

Lord, this departed shipmate with dolphins on his chest
Is part of an outfit known as the best.
Make him welcome and take him by the hand.
You'll find without a doubt he was the best in all the land.
So, heavenly Father add his name to the roll
Of our departed shipmates still on patrol
Let them know that we who survive
Will always keep their memories alive.



**USS Cisco (SS-290)
September 28, 1943
76 men lost**

The Balao Class was an evolutionary improvement over the earlier Gato class, the boats had slight internal differences. The most significant improvement was the use of higher yield steel in the pressure hull, which increased their test depth to 400 feet. There were 132 submarines ordered in this class (10 cancelled toward the end of World War II.)

Displacement: 1,526 tons surf., 2,424 tons sub.
 Length: 311ft 9 in, Beam: 27 ft 3in, Draft: 15 ft 3in
 Test depth: 400ft., Speed: 20 knots surf., 9 knots sub.
 Armament: 10 x 21 in torpedo tubes (6 forward, 4 aft, 24 torpedoes)
 1 x 5/25 cal AA gun, 1 x 40mm AA Canon, 1 x 3/50 cal and 2 x .30 cal machineguns
 Crew: 80 – 85 officers and men
 Powerplant: •4 x 1350 hp 16cyl GM 278A diesels
 (except SS228-239 and SS275-284 10cyl Fairbanks-Morse 38D-1/8),
 •2 x 1370 hp GE electric motors
 (except SS228-235 Elliott Motor or SS257-264 Allis-Chalmers)
 (two 126-cell Exide main storage batteries
 {except SS.261, 275-278, & 280 Gould})
 Range: •11,800 nm at 10 knots surf, 100nm at 3 knots sub.
 Submerged Endurance: 48 hours

USS Cisco (SS-290), a Balao-class submarine, was the only ship of the United States Navy to be named for the cisco, a whitefish of the Great Lakes. Her keel was laid down by the Portsmouth Navy Yard in Kittery, Maine. She was launched on 24 December 1942 sponsored by Mrs. A. C. Bennett, through her proxy, Mrs. N. Robertson, and commissioned on 10 May 1943 with Commander James W. Coe in command.

[5] She reported to the Pacific Fleet.

Cisco sailed from Panama 7 August 1943 for Brisbane, Australia, arriving 1 September to assume local patrol duties, until 18 September, when she docked at Darwin. She put out on her first war patrol 20 September, but never returned. Japanese records tell of sighting a submarine leaking oil on 28 September in an area where Cisco is known to have been the only submarine then operating. Japanese records state this submarine was sunk by bombs and depth charges. Cisco is thus presumed to have been lost in action 28 September 1943. The only survivor from the crew was Chief Radioman Howell B. Rice (USN ret.), who was taken sick in Darwin and sent ashore to the Navy hospital prior to Cisco's final voyage.

Japanese Records above indicate the submarine was attacked by Type 97 "Kate" attack bombers of the 954 Naval Air Squadron and the riverboat Karatsu (originally a U.S. gunboat, USS Luzon [PR-7], captured by Japanese forces and put to work against its former owners).



USS BARB: THE SUB THAT SANK A TRAIN

Eight sailors conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese “homeland” of World War II.

In 1973 an Italian submarine named Enriquer Tazzoli was sold for a paltry \$100,000 as scrap metal. The submarine, given to the Italian Navy in 1953 was actually an incredible veteran of World War II service with a heritage that never should have passed so unnoticed into the graveyards of the metal recyclers. The USS Barb was a pioneer, paving the way for the first submarine launched missiles and flying a battle flag unlike that of any other ship. In addition to the Medal of Honor ribbon at the top of the flag identifying the heroism of its captain, Commander Eugene “Lucky” Fluckey, the bottom border of the flag bore the image of a Japanese locomotive. The USS Barb was indeed, the submarine that “SANK A TRAIN”.

July, 1945 (Guam)

Fleet Admiral Chester Nimitz looked across the desk at Admiral Lockwood as he finished the personal briefing on U.S. war ships in the vicinity of the northern coastal areas of Hokkaido, Japan. “Well, Chester, there’s only the Barb there, and probably no word until the patrol is finished.

You remember Gene Fluckey?”

“Of course. I recommended him for the Medal of Honor,” Admiral Nimitz replied. “You surely pulled him from command after he received it?”

July 18, 1945 (Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan)

It was after 4 a.m. and Commander Fluckey rubbed his eyes as he peered over the map spread before him. It was the twelfth war patrol of the Barb, the fifth under Commander Fluckey. He should have turned command over to another skipper after four patrols, but had managed to strike a deal with Admiral Lockwood to make one more trip with the men he cared for like a father, should his fourth patrol be successful. Of course, no one suspected when he had struck that deal prior to his fourth and what should have been his final war patrol on the Barb, that Commander

Photo # 19-N-83952 USS Barb in San Francisco Bay, 3 May 1945



Fluckey’s success would be so great he would be awarded the Medal of Honor.

Commander Fluckey smiled as he remembered that patrol. “Lucky” Fluckey they called him. On January 8th the Barb had emerged victorious from a running two-hour night battle after sinking a large enemy ammunition ship. Two weeks later in Mamkwan harbor he found the “mother-lode” — More than 30 enemy ships. In only 5 fathoms (30 feet) of water, his crew had unleashed the sub’s forward torpedoes, then turned and fired four from the stern.

As he pushed the Barb to the full limit of its speed through the dangerous waters in a daring withdrawal to the open sea, he recorded eight direct hits on six enemy ships. Then, on the return home he added yet another Japanese freighter to the tally for the Barb’s eleventh patrol, a score that

exceeded even the patrol number.

What could possibly be left for the Commander to accomplish who, just three months earlier had been in Washington, DC to receive the Medal of Honor? He smiled to himself as he looked again at the map showing the rail line that ran along the enemy coastline. This final patrol had been promised as the Barb's "graduation patrol" and he and his crew had cooked up an unusual finale.

Since the June 8 they had harassed the enemy, destroying the enemy supplies and coastal fortifications with the first submarine launched rocket attacks. Now his crew was buzzing excitedly about bagging a train.

The rail line itself wouldn't be a problem. A shore patrol could go ashore under cover of darkness to plant the explosives, one of the sub's 55-pound scuttling charges. But this early morning Lucky Fluckey and his officers were puzzling over how they could blow not only the rails, but also one of the frequent trains that shuttled supplies to equip the Japanese war machine. Such a daring feat could handicap the enemy's war effort for several days, a week, perhaps even longer. It was a crazy idea, just the kind of operation for which "Lucky" Fluckey had become famous — or infamous.

But no matter how crazy the idea might have sounded, the Barb's skipper would not risk the lives of his men. Thus the problem: how to detonate the charge at the moment the train passed, without endangering the life of a shore party. Problem? Not on Commander Fluckey's ship. His philosophy had always been, "We didn't have problems, only solutions".

11:27 a.m.

"Battle Stations!" No more time to seek solutions or to ponder blowing up a train. The approach of a Japanese freighter with a frigate escort demands traditional submarine warfare. By noon the frigate is laying on the ocean floor in pieces and the Barb is in danger of becoming the hunted.

6:07 p.m.

Solutions! If you don't look for them, you'll never find them. And even then, sometimes they arrive in the most unusual fashion. Cruising slowly beneath the surface to evade the enemy plane now circling overhead, the monotony is broken with an exciting new idea. Instead of having a crewman on shore to trigger explosives to blow both rail and a passing train, why not let the train BLOW ITSELF up.

Billy Hatfield was excitedly explaining how he had cracked nuts on the railroad tracks as a kid, placing the nuts between two ties so the sagging of the rail under the weight of a train would break them open. "Just like cracking walnuts," he explained. "To complete the circuit (detonating the 55-pound charge) we hook in a micro switch between two ties. We don't set it off, the TRAIN does."

Not only did Hatfield have the plan, he wanted to be part of the volunteer shore party.

The solution found, there was no shortage of volunteers, all that was needed was the proper weather — a little cloud cover to darken the moon for the mission ashore. Lucky Fluckey established his own criteria for the volunteer party:

- No married men would be included, except for Hatfield,
- The party would include members from each department,
- The opportunity would be split between regular Navy and Navy Reserve sailors,
- At least half of the men had to have been Boy Scouts, experienced in how to handle themselves in medical emergencies and in the woods.
- And finally, "Lucky" Fluckey would lead the saboteurs himself.

When the names of the eight selected sailors were announced it was greeted with a mixture of excitement and disappointment. Among the disappointed was Commander Fluckey who surrendered his opportunity at the insistence of his officers that "as commander he belonged with the Barb." This was coupled with the threat from one that "I swear I'll send a message to COMSUBPAC if you attempt this (joining the shore party himself)." Even a Japanese POW being held on the Barb wanted to go, promising not to try to escape.

In the meantime, there would be no more harassment of Japanese shipping or shore operations by the Barb until



the train mission had been accomplished. The crew would “lay low”, prepare their equipment, train, and wait for the weather.

July 22, 1945 (Patience Bay, off the coast of Karafuto, Japan)

Patience Bay was wearing thin the patience of Commander Fluckey and his innovative crew. Everything was ready. In the four days the saboteurs had anxiously watched the skies for cloud cover, the inventive crew of the Barb had built their micro switch. When the need was posed for a pick and shovel to bury the explosive charge and batteries, the Barb’s engineers had cut up steel plates in the lower flats of an engine room, then bent and welded them to create the needed tools. The only things beyond their control were the weather and time. Only five days remained in the Barb’s patrol.

Anxiously watching the skies, Commander Fluckey noticed plumes of cirrus clouds, then white stratus capping the mountain peaks ashore. A cloud cover was building to hide the three-quarters moon. This would be the night.

MIDNIGHT, July 23, 1945

The Barb had crept within 950 yards of the shoreline. If it was somehow seen from the shore it would probably be mistaken for a schooner or Japanese patrol boat. No one would suspect an American submarine so close to shore or in such shallow water.



Slowly the small boats were lowered to the water and the eight saboteurs began paddling toward the enemy beach. Twenty-five minutes later they pulled the boats ashore and walked onto the surface of the Japanese homeland. Having lost their points of navigation, the saboteurs landed near the backyard of a house. Fortunately the residents had no dogs, though the sight of human and dog’s tracks in the sand along the beach alerted the brave sailors to the potential for unexpected danger.

Stumbling through noisy waist-high grasses, crossing a highway and then plunging into a 4-foot drainage ditch, the saboteurs made their way to the railroad tracks. Three men were posted as guards; Markuson was assigned to examine a nearby water tower. The Barb’s auxiliary man climbed the ladder,

and then stopped in shock as he realized it was an enemy lookout tower! An OCCUPIED tower! Fortunately the Japanese sentry was peacefully sleeping and Markuson was able to quietly withdraw and warn his raiding party.

The news from Markuson caused the men digging the placement for the explosive charge to continue their work more slowly and quietly.

Suddenly, from less than 80 yards away, an express train was bearing down on them. The appearance was a surprise; it hadn’t occurred to the crew during the planning for the mission that there might be a night train.

When at last it passed, the brave but nervous sailors extracted themselves from the brush into which they had leapt, to continue their task. Twenty minutes later the holes had been dug and the explosives and batteries hidden beneath fresh soil.

During planning for the mission the saboteurs had been told that, with the explosives in place, all would retreat a safe distance while Hatfield made the final connection. If the sailor who had once cracked walnuts on the railroad tracks slipped during this final, dangerous procedure, his would be the only life lost. On this night it was the only order the saboteurs refused to obey, all of them peering anxiously over Hatfield’s shoulder to make sure he did it right. The men had come too far to be disappointed by a switch failure.

1:32 a.m.

Watching from the deck of the Barb, Commander Fluckey allowed himself a sigh of relief as he noticed the flash-light signal from the beach announcing the departure of the shore party. He had skillfully, and daringly, guided the Barb within 600 yards of the enemy beach. There was less than 6 feet of water beneath the sub’s keel, but Fluckey wanted to be close in case trouble arose and a daring rescue of his saboteurs became necessary.

1:45 a.m.

The two boats carrying his saboteurs were only halfway back to the Barb when the sub's machine gunner yelled, "CAPTAIN! Another train coming up the tracks!" The Commander grabbed a megaphone and yelled through the night, "Paddle like the devil!" knowing full well that they wouldn't reach the Barb before the train hit the micro switch.

1:47 a.m.

The darkness was shattered by brilliant light and the roar of the explosion.

The boilers of the locomotive blew, shattered pieces of the engine blowing 200 feet into the air. Behind it the cars began to accordion into each other, bursting into flame and adding to the magnificent fireworks display. Five minutes later the saboteurs were lifted to the deck by their exuberant comrades as the Barb turned to slip back to safer waters. Moving at only two knots, it would be a while before the Barb was in waters deep enough to allow it to submerge. It was a moment to savor, the culmination of teamwork, ingenuity, and daring by the Commander and all his crew. "Lucky" Fluckey's voice came over the intercom. "All hands below deck not absolutely needed to maneuver the ship have permission to come topside." He didn't have to repeat the invitation. Hatches sprang open as the proud sailors of the Barb gathered on her decks to proudly watch the distant fireworks display.

The Barb had "sunk" a Japanese TRAIN!

On August 2, 1945 the Barb arrived at Midway, her twelfth war patrol concluded. Meanwhile United States military commanders had pondered the prospect of an armed assault on the Japanese homeland. Military tacticians estimated such an invasion would cost more than a million American casualties. But a momentous event on August 6 changed all that. The B-29 bomber Enola Gay dropped a single atomic bomb on the city of Hiroshima, Japan. Four days later, a second bomb fell on Nagasaki. Japan agreed to surrender terms on August 15. On September 2, 1945, in Tokyo Harbor, the documents ending the war in the Pacific were signed.

The story of the saboteurs of the USS Barb is one of those unique, little known stories of World War II. It becomes increasingly important when one realizes that the 8 sailors who blew up the train at near Kashiho, Japan conducted the ONLY GROUND COMBAT OPERATION on the Japanese "homeland" of World War II. The eight saboteurs were: Paul Saunders, William Hatfield, Francis Sever, Lawrence Newland, Edward Klinglesmith, James Richard, John Markuson and William Walker.

Footnote: Eugene Bennett Fluckey retired from the Navy as a Rear Admiral, and wears in addition to his Medal of Honor, four Navy Crosses — a record of awards unmatched by any living American. In 1992 his recollection of the history of the USS Barb was published in the award winning book, "THUNDER BELOW." Over the past several years proceeds from the sale of this exciting book have been used by Admiral Fluckey to provide free reunions for the men who served him aboard the Barb, and their wives.



USSVI CONVENTION 2010

- FRIENDS -



Clockwise from top left; Tim Moore, Glenn Herrold, Howard Doyle and Rick Simmons, Perch Base attendees.



Left to right, John Dudas and Kathy & Jack Messersmith, Gudgeon Base attendees.



At left, Fred Borgmann (USSVI National Office Manager) and right, Al Durkee, Commander of Barbel Base, Yuma.



Nell Turner (wife of USS Perch SS-176 survivor, Marion "Turk" Turner) and Howard Doyle. (See Mrs. Turner featured in an article earlier in this newsletter.)

(PHOTOS CONTINUED)



Big Al (Al Durkee, Commander of Barbel Base) and Tim Moore



Rear Admiral Michael McLaughlin, ComSubGru2, New London, CT;
Keynote Speaker for the final night banquet.



Nautical Nuances or, Did You Know?

◇ *Interest in submarines extends to royalty and presidents. The King of England and the King and Queen of Spain are among those who have made submerged cruises in submarines. As a result of a trip in an early United States submarine, President "Teddy" Roosevelt ordered extra compensation for personnel serving in the "Silent Service." President Harry Truman made a 440 foot dive in a captured German submarine. President George H.W. Bush was rescued from his downed fighter plane by the USS FINBACK during WW-II, and President Jimmy Carter served as an officer aboard submarines. The first President to cruise aboard a nuclear submarine was President Eisenhower who rode the USS SEAWOLF out of Newport, Rhode Island on September 26, 1957.*

◇ *Dollar for dollar and man for man, the submarine is the country's most economical weapon. Comprising only 1.6 percent of the Navy's World War II personnel, the submarine service accounted for 55 percent of all enemy shipping destroyed.*

◇ *Leonardo da Vinci, the Florentine Renaissance inventor and artist, developed plans for an underwater warship but kept them secret. He was afraid that it would make war even more frightful than it already was.*

◇ *Many instances of submarines being 'caught' by fishing vessels are on record. The NAUTILUS, world's first nuclear powered vessel, was caught in a fish net and towed the fishing vessel several miles before the situation was cleared up. There is one instance of a submarine being captured by an abandoned balloon, and on another occasion a submarine rescued a blimp and towed it to safety.*

Return To:

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Glendale, AZ 85308
E-Mail: communications@perch-base.org

<http://www.perch-base.org>



NEXT MEETING

12 noon, Saturday, October 9, 2010
American Legion Post #105
3534 W. Calavar Rd., Phoenix, 85053
(1/2 block northwest, 35th Ave. & Thunderbird)