

# Sea Poacher Association



*Dedicated to the men who served  
on this great fighting ship!*



Volume 3, Issue 3

July, 2005

## Submariner's Brush With Death

**Taken for dead, the  
wounded sailor almost  
was tossed overboard.**

The following article appeared in the Tampa Tribune on November 11, 2001 and appears here with the permission of the Tampa Tribune.

**By B.C. MANION**  
[bmanion@tampatrib.com](mailto:bmanion@tampatrib.com)

SUNSET PARK, Florida – It was about 6 in the morning of May 15, 1945, when the submarine USS Sea Poacher 406 surfaced off the Kurile Islands and engaged in battle with six small Japanese freighters.

Third Class Signalman Bob Cooley (44-46) was a sight setter on a five-inch gun on the bow of the 300-foot submarine.

The 19-year-old Cooley was wearing a helmet to protect the telephone he was talking into as he took information from the tower.

"If I hadn't had that helmet, I would not be here today," said Cooley, now 76.

"The opening range was 600 yards. It was foggy. You'd go into a fog bank and come out of a fog bank," Cooley said.

As he fired his five-inch shell, others fired guns on a deck above him and at other locations on the boat.

"We all shot at the same time," Cooley said.

One gunner shot a 20mm gun on the cigarette deck above Cooley.

"The first shell that he shot didn't leave the barrel of the gun," Cooley said. Ice had formed within the gun's barrel.

The second shot exploded into the first, shattering the barrel and sending shrapnel flying, Cooley said.

Cooley was hit.

"I opened my eyes, and all I could see was a pool of blood," he said.

Then he blacked out.

"I don't remember anything until I came to, below," Cooley said.

He later learned that he was nearly thrown overboard by the gunnery officer.

"You can't jeopardize the life of 63 men for one man, he felt my pulse and I had none. My eyes were rolling back in my head," Cooley said.

But as the gunnery officer prepared to throw him over, another man intervened.

"Ted Zung, a big kid from Notre Dame . . . picked me up and



Photo courtesy of Dave Green, FN, 44-46

moved me under the cigarette deck," Cooley said.

"I lay there until the battle was over," Cooley said.

After the battle, the chief pharmacist came topside and picked up Cooley.

Three men had been injured. The other two suffered superficial wounds that could be treated on the boat. But Cooley had to be taken to a hospital at Midway, where he stayed for six weeks.

All three men received the Purple Heart.

After recuperating, Cooley went home on leave and then returned to Pearl Harbor to finish out his service, serving on the USS Sea Lion.

The event, which occurred so many years ago, has had a lasting impact on the Sunset Park man's life.

"I don't let things bother me. I think how fortunate I am to be here.

"My life could have been over when I was 19," Cooley said.

(Continued on page two)

### Change of Address

Please let us know of any change of status – address, phone or email. Either call Jack Merrill at 863-660-3314 or Bill Brinkman at 512-255-0285



Photo of USS Bushnell (AS15) and the USS Sea Poacher (SS406) courtesy of the Roy Gallemore family. At the time this picture was taken Roy Gallemore was skipper of Bushnell (1964-1966. He served on Sea Poacher from 1944-1947,



## From the Treasurer:

Ken LeBlanc

[kengail@hotmail.com](mailto:kengail@hotmail.com)

June 1	Beginning Balance (General + Memorial Funds)	\$9,262.56
	General Fund Deposits & Credits	\$122.00
	General Fund Withdrawals	\$0.00
	Memorial Fund Deposits & Credits	\$0.00
	Memorial Fund Withdrawals	\$0.00
June 30	Ending Balance (General + Memorial Funds)	\$9,384.56
	Memorial Fund Balance	\$264.58

(Continued from page one)

## Brush with death

Instead, he went on to marry Carolyn, his wife of 47 years. They have two married children and a grandson.

The couple has been active in Palma Ceia Presbyterian Church, and Cooley was the announcer for Plant High football games for four years.

He has sold insurance for 44 years.

His close brush with death makes him grateful for each day.

"I had a second chance."

When he reflects upon the current war, he turns to prayer.

"My prayers are that we will always have a minimum loss of life," Cooley said



Becky Gallemore Saunders appreciatively receives the USS Sea Poacher Memorial Plaque on behalf of the family of the late Roy Holland Gallemore Lt, 44-47 who passed away on February 14, 2005. Jack Merrill TM 61-63 presented the plaque.





## From the President:

**Bill Brinkman**

seapoacher@austin.rr.com  
m.com

Hello Shipmates,

### 1. Reunion up-date:

Ivan Joslin has secured the hotel for our Reunion May 18-21, 2006 in Virginia Beach. As of two weeks ago, all ready have 20 people who have booked rooms. Not bad with the reunion almost 10 months from now!

Ivan & Marjorie Joslin will be moving to Florida this October. They will continue to spear head the 2006 reunion in Virginia Beach.

However, for those shipmates living near Virginia Beach, don't be surprised if I "Impress" you into helping with the details of conducting a successful reunion.

### 2. Ship's store

Remember that we've got quite a few nice ship's store items for sale and that the profits go back into the treasury for use at the Reunion and for Memorial Plaques.

So, avoid the rush, and order some items from the ship's store.



Photo by: Jon Nagle, MM, 62-63

Gentlemen: Bring your wallets and plastic to Reunion Virginia Beach. This lovely piece of art by Gazie Nagle will be on the auction block to help support our Memorial Fund which provides a Memorial Plaque to the next of kin of recently passed former USS Sea Poacher shipmates. The original photo from which this was painted was taken as we transited to New London after our shipyard overhaul in 1962.

## Membership Roll

The following is a list of paid-up members. Are you on this list? If not, why not?

### LIFETIME MEMBERS

Robert Abbott	Ron Godwin	Jack Nims
Bob Acor	Dave Green	Paul Ogg
Charles Ahler	Carl Hale	Tom Polen
Paul Allers	Dave Harms	Jim Powers
Peter Amunrud	Ray Heckroth	Charles Rager
Dave Andres	Bill Hellmer	Dewey Reed
Ted Anthony	Robert Henry	Larry Reiche
Robert Beers	Bill Higley	David Richter
Harvey Benson	Dick Holtz	David Ringland
Truman Bernhard	Robert Horne	Robert Ritz
Doug Bishop	Harry Huggins	Salvatore Rosina
Kenneth Bonnell	Carol Humphries	John Savory
Bill Brinkman	Richard Jennison	Karl Schipper
Russ Burrows	Gerald Joseph	Russell Schonendorf
Frank Calderone	Ivan Joslin	William Sharp
Bobbie Calvert	Donald Kamuf	Harry Sherman
Dick Carney	Mike Kassinger	Rick Smock
Leo Carr	Allan Katen	John Snook
Kent Carroll	Richard Laake	Fred Socha
John Chaich	Troy Law	Richard Stickney
Richard Clubb	Carroll Lawson	Marty Stokes
Cal Cochrane	Ken LeBlanc	Chuck Strand
Lawrence Colwell	Frank Lederer	David Strunk
Robert Cooley	Bill Luttrell	Robert Sumner
James Cooney	J.J. Lynch	Chester Taylor
Gerry Coutou	John Mach	Tommy Thompson
Bill Crismon	Ken Manion	James Tryon
Alfred Dickey	Mark Markham	Ed Urban
William Donnelan	Robert Matheny	Don Waltrap
Merlyn Dorrheim	Clement Maue	Arne Weinfurter
Daniel Dybala	Jim McClanahan	Larry Weinfurter
Leon Eggleston	Carl McCutcheon	James Weston
Buster Flaskas	Jack Merrill	Olin Williams
Dante Fortini	Joe Murdoch	George Wyse
Richard Fox	Gary Nagle	Bruce Young
Larry Garrett	Jon Nagle	

### MEMBERS

Dewey Akins	Ralph French	Roy Randall
Charlie Auclair	Harold Gall	Mark Richwine
Vernon Barnett	Arthur Geddes	Robert Roth
Russell Bauer	James Gentry	John Saeli
Rodney Benefield	Lyle Gillette	Herman Scallen
William Buckley	Billy Gorsuch	Donald Schwartz
James Burgett	Darrell Hickman	Bennie Sheldon
Warren Burkett	Jimmie Hickman	Delvin Smith
Neil Cabe	Gerald Keffer	John Sohl Jr.
Rick Carlson	Kenneth Kile	Ron Spooner
Frank Caulfield	Phillip Kinney	Harold Stanley
Ed Chubb	Ray Krivacy	Gary Stark
Don Cipra	Jim Lemmerman	Glen Suttle
Harold Cook	Jerry Loveless	Harold Swan
William Cook	Nathan Lundy	Terry Tague
James Deming	Buster McCollum	Ed Thompson
Ray Dicaire	Peter McCormack	James Thompson
William Docekal	Daniel McLaren	Ron Thompson
Charles Donnelly	Thomas Nein	Albert Turbeville
William Dougherty	Charles O'Baker	Tony Tuttobene
William Douthit	Charles Owen	Andrew Viers
John Dubbs	Roy Palmer	Ed Voloka
Daniel Eberhardt	William Parhamenko	Ross Wesner
Jack Enslinger	Ron Patterson	Don Wilkinson
Garl Eubank	Dale Peterson	Lee Yonts
Francis Evens	Robert Poteet	
Richard Ferris	John Rabusse	

If your name does not appear here . . . Why not??? Please help support your association!!!! Dues are \$10 per year or \$100 for a life membership. Please make check payable to "Sea Poacher Association" and Mail to: Bill Brinkman, 4500 Tiffany Nichole St., Round Rock, TX 78664-9466

# FINAL PATROL

*I have one consolation that lives  
with me today.*

*That God is near to them, in his own special way.  
So, God in all Your mercy, keep near Thyself the soul,  
Of every Submariner, still on his final patrol.  
Lord, these departed shipmates, with dolphins on their chests  
are part of an outfit known as the best.  
Make them welcome and take them by the hand.  
You'll find without a doubt they were the best in all the land.  
So, heavenly Father add their names to the roll of our  
departed shipmates still on patrol.  
Let them know that we who survive will  
always keep their memories  
alive.*

Bruce Adams, MoMM 44  
Raymond E. Adcock, SN 47 -  
December 1974  
Don Barnes, EM 44-49  
Raymond Bassett, FT 64 - July 2000  
Irwin Battle, MoMM 45-46 - July 2000  
Ray Bayans, EN 49 - November 1983  
Richard Baybutt, FN 44-46 - December 2002  
Reynold A. Binder, MoMM 46-47 - June 1993  
Powell Blair, Pritc, 45 - April 1992  
Salvatore Blangiardi, EN 61 - June 2002  
Federick Boczon, EN 48-50 - May 1993  
Joseph Bole, ET 50-51 - 1995  
John Bornowski, TM 54-57  
W. D. Boulton, 44  
George Bracey, TN 58-59 - USS Thresher  
Norris Bradley, SN 44-45  
Jim Brink, Ens 44 - September 2003  
Josephino Bugarin TN 50-54  
James Burke, EN 44-46  
George Butkis, EN 62-63 - October 2003  
Richard Byom, QM 51 - April 1976  
Louis Cafone SN 44-45 - June 1981  
Olie L. Carden, EN 50-57  
J.B. Carson, TM 53, 56-59  
Clarence Carter, EM 45 - September 2003  
Vinton Carver, QM 55-56 - December 1990  
Murry Cherry, TM 48-49 - April 1984  
Robert Chestnut, EN 59-62  
Raymond Conahan, SA 49 - 20 October 2001  
Arthur Cornish, MoMM 45-48 - 2001  
Richard H. Coupe, XO 61-63 - May 2003  
Raymond J. Cremin, EM 60 - January 2005  
Richard Crittenden, EM 58 - January 2004  
Stephen P. Cyganik, FT 45 - February 2002  
Jerome A. Davi, XO 60-61 - February 2003  
Fred Davis, TM 49-53  
William Davis, MoMM 44-48  
Maurice Demers, HM 48-50 - October 1995  
Robert DeMonge, TM 55-57 - August 8, 1996  
Kenneth Deramus, TM 57-63  
Alfred Despang, EM 59, 61-63  
John Dittmer, MoMM 47-48  
Francis Drosch, EN 59 - 1978  
John H. Epps, Ltjg 47  
Morris E. Ezell Jr., QM 46 - June 2004  
Jess Favors, EM 59-60 - February, 2003  
George Fender, EN 52-July 2003  
Elwood H. Forni, SO 58 - USS Thresher  
Charles H. Foy, GM 45-46 - May 22, 1974  
Roy Holland Gallemore, Lt 44-47 - February  
2005  
Frank Michael Gambacorta, CO 44 - December  
2000

Warden  
Gaskins, XO 45  
Robert C. Gaunt, TM 44 - 1953  
John Gerenser, SN 46-49 - 2000  
Raymond Jerome Gillin, ET 58-59 - March 2005  
William Gould, EN 46-49 - June 2003  
John A. Gorman, ET 54-55 - January 1990  
John H. Goss, MM 46-49 - 1954  
Rober Gouge, EN 57-60  
Henry Guthrie, EN 63-65 - 2001  
Bobbie Joe Hammac, FA 58-62 - May 1995  
Michael Hehmann ET 68-69 - 1993  
Joe Hemphill, EM 44-45  
James High, Lt, 57-60 - December 2003  
Dale Holtzclaw, EN 60-61 - 1999  
Scott E. Horton Jr., QM 44-47  
Ira R. Houston, RM 48-49  
Jerry Hucks, Ltjg 63-66 - June 2001  
William Hurt, MM 44-45  
Jack Johns, QM 49-50  
Alfred Jonas, EN 57 - February 2003  
Jerry Jorn, IC 51-54 - 7 November 2002  
Douglas Jordan, Lt, 59-61 - February 2005  
John Juricek, QM 63 - March 2000  
Zigmond Kanaszka, EM 52-55 - 1975  
Arthur Keevil, Ltjg, 47 - August 1993  
Carlos Kilgore, EM 63-65 - February 2003  
Edward Kilosky, EM 63 - 1997  
George Kiarman, IC 54 - May 2003  
Leonard R. Kojm, CO 61-63 - September 2004  
Leonard Kroll, TM 52-55  
Harry Kumanski, TM 45 - July 1993  
Stephen Kurkjian, EN 51 - November 1977  
Paul Lacouture, Lt 44  
Thomas L. Lampley, SN, 45-46 - March 2005  
Johnny Lazo, SO 61-63 - December 2002  
Robert Lebel, FN 44-46  
Neal Ledford, EN 49-50 - April 1993  
Charles F. Leigh, CO, 45-46  
Andrew Leslie, RM 55 - January 2000  
Herman LeVaur, MM 61 - 1994  
Jim Lofland, CS 58-61 - January 2004  
John Lorrey, MoMM 47 - December 1997  
Robert Madill, EM 49-50 - Jan. 1998  
D. B. Maher, CO 55  
Gerald Matern, YN 46 - 1998  
William McNeil, SN 47-48 - December 1999

Morgan J. Minchey,

TM 61-63 - May 2004  
John Minett, YN 45 - June 1989  
Rudolph Myers, QM 58-60 - 1993  
William Nelson, EM 52-54 - Jan. 2002  
Bobbie Newell, GM 44-46  
Edgar Nies, RM 49 - Sept. 2002  
Bliss Nisonger, TM 44 - 2000  
Constantine Pappas, SC 44-45  
John Park, CS 63-65  
Nando Passerine, TM 53-54 - July 1980  
Thomas H. Polk, CO 55-57  
William Porter, EM 44-46  
Tracey Price, EM 44-46  
Paul Purkrabek, Ltjg 47 - November 2003  
Burton E. Rider, EN 51-53 - March 2003  
Henry Robertson, EN 48-50  
Horace Rogers, TM 58-59 - June 1993  
John Ross, SN 44-47  
Bruce Rounds, SN 44-46  
Charles Russell, Lt. 59-61  
Frank Rutzen, FN 55-57 - November 1999  
Ernest Sabol, Ltjg 57 - June 2003  
Richard Sanders, IC 66-68  
Louis Sardo, QM 60-61 & 64 - April 2004  
William G. Sargent, EM 63-64  
Henry Schmidt, CS 55-57  
Herman Sschoenberger,, TM 57-59  
Sid Schorr, SN 45 - March 2003  
Walter Seifert, EN 60-62  
Vernon Seiple, SO 61-63  
Thomas Serici, EN 63-67  
Ed Sharp, EN 67  
Edward Shook, EM 64-68  
Robert Silvis, SC 45-46 - May 1999  
Norman Skiles, RM 58-59 - October 2003  
James E. Smith, TM 63-64 - 1991  
Ebrue G. Smojicie, EN 44-51  
Nolan (Dave) Spence, ET 54-56 - October 2000  
Yaber Staggs, EM 67-68 - September 1989  
Lawrence Stahl, XO 59-61 - April 2000  
Peter Stea, EN 53 - May 2002  
Ezra Swartz, MoMM 46-47, August 2001  
James Symanek, SA 68-69 - July 1970  
Melvin Syme, TM 44-45  
William N. V. Tackett, EN 51-55 - February 2005

Frank J. Taggart, FT 56-59  
Joe Tasillo, FA 52 - March 1993  
Charlie Thieme, MM 44-47 - 2003  
Richard Todd, SN 45  
Gordon Townsend, RM 57 - June 1982  
Theodore M. Ustick, CO 49 - May 2000  
Warren Vanderwerker, EM 57-63  
Robert E. Van Meter Jr., EM 60-62 - August 2003  
Peter Wallin, QM 56-59 - March 1991  
Charlie Wentz, YN 56-58 - June 1999  
Ellis White, Lt 44 - June 2004  
Wayne White, EN 61-62 - April 1962  
Jesse Wiles, RM 61 - November 1999  
R. K. R. Worthington, XO 44  
Theodore Znuj, MM 44-46

## Sailors Rest Your Oars

# Sinking the fleet



**EDITOR'S NOTE:** Vice Adm. (ret.) Albert H. Konetzni Jr. testifies today before the Base Realignment and Closure Commission (BRAC), the panel reviewing proposed military base closings. He served as Deputy Commander and Chief of Staff, U.S. Fleet Forces Command, 2001-04, and Commander, Submarine Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, 1998-01. I am breaking my rule regarding political content in this publication, I believe this subject is important to all of us as ex-submariners.



**New London Navy Base circa 1800's**

American military history records many instances of poor readiness or non-availability of war-fighting equipment when conflicts broke out. (More on that below.)

In that light, consider these facts:

- American submarines perform many missions, but serve as the premier anti-submarine weapons platform in the U.S. Navy inventory today.
- There are 400 submarines in the world today; about half are friendly. China has a larger submarine force than the United States.
- China is building at least five new nuclear fast attack submarines and two new ballistic-missile nuclear submarines today greatly enhancing Chinese capabilities.
- Nineteen submarines were launched last year worldwide nine of them in China.
- And the United States has launched just four submarines in the last five years.

I've often wondered how many U.S. submarines were lost because of faulty torpedoes during the first two years of World War II. Less than half of our torpedoes actually functioned in combat but the Navy's high command refused to admit the problem until late in 1942.

As important would the war in the Pacific have ended sooner if we had reliable torpedoes early in the conflict?

Underscoring the tragedy (a scandal dramatized in the 1958 war drama "Run Silent, Run Deep") was that the problem faulty torpedo exploders and a failure to achieve proper run depths was well-known in the fleet, but the Navy's leaders back in Washington wouldn't believe it.

In fact, until late 1943 it took an average of 12 torpedoes to sink a single enemy ship. Several naval officers risked their careers by voicing great concern about the problems to naval leadership all to no avail.

Intellectual arguments, analysis and tests were ignored and many American submariners lost their lives. It wasn't until early 1944 that the needed modifications were made.

Sixty years later, the U.S. submarine force is once again facing a situation that will diminish its effectiveness as an instrument of national defense if not result in the effective demise of this proud force.

The Navy, which has already been shrinking its submarine force, now proposes to compound the damage by removing the infrastructure necessary to train, develop and maintain that force by closing the Naval Submarine Base in New London, Conn., and the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Kittery, Maine. The closures will accelerate the demise of our powerful submarine force.

The closure of the Portsmouth facility will leave the Navy with inadequate capacity to maintain our submarines, reducing the pub-

lic shipyard structure to one shipyard on the East Coast. All at a time, as a result of aging, our Los Angeles and Trident class submarines will require extra maintenance and modernization.

Every facet of submarine warfare is represented at New London (initial and ship training, maintenance, tactical development, undersea medicine, laboratories, major defense contractors) creating a powerful synergy that enhances each function. Losing that base will eradicate a vital Navy center.

That closure will also reduce our strategic flexibility. East Coast submarines deploy to the Pacific via the North Pole. New London is perfectly geographically situated to continue this practice as well as to support operations in the Mediterranean and the Persian Gulf.

What is particularly troubling about the drive to close these critical facilities is the sudden shift in the analysis behind the U.S. military's approach to the structure of our armed forces, and its relationship to the budget.

Our submarine force has been the subject of 14 studies in the last 12 years. These studies are time-consuming, but for the most part they are appropriate and welcome. We should be ready to justify the billions of dollars that the taxpayers spend on submarines; if we can't, the money should be taken away.

Repeatedly, the submarine force has been able to show a solid case both in real world "peacetime" operations and in speculative wartime usage that provides a firm basis for the American taxpayer to be comfortable that that money is not being wasted.

But more recent studies are different: The pragmatic and balanced approach favored in the past, one that understood the need to maintain a force ready for war, seems to have been replaced by a "reverse-engineered" analysis that starts with a fixed dollar amount, then finds and attempts to design a force structure that fits the budget.

This approach threatens to damage national security; most of the analytically driven studies have shown a need for from 55 to 75 submarines. But the most recent Navy review in March put the numbers at 37 to 41.

This disparity needs to be further analyzed and resolved before we disable the U.S. Navy's Submarine Force by shutting down its infrastructure. If America can't afford a submarine force as a nation, the people of America need to know it now.

I hope that we as a nation, will agree on the proper size of our Submarine Force before we decide to close important infrastructure. If we do otherwise, we imperil our national security.



# Sea Poacher Ships' Store



## SPECIAL OFFER:

**\$ 2 off** if you buy a shirt along with either an Afghan or coffee cup or Tankard as we use the shirt to protect the coffee cup/tankard during shipping:

Afghan + Shirt = \$ 70.00  
Coffee cup + shirt = \$ 34.00  
Tankard + shirt = \$ 40.00

ITEM	Quan.	Price	TOTAL
Afghan	—	\$50.00	—
Ships' Patch	—	\$5.50	—
Ballcap	—	\$12.00	—
Coffee Cup	—	\$14.00	—
Golf Shirt	—	\$22.00	—
Etched Glass Tankard	—	\$20.00	—
WWII & Reunion 2003 Video	—	\$14.00	—
Reunion 2004 Video	—	\$10.00	—
TOTAL			—

Please make check payable to Bill Brinkman and mail to: *Bill Brinkman, 4500 Tiffany Nicole St., Round Rock, TX 78664-9466.* Prices includes shipping!

# The women who loved us

By BOB "DEX" ARMSTRONG

There's a lot of stuff written about submarines. The men, the ships, the schools, the equipment, units, piers, locations, bars, hookers, and God knows what else. But, we don't say a helluva lot about those wonderful women who loved us. Believe me, loving a damn diesel boat sailor took one Cracker Jack woman. They were, and will always remain among God's most endearingly wonderful creations.

As a linehandler, I was always topside when we came into Pier 22. It could be 0200 in a damn hailstorm and they would be there; Snow; Rain; Hell, rattlesnakes could have been falling from the sky and they would have been there waiting for what? An unshaven, stinking, raggedy-ass idiot, hauling a sack of laundry, reeking of the inside of a seagoing submersible zoo.

They actually couldn't wait to get their arms around the smelly idiots that belched forth from the iron monster just tethered to the pier or bouncing tank tops with some other iron monster moored in the nest.

Hey, you lucky bastards sit back and close your eyes. Think back. Remember the days when the lady out there doing the dinner dishes before she goes upstairs to iron the shirt you'll wear to work tomorrow, was 24? Remember that? Back when you two lived on E-4 pay with sub, sea and foreign duty pay?

In those days, she met you with two-year-old Patrick on her hip, wearing a J.C. Penny sale sundress and a smile that needed yard markers. Later, when you were sucking snorkel air for a living, she attended parent teacher conferences, school plays, PTA spaghetti dinners, little league games, scout awards banquets and dental appointments without your help.

She sat in the emergency room at the Norfolk Naval Hospital and in the principal's office, times when it would have been really great to have you around.

They were saints. Saints who didn't exactly get prize packages. I mean, think back, marrying a guy who spent most of his time plowing invisible holes in the ocean, wasn't such a great deal. Living on peanut butter and jelly sandwiches until payday, knitted Christmas gifts. Dropping a busted TV off at the Salvation Army simply because repairs couldn't be fitted in the family budget. Hand me down kid's clothes, home permanents in lieu of trips to the beauty shop.

Horsefly, do you have any idea what a lucky bastard you are? Do you have any idea how rare it is for a woman to put up with crap like that? Yes, we were loved by some very special ladies. The 'Welcome home, sailor' with arms around your neck kind. Hell, the way you smelled and looked, you couldn't have paid somebody who didn't love you, to do that.

Remember duty nights when they passed the word, "Lady visitors aboard" and the Duty Officer sent the Below Decks Watch on a Paul Revere run through the boat whispering, "Murphy's bride is in the Crew's Mess watching the movie. Watch your ah, darn language and if you pass through the compartment don't pat the actresses on the screen, on the ass." Remember laying in your rack in the Alley and getting a whiff of some 'catch me, rape me' perfume, when some tender young thing dropped down into the boat? One whiff of that perfume and you were rooting through your sidelocker for a set of whites and heading up to Bells.



They actually ordered see through ooh-la-la baby doll nighties they wouldn't have been caught dead in under any other circumstances, to welcome you home.

Submarine sailors are not known for their sensitivity when it comes to selecting cohabitational locations. Pier head parking lot, Kroger's food store parking lot. Driveway at vacationing pal's house. Front seat or back seat, didn't matter. One returning sailor used to toss two dollars worth of nickels in the backyard to keep his kids occupied. Another first class once took his teenage daughter to the movies to see 'Gone with the Wind' and then after a raging ten minutes of cohabitational bliss, he and his dear sweet bride fell asleep, and little Trixie watched the whole movie twice, because the folks running the theater, who knew the family, didn't want her standing out in the rain.

I once saw this TV program about nuke sailors whose wives put perfumed panties in sealed plastic baggies for sailors to tuck under their pillows to remember them by. You have any idea what that would have caused on a smokeboat? Nocturnal fantasy dreams would have had the place hopping around like fresh-caught fish in the bottom of an aluminum canoe.

They were ours. They will always be ours. Every damn submarine base should have a memorial tribute to the smokeboat sailors' bride. Say, a statue of a beautiful girl in a Robert Hall bargain basement fashion, holding the hand of a grinning bluejacket in acid-eaten dungarees and a frayed white hat.

Ladies, this is for you. God bless you and all you represent. You and you alone made a contribution to this nation's winning of the Cold War only you could have given. It was recognized by every boat sailor who ever stood topside when his boat put her lines over and saw the kind of smile true love puts on a patriotically-inspired, loyal woman's face. Those of us, not married at the time, learned lessons in what truly counts in a marriage from watching these amazingly wonderful ladies.

Well here's to you ladies. There was no more important part of submarining than being your friend. And being asked home for a home-cooked meal. Your life was not easy, in fact it was one helluva lot tougher than any starry-eyed bride should have been asked to deal with.

But, the reward for your personal hardships and sacrifices will be found in the memories all loyal and faithful women accumulate and in the deep respect by which you are held by the men who stood topside and regarded your \$8.95 sale dress as a gown worn by an angel!

**USS Sea Poacher (SS406)  
Association**

Bill Brinkman, President  
4500 Tiffany Nicole St.  
Round Rock, TX 78664-9466  
[seapoacher@austin.rr.com](mailto:seapoacher@austin.rr.com)

**Sea Poacher web site:**  
<http://seapoacher.com>

**From the  
Web Guru:**

Jon K. Nagle  
[jondryvac@aol.com](mailto:jondryvac@aol.com)

In case you don't have access to a computer or haven't visited the web site in a while, let me bring you up to date on the "happenings" on your web page.

Essentially, your web page, "seapoacher.com", is the story in words and pictures of the ship and crew USS Sea Poacher SS406 from commissioning in 1944 to decommissioning in 1969.

You'll see pictures of numerous young men, all thin and muscular and full of piss and vinegar ready to take on the world. They even have hair. You'll see the same men grown with age reliving the "Old Days" at ships reunions.

You'll see a list of all the crew, listed both by years on board and alphabetical. The alphabetical list also has the most recent e-mail addresses of a number of shipmates. A good web site has to have honest to goodness "war" stories sent in by your shipmates and we have many.

There is also other information like the story of the sinking and rescue of the USS Atule SS 403 and other submarine related links you can visit or tell your grandchildren about.

The latest news on the upcoming reunion is there plus a memorial to the shipmates who have gone on eternal patrol. You can also order your Sea Poacher supplies from the ships store-keeper or peruse the latest newsletter. Coming up will be pictures and articles on the last confederate submarine funeral.

But most important is you. What would you like to see on your web page? Let me know by clicking on the web page designer icon or write me at 1381 Black River Dr., Mt. Pleasant, SC 29466

Single up and Cast Off,  
Jon K. Nagle

