



1MC



The official newsletter of the Wolverine Base, United States Submarine Veterans, Inc.

Volume 2022, No. 1

WOLVERINE BASE CHRISTMAS PARTY



The fifth annual Wolverine Base Christmas Party was held on 19 December 2021. More than 30 members, spouses, significant others, and guests gathered at the Hamlin Pub in Shelby Township for the gala, organized by Bob and Denise Walsh, and presided over by Base Commander Fred Kinzel.

Although for the most part a festive occasion, the meeting included a "Tolling of the Boats" for those boats lost in December, in honor of our shipmates on Eternal Patrol.

The meeting also included the first presentation of the Wolverine Base "Submarine Veteran of the Year" award. The recipient was Wolverine Base member RMC(SS) (ret) Ron Mexicott, who was recognized for his efforts in procuring parade flags and honor guard equipment for the Base as well as obtaining donations supporting the Base from other veterans' organizations. WELL DONE Ron!



Base Commander Fred Kinzel and Base Treasurer Bob Walsh present Chief Mexicott with his award.

EAGLE SCOUT PRESENTATION



On October 16, Base Treasurer Bob Walsh and Vice Commander Phil Klintworth attended an Eagle Scout Court of Honor for Griffin Bloch of Boy Scout Troop 391 at the Clinton Macomb Public Library. After explaining the many similarities between qualifying in submarines and achieving Eagle Scout rank, they presented Griffin with his USSVI certificate.

Griffin's Eagle Scout project was the construction of a gaga ball court for the elementary school he had attended previously.

Congratulations, Griffin!

CHARITABLE CAUSES

From Bob Walsh, Base Treasurer:

I am pleased to announce that we contributed a total of \$2056.00 to charitable causes in 2021 as follows:

\$1706.00 to Veterans Returning Home

\$350.00 to the USS Silversides Museum

Your generous contributions were greatly appreciated by both of these organizations and reflect the serving character of who we are as a base.

Ah-OO-GAH!

MUSEUM SUBMARINES

A continuing feature of the *1MC* is a roster of current USN museum submarines, and some information about each. The current list follows. The data is taken mainly from the website of the Historic Naval Ships Association [www.hnsa.org].

Name	Hull No.	Location	Configuration	Website
USS Marlin	(SST-2)	Omaha, NE	SST	parks.cityofomaha.org/.../281-freedom-park
USS Cod	(SS-224)	Cleveland, OH	Fleet boat	www.usscod.org/
USS Drum	(SS-228)	Mobile, AL	Fleet boat	www.ussalabama.com/
USS Silversides	(SS-236)	Muskegon,	Fleet boat	www.silversidesmuseum.org/
USS Cavalla	(SS-244)	Galveston, TX	Guppy II	www.galvestonnavalmuseum.com/
USS Cobia	(SS-245)	Manitowoc, WI	Fleet boat	www.wisconsinmaritime.org/
USS Croaker	(SS-246)	Buffalo, NY	Guppy II	www.buffalonaivalpark.org/
USS Bowfin	(SS-287)	Honolulu, HI	Fleet boat	www.bowfin.org/
USS Ling	(SS-297)	Hackensack, NJ	Fleet boat	www.njnm.org/
USS Lionfish	(SS-298)	Fall River, MA	Fleet boat	www.battleshipcove.org/
USS Batfish	(SS-310)	Muskogee, OK	Fleet boat	www.warmemorialpark.org/
USS Becuna	(SS-319)	Philadelphia, PA	Guppy IA	www.phillyseaport.org/
USS Clamagore	(SS-343)	Mount Pleasant, SC	Guppy III	www.patriotspoint.org/
USS Pampanito	(SS-383)	San Francisco, CA	Fleet boat	www.maritime.org/
USS Razorback	(SS-394)	North Little Rock, AR	Guppy II	www.aimmuseum.org/
USS Torsk	(SS-423)	Baltimore, MD	Fleet snorkel	www.historicships.org/
USS Requin	(SS-481)	Pittsburgh, PA	Fleet snorkel	www.carnegiesciencecenter.org/
USS Dolphin	(AGSS-555)	San Diego, CA	Deep diving	www.sdmaritime.org/
USS Albacore	(AGSS-569)	Portsmouth, NH	Experimental	www.ussalbacore.org/
USS Nautilus	(SSN-571)	Groton, CT	SSN	www.ussnautilus.org/
USS Growler	(SSG-577)	New York, NY	SSG	www.intrepidmuseum.org/
USS Blueback	(SS-581)	Portland, OR	Teardrop hull	www.oms.edu/submarine

Featured in this issue is USS Batfish (SS-310)

USS Batfish (SS-310) is a Balao-class submarine, known primarily for the remarkable feat of sinking three Imperial Japanese Navy submarines in a 76-hour period, in February 1945. She is the first vessel of the United States Navy to be named for the batfish, a fish found off the coast of Peru, at depths ranging from 3 to 76 metres.

Originally to be named Acoupa, hull SS-310 was renamed Batfish on 24 September 1942 prior to its keel laying on 27 December 1942. Batfish was constructed at the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard Kittery, Maine, launched 5 May 1943, and commissioned 21 August 1943.

During World War II USS Batfish conducted seven war patrols between 1943 and 1945. She is credited with having sunk nine Japanese ships totaling 10,658 tons. She received the Presidential Unit Citation for her sixth war patrol in the South China Sea during which she sank three enemy submarines. She was also awarded six battle stars for her World War II service.

Decommissioned in 1946, Batfish was reactivated in 1952 for Korean War service, and decommissioned again in 1958. She subsequently served as a naval reserve training vessel in New Orleans.

THE MUSEUM SAGA

In 1969, Oklahoma Submarine veterans were impressed by the USS Drum museum in Mobile, Alabama, which drew over 300,000 paying visitors its first year. A delegation from the Oklahoma City and Tulsa chapters asked the U.S. Navy if they could adopt a retired submarine. On hand at the time in the New Orleans Naval Yard was USS Piranha, which the Navy agreed to turn over to them if they could fulfill the donation requirements. Wanting Piranha for his hometown, then State Senator James Inhofe agreed to sponsor a bill accepting the submarine for Oklahoma.

An initial report claimed that it was impossible to get a submarine as far upriver as Tulsa, due to the Arkansas River Channel not being deep enough above Muskogee. Later, a direct tow to Muskogee was determined to also not be possible, therefore another method of transport other than direct towing would have to be devised. The Muskogee City-County Trust Port Authority in the meantime donated five acres of prime waterfront real estate for the submarine's berth and memorial park.



The procurement committee met with the Navy for preliminary arrangements for the transfer of Piranha, however the Navy would not hold the submarine unless the committee made a formal application for her with possession being immediate once the donation contract was approved. Since the Arkansas River Navigable Waterway system would not be open for at least a year, interim docking charges would be incurred. The procurement committee decided to wait and take their chances on another submarine being made available.

In September 1970, the procurement committee inspected Batfish as a possible alternative to Piranha, both of which were mothballed at the Naval Inactive Ship Facility in Orange, Texas. Both submarines had suffered considerable neglect, with Piranha being almost completely cannibalized for parts, whereas Batfish was much cleaner and better outfitted. Batfish's better war record compared to Piranha impressed the committee; in 1971, a formal application to acquire Batfish was made. The Navy made no objection to the last-minute swap,

and the donation contract was drawn up on 24 June 1971. John H. Chafee, the Secretary of the Navy, approved the transaction and congressional approval was obtained on 8 November 1971.

On 9 December 1971, ownership of the boat was transferred to the Oklahoma Maritime Advisory Board. The towing was divided into two phases. Phase one was a direct offshore tow from Orange to the Avondale Shipyard in New Orleans. At the shipyard, Batfish would be raised on steel lifting straps and cradled between two pairs of bare-decked barges, so the submarine's draft would be high enough to make phase two of the tow, 1,350-mile upriver, possible. Labor issues at the Orange drydock caused the submarine to instead be towed to the Bethlehem Steel drydock in Beaumont, Texas. After a general inspection and clearing of fuel and ballast tanks, Batfish was sealed up and was ready to tow to Avondale on 1 March 1972. At Avondale, it was found that the four barges were insufficient to reduce the submarine's draft, and a new plan for six 120-by-32-foot barges, ballasted to the outside and linked together by steel cables. On 13 March, Batfish was partially secured to the barges by lifting straps, but no cables had been placed to bind them together. That afternoon, the English tanker Silverman passed through a nearby 5-knot zone at 11 knots and the resulting wake sank one barge and seriously damaged several others, although Batfish herself escaped major harm.

The flotilla of barges was re-assembled, and Batfish was slowly moved up-river by two tugs at 4 knots. On 3 May 1972 she passed with ease through Lock-and-Dam Number 6, but her superstructure had trouble clearing a bridge on the way into Little Rock, Arkansas, and was only able to pass under when the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers lowered the river level by 3 feet. One tug returned downriver, and the second tug continued the tow towards Fort Smith. Batfish arrived at the Will Brothers Port of Muskogee Terminal on 7 May 1972: this became her temporary home until a 120-foot wide, 1/4-mile trench could be dug to the boat's permanent berthing site. On 4 July 1972, while still at Muskogee Terminal, Batfish was unofficially opened to the public. Heavy spring rains flooded the Arkansas River on 12 March 1973, which caused Batfish to strain at her moorings, with fears that she would rip loose and damage the surrounding docks or collide with the new U.S.



Route 62 bridge downriver and block the channel. Although the submarine remained moored, the Oklahoma Tourism and Recreation Commission wanted to return the submarine to the Navy. However, the Navy expected Oklahoma to honor its contract.

On 4 April 1973, the trench to the new slipway was completed, and Batfish was maneuvered into position by cables attached to four bulldozers, plus a Port of Muskogee tugboat. Over the next week, further flooding of the slip was used to bring the submarine to her final resting elevation, and by 1 May, she had been realigned to overlook the Arkansas River at what is now **Muskogee War Memorial Park: Home of the USS Batfish**. Batfish was officially opened on the Memorial Day weekend. By the end of August 1973, the submarine was attracting a thousand visitors a week, with income from paid attendance doubling over the boat's first



seven weeks on display. The submarine had been restored well, with the exception of the conning tower, and she was open to the public year round.

UNPLANNED UNDERWAY



The submarine was washed from her position during the floods of May 2019, and suffered \$150,000 in damage. The park and grounds have reopened, but the submarine remains closed while funds are raised for repairs.

A plan to relocate the submarine, including the artifacts in the museum and the pieces on the museum grounds, to Three Forks Harbor in Fort Gibson, OK, was announced last November. The entire process will take 3 to 5 years.

COMING EVENTS

16 Jan	1600	Monthly base meeting, Hamlin Pub (22 Mile Rd & Hayes, Shelby Twp)
20 Feb	1600	Monthly base meeting, Hamlin Pub (22 Mile Rd & Hayes, Shelby Twp)
20 Mar	1600	Monthly base meeting, Hamlin Pub (22 Mile Rd & Hayes, Shelby Twp)
NOTE: If in-person meetings are not possible due to COVID restrictions, Zoom meetings will be scheduled. Check your email, the Base website, or the Base Facebook page for additional information.		



LOST BOATS [JANUARY – MARCH]

USS Scorpion (SS-278)

Lost on Jan 5, 1944 with the loss of 77 officers and men in the East China Sea, on her 4th war patrol. It is assumed she was sunk by a mine.

USS Argonaut (SS-166)

Lost on Jan 10, 1943 with the loss of 102 officers and men off Rabaul, on her 3rd war patrol. While attacking a convoy, she torpedoed a Jap destroyer who along with 2 other destroyers depth charged her. As she tried to surface, the destroyers sank her by gun fire.

USS Swordfish (SS-193)

Lost on Jan 12, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men somewhere near Okinawa, on her 13th war patrol. Probably was lost to a mine.

USS S-36 (SS-141)

Lost on Jan 20, 1942 with no loss of life, on her 2nd war patrol. She ran hard aground on a reef and radioed for help. The entire crew was rescued by a Dutch ship after they scuttled her.

USS S-26 (SS-131)

Lost on Jan 24, 1942 with the loss of 46 officers and men in the Gulf of Panama, on her 2nd war patrol. She was rammed by the USS PC-460 and sunk within seconds. The CO, XO and one lookout on the bridge, were the only survivors.

USS Barbel (SS-316)

Lost on Feb 4, 1945 with the loss of 81 officers and men on her 4th war patrol. Based on Japanese records, she was bombed near the southern entrance to the Palawan Passage.

USS Shark I (SS-174)

Lost on Feb 11, 1942 with the loss of 59 officers and men on her 1st war patrol. Shark was the 1st US submarine sunk by enemy surface craft in the Pacific. She was most likely sunk by depth charges.

USS Amberjack (SS-219)

Lost on Feb 16, 1943 with the loss of 72 officers and men on her 3rd war patrol. Off Rabaul, she was attacked by a Japanese patrol plane, attacked by a torpedo boat and then depth charged by a subchaser. One additional man was killed earlier on the last patrol.

USS Grayback (SS-208)

Lost on Feb 26, 1944 with the loss of 80 officers and men on her 10th war patrol. She appears to have been caught on the surface in the East China Sea by a Japanese carrier plane whose bombs made a direct hit. During this patrol she sank 4 ships totaling 21,594 tons and was tied for 11th in the number of ships sunk.

USS Trout (SS-202)

Lost on Feb 29, 1944 with the loss of 81 officers and men on her 11th war patrol. She was sunk by escorts in the middle of the Philippines Basin after sinking a passenger-cargoman and damaging another in a convoy.

USS Perch (SS-176)

Lost on March 3, 1942 near Java with no immediate loss of life, while on her 1st war patrol. She survived 2 severe depth chargings in less than 200 feet of water by 3 Japanese destroyers. The crew abandoned ship and scuttled her. Of the 59 officers and men taken prisoner, 53 survived the war and six died as POWs.

USS Grampus (SS-207)

Lost on March 5, 1943 with the loss of 71 officers and men, on her 6th war patrol. She was lost in Vella Gulf, sunk after engaging 2 Japanese Destroyers.

USS H-1 (SS-28)

Lost on March 12, 1920 with the loss of 4 men as they tried to swim to shore after grounding on a shoal off Santa Margarita Island, off the coast of Baja California, Mexico. Vestal (AR-4), pulled H-1 off the rocks in the morning of 24 March, only to have her sink 45 minutes later in some 50 feet of water. She was originally named the USS Seawolf before becoming H-1.

USS Triton (SS-201)

Lost on March 15, 1943 with the loss of 74 men. She was sunk north of the Admiralty Islands during a fight with 3 Japanese Destroyers. Triton was the 1st boat to engage the enemy in December 1941 off Wake Island, sinking 9 ships, 1 submarine and a destroyer.

USS Kete (SS-369)

Lost on March 20, 1945 with the loss of 87 officers and men at the end of her 2nd war patrol. Probably sunk near

Okinawa, by a Japanese submarine that itself was subsequently lost.

USS F-4 (SS-23)

Lost on March 25, 1915 with the loss of 21 men. She foundered 1.5 miles off of Honolulu when acid corrosion of the lead lining of the battery tank let seawater into the battery compartment, causing loss of control. She was raised in August 1915.

USS Tullibee (SS-284)

Lost on March 26, 1944 with the loss of 79 officers and men, on her 4th war patrol. It's believed she was a victim of a circular run by one of her own torpedoes. The lookout was the only survivor and he survived the war as a Japanese prisoner.

USS Trigger (SS-237)

Lost on March 26, 1945 with the loss of 89 officers and men, on her 12th war patrol. She was lost during a combined attack by Japanese antisubmarine vessels and aircraft. Trigger ranked 7th in total tonnage sunk and tied for 8th in number of ships sunk.

Lost Harbor

by Leslie Nelson Jennings

There is a port of no return, where ships
May ride at anchor for a little space
And then, some starless night, the cable slips,
Leaving an eddy at the mooring place . . .
Gulls, veer no longer. Sailor, rest your oar.
No tangled wreckage will be washed ashore.



Our 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.



Wolverine Base

Macomb County, Michigan

(586) 945-8561

<https://www.ussvimich.org/>

Officers

Base Commander: Fred Kinzel

Sr. Vice Commander: Phil Klintworth

Secretary: Denise Walsh

Treasurer: Bob Walsh

Chaplain: Ron Wilkins

Chief of the Boat: Ted Smiglewski