



# Hooter Hilites

A Publication of the USS Sea Owl Association

Web Site: <http://www.ussseaowl.com>

We still give a hoot!

September 2004 Issue



Front row, left to right

Bill Dornsife LTJG 67-69, Tom Camenisch EN 64-67, Frank Kenyon ST 68-69, Lamar Taylor CO 52-55, Tom Moniz EM 62-66  
Bob Thomas EM 65-67, John Leers YN 53-57, Francis Rabaey TM 53-55, Roy Purtell TM 66-69, Ken Johnson LTJG 62-65

Standing, left to right

Don Gregg QM 63-68, Tom Blodgett TM 44-45, Ralph Lucas TM 44-46, Jerry Morrison EM 53-55, Frank Limpert QM 47-51,  
Jerry Leppart FN 62-64, Ed Welch CS 66-69, Bob Ruppel MM 63-65, John Kolodziej LT 63-65, Walt Deal TM 62-65, Jim Madigan FT 68-69,  
Jerry Farr QM 62-64, Neil Carmichael EM 64-67, Ed Bess EM 64-69, Ken Nichols TM 66-68, Ben Flynn EM 64-68, Mike Toomey ET 63-64  
Bill Brinkman FN 59-60, Howie Stein IC 59-60, Greg Hankin SN 67-68, Mike Jensen TM 59-62, Ken Boyer IC 59-60, Russel Travis EN 66-69  
John Barnes MM 63-67

Picture taken during our Baltimore reunion September 2004

## Shipmates & 1<sup>st</sup> Mates

### President's message:

Wow, what a two-week run this has been! It began with the USSVI National Convention in Saratoga Springs, NY, which, by most reports, was a great success for those shipmates of the Albany-Saratoga Base that worked very hard putting it together. Then, directly after that, Carol & I packed the car and traveled to Baltimore for another week of great weather and to get our reunion moving in the right direction. Baltimore turned out to be a great host for our reunion.

During our business meeting, those in attendance chose Branson, MO, as the next location for the Sea Owl Reunion. I have chosen the dates of September 20<sup>th</sup> - 24<sup>th</sup>, 2005 (arriving on the 20<sup>th</sup>, departing

on the 25<sup>th</sup>). Moving the reunion to a more central state, we are hoping to get more ship-mates from the West Coast to attend, while keeping those from the East Coast that attend each year interested. I will share any new information on the Branson reunion in the next issue of Hooter Hilites. If we have any shipmates that are familiar with Branson, or that live close by Branson, that can help with this reunion, please contact Roy Purtell ASAP.

Another key issue was resolved during the business meeting -- the number of Hooter Hilites published each year. Your officers decided to keep it at four issues per year. Along with this decision, we also agreed on notifying more shipmates who receive the Newsletter that their dues are about to expire. We need everyone to renew their dues each year to ensure the continuation of four issues a year of the Newsletter.

### Thanks for a great 2004 reunion:

My sincere thanks to Ed Welch CS 66-69 & Greg Hankin SN 67-68 for all their help and hard work in setting up the hospitality room, the Ship's Store, and for manning the table during the reunion. You made it much easier for me and better for your shipmates.

We enjoyed a bus tour of Washington, DC, on September 22<sup>nd</sup> visiting the Washington Navy Yard, where we toured the Museum at the Navy Yard; then onto the Smithsonian Institute for a quick lunch; from there we went to the WWII Memorial; then the Navy Memorial. On September 23<sup>rd</sup> we spent the entire day touring the US Naval Academy. Both tours were arranged by Shipmate Peter Boyne LT 64-65. We thank Pete for giving of his time in helping to set up these grand tours. I'm sure the Sea Owl sailors will not forget either of them for sometime!

To quote from a letter from Lamar (Ace) Taylor: "Those shipmates attending in Baltimore were treated to what has to be, by far, the best dinner we have had at a reunion yet!" Dinner was prepared by Shipmate Henry Fulkoski EN 68-69 and his wife Pat, and served at the Bodkin Yacht Club, to which Henry is a member. Our thanks go out to Ski & Pat for a superb dinner!

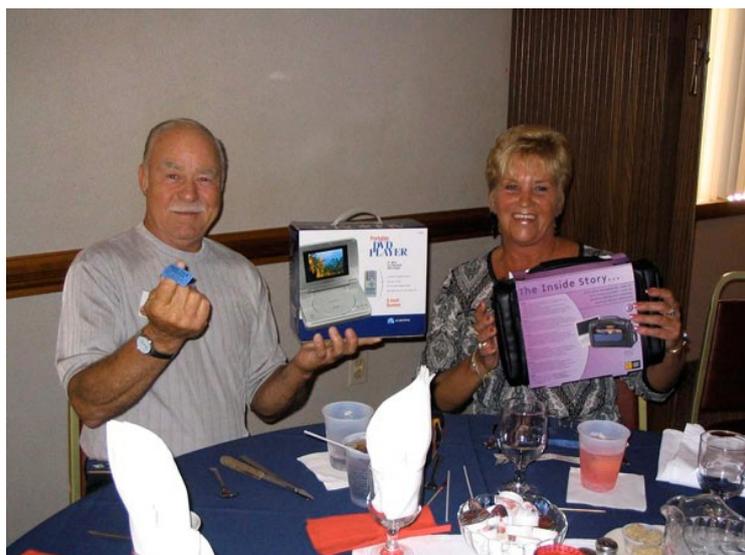
Shipmate Mike Toomey ET 63-64 & his wife Karen enjoyed a day of sailing on Friday, September 24, 2004, with Shipmate Bill Dornsife Ltjg 67-69 on his 36 foot sailboat. Bill, I think you put a smile on both Karen & Mike's faces for years to come.

Reunion pictures can be viewed on a new web page that I created at: <http://ussseaowl.com/NewPages/2004Reunion.html>

### Results from reunion raffle:

I try to make the raffle items given away during the reunion as interesting & fun as I can. With Ed Welch's help, I think this year's reunion raffle items pleased everyone.

Continuing the tradition of raffling off the complimentary room provided to the Association by the guest hotel has been very well received by our shipmates. Our congratulations to Shipmate Frank Kenyon ST 68-69 and his wife Lynda for winning for the second time -- they won the free room in Atlantic City during our 2000 reunion.



Shipmate John Barnes MM 63-67 was the happy winner of the portable DVD player and carrying case, although it took John some

time to find the winning ticket, thus giving me a few moments of 'what do I do now'.

One item that was a really great prize was the book "United States Submarines" donated by Shipmate Peter Boyne LT 64-65 to use as a raffle item. Thanks, Pete! And I'm certain that the winner, Shipmate Jerry Morrison EM 53-55, will enjoy this book for many hours.

We raffled off many more items at the reunion, which included coffee cups, travel mugs, stackable stainless steel coffee cups, T-shirts (which were donated by Shipmate and former CO Lamar Taylor 52-55 (Thanks Captain !!)), Sea Owl golf shirts, first day issue postage stamp covers & medallions from the WWII Memorial, small submarine dolphin pins (that were donated by Paulette Welch); she also donated a brief case with dolphins on it, which was won by Shipmate Ken Johnson Ltjg 62-65. With Ken entering into his retirement by the time you receive this newsletter, I don't expect this new brief case to be very far from his side.



As I gave everyone their raffle prize, no one had the smile and jubilation that Captain Lamar Taylor wore when he won the Sea Owl throw. As you can see in the picture, even though he's enjoying a special kiss from his new-found girl friend (a/k/a Paulette Welch), the prized blanket is not going anywhere.

Our thanks also to Shipmate Howie Stein IC 59-61 for running a 50-50 raffle during our Saturday night dinner. His efforts collected a total of \$300: \$150 to the Association; \$150 to the winner of the drawing, Shipmate John Leers. Congratulations John!

My sincere thanks to Peter Boyne, Ed & Paulette Welch, Lamar Taylor and Greg Hankin for their raffle items, and a special thanks to everyone who purchased raffle tickets. Your support in this way paid for the rental of the 15-passenger van used to shuttle shipmates around town and to the airport and paid for the 55-passenger coach that transported everyone to dinner Saturday night at the Bodkin Yacht Club; plus all raffle items not donated were paid for. We could not have done this without your support! Thanks Shipmates !!

### Association Dues:

Association Membership dues are due on November 1<sup>st</sup> each year, unless you elect to become a lifetime member. This past year many members have either forgotten to send in their dues or decided not to

renew their membership. Secretary/Treasurer John Leers has reported that only 56 members out of over 200 have renewed their yearly \$10.00 membership dues. Dues are the blood that keeps this Association moving forward -- without it we cannot survive. What I tell shipmates that ask when dues are due is to look for Halloween. When Halloween comes, it's time to pay your dues. Anyone that wants to check his dues status can do so by contacting John Leers directly at (614) 866-3707. Dues can be mailed directly to John at: John Leers, 1453 Marty Drive, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068.

**Groton Picnic:**

This year's Groton picnic will be a clam bake and is scheduled to be held on June 10, 11, 12, 2005.

**Vice-President's message:**

"Best one yet!" "Great reunion!" "Cant wait for the next one!" These were some of the comments on this years reunion in Baltimore. There was a lot of work put in by some of our shipmates on putting this reunion together. Peter Boyne gave us two great days of touring in Washington D.C. area. We toured the Washington Naval shipyard, The Navy museum the WW2, memorial, part of the Smithsonian museum, plus a short trip around D.C. The next day he gave us a tour to Annapolis. It was much better than I expected. We saw things from the midshipmen marching in review to John Paul Jones's resting place under the church. Peter is a docent in several of the places we went and gave us a deluxe tour. I especially enjoyed the sailing ship models that dated from the 1600s to the 1800s. The detail was beyond anything I've seen, with some of the models taking 4 years to complete.

Roy rented a van and he shuttled us back and forth to downtown Baltimore. Some of the sights seen there were Ft McHenry, the aquarium and of course the Torsk. Francis Rabey also served on the Torsk and it was a great homecoming for him. Torsk is really similar to Sea Owl below decks.

But the coup de gras was the banquet that Henry Fulkoski hosted. It was one of the best dinners I've ever eaten.

Meeting old friends and swapping sea stories, some repeated many times was really nice this year we picked up some new crewmen and renewed friendship with them. There were 4 from the original crew and it was interesting to listen to their stories.

Mike Jansen brought a copy of his original painting depicting the Sea Owl sinking the Japanese sub in Wake Island.

Next year we're holding our reunion in Branson MO. This should make it easy for our midwest crew. Let's try and make this another great reunion.

Please help John Leers and get your dues to him. Some haven't paid up for several years and we need the funds to continue printing the newsletter. I think Ken is doing a great job as you can see with this issue.

Looking forward to seeing everyone in Branson!

Tom Moniz

**Book Review – Scimitar SL-2**

If you are a fan of Patrick Robinson as I am, you will enjoy his latest thriller, Scimitar SL-2. In it we see the return of Ravi Rashood, the former British SAS officer who defected and became the military head of Hamas in one of Robinson's previous novels. This time he threatens to use a submarine launched, nuclear cruise missile to blow up a volcano in the Canary Islands which would create a mega tsunami that would devastate the east coast of the United States and much of Europe unless the Israelis withdraw from Palestine by a certain date. The submarine is one of two previously procured from

Russia via China in and the nuclear armed cruise missiles were purchased from North Korea.

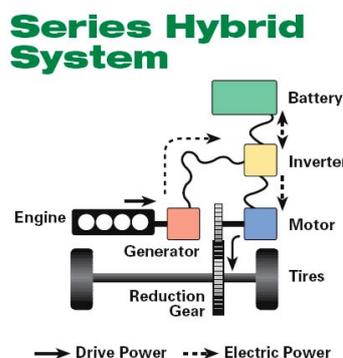
Rashood demonstrates his ability to follow through on his threat by causing an eruption of Mt. St. Helens by targeting it with two cruise missiles with conventional warheads.

To counter this threat, we find ADM Arnold Morgan, the recently retired Dir of Central Intelligence being recalled from retirement to head Operation High Tide and the evacuation of the East Coast.

The premise of this story with regard to the potential for such a mega tsunami has more than an element of truth to it. There does in fact exist a possibility that a major, under sea landslide could someday occur in the Canary Island region that could devastate the east coast of the United States. Whether or not it could be triggered by a well placed nuclear explosion is a matter of speculation, however.

**Hybrid Cars – What's so new about them?**

While reading a review of the Toyota Prius hybrid automobile, it occurred to me that there is not much new here that an old diesel boat electrician would not be right at home with. Consider this diagram of a series-hybrid car system. Substitute "CUBICLE" for "INVERTER" in the diagram and put a prop on the motor instead of



gears and wheels and you have a basic diagram of a diesel boat propulsion system that could have come from any diesel boat sailor's qualification notebook.

The Toyota system is, of course, more complicated in that it uses a regenerative braking system to recharge the battery, something that would not be practical for a

submarine, and later variations actually work on a series-parallel arrangement.

**Sailor Rest Your Oars**

One of the saddest parts of doing the newsletter is the listing of those shipmates who have departed on "eternal patrol" since the last issue. Since the last newsletter we have lost one shipmate:

Emmett Pipher, F1 – June 26, 2004

Emmett was a Sea Owl "Plankowner". According to close friend and Shipmate Zenneth "Zeke" Chamberlain, Emmett went on to in later years to work for the Link-Belt Speeder company in Speedway, IN, retiring as a Plant Manager. We extend our deepest sympathy to family and friends of our departed shipmate.

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Hooter Hilites is a quarterly publication of the USS Sea Owl Association. Issues are published in March, June, September and December.

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# The 40's

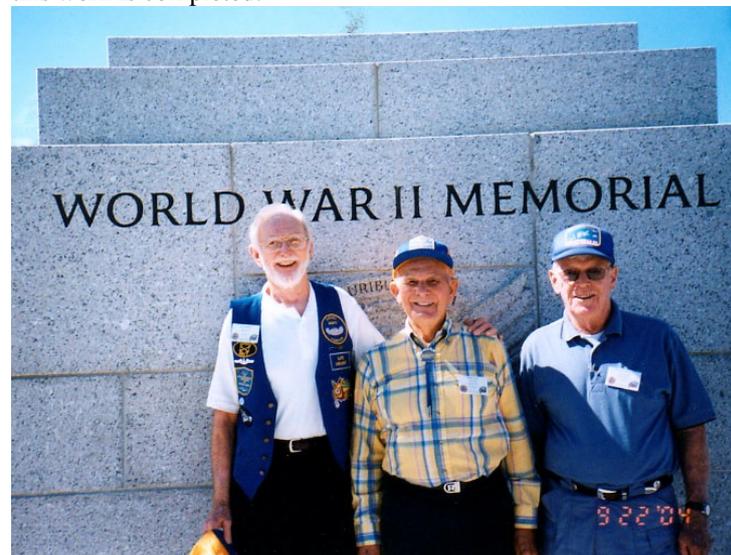
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## National WW II Memorial Update

By Ken Johnson

I did not get to visit the new WW II memorial during my trip to Baltimore for the Sea Owl reunion, but I did drive by it on Sunday before returning home. It is quite impressive and I hope to return and spend more time there exploring it soon. At this time there is much construction work in progress around the base of the adjacent Washington Monument and I would like to return to take pictures once this work is completed.



Among those who did visit the memorial were (l to r) Shipmates Jim Campbell, Ralph Lucas and Bob Schlichenmaier. We know that it must have been a very moving experience for them to finally see their service thus recognized.

## Baltimore Reunion

By Ken Johnson

One of the highlights of the recent reunion at Baltimore was the opportunity to get to meet two WW II Sea Owl shipmates I had not previously met, Tom Blodgett and Bob Schlichenmaier. I was particularly fascinated by many of Tom Blodgett's stories of the war patrols. For those of us who never experienced being depth charged, it is fascinating to listen to someone relate what it was like to be on the receiving end of 84 depth charges during Sea Owl's third war patrol. Listening to him relate his many stories has inspired me to get more involved with my project working on oral histories, particularly of WW II veterans before it is too late.

In addition, I was able to show the video of action during Sea Owl's third war patrol to shipmates Jim Campbell, Ralph Lucas and Bob Schlichenmaier and to record their comments as they watched. They were able to identify several shipmates in the video who we had not previously identified. Unfortunately Jim and Bob had to leave early and did not get to stay for the excellent banquet on Saturday due to concerns that their homes in Florida were being threatened by the

fourth hurricane to strike Florida this year. We hope that they did not suffer too much damage from these storms.

## Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and WW II

By Ken Johnson

(This is one of a series of articles I plan to do about Portsmouth Naval Shipyard in Hooter Hilites. Much of the information for this was taken from the book *Portsmouth Built* by Richard E. Winslow III, published by the Portsmouth Marine Society.)

Following the Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard began an unprecedented mobilization and steadily increased its production of submarines to support the war effort. By 1944, the yard had reached its peak production period and during that year produced a total of 32 boats, our own Sea Owl, of course, being just one of them. On January 27, 1944 the yard actually launched 4 boats in a single day, Razorback, Redfish, Ronquil and Scabbardfish. (The strength and durability of Portsmouth boats is demonstrated by the recent return of Razorback from Turkey after 60 years in service.)

By war's end in 1945 Portsmouth had established itself as the leading submarine builder in the country, having produced since 1941 a total of 79 boats, one more than Electric Boat. Sea Owl belonged to the Balao class of so called "thick skinned" boats. The class prototype, USS Balao, was the tenth submarine built at Portsmouth during 1942 and by war's end Portsmouth had built 44 of the 119 Balao class boats. Since this class could dive deeper than the earlier Gato class boats, they were able to survive many attacks by Japanese depth charges which were set to go off at too shallow a depth to destroy them.

Several Portsmouth built boats were lost during WW II. The list of them includes Argonaut, Sculpin, Seawolf, Triton, Trout, Grayling, Grenadier, Runner, Scamp, Scorpion, Snook, Capelin, and Cisco. One, the Squalus, sank in 1939, was refloated and refurbished and went on to fight during the war as the Sailfish. Many also live on as memorials, a tribute to the strength and toughness of Portsmouth built boats. These include Drum in Mobile, Bowfin in Pearl Harbor, Batfish in Muskogee, Pampanito in San Francisco, Torsk in Baltimore, Requin in Tampa and Lionfish in Fall River. One, the Plaice, is a memorial in Santos, Brazil and the conning tower of the Squalus/Sailfish is at the shipyard in Portsmouth where she was built. Razorback was recently returned by Turkey to the United States after 60 years and will be a lasting memorial and tribute to the great Portsmouth built boats in Little Rock, Arkansas.

From the L-8 (SS 48) in 1917 to the nuclear powered Sturgeon class Sand Lance (SSN 660) in 1971, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard built a total of 134 submarines. Today the yard still survives as the only Navy yard which overhauls nuclear submarines. Over the years many of the Portsmouth built submarines represented advancements in the art of submarine design and construction. Notable among these is the USS Albacore (AGSS 569) which is preserved as a memorial at Portsmouth just up the Piscataqua river from the shipyard. Albacore, recognized as a National Mechanical Engineering Historical Landmark was built and used a test platform for advanced submarine hull design and control.



# The 50's

September 2004 Issue



## Letter from Lamar Taylor

Dear Shipmates:

Our reunion in Baltimore was the best reunion I have attended yet. I wish every Sea Owl alumnus could have attended. Roy Purtell, assisted by many, did an outstanding job in organizing and ensuring the reunion was a huge success.

The motel, a renovated motel, was clean, very accessible and the hospitality room was very spacious and centrally located, plus the staff did everything to ensure that we enjoyed a very successful reunion.

I flew into Baltimore where I was met at the airport by Bryan (Roy's son) and Roy Purtell. I rode in a 15-passenger van which Roy had rented and drove (an expert driver). Besides the van, we had a 55 passenger bus to transport our shipmates to dinner Saturday night. The bus was equipped with a hydraulic lift for lifting wheelchairs.

Wednesday we toured Washington, DC where we visited the Navy Yard where we saw many, many photos, ships, etc. – very historical. Additionally, we visited the new WWII Memorial, Smithsonian Institute & Navy Memorial.

Thursday we went to the Naval Academy where we had about a 4-hour tour that included classrooms, the chapel (beautiful), the museum and many more points of interest. We were able to witness a regiment of midshipmen (2000) attend formation for marching to their noon meal. There were other places and the scenery was beautiful.

Friday Roy operated a shuttle to and from the hotel to the Inner Harbor, Baltimore. My group visited Federal Hill and Fort McHenry where Francis Scott Key composed our National Anthem. We also traveled about and through the city.

Saturday night we took the bus to Bodkin Yacht Club for a most delicious steak and shrimp dinner. Club members cooked and acted as bartenders while their wives served the delicious food. Our Shipmate Henry Fulkoski arranged the dinner and other events. After dinner, several prizes were auctioned off and raffle tickets drawn. The profits from the sale of raffle tickets provided sufficient funds to pay for the rental of the 15-passenger van and the 55-passenger coach.

It is great to see how successful our shipmates have become and how they have reared their families.

This reunion was the best of all I have attended. It is a pleasure and a privilege to meet new shipmates and to share sea stories with each other.

I urge and highly recommend attending our next reunion which is tentatively scheduled to be held in Branson, MO.

Again, thanks to all of you for attending.

Sincerely,

An Old Salt...Lamar (Ace) Taylor

## Holland Club

We recognize the recent induction of Sea Owl shipmate Joe Damiata into the Holland Club. We are sure there are many more Sea Owl shipmates who are already members or eligible for Holland Club membership and would like to recognize you in future issues of Hooter Hilites. We would particularly like to recognize those who qualified aboard Sea Owl and would like to hear from you.



For those who may not be aware of what the Holland Club is, it is a special group within the USSVI which may be considered as the "Senior Citizen Branch" of the organization. It is, of course, named for the first U. S. Navy submarine, the USS Holland. Members of Holland Club consist of those members of USSVI who have been qualified in Submarines for 50 or more years.

The requirement's for membership in the Holland Club are identified in Section 5 of the USSVI Constitution. Basically a member must be qualified 50 or more years, be either a life member and a member in good standing for one year, or an annual member in good standing for 5 consecutive years.

Each member must request membership in Holland Club. To do this simply apply through your USSVI Base Commander. He in turn will verify your eligibility and forward your request to the National Junior Vice Commander for action..

Each member will be issued a distinctive Holland Club membership Card, a Holland Club Patch (shown above) and a certificate of membership.

I cannot speak for other USSVI bases, but I know that Groton Base recognizes all Holland Club members attending each monthly meeting. They also hold special breakfasts for Holland Club members and conduct induction ceremonies for new members.



# The 60's

September 2004 Issue



## Operation Overflight

By Ken Johnson

I know this has little to do with submarines, but I thought it might be of interest to readers anyway. Back in May during the Cold War at Sea Conference in Rhode Island, that I mentioned in an article in the previous issue, I had the pleasure of meeting Francis Gary Powers, Jr. Gary was the luncheon speaker during the Brown University Watson Institute conference session. His father, as you probably know, was the U-2 spy plane pilot who was shot down over Russia on May 1, 1960. Some time after his release from Soviet prison, he wrote a book about his flight and the U-2 program. The book was titled *Operation Overflight*.

Gary decided to have this book reprinted after several years of being out of print and added a brief epilogue to the book describing events around his father's death in 1977 in a helicopter crash. He decided to do this after visiting high school groups to talk about the U-2 and having his audiences thinking he was there to talk about the U-2 rock band. Gary had copies of this book with him and I obtained a copy which I had him autograph. I recently got around to reading it.

The story is an important and interesting one, not only for historical interest about an important event of the Cold War, but also for the lessons it should have taught about intelligence gathering and the tendency to believe what you want to believe about the capabilities of your real or potential adversaries.

At the time that this flight was made, it was assumed that the Soviet Union did not possess the ability to shoot down an aircraft flying at the altitude of the U-2. We were wrong. Further assumptions were made that if such a flight did go down over hostile territory, the pilot and the plane would not survive. Again we were wrong. At the time some rumors were that the pilot of this plane defected and "spilled his guts" to the Soviets. This too was wrong.

Francis Gary Powers was a true patriot who served his country well. His story and that of many "Cold Warriors" whose efforts on behalf of their country were and remain clouded in secrecy are finally being told. The "Silent Service" played a major part in winning the Cold War and many of its stories are now being told for the first time.

Francis Gary Powers, Jr. is founder of a Cold War Museum which he hopes to house soon at a former Nike missile base in Lorton, VA just south of Washington, DC. I for one wish him success in this venture and through continuing support of the Russian Sub Museum and its parent organization the USS Saratoga Museum Foundation hope to contribute to a greater understanding of the "Silent Service" role in the Cold War.

Further information on Gary Powers' Cold War Museum may be found on the Internet at <http://www.coldwar.org> and tax deductible contributions to his Cold War museum effort may be made through this web site or by contacting:

The Cold War Museum  
P.O. Box 178  
Fairfax, VA 22030

## Raffle Drawing

The Sea Owl Association is conducting a raffle. The prize will be the TV set which is described below. Drawing will be at our Groton picnic in June. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 for \$20.00.

If you are interested in purchasing raffle tickets for this drawing, send checks to Ed Welch, 33 Waco Court, Groton, CT 06340-6749. He will enter your tickets into the drum. The winning ticket will be drawn at the Groton picnic. The Association will pay for shipping, if the winner is not present at the picnic.

This is a photo of the TV that is being offered. The specifications follow:



- 27"
- Digital Comb Filter
- Pure Flat Picture Tube
- 700 Lines Horizontal Resolution (Video)
- AI Sound
- Closed Captioning on Mute
- Two Speakers
- 2.5-watts per channel Stereo Amp
- Stereo/SAP with dbx NR
- Surround Sound
- 181-Channel NTSC Tuner
- Auto Programmable Scan
- Channel Labeling (30 channels)
- Clock and Sleep Timer
- First Time Set Up
- Trilingual Menu (Eng/Spanish/French)
- PG Parental Guidance (Ch Lock & GG)
- Programmable On/Off Timer
- Lighted Universal Remote
- Front A/V Jacks
- Three A/V Input Jacks (Two Rear and One Front)
- Two S-Video Inputs (1 Rear/1 Front)
- Component Video Input - Y, Pb, Pr
- Stereo Audio Output Jacks - Fixed and Variable
- Remote Control Included
- Dimensions: 19.8"D x 27.1"W x 23.8"H. .