

# Sirago Newsletter



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## Reunion 2017

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Shipmates:

PLEASE ***SERIOUSLY CONSIDER*** coming to our Sirago 2017 Reunion which will be in the Cleveland area (Thursday 20 July 2017 – Sunday 23 July 2017). I want to try to answer questions you may have about this reunion in this newsletter. Also, TWO copies of the reunion signup sheet are enclosed so that you can fill out both and retain one of them for your records without having to copy the document. Instructions for filling out the signup sheet are included ON the signup sheet.

FIRST OF ALL – I need to ensure you that this is a SIRAGO reunion, not an SSSBS reunion of all squadron six diesels. Some of you have gotten a bit confused about this due to the fact that another submarine, the USS Greenfish (SS-351), will be at the same hotel at the same time as we are, but since this is their very first trial at a real REUNION (separate from the United States Submarine Veterans, Inc. - USSVI organization reunions) we (Sirago) have offered to SIGN THE HOTEL CONTRACT, and

guarantee the room rates so that they may benefit from our successful 501(c)(19) association without us taking additional risk. We are proud to be able to help out another boat to do what we've been doing successfully since the mid-1990's without any cost or risk to us as an organization. AND... for those of us who were on the Northern Run Operations in 1971, we remember the USS Greenfish when we were last seeing them in Aarhus, Denmark prior to our own "private" operations in the Barents Sea off the coast of Russia. Of course we cannot talk about operations, dates and places of that nature, but submarines like ours and theirs were key to our country's security even if not a single medal, ribbon or commendation was given to anyone. That's what we did and that's what Greenfish and many other diesel boats did too. Bottom line, some of their crew members will be there at the hotel and will be enjoying the preferred rates we have guaranteed, but we will be having our own LUNCHEON (Friday) and BANQUET (Saturday Evening) as well as other activities we may choose to participate in.

SECONDLY – The USS COD (SS-224) Memorial is a World War II vintage submarine like our own and this fleet submarine is in GREAT SHAPE and docked in Cleveland and we will plan to tour it while there. Pat Conroy, who is our own Reunion Coordinator has set the date for our reunion in Cleveland to coincide with the USS COD Base (USSVI) picnic as well, which they have reserved on the USS Cod Memorial area. So in addition to seeing some USS Greenfish submariners you will likely see many other submariners, especially at the COD Memorial and the picnic is for those who actually commit to going (like members of our

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crew and members of the USS Greenfish and USS Cod Base, etc.) We will be collecting \$10 each if you choose to participate in this picnic which will be held in mid-day on Saturday. This is added to our “pre-pay” on the SIGNUP SHEET so that we can give you an official ticket to show you paid rather than just crashing the picnic without paying.

There are other activities that we are hoping to participate in for those desiring to go, including a Friday afternoon train ride through the Cuyahoga National Park that would be from early afternoon to maybe 4:00PM and we are asking for your interest as there are serious discounts for Senior Citizens if the group is large enough. Also a Saturday morning opportunity to visit the Rock & Roll Hall of Fame which is very close to the COD Memorial so you could park at the Memorial and walk there and then return for the picnic. For these two potential events, you will pay your own, but will receive a discount based upon your SIRAGO badge which you should keep with you the whole reunion for many reasons. We are also trying to coordinate carpooling.

THIRDLY and FINALLY, the reason you should seriously consider coming and getting the enclosed signup in is that we (the USS Sirago (SS485) Veterans’ Fraternal Association, Inc.) have committed (as you know) to gathering every 2 years (whether at a Sirago reunion or an SSSBS reunion) to REMEMBER THOSE CREW MEMBERS who have died in the 2-year interim. This is an important ceremony that we do independently and those of us who attend reunions, will be doing it for you, when YOU pass away as well... we have committed to do this “to the last man”. Remember that when you were aboard the USS Sirago, you committed to being responsible for your station and your qualifications to be able to save the boat, or save a fellow crew member if disaster hit. There have been numerous “situations” that many crew members recall when things got very intense and required your expertise and knowhow. Most of you did NOT make the navy a career... probably less than 10% did. But ALL of us remember what it was like and when we begin to tell what we “can tell” to other veterans and civilians, they are generally amazed that we endured what we did. We were part of a very important COLD WAR strategy to apply unique techniques and tactics, suffer numerous sleepless nights, and apply sheer determination to outwit and outplay our perceived enemy. It wasn’t easy, of course. And to some, it wasn’t very pleasant. But it made us who we are today. I myself was aboard the Sirago for only 18 months and was on the decommissioning crew. We were the last diesel boat to be in SUBRON SIX. We were also the LAST of two combatant vessels to be commissioned officially during WORLD WAR II – one was our boat and the other was a Destroyer Escort – both commissioned just 2 days before the war was over. We saw no action. Many thought it was a waste to have all these newly built submarines. But then, the COLD WAR began we played a very important part in ending it. You know that, and I know that. So, come and remember with the rest of us and know that you are the last of those who were part of the Silent Service of diesel boats whose crew did their duty to safeguard this great country we call home.

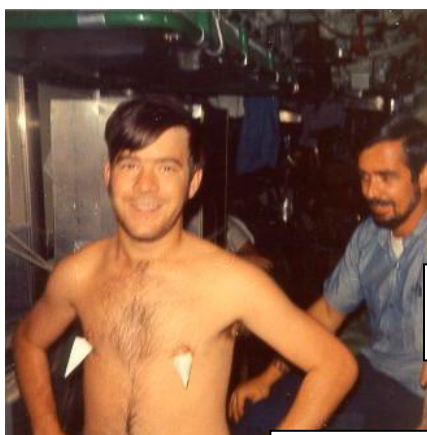


**LOST & FOUND NOTICES (D=Decom Crew, P=Plank Owner)**

**ETERNAL PATROL (P=Plank Owner, D=Decommissioning Crew)**

<b>Gregory M. Bell III</b>	<b>ETR3</b>	<b>71-72 (D)</b>	<b>Died 3 October 2009</b>
<b>James Henry McCullough</b>	<b>F1c</b>	<b>45-46</b>	<b>Died 12 August 2016</b>
<b>James H. Weathers</b>	<b>CS3</b>	<b>71-72 (D)</b>	<b>Died 14 June 2016</b>

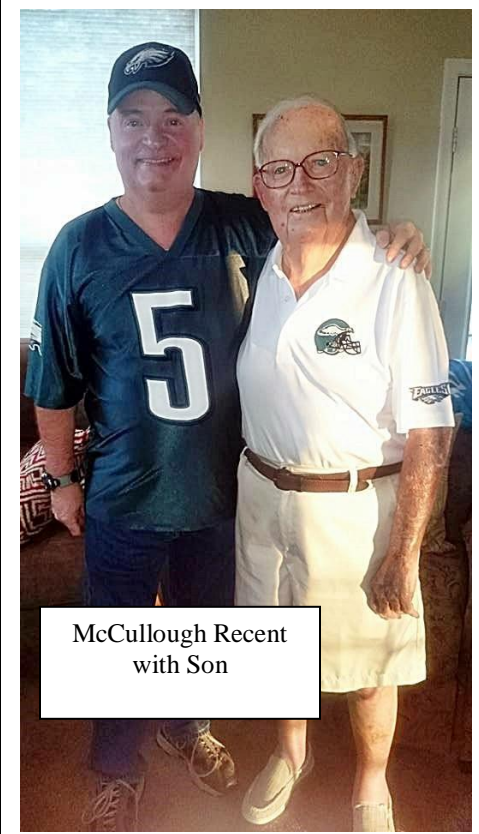
*Sailor, rest your oar....*



Bell in 1971



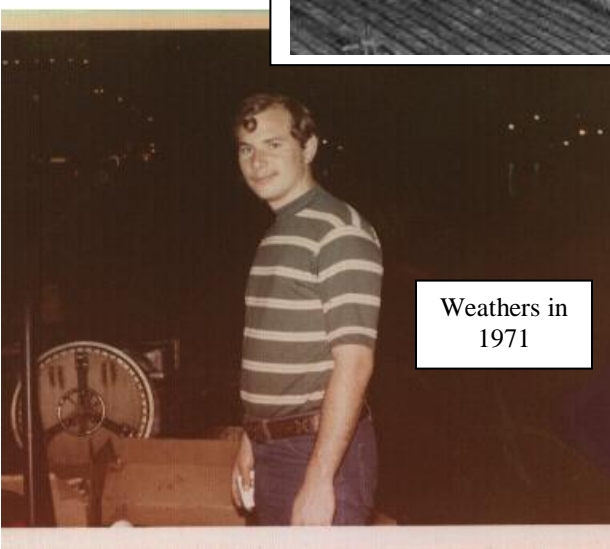
Bell  
Retired



McCullough Recent  
with Son



McCullough Center 1945



Weathers in  
1971



Weathers Recent

**IMPORTANT NOTICE!**

**REUNION 2017  
INFORMATION &  
SIGNUP (2 copies)  
ENCLOSED**

Rich McCamant  
10225 Ocean Gateway  
Easton, MD 21601

US POSTAGE  
STAMP  
HERE

**ADDRESS CORRECTION REQUESTED**