



# Hooter Hilites

A Publication of the USS Sea Owl Association  
Web Site: <http://home.earthlink.net/~purtellr/index.html>

We still give a hoot!  
December 2002 Issue



## President's Message

As we all prepare for the upcoming holiday season, I would like to wish everyone a very joyful and happy holiday season. May you all have fair winds and following seas.

We are just back from our annual reunion held in St. Marys, GA, October 29th through November 3rd. Those shipmates that attended will be talking about this one for some time. It was without a doubt a most successful reunion. It was great to see such a large group of Sea Owl shipmates together again. There were 47 shipmates, and spouses, in attendance, for a total number of 87. Those who made the Halloween party, held at the Borrell Creek Restaurant on Thursday, October 31st, really enjoyed themselves, with Peter Bailey QM 54-56 and his wife Debbie coming in as a doctor & nurse, in full dress scrubs; Bill Brinkman FN 59-60 and his wife Lin, as pirate & pirate's wife; not to mention myself as another pirate, although not as well dressed as Bill & Lin were.

One of the highlites of being in St. Marys during the SubVets of WWII Memorial service is the Memorial Service itself. The Sea Owl Association was given the honor of having our ship's bell used during the "tolling of the boats" during this year's Memorial Service. Those who were present will attest that our Sea Owl ship's bell never sounded so good. I hope to have our bell at all future reunions.

At our reunion and Groton picnic, we try to have a raffle that everyone will enjoy. These turn out not to be so much a money maker, but more just to have shipmates go home with items that they will remember. This year we had the coffee table book "United States Submarines", which was won by shipmate Don Clouse EN 52-54. I'm sure that Don is enjoying his new book. There were other items, some donated to the Association by shipmate John Leers YN 53-57, and other items purchased from various places. What I found to be amazing was how it seemed that those shipmates that wanted a particular item, did, in fact, win it. Such as John Leers hoping to win the Polartec fleece-lined jacket he went home with; Don Clouse also really wanted to win the book. But more appropriately, here we are in St. Marys, GA, the room is full of shipmates who primarily live in the southern states, and who wins the hooded, long-sleeved sweatshirt, but shipmate Doug Jensen MM 63-66, who lives in Wisconsin; Margaret will look great in her new Sea Owl sweatshirt! I would be remiss if I failed to mention a large "Thank You" to shipmate Ed Welch CS 66-69 & his wife Paulette for handling our ship's stores and the raffles during the reunion. Thanks also to our storekeeper striker Greg Hankin. Thanks very much guys, for doing a great job!

Hope you can make our next reunion. I am looking forward to seeing everyone again.

## USSVI National Convention at Reno, NV

Those shipmates interested in attending the USSVI National Convention during September 2-6, 2003 are urged to contact Tom

Moniz. Tom is interested in knowing how many Sea Owl shipmates are coming into Reno for this convention. If he gets enough interested shipmates, he will look into trying to get a reduced rate on rooms. Contact Tom at 8765 Carlisle Ave, Sacramento, CA 95828, tele # (916) 682-9306 or via e-mail at [405@lanset.com](mailto:405@lanset.com)

If you are online, go to this page for complete Reno Convention information: <http://www.ussvi.org/reno.htm>

## Membership Dues

Membership dues pay for this newsletter. It also gives our storekeeper money to purchase items that are available. Without your dues, we would have to purchase these items with our own money, then hope that we were paid back. Dues enable us to purchase items used during our raffles. They are very important. Dues for one year is \$10.00 and due on November 1st of each year unless you joined after June 1st, then you are exempt until November 1st of the following year. Make your check out to "Sea Owl Association" and send it to John Leers, 1453 Marty Drive, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-2425.

Beginning this year, we will be sending out Membership Cards to those shipmates who pay their dues. This card will tell you that you are paid up to date and when your dues is due again. These cards are being prepared by shipmate John Leers, your Association Secretary/Treasurer.

Lifetime Memberships are also available at a cost of \$100.00 -- no more writing checks; no more remembering if you paid or not. Lifetime Memberships receive a Certificate from the Association, also prepared by shipmate John Leers.

## Newsletters

During our business meeting held at St. Marys, and beforehand during a meeting of the officers, we decided that those shipmates that have NOT paid their dues for two years or more will NOT receive the Newsletter via US Postal Service.

Those delinquent shipmates can still receive the Newsletter via their computer, as a PDF by getting in touch with Ken Johnson at [JAMGraphic@aol.com](mailto:JAMGraphic@aol.com).

This does NOT apply to our Sea Owl veterans of WWII, they will always receive a Newsletter regardless.

If you haven't paid your dues for two years or more, this will be your last newsletter received by US Mail.

## Sea Owl Reunion 2003

Our reunion next year will be in Mobile, AL, the home of the USS Drum SS-228 & Battleship Park, which was a very positive attraction in making this decision.

The dates for the reunion are October 7th through the 12th, 2003.

We are working on putting this together now, and we are fortunate

to have our Past President Tom Gilbert living close by Mobile to scout out upcoming activities and events. Tom is also a member of the USSVI Drum Base. I will have more information on the reunion in the next newsletter. Mark your calendars to be in Mobile next year.

### Groton Picnic

We will be having our summer picnic in Groton, CT, again this year. Hold the dates of June 6th through the 8th, 2003. Much as it was last year, come into Groton on Friday, June 6th, for a dinner buffet at the Groton Motor Inn; Saturday, June 7th, will be our picnic at Sutton Park; and Sunday, June 8th, we will have a brunch at the Groton Motor Inn. Everyone is invited for all 3 days, or, if that seems to be too much, try to attend any one of the days. We like to have as many shipmates reunite during these events as possible. We are working with people on NLON Base to see what tours we can get together, if any. More on this will be in the next newsletter. Your contact person for picnic information will be: Ed Welch, 33 Waco Court, Groton, CT 06340 (860) 446-9104 or myself. Hope to see you there !!!

### Sailors Rest Your Oars

We have learned since the last newsletter of the passing of these shipmates:

Glenn Duncan, LT(jg) 59-62 – October 2
William J. Fasolo, EN 47-50 – October 30
Robert Griffiths, CS 57-62 – July 22

We extend our deepest sympathy to family and friends of these our departed shipmates.

### From the Editor

Video tapes of the Kings Bay Memorial Service and Sea Owl meeting are available from Ken Johnson for \$5.00 each to cover the cost of the material and postage. Both the memorial service and meeting will be included on one tape.

St Marys was my first Sea Owl reunion. Getting to meet so many shipmates and especially WW II vets was a rewarding experience. I continue to gather material for the Sea Owl CD and hope to have copies ready to go shortly after the first of the year. I especially would like to thank Lamar Taylor for providing a wealth of sea stories and other commentary on his Navy career.

Your comments, suggestions and ideas for future issues are most welcome. Please send them to:

Ken Johnson  
P.O. Box 561  
Oakham, MA 01068  
e-Mail: [JAMGraphic@aol.com](mailto:JAMGraphic@aol.com)

### Special Thanks, Shipmates

We would like to thank shipmate Bill Brinkman FN 59-60 and shipmate Dwight Bixler EM 66-69 for going the extra mile in helping our shipmate Captain Lamar Taylor CO 52-55. Bill went the extra mile in getting Lamar to our St. Marys reunion. Bix went the extra mile in getting Lamar home to Macon, GA after our reunion.

Thanks again, Guys. You made the extra effort in helping a

shipmate enjoy a great reunion. I know that he really appreciated it, and wanted everyone to know it.

Our Thanks to you !!!!!

### Caring & Sharing

Again this year, we are supporting Groton Base of USSVI. Your Association has presented Groton Base with a \$350.00 check to feed those less fortunate sailors in the Groton area. This includes those active duty sailors who can't leave town because of duty requirements, those retired sailors who don't have anyone to share a holiday meal with, and those large families who are on active duty and not be able to feed everyone. Groton Base has done this in years past, and the Sea Owl Association continues to support them in this worthwhile effort.

### USS Cavalla SS 244 Restoration Project

Shipmates, your Sea Owl Association has also agreed to send \$100.00 to the USS Cavalla restoration fund, which supports the fine job being done to restore this girl back to a condition that all should be very proud of. The Cavalla is on display in Seawolf Park - Galveston, Texas.

### What in the World is a Sea Owl?

Did you ever wonder what sort of creature a sea owl is? This is a question that puzzled Shipmate and "plankowner" Stan Ainley enough for him to write a letter in June 1948 to the Smithsonian Institution. Stan received a reply from Waldo Schmitt, Head Curator of Zoology with this description:

"The Sea Owl is a small fish not exceeding 8 inches in length, and lives a secluded life among rocks and reefs. On the under side, the pelvic fins are united to form a sucking disc, which is used to cling or hold on to the rocks so that the surging waves and currents will not wash it away. During the lull between waves it releases its hold and for a few moments seeks its food, then clings again to the rock surfaces. Its body has numerous bony plates that serve as a protective coat of arms, but its survival in the sea depends mostly on its ability to hide unobserved among the rocks. This is easily accomplished because its color resembles the rocks to which it clings."



Our namesake is not exactly what you would call a ferocious fighting fish, but a stealthy critter nevertheless. This is a picture of a sea owl.

Otherwise known as a Cyclopterus lumpus or lumpfish

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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.

### Sea Owl Association Officers are:

**President** – Roy Purtell, 4 Garden Court, Troy, NY 12180-1307, (518) 272-8614

**Vice-President** - Tom Moniz, 8765 Carlisle Ave., Sacramento, CA 95828, (916) 682-9306

**Secretary/Treasurer** – John Leers, 1453 Marty Drive, Reynoldsburg, OH 43068-2425, (614) 866-3707

**Storekeeper** – Ed Welch, 33 Waco Court, Groton, CT 06340-4719, (860) 446-9104

**Newsletter Editor** – Ken Johnson, P.O. Box 561, Oakham, MA 01068 (508) 882-3738





# The 40's

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## Last Man's Drink

Shipmate Frank Limpert QM 47-51 brought a bottle of Gordon's gin to this year's reunion. He and wife Alma tell me that this bottle is 50 years old. Frank bought it at either Panama or Havana, he doesn't remember which. But, a 50 year old bottle of Gin, that's never been opened, deserved something special. In talking with shipmate Tom Gilbert MM 63-66 and others, Tom came up with the idea of having this bottle kept until the last few remaining Sea Owl shipmates can open it.

It was my intention to build a wooden box to store it in, making a glass cover that would be broken when those last few remaining shipmates deem appropriate. However, in visiting with shipmate Stan Ainley MM 44-49 this past weekend, he donated a wooden box, with sliding cover. Stan, the box fits the bottle perfectly. I will have a piece of glass cut to fit the box, creating something like a fire extinguisher box.

Our thanks to Frank for the bottle of gin, to Stan for the box to protect it. Shipmates look for this at future reunions.

## Original Sea Owl Battle Flag

Sam Walton brought one of his special mementos to the Sea Owl Association meeting, the original Sea Owl WW II battle flag. This is yet another piece of Sea Owl history that we are pleased he thought to share with us on this occasion.



## Sea Owl Ashtray & Homeward Bound Pennant

Shipmates, as I mentioned before, Carol & I, along with Ken Johnson, visited with shipmate Stan Ainley MM 47-49 and wife Lois in their Greenville, RI, home.

At this meeting, Stan, Ken & I moved down to Stan's den, where he has his Sea Owl memorabilia proudly displayed: his Sea Owl battle flag, the original Sea Owl patch that those plankowners signed, various signs that he has gotten over the years from reunions of Sea Owl shipmates long before the Sea Owl Association was ever thought of, pictures taken on Midway during

R & R periods, and pictures of shipmates who were onboard during Stan's years onboard. He also came up with an ash tray that he believes to be an original built in Portsmouth, NH, when Sea Owl was commissioned. Stan wanted me to take this ash tray to prevent it from getting lost. He also has about 4' remaining of the "Homeward Bound Pennant" which was flown from the raised periscope when Sea Owl was departing Pearl Harbor after the war enroute to the States. Stan said the Homeward Bound Pennant was actually 1' long for each crew member onboard, plus a star for each officer onboard, giving you an idea of the length of the original.

Stan, our thanks for the ash tray, it will be displayed during our reunions. It is another piece of Sea Owl history that all shipmates will remember.

## Shipmates Then and Now



This is a picture of Jim Campbell and Sam Walton which was captured from a frame on the video of portions of the Sea Owl's third war patrol in 1945. Over the years they remained in touch with each

other and gotten together at various Sea Owl reunions.



This was Jim and Sam at the St. Mary's reunion. (Haven't changed a bit have they?)

It was great to have five of our WW II vets at the reunion and to get to meet and chat with them.

Others attending were:



Bill Belt



Don Hewitt



Harold Hill



# The 50's

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## Captain Lamar Taylor

By Ken Johnson

As Roy mentioned in his message, we were particularly honored



that the Sea Owl bell was used during the memorial ceremony. After the ceremony, Lamar Taylor, CO of Sea Owl from 1952 to 1955, had an opportunity to hold the bell and I was able to get this great picture of him.

I met Lamar for the first time at this reunion, but I had sent him a tape recorder last summer and asked him to record some of his sea stories. I had viewed the tape of the Reno reunion and enjoyed listening to some of the stories that he told there.

I hoped that he would make it to St. Marys and that he would return the recorder with some good material for the Sea Owl CD-ROM. Well, when I arrived at St. Marys, Lamar handed me back the recorder and when I had a chance to listen to what he recorded on it I found that he had far exceeded my expectations.

I listened with great fascination as Lamar recalled how he entered officer training in 1940 and recalled experiences as a young Ensign aboard the battleship USS California at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941. He went on to relate his entry into the submarine service and career up through his tour as CO of Sea Owl in the early 50s.

I found Lamar to be a true southern gentleman and thoroughly enjoyed spending time with him during the St. Marys reunion. Hopefully he will be at the next reunion at Mobile in 2003.

What follows is the story of another gentleman submarine CO who I look forward to meeting next May at the next International Submariner Association convention at Chatham, UK.

## Capt. Dmitry Zubkov: Gentleman, Submariner and Special Friend

By Dick Boyle 53-56

I retired as a Federal Civil Servant at The Arctic Submarine Lab, San Diego, in 1985. To support research efforts for a submarine history I am writing, I joined the International Submariners Association (ISA) USA branch in the late 1980s. Russian officers first came to an ISA meeting hosted by the French at St. Malo in 1989. Two Admirals were supported by a very talented interpreter (he reportedly spoke seven languages), but it was difficult to carry

on a conversation. Over the years I kept hoping to meet an officer who spoke English.

Finally in 1998 at the ISA meeting held at Harrowgate, UK, I became aware of the presence of a very gracious Russian gentleman who spoke excellent English. Toward the end of the meetings, I introduced myself to Dmitry and asked if I could correspond with him. We have kept in touch ever since.

In 2000 the St. Petersburg Submariners Club sponsored the annual ISA meeting in their home town. It was a fabulous success -- one of the best ever. While in St. Petersburg I had the honor to meet with Dmitry's family (wife Valentina, son Dmitry Jr., and daughter-in-law Tatiana) in Dmitry's apartment in St. Pete.

Dmitry Jr. and Tatiana now have a daughter Alexandra, who turned one year old on 25 Oct 02.

In Oct 01, at the 35th anniversary of the *Henry L. Stimson* commissioning, Dmitry was invited by Bob Weeks, Stimson Gold crew CO for five years (1966-1971), to be guest speaker at the celebration banquet. Dmitry had command of *K-475*, a Delta I SSBN, for eight years (1972-1980). This was truly a historic occasion, and U. S. - Russian relations were nobly enhanced by all in attendance.

## 50's Crew Members at the St. Marys Reunion



Left to Right: John Leers YN 53-57, Peter Bailey QM 54-56, Don Clouse EM 52-54, sitting is Lamar Taylor CO 52-55



# The 60's

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## Sub Sailors Running in the Streets

As some of you know, shipmate Doug Jensen MM 63-66 has personalized plates on his vehicles. On his pick-up he has "Sea Owl", on his Corvette, he has "USS 405". On a trip to Madison to pick up his Mom from the hospital, where she was fitted with a pacemaker, Doug was sitting at a red light. In his rearview mirror, while waiting for the light to change, he sees this guy running up the street between the stopped cars. His first thought was that these people from Madison are kinda weird, they jog in the streets, between parked cars. The jogger then knocks on Doug's window. It turns out it was Ron Steele. Ron was onboard the Sea Robin, plus other boats during his Navy career. He spotted Doug's license plates and just had to make contact with the person driving around with SS-405 plates.

## 500 Pound Canary Revisited

Bob Russell, QM 62-65 has sent along this photo of the burial at sea service held for the 500 pound canary. He has identified the



shipmates in the photo as (l to r) "Ginzo" Orsetti, "Moose" Money, "BZ" Bzezinski, Roger Ward, Stan Greenwood, Bob Russell, Frank Griffith and Frank Ciak. As best Bob remembers, this took place around July 1963 on the way back from Halifax and was recorded by him in the Quartermaster's Notebook. He said there was a toilet paper wreath involved as well as the 21 gun salute.

## Tom Gilbert

As this newsletter goes to "press", we learn from Shipmate Ed LaBreck, EM 64-66, that Tom Gilbert was recently hospitalized with heart trouble once again. He is home again, but is scheduled for more surgery in a few weeks and is very optimistic about the future surgery.

Please keep him and Suzy and their family in your prayers.

As you know, Tom is one of the "Founding Fathers" of the Sea Owl Association and we are looking forward to him laying the groundwork for our next reunion in Mobile next October.

## Bits and Pieces Live On

By Ken Johnson

Anyone visiting to Ben Bastura's Submarine Library and Museum in Middletown, CT will discover that there are still bits and pieces of the Sea Owl that managed to remain long after the boat is gone.



This brow canvas is one example. We are not sure when this was used, but it seems authentic. In addition, there are several label plates that marked items ranging from electric

power distribution panels to various valves.

I had hoped to find the picture that I had taken at Albacore Park three years ago of the Sea Owl "Christmas tree" which I found in a display case there. Some of you may recall that I sent this out as a special Sea Owl Christmas card that year.

If you happen to run across other artifacts from Sea Owl, please let us know. Get a picture and send it along as well.

## 60's Era Kings Bay Reunion Attendees



Standing left to right: Ben Flynn EM 64-68, Leonard Marcoux EM 63-66, Herb Cherrier CO 66-68, Jim Keaveny FT 65-67, Dwight Bixler EM 66-69, Ed Welch CS 66-69, Doug Jensen MM 63-66, Perry Moore TM 64-66, Ed Bess EM 64-69  
Kneeling Left to Right: Roy Purtell TM 66-69, Greg Hankin QM 67-68, Ken Nichols TM 66-68, John Barnes MM 63-67, Bob Thomas EM 65-67