



USS Sabalo (SS-302) Assn Newsletter March 16, 2009

Heard on the **UQC: 2009 Reunion, Smallstores, personal data/health; let us hear from you.



Webmaster Notes: By Jeff Owens

Past Reunions: On the website (ussabalo.org) there are places for details and listings of those who attended the 2007 Bremerton, WA - Alaska Cruise in 2008, or Dallas-Ft Worth or San Diego last year.

Only a few have submitted photos or details of what Sabalo sailors did. If you were there, maybe you have some contributions?



Looking Forward: Ron's agreed to help with a few projects I would like to see accomplished: Who's your neighbor? There are many instances of Sabalo men close together or living in the same town. Why not make contact for a chat, or a Sabalo deer hunt like we did in San Diego, or a local ball game? With some decent response to Ron's queries, we could sort and create online listings by state/town/zip code.

Future Reunions

Regional reunions could reduce long travel, a reason some have missed past reunions. It's great for Sabalo men to gather to discuss life/recall adventures. If you can organize something in

your region, make your offer/ideas known. With newsletter and web site support, we'll get out the word out. As mentioned above, I remember hunting with shipmates in the Cleveland Nat. Forest in Ca, and they were some fun times: the hunt, camping, and time around a campfire. Please weigh in on the idea with your suggestions or other possibilities; little reunions are of interest to us all if they result in sea-stories or pictures.

Clever Boy: *Clever Boy* will always be free to read as posted on the Sabalo web site, even though the domain name, and web site space are not free, but because about 1/4 of Sabalo guys don't have internet capability—requiring USPS mail distribution and printing expense—it is requested from everyone that those who value the continuing Sabalo fraternity make a small contribution to keep the newsletter coming to all. This is probably a one time request, and we think five bucks from most of you will hold us for a few years at least.

What do you get – isn't it worth \$5 for some news about Sabalo, etc? Maybe you already have email and figure, why should I pay? No cost to send me an email right? Well, the fee not just about cost, it's about keeping the fraternal unity of the entire group together, not for just those with email, or those who can afford or have the health to make it to a reunion, but for each man who considers himself a proud Sabalo veteran.

2010 Reunion notes: August 30, 2010 in Cincinnati/Covington, Ky (6 months to go)

•**Never Say Never!** (Jeff Owens) Twice now, I've called our "last reunion." But a burning ember exists. Maybe *Clever Boy* can keep the fire going. Your response/input will affect the next chapter, so here are some thoughts: This year's USSVI Convention is in the N. Kentucky/Cincinnati area. It's time now to make reservations. I'll be there, and if there are enough others, we can have a hospitality suite or?? Having ours with USSVI Convention combines travel & expense and activities-planning is not a major project. **If you're serious about being there, let me/Ron know for the interest list, & help us encourage others to come. Ron's survey in the last issue received only one (1) response.**

~~~~ *Confucius Say: Man who run in front of car get tired* ~~~~

## ●On Eternal Patrol:

From: Troy Lute (son): *James H. "Harry" Lute (Sabalo Engineman 1952-53 & USSVI Holland Club member) passed away on December 25, 2009.*

Jeff Owens' Response: *On behalf of myself and Harry's shipmates, I would like to express sincere condolences to you and all of his family. I will miss the email Christmas card he sent me every year since he discovered our crew association. I know he really wished to attend one of our reunions, and had he had better health, I'm sure he would have been there. Thanks for letting us know of his passing. He will be remembered, along with our other departed shipmates, with a special toast and remembrance at our next reunion. For the USS Sabalo Crew Association*

## Notes from the Conning Tower [Ed]: *Clever Boy* Publication Report

The Inaugural Issue of *Clever Boy* went out with 342 emails & 59 USPO mailings; about 10% of each was rejected for bad addresses. This issue: 358 emails/106 USPO with failure rate below 5%.

The total cost for stamps, ink and paper came to \$70. The budget consisted of \$100 from the San Diego Banquet, a \$70 refund for gambling transportation, and shipmate Irv Forman's generous \$25 donation, leaving \$125 for this issue which ought to be just about right (note: all figures are available for audit).

That's the Teleprompter good economic news, but how about our next issue? I've always said Jeff is herding cats; he is the keeper of our great memories, the shepherd of our fraternal unity, of our Sabalo pride and nostalgia; he's kept the fondest memories alive of we few who can really appreciate the Sabalo brotherhood. But...Jeff has actually been told by some to quit bothering them, and he's been ignored many more times than he's been congratulated. While most of us are eager and grateful, a few are nasty, grouchy, or just apathetic, like the guys who've never responded in any way—who've never indicated to Jeff or me that they have any interest. There are probably both millionaires and street people out there who served on Sabalo, but why should one pay for the other's postage stamps?

Here's my take on that: Imagine that there's just one feeble old shipmate out there who's legally blind, hard-of-hearing, and surviving a stroke while living on Social Security. If we can see to it that this shipmate's wife can sit down

and read a few tidbits of *Clever Boy* scuttlebutt to him once in a while to rekindle sixty-year-old memories of his Sabalo days, then we are doing a good thing! I'm sure that anyone else who's ever felt the warmth of an old Sabalo memory will appreciate that.

I spend the time and effort to edit a newsletter because it's enjoyable—almost like sitting on the capstan again, shooting the sh\*t with my shipmates. I also feel an obligation to honor our WWII heroes — and those who learned from them — for passing the skills and the submariner's pride on to us. It also happens that at least one vet like I just described 'out there' really does exist.

Aside from Sabalo website costs, email is *free* after maybe 10-20 hours of collecting and editing the info, but mailed versions cost about \$1.00 each, and are 5-10 times the labor—a big cost difference, but this ain't *TIME* magazine, and cost ain't the point.

Two questions: 1. Why should anybody, who paid two grand for a computer and learned to use it, pay for a street person who might just use the newsletter to wrap his McDonald's dumpster contents? 2. If everybody chipped in \$5, would any of us old pharts live long enough to buy and use up all that paper and ink?

Jeff and I agree that we don't want dues or subscription fees with the accounting



nightmare involved. Anyone have other thoughts for financing future issues? If I receive any money directly, I'll be accountable to Jeff.

If you received a hard copy of this Newsletter through the mail, but have access to the internet, **please send me an email with your current email address**— Printing/Postage is our biggest expense.[Ed] €

## **Letters:**

- From: Mike Elzinga: "...During the time I was on board (1959 – '61) the question about the 500 pound canary in the forward torpedo room came up and engaged a number of us in some "intense discussion." I don't recall that everyone was satisfied with the answers others gave, and, as far as I recall, the "issue" was never completely resolved at that time; although I still think I had the right idea, and a few others agreed... After I left, I became a physicist. That education has not only confirmed some my original thoughts..." Mike went on with a thesis-sized argument too long to include, but he's ready for a debate regarding how the trim will be affected when Big Bird takes off [ed].
  - 1/29/10 Subject: Mrs. Joyce B. Moulton and Capt. Charles G. Darrell, USN (Ret) announce our engagement to be married later this year. (Qualified on Sabalo 1957).
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## **Ping ))))**

## **Typical Diesel Boat Job Descriptions** (editor's unbiased report)

I am assuming this will generate a few disagreements because I've seldom seen much real work going on below the lower conning tower hatch; so some slight limitations of my knowledge might be obvious in the descriptions below.

### •**Deck Gang** (Ship's complement: 4-6 low rated men, Seamen)

In Port: Painting & scraping deck/sail/superstructure topside, tank-tops; making heavies (marlinspike seamanship), loading torpedoes; hiding in superstructure or behind pier dumpster while drinking coffee and telling lies about their vast sexual experience/expertise.

At sea: Standing lookout/helm watch (manning the helm, and bow/stern planes upon submergence) 4 hours on – 8 off. Scrubbing decks in Control Room and After Battery and cleaning head during daytime off-watch hours.

These are mostly non-quals, so their every spare minute is spent tracing and drawing plans of ship's systems, and trying to avoid mess cooking duty.

### •**Navigation Gang** (Complement: three QM watchstanders—probably a couple of third-class, a second-class, plus a striker, and the Assistant Navigator—a First Class or Chief).

At sea: 4 on – 8 off, keeping a plot of ship's position by periodic fixes (LoRaN, Celestial nav, Dead-reckoning); keeping QM Notebook (the record all ship's maneuvers and noteworthy events); supervising Lookouts/Radar/Fathometer watches; keeping hourly weather log, compass comparisons, and Chronometer accuracy. Off watch: Correct charts, study track and area ahead (Hazards, landfall, etc.), clean conning tower. Assistant Navigator confers with God in tracking the ships position and has hallucinatory dreams about things called "Inertial Guidance" and "Satellite Navigation." Stands no watches because of on-call status, morning/evening star sights, noon sights, and all-nighters when nearing hazards or making landfall. Argues with other Chiefs about not appearing on the watch-bill, and constantly complains about the need for more men (actually knowing that 4 are adequate, but taking the offensive position to preempt any cuts). Submerged/surfaced same.

In Port: Correct charts, paint conning tower, and prepare mentally and physically for the next underway event. Generally acts as point-man for the rest of the crew by scouting out the hazards inherent in booze and female sirens ashore. Smells about the same as a snipe, but generally has cleaner fingernails, and smoother tongue.

•**Engineering Gang:** (Condensed summary) Enginemen and Electricians swap jobs in accordance with the rule: "If a hammer won't fix it, it's an electrical problem". Retired snipes usually have a lawnmower running in their living room day and night. All pipes and wires in their houses are exposed on the walls.

•**Weapons Gang:** Although all Submariners (to date) have torpedoes, only the Torpedomen spend every waking hour polishing theirs. They also hold contests to determine the worst small arms shots, otherwise known as the Shark Watch during swim call.

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Q: How do you know if there's a submariner at your party? A: He'll tell you.

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**NTINS:           The Diving Alarm Ballet** by Mike Hemming

As I pass the controllermen, the *oogah, oogah*, "Dive!" ... "Dive!" comes over the speakers, and they leap to their sticks and rheostats. The engine shut-down air lever is hit, rheostats spun down, sticks are thrown, as the ballet begins. Generator electricity wanes as the huge storage batteries are called on for power. Sticks pulled to new positions and rheostats spun back up to keep the motors turning. The flurry of intense activity over, minor adjustments made, and times logged, while listening *always* for the sound of water doing something it shouldn't.

As I walk forward into the engine room, the two men in each one do the shutdown dance. Throttles are slapped down, hydraulic levers pulled to the closed position to shut exhaust valves and drains opened by the throttleman. As his oiler spins the inboard exhaust valves the 32 turns to shut it, either the oiler or the throttleman, whoever is closer, will have yanked the pin holding the great intake air valve open so it falls shut with a loud clang. His inboard exhaust valves shut, the oiler drops below to secure the sea valves that allow the seawater to cool the engines. The throttleman checks everything secure one more time.

In the control room, the other area of great activity on a dive, lookouts almost free-fall to their diving stations on the bow and stern planes. Quickly the bow planesman rigs out his planes and both he and the stern planesman set their charges to the prescribed angles for the dive. Arriving soon after the planesmen, the OOD, now the Diving Officer, gives the ordered depth and the angle to reach it. He checks that all is well and watches the planesmen to learn if the trim needs changing.

The Chief of the Watch, having closed the huge main air induction valve, watches the Christmas Tree to see that all hull openings are closed. He pulls the vents to flood the main ballast tanks and watches the depth gages to signal the auxiliaryman on the air manifold when to blow negative tank to the mark to stop our descent into the depths. The manifold operator will hammer open the valve and then close off the roaring rush of compressed air, as needed.

By this time, the trim manifold operator will have arrived from the engine room. After climbing over the stern planesman he will be ready to pump or flood seawater to the tanks. This will trim up the boat to neutral buoyancy.

In the conn, the helmsman will have rung up standard speed so the boat will be driven under by the screws. The QM of the watch will dog the conning tower hatch when the OOD, the last man down from the bridge, pulls the lanyard to close it.

There is no music to guide this dance except calm orders given and acknowledged. Started in a flurry of activity, it will end by winding down quietly to a state of relaxed vigilance by men practiced and confident of themselves and each other. They have done this many times, this graceful and awkward descent into the depths.

They do it as fast as is safely possible. This is where they belong, with many feet of sea hiding the strong steel of the hull. Men asleep in bunks, who were half-awakened by the raucous alarm and noisy ballet, drift back to deep sleep, confident they are at home—where they should be. ☺

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**Joke:** Sometimes I'd hear insubordinate grumbling when I'd lower a QM striker headfirst down into the periscope-well to retrieve my lost corncob pipes, so on one occasion, I confronted Wilhelm, "I reckon after you get out, you'll just be waiting for me to die so you can piss on my grave." "Not me, Chief. No way!" he said, mumbling something I couldn't quite hear as he dropped down into Control.

Forty years later at our reunion, MacLean filled me in:

What I'd missed was: "Once I get out of the Navy, I'm never going to stand in line again." (by the way, the Padres picture on page 1 was taken/submitted by Tom Wilhelm) -----*I know! I should keep my day job.*



## Tidbits from the Deep—History: Boats, Torpedoes and Targets in 1940-42:



- In 1940 German scientist Helmuth Walter demonstrated a prototype for the first true submarine – a boat which in theory could operate submerged for an indefinite period, unlimited by battery capacity or the need for atmospheric oxygen. V.80 was powered by the decomposition of highly-concentrated (95 percent) hydrogen peroxide, H<sub>2</sub>O<sub>2</sub>, known as Perhydrol. In essence: when the chemical breaks down, it releases superheated steam to drive a turbine, along with oxygen to support conventional combustion or for respiration by the crew.

The hull-shape of V.80 was optimized for submerged operations, and the boat indeed demonstrated exceptional speed – 28 knots submerged. It also demonstrated exceptionally high fuel consumption, 25 times that of a diesel engine, at exceptional cost. According to one source, one 6.5 hour trial run consumed \$200,000 dollars worth of Perhydrol.

- 1940 The Navy settled on SS-212, "Gato," laid down in October, 1940, as the template: 312 feet, 1,825 tons, range 11,400 miles, 24 torpedoes. Over time, improvements were made including a thicker pressure hull beginning with the otherwise more or less identical SS-285, "Balao."

- 1941 In August, Adolph Hitler demonstrated a constitutional inability to keep hands off and let his commanders run the war. Against all advice, in a misguided effort to protect his supply lines to North Africa, he ordered a shift of submarines from the Atlantic to the Mediterranean. (Misguided? How, indeed, could a submarine protect a surface ship against the principal threat, which was air attack?) This soon led to an order to a shift of all operational boats from the Atlantic theater – at a time when there were Atlantic targets aplenty, and good weather in which to enjoy them. The "Happy Time" soon came to an end.

- 1942 Japanese submarines also made some attacks on the West Coast, lobbing shells at Santa Monica, California, and Astoria, Oregon. The attacks had minor effect, although Radio Tokyo gloated, "Americans know that the submarine shelling of the Pacific coast was a warning to the nation that the paradise created by George Washington is on the verge of destruction."

- For all of 1942, total U. S. torpedo production was 2,382, so Submarine CO's were cautioned not to waste their precious ammunition. They carefully fired 2,010 of the scarce and inadequately designed fish which ran erratically, and often did not explode even on direct contact. On one patrol, Halibut fired 23 fish and only one exploded. Halibut managed to sink one of the targets when a torpedo punched a hole through its rusting hull.

- Meanwhile, on 9/13/42, the Japanese I-19 launched a spread of six torpedoes at a carrier— three hits sunk the U.S.S. Wasp. The other fish continued running for 12 miles into another task group: one fatally damaged the destroyer U.S.S. O'Brien; another hit required shipyard repairs for battleship U.S.S. North Carolina; the fate of the sixth torpedo was unknown.

### •US Submarine Fleet Size:

|                                                                                      |       |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-------|
| 1941: U. S. Navy had 60 commissioned submarines in the Atlantic & 51 in the Pacific  | = 111 |
| 1945: With 288 boats participating & 52 lost, subs in commission at the end of WW II | = 232 |
| 1952: Decreased need (?); active commissioned submarines. (all diesel)               | = 110 |
| 1968: Height of Vietnam War. Sub fleet increased. (diesel and nuclear)               | = 156 |
| 1977: Decreased need (?); active commissioned submarines (3 diesels, 115 nuclear)    | = 118 |
| 1991: Active commissioned (all nuclear powered)                                      | = 121 |
| 1997: Decreased need (?); Active commissioned (all nuclear powered)                  | = 91  |

NOW (2010) - 56 SSN, 14 SSBN, 4 SSGN (38 in Pacific, 36 in Atlantic)

= 74

↳ USS Los Angeles (SSN-688) the first of the 62 Los Angeles Class submarines built was decommissioned in Los Angeles in January, 2010 after 33 years of service. How old does that make you feel? [Ed].

↳ Some types of submarine and nuclear power technicians can now get a bonus of up to \$125,000 if they reenlist for three years. These specialists have an easy time getting good civilian jobs if they get out. The Navy "nukes" will be particularly sought after because of the discipline and high training levels the Navy maintains for those who run nuclear power plants.

↳ Sailors aboard attack submarines can expect longer deployments and service-life extensions of their boats to compensate for an expected "submarine gap" in the years to come, according to Navy documents and congressional analysts.

Under the current 30-year procurement plan, the number of attack subs will fall below the required 48 boats in 2022 and will bottom out six years later at 41 boats. The shortfall will continue until 2034.

"[The Navy] doesn't have a lot of choice in this gap," said one congressional analyst who spoke on condition of anonymity. "This is the result of decisions made in the past 20 years that are coming home to roost."

The Navy plans to meet typical requirements with longer deployments and older boats. The service lives of 16 Los Angeles-class subs will be lengthened by as much as 24 months, and at least one month will be added to 40 deployments - about 25 percent of total deployments - over an eight-year period to provide the roughly 10 subs combatant commanders need on any given day. The typical attack sub deployment is six months; it was unclear when the longer deployments are expected to begin. Navy Times Saturday Jan 9, 2010 8:

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**Warning (No joke):** While you're doing your taxes this year, check the back of your Military Retiree Account Statement and verify who you have designated as the beneficiary. Recently, the VA had military retiree personnel information compromised and it seems there are cases of complete strangers' names inserted in that spot.

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov/>

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### **Finding Sabalo Men: Would someone please make ten phone calls?** By Jeff Owens

My goal is to find every man who set sail on the Sabalo, and I'd like to see a few of you guys with time available make maybe ten phone calls each to help. My search has been frustrated, for example, by large numbers of possibilities for those with common names, and it would be great if some volunteers would take a few of these files and see if you could track a guy down from these my list of 200+.

Imagine the feeling you will bring to the guy who gets your call, and connects to our Sabalo fraternity after all these years, not to mention the satisfaction and pleasure you'll get by maybe chatting a while and swapping a few tales.

Call me or email, and I'll send a print-out of some of the individual word processor files I keep for each man, and you can make some calls to see if the info might match. All it takes is a little persistence, and some of your time to complete the search for these men. This list of 'almost found-needs a call' represents about 17% of the present roster. It would be really great to get these guys into the loop before the next issue of Clever Boy. Please let me hear from you.

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**\*NTINS:**

It was dusk and the computer screen glared brightly in the dim room. The monitor was blank except for rows of dots and a few words at the bottom scrolling across the page:

". . . steering course two-two-five, standard speed on 3 main engines . . . enroute Kao Hsiung; Formosa . . . seas: calm. . . Wind NE, 5kts"

The periods chased the words across the page making them disappear one at a time at the right margin and reappear on a next line. Conny's grey head was resting on his right forearm on the desk. He snored gently. His left thumb had pushed up his bifocals until they reflected the bright light back into the screen, and the little finger of his left hand rested on the Del key and tirelessly transmitted decimal points.

He was dreaming in the way that only old men can dream: slowly and carefully choosing images from the past and rearranging the scenes at the speed of light. Children dream of flying above the earth or of being chased by monsters, but old men have already flown to the limits of their ability, and tamed their monsters in days gone by.

The front door slammed shut, and Conny snorted. He moved slightly, but did not come fully awake until he heard the business-like clicking of his daughter-in-law's high heels on the hardwood floor. He straightened his glasses,

**Once Upon a Time**

by Ron Gorence (3/6/10 needs work)

brushed back his hair instinctively, and tried to act as though he had been wide awake. He heard her go straight into the kitchen, and heard the refrigerator door close.

"Dad? Why's everything so dark in here?" She burst into the den, flicking light switches, and collecting beer cans.

He clicked his mouse and reduced the dotted screen, "Hi Lee. Just gabin' with the guys; don't need to waste electricity for that." He was on his feet now. "Want some coffee or something?"

She stood facing him with her hands on her hips, "Sara called me, and said you'd been on the phone-line all day. Couldn't get a hold of you. I told her I'd stop by and tell you she's working late, so she'll meet us all at Tio's at seven." She turned away and started dumping pipe ashes into the trash can. "You fell asleep on the internet again didn't you? Why don't you get digital?"

Before he could answer, her son charged in through the front door. "Yo gramps, got any Coke?" Danny headed straight for the refrigerator, and then came into the den, put his head on Conny's belly, and gave him a hug.

"Hey birthday-boy, let me see if you've got any grey hair like me."

"I'm only ten, grandpa." He shoved Conny gently back onto the sofa next to the computer desk, crawled up on his lap, and poked a forefinger into Conny's stomach, "Kids don't

have fat bellies and grey hair. Can I dump some tunes on your computer?"

"I'll download 'em for you later—maybe tonight after your birthday party" Conny called after him, as Lee grabbed Danny's hand and left as quickly as she'd come in.

During dinner that evening the adult men discussed golf clubs, the ladies chatted about food and sensible diets, while Danny played his video game—or engaged in peahockey across the table with Conny whenever his parents weren't looking.

When the waiter brought the cake, and they all sang Happy Birthday, and Conny sang along, but he was soon back to swirling his beer around with an absent grin, imagining the women suddenly discussing back-swings, as the men cited the caloric content of tofu.

Earlier one of the adult men had politely gestured across the table to Conny, "So what do you do Mr. Shawn?"

"He's retired!" Sara was much quicker with words, so she answered for him, "He sits in his chair and watches the politics channel all day and argues on the internet with his submarine pen-pals all night."

"Submarines? You were on submarines? I don't think I could handle that," said someone.

One of Conny's black brows lifted slightly, but he had little chance to say anything because from all around the table came questions like, "What's it like

being down there in a submarine? Weren't you scared?" And then they began answering their own questions among themselves: "I've got claustrophobia; you couldn't get me on one of those things. Naw, you don't get seasick underwater...."

*Just as well*, he thought. His wife and kids had heard his standard responses to the same curiosities for years: *going without a shower for a month... extra pay for living in a sewer pipe with head-knockers and bad air-conditioning... almost like being in your own bedroom with the shades pulled—except it tilts... safer than crossing a busy street... submariners are too busy during hazardous situations to get scared—those too scared to get busy don't wear dolphins.*

His eyes happened to meet Danny's gaze and he winked. Danny winked back. *How can you describe shooting below crush depth, and then ping-ponging mercilessly on anyone who broke a sweat? Or having a fistfight with a shipmate and then accepting \$100 from him to go home on a family emergency? Or cruising ports (and girls) accessible to submarines alone? Or raising absolute hell after months at sea?* Standard answers are boring; real ones, impossible.

Conny tilted his head downward, lifted both brows and his shoulders in unison, but when he opened his mouth, his son Dave said, "I can tell you all about it. I've heard the

stories since I was a kid. A thousand tons of Japanese ships sunk."

Turning toward his dad, he asked, "Was it a thousand, or a hundred-thousand tons, Dad?" And without waiting for an answer, "Dad did some pretty hairy stuff before the big bomb ended it all."

Conny frowned, but saw little Danny frowning harder, so he simply said, "...Wasn't in World War Two, son. I rode the boats in the fifties."

He knew it had been his own fault, and he remembered with regret that every time his youngsters had asked something simple like which ocean is the biggest, Conny had droned on with an hour's geography lesson. The kids had learned early-on how to avoid long lectures.

"Whatever," shrugged Dave—with no disrespect—as the conversation lost momentum, "Enough about the good old days, Cheers to the Birthday Boy."

On the way home in the back seat, Danny nuzzled his head under Conny's arm and said, "How come they're mean to you, and never let you talk, Grandpa?"

"They're not mean. They're just bored with my old stories." He squeezed his grandson.

"Well, you never told me about submarines. I wouldn't get bored."

When the van pulled up in front of Sara and Conny's house, Conny hugged Danny, and promised, "I'll tell you all about my adventures

someday."

When they were in the house, Conny told Sara that he needed to answer his email and then download some songs for Danny—he'd come along to bed shortly. Actually, he intended to sit down and write a few lines for his grandson as he'd promised.

He booted up the computer, and opened his word-processor, stared at the screen, and tried to think of something interesting to write—without introducing a ten-year-old to the wonders of sex or booze.

*The best years of my life, and I can't share them with a kid who loves me.* Thoughts raced through his brain, but none reached his fingers. "Nursery rhymes and fairy tales begin with, 'Once upon a time...'" It was an old Submarine saying, "but sea-stories begin, 'Now This Is No Sh\*t' (NTINS)."

Everything Conny could remember was in the NTINS category, so he forced himself to type, "Once upon a time, there was a young sailor standing in a check-out line in San Diego, when he noticed a beautiful young lady . . ."

*Boring...*

He left the words on the screen, cursor flashing, while he sipped his beer and he gawked at the cursor.

The monitor went blank except for rows of dots and a few words at the bottom, scrolling across the page . . .



## **An exclamation explanation: AARUGHA! AARUGHA! . . . . Dive! Dive!**

Ooh-Rah (Urah, Hoo-rah) is used by: USMC, USN Seabees, Hospital Corpsmen, USCG, & Russian Ground Forces ("Ypa" in Cyrillic)

↳ The 1st Amphibious Reconnaissance Company, FMFPAC can be credited with the introduction of "Ooh-rah!" into the Marine Corps in 1953, shortly after the Korean War. Recon Marines aboard the USS Perch (ASSP-313), a submarine retrofitted to carry Navy UDT and Recon Marines. Whenever the boat was to dive, the 1MC announced "DIVE! DIVE!" followed by the sound of the diving klaxon: "AARUGHA!"

↳ In '53 or '54, on a conditioning run, former Sergeant Major of the Marine Corps John R. Massaro, as company Gunnery Sergeant of 1st Amphibious Reconnaissance Battalion, simulated the "Dive" horn sound "AARUGHA!" as part of the cadence. Legend has it he took it with him when he went to serve as an instructor at the Drill Instructor school at Marine Corps Recruit Depot San Diego. He there passed it on to the Drill Instructor students and they, in turn, passed it on to their recruits where it eventually and naturally became a part of the Recon cadence, and thereafter infiltrated Recon Marine lexicon. Over time, "AARUGHA!" morphed into the shorter, simpler "Oorah!" Today, the official Marine Corps Training Reference Manual on the history of Marine Recon is titled "AARUGHA!"

↳ HooYah is used by: Navy Seals

↳ HooAh is used by: Army (from Vietnamese U-ah, meaning 'yes' when given an order) -or- Rangers from 'Who Us?' misheard at Omaha Beach when told to lead the way.

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## **Those Who Sail Beneath the Swells**

by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

In every generation, the navies of the world always seem to find the necessary number of that 'special breed of man' needed to man their undersea ships Those truly magnificent fools with the requisite pride and spirit of adventure needed to voluntarily crawl into an iron cylinder full of similar mental defectives and take the contraptions to sea.

I can't speak for the rest of the Navy. The only 'rest of the Navy' I ever met, were perpetual shore duty shore patrols. Looking back I can't remember one positive interaction I had with any sonuvabitch sporting an SP armband. The last thing they were interested in, in the old days, was spreading goodwill.

My entire short-lived naval service career was spent with lik-minded jaybirds who actually liked going to sea in what closely resembled a sinkable septic tank. I actually thought that to be a sailor, one had to go to sea. Sailing had to involve stuff like seagulls, saltwater and large metal objects that were painted gray, displaced tons of water and bounced around a lot in heavy weather.

How guys who interpreted photographs in a windowless building in Omaha, Nebraska called themselves sailors was way beyond the level of comprehension of a seventeen-year-old who cut his teeth on books about Pacific submarine action.

Lads who turned up at New London back in the 1950s weren't the kind of young men whose sense of naval adventure could be satisfied inventorying jocks and socks in some damn quonset hut in East Rat's Ass, Minnesota, or typing liberty cards at some shore station where they hot-patched weather balloons.

Submariners had no desire to belong to any organization that issued clothing designed to blend in with poison ivy plants required you to dig holes and own a personal shovel or any desire to eat unidentifiable food out of little green cans in the rain.

We liked hydraulic oil-laced coffee, crawling up on a pre-warmed flash pad and freely exchanging insults with men as equally ugly as ourselves. We enjoyed knowing that in any unscheduled altercation, our entire crew would show up to extract our drunken fanny and chastise those we had stirred up.

Back in the old days, (before any of you modern day techno undersea swashbucklers get a twist in your bloomers, I only know about the old days. I never rode anything that was intended to go below 412 feet or stay down for several months at a time.) So, as I started to say, back in the old days, the old leather-faced, hard boiled Chiefs used to say, "Gahdam sailors belong on ships and ships belong at sea."

There was some kind of selection process that they put you through at New London that eliminated the fainthearted, the not totally committed, guys lacking desire to engage in intimate cohabitation with members of the opposite gender, communists, bed wetters, whiners, and anyone who entertained the slightest desire to be stationed in Omaha, Nebraska.

The system, God bless it, sorted out the true believers and packed the rest off to the surface fleet, Omaha and God knows where else. And they put us on boats. A lot of us went to old, late in life, boats with combat histories. They were old World War II boats with racks, that once bunked our heroes the men we wanted to be accepted by and to be exactly like. We qualified and in so doing we joined the continuous chain that is and will always be the U.S. Submarine Force.

I don't know what the dreams and aspirations consist of for the young men of today. Ours was a far simpler time. We grew up chasing fireflies, shooting marbles, spinning tops, teaching each other yo-yo tricks, shooting each other with BB guns, playing two hands below the waist tag football, neighborhood kick the can and pick-up -game after school hardball. Nobody cried, tattle-tailed or went home to pee.

Back then, you didn't have to have made all 'A's in diathermic razzmatazz physics or have a working understanding of the components in the formulation of the universe, to ride submarines.

You had to have an understanding of honor, loyalty, faithfully performed duty, obedience to command, respect for leadership, and total and absolute faith in your ship and shipmates.

Added to these qualities, a true boat sailor had to have a wide- screen sense of adventure and the same brand of curiosity that has lived in the hearts of those in every generation who ventured beyond known limits.

And you had love dancing with the devil. Somewhere, real major- league devil dancing got shot out the garbage gun. But some things never change. It's still pitch black dark below 150 feet, a boat is always no farther than 9 miles from land (straight down) and the skipper's word is law.

And so far, every generation has worn the same insignia and nobody ever forgets the hull number of their qual boat or the name of their first COB.

There are many common denominators among the worldwide community of undersea sailors. When the Kursk went down, I was struck and frankly dumbfounded by the genuine outpouring of sympathy for the families and loved ones of the lost boat sailors. To me, they had always been our enemy. Up to then, I had given no thought to the similarities found in our manner of service and the commonality of the danger of operating deep within a hostile environment surrounded by potential death on all sides.

Likewise, I never cease to be surprised by the way that submariners embrace their adversarial counterparts. There appears to be a universal acceptance with implied forgiveness of all German U-boat crewmen. You never hear the term 'Nazi' U- boatmen. The term 'German' has become substituted for the term 'Nazi'. America has a short national memory and everybody gets out of the penalty box in one generation.

I sat in a theater rooting for the former 'bad guys' in the film DAS BOOT. What we were seeing on the screen, was a boat full of sons of Hitler sneaking around and sinking our citizens. But the fact that we, having lived a similar life inside a recognizably similar pressure hull, elicited a sympathy and irrational forgiveness. In short, we related to both the characters and their circumstances.

I guess that in the final analysis, all submariners are brothers when you look into the depth of their souls.

That is good. In times of war, nobody who transits the surface of the world's oceans loves submarines.

Submarines and submariners are viewed as implements and practitioners of the black arts back stabbing, bushwhacking sonuvabitches. We slip up from hiding below the waves and blow ships to pieces in a totally unfair, unsportsmanlike fashion. Any way you cut it, that's the way we made our living.

We black sheep we predatory sharks we saltwater sneaky Petes stick together.

We are a very small group when you consider the total world population and the percentage that never had any desire to crawl into a steel tank and sink out of sight.

Submariners, when all is said and done, are special unique people who are the only ones who truly understand each other and ever will.

The old war horses who fought submarine wars are leaving us. These submersible sea dogs passed down the lethal reputation we carried and the awesome respect our boats were given.

I for one have been both honored and extremely proud to have been a part of this fine body of extraordinary adventurers and patriots.

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● **Error Correction:** *The last issue of Clever Boy omitted critical information according to Harold 'Honeybee' Losby: The guy in Grawl Tiger was not called "Big Ed". And, left out was an instance when "Big Ed" at the end of the bar in Starlight was asked for a light by a guy who'd just pulled out a Lucky Strike. "Sure," he answered as he reached over to the bulkhead and ripped off a wall sconce and then handed the dead bulb in its socket, the lampshade, and a handful of bent brass to his startled shipmate. Fortunately, one of the wildly-sparking loose wires burned in two before starting a fire and/or snuffing out all the neon lights in Skivvie Alley*



Our pre-WWII submarine predecessors faced many more difficult (and different) challenges than we did; this picture tells us something about the times in which they earned Dolphins. Of course they didn't have to serve with ladies like this on the R- or S-boats. Neither did WWII submariners, nor did we; nor did the first generation of Nucs which we trained, but...

Q: What's the difference between God and a submariner? A: God doesn't think he's a submariner.

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## ATTENTION! [Ed]

I've got a little project in the works, and I need your participation. Here's what I'd like you to do:

Pick 2-3 men you worked with on the Sabalo and list them on a piece of paper separated by a couple of blank lines; then write the names of 2-3 more guys you went on liberty with, then 2-3 more you've met at reunions or after your time on the boat, or those you admired, respected, etc.. You get the idea—guys who stand out in your memory.

After you've got a half-dozen or a dozen names, write something NICE about each of them in the spaces below his name. A couple of sentences, or just a word or two will do for each of the men you've listed, but I do need something to identify them besides Wing-nut, Slim, etc.

Without mentioning your name, I will publish an edited summary of the guys receiving the most comments. I reserve the right to edit, because I know bubbleheads well enough to expect "Nice" things to include tales of amazing sexual prowess and statements like "...he was the hardest-working drunk..."

The Sabalo Ship Store page on the website will soon be revised to reflect reduced inventory. Hats, Lapel Pins, "Wheel books" (small, green, semi hard cover note books with the word "Memoranda" across the cover—"Wheels" carried them in their shirt pocket) and luggage tags (souvenirs from the 2007 reunion) will still be available. Both of these are marked with a "Submarine Service" design. Images of them will be posted on the site. Storekeeper, Jeff Owens

### Notes:

\***NTINS** –Now This Is No Sh\*t. (As opposed to Nursery rhymes, which begin with ' Once upon a time...')

\*\***UQC** –An underwater telephone (AKA *Gertrude*). Sabalo's voice call-sign was Clever Boy (call sign: NXYO)

# USS Sabalo (SS302)



**Left: Sabalo sailors at Padres Game in San Diego 9/09.**



**Right I think we swam there in the late 60's**

The **50th anniversary** of Trieste's 1960 Deep Dive in the Challenger Deep of the Mariana Trench, to a depth of 10,911 meters (35,797 ft) was celebrated on **January 23, 2010**. Cheers! (Who's on Shark Watch?)



This Sabalo patch is the currently available \$7.00 version. But ... it has no hull number and the shape/size of the Sabalo fish is different. If 35 people are willing to pay \$10 for recreating the pattern of the patch featured on the web site home page, then \$3 profit after that might be used toward publishing *Clever Boy*. Please respond quickly with your order if you want them available for Cincinnati.

~~~~~ **Pride Runs Deep** ~~~~~

Sabalo Association Staff

Webmaster/Historian/Reunion Coordinator and Assn. Founder:

Jeff Owens 273 Pratt Hollow Rd, Nicholson, PA 18446, 570 942-4622 owensj@epix.net

Editor: Ron Gorence 2563 Roseview Place, San Diego, CA 92105, 619-264-6995 mgorence@yahoo.com

Please return to:
Ronald Gorence, Editor
2563 Roseview Place
San Diego, Ca. 92105-4734

To: