

Sirago Newsletter



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Reunion 2017

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Shipmates:

In the beginning was the word.... and the word was changed.... again. We have "slightly" adjusted the DATE for the 2017 reunion to July 20th – July 23rd 2017. REMEMBER – this is NEXT YEAR, not THIS YEAR.

The hotel contract has been signed and Pat Conroy (our Association XO/Reunion Coordinator Extraordinaire) has been negotiating to keep prices low and affordable. As part of this, we will be joining with a "first reunion" of the USS Greenfish. Also, the COD Base (USSVI) will be having their normal activities simultaneous with ours, so we are hoping we can share costs and risks on this endeavor.

The reunion will be held (as stated above) from Thursday the 20th of July to Sunday the 23rd at the EMBASSY SUITES/Cleveland Rockside. We have reserved 50 rooms in the hotel for a price of \$129 per night. We have hospitality areas and plenty of space to have great conversations. We will be joining the COD Base

at the USS COD itself which is in great shape and will be having a picnic there with the base members.

Pat has also been checking out cool places to visit while there including the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame and a great number of other venues.

We include a free breakfast with the hotel room and also a free 2-hour cocktail hour at the hotel for guests.

The official SIGNUP SHEET will be sent later in the year, but we need for each of you who might be interested in coming to this reunion to EMAIL ME that you are interested – BICKEL485@AOL.COM ... OR... you can mail me a note to this effect at

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and I will add you to the "plan to come" list.

Particularly, I would like to know HOW MANY would be coming – and would you likely DRIVE or would you likely be coming by PLANE. The reason I need to know this is that we'd like to see how many people would be interested in various venues (when we send out the signup sheet) and then figure out if it would be possible to carpool rather than renting an expensive bus. As you know, some of our crew members cannot drive and have some difficulty getting around so we'd like to see some good teamwork and have a lot of fun without burdening people too much.

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SIRAGO CREW HONORED FOR DONATION – April 19th 2016

In the spring of 2004 the USS Razorback (SS-394) was returned from the Turkish Navy to a historic site in N. Little Rock Arkansas at their Maritime Museum. Bringing her back was a monumental effort and the newly formed USS Sirago Veterans' Association, Inc. – 501(c)(19) donated \$1000 to help with the effort. We were officially sent an invitation to thank us and our Treasurer Frank George and his wife Frances traveled there on April 19, 2016 to be part of their celebration and to accept the honor bestowed on major contributors. Here is his report:

Here is my report on the Donor Reception at the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum on April 19, 2016. The reception was for those who had donated to the fund for bringing the USS Hoga YT 146 to Little Rock and those who had donated \$1,000 or more over the past 10 years which included the project of bringing home the USS Razorback SS 394. With the addition of the USS Hoga, the museum now has bookends to WWII, with the USS Hoga being in Pearl Harbor on Dec 7th 1941, fighting fires and aiding the USS Nevada to shallower water to sink, out of the main channel. The USS Razorback was in Tokyo Bay when the Japanese signed the surrender papers ending the war. Approximately 75 people attended, including the past Mayor of North Little Rock Patrick Hays, North Little Rock Chamber of Commerce President John Owens, three North Little Rock Aldermen, three Arkansas state legislators, as well as past Congressman Vic Snyder. They had free food and drink, which I could have done some damage on if I were not a bit under the weather with a cold. They had several speakers thanking us for the donations, one speaker did really catch my attention. He was Charley DuVeen, who pointed to the USS Razorback and said if not for her, he would not be here today. His dad Charles DuVeen, was a bombardier on a shot up B-29 that barely made it back over the water after bombing Japan. After bailing out and landing in the water, his thoughts went to who would rescue him. If he had landed on land the locals who have probably killed him on the spot, if a Japanese patrol boat picked him up it meant prisoner of war camp. Then the USS Razorback appeared and it was the most beautiful site he had ever seen knowing he was saved. We had several others in attendance, including the daughter of a worker who helped build the USS Razorback in Portsmouth, and the widow of a sailor who served onboard 1945 to 1948. My wife, Frances and I talked with several of the guests and made some new friends. As the reception came to an end I had a conversation with the Executive Director of the Arkansas Inland Marine Museum, Greg Zonner. After thanking the USS Sirago SS-485 Veterans Association for their donation to the USS Razorback Fund, he told me an interesting story about bringing the USS Razorback back home. The original plan was for volunteers to drive it under its own power back home. They had over 650 former Submariners apply to report for duty, and pay their own expenses to get the job done. As most of us know, that did not happen as it was towed all the way home. What most of us do not know is that it was not a material or mechanical issue that caused the change of plans, it was the US State Department that put a stop to the plans. Their concerns were that if the crew were met by a ship of a rogue nation at sea, they (USS Razorback) would be unarmed and the possibility of a fully operational submarine, even an older one, falling into their hands was unacceptable. That was the reason for the change of plans. In another side story to this is the Commander Submarine Forces Atlantic Fleet had about every submarine wanting to help in the return of the USS Razorback. So, whether the crew towing the USS Razorback knew it or not, they were always being tailed by a US submarine not more than 2 miles away at all times. This was accomplished by 4 different boats that were picked by SUBLANT. I explained that the USS Razorback was part of SSSBS and that really got him excited, saying if we wanted to hold a reunion in Little Rock, he would see that the whole place would be at our disposal: The USS Razorback, The USS Hoga, and the 3 barges which hold a museum, party deck area and a gift store with restrooms and indoor seating. He stated he could arrange for us to get special pricing at the WYNDAM RIVERFRONT hotel, which is a close as you can get to the museum, walking distance. He also said he could get us passes for the museum on the Little Rock AFB. There is a lot to do in Little Rock and it would be a great place for a future SSSBS reunion with its centralized location and support from the Arkansas Inland Maritime Museum.

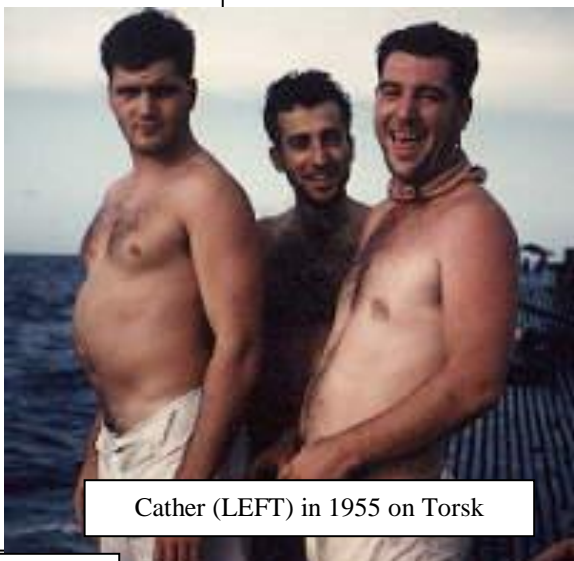
Frank George

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

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

Oswald "Nelson" Anderson, Jr.	SN	63-64	Died 9 September 2014
Ralph W. Boese	EM1	46-47	Died 24 September 2012
Don C. Burkett	FN	48-50	Died 17 April 2012
William K. Cather	SA	53-53	Died 19 October 2013
Leonardo Custodio	SD2	55-55	Died 9 July 2008
Richard H. Eggers, Jr.	RMSN	49-51	Died 16 June 2014
William George Krueger	EN2	61-62	Died 11 April 2015
Thomas E. Reilly, Jr.	GM1	46-46	Died 8 September 2014
Leon Roberson	STM2c	47-47	Died 13 January 2016
Arthur P. Steiner	MoMM3c	45-47	Died 17 January 2015
Lewis I. Zipperer	STS1	66-68	Died 17 February 2014

Sailor, rest your oar....



Cather (LEFT) in 1955 on Torsk



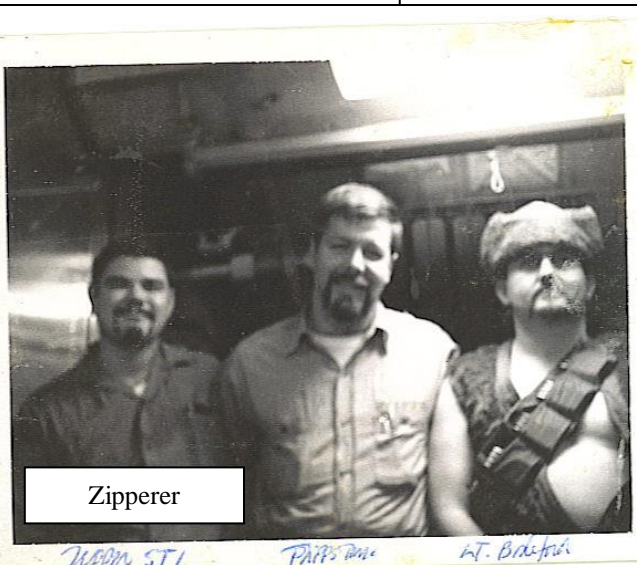
Eggers Obit Photo



Reilly Obit Photo



Steiner Obit Photo



Zipperer

Zipperer ST1 Phillips Lt. Bickel



Zipperer 2nd from Right helping to throw
CO Talbot overboard.

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