

# The Piper Report

USS Piper (SS409) 1944 - 1967



December 2011



## USS Piper (SS409)

Keel laid by Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery Maine, 15 March 1944; launched 26 June 1944; commissioned 23 August 1944; decommissioned 16 June 1967.

Balao class; Length 311' 8"; Beam 27' 3"; Speed 20.25 knots surface, 8.75 knots submerged; Test depth 400 feet; Displacement 1526 tons (surface); 2401 tons (submerged); 21 inch torpedo tubes: 6 fwd, 4 aft; Propulsion: twin screw, diesel electric drive (Fairbanks Morse engines) with Guppy (snorkel) conversion in 1951. Design Complement: 6 officers, 60 enlisted men.

Although built late in World War II, Piper completed 3 successful war patrols in the Pacific, winning four battle stars before the end of hostilities. She was responsible for sinking more than 6000 tons of Japanese shipping.

After the war, Piper operated out of the U.S. Naval Submarine Base in Groton Connecticut until her decommissioning in 1967.

## Remembering Diesel Boat Thanksgivings

by Bob 'Dex' Armstrong

Memory is a wonderful means of cost-free transport. It allows old rascals to revisit their youth and romp all over yesteryear with the freedom of people with far younger legs.

After Thanksgiving dinner this year, I took a short snooze in my magic carpet daydreaming chair and revisited the old Requin messdeck once more for one of those old fashion 'no holds barred' Thanksgiving rollicking raghat free for alls.

Thanksgiving in the old sewer pipe navy was a really big deal... especially at sea.

Before shoving off on a run, the cooks laid in the requisite goodies... six to eight frozen turkeys (to be precooked the night before, two at a time and reheated reload-style prior to serving)... a half ton of spuds... twenty cans of yams... ten cans of cranberry sauce... assorted nuts... cornbread stuffing in cellophane bags and five boxes of El Cheapo cigars.

Cigars were a most important part of any fleet submarine celebratory meal. These were the days before the gloom and doomers invented 'secondhand smoke'. Hell, the air in the old diesel subs was 80% to 90% tobacco smoke, anyway. It was not without reason that the contraptions were called 'smoke-boats'.

The cigars were purchased by vote of the totally illegal... against regulation... every boat had one... slush fund committee.

The slush fund, known in the compartments inhabited by raghats as the 'saltwater saving and loan', was a long-standing boatservice financial institution that operated far beyond regulation by the FDIC, Federal Securities and Exchange Commission, the FBI, Secret Service, or the Naval Investigative Service, and it's interest rate didn't have a damn thing to do with the chief monkey at

the Federal Reserve. It was a bluejacket financial Institution run along the principle of Jesse James economics... out of a cigar box under the foot of the COB's flashpad.

Every sonouvabitch in the crew was a deputized collection agent and was prepared to deny it's existence up to the point that they administered the truth serum or set fire to your feet.

Where was I? Oh yes, the slush fund committee bought the obligatory five boxes of 'enlisted acceptable' cigars. By enlisted acceptable, I mean rolled dried vegetation of dubious origin, capable of being lit at one end allowing smoke to pass to the other end. Connection with anything that would be recognized in Cuba as tobacc, was highly unlikely.

Starting before sunset on the day prior to Thanksgiving, the cooks ran everyone but the two idiot messcooks out of the galley and started cooking the birds that had been removed from the reefer (freezer) on the Monday prior to Thanksgiving and thawed out in the cool room.

The messcooks got the job of reaching into the cavity, locating the bag of giblets and removing them. This required washing your hands with some kind of super germ killing soap supplied by and supervised by the Corpsman.

This is the type of job that, if not handled properly can get the poor messcooks ragged. So it must be handled like true professionals. To avoid terms like, "flunky gut handlers", and "bird gut shufflers", we would lay the bird carcass on the messtable, cover it with a fresh dish towel and give a running gynecological commentary during the removal process. Messcooking is part theatrical art and part menial servitude.

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## Commander's Column

December 2011

Dear Shipmates:

Let me start with just a few words, extending my best wishes to all of you and your families for a joyous holiday season.

I'd urge you to dig into any of your Piper memorabilia and if you come up with anything in written format or a photo or two that you'd like to share, please send along to Mike Bray for inclusion in the next Piper Report and perhaps the website. Mike does prodigious work for all of us, and I sent him a Certificate of Appreciation that Mother Burke printed up as a small token of our collective gratitude.

To say that this has been a sad year would be an understatement for me. Perhaps Lally and Holst's passing stand out most. Although he preceded me on Piper, Mike was a charter member of the Piper Association and worked diligently for the last twenty years to help us grow and prosper. And George was chief in the electrical gang, wherein I proudly stood junior controllerman watches back in maneuvering with my pal Tom Kucharski as my senior. He was a fun guy. Ski and I, our wives, and my firstborn, still in diapers and now in his mid-forties, even took a road trip back in 1968 to visit him and his family up in Presque Isle, Maine where he was on recruiting duty. Great memories, albeit faded now.

The future? Who the hell knows? Maybe we can have a get together in 2012 or 2013. It would be nice to keep these reunions going for as long as we're still above ground.

So we're no longer single-gender on submarines. Interesting. I shared at this year's reunion how I would have had a tough time sitting across a mess table from a young, NQP female, trying to keep the focus on teaching weapons systems and procedures. They'll only have the ladies in the wardroom for now, and as we all know, officers, being gentlemen, seldom think about those more earthy things...or do they? Do any of you remember the silk sheet caper in Bermuda?

I read an interesting article in today's Boston Globe about the Brits. I'll send it along to Mike for inclusion.

I came across the following. Back in 1966, Jim Pinkston, QM3 (SS)-maybe QM2, aka The Vagabond, Published Vagabond Tales when we were at sea. It was supposed to be anonymous. Yah, right. Here are some excerpts:

### 7 July 1966

- The XO invited Mazuc to eat with him so he could get him to ship over, and rumor has it that they sat through three calls.
- A senior ship's officer tried to get a Gertrude check over the UHF.

- Have you heard? A certain trim pump operator does exactly as he is told. He was ordered to put 3000 gallons in auxiliaries...auxiliaries were only 2000 gallons light. He put in the 2000 and put the other 1000 on the control room deck. Lots of fun.

### 27 July 1966

- Piper made her 13,000<sup>th</sup> dive last evening, with Mother Burke as the Conning Officer and Satch Cross taking the dive. From 23 August 1944 to 26 July 1966, Piper has made .615538461553846155384 dives per day.
- Bonham stated that he doesn't give a damn if her ever gets qualified...BYE.
- We are losing many planes and too many pilots in Vietnam. It has been proposed to recommission a battleship to take over some long range bombing. This could save a lot of money and lives, **since we will be there for some time**. (How prophetic was that?)

That's it for now. Stay well, stay involved, and always tap dance and whistle at the same time.

Regards,  
Frank

## Britain to Allow Female Submariners Associated Press

LONDON - Women will be allowed to serve on submarines for the first time in Britain's history, the country's defense secretary announced yesterday, after research showed there were no health reasons to support the ban.

A small number of female officers who volunteered will start training next year and start serving on Royal Navy nuclear powered submarines in late 2013, Phillip Hammond said.

The decision comes on the heels of an 18-month review conducted by the Royal Navy looking at health, social, and technical issues of allowing women to serve on submarines.

While women have been allowed on Royal Navy ships since 1990, they weren't eligible to be submariners because of concerns that higher levels of carbon dioxide in submarine atmosphere risked their health.

But the Ministry of Defense said recent research showed those risks were unfounded.

The defense secretary stressed that the armed forces must adapt rather than clinging to the past.

"We will value our history and tradition but we will not be slaves to them," Hammond said in a keynote speech to the Royal United Services Institute in London.

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T'was the Night Before Christmas-Submarine Style

By Sean Keck

T'was the night before Christmas, and what no-one could see,  
The men with the dolphins were under the sea.  
Most of the crew was flat on their backs,  
Snoring and dreaming all snug in their racks.

Those men on watch were making their rounds,  
Some manning the planes or listening for sounds.  
Back in maneuvering or down in the room,  
They all hoped the oncoming watch would come soon.

I'd finished some PM's whose time was now due,  
And hoped for some sleep, even an hour or two.  
Against better judgment I took a short stroll,  
And found myself wandering into control.

The Nav had the Conn, the COW was in place,  
The COB had the Dive and a scowl on his face.  
The helm and the planes were relaxed but aware,  
The QM and ET were discussing a dare.

To comply with the orders the Nav told the Dive,  
To bring the boat up with minimum rise.  
The orders were given and soon they were there,  
At periscope depth with a scope in the air.

The QM confirmed our position with care,  
The broadcast was copied, we brought in some air.  
The Nav on the scope let out a small cry,  
He shook his head twice and rubbed at his eyes.

He looked once again to find what it was,  
That interrupted his sweep and caused him to pause.  
Try as he might there was nothing to see,  
So down went the scope and us to the deep.

I asked what it was that caused his dismay,  
He sheepishly said, "I'm embarrassed to say."  
It could have been Northern Lights or a cloud,  
Or a meteorite he wondered aloud.

But to tell you the truth I guess I must say,  
Whatever it was it looked like a sleigh.  
And though it passed quickly and never was clear,  
I almost believe it was pulled by reindeer.

We laughed and teased him and I got up to go,  
When our moment was broken by "Conn, Radio."  
They told us a message was just coming in,  
We looked at the depth gauge and started to grin.

"Radio, Conn, I feel safe to say,  
Your attempt at a joke is too long delayed.  
If it had been sooner it might have been neat,  
But I doubt we're receiving at four-hundred feet."

"Conn, Radio, you can come down and see,  
We're not playing games to any degree."  
I headed aft with nothing better to do,  
Surprised by the fact it was still coming through.

It stopped and was sent to control to be read,  
The Nav read it slowly and scratched at his head.  
Then again he began but this time aloud,  
To those that now waited, a curious crowd.

"To you Denizens of the Deep and men of the sea,  
Who risk your life daily so others stay free.  
I rarely have seen you on this, my big night,  
For far too often you are hidden from sight.

But purely by luck I saw you tonight,  
As your scope coaxed the plankton to glow in the night.  
And lucky for me I've finally won,  
The chance to say thanks for all you have done.

I know that you miss your families at home,  
And sometimes you feel as if you're alone.  
But trust what I say and I'll do what's right,  
I'll take something special to your families tonight.

Along with the gifts I'll take to your kin,  
I'll visit their dreams and leave word within.  
They'll hear of your love, and how you miss them,  
I'll tell them that soon you'll be home again.

It might not be much I know that is true,  
To thank you for all the things that you do.  
But I'll do what I can, while you do what's right,  
Merry Christmas to all, and to all a goodnight.

*Contributed by shipmate Mother Burke*



Christmas in Monaco - 1963

*Phil Pattison photo*

## Obituaries

### Wallace W. Hankins, Jr.

Wallace W. Hankins Jr., CAPT, USN, Ret., died September 24 from complications of heart and pulmonary disease at his home in Annapolis, surrounded by his family. He was born in Minnesota to Wallace W. Hankins Sr. and Beatrice Hankins. He was raised in Duluth, where he attended high school and junior college until July 1942, when he entered the U.S. Navy as a midshipman at the U.S. Naval Academy in Annapolis. He graduated with the Class of 1946, was commissioned as Ensign, and married Kathleen Giddings of Severna Park, all on June 6, 1945. With her he embarked on a varied career of twenty-five years on active duty that spanned the entire period from the last months of World War II, most of the Cold War, the Korean Conflict and Vietnam. Captain Hankins's first ship was the USS FARGO (CL106) 1945-1947 during that cruiser's contribution to the balance of power in the Mediterranean between Marshal Tito's Yugoslav troops and those of the U.S. and U.K. Occupation Forces in Italy. Following that protracted foreign cruise (11 months), he served on the small craft USS PCE 903 operating from Hawaii to the northwest Pacific Ocean until 1949, when he began submarine training in New London, Connecticut. Except for two years as an instructor at the U.S. Naval Academy, 1953-1955, his early submarine duty was served in Fleet-type and snorkel-equipped diesel submarines, USS PIPER, USS GUAVINA and USS ATULE. It culminated in command of the USS GROUPER (SSK 214) 1957-1959. Then he was assigned to the U.S. Naval War College, Newport, Rhode Island, first as a student and then as a faculty member writing and teaching courses in strategy and tactics. In 1963, then-Commander Hankins was detailed to war requirements planning in the staff of the U.S. Navy Antisubmarine Warfare Force Pacific Fleet, in Hawaii. While on the faculty of the Naval War College, he concurrently earned his MA degree in international relations from Boston University. In 1964, Commander Hankins served aboard the carrier USS YORKTOWN (CV S 10) on the staff of Commander Antisubmarine Group Three, primarily operating in the Western Pacific and South China Sea. Completing that tour, he assumed command of Submarine Division Twelve in Hawaii. Following that command tour, Commander Hankins joined the Naval Inspector General's branch of the Chief of Naval Operations staff in Washington, in which position he was privileged to participate in the inspections (management audits) of all of the top command (four-star) echelons and a number

of others. Concurrently he earned his MBA degree from Southern Illinois University in addition to his Navy duties during that tour. At the close of his Washington tour of duty, Captain Hankins retired from active duty and resumed residence in Severna Park. After his retirement from active duty, Captain Hankins became a registered representative for Legg, Mason, leaving in 1974 to join the management analysis group in the Department of Budget and Fiscal Planning in the State of Maryland government, serving until 1980. Captain Hankins was an active member of Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church in Severna Park and enjoyed singing in their choir for forty-one years. He was ordained elder in 1970. His other interests included sailing, fitness swimming, community leadership, creative writing, and family gatherings. In October 2002, he and Kathie moved from Severna Park to the Ginger Cove Retirement Community in Annapolis. He is survived by his wife of 66 years, Kathleen of Annapolis and formerly of Severna Park; three daughters and their husbands, Linda Hankins Dukes and Frank Dukes of Charlottesville, VA, Professor Leslie Kathleen Hankins and Cliff Rappoport of Iowa City, IA, and Laurette Hankins-O'Connell and Kevin O'Connell of Severna Park; three sisters, Margaret Hanson and Jane Haglund of Minnesota, and Katherine Saylor of Tennessee; nine grandchildren, Clarissa, Lenore, Lydia Rose, Jesse, Patrick, Daniel, Roderick, Megan and Brendan; and eight great-grandchildren. The funeral, originally scheduled for Thursday, September 29th, has been postponed and will be rescheduled for a later date. For updated information please call Woods Memorial Presbyterian Church at 410-647-2550. Memorial contributions may be sent to Woods Church, 611 Baltimore Annapolis Blvd, Severna Park, MD 21146, or to the Severna Park Community Center, P.O. Box 691, Severna Park, MD 21146. Published in The Capital on September 26, 2011

### Robert Hailey

Robert Hailey, CAPT, USN, Ret., 93, died in Williamsburg, Va., on Sept. 26, 2011. Bob graduated from high school in Big Spring, Texas, attended McMurry College for one year and worked for a year in the oil fields of West Texas, before entering the United States Naval Academy in July 1937. His 1941 Academy class

#### Eternal Patrol

George Holst passed away on October 14, 2011. He was a life member of the USS Piper Veterans Association.

Robert Hailey, CAPT, USN, passed away September 26, 2011. He commanded Piper 1948-1950.

Wallace Hankins Jr, CAPT, USN passed away September 24, 2011

Sincere condolences go to family and friends.

Please notify us of the illness or death of any association member.

#### New Address?

To ensure that you continue to receive this newsletter and information about upcoming reunions, etc., please notify Bill Fuchs of any change of mailing address, email address, or telephone number.

**William Fuchs**  
**82 South Millpage Drive**  
**Bethpage, NY 11714**  
[billss582@hotmail.com](mailto:billss582@hotmail.com)  
**Phone: 516-578-4182**

#### Newsletter Articles Needed

I would like to hear about experiences you've had while you served aboard Piper. Whether a long story, "Sea Story" or a short paragraph, anything that you'd think would bring a smile to a shipmate's face would be great.

Have you recently visited a shipmate? Do you have a photo of the visit? Send a paragraph or more about the visit, or just send a caption for the photo.

What sort of things do you like to read about in the newsletter? Chances are your shipmates enjoy the same thing and they'd like to hear about it from you. So, take a little time to jot something down and send it to me:

Mike Bray  
 W3821 Waucedah Road  
 Vulcan, MI 49892

[mikebray@chartermi.net](mailto:mikebray@chartermi.net)

## Obituaries

graduated Feb. 7, 1941. His 28 years of service in the Navy included many varied assignments. He served on the INDIANAPOLIS in the Pacific until September 1943, commanded two submarines R-5 and PIPER [1948-1950], the destroyer WALLER and the attack transport SANDOVAL. He also served as District Intelligence Officer of the 15th Naval District in the Panama Canal Zone.

After retirement in 1965, he taught mathematics in the Norfolk Public Schools for 12 years. A lifelong Methodist, he was active in church, scouting and community affairs. He served as President of the Education Association of Norfolk and President of the Citizens Association for Justice in Virginia. A second retirement gave time for travel and the opportunity to serve as President of the Norview Lions Club and Tidewater Childrens Foundation, to work with Habitat for Humanity, Meals on Wheels, and the Chesapeake Bay Foundation. After moving to Williamsburg in 1992, he continued working with the Lions Club and worked with the Housing Partnership, engaged in repairing homes of elderly and low income persons.

His wife, the former Evelyn Momsen, daughter of Vice Admiral and Mrs. Charles 'Swede' Momsen, died March 29, 2011, just three days after their 68th wedding anniversary. He is survived by two children, a daughter, Mrs. Anne Bartee of Staunton, Va.; and a son, Christopher Hailey and his wife, Esther of Pennington, N.J.; a dear daughter-in-law, Susan Hailey of Germantown, Tenn.; six grandchildren and five great-grandchildren. His son, Robert preceded him in death in 1996. A service will be held at 4:30 p.m., Oct. 1, 2011, at Chambrel Retirement Community, 3800 Treyburn Dr., Williamsburg, Va. Robert and Evelyn will be interred in the Naval Academy Columbarium. Online condolences may be registered at [bucktroutfuneralhome.net](http://bucktroutfuneralhome.net) *View and post condolences on our online guestbook at [dailypress.com/guestbooks](http://dailypress.com/guestbooks).* Published in Daily Press from September 27 to September 28, 2011

### George William Holst

PRESQUE ISLE - George William Holst passed away peacefully Friday, Oct. 14, 2011, surrounded by his family at his home. He was born Jan. 20, 1937, in Newark, N.J., to George and Irma (Grimme) Holst. He shared a long and happy life with his wife of more than 50 years, Jacquelyne, and their daughter, Janet.

At the age of 17, he followed in his father's footsteps by joining the U.S. Navy. His two brothers later followed him into the service, and for many years his parents were proud to say they had three sons serving their country aboard U.S. Navy submarines. During his 20-year career as a submariner, he served aboard the USS Guavina, USS Mackerel, USS Hardhead, USS Piper and USS Fulton. He volunteered for a tour in Vietnam and retired as a senior chief petty officer.

n 1967 George and his family moved to Presque Isle, where he served a tour as the U.S. Naval recruiter. They grew to love the County and the people, and decided to make Presque Isle their home after George's retirement from the Navy. His first job in the County was at Aroostook Communications, now Aroostook Technologies. George went on to work for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration - NOAA, and finished his career at the National Weather Service station, Caribou. He was a charter member of MARS - Military Affiliate Radio System, which allowed military members and their families to keep in touch before the advent of email and the Internet. George was a lifelong ham radio operator. He was co-founder of Aroostook Amateur Radio Club and taught many classes and helped others enjoy ham radio. He could often be found in his "shack" in the evenings, talking to people around the world. With his rich bass voice, George loved singing in four-part harmony. He was a longtime member of a local barbershop quartet and encouraged others to join them. For the last 2 1/2 years of his life, he had a service dog named Sunshine. She was a dedicated companion and brought him a great deal of joy. George embraced the values and life of the "greatest generation." He was a patriot. He loved his country. He lived his life as a man who tried to always be honest and do the right thing. He always did his best at any job, never cutting corners. He will be remembered for his sense of duty and honor. Few people knew of George's quiet generosity; when he saw a need, he tried to meet it.

He cherished the memories he made with his family; spending time with his daughter, welcoming new babies into the family, taking honeymoons with his bride. George remained very much in love with her until his final breath. He is survived by his wife, Jacquelyne (Maloy) Holst; daughter, Janet (Holst) Morrow and son-in-law, Mark Morrow; his two brothers, Robert Holst and wife, Gail, and Richard Holst and wife, Cindy; 14 grandchildren, Rachel (Morrow) Rice and husband, Raymond, Sharon (Morrow) Thibault and husband, Noah, Leeann (Morrow) Ward and husband, William, Jacquelyne Morrow, Seth Morrow, Elizabeth (Morrow) Spragg and husband, Caleb, Tiffany Morrow, Sarah Morrow, James Morrow, Kimberly Morrow, Joshua Morrow, Ansumana Morrow, Faith Morrow and Emily Morrow; and six great-grandchildren, Zachary and Naomi Rice, and Belle, Ryllan, Finn and Zane Thibault. He was predeceased by his parents; and sister, Carol (Holst) Fredette. George was a son, brother, husband, father, Opa, and great-grandfather. He will be greatly missed

## Remembering Diesel Boat Thanksgivings

*(Continued from page 1)*

During the turkey cooking process, the aroma migrated into the berthing portion of the After Battery compartment. Before the last bird cleared the oven, the animals were so damn hungry that cannibalism was becoming a serious consideration.

The messcooks spent the time while the birds were cooking, whittling the hides off a half million potatoes. Every boatsailor of my day will remember those great big stainless steel bowls of what was announced over the IMC as "fluffy mashed potatoes". There was something about sub force mashed potatoes. I have never had better. The boats used real butter and made absolutely fabulous gravy.

It is no secret that the submarines got the best cooks. If you were a cook who came with a sub duty entry in your service jacket, you could damn near write your own ticket.

Thirty minutes prior to the appointed time that the messdeck opened, the hungry rats began forming a line that extended through the forward engine room.

The waiting animals began laughing, hooting, hollering, pushing, shoving, and engaging in what in the days before the kinder and gentler, sensitive revised naval vocabulary was known as 'grabass'.

"Okay, okay, let's knock off the grabass."

"Hey Chief... you close enough to see if those two lazy ass messcooks have the table set up? Hell Chief, I could chew the hip pockets out of a set of Mongolian dungarees."

"Try to exercise a little self control."

"Hey Buzz, damn messcooks are wearing clean aprons and new white hats."

"Must be the end of the world."

"You think we'll have pumpkin or apple pie this year?"  
"Pumpkin... we loaded a case of canned pumpkin pie filler before we singled up."

"Hey chief... how're they doin'?" I may starve to death any minute now."

"You won't be missed."

"You break my heart... whaddaya think comments like that do to my morale and sea warrior spirit?"

"Jack... is it possible for you to shut the hell up for ten minutes and give your shipmates a break?"

It was the kind of aimless bullshit conversation that filled time.

Filling time while waiting was an art. Comments made in waiting formations didn't count against the allotted time God gave you on earth... God understood his submariners.

We could seat 14 at a sitting. After the first sitting got situated and the holiday bounty began, the food kept coming. After the meal, the cigars were passed around.

Within a couple of minutes, smoke filled the messdeck and depending on the sea state, the word was passed to open top-side access hatches.

The lads waiting for the follow-on-sittings were strung out down the outboard passageway all the way back to the After Battery head. By the time the guys in the first sitting were relaxing and firing up their EL Cheapo stogies, the lads waiting were getting restless.

In an environment devoid of feminine civilizing influence, restless men begin to get vocal and as hunger escalated, vocabulary degenerates and the intent and solemnity of the holiday gets somehow forgotten in the press of the moment.

"Hey, you bastards gonna take all day?"

"I think the tribal elders are having smoke and bullshit for dessert."

"Many nasty smelling smoke sticks involved in pow wow."  
"I think the sonuvabitches are incinerating a skunk."

"Hey... you one way bastards. Give your shipmates a break." The longer they took the worse the mutiny got.

Waiting in a restless chowline for comfortably situated lard ass senior rates to complete both meal and post chowdown convivial bullshit exchange, was hell. It was like stroking and burping a three-month old.

After a while, the smiling cigar-puffing bastards started drifting aft.

"Hey you gut bandits outdid yourselves this year... great chow."

You could hear the clatter of dishes as the messcooks set the tables for the next setting.

Turkey... gravy... the best gahdam mashed potatoes you would ever have in your life... fantastic pumpkin pie... A big ol' fat El Roi Tan... sitting shoulder-to-shoulder with the finest men you would ever know... men who, in later life would drive a thousand miles just to shake your hand again, tell you, you were still a worthless bastard and make your wife laugh half the night. Men you would drive a thousand miles to pump a pint of blood for.

*(Continued on page 7)*

Every Thanksgiving, that is what I'm grateful for. I'm thankful I served in Arleigh Burke's Navy... thankful God gave me the sense to volunteer for submarines and thankful for the years spent with the big hearted, fun loving ugly bastards I shared turkey, cigars and bull-shit with, on the day the pilgrims set aside to have some kind of luau with the Indians.

As an old coot, when I look back and inventory the good times, those were some of the best.

*Dex Armstrong has given permission to use his stories in The Piper Report. Thanks Dex.*

### Britain to Allow Female Submariners

*(Continued from page 2)*

The change means the submarine service will be able to draw on the “the widest range of talent and skills” to recruit, said the Second Sea Lord, Vice Admiral Charles Montgomery.

“And it will give our women the same opportunities as men to enjoy a fulfilling and rewarding career in the Submarine Service,” he added in a statement.

The US Navy announced a similar policy move last year, and the first female submarine officers are slated to report to their submarines at the end of this year.

Outside of existing officers, the first new class of British female submariners will be recruited and trained in 2014.

In addition to the Vanguard class submarines, the Astute class will also take females on board starting in 2016 after necessary on-board accommodation modifications have been made, the defense ministry said.

It said more than 9 percent of Royal Navy personnel are female and that women have been on board Navy ships since 1990.

*Article contributed by shipmate Frank Whitty*



K8V Veterans Day Special Event QSL Card



The K8V Team

Since 2007, the Mich-A-Con Amateur Radio Club has been conducting a Veterans Day Special Event radio operation from the Upper Peninsula Veterans Memorial in Iron Mountain Michigan. The Special Event honors our veterans, living and deceased, who served our country so that we might enjoy the fruits of freedom. Radio communications are conducted with amateur radio operators throughout the United States and the world using voice, digital and Morse code modes of operation. QSL cards are exchanged to document the radio contact and provide a memento of the event.

The Upper Peninsula Veterans Memorial, located atop Pine Mountain in Iron Mountain Michigan, represents all 15 counties of the Upper Peninsula. Five granite markers represent the eras of WWI to the present war in the Middle East. An 80 foot flag pole proudly supports a 30 x 60 foot garrison flag that is flown on July 4th, Flag Day, Memorial Day and Veterans Day. Rest assured our U.P. veterans will not be forgotten.

Mike Bray, K8DDB

## A True Christmas Story from American Submariner, January-February 2000

(USS Sam Houston, SSBN 609 Holy Loch, Scotland -1964)

By Jim Terrel

It was mid-December 1964 and it was as cold as one would expect Connecticut to be at that time of the year. We boarded the buses and after a while we were on our way to Quonset Point Naval Air Station where an aircraft waited to take us to Scotland. We were going back a few days early this time. The idea was to relieve the other crew so they could get home for Christmas. The faces of the men betrayed their remorse at leaving home at this time of the year. There was little of the usual horseplay and chatter we normally enjoyed on these trips. Instead, the men stared out the windows reflecting on the price they and their families paid for the security of the nation. Children would rush downstairs on Christmas morning to discover a bounty of presents. Their fathers would share that precious moment, unaware that somewhere out in the worlds oceans, their fathers, crammed into a cylinder of steel, kept watch over the delicate world peace. On our watch, there was peace on earth.

Takeoffs always amused me. I chuckled watching men who would take a boat to test depth and think nothing of it, grip the armrest so hard their knuckles turned white. They sat rigid with their heads back and their eyes closed, perhaps making peace with their maker, while the plane rotated and climbed out into the morning sunshine. In a few minutes we had reached our altitude and leveled out. Almost immediately, I noticed a couple of the guys begin to move around the plane having conferences with first one group and then another. Soon they approached us with their proposition. They proposed that although we had our duty to do we need not sacrifice our customs and traditions.

We couldn't be home for Christmas with our kids but we could share with others. There was an orphanage in Dunoon with children in need of what we had to give. Soon the hat was passed, monies collected, plans made and duties assigned. The balance of the flight seemed more relaxed, and it was not long before I heard someone question the masculinity of a Nav ET. I knew then that all was well.

When we arrived in Holy Loch the usual change of command process went forward with a greater sense of urgency than usual. Clearly the other crew wanted to go home. In no time the process was complete and we had the boat. When the opportunity for liberty came along we dispatched a committee to the orphanage and they returned with a list of children who would be invited aboard for Christmas dinner. The list included their names, age and gender. Each child was assigned to a "Daddy for the Day" who was charged with escorting them around the boat and getting them to all functions. It's funny, but although I have not been able to put a name to the faces of

the men who organized this event, I still remember the name of the child I looked after that day. Angus Naylor.

A second committee, armed with the list that indicated age and gender, went shopping for Christmas presents for the Children. Soon the local merchants became aware of what we were doing and our money went much further than we had estimated. Our men returned with a huge supply of presents. Instead of the usual movie we spent one evening wrapping the gifts. The role of Santa Claus went to our Hospital Corpsman, affectionately known as "The Quack".

A liberty launch brought the kids out and that in itself was a thrill for them. Some were scared and others mischievous. We gave them a tour of the boat, then took them to the crews mess where they enjoyed perhaps the best Christmas dinner of their lives. After dinner they were treated to a Walt Disney movie. The Amazing Mr. Limpet, starring Don Knotts. When the movie was over, we took them up to the periscope stand where the Quack was decked out in an ill-fitting Santa Claus suit. He had a couple of helpers in some form of costume. This was when we discovered that British Children believe in Father Christmas, not Santa Claus. One of the guys quickly explained we had invited our American Santa Claus to come over especially for them. As the child sat in Santa's lap the Quack would ask their name and then repeat it loud enough for his helpers to hear it. This would send the helpers frantically searching among the huge pile of presents to locate the ones intended for this child, who was kept occupied answering the usual questions concerning their behavior during the year. When found, a present would be placed in Santa's hand. He would present it to the child while the two of them smiled at the camera. In the end, each child received about three presents and a picture of themselves with the most ridiculous looking Santa Claus.

Soon it was time for them to go and the tears began to flow. Tiny little girls held tightly to their "Daddies" and cried out that they wanted to stay. Everyone was affected. We escorted them with their presents back to the tender where the liberty launches waited to return them to the cold reality that we had given them temporary respite from.

As the launch pulled away the children waved and all the "Daddies" waved farewell to them as I had seen them do to their own children a few weeks before. It was not lost on me that here were men who wielded on one of the most powerful warships ever conceived, who struck fear in the Russian heart, who could unleash an attack never before seen on Earth. There, at that moment, these warriors of the deep wiped tears from their eyes; and there was truly "Peace on Earth".

*Contributed by shipmate Charlie Patch*



**A Note About Membership**

So that we can all be in touch with each other as friends and old shipmates, a Piper Association was formed some years ago by Frank Whitty . We have reunions and publish an occasional newsletter called the Piper Report. In order for the Association to exist we need to have paying members.

The dues money goes for paper, ink, postage, etc. This is a considerable expense. A newsletter, The Piper Report, is published once or twice a year (depending on health and work) to bring you up to date on what's happening about future reunions, picnics, etc. It isn't much for \$10.00, but think of how sweet it is.

It sure would be nice to see 100% signed up for the Association. To receive a copy of the newsletter or other correspondence (reunion news, etc. you must be a paid member of the Piper Association.

**USS Piper (SS409) Veteran's Association  
Membership/Renewal Form**

**Send form and payment to:**

William Fuchs  
82 South Millpage Drive  
Bethpage, NY 11714  
[billss582@hotmail.com](mailto:billss582@hotmail.com)

Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone: \_\_\_\_\_  
Year reported aboard Piper: \_\_\_\_\_ Year departed Piper: \_\_\_\_\_  
Highest rank/rating while aboard Piper: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my \$10.00 for the year beginning July \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_ Here's another \$10.00 for next year  
\_\_\_\_ Enclosed is my \$100.00 for Life Membership!

Make check payable to Piper Association

Total enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

The dues are \$10.00 each year. A year is between 1 July to 30 June or any part of it. Sorry it has to be that way, as we are unable to take care of the books for "parts of a year".

**Please consider a Life Membership payment. This would eliminate paying each year and result in less paperwork for us. **DUES FOR 2011-2012 WERE DUE JULY 1st****

**Shipmates on Eternal Patrol**

Thanks to the work of shipmate Larry Boutelle, IC2(SS) who was aboard Piper from 1953 to 1956, we have a more complete listing of Shipmates on Eternal Patrol on our web site. Larry did research on the crew members that were on board Piper during his tour of duty.

Obituaries, where available, are included in Newspaper Clippings which can be accessed by a link on the News page of the website.

See <http://webpages.charter.net/usspiper/index.html>

An updated list will be included in The Piper Report from time to time.

If you have information of the death of a shipmate that is not on the Eternal Patrol list, please send it to:

Mike Bray  
W3821 Waucedah Road  
Vulcan, MI 49892-8483  
Or via email to: [mikebray@chartermi.net](mailto:mikebray@chartermi.net)

**Life Members**

William Bailey	Chester Fuller	Joe Pow
Bob Baker	Chic Gilgore	Frank Reinhold
Paul Barlow	Charles Halbing, Jr	Michael Remington
Robert Batscher	Gerald Haring	Benjamin Rollonston
Tom Black	John Hendry	George Sanderson
Michael Bray	Obie Hill	C. Miles Schmidt
Jim Burdett	Jerry Holland	Ralph Schmidt
Jim Burke	Michael Hubbard	Charles Schwartz
Thomas Calabrese	Charles Jones	David Shoaff
Richard Caldwell	Edmund Lee Joyner	Clarence Spencer
Aldo Cecchi	Ernie Kertzscher	Thomas J Stanton
Howard Clark	James King	Bob Staufenberg
Ralph Clark	Thomas Kucharski	Gilles St. George
Willis Clifford	Robert Lloyd	R Calvin Sutliff
Richard Collins	David Mogil	Gordon Threlfall
William Cotter	Noah Monsour	Joseph Vanderbosch
Edward Cushman	James Morris	Douglas Ward
James Delaney	Ross Morrison	Terry Welsh
Don Del Core	Robert Neidlinger	Frank Whitty
John Donkus	Morris Newkirk	Hank Wiley
Preston Douthitt	Austin Nickerson	David Winnington
Al Dube	Ralph Norman	Eugene Zakutansky
Richard Fohn	Mike Paquette	
William Fuchs	Charles Patch	

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# The Piper Report

USS PIPER VETERAN'S ASSOCIATION  
c/o Michael F. Bray  
W3821 Waucedah Road  
Vulcan, MI 49892-8483



**USS Piper (SS409)**  
Great boat, great crew!



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## The Piper Report

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### Material for The Piper Report & Piper Veteran's Assoc. Website

We are always looking for photos, [sea stories](#) and memorabilia to print in the newsletter and put on our website.

Email attachments are welcome, you can send scanned photos and material formatted with software in the Microsoft Office suite. Please provide as much information about the photos as you can.

If you have anything, please send it to me:

Mike Bray  
W3821 Waucedah Road  
Vulcan, MI 49892-8483  
Email: [mikebray@chartermi.net](mailto:mikebray@chartermi.net)

The URL for the USS Piper Veteran's Association website is:

<http://webpages.charter.net/usspiper/index.html>

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