



February 2012  
Volume 18 - Issue 2

# The Monthly Newsletter, Perch Base, USSVI Phoenix, Arizona



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## Featured Story

### "THE "S" BOATS — THE FIRST STANDARDIZED SUBMARINE DESIGN

## USSVI CREED

Our organization's purpose is . . .

"To perpetuate the memory of our shipmates who gave their lives in the pursuit of their duties while serving their country. That their dedication, deeds and supreme sacrifice be a constant source of motivation toward greater accomplishments. Pledge loyalty and patriotism to the United States of America and its Constitution.

In addition to perpetuating the memory of departed shipmates, we shall provide a way for all Submariners to gather for the mutual benefit and enjoyment. Our common heritage as Submariners shall be strengthened by camaraderie. We support a strong U.S. Submarine Force.

The organization will engage in various projects and deeds that will bring about the perpetual remembrance of those shipmates who have given the supreme sacrifice. The organization will also endeavor to educate all third parties it comes in contact with about the services our submarine brothers performed and how their sacrifices made possible the freedom and lifestyle we enjoy today."



## 2012 Perch Base Foundation Supporters

These are the Base members and friends who donate monies or efforts to allow for Base operation while keeping our dues low and avoid raising money through member labor as most other organizations do.

**Remember, if you contribute by check, it must be made out to the "Perch Base Foundation."**

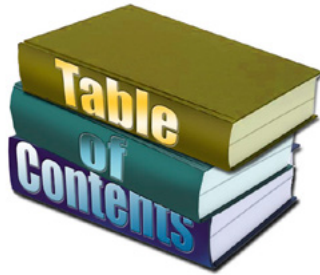
## These are the 2012 Foundation Donors



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FORREST J. WATSON  
RICH WOMACK  
WILLIAM WOOLCOTT  
JOHN G. ZAICHKIN  
RONALD J. ZOMOK




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## Sailing Orders

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\* February 4 \*

Laveen Parade (no static display). Details will be coming in a **Flash Traffic**

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**Next regular meeting will be February 11  
12 noon (social hour at 11 a.m.)  
Dillon's Restaurant at Arrowhead  
20585 N. 59th Avenue  
Glendale, AZ 85308-6821**

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\* February 11 & 12 \*

Centennial Celebrations. Details will be coming in a **Flash Traffic**

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\* February 25 \*

Avondale and Goodyear joint celebration billed as "Tail of Two Cities." This will be a parade and static display. Details will be coming in a **Flash Traffic**

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# LEST WE FORGET THOSE STILL ON PATROL

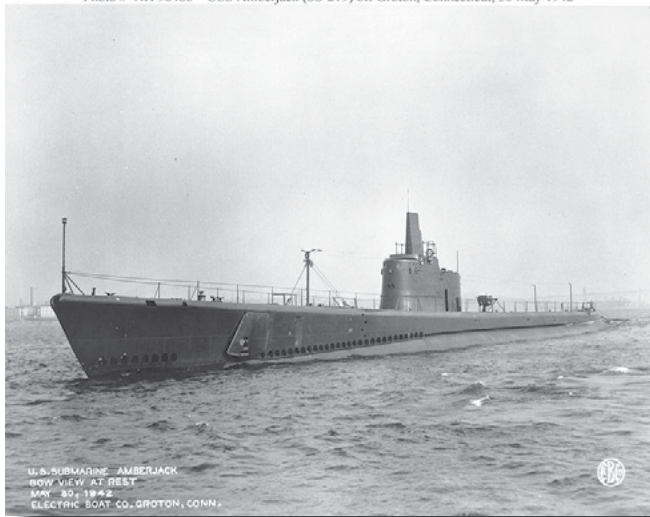
## FEBRUARY ETERNAL PATROLS

### Feb. 11, 1942 USS Shark (SS-174) 59 men lost

Probably lost due to enemy depth charging near the Makassar Strait (current Indonesia) but never officially determined



Photo # NH 98486 USS Amberjack (SS-219) off Groton, Connecticut, 30 May 1942



### Feb. 14, 1943 USS Amberjack (SS-219) 72 men lost

Probably sunk by Japanese destroyers near Rabul. Reports conflict with the loss of the USS Grampus, both missing in the same area.

### Feb. 29, 1944 USS Trout (SS-202) 81 men lost

On 8 February 1944, Trout began her final war patrol. Japanese records indicate that one of their convoys was attacked by a submarine on 29 February 1944 in the patrol area assigned to Trout. The submarine badly damaged one large passenger-cargo ship and sank the 7,126-ton transport Sakito Maru. A destroyer detected the submarine and dropped 19 depth charges. Oil and debris came to the surface and the destroyer dropped a final depth charge on that spot. The submarine was using Mk. XVIII electric torpedoes, and it was also possible that one of those had made a circular run and sunk the boat, as happened with the Tang.



# PERCH BASE OFFICERS



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## From the Wardroom Base Commander's Message

Shipmates:

I had hoped to be writing this after the Awards Dinner but timing and deadlines are not on my side. I am certain that the event will be a big success and we will have many new Holland Club members.

We have a parade in Laveen on February 4<sup>th</sup>, State Centennial display events on February 11<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup>, and another parade on the 25<sup>th</sup> in Goodyear. Try and support as many of these events as you can.

Since this is the state's centennial time, if you are aware of any other events that Perch Base can/should participate in, let our Event Coordinator, Joe "Wanderer" Varese know about them so that they may be considered for our calendar.

I hope to see many of you at these events and at the meeting on February 11<sup>th</sup>!

Fraternally,

Jim Denzien, Base Commander

## January 2011 Minutes of the Regular Base Meeting

The regular monthly meeting of the Arizona Submarine Veterans Perch Base was convened at Dillon's Restaurant at Arrowhead, in Glendale, AZ at 12:00 hours, 14 January, 2012. The meeting was called to order by Jim Denzien, Base Commander.

The "Call to Order" was followed by a prayer of invocation by Walt Blomgren, Base Chaplain, the Pledge of Allegiance and the Reciting of our Purpose. The tolling ceremony was conducted for all boats lost in the month of January, a moment of silence was observed for our shipmates on eternal patrol, "Sailor's rest your oars".

Jim started the meeting by introduced the guests present at today's meeting: Michael Hinderliter, a new member that will be joining Perch Base. Ed Hawkins introduced his son Tim and Gary Slick who is a new member that will be joining Perch Base.

According to the Sailing List there were 40 members and guests present. The complete sailing list included:

Jim Denzien	Bob Warner	Chuck Emmett	Rick Simmons
Walt Blomgren	Richard Kunze	Stan Reinhold	Joe Varese
John Schlag	Richard Bernier	Ted Hunt	Dan Moss
Davy Jones	Dewey Reed	Dottie Reed	Douglas La Rock
Herb Coulter	John G Zaichkin	Ray Marshall	Robb Roberts
Steven Stanger	Jerry Pittman	Ron Dutcher	George Crider
Tim Moore	Bill Woolcott	Vern Waldrip	Matt Hayball
Karl Krull	Michael Hinderliter	Thomas Farley	Ed Hawkins
Tim Hawkins	Jackie Hawkins	Robie Robinson	Don Unser
Rich Womack	Gary Waterbury	Gary Slick	Tom Clonts

Denzien asked that the minutes from the December 2011 regular meeting be approved as published in the "Mid Watch". A motion was made and seconded. The motion was carried by unanimous voice vote.

The Base Treasurer, Bob Warner, reported on the base's financial status as of 31 December, 2011. A motion was made and seconded to accept the Treasurer's Report as read. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote.

### **Base Commander's Board of Directors Meeting Report**

Denzien reported on the Board of Directors meeting held Wednesday January 11.

He said that the primary focus of that meeting was to discuss up coming events. These events will elaborated upon

when the Base Event Coordinator, Joe Varese, makes his report later during the meeting. The BOD also discussed possible events for Arizona's Centennial centered around February 11.

Jim reminded the members that the annual Awards Dinner is just two weeks away (from the meeting) on the 28<sup>th</sup> of January. Rick Simmons (one of dinner coordinators) needs to know who is coming and so to ensure reservations. Rick reminded the members that the cost is \$18 per person and the menu is posted on the website ([www.perch-base.org](http://www.perch-base.org).) Jerry Pittman, one of the newer members, has been instrumental in getting a guest speaker, Commander Alex Ortiz, Executive Officer of NRD Phoenix. Cmdr. Ortiz is a submariner. Based on the Commander's career, the talk will be interesting to all of us, said Denzien.

Perch Base has become a member of UAV, Unified Arizona Veterans, reported Jim. This group is a large high level organization. We became members at the end of last year. Denzien attended the first meeting as Perch Base representative last Saturday.

One of the projects mentioned at the group's meeting was one sponsored by the Secretary of State, which entails bringing two naval gun barrels to Wesley Bollin Plaza. One barrel is a part of a 14 inch gun from the USS Arizona and the other is a 16 inch gun off of the USS Missouri. The organizers missed their goal of having them here for the 70<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Pearl Harbor bombing, but they are pushing forward to get them here as soon as possible. They are estimating it will cost something in excess of \$200,000. The organizers will be looking for donations.

Denzien reminded everyone we have a picnic coming up on the 14<sup>th</sup> of April at White Tanks Regional Park. The location has already been reserved from 11 a.m. through 3 p.m. All other Arizona Bases have been invited to attend but have not yet had any response. Last year, despite bad weather — it was raining and cold — we still had 65 or 70 people attending. We are hoping for better this year. Please put this on your calendar to attend.

Jim informed the members that Bob Gilmore has a lead on having a powder-coating service donated to cover the torpedo at the National Cemetery. This would go a long way toward reducing the amount of time, energy and efforts in maintaining the old Mark 14. There was some discussion of cost and how it might be done.

A notice has been sent from National asking for nominations for National and Regional Officers. If you know of anyone wanting one of these positions please respond to the "Flash Traffic" that was sent.

### **Base Officers and Board of Directors Reports**

**Vice Commander** – Howard Doyle was not present.

**Communications Officer** – Chuck Emmett had nothing to report but reminded the members that he had papers copies of the "MidWatch" with him for those who need them.

**Membership Chairman** – Rick Simmons reported that we had 85% reenlistment success. Some decided not to continue membership and told us. Others simply didn't respond. We will have an Early Bird drawing at the awards dinner and the winner will get free Base dues for 2013. Also, each member needs to go into the database online at [www.ussvi.org](http://www.ussvi.org) and make sure your personal information is correct. This is the information used to send out membership renewals. If you don't have computer access let Rick know and he will print a copy and, if necessary, update for you. We also need to know as soon as possible who is attending the awards dinner.

**Secretary** – John Schlag had nothing to report.

**Event Coordinator** – Joe Varese reported on upcoming events: February 4<sup>th</sup> there is a parade at Levee which starts at 11 a.m.. Entrants need to be staged by 10 a.m. Following is the Phoenix Centennial Event on February 11 and 12. Next will be a combined Avondale/Goodyear parade and static display on February 25. This is also considered a Centennial Event we stage at 8 a.m. for a parade start at 10 a.m. We also have Luke Days coming up but information is not yet available.

**Chaplain** – Walt Blomgren had nothing to report.

**Treasurer** – Bob Warner reported that he was now using an electronic Expense Report.

**Past Base Commander** – Stan Reinhold had nothing to report.

**Chief of the Boat** – Richard Kunze had nothing additional to report.

**Base Storekeeper** – DeWayne Lober was not present today.

**Base Historian** – Jim Newman was not present today.

### **Old Business**

Our Awards Banquet will be held on 28 January here at Dillions. Jim had been asked about dress code for the Awards Dinner. There was a little discussion with the result being that members can come dressed as they liked but should wear their vests.

Rick discussed new policy from National regarding lost membership cards. You now have to apply directly to National yourself and they will charge \$1.00 for the replacement card.

### New Business

The Avondale/Goodyear parade is being called the "Tale of two Cities Parade" as we get more details info will be sent by Flash Traffic.

Regarding the Save our Sail Project: this past October, Jim sent a letter signed by himself, Dan Moss and Layne Moss to NAVC formally requesting the Sail, Rudder and Fairwater's off of the Phoenix. We received a response just before the end of the year and they have tentatively approved that. There are a couple of administrative things. We need to send them a plot plan of where they are going to be located in Indian School Park. This was approved by the Parks and Recreation Review Board in 2008. They said in the letter that the deconstruction of the Phoenix was pushed back to 2014. With availability of parts in late 2015.

### Good of the Order

The Binnacle List is clear. Billy Grieves was in the hospital with pneumonia for 2 days, but he is now at home.

Jim discussed the Eagle Scouts presentations being made as part of a national program. We know of four Eagle Scouts that are members of Perch Base. We are getting more active in honoring Eagle Scouts.

Jim made a request for Ron Dutcher who is in need of some assistance getting to our meetings from the Scottsdale area.

### 50/50 Drawing

50/50 drawing. Was won by Matt Hayball.

### Adjournment

The benediction was offered by Walt Blomgren.

All outstanding business having been concluded, it was moved and seconded that the meeting be adjourned. The motion carried by unanimous voice vote and the meeting was adjourned at 12:51 p.m.

John Schlag

Secretary, Perch Base USSVI



## **Holland Club**

Perch Base is proud to conduct our annual induction into the Holland Club at the recent Awards Banquet. Below are the names we inducted into that august group.

**John Cash**

**Herbert J. Coulter Jr.**

**James Evans**

**Stephen F. Hough**

**DeWayne Lober**

**Brutis W. Loftin**

**Bruce "Robie" D. Robinson**



# 2011 AWARDS BANQUET

JAN. 28, 2012



Members and guests begin to arrive for our 2011 Awards Banquet (held in Jan. 2012.) We held it in our regular meeting location, Dillon's at Arrowhead but with the tables arranged in a large u-shape.

With the banquet well underway, all eyes are on the head table. The best calculations indicate we had 49 people attending.



Our guest speaker was Commander Alex Ortiz USN, the Executive Officer of the Phoenix Recruiting District. He was great! And the questions raised from the audience were pretty good too.



Another great and beautiful cake courtesy of Base Membership Chairman Rick Simmons and "Cake Dreams of Phoenix."





## SHIPMATE OF THE YEAR

2011's Perch Base Shipmate of the Year is our Membership Chairman, Rick Simmons.

Shipmate Rick was presented with his award at our annual Awards Banquet.

The award is selected by an exclusive ad hoc group of the present- and past- Base Commanders.



### Fact #1: The REAL Cold War

Most Americans have no idea that the United States and Russia did openly engage each other in war. In 1918, about 11,000 American soldiers and Marines were sent to Russia to support what remained of the Czarist Russian army, where (in future irony) they joined Japanese troops fighting in support of the Czarist forces. In September of 1918, 7000 Marines landed in Vladivostok, and shortly thereafter, 4000 soldiers arrived in the far north of Russia, where British troops were already fighting the Bolshevik army. It was not until 1920 that Woodrow Wilson decided that he could not stop the Bolshevik takeover and quietly withdrew all American forces from Russia. American involvement in the Russian Revolution was well remembered in Russia, especially during the Cold War, even though it has been nearly forgotten in the United States. The number of American dead has still not been officially released to the American public.

### Fact #2: The Black and the Baddest

The US Army's 369th Infantry Regiment, a black unit with white officers, served with amazing distinction in the First World War, earning much praise (especially from the French) and setting many records. They served in combat for 191 days in a row, more than any other American ground unit. But they trumped all Allied regiments in that they were the first to reach the Rhine. They were cited eleven times for bravery. They never lost a single foot of ground to the Germans and not one man was captured by the enemy. 171 men and officers were awarded the French Croix de Guerre by war's end.

### Fact #3: Southern Gentleman

Long before his stint as Confederate President, a young US Army Lieutenant named Jefferson Davis dealt with insubordination in a rebellious private by beating him senseless with his fists, then refused to put the young man on report, stating that it was a fair fight. No one was insubordinate in Lt. Davis's unit again.

### Fact #4: If you want peace...

Woodrow Wilson is remembered as the 'peace president,' because he tried to keep America out of World War I. But during his terms of office, he sent Marines to Haiti in 1915, troops to the Dominican Republic and Mexico in 1916, more troops to invade Cuba in 1917, even more troops to Panama in 1918, and then sent a few more the same year to Nicaragua (to force the country to elect a hand-picked pro-American presidential candidate, who was then forced to sign a commerce treaty with the US on favorable terms to US businessmen), sent most of the military to Europe to fight the Great War, then sent soldiers and Marines to the aforementioned Russian Revolution, and in 1919 sent ships of the US Navy to blockade Russian ports. Peace, huh?



## NATIONAL USSVI NEWS

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### NEWS-01: Associate Member Procedure

Submitted by: T. Michael Bircumshaw on 1/26/2012

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Shipmates,

All membership applications for Associate Members of USSVI must be sent by US mail to the national Office in Bremerton, WA.

Online applications are no longer accepted nor utilized.

Due to the needs of the organization all Associate Member applications will be screened and require approval prior to being entered into the organization data base.

There are two specific reasons for this change in procedure.

1. Applications are being submitted that do not comply with the published requirements as stated in the Constitution and By-Laws.
2. It is imperative to retain the "War Veteran's Status of USSVI in order to remain eligible for the "Tax Deductible" status of all of our individual Bases.

Additionally, all Associate member applications must clearly indicate if the proposed Associate member is a US military Veteran and show their years of service, branch of service, and highest Rank/Rate/Pay grade.

All Associate Member applications must be submitted as follows:

Attn: John Gardner  
USSVI National Office  
PO Box 3870  
Silverdale, WA 98383-3870

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### *A Message from the Base vice-Commander*



I and my wife Dalene wish to extend our most sincere thanks to all of the Perch Base members who either visited me when I was in the hospital, called and wished me well, sent cards and/or emails, or visited me at home. Also for all the offers of help and assistance.

Each and every one of you exhibited the TRUE meaning of being a shipmate and the spirit of the "brotherhood of the pin."



## CHAPLAIN'S COLUMN

### **IMPORTANT**

***Shipmates, you should ensure that your next of kin is aware of the information in the box, right.***

In the case of my death, please immediately notify the U.S. Submarine Veterans Inc., (USSVI) at 877-542-3483 or 360-337-2978 and give the person on duty the information regarding my death, funeral, and burial arrangements, plus who they can contact for follow-up and support.

Please ask them to contact my local chapter's Base Commander with this information as well (they can look it up in their membership records).

This information can alternatively be E-Mailed to the National Office at ["office@ussvi.org"](mailto:office@ussvi.org).



## **SHIPMATES RUNNING ON LESS THAN A FULL BATTERY CHARGE**

The chaplain is pleased to report that there have been no members departing on eternal patrol nor do we have anyone on the binnacle list for the past month.



### **THE WOMEN OF PERCH BASE**

**At their October 2009 meeting, Perch Base SubVettes had voted to disband. Participation and finances made this a logical action. Since then, sponsored woman have been incorporated in Perch Base as Associate Members with all rights therein where they are vigorous participants. Activities of Base ladies is, therefore, activities of the Base**



## February Base Birthdays

<b>ROBERT E. MAY</b>	<b>FEB. 2</b>
<b>MEL RYCUS</b>	<b>FEB. 9</b>
<b>DANNY R. MOSS</b>	<b>FEB. 11</b>
<b>EDGAR T. BROOKS</b>	<b>FEB. 13</b>
<b>MICHAEL DAHL</b>	<b>FEB. 16</b>
<b>PHILLIP WAGNER</b>	<b>FEB. 18</b>
<b>EMIL SCHOONEJANS</b>	<b>FEB. 24</b>



### Communications Officer's Report



At the last Board of Directors meeting, the officers discussed placing all of the Base documents in electronic form online. A lot of them already are. Did you know that all of the past issues of your Base newsletter, the "Mid-Watch", going back to October 1992 are already online? Just click on the newsletter archives icon to the left side of the perch base webpage.

By now everyone should know the address of our own webpage. Just open your web browser, such as Internet Explorer or Google Chrome, and type [www.perch-base.org](http://www.perch-base.org). In addition to newsletter copies, also online you can find the Perch Base Constitution and our Policies and Procedures that help guide how we conduct our business. These are also on the webpage.

Still other documents, such as past issues of *Flash Traffic*, are available on a special password-protected section of the webpage. If any base member wishes to see these, just contact a Base officer who will be glad to help you access them.

As always; comments, complaints are welcomed. [communications@perch-base.org](mailto:communications@perch-base.org)

# Eternal Patrol

February 14, 1943

Editors Note: Less we forget, each month, one boat on eternal patrol will be highlighted in this newsletter. Sailors, rest your oars.

### The Final Patrol

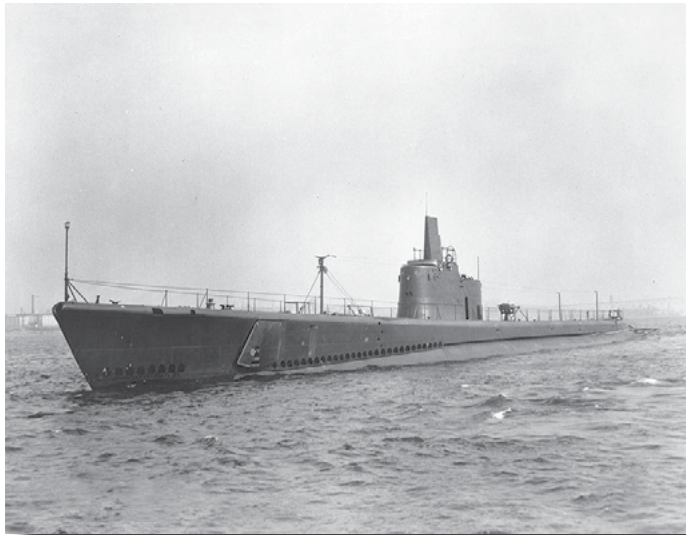
Lord, this departed shipmate with dolphins on his chest  
 Is part of an outfit known as the best.  
 Make him welcome and take him by the hand.  
 You'll find without a doubt he was the best in all the land.  
 So, heavenly Father add his name to the roll  
 Of our departed shipmates still on patrol  
 Let them know that we who survive  
 Will always keep their memories alive.



### USS Amberjack (SS-219) 14 February 1943 72 men lost

GATO-CLASS DIESEL-ELECTRIC SUBMARINE

Displacement: 1,549 tons (surf) 2,463 tons (sub)  
 Length: 311 ft 9 in; Beam: 27 ft 3 in; Draft: 17 ft 0 in  
 4 × Fairbanks-Morse Model 38D8-1/2 9-cylinder diesel engines  
 driving electrical generators; 2 × 126-cell Sargo batteries]  
 4 × high-speed GE electric motors with reduction gears two propellers]  
     5,400 shp (surf); 2,740 shp (sub)  
 Speed: 21 kn (surf); 9 kn (sub)  
 Range: 11,000 nmi surfaced at 10 kn  
 Endurance: 48 hours at 2 kn sub, 75 days on patrol  
     Test depth: 300 ft  
 Complement: 6 officers, 54 enlisted  
 Armament: 10 × 21-inch torpedo tubes  
     (six forward, four aft), 24 torpedoes  
     1 × 4-inch/ 50 caliber deck gun  
     Bofors 40 mm and Oerlikon 20 mm cannon



**USS Amberjack (SS-219)** was a Gato-class submarine, the first United States Navy ship named for the amberjack, a vigorous sport fish found in the western Atlantic from New England to Brazil.

Her keel was laid by the Electric Boat Company of Groton, Connecticut, on 15 May 1941. She was launched on 6 March 1942 (sponsored by Mrs. Randall Jacobs), and commissioned on 19 June 1942, Lieutenant Commander John A. Bole, Jr. in command.

After shakedown training in waters off New London, Connecticut and Newport, Rhode Island, Amberjack got underway on 20 July, bound for the Pacific. She transited the Panama Canal in mid-August and reached Pearl Harbor on 20 August. Following training exercises, Amberjack got underway for her first war patrol on 3 September. Two days later, she touched at Johnston Island to refuel and, later that day, resumed her voyage to her patrol area between the northeast coast of New Ireland and Bougainville, Solomon Islands.

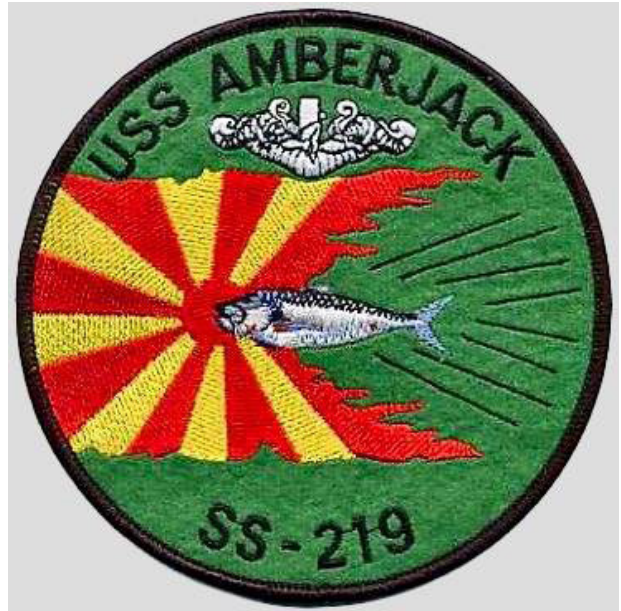
On 15 September, Amberjack was patrolling off Kavieng, New Ireland. Three days later, she made contact with a large Japanese transport escorted by a destroyer, and fired a spread of four torpedoes at the vessels, but none hit. While patrolling in Bougainville Strait on 19 September, the submarine launched two torpedoes at an enemy freighter. The first hit under the target's bridge, and the second broke her keel in two. Amberjack was credited with having sunk Shirogane Maru.



Amberjack made her next contact with Japanese shipping on 25 September, spotting a large cruiser escorted by a destroyer. However, before the submarine could get into position for an attack, the destroyer headed toward her and forced her to go deep. Several depth charges were dropped on the submarine, but they inflicted no damage. During the next few days, Amberjack reconnoitered Tau, Kilinailau, Greenwich Island, and Ocean Island.

The submarine spotted a Japanese cruiser on the morning of 30 September and launched four torpedoes from her bow tubes. None hit, so she fired another two forward tubes shortly thereafter. These also went wide of the mark, and the cruiser escaped damage. One week later, the submarine was patrolling off Kavieng when she spotted smoke on the horizon. After a Japanese cargo ship sailed into view, Amberjack launched two torpedoes. One missed forward and the other hit the target's hull forward. The enemy ship was still able to continue under her own power and Amberjack took up pursuit. About one hour later, both sides opened fire with their deck guns but neither was within range of the other and they broke off fire. After two more hours of the chase, the submarine fired a slow speed torpedo which hit its target five minutes later. The cargo vessel, later identified as Senkai Maru, swung left and seemed to stop. Its bow swung up in the air, the ship took a vertical position, and sank from sight shortly thereafter. Lifeboats carrying the cargo ship's survivors were later spotted as the submarine headed for Kavieng.

While patrolling off Kavieng Harbor on 10 October, Amberjack spotted Japanese ships in the harbor and launched four torpedoes into the anchorage. One damaged a freighter and another damaged Tonan Maru II, which was being used to ferry airplanes. The vessel sank in shallow water, but was later salvaged, towed to Japan for repairs, and was returned to service. On 16 October, the submarine headed for Espiritu Santo for repairs to her ballast tanks and arrived there on 19 October. While undergoing repairs, she was assigned the task of hauling aviation gas, bombs, and personnel to Guadalcanal. While en route to the Solomons, her destination was changed to Tulagi. She arrived there on 25 October and unloaded her embarked troops and cargo under the cover of darkness. The next day, she set course for Brisbane, Australia, and reached that port on 30 October.



After a refit alongside Griffin and a series of training exercises, Amberjack began her second war patrol on 21 November. On the morning of 27 November, the submarine encountered two enemy destroyers which were probably carrying supplies for Japanese forces on Guadalcanal. While launching four torpedoes from her stern tubes, the submarine heard the screws of a third ship crossing ahead of her bow. None of the torpedoes hit their target, and the submarine began to take action to avoid depth charges. Approximately two hours later, all sounds had faded away, and the submarine rose to the surface to look for signs of damage. She spotted nothing so she assumed a new station at the southern end of the eastern entrance to Shortland Harbor.

On 29 November, while on patrol ten miles (16 km) east of the Treasury Islands, Amberjack spotted a surfaced Japanese submarine. Before she could set up an attack, however, the enemy vessel rapidly drew away. She again saw a Japanese submarine on 3 December proceeding toward the entrance to Shortland harbor and sent four torpedoes toward the fleeing enemy, but all failed to hit. During the next one and one-half weeks, she made numerous ship contacts, but carried out no attacks. On 15 December, the submarine sighted a convoy consisting of four or five ships on a course for Rabaul and launched two torpedoes at a large freighter, one at a small tanker, and one more at a small freighter. However, she apparently inflicted no damage on any of the targets.

Her next contact occurred on 20 December. While patrolling submerged, Amberjack began hearing a series of explosions which drew closer and closer. She surfaced and saw two Japanese destroyer escorts, which soon thereafter began raining depth charges on the submarine. Within the space of one minute, six exploded close aboard, shook the vessel considerably, and caused numerous broken light bulbs forward. Some fittings mounted on the overhead were broken off, and several valves were sprung open. However, the submarine suffered no crippling damage and moved on to continue her patrol off the northeast coast of New Ireland.

She spotted another Japanese ship on 3 January 1943, a destroyer which apparently was waiting to rendezvous with a convoy from the Palau Islands. The submarine was unable to attack the ship and, two days later, set a course for Brisbane, Queensland. She reached that port on 11 January and safely concluded her patrol.

Following this patrol, the submarine's period of refit was cut to 12 days due to the urgent need for submarines to patrol enemy infested waters. She got underway on 24 January but was forced to return to Brisbane for repair of minor leaks which developed during a deep dive. Again departing Brisbane on 26 January, Amberjack started her third war patrol in the Solomons area. On 29 January she was directed to pass close to Tetipari Island and then proceed to the northwest and patrol the approaches to Shortland Basin. Orders were radioed on 1 February for her to move north and patrol the western approaches to Buka Passage. Having complied with these orders, Amberjack made her first miles southeast of Treasury Island on 1 February, and of sinking a two-masted schooner by gunfire 20 miles (32 km) from Buka the afternoon of 3 February 1943. At this time she was ordered to move south along the Buka-Shortland traffic lane and patrol east of Vella Lavella Island.

In a second radio transmission on 4 February, Amberjack reported having sunk a 5,000 ton freighter laden with explosives in a two-hour night surface attack that date in which five torpedoes were fired. During this engagement, Chief Pharmacist's Mate Arthur C. Beeman was killed by machine gun fire, and an officer was slightly wounded in the hand. On 8 February, Amberjack was ordered to move to the west side of Ganongga Island and on 10 February, she was directed to keep south of latitude 7°30'S and to cover the traffic routes from Rabaul and Buka Island to Shortland Basin. On 13 February, Amberjack was assigned the entire Rabaul-Buka-Shortland Sea area and told to hunt for traffic.

The last radio transmission received from Amberjack was made on 14 February. She related having been forced down the night before by two destroyers, and that she had recovered from the water and taken prisoner an enemy aviator on 13 February. She was ordered north of latitude 6°30'S, and told to keep hunting for Rabaul traffic.

All further messages to Amberjack remained unanswered, and when, by 10 March, she had failed to make her routine report estimating the time of her arrival at base, she was ordered to do so. No reply was received, and she was reported as presumed lost on 22 March 1943.

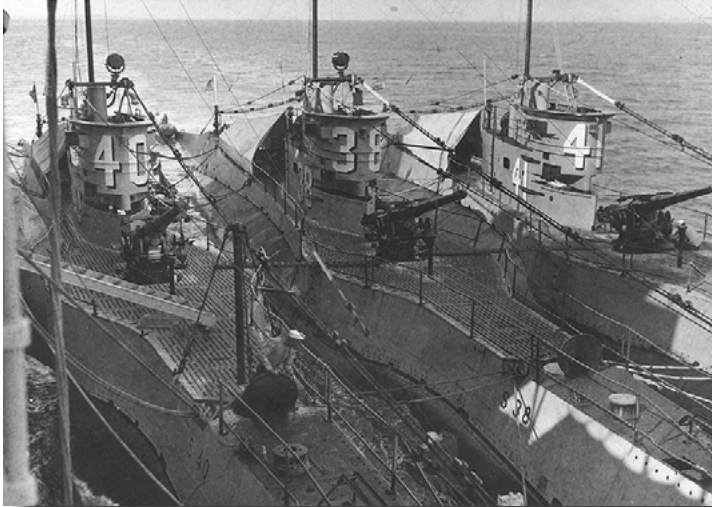
Reports received from the enemy after the war record an attack which probably sank Amberjack. On 16 February 1943, Hiyodori and Sub Chaser Number 18 attacked a U.S. submarine with nine depth charges at about 5°05'S 152°37'E Coordinates: 5°05'S 152°37'E. An escorting patrol plane had previously attacked the submarine. A large amount of heavy oil and "parts of the hull" came to the surface. This attack is believed to have sunk Amberjack. However, no final conclusions can be drawn, since Grampus was lost in the same area at about the same time. From the evidence available, it is considered most likely that the attack of 16 February sank Amberjack, but if she did survive this attack, any one of the attacks and sightings thought to have been made on Grampus might have been made on Amberjack.





# THE "S" BOATS — THE FIRST STANDARDIZED SUBMARINE DESIGN

Photo # NH 51833 Submarines S-40, S-38 & S-41 alongside USS Canopus, 1930



The United States' **S-class submarines**, often simply called **S-boats** (sometimes "**Sugar**" boats, after the contemporary Navy phonetic alphabet for "S"), were the first class of submarines built to a United States Navy design.

The United States Navy commissioned 51 S-Class submarines from 1920 to 1925. The first S-boat, USS *S-1* (SS-105), was commissioned in 1918 and the last, USS *S-51* (SS-162), in 1925. The S class is subdivided into four groups of different designs:

- Group I (S-1 class, or "Elco" type): S-1 and S-18-S-41, built by Bethlehem Steel at Fore River Shipyard in Quincy, Massachusetts and Union Iron Works in San Francisco, California, as subcontractor for Electric Boat Company (Elco).
- Group II (S-3 class, or "Navy Yard" type): S-3-S-17, built at the Portsmouth Navy Yard and Lake Torpedo Boat at Bridgeport, Connecticut.
- Group III (S-42 class): S-42-S-47, built at Fore River.
- Group IV (S-48 class): S-48-S-51, built by Lake.

S-2 was a prototype built by Lake, and was not repeated.

S-1, S-2, and S-3 were prototypes built to the same specification: S-1 designed by Electric Boat (Elco), S-2 by Lake, and S-3 by the Bureau of Construction and Repair (later Bureau of Ships). The Lake boat was considered inferior. The Elco and BuC&R designs were put into production.

The first S-boat, S-1, was launched on 26 September 1918, by Bethlehem at Fore River, but not commissioned until 5 June 1920.

The S-boats were improvements over the O- and R-boats. They were substantially larger. Compared to the R-boats, Group I S-boats were 33 feet (10.1 m) longer, with 3 feet 3 inches (1.0 m) more beam, 2 feet 3 inches (0.7 m) more draft, and 60% greater displacement. This allowed for greater range, larger engines and higher speed, and more torpedo reloads, though the number of forward torpedo tubes was still four. Seven of the Group II and all the Group IV boats had an additional stern tube. Group IV was also longer and had less draft. In 1923, USS *S-1* (SS-105) experimented with a seaplane (an idea the Japanese would adopt); four like boats were provided to Peru in 1926-8.

## SERVICE

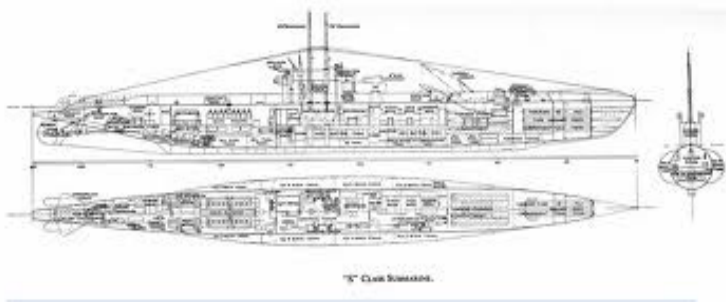
These boats saw service in World War II in both the Atlantic and the Pacific. Smaller and slower than many of the submarines produced for war service, and lacking the range for Pacific Ocean patrols (as well as being 20 years old), they were used in reconnaissance and supply roles, as well as for coastal defense, such as in the Alaska theater during the aftermath of the Battle of the Aleutian Islands. They were withdrawn in mid-1943 as fleet submarines became available, and were relegated to ASW training. Most of the surviving boats were scrapped in 1946.

In World War II, S-class boats did not use the newer Mark 14, standard in fleet submarines, due to shorter torpedo tubes, relying on the World War I-vintage Mark 10, instead. (Due to production shortages, many fleet boats used Mark 10s, also.) Since the Mark 14 suffered from a high failure rate early in the war, this was not necessarily a disadvantage.

Some were transferred to other navies, such as the six transferred to the British Royal Navy. These were mostly

used for training in anti-submarine warfare and removed from service by mid-1944.

## GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS



### Group I

- Displacement: 854 tons surfaced; 1,062 tons submerged
- Length: 219 feet 3 inches (66.8 m)
- Beam: 20 feet 9 inches (6.3 m)
- Draft: 16 feet (4.9 m)
- Propulsion: 2 × New London Ship and Engine Company (NELSECO) diesels, 600 hp (448 kW) each; 2 × Electro-Dynamic (S-1, S-30-S-35), Ridgway (S-18, S-20 through S-29), or General Electric (S-36 through S-41) electric motors, 750 horsepower (560 kW) each; 120 cell Exide battery; two shafts.

- Bunkerage: 168 tons oil fuel
- Speed: 14.5 knots (27 km/h) surfaced; 11 knots (20 km/h) submerged
- Range: 5,000 miles (8,000 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h) surfaced
- Test depth: 200 ft (61 m)
- Armament (as built): 4 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (bow, 12 torpedoes); 1 × 4 in (102 mm)/50 cal deck gun
- Crew: 42 officers and men
- Boats in Group: S-1, S-18 through S-41

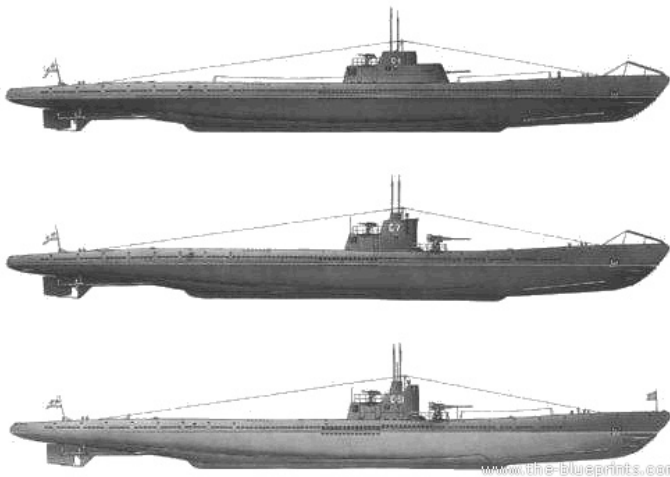
### Group II

- Boats in Group: S-3 through S-17
- Displacement: 876 tons surfaced; 1,092 tons submerged
- Length: 231 feet (70.4 m)
- Beam: 21 feet 9 inches (6.6 m)
- Draft: 13 feet 4 inches (4.1 m)
- Propulsion: 2 × M.A.N (S-3 through S-13) or Busch-Sulzer (S-14 through S-17) diesels, 1,000 hp (746 kW) each; 2 × Westinghouse electric motors, 600 hp (447 kW) each; 120-cell Exide battery; two shafts.
- Speed: 15 knots (28 km/h) surfaced; 11 knots (20 km/h) submerged
- Bunkerage: 148 tons oil fuel
- Range: 5,000 nautical miles (9,000 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h) surfaced
- Test depth: 200 ft (61 m)
- Armament (as built): 4 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (bow, 12 torpedoes) or (S-11 through S-13) 5 (four forward, one aft, 14 torpedoes); 1 × 4 in (102 mm)/50 cal deck gun
- Crew: 42 officers and men

### Group III

- Boats in Group: S-42 through S-47
- Displacement: 906 tons surfaced; 1,126 tons submerged

- Length: 216 feet (65.8 m), 225 feet 3 inches (68.7 m) overall
- Beam: 20 feet 9 inches (6.3 m)
- Draft: 16 feet (4.9 m)
- Propulsion: 2 × NELSECO diesels, 600 hp (448 kW) each; 2 × Electro-Dynamic electric motors, 750 horsepower (560 kW) each; 120 cell Exide battery; two shafts.
- Speed: 15 knots (28 km/h) surfaced; 11 knots (20 km/h) submerged
- Bunkerage: 185 tons oil fuel
- Range: 5,000 nautical miles (9,000 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h) surfaced
- Test depth: 200 ft (61 m)
- Armament (as built): 4 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (bow, 12 torpedoes); 1 × 4 in (102 mm)/50 cal deck gun
- Crew: 42 officers and men



#### Group IV

- Boats in Group: S-48 through S-51
- Displacement: 903 tons surfaced; 1,130 tons submerged
- Length: 240 feet (73.2 m), 266 feet (81.1 m) overall
- Beam: 21 feet 9 inches (6.6 m)
- Draft: 13 feet 6 inches (4.1 m)
- Propulsion: 2 × Busch-Sulzer diesels, 900 hp (670 kW) each; 2 × Ridgway electric motors, 750 horsepower (560 kW) each; 120 cell Exide battery; two shafts.
- Bunkerage: 177 tons oil fuel
- Speed: 14.5 knots (27 km/h) surfaced; 11 knots (20 km/h) submerged
- Range: 8,000 nautical miles (15,000 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h) surfaced
- Depth: 200 ft (61 m)
- Armament (as built): 4 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (bow, 12 torpedoes); 1 × 4 in (102 mm)/50 cal deck gun
- Crew: 42 officers and men

#### S-2

- Displacement: 800 tons surfaced; 977 tons submerged
- Length: 207 feet (63.1 m) overall
- Beam: 19 feet 6 inches (5.9 m)
- Draft: 16 feet 3 inches (5.0 m)
- Propulsion: 2 × diesels, 900 hp (670 kW) each; 2 × electric motors, 750 horsepower (560 kW) each; two shafts.
- Speed: 15 knots (28 km/h) surfaced; 11 knots (20 km/h) submerged
- Range: 8,000 nautical miles (15,000 km) at 10 knots (19 km/h) surfaced
- Depth: 200 ft (61 m)

Photo # NH 46418 USS Maryland, USS Camden and submarines in port, May 1927



Aerial view showing two S-boats alongside the much larger V-class boats.

The surface craft are the battleship USS Maryland (BB-46) and the former German freighter S.S. Kiel, here shown after conversion to the USS Camden (AS-6.)

- Armament (as built): 4 × 21 in (533 mm) torpedo tubes (bow, 12 torpedoes), 1 × 4 in (102 mm)/50 cal deck gun
- Crew: 42 officers and men

## S-BOAT FATES

All S-boats were scrapped after World War II except those listed below.

### LOST AT SEA BETWEEN WARS

- USS S-4 (SS-109) - Sunk 1927 later raised, re-commissioned, and served before being finally sunk 1936
- USS S-5 (SS-110) - lost September 1, 1920
- USS S-51 (SS-162)-sunk 1925; raised and later scrapped 1930

### SCRAPPED BETWEEN WORLD WAR I AND WORLD WAR II

- USS S-2 (SS-106)
- USS S-3 (SS-107)
- USS S-6 (SS-111)
- USS S-10 (SS-115)
- USS S-19 (SS-124)
- USS S-50(SS-161)

### TRANSFERRED TO THE ROYAL NAVY DURING WORLD WAR II

- USS S-1 (SS-105) to RN as P 552 in 1942, removed from service Jan 1944; scrapped 1945
- USS S-21 (SS-126) (as P 553) Sunk as target 23 March 1945
- USS S-22 (SS-127) (as P 554) scrapped 1945
- USS S-24 (SS-129) (as P 555) destroyed 1947
- USS S-25 (SS-130) (as P 551, later transferred to the Polish Navy as ORP Jastrząb-scuttled after hit by friendly fire 2 May 1942
- USS S-29 (SS-134) (as P 556) scrapped 1947

## LOST DURING WORLD WAR II

- USS S-26 (SS-131) was destroyed in a collision with SC-460 in the Gulf of Panama 24 January 1942
- USS S-27 (SS-132), USS S-36 (SS-141), and USS S-39 (SS-144) were wrecked when they ran aground
- USS S-28 (SS-133) was wrecked 4 July 1944 by a flooding casualty off Pearl Harbor
- USS S-44 (SS-155) was lost to enemy action 7 October 1943
- USS S-49 (SS-160) foundered and sank in the Patuxent River; stricken and sold in 1931 for scrap company; reduced to hulk 1936; 1943 hulk reacquired by the U.S. Navy for "experimental purposes".



## Strange Facts from World War II

**THE CAPTURE OF "THE SEAL".** The only British submarine to be captured at sea was the HMS Seal. On May 5, 1940, she was damaged while laying mines in the Kattegat (between Denmark and Sweden). Attempting to reach Sweden the badly damaged HMS Seal was spotted by two Arado seaplanes which proceeded to drop bombs around the wallowing submarine. Realizing that the ship would inevitably be sunk, the captain, Lt. Cmdr. Lonsdale, surrendered by waving a white sheet from the conning tower. One of the Arados then landed on the water and took the captain on board. A radio message to a nearby German fishing trawler on submarine patrol, the Franken, soon had the entire crew of HMS Seal on board as POWs.

**SNOWBOUND** (April, 1940). Norwegian pilots faced a dilemma when over two feet of snow fell on their airstrip near Trondheim. The advancing Germans were only hours away and here they were stuck, impossible to take off and escape. Nearby, a large herd of Reindeer was being driven to their spring pastures in the mountains by their Lapp keepers. Bribed by a bottle or two of alcohol, the herdsmen agreed to drive the Reindeer down the airstrip thus trampling the snow into a hard compact surface, enough to enable the planes to take off.

**THE LAST EXECUTION** in the Tower of London was on August 14, 1941. German spy, Josef Jakobs, was executed while seated tied to a chair, by an eight man firing squad from the Scots Guards. The white lint target patch placed over the area of his heart bore five bullet holes from the eight shots fired. Jakobs had parachuted into Britain on January 31, 1941, and broke his leg on landing. He lay all night in a field until his cries for help were heard next morning. He is buried in an unmarked grave in St. Mary's Roman Catholic Cemetery at Kinsal Green, London.

**ICE CREAM SHIP.** The war's most unusual ship was commissioned in 1945 at a cost of around one million dollars. It was the US Navy's 'Ice Cream Barge' the world's first floating ice cream parlor. It's sole responsibility was to produce ice cream for US sailors in the Pacific region. The barge crew pumped out around 1,500 gallons every hour! The concrete hulled vessel had no engine of its own but was towed around by tugs and other ships. A second barge, also in the ice cream business, and under the command of a Major Charles Zeigler, was anchored off Naha.

**LUCKY HIT.** During the attack on Pearl Harbor, a Hawaiian DC-3 airliner, coming in to land, was hit by a Japanese tracer bullet and set on fire. A minute later, the plane was hit by another bullet which hit the valve of a fire extinguisher, thus putting out the fire!

**Return To:**

U. S. Submarine Veterans, Perch Base  
7011 West Risner Road  
Glendale, AZ 85308  
E-Mail: [communications@perch-base.org](mailto:communications@perch-base.org)

<http://www.perch-base.org>



**Next Meeting Feb. 11, 2012**

**12 noon**

**Dillon's Restaurant at Arrowhead**

**20585 N. 59th Avenue  
Glendale, AZ 85308-6821**