

USS HADDO (SSN 604)



Volume 1, Issue 13

November 1995

Well, here it is, November, and another Haddo Newsletter rolls off the computer printer. Greetings, former shipmates. I have a fair amount of news again this edition, which I'll get to ASAP. Again the reminder... If you have addresses for non-listed former crewmembers, please send them on to me:

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And Now, The News...

Despite my best efforts and tantalizing pitch in the last Edition, I received no "volunteers" offering to help set up a reunion. I have not lived up to my end of the bargain, either, as I never found the time to go visit the Submarine Force Library and Museum to talk with Ms. June Johnson about assistance they might be able to lend. Ms. Johnson, on the other hand, has not forgotten my request. I received the attached (not included) letter from her dated May 23, 1995. And so I will cool it for a while and maybe visit Ms. Johnson this winter when things aren't so hectic. I hope you all aren't too disappointed. A Haddo reunion will happen someday, I'm confident of that.

Notes from the Crew...

When Bill Cook sent me the finished copy of the last edition, he enclosed a note with the following story I thought you all might enjoy:

Another memory is Haddog; you may remember the incident. It seems that an enterprising crew member (some said it was one of the QM gang) used some light green paper, a few colored pens, a Polaroid camera and a laminating machine to gin up a shipyard military personnel photo ID for a stray dog that spent time about the shipyard. The dog's name on the ID was Haddog. All thought is was great fun to see the pooch coming and going with the ID wagging from his collar, with the guards saluting, etc. All but the CO and XO, that it (or at least they couldn't admit it in public). I guess there arose quite a furor over shipyard security. After all, what if some mutt-faced spy look-alike or poor, hapless Haddog had crept past the guards on all four, and used the ID to steal top military secrets? Anyone who looks enough like Haddog's photo to pass

security checks deserves all the stolen secrets he can get, I supposed. Or maybe the security guards need the help. It was said that they actually verified that the dog looked like the photo every time he came into the yard. So it must have been ok. {Lest the author upset anyone, he dutifully acknowledges the importance of security, and hopes that this light-hearted look at a long-ago incident does not reflect poorly on him.]

As I was preparing the 12th edition for the mail, two notes arrived in mid-March that I could not cover. These were...

March 15 - A letter arrived from Leroy S. (Roy) Miller, whose Navy career spanned 38 years beginning in 1942 including service on 8 diesel boats, 1 fast attack (Haddo) and 1 FBM (Von Steuben). Roy provided an address for William M. Austin in his letter. Thanks, Roy!

On March 22, Denny Weaver called with a new address. Denny was on Haddo from 1975-78 and made the long WestPac runs out of San Diego.

April 6, 1995 - I received a telephone call from Rod Taft, complaining about the tiny print resulting from my photoreduction of the letter I sent to June Johnson. Well, take comfort old friend (emphasis on old), all of us are reaching the bifocal age. May I suggest you get yourself a big magnifying glass? - you see them advertised all the time in Modern Maturity magazine for us "seniors." [Typist's note - my computer monitor was getting fuzzy. The repair technician told me to get reading glasses. I did. The problem went away. \$30 for the repair call; \$60 for the specs.]

April 10 - A letter arrived from Fred Holmes with three new addresses ... Thanks Fred! Fred asks why I have not included phone numbers with the crew lists sent with the newsletter. I have not done this because I don't want to invade anyone's privacy - some folks are touchy about this for a variety of reasons - I'm sure you can think of a few. I figure anyone who wants to get in touch with an old buddy can write a note or call directory assistance easily enough.

April 12 brought a short note and generous donation from Dick Scales (former CO, and promises of some anecdotes surrounding David Oliver's (RADM USN Ret'd) retirement ceremony. Hasn't arrived yet...maybe for the next edition?

April 14 - A letter from A.C. Viebranz (crewmember of the first Haddo, SS-255) arrived along with an interesting booklet about the first Haddo's war patrols. Mr. Viebranz's letter follows, as I thought I should share it with all.

Dear Mike,

Thanks for your letter of April 3. I was pleased to see the issue of the Klaxon which I'm sure you have received by now. I think they treated both Haddos quite well. We got a little more copy because of the letter from Chester Nimitz, Jr. The Nimitz name is still revered in the Navy even after fifty years - as it should be.

As they told in the article, we have a rapidly dwindling group of Haddo sailors from SS 255 that holds a reunion every two years. We have a number who are members of a group called Submarine Veterans of World War II, so that we always meet at the time of that organization's meeting, and in the same city. We do, however, hold our reunion early in the week and separate from any of their activities, which start later. Our next reunion is scheduled for September 1996 in Milwaukee. We would certainly welcome you and any of your shipmates. A

number of our people did visit the "new" Haddo when she was in San Diego, and received a very warm welcome. You may have been aboard at the time. The crew of SSN-604 seemed to be interested in what it was like to be on one of the WW II fleet boats, and our fellows were awed by being on a nuclear sub. I am enclosing a copy of a booklet that was written by CMDR Dick Downing who was our Executive Officer during three patrols. I hope you will find it of interest.

I made six war patrols on Haddo. Four were as Chief Engineer, and then I put her out of commission in New London as Exec. I then went to Portsmouth (New Hampshire) Navy Yard where we commissioned SARDA (SS 468) and took her on her shake-down cruise. Nimitz was the Captain of that boat and recruited me to join him. I couldn't stand the peacetime Navy, but the wartime service was a defining period in my life. This is one reason that we Haddo survivors are still so tight.

This is probably more than you wanted to know. Appreciated your letter and would like to stay in touch. In any case, we will contact you before the next reunion to issue you a formal invitation. All the best to you.

Sincerely, A.C. Viebranz

P.S. Enjoyed your newsletter. It is a very professional job. ACV

April 15 - A letter and generous donation arrived from Jack Bentley with a correction and an address for Frank Wise (ET/RO, late '60s). Thanks very much, Jack!

Mrs. John Viney sent a short note on April 27 with an address for Levi Salazar and requesting any information on a Tom Owenby - apparently a Navy friend preceding John's days on Haddo. Thanks, John and Mrs. Viney.

April 27 - A letter from Tim France provided a change of address and a donation. Tim notes the deactivation of Submarine Squadron Four in Charleston in March - Haddo's squadron when once assigned there. Tim is working at Fernald, a Department of Energy environmental restoration site northwest of Cincinnati.

April 28 brought a letter from Paul Wiltberger, Jr. noting that his father served on Haddo, not him. An address for Paul, Sr. was provided and a donation to the newsletter as well. Thanks, Paul

On April 29 the phone rang and Paul Wiltberger, Sr. was on the other end. Paul called to say thanks for finding him and thanks for the newsletter. I sent him a complete set of back issues so he can catch up.

On May 8, a note arrived from Bob Jeager noting the duplication of his name and address on the last list. Thanks, Bob, we'll fix it.

A note from Bill Frantz provided an address change on May 9. Thanks, Bill.

A letter and donation was received from Jim "J.B." Moore on May 18 along with a change of address and "what I did after Haddo" chronology which included service on USS L.Y. Spear (AS-36) and USS Bergall (SSN-667), followed by civilian employment with Gamma Industries in Texas and Amersham Corp. in Louisiana. Then followed employment with Source Production and Equipment in Louisiana and a concurrent return to school for a Masters Degree in Religious Education. Jim is now pastor of a small Baptist church in Delaware.

May 20 brought a brief note from Larry Krause (CDR USNR, Ret), asking to be added to the mailing list. Will do! Larry was OPS/NAV on Haddo when she left the yards in Pascagoula.

On May 30, a letter arrived from Scott Atwater including another generous donation plus some interesting news. Scott recently visited the Sub Force Library and Museum and paged through the Haddo "Boat Book" which now contains some of the material I forwarded. Scott says the museum is well worth a visit. He ran into Chiavaris (we don't have an address) at Hanford a while back. Also would like to find Frank Wise - check the list, Scott, we found him!

Nothing further arrived in June or July except that on July 20-23 I made a business trip to Oakland, CA and while there was able to look up Harold Clark. Hal dropped everything when he heard from me and drove into Oakland with his lady friend Janet. We had a terrific visit - a few drinks, dinner and several hours of reminiscing over our days together on Haddo. Janet, bless her, took all this in stride and, by her presence, probably kept Hal and me from getting blotto and exchanging stories meant for sailors' ears only. I hadn't seen Hal since Pascagoula - now some 20 years ago!

Still in the spirit of visiting old buddies, I looked up Jack and Jan Garrison in late September while passing through southern PA on another business teip. Jack and Jan came over to Hershey Lodge in Hershey, PA for dinner and drinks. Jack is still working at Three Mile Island. During his years at TMI the company sent him on a trip to Hungary to look over their nuclear power plants and program. While there, he and Jan toured Europe by rail. We whiled away the evening exchanging Haddo and post-Haddo career stories. Jack and Jan visited with the Kellys in Florida recently. All-in-all, we had a great visit - hadn't seen Jack in 22 years.

A Short Word About Donations...

Over the six year period of my doing the newsletter, I have received, unsolicited, a fair number of donations for which I am very grateful. I always acknowledge these in the newsletter, thought never the amounts. I want you all to know the donation have kept pace almost exactly with the costs of producing and mailing the newsletter, which not goes out to 172 people (this edition).

Thank you one and all!

Credits, Thanks and Miscellaneous ...

Envelopes and postage paid for in part by generous donations of Dick Scales, Jack Bentley, Tim France, Paul Wiltberger, Jr., "J.B." Moore and Scott Atwater. Typing and address list by Bill Cook.

Thanks to June Johnson at the Submarine Force Library and Museum Association for her continuing interest and her excellent articles on both Haddos in the Klaxon.

Shifting Mail Coolant Pumps to slow until the next edition - April '96, most likely.

Mike Gann
Author/Editor