



# FLAMIN' CAIMAN TALE

[www.flamincaiman.org](http://www.flamincaiman.org)

SEPT 2017

## COMMANDER'S SCUTTLEBUTT

Good news, Little Rock is close to the middle of the U.S. which makes the travel distance almost the same for all shipmates. We hope many more will be able to attend. Our illustrious Secretary/Treasurer Doug "Smitty" Smith has put himself out finding lost shipmates and shrinking our Lost List tremendously. An OUTSTANDING JOB WELL DONE. I ran across an article I got from an old shipmate and I would like to share it with you. It's titled "THE OLD SUBMARINER". I sometimes don't know where I'm going, but OH, all the places I've been. Wrapped up in a hull made of steel, with a crew of fine sailors locked in. The missions are lonely and silent, the dangers untold with no yield, but we still climb down the steel ladders, the hatches above us are sealed. The sunlight's a far distant memory, fresh air just a dream from the past the world outside comes in short little bursts, from a buoy or a wire or a mast. Between drilling and watches and work, there's no place to be secluded surrounded by lights and companions, and pressure is always included. In sub school, they taught you the stories of boats that exceeded design, and others that found ancient mountains, nearly ending before it was time. Fires and flooding and things that exploded, in a hull that is closed on both ends, add to pressure from not really seeing, what's ahead or around the next bend. You can hide from the storms in deep places, using thermals and currents as masks. But if mission requires more exposure, the crew does what the Captain asks. Sliding silently through the dark ocean, sometimes you forget where you are, until you remember there's no moon, not even a glimmering star. They all wait above you in silence, for the boat to once more breach the waves in a rush of wild water and motion, escaping a watery grave. Unless you're an "old submariner", it's hard to know what this means. As age dims my mind and my body, I'm back riding old submarines. I sometimes forget what I'm thinking, but OH, all the places I've been!!!!

John "Yeo" Fagereng, Commander

## LITTLE ROCK

While we are visiting Little Rock, remember this city likes William Clinton. His presidential library is in Little Rock. I realize that the people in the military normally favor the other party, but the people in this city have a favorite son and do not approve of anyone saying anything against him. Please remember this so we will have a nice peaceful reunion.

## NEWSLETTER

If anyone would like to have the newsletter emailed to them instead of snail mail (US Postal Service), please contact me by email. Don't forget to include your name as email addresses can be confusing. If you would prefer to shift from email to snail mail, send me an email with your name and address.

## LITTLE ROCK HOTEL

The hotel we choose for our reunion is the Holiday Inn Presidential. A breakfast buffet is included with the room rate of \$99.00 plus a 15% state tax for \$113.85 a night. We will NOT have sticky buns in the hospitality room as breakfast is included with the room. The hotel was recently remodeled and every room has a mini-fridge, a microwave, and a Keurig coffee maker. You will have a choice of a king bed or two queen beds, when you call in your reservation don't forget to state which you desire. The hotel has a full restaurant and bar. Underground parking is available and if full there is above ground parking close to the front door. The above ground parking is where empty RVs can park. This hotel is one of the easiest we have dealt with. There is one slight problem. There is only one room large enough for our hospitality room and our meals. So, we will need to vacate the hospitality room while it is set up for our luncheon on Tuesday and diner Thursday night. Good news, the bar is close by and this will probably only take a half hour. Sailors can always find something to do for a half hour. The hotel is a short distance from the airport and several restaurants are in the area. A free shuttle van is available at the hotel for rides to and from the airport and any restaurant within three miles. There are many within three miles. We noticed the gas and food prices are cheaper than on the West Coast. The hotel is giving us one complimentary night for every twenty nights we occupy. This is a better ratio than we normally get. So, arrive at the hotel early and stay after the reunion so more free nights will be available for the drawing. Remember, this reduced rate expires on 15 April 2018. Hotel phone numbers are 866-900-7625 or 501-375-2100. Use the local number (501) for the shuttle.

## RV PARK

The most recommended RV park is a short walk from the Razorback. It is the Downtown RV Park in North Little Rock. GPS address:

250 S. Locust  
North Little Rock, AR 72114  
501-340-5312

Little Rock and North Little Rock are two separate cities with only the Arkansas River between them. Yes, it is confusing. The hotel and RV park are only 1.7 miles apart so anyone that is trying to stay healthy can walk the short distance between the RV park and hotel. Getting back to the RV may pose a problem.

## SHIPMATE MOVED

We have a shipmate that really moved. James "Duck" Millard ICC(SS) (67/70) moved with his wife to South Korea. He is doing fine and enjoying the relaxed living conditions. We understand there is no traffic problem in the small village where he is living. He will not be making any reunions unless John Troutman gets his way and we have a reunion in Hong Kong.

## REUNION TOUR 2018

We will be touring the USS Razorback on Wednesday (5/9/2018) from 1000 to 1600. A tour bus will shuttle us down to the Razorback. It is a 10-minute round trip so to save money, we only rented one bus. It will make as many trips as necessary. The bus is ours for seven hours so return trips to the hotel will be made as required. We need to be finished by 1600 to avoid addition charges for the bus. The "crew" of the Razorback completely trusts submarine sailors so we will have the boat and the barge to ourselves all day. Everyone can spend as much time as they like on the boat and pictures are permitted. A catered buffet lunch will be available on the barge. Razorback is a Balao class submarine as was CAIMAN, but was built in Portsmouth and has Fairbanks-Morse engines. Since she was built in a different yard and has different engines, some valves and switches are in different places, but I am sure the swabs will know what each does so all the questions from our adult supervisors will be answered.

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## DONATED ITEMS

Here is your chance to get rid of the submarine items you have been hauling around for years and your wife has been hounding you about. If you have any item that you would like to donate either to the drawing the last night of the reunion or to a submarine museum, bring them to the reunion. If you cannot attend the reunion, contact me and I will arrange for a shipmate to take it to the reunion for you. Jim "Buckets" Hunnicutt plans to attend the reunion and he is happy to transport any items to St Marys Submarine Museum in Kings Bay, GA. CAIMAN has donated several items to the St Marys Museum and will continue to support the museum. When I visited the museum in St Marys, they did not hesitate to give us copies of every piece of paperwork they had on CAIMAN which I turned over to our historian, Greg "Hawkeye" Baer. The CAIMAN Association and the museum are non-profit organizations so any donations are tax deductible and you get to determine the value.

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## DD214

The National Personnel Records Center (NPRC) has provided the following website for veterans to gain access to their DD-214s online: <http://vetrecs.archives.gov> or try <http://www.archives.gov/veterans/military-service-records>. NPRC is working to make it easier for veterans with computers and Internet access to obtain copies of documents from their military files. Military veterans and the next of kin of deceased former military members may now use a new online military personnel records system to request documents. Other individuals with a need for documents must still complete the Standard Form 180, which can be downloaded from the online web site. Because the requester will be asked to supply all information essential for NPRC to process the request, delays that normally occur when NPRC has to ask veterans for additional information will be minimized. The new web-based application was designed to provide better service on these requests by eliminating the records centers mailroom and processing time.

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## SHIPS STORE

CAIMAN's ship store will be in operation at the reunion. We have a new tee shirt that we believe all of you will want. This shirt was designed by CAIMAN's board, so it is unique to us. We designed it so you can wear it in public and will not have to answer civilian's questions such as "What does that mean?". It is a generic submarine tee so we hope to sell them to Sub Vet bases too. We will have, as always, many other items. Bring your checkbook. Remember this will help support the next reunion.

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## USS LING

**I recently received the following article.**

As Base Secretary and Editor of "Venting Sanitary Inboard" for the Blueback Base in Portland, Oregon, I am constantly searching the internet for articles of interest to include in our Base newsletter. I recently discovered the following article [published in the \*New York Times\* on June 12, 2017](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/nyregion/submarine-hackensack-uss-ling.html?_r=0) ([https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/nyregion/submarine-hackensack-uss-ling.html?\\_r=0](https://www.nytimes.com/2017/06/12/nyregion/submarine-hackensack-uss-ling.html?_r=0)) outlining the plight of USS Ling (SS-297), a World War II-era submarine owned by the Submarine Memorial Association which runs the New Jersey Naval Museum in Hackensack, New Jersey. Mired in the muddy bottom of the Hackensack River and damaged by Hurricane Sandy, Ling became inaccessible to the public and sadly, the museum was forced to close in 2012. Without the revenues, the museum generated from admission fees and charitable donations, the Submarine Memorial Association does not have the funds to move her or to restore her. Now, not only has the boat fallen into a serious state of disrepair, she is in danger of being evicted from the berth she has occupied since the early 1970s to make room for a large real estate development project.

After reading this article I was overcome with a sense of profound sadness over the fate of this once-proud boat and a sense of urgency to do something to help. To that end, I have started a GoFundMe page to raise funds to help restore USS Ling, and have made it my goal to reach out personally to the point of contact for **every Base in USSVI** and ask each one to share this story with its members in the hope that our fellow Shipmates might consider helping with the preservation of this important piece of our submarine heritage and maritime history. All contributions made through the GoFundMe web site **go directly to the Submarine Memorial Association** – a qualified 501(c) (3) organization – **and all donations are fully tax-deductible**. Those who do not wish to contribute financially can still help by sharing the Ling's story with family, friends and colleagues via email or on Facebook, Twitter, or other social media.

A link to the GoFundMe page to restore the USS Ling (SS-297) is (<https://www.gofundme.com/uss-ling>). I would greatly appreciate your help in disseminating this information to your Base members and thank you in advance for your support in this effort.

***Pride Runs Deep!***

Alan C. Brodie  
USSVI Blueback Base, Base Secretary  
Editor, Venting Sanitary Inboard

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## REUNION TEE SHIRTS

We have not had a shipmate offer to furnish tee shirts for the next reunion yet. If you are considering this, it will cost about \$1000.00 depending on the number of colors and the complexity of the design. Since we will have to place the order early to ensure the shirts are ready for the reunion we need to get a design started before the end of the year. Please contact me if you would like to do this.

## ONLINE EXCHANGE COMING CLOSER FOR VETS

Military Exchanges are offering on-line ordering for all honorable discharged veterans beginning November 11<sup>th</sup>, 2017 – Veterans Day.

All veterans are being encouraged to take the same first step by confirming veteran eligibility status at:

<https://www.vetverify.org>. It might be a multi-step process if the Defense Manpower Data Center lacks information to verify that a veteran served and received an honorable discharge. By early July, 90,000 veterans had attempted to register to exchange shop online starting Nov. 11. Twelve percent of them got invitations to shop immediately as “beta test” participants. AAFES was monitoring shopping patterns to ensure their online portal and distribution system are ready for waves of new shoppers this fall, said Ana Middleton, president and chief merchandising officer for AAFES. “My worst fear,” said Middleton, “is a tsunami on November 11th, if everybody decides, ‘Hey, I’m going to check this out’ and they sign on that day” and also at the same moment. AAFES is building website capacity to allow for 30,000 simultaneous shoppers at any given time. A lot of shoppers “would have to be signing on at that exact same millisecond to stress it out. So yes, I feel that we are sized appropriately.”

Exchanges use profits to pay staff salaries, fund store operations and to ensure adequate website capacity but even more profits are distributed to on-base Morale, Welfare and Recreational activities including child development centers, fitness centers, outdoor recreation and, overseas, on-base school lunches. “Everything is just turned back to our customers,” Middleton said, and “not paying anything to any shareholders” as retail stores must.

Besides discounts and tax breaks, AAFES online promises a price match. “If we are not the lowest price -- say you found a vacuum cleaner below our price at Walmart -- you can challenge our price and we will match it,” she said.

Shoppers will find prices particularly attractive on certain items like premium running shoes and children’s clothing. Profit margins on electronics are narrow everywhere so exchange prices “are close to comparable,” Middleton said. Remember – no tax. Merchandise selection is wider online than in base stores. The only goods veterans are barred from purchasing are military uniform items.

The four exchange service web sites are:

[www.shopmyexchange.com](http://www.shopmyexchange.com) for Army & Air Force Exchange Service (AAFES):

[www.mynavyexchange.com](http://www.mynavyexchange.com) for Navy exchanges;

[www.mymcx.com](http://www.mymcx.com) for Marine Corps stores and

[www.shopcgx.com](http://www.shopcgx.com) for Coast Guard exchanges.

## ETERNAL PATROL

Several web sites I use appear to have updated their records on the internet. So, I located several lost shipmates and learned that several of our current members had received Eternal Patrol orders. This is a very good reason to attend our reunions. Our shipmates are passing away and we may not have another chance to see them and ensure that all the sea stories are told correctly.

McCready Jr, Harry J. LTjg (45/45) 24 July 1950  
Thomas, Donald F. S1c (45/46) 12 September 2006  
Clarke, John H. EN1(SS) (47/48) 1 December 2015  
Schmidt, Charles K. CAPT (47/49) 21 June 2015  
Trosan, Joseph M. FN(SS) (47/48) 21 December 2016  
Bragole, Joseph A. QM1(SS) (48/48) 5 January 2017  
Covey, George M. ENFN(SS) 49/52) 27 December 2011  
Henry, William J. ENC(SS) (49/51) 19 October 1996  
Haywood, James E. TM1(SS) (51/52) 18 January 2016  
Hurly, Jack QMC(SS) (51/52) 2 July 1982  
Woodrick, Richard TM3(SS) (55/56) 27 November 2014  
Davis, Walter RM1(SS) (60/62) 23 December 2016  
Scott, David H. IC2(SS) (60/62) 24 December 2016  
Coleman, Howard E. SN(SS) (62/64) 18 October 2012  
Sipera, Paul S. TM2(SS) DV (64/65) 8 October 2016  
Ross, Lloyd J. QM1(SS) (65/66) 3 October 1998  
Bigelow, Grant LCDR (69/70) 9 January 2016  
Davidson, Homer N. SN(SS) (69/72) 4 July 2016  
David, Owen L. CS3(SS) (71/72) 10 September 1986  
Hayer, Robert J. EM3(SS) (71/72) 17 November 1993  
Roach, Martin Dale QMSN(SS) (71/72) 2 April 2017

## SAILING LIST

We have added 19 shipmates that were on our lost list to the sailing list, but 14 had received Eternal Patrol orders. We located 18 and one found us, rather his wife did, and then she sent us an email. I truly wish we could have found them all earlier. We also re-located a shipmate. We lost contact with him when he moved in with his son, but we found him. As I have mentioned before, when a shipmate moves in with their children or enters an assisted care facility, they disappear from many of the web sites I use. If you move, please remember to inform the USS CAIMAN Association. Many people have shifted to cell phones and are disconnecting their land lines, when they do this it becomes very difficult to contact them. If you compare the last newsletter sailing list to these numbers, you will notice some discrepancies. We have corrected some duplicate names on the sailing list and names on the lost list that did not belong. 36.4% of the shipmates we have located are still with us.

Here are the latest counts:

Sailing List:	1311
Hopefully at the next reunion:	478
Eternal Patrol:	833
Lost List:	111

**Fleet Admiral Halsey in a book called "The Admirals" when asked "What is the ultimate strategic weapon that is bringing the enemy to its knees? Halsey's reply "If I had to give credit to the instruments and machines that won us the war in the Pacific, I would rank them in this order: SUBMARINES, FIRST; RADAR, SECOND; PLANES, THIRD AND BULLDOZERS FOURTH."**

## ALWAYS REMEMBER

Let it never be said, that we don't remember.  
What Submariners have done, since that day in December.  
The sun shown bright, on that Pearl Harbor morning.  
When the enemy attacked, with little or no warning.  
The Tautog was there, with no time to think.  
And splashed one Japanese plane, right down in the drink.  
She sent twenty-six ships, to the depths of the sea.  
And came to be known, as the "Terrible T."  
The Sealion at Cavite, was the first to be caught.  
She was moored to a pier, but bravely she fought.  
Two bombs exploded, through the hull they did rip.  
And many brave submariners, died in their ship.  
There were many proud boats, like the Perch and the Finback.  
The Kraken, the Haddock, the Scamp and the Skipjack.  
We remember the Halibut, Blenny and Darter.  
And never forget, Sam Dealey in Harder.  
Cutter and Seahorse's, torpedoes ran true.  
She targeted the enemy, and sank many Marus.  
And although the enemy, was quite filled with hate.  
"Red" Ramage and Parche, showed many their fate.  
"Mush" Morton and Wahoo, never backed down from a fight.  
Fluckey and Barb, entered Namkwan Harbor one night.  
Many airman were saved, by O'Kane and the Tang.  
Some owe their lives, to Seafox, Tigrone and Trepang.  
We remember the honorable, boat called Barbel.  
Before she was lost, she gave the enemy hell.  
The Sturgeon, the Trigger, the Pollack had heart.  
The Torsk, made the last two frigates depart.  
Nowadays the cold war, seems to be a big factor.  
And submarines are powered, by nuclear reactors.  
The proud names are still there, the Tautog did shine.  
But her hull number by then, was Six Thirty Nine.  
Many boats gave their all, with heroic namesakes.  
Like Thresher, Scorpion, Nautilus and Skate.  
The Seadragon, Swordfish, Richard B. Russell and Dace.  
Have all stood out to sea, and heard the enemies trace.  
We remember "Forty-One For Freedom," whose patrols couldn't fail.  
The George Washington, Andrew Jackson and Nathan Hale.  
Now the Alaska and Nebraska, and other Tridents are here.  
They patrol the deep oceans, so aggressive nations have fear.  
There are new boats on the line, called Cheyenne and Wyoming.  
They will all do us proud, like the old Gudgeon and Grayling.  
So take time each day, and think of the past.  
Then toast the new Seawolf, for she's quiet and fast.  
Let it never be said, that we don't remember.  
What submariners have done, since that day in December.  
The sun still shines bright, every Pearl Harbor Morning.  
But never forget, the enemy attacks without warning.

Author (c) By John Chaffey, Powell, WY SSN639, SSN687, SSBN619