



# USS HADDO NEWSLETTER



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## From the Editor:

Feedback on scorpion:

Just read your Haddo newsletter. I see the Navy and government have issued another line of bs for the loss of the Scorpion. Hope you don't believe it. The actual reason is buried so deep in the archives that it will never surface. If you wonder, just talk to the people on the Haddo during that Med spec op in April and May 1968 and you will get a real good idea of what actually happened. If still alive and have no conflicts, will probably attend 50th reunion. Was on Haddo from 68 to 70.

Don Ransel MMCS(SS) USN RETIRED

My own experience with the loss of the scorpion is that the sub lost message came the day after my birthday. I was on the USS Gato and we were immediately sent to their last known location. I do not remember how long we stayed on station but I do remember the eerie sound of the transmissions of tri-beam omni sonar and UWT calls of "brandywine this is polar chief, over". Eventually we were relieved off station by another sub and we returned to New London. Ed Hergert

There is a nice article about the USS Thresher at this website.

<http://news.yahoo.com/us-sub-sinking-50-years-ago-led-safety-063033693.html>

Originally Haddo's hull design was thresher class and subsequently referred to as Permit class after modifications were introduced or the Navy thought it was better for morale to be Permit class.

The following is a letter from **Angelo G. Cicolani**, USNA '55

Fifty years of keeping this in check and it's time to write my story about USS Thresher (SSN-593) as best I can recall. Addressees may use or forward this as they wish. In early March 1963, when Sub school graduation was a couple weeks away, we got to pick our submarines and I picked Thresher. A good friend, LT. Merrill Collier, who had accompanied me most of the way through surface nuclear power training, prototype, etc. starting in 1959 had also decided to go to subs. We were in the same Subschool class and he got to pick his submarine after I

did. He picked Permit (SSN-594). However, he wanted to stay on the East coast and his wife knew that my wife wanted (quite badly) to be on the West coast, which I did not know at the time. Merrill also knew that I wanted to be on "the hottest running Buck Rogers submarine" (those were my words at the time). He told me that it would be Permit, not Thresher because Permit was going to conduct extensive technical evaluations on the sonar-SINS-fire control system to support the SubRoc missile. We had 24 hours to trade submarine assignments. After discussions with my wife that night, I agreed to trade my pick of Thresher for Merrill's pick of Permit. Sub school graduation was near the end of March 1963. Somewhere in Oklahoma, while I'm driving the family car from New London to San Diego to report in to Permit, the radio news reports that Thresher is missing. Merrill Collier went down with Thresher in my place. Merrill was no ordinary young naval officer; he came to his commission with extraordinary promise. He rose through the Naval Academy Preparatory School (NAPS) to the Naval Academy (USNA) and became the Brigade Commander for the USNA class of 1956. (For those unfamiliar with the traditions of USNA, being selected as the Brigade Commander is the strongest indicator possible of confidence in the Brigade Commander's leadership promise.) Every time I think about my adventures in submarines, I think of Merrill and I have to confront the guilt of those who can truly say, "there but for the grace of God". God bless you Merrill and my heartfelt sorrow and condolences to the Collier family. Also, sitting right behind me for the six months of Sub school was the bright-eyed, bushy-tailed LTJG. John Grafton who also went down with Thresher. I would have loved to serve on a submarine with John. God bless all those who served our country on Thresher.

## **Haddo 604 Memories**

For the sake of all concerned I will try to protect the identity of anyone in a story who may be shown in a bad light as the memories should all be good memories and not a relived nightmare for the readers. Regardless of who we served, disagreed, despised or had a problem with we as submariners are a band of brothers like no other and the past is the past..

One particular incident occurred as we were returning back to Charleston after a "North Atlantic run". This was probably sometime around 67 – 68 time frame. We had been out for over 2 months and were scheduled to be back for Christmas and New years. We were on the track of a "target" that took us from the North Atlantic to the Caribbean and into their patrol area. Because of the importance of this track, we were extended and did not return until about 1 week after New Years.

When we were coming up the Cooper River, the Squadron Commander met us on the way in. He got on the 1 MC and congratulated us for a job "well done" saying "gee I'm sorry you guys missed Christmas & New Years blah, blah, blah". As soon as he hung up the microphone it was almost like we rehearsed it; the whole crew from bow to engine room sang him a "hymn"; you know; "him, him, F#@&\* him. There were officers scrambling everywhere trying to pin point the culprits but it was almost the whole crew; there was nothing they could do. Two weeks later we were back at sea.

Don Derfler

A funny thing happened on the way to the Head. Any submariner especially an "A" ganger can appreciate stories about sanitary tank catastrophes.

One "A" Ganger who's name will be left for the reader to determine was "blowing sanitaries", he forgot to shut off the valve for the Captains sink; do you want to guess what happened next? Yep, the old man went to drain it and got a backwards flush shower; he was not too happy to say the least. I am betting any of the guys especially the aft gang from back around 66 – 69 would remember the culprit.

Another time we came up to periscope depth to communicate and do our "housekeeping". He again went to "blow sanitaries", this time he shut off all of the valves but neglected to blow down the tank level gauges to check to see how full they were. He just opened up the 700 pound air wide open; the tanks were full so it took a whole lot less air. The relief valves for the tank blew which if you recall was a test pressure tank. The sanitary blow station was in a small compartment down in the lower level mid ships berthing area; my bunk was right outside of the door; I was on watch and when we all heard the loud boom, I ran down to see what it was. There was the "A" ganger covered in wet turds, toilet paper and dripping from head to toe. My bunk was also collateral damage; fortunately I was not in it and the flash cover was zipped up. I did however trade my mattress out for his.

Don Derfler

This happened on another 594 class SSN615. I was a second class MM "A" ganger, The executive officer came out of the wardroom and said Petty Officer Hergert there is some water dripping from the overhead in one of the staterooms, it tastes like sea water. I went in to investigate and found water dripping from the overhead in the stateroom near the officers head. I opened the access panel in the overhead and found that the water was coming from a charcoal filter vent for the sanitary system. I went to the XO and informed him that

the water came from the officers urinal when someone blew it down without closing the valve forcing the water up through the vent. Of course I didn't lecture the XO about using a taste test, but I think he got the point.

## **USS Haddo SS 255**

### THE SILENT SERVICE TV Series Available

Thanks to the generosity of USSVI Northern VA Base member Ray Stone, the following episodes are available for downloading at this site are from the submarine adventure series 'The Silent Service' which aired during the 1957-1958 television seasons.

The Silent Service is a documentary styled anthology series about the U.S. Navy's submarine fleet and their missions during World War II and the Korean War. Every episode was fact based and the realism of the show was elevated by the use of actual combat footage from the files of the United States Navy.

The stories, which varied between the South Pacific during World War II, the Atlantic campaign and the Korean War, were the brainchild of Rear Admiral Thomas T. M. Dykers, himself a WWII submariner who commanded USS Jack (SS-259) and retired from the Navy in 1949 after 22 years of service.

Admiral Dykers also did an intro piece for each episode, narrated the action and filmed a closing segment, usually with a member of the crew of the submarine that was highlighted on that particular episode.

Each season was comprised of 39 episodes. All of the episodes for season one are complete, however there are three missing episodes for season two. If anyone has copies or knows where they are available, please let Ray know.

In addition to the episodes, Ray has included copies of the press kits that were issued to the stations along with the films. He also included episode summaries which are handy in preparing notices / programs for individual viewing.

All episodes are in MP4 format. Ray suggests downloading to your device rather than trying to view on line. Each episode is about 30 min. in length so consider that when trying to download.

For those interested in short-cutting this process, the entire set can be purchased on DVD from USSVI Member John Clear. Visit <http://www.usssealion.com/> for more information.

To download the TV episodes, go to <http://www.olgoat.com/> and click on the DOWNLOAD button.

### **Other Tales from the Deep**

Jack Hester USS Snook

Doc McMicken (Snook commissioning crew) provided this story regarding the Snook's first sea trial. I was there and like the Doc, I don't recall going back

down 300 feet (more like 150), but who cares, we made it. In addition, I think the guy that went berserk was named Nelson and he wasn't a WWII vet...again who cares, we made it...

I do remember the skipper (CDR Bucknell) asking us not to mention the problem once we got back to the shipyard...but when I got home later that evening my wife said, "I understand you had a little excitement today." So much for not mentioning it....ha

I was on board Snook for that emergency surfacing in the Gulf of Mexico, and didn't fully realize the significance of it until I happened upon an account of the incident that Jim Watkins gave in an interview years later. Perhaps you have already read it, but just in case, here it is. I was in the Control Room watching the depth gauge; I remember going back down again after first surfacing, but don't believe it was 300 ft. ... about half that according to my memory, but who am I to contradict the XO?

The following excerpt is abstracted from an interview conducted By Gary Weir at the Naval Historical Center, Washington, D.C. with Admiral James D. Watkins on May 11, 2000. This is part of an *Oral History Project* of the H. John Heinz III Center for Science, Economics and the Environment in conjunction with the Colloquia Series *Oceanography: The Making of a Science*.

"While we were at test depth on our first sea trial, we went down to test depth, we blew a five-inch line, salt water line, and it flooded badly back in the engineering spaces. And the skipper was back there for the trial.

So I was at the con, and so away we went. I get calm the more tense the situation is. I don't why. God gave me something. I go the other way. My adrenalin flows fast, but I think clearly. So away we went. I had a rescue vessel above me which was very worrying to me. I thought, "We're going to come up fast. We've got to get out of here. And if I hit that thing, it's going to really be something. We'll sink that ship, could sink our own." So we were communicating on the underwater telephone to get out of the way, to clear to the north. We were blowing all our main ballast. We were going to all-ahead flank, as much as we could get on the engine, because by now the ship had taken a down-turn at the stern. ... They had to scram the reactor, because all the gauges started--once you get a fog in there, you begin to lose control of that reactor, and the best thing to do is shut it down, but you could still use the decay heat, you know, heat in the system. And we just kicked it ahead and got up on the surface and got that place open. Because what happens in a situation like that is you overload your air-conditioning plant because you get a fog, actual fog in the space. The water comes in at such a high pressure; it just sprays everywhere right away. Not only do you get the flooding, but you get this incredible moisture in the air which can confuse your instruments. You can't run a plant unless you have all the instruments really on top of what's going on. So you scram the reactor, and we did, but we had enough heat still in the reactor to get up. So, fortunately, we were moving along at reasonably good speed and could accelerate rapidly.

If we hadn't been, I think we'd have lost the ship. There was that much water coming in.

This happened in the Gulf of Mexico. Let's say maybe fifty, seventy miles off Pascagoula to the south. But I handled that well. The team that was on board liked it because all the crew did well. In other words, the training paid off. You really learned something in a situation like that.

We had one experience, (a) diesel submariner in World War II there that went berserk. We had to tie him to his bunk and inject him with a -- the corpsman had (to) inject him with a sedative to calm him down, because he'd been through depth charge and everything else in the war. It was sad. He was a wonderful person, but we had to get him out of submarines. There again you test people under those things. But the crew worked beautifully, collision alarm went, the tanks blew, the people in the propulsion plant knew what we were doing by kicking it ahead and giving it everything we can, and water was just flooded on the stern of the ship. It was really incredible.

So we were still down by the stern when we got up, but we came up so fast, we went back down to 300 feet because you came up, but we still hadn't--that's a 4,000-ship, so it's not something you just throw up in the air and it just stays up there like a cork. It went back down again, then it came up again. But we had enough buoyancy in it then to overcome the water that had come in. So it was one of those kinds of things where they liked what they saw and they knew that the exec is very much involved in the training of the crew and readying for sea trials and everything that goes on.

New construction is a whole breed of submarine lore that's very different from normal operations at sea. It is a very demanding kind of a tour of duty and very much engineering oriented.

(The) up-angle when (we) came up (was) about twenty degrees. You don't want to get it too much more than that because the crew can't take it. Then you're dumping your people. They know, they'll hang on at twenty. They've got to really hang on. They're hanging on the pipes and all kinds of things, but that's about as much as you can sustain. And we didn't have really that much control over that, because the water was in the stern. You had a lot of seawater back there, filled that after end down by the shafts.

The up-angle (on ascent) was probably twenty degrees, not more than that. (The water in the stern) almost forced the angle. We couldn't do much more than that. It was really somewhat out of control at that point. Fortunately, we were able to get the speed on. That's the critical thing, because you had those huge stern planes and the sail planes that stick out the side, and if you got enough speed on, they will overcome an awful lot of weight from the water. So that's why the speed is critically important.

In fact, they did a lot of studies after we lost Thresher and Scorpion, and gave us a whole, totally new protocol on sea trials where we had to maintain, if we were going down to test depth for the first time, you had to be at a certain speed, like 10 knots, minimal. Get your momentum on so if anything happens--and in those days

(salt water) joints were classic failures. We didn't know how to do them and make sure we could test all the way around the braze, and so that was a common failure and what probably lost the Thresher. We don't know for sure, but certainly there were experiments that showed that high-pressure water coming in and spraying on those distribution switchboards will blow them up just like a bomb. Boom! And those kinds of things can happen when you get water in a hull like that."

### USSVI Haddo Base in Cleveland, TN

Five were inducted into the Holland Club on May 11 at the base meeting in the Golden Corral restaurant. Dick Gill and John Farro were also inducted but could not attend. Richard Noble has identified the people in the pictures. Dave Montgomery also made it into the Holland Club but was unable to attend.



George Sims-Lee Rogers



Lee Rogers - Ron Eytchison



Donald Smith-Lee Rogers



Gerald Roch- Lee Rogers



Richard Noble- Ralph Stroede



L-R Back Row ( Frank Kelso III, Ron Eytchison, Ralph Stroede, Gerald Roch, George Sims, Mark Parrish, Richard Noble, LV Moore) L-R Front Row (Lee Rogers & Brian Meagher) **all Holland Club members**

### Eternal Patrol

Hello Ed,  
Looking at the news letter I see an article regarding Dick Byrnes going on eternal patrol from his wife Pat. I would like to say that I remember Lt Byrnes; he was "A" div officer for a time when I was on the Haddo. I would agree with the comment on the lighter his men gave him; he was not only a great division officer but a good all around guy. He was the lay leader for Catholic services when we were under way; I used to attend the services he held and read the Bible & prayed with him.

I would like to convey my deepest sympathy to his wife Pat and thank her for sharing him with us. I do recognize a couple of the names on the lighter; it appears they are all last names. After I got married in 1969, my wife & I rented a mobile home on a lot owned by Dave Hottenstein.

Best regards,  
**Don Derfler MM1 (SS)**

Mrs. Byrnes,  
I am sorry to hear of the loss of your husband, Mr. Byrnes.  
I joined Haddo while she was in the Charleston shipyards undergoing the Subsafe overhaul. Your husband was my division officer and I have many memories of him and that time. We worked hard but had a lot of good times.  
On the lighter you described was Chief Maddox, Dave Hottenstein EM1, Bill Roemer EM1, Frank Prochazka IC1, Calvin Elam, Jack Garrison and myself Jim Turner. Your husband will always be remembered.  
Jim Turner  
Trenton , NJ

Patrick Healy served with us in 65-66. I unfortunately don't remember him. His son, Pete, is trying to find some of the crew he served with and tell him some of the stories. He would also love to see any pictures. Would you post this in the next Newsletter so that we can cast a large net? Thank you. To the guys I have copied, you served at the same time. If you remember Patrick would

you drop his son a line, it would mean an awful lot to him. And copy me. Thanks.  
Ralph

Ralph,

Thanks for your time on the phone today. My Dad loved the Navy and loved the Haddo. He is a member of the Long Island NY Sub vets so we have contacted them as well.

I would think anyone from the 65-66 crews may know him. Lance was the only specific one I knew of since he lived close to us. If any of those gentleman possibly had photos of my Dad from then it would be incredible. I know that might be a long shot.

Memorial services will be held This Sunday July 29th at  
Mangano Funeral Home  
1701 Deer Park Ave  
Deer Park, NY 11729  
631-586-3600

Burial will be at Calverton National Cemetery on Monday the 30th.  
Thank you so much for your help and for your service.



Pat Healy - left



Pete & Patrick Healy

### Other Emails

I noticed the website did not have all the awards. Some to add to the main page

Also, in 1985, 2 expeditionary medals were award on WESTPAC.

Robert Desrosiers

Cited Unit	Merit Start	Merit End	Merit Mons/Da ys	Appr Award
HADD O SSN 604	08-Dec-1980	26-Dec-1980	1/19	EM
HADD O SSN 604	01-Oct-1984	30-Sep-1985	12/365	NE
HADD O SSN 604	01-Jan-1966	-	-	NU
HADD O SSN 604	01-Jan-1967	-	-	MU

Edwin,

As you can tell by the number of responses, O Knox was a popular guy. I too served with Mark Gores and as I remember his name, Ormand Knox, but when you get a nick name that's what sticks. I have a little different take in that I knew 'O' from nuke school in Orlando. He was the hardest working guy there, spending all night and weekends, but in the end didn't quite make it. Even with all that going on he was upbeat and positive. Ends up, some 8 months later, I run into him on my first boat, the Haddo, as an A-ganger. Same hard working great guy. Hope all is well with him.

Thanks for all the hard work that goes into this news letter. It's good to take a walk down memory lane from time to time. I'm hoping to make the 50<sup>th</sup> reunion and touch bases with long lost comrades.

EM2/SS Drope

Edwin,

My father-in-law served on the USS Haddo 604, and we recently discovered the website dedicated to that submarine. I am not sure if you are the person to contact to add his name to the crew list, but I figured if not, you could give me the email of the person who could do that. His information is as follows:

Robert (Bobby) Webb

'64-'67

EN2

Thank you.

Kip Van Aken

I was on Haddo 1972-1976 EM2(SS) Nuclear. I happen to have the NY Shipbuilding presentation model of the USS Haddo SSN 604. It is 99:1 nicely done in red oak I think. Missing are the vertical tail fins.(did Hymie rip off during one of his rants?) Weird sonar bulge aft Stbd engine room. Been meaning to restore: thinking also depth numbers on leading edge plus nav light. Hull numbers and other name paintings like I first saw on board (until incident when all blacked over and no more ball caps with ID).

I was thinking of giving it to Sub Base New London where we started, but would you ask that Haddo USSVI base Tennessee if they would like it. I do want it treated properly, no matter what.

Kipp C Van Aken, Chief Engineer, acting, replica tall ship, "Half Moon"

After another day, and some thought and reflection, I have decided to keep Haddo with me. However, I will make ready for Charleston, and will bring it with.

It was my first home port, USS Orion AS-18, the big "O", my happiest time in the real Navy. The Haddo was not a happy ship when I was on board. Good people unhappy. I see in the Navy Times that there are still yet today even now, issues of leadership and morale, which are taught at the "Academy", perhaps by some of our own officers. KC

great newsletter, memories story brought back the white knuckle times , especially coming to periscope depth in the med. always sad to hear about a lost sub, but the information helps solve some mind struggles, there are many horror stories hidden in the minds of submariners, take care,

Mark Schwinger

**From:** Ralph Stroede

[mailto:rstroede@hughes.net]

**Sent:** Saturday, March 30, 2013 10:38 AM

**To:** Derfler, Don

**Cc:** Ed Hergert; Trudy Stroede

**Subject:** FW: USS Haddo

Hi Don,

Would you rather have your personal email rather than your company? Please send it to me. I have added this one to the Crew List but can always change it. What years did you serve on Haddo? Will you send me your physical address and phone number so that we can add you to our Master Mailing List? We have also added you to our Newsletter list, it comes out twice a year, April and Oct. You can go on the web site and see all the old Newsletters. Would you please send Ed Hergert, our Newsletter Editor , some sea stories from your time on the Haddo,

I was on the Commissioning Crew and got off in Sept. 1968. I'm sorry but I don't remember you. I do know Foster, Pester and Romero. We are trying to find Foster, do have a contact with him? You can get in touch with

Pester on the Crew List, he comes to the Haddo reunions. I was MM1 aft, I was Section Leader 3.  
Ralph Stroede  
MM1(SS)N  
Plank Owner  
1964-1968

Hi Ralph,

I do remember your name but probably would not recognize you. I came aboard straight out of sub school around May of 1966 as a FA. After mess cooking and seaman gang I ultimately went in to "A" div with Fred and Billy Foster. I stayed aboard all the way through the 18 month shipyard overhaul when she got the sub-safe package; when we went back out for sea trials there were only a handful of us that had been to sea on her before. I reenlisted for an additional 4 years in 1969; rode her until around September of 1971. I went to shore duty in Phila. PA then out in August of 1971 as a MM 1 (SS). Still have some of my old uniforms but doubt very much if I could ever get in to any of them.

I do not have contact with Billy Foster; I have kept in contact with a couple of guys I knew that came aboard after you were gone I imagine.

I am in the middle of changing my ISP so as soon as I get a new home e mail address will send it to you. I will be retiring from full time at my employer around January – Feb. of 2014. When I got out of the Navy, I went to work for this company and in Jan. of 14 will have 40 years with them. I credit a great career to the Navy and especially the training and experiences I got on the Haddo; I still hold those times both good and bad close to my heart especially the relationships withal of the guys I met over the years.

I see from Dick Noble's note there is a 50<sup>th</sup> year of the commissioning reunion planned in Charleston in 2014. My wife and vacation in Myrtle Beach every year and we still like to go to Charleston on occasion; in fact we have a couple of friends that live there and one is an old acquaintance my wife worked with when we lived there so it would be great to go back for the reunion.

**From:** r Noble [<mailto:rmnoble@hughes.net>]

**Sent:** Friday, March 29, 2013 5:24 PM

**To:** 'Derfler, Don'

**Subject:** RE: USS Haddo

Don,

Dick Noble here. My memory is somewhat fuzzy on remembering you, please forgive me. On another note however I would like to suggest that you may be interested in joining the USS HADDO Base in Cleveland TN. a Base within USSVI. Since you have joined USSVI the base annual dues are only \$15.00. You can send a check to me if you want made out to the USS HADDO Base and I will forward your information to the membership Chairman. We would gladly welcome you to our Base as we have approximately 40 members from the crew as members.

My address is P.O.Box 375, Charleston TN. 37310.  
I am forwarding your information to the USS HADDO Reunion Committee Chairman (Ralph Stroede) so you

will be placed on the Newsletter. In addition the Crew of the Haddo will celebrate the 50th anniversary of the year it was commissioned with a reunion in Charleston SC in September 2014.

Let me hear what your intentions are if you please.

Dick Noble sends

**From:** Derfler, Don

[<mailto:Don.Derfler@daikinmcquay.com>]

**Sent:** Wednesday, March 27, 2013 1:02 PM

**To:** [rmnoble@hughes.net](mailto:rmnoble@hughes.net)

**Subject:** USS Haddo

Dick, Noble, ST 1 when I came aboard as I recall; I can still hear your voice giving the cooks a hard time saying "I ate 3 steaks and could not find a good one" and when asked how chow was your reply was "it will make a turd". To this day, I still use both of those every opportunity I get.

I have debated for years getting in touch with some of the old shipmates; I still keep in touch with a couple personally. I submitted my info as a crew member and hope to receive confirmation soon. I was there with Billy Foster & Fred Pester in "A" Gang.

"May your number of surfaces always equal your number of dives"

Thanks and regards,

## USS Haddo 50<sup>th</sup> Year Reunion News

Planning is moving along nicely, but since it is still a year and a half away, we haven't been able to finalize all the plans just yet. In the last newsletter we asked you to send an email to [rstroede@hughes.net](mailto:rstroede@hughes.net) if you are planning on attending, but it is not a commitment. We received several responses, but we are hopeful to receive more as a result of this newsletter to enable us to get a better feel for how many folks we will be accommodating for activities.

As a reminder:

You can make your reservations with the Radisson Hotel, Charleston Airport any time now. They request that you call them at 1-843-744-2501 – **ask for in-house reservations**, then give them our group code which is **/SMERF**. Room rates have been negotiated in advance at \$85.00 per night - with tax coming to \$97.47/night.

We have also negotiated our banquet main course selection and pricing - listed as follows:

8oz Rib-eye – \$31.00

Chicken Marsala - \$27.00

Vegetarian - \$24.00

Charleston Crab Cakes - \$32.00

These prices include tax and tip.

We hope you are all making your plans for this historic occasion. We expect to have a much more comprehensive agenda for the next newsletter in October.

Please send submissions for the News letter

To: Edwin Hergert – [ehergert@cox.net](mailto:ehergert@cox.net)

or 1440 W. Gail Dr., Chandler, AZ 85224

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